OUR CENTURY
1913

AT A GLANCE

Gas wells run deep in Lakewood

A "gas rush" — Cleveland's answer to the Yukon gold rush — brought dreams of striking it rich to residents in what geologists called the "Lakewood Field."

The Lakewood Gas Co. was organized on Jan. 24 and by the following year, it had 34 wells, 23 of which were producing. In November, a 5 million-foot well came in on the grounds of the National Carbon Co. at W. 117th St. and Madison Ave. Crews struggled all night to cap it.

Many property owners in the western suburbs drilled shallow wells to provide their own heat, light and cooking fuel — and to bedevil future property owners faced with the expense of capping gas wells they hadn't realized they owned.

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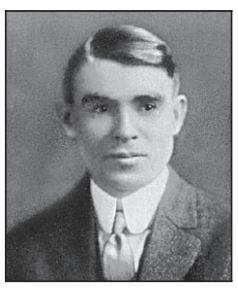
Cleveland's cultural scene got another boost on March 2 when Max Faetkenheuer, "the Oscar Hammerstein of Cleveland," opened the Metropolitan Theater on Euclid Ave. near E. 55th St. The opening opera was "Aida," starring Adelaide Norwood. Tickets were 50 cents to $1.



McGinty

Clevelanders had no lack of entertainment in 1913. John Philip Sousa brought his band to the Hippodrome in August, and later that month, Marie Dressler headlined the Hipp's vaudeville show. Paderewski gave a recital at Grays Armory. The Primrose and Dockstadder Minstrel Show played the Colonial.

Councilman Jimmy McGinty was upset with a lack of ragtime music in park concerts. Director Christian Timmner agreed that at the next concert, the city-sponsored orchestra would play the "Hungarian Rag." It turned out to be one of Brahms' Hungarian Dances.

And, in line with the city's growing gentility, Star Theater Manager Frank Drew announced that no more peanuts, pop and candy would be sold at his burlesque house because "it lowers the tone of the theater."

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It seemed that something always happened to the Naps. They were in second place when they began their final eastern trip with a chance to catch the Philadelphia Athletics for the lead.

Then, on the train from New York to Washington, pitchers Vean Gregg and Cy Falkenberg got into what was described as a "friendly wrestling match." They fell, and both managed to injure their pitching arms.

The Naps lost a series to the Senators, then lost two of three games to the A's. They wound up third.

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The Cleveland-made Chandler — a sensation at the Chicago Auto Show — had six cylinders and cost only $1,785.

But at his Highland Park, Mich., plant, Henry Ford had come up with a process called the moving assembly line. It was the beginning of mass production, the beginning of autos for the average family and the beginning of the end for Cleveland's higher-priced automakers.

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The Housemaids Union demanded a 10-hour day and threatened to blacklist "housewives who hired nonunion girls." Their employers shrugged; other than the garment industry, there were few other jobs for immigrants who spoke little English.

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Nov. 7 started out almost summery; winter wouldn't arrive officially for another two weeks. Then, out of nowhere, wind, sleet and snow hit Cleveland with what was described as the worst storm in history, bringing winds of up to 79 mph and 18 inches of snow. Transportation was paralyzed. Hotels were filled with office workers unable to get home. Schools were closed. Officials feared a famine. The toll on the Great Lakes was horrendous: 32 ships and tugs, with a loss of 277 lives.

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New this year: the first Illuminating Building (now the 55 Public Square Building), Baldwin-Wallace College (a merger of Baldwin University and German-Wallace College), Apex Electric Manufacturing Co. (now a division of White Consolidated Industries Inc.), the E.F. Hauserman Co. (now Sunar-Hauserman Inc.), the Winton Gas Engine & Manufacturing Co. (now the Cleveland Diesel Division of General Motors Corp.)

PLAIN DEALER FILE

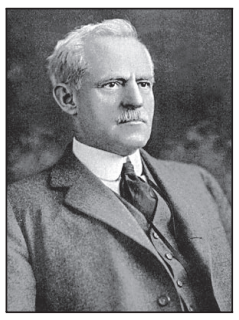
In 1913, political reform also meant social and cultural changes. At left, construction began on the Cleveland Museum of Art. Above, children and families living in what were called the "ghettos" of Cleveland also benefited from city leaders' generosity, and from what was to become the Federation for Community Planning.

Altruism helps groups prosper

City, business leaders turn attention to social, cultural causes

By Fred McGunagle

Cleveland was America's sixth-largest city and still was growing. Every day, trains from the East Coast pulled into Union Terminal on the lakefront, bringing more immigrants to work in the city's booming factories.



Goff

It was a golden age of civic spirit as well. Fresh from their victory for political reform in 1912, Cleveland's united political and business leaders turned their attention to the poor and to cultural needs.

In 1913, what was to become the Federation for Community Planning and America's first Community Fund were born. It saw the incorporation of the Cleveland Museum of Art, though the building would not open until 1916. The Cleveland Foundation followed, and over the rest of the decade, so did the institutions that came to be known collectively as University Circle.

"This was the Progressive Era, when middle-class people thought of reform as an obligation," said Edward Miggins, professor of history and urban affairs at Cuyahoga Community College. "Business people saw the relationship between their businesses and a civic vision that included nonbusiness activities."

Not that their motives were entirely altruistic. They had been scared into action by muckrakers and by populists like Tom L. Johnson and Newton D. Baker, the new mayor who was "municipalizing" even dance halls and fishing boats. Even scarier were the Socialists; Charles Ruthenberg was getting more votes each time he ran for mayor, many on ballots cast by immigrants.

"This was a way," Miggins said of the reform organizations, "for businessmen, many of them now moving out of the city, to maintain civil control.

"Their list would include 'safe' charities. If there's an organization organizing poor people to protest bad housing, it's probably not going to get the money."

Whatever the motives, the Chamber of Commerce was the leader of the movement. Eager to reduce duplication and apply the new "scientific management" principles to social problems, its leaders in June created the Cleveland Federation for Charity and Philanthropy. A fund drive raised $237,000 for its 52 member organizations.

The group changed its name to the Welfare Federation in 1917 and the Federation for Community Planning in 1971. Among its early activities was a call for more professionalism in social work, which resulted in the establishment in 1916 of what is now the Mandell School of Applied Social Science of Case Western Reserve University. The fund drive, meanwhile, has raised nearly $1.4 billion as the Victory Chest, Community Fund, United Torch and, since 1977, United Way Services of Greater Cleveland.

Frederick H. Goff still was not satisfied. "Frederick Goff was an unusual person," Miggins said. He had been a prominent corporate lawyer who was among Tom L. Johnson's early opponents. In 1908, he was named as mediator to work out terms for uniting the municipal streetcars with the private Con-Con (waiving all pay in the Progressive spirit of good citizenship). Goff was impressed with the "semi-public" system that emerged, and he and Johnson became good friends.

PD FILE

Union Terminal, in the early 1920s.

Officers of the Cleveland Trust Co. were so impressed with his work that they offered Goff the presidency of their 14-year-old bank. It meant giving up his law practice and taking a $150,000-a-year pay cut, but he accepted. In the next 15 years, Cleveland Trust's assets increased from $30 million to $176 million.

Both as a lawyer and as a banker, Goff was concerned about the trusts he administered for out-of-date purposes; they couldn't be changed because of the "dead hand" of the grantor. He proposed a community trust to which wealthy Clevelanders could leave bequests, confident that the money would be managed for the best interests of future generations. The Cleveland Foundation, organized Jan. 2, 1914, now has assets of $1.2 billion, making it the nation's second-largest community trust. It averages $40 million a year in grants.

Cleveland's old-line families — the Wades, Severances, Hannas, Blossoms, Holdens, Mathers and Rockefellers — preferred to make their contributions directly, and they favored cultural institutions, such as the art museum, whose 1916 opening helped establish the University Circle area as the preferred location for cultural activities. (The Institute of Art had been there since 1904.)

The Play House was formed in 1916 and the Cleveland Orchestra two years later, though it did not move into Severance Hall until 1931. The Museum of Natural History and the Institute of Music date to 1920, moving to University Circle in 1958 and 1961, respectively.

Cleveland basked in the glow of its golden age.

McGunagle is a Cleveland freelance writer.

LOOKING AT A YEAR

Begin

Jan. 27: Olympic hero Jim Thorpe is stripped of his amateur awards after confessing that he had played professional baseball.

Feb. 2: New York's palatial new rail terminal, Grand Central Station, opens on Park Ave.

Apr. 8: President Woodrow Wilson delivers a nine-minute State of the Union address, reviving a custom abandoned 112 years earlier.

June 30: A party headed by Archdeacon Hudson Stuck, an Episcopalian missionary, becomes the first to scale to the peak of Mount McKinley.

Sept. 7: As tensions mount in Europe, Germany joins with Italy and Austria-Hungary to form the "Triple Alliance."

Oct. 10: Pushing a button in Washington, President Wilson ignites 8 tons of dynamite that opens the last segment of the Panama Canal.

Born: Richard Nixon, Rosa Parks, Menachem Begin, Willy Brandt, Gerald Ford, Klaus Barbie, William Casey, Albert Camus, Burt Lancaster, Vivien Leigh, Tyrone Power, Mary Martin, James Hoffa.

Died: abolitionist Harriet Tubman, financier J.P. Morgan, brewer Adolphus Busch.

Tubman