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Clifton Town Meeting 2009 House Tour
Sunday, May 10, 2009

Introductions and House Descriptions by Walter E. Langsam
In their original form prior to editing by Julia Mace for the tour-guide

Final Version 7/5/2009

Introduction: The Clifton Context

Clifton, located on a hilly plateau north of downtown Cincinnati, is a distinctive historic, architectural, and landscaped suburban community. Established as an exclusive village in the 1850s on the site of earlier farms, Clifton has evolved compatibly for a century and a half. Several of the mid-19th-century estates were landscaped in the Civil War era by Adolph Strauch, the chief landscape architect of nearby Spring Grove Cemetery. Among the outstanding surviving mansions from this period are "Oakwood," the Henry Probasco House (still in private hands), and "Scarlet Oaks," the George K. Shoenberger House (intact but part of a retirement community), but there are several others. Despite these apparently Germanic names, most of the estate and mansion owners during the mid-19th century tended to be of Anglo-American origin, as reflected, for instance, in the prominence of Calvary Episcopal Church on Clifton Avenue (1866-68) and the continuing location of such interrelated families as the Rawsons, Resors, Hoseas, Hulberts, Perins, and Tafts along Clifton and Lafayette Aves.

In the 1880s and '90s, many of the original estates were developed with handsome residences on generous grounds, often by distinguished Establishment local architects such as James W. McLaughlin, Samuel Hannaford (& Sons), Lucien F. Plympton, and Des Jardins & Hayward. The increasing presence of prominent German-American families, however, including the Bergers, Diems, Dieterles, Muhlhausers, Rattermans, and Wettengels, led to commissions for well-trained German-American architects like Theodore A. Richter, Jr., Emil G. and Jacob J. Rueckert, and the Steinkamp family that was patronized by the Emerys. At the end of the century, the extension of urban railways to Middleton Avenue on Ludlow/Jefferson Avenue, the commercial core of the area, introduced apartment

buildings and denser but still compatible residential development throughout what is known as the "Gaslight District."

Clifton Avenue also became an institutional center at the turn of the last century. Aside from the existing churches that served the residents, the University of Cincinnati, Hebrew Union College (now University), and Hughes High School were located on Clifton Avenue between McMillan Street and Ludlow Avenue, along with a series of hospitals. Early in the century, the new Clifton Public School (now the Clifton Cultural Arts Center) became an instant landmark and community center, architecturally both refined and vigorous, as suits Clifton and its inhabitants. The proximity of these institutions led to a concentration of administrators, faculty members, and students, as well as other related professionals, within the Clifton residential district, affecting the social as well as architectural character of the neighborhood. Many visual artists, architects, museum staff members (beginning in the 1890s with Sir Alfred T. Goshorn, first Director of the Cincinnati Art Museum, at 3540 Clifton Avenue), and performing artists have chosen to live here too. Early Modern Bungalows and their upright equivalent, "American Four-Squares," as well as more Traditional Cottages, helped fill in developing streets such as Resor, Middleton, Wood, and Warren Aves. Early Modernist architectural influence from Chicago is shown, for example, by several stuccoed dwellings designed by Hall & Burroughs on Greendale Avenue (a former Resor estate).

Between the world wars, streets and sub-divisions like Rawson Woods Circle and nearby Belsaw Place were laid out between and on former large properties between the World Wars. To counteract increasing urbanization, natural features like Mt. Storm Park at the west end of Lafayette Avenue (where the 1935 Shelter House was designed by Samuel Hannaford & Sons) and the Rawson Woods Bird Preserve or Nature Sanctuary (1925-1928) at Middleton and McAlpin Avenues were donated. Rawson Woods Lane's and Circle's first residences in the 1920s and '30s were traditional Tudor and Colonial Revival houses of high-quality design and craftsmanship, taking advantage of the sloping topography; these include the home H. Eldredge Hannaford, Samuel's grandson, designed for himself on Rawson Woods Lane.

During the mid-1930s two of Cincinnati's first "Modern" or International Style houses were built opposite the future site of the Frank Lloyd Wright's and his Taliesin Associates' Boulter House (1954-46). First was the Gale and Agnes Potter Lowrie House, 20 Rawson Woods Circle (1933-34: designed by Potter, Tyler & Martin, it is now the home of Jay Chatterjee, formerly dean of the University of Cincinnati's outstanding College of Design, Architecture, Art and Planning

(DAAP), as well as the initiator of the University's important recent Signature Architect program. Similar but more formal is the adjacent 1933-35 George F. Mayne House.

Just before and after World War II, residents of Clifton began seeking out more challenging sites, particularly around the periphery of the built-up areas, where less-expensive steep, wooded hillside sites, often at the ends of older streets, became more attractive and even challenging to architects and builders, who often tried to maintain the natural setting. Concomitantly, more "modern," adventurous and experimental styles and structural solutions were embraced, as alternatives to traditional or conventional design, especially by clients associated with the University of Cincinnati. Especially concentrated on Lafayette Lane, there are numerous examples of fine contemporary design since the 1930s by outstanding local Modernist firms such as Garriott & Becker, Carl A. Strauss & Associates, and former Taliesin Fellows Abrom and Benjamin Dombar (the latter served as supervising architect of the Boulter House), as well as many individual architects' own residences.

Despite serious concerns in recent decades for urban and historic preservation issues, including zoning and incompatible redevelopment, Clifton—considerably abetted by the Clifton Town Meeting—has managed to retain its unique character, in terms of topography, manmade environment, and sense of diverse yet somehow unified community. As you drive around Clifton on this tour and experience the individual dwellings and life-styles that these home-owners have so generously opened for us, we hope you will join us in celebrating the best of Clifton.

Architectural Summary of the 2009 House Tour

This year's residences represent a wide span of the architectural styles, architects, scales, and life-styles available in Clifton. The first and last chronologically are the most adventurous and creative from all these standpoints, but all of the house have considerable interest in their own right, suggesting a variety of approaches to historic preservation, adaptation, and up-dating that will be sure to have a wide appeal to visitors.

The earliest residence was built in 1885-86 for a prominent, wealthy man and his well-connected wife. Harry C. Hulbert commissioned the unforgettable residence known appropriately as "Stonehedge," at 333 *Lafayette Avenue* (across from the Cincinnati Woman's Club). It was one of the first significant works of Buddemeyer, Plympton & Trowbridge, an architectural firm that was to design some of the most fascinating and outstanding dwellings in the area over the next decade or more. Although the brilliant young James S. Trowbridge was to die tragically of typhoid fever only a year later, Lucien F. Plympton continued to practice here until the turn of the last century. His best-known works are the remarkably authentic Fisher family's "Swiss Chalet" and Plympton's own nearby home, both on Upland Place in East Walnut Hills. Both also feature, as does the Hulbert House, real half-timbering (not veneer, as is the case nowadays) held together with hand-crafted pegs. The most striking feature of the Clifton residence is its first floor constructed of "erratic Boulders," as they were called in an advertisement the firm used to promote their work. Interior features include the elegant staircase that swirls around the Great Hall's "inglenook" fireplace; the original Smoking Room's even larger hearth that incorporates slots for pipes; and the distinctive leaded-glass window patterns, different for each room. Equally intriguing is the garden with cascading pools that wind down from ground-level to the basement "pad" and patio provided in the 1960s for a previous owner's extended family.

At the corner of Brookline and Hosea Avenues in the eastern section of Clifton are three high-quality dwellings that reflect changes in life-styles, architecture, and craftsmanship at the turn of the last century. At least two of them, and probably the third, were designed by the same fine architectural firm of Des Jardins & Hayward, who were known for individualistic church as well as residential designs. Among many works in Clifton (Mrs. Des Jardins was a Hosea), the house erected at 218 *Hosea Avenue* in 1895 for Albert Diem of the long-lived Diem & Wing Paper Co., is an elegant example of the early American Colonial or Federal Revival, with its delicate Neo-Classical details: a subtly curved front gable, porches, and bay-windows; and a spectacular stained-glass window on the gracious stair-landing.

In 1911 the Diem property was acquired by tobacco manufacturer George M. Berger, whose descendants include the present owner. Berger hired John F. Sheblessy, a later partner of the original architect S.E. (“Dizzy”) Des Jardins, to modernize and enlarge the house for his family of six children. Two wings were added at the rear, the kitchen and services were up-dated and, in the basement, a Billiard Room or “Rathskeller” and a surprisingly early indoor swimming pool were added. The Bergers did not need a private garage on the property: instead, the chauffeur fetched it from the large public garage at Clifton and Dixmyth Aves (where Widmer’s Dry Cleaning is located) that the family had constructed and owned. Plans of this and other projects related to the Bergers by Sheblessy (who is also a family connection) will be displayed during the tour.

Next door at *210 Hosea Avenue* is a large low-slung residence clad in a distinctive pattern of light and darker bricks that contrasts dramatically with the upright, red-brick Diem-Berger House, vividly reflecting changes between late 19th- and early 20th-century architectural ideals. Although the residence was surely also designed by Des Jardins & Hayward, its shape and materials were echoed in the 1910 triple garage designed by the Early Modernist architects Hall & Burroughs, at the back of the superbly landscaped property. The house, with its Wrightian “Prairie” character touched with a few subtle period references, was built in 1906 for distiller George F. Dieterle, a grand-father of Mrs. Louise D. Nippert who, with her late husband, has been such an extraordinarily generous patron of the arts, sports, and the environment. The interior features wide spaces flowing into each other through pocket-doors, recently-stripped woodwork, leaded-glass panels with a proto-Art Deco flavor, a hand-painted woodland frieze, and understated Steuben Glass Arts & Crafts light-fixtures. These are complemented by the present owners’ spectacular collection of Rookwood Pottery representing a wide range of periods, functions, forms, artists, and glazes.

The third house at the intersection of Hosea and Brookline, *209 Hosea Avenue*, combines elements of both the Diem-Berger’s Late Victorian character and the proto-Modern Arts & Crafts features of the Dieterle House. Built in 1905-1907 for yet another German-American family, that of retailer Edward C. Wettengel, this substantial buff-brick house has specifically Teutonic aspects, such as the phrase “Unser Ruhe” (“Our Rest” or “Refuge”) in the mosaic-tile floor of the vestibule, the Rhine castle painted over the dining-room sideboard, and the original tapestry fabric above the plate rail. The current owners’ period portraits, a church-painting of the Madonna, and period artifacts bring the interior to life. Original plans include those by Des Jardins & Hayward; the 1925 garage by Kruckemeyer & Strong; and a

proposed Library in the porch off the impressive double living room.

The ca. 1910 home of banker George R. Plogstedt at *3619 Middleton Avenue* is a typical “American Four-Square” house, with its efficient block-like massing, earth-toned brick exterior, deep eaves and brackets, few but large windows, relatively open-plan interior, and unfussy woodwork; it shares some of these more “Modern” features with Frank Lloyd Wright’s early “Prairie Style” work in Chicago. Despite an elegant staircase with a colorful Late Victorian window on the landing, this early 20th-century house somehow seems readily adaptable to contemporary life, especially with its up-dated functional areas and a large, well-thought-out porch recently added at the rear, where a condominiumized garage shared with a neighbor provides a practical and thoughtful urban solution. Somewhat unusually for such a vernacular type as an “American Four-Square,” the original owner and the architect of the house have been identified; the latter was the once very prominent Anglo-American Cincinnati practitioner, W.W. Franklin, and possibly his son J. Ward Franklin, who joined his father as a partner in 1908 and may have brought a breath of Early Modern Arts & Crafts to the firm.

Twentieth-century Traditional architecture is represented on this tour by the mid-1920s home at *437 Rawson Woods Lane* that H. Eldredge Hannaford, grandson of the famous 19th-century Anglo-American Cincinnati architect Samuel Hannaford, designed for himself and his wife Louise Ratterman Hannaford. She was a member of yet another prominent German-American family group—thus combining the two main streams of Cincinnati culture. Evoking a “Cotswold Cottage” (a sub-set of the popular Tudor Revival and/or Normandy Manor style), the Hannaford house is larger than it looks at first glance, with its long sweeping roofs, quaint gables and chimneys on the façade, stuccoed walls, dark-stained wood trim, and many hand-crafted details. Original specifications document the fine yet mass-produced materials and functional technology, such as the heated linen-drying rack in the basement laundry

The penultimate house, chronologically, *3773 Middleton Avenue*, was built in 1949 for a commercial artist, E Blaine Goyerts, Jr. Designed by an unknown architect or developer, it is almost contemporary with Wright’s nearby Boulter House, but its upright red-brick form and Traditional associations are as different as possible: in fact, it represents exactly what Wright and his followers were reacting against, although it still retains much of its appeal as an environment for actual living. Its references to 18th-century and Early Republican American Colonial history and architecture originally even included six tall square pillars across the front, obviously referring to George Washington’s “Mt. Vernon.” The reduced front porch

flanked by terraces in the well-landscaped, sloping grounds now feels welcoming, rather than imposing. Inside, a lovely spiral staircase, formal reception rooms, restrained woodwork, and its relatively small size (like that of the Boulter House) usual in post-World War II housing are now complemented by the magnificent combined Family-Informal Dining Room-Kitchen added across the rear and extended by porches and patios. Comparable expansion and up-dating for contemporary needs and expectations has taken place in virtually all the homes on the tour. This phenomenon reflects the mostly growing economy over the past half-century, as well as the continuing desirability of the Clifton neighborhood.

Last chronologically, but far from least, is the 1954-56 Boulter House at *One Rawson Woods Circle*, designed toward the end of his long life by Frank Lloyd Wright and his Taliesin Associates (the first of only three in the Cincinnati area). It is an example of the modest houses Wright called “Usonian”—a term combining “U.S.A.” and “Utopia”—that were constructed of inexpensive concrete block and/or horizontal wood siding, both inside and out. Despite their typically postwar small size, they embodied “The Master’s” open plans, abstract sculptural forms, soaring lines, and ever-changing light within a limited footprint. Many original “Usonian” houses were commissioned by academics, such Drs. Cedric and Patricia Boulter, both associated with the University of Cincinnati’s outstanding Classics Department; at this period, its leading light, the world-famous archaeologist Dr. Carl Blegen, was supported by the Rawson sisters on whose family land this area, like the adjacent Nature Preserve, was developed. A Hellenic quality may even be perceived in the Boulter House, with its delicate vertical ribs along the window wall above Rawson Woods Lane suggesting Classical columns beneath a fascia and cornice. A sensitive addition was made for the second owner, another academic, Dr. David Gosling, an internationally recognized urban planner. The current owners are not only avid admirers of Wright but leaders in environmentally responsible LEED design, so that the house—like so many in Clifton—embodies not only the past and present, but also the future.

The Architects

For more information on these architects, please consult the “Biographical Dictionary of Cincinnati Architects, 1788-1940,” by Walter E. Langsam, on the Website of the Architectural Foundation of Cincinnati, www.architecturecincy.org. Their known Clifton works and connections are emphasized here.

Buddemeyer, Plympton & Trowbridge

Buddemeyer, Plympton & Trowbridge, both individually and as a firm, were among the most creative in the Cincinnati area in the last decades of the 19th century. Their work was almost entirely residential; that it was often innovative, both artistically and structurally, was recognized in contemporary national and even international architectural publications. One of the firm's few non-residential works was the Cincinnati Crematory (1885), which still stands (painted white) above the former Dixmyth Avenue (now Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Drive) in Clifton Heights.

Edwin Buddemeyer (Cincinnati, 1862-Memphis, Tenn., 1904), practiced here on his own 1884-86, when his many varied commissions for both German- and Anglo-American communities in Ohio and N. Ky. that were listed in the Chicago-based periodical, *The Inland Architect*, attest to his success. He joined the firm of Buddemeyer, (L.F.) Plympton, & (J.S.) Trowbridge in 1887. Buddemeyer signed several of the fascinating sketches in the firm's 1888 New Year's greeting brochure. A few of their works, such as the Cavagna Farm near Cincinnati, were published in Europe at the time as prime examples of “cutting-edge” American residential architecture, with their structural half-timbering, grid-based plans, and wide eaves suggesting Japanese influence. In fact, in the 1880s Buddemeyer designed a remarkably precocious Japanese-inspired grandstand and judges' box for the Carthage (O.) Fairgrounds north of Cincinnati. He also designed several schools in Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky, and is said to have designed the Chapel and other buildings at Duke University, Durham, N.C.

Lucian (or Lucien) F. Plympton (Horsehead, near Corning, N.Y., 1856-1938) was a son of a talented artistic family (previously named Plimpton). He was educated in Cincinnati at the Chickering Institute, where he later taught; travelled in Europe ca. 1875-80, studying at the Karlsruhe Polytechnic Institute and Vienna Academy of the Fine Arts, ca. 1875-80. He began practice in Cincinnati ca. 1883; ca. 1885 he was joined by James S. Trowbridge; Edwin Buddemeyer joined them in 1887 and probably remained with Plympton a few years after Trowbridge's death in late 1887.

Plympton was associated with M.R. Nash (son of the highly eclectic post-Civil War Cincinnati architect A.C. Nash) 1892-95; and in 1897 with H.E. Siter; the first Harry Hake, who became one of the area's outstanding Beaux-Arts practitioners, was also trained in the office in the late 1890s.

At the turn of the last century Plympton moved to Pittsburgh, complaining about the difficulty of gaining large commissions, rather than his plentiful residential opportunities, in a city dominated by Hannaford and other established architects. Plympton then probably worked for the rest of his career for the Pittsburgh firm of John T. Comes, a noted designer of Roman Catholic churches and institutions (including the magnificent St. Mary's in Hyde Park, 1916-17); he also served, however, as at least a delineator for the Pittsburgh architect Edward J. Weber, for whose book *Catholic Ecclesiology* (Pittsburgh, 1927), he provided many extravagant renderings.

While in Cincinnati, Plympton was "well known as a gentleman with artistic ideas." He was represented in the 1882 Cincinnati Industrial Exposition Art Exhibition, the 1889 Cincinnati Architectural Club exhibition, and the Pittsburgh Architectural League in 1907. His renderings of local scenes and landmarks in 1880s and '90s directories and promotional brochures have considerable panache. In the early 1880s he designed vase shapes for his mother, Cordelia A. Plimpton, to decorate at the Cincinnati Pottery Club. Lucien's "real" half-timbered structural style is best represented by his mother's and his own residence house at the south end of Upland Avenue in East Walnut Hills (1887); nearby is the famous Albert D. and Alice Teasdale Fisher "Swiss Chalet" (1892), which was nationally recognized and became the progenitor of a local vernacular school, highly suited to the hillsides of Cincinnati and N. Ky.; these two residences are featured in Walter E. Langsam, *Great Houses of the Queen City* (1997). There is even an 1888 reference to a frame house by Plympton in "Norwegian style"!

James S. (Sims) Trowbridge (ca. 1863 -87), who was educated abroad and in Boston, was a talented draftsman. He contributed architectural designs to the 1883 Cincinnati Exposition, and in 1884 he was delineating buildings by Edwin Anderson (the early partner of Samuel Hannaford) in a national periodical. He may have practiced for part of 1885 on his own in Cincinnati, but soon joined Plympton, who was equally accomplished as a draftsman. They had hardly been joined in turn by Edwin Buddemeyer when a note appeared in the *Inland Architect* (12/1887): "Architect James Trowbridge (Jimmey), as he is called, is lying very low with the typhoid fever. The Craft cannot afford to lose him, for he is a brilliant architect." Sadly, within a few weeks his obituary and a tribute appeared. One of Trowbridge's

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1887 *Inland Architect* drawings has even been cited as an example of the high caliber of contemporary architectural drawings in comparison to Frank Lloyd Wright's first published drawings during that year!

S.E. Des Jardins and His Partners: A.W. Hayward, John F. Sheblessy

S. (Samuel) E. ("Dizzy") Des Jardins (after ca. 1900, sometimes spelled as one word) (Forestville, Mich., 1856-1916) was a highly individual, even eccentric, but capable architect. Conceivably he was trained at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris (although he is not listed in official sources) or possibly in an atelier or studio there. He practiced in Cincinnati on his own 1882-92, 1905, 1910; with A.W. Hayward, 1893-1903 and 1913-16; with John G. Drainie, 1906; with John F. Sheblessy, 1907-1909; with Rowland G. Bevis, 1911-12. Des Jardins, buttressed by his various partners and staff, was one of the most creative of Cincinnati's architects for thirty years, with a fanciful flair in massing, outline, and decoration, often combining elements from different historic sources in a remarkably free way. It was Des Jardins' distinctive 1887 Cincinnati City Hall competition project, for instance--rather than the more conventional Richardsonian Romanesque design of the winning competitor, Samuel Hannaford & Sons--that was published in the influential New York-based *American Architect & Building News*, which also stated that Des Jardins & Hayward's 1894 competition project for the University of Cincinnati's first buildings on the Clifton campus "should have placed second," after the Hannafords once again!

Among Des Jardins' and his firm's most important works are the 7th Presbyterian Church at 1721 Madison Rd SEC Cleinview Ave, E. Walnut Hills, which burnt several decades ago (the striking tower remains above the modern sanctuary); as well as churches of the Christian denomination in Paris, Winchester, and Cynthiana, Ky. (all wealthy Bluegrass county seats located around Lexington--which had its own architects--but were easily accessible by railway from Cincinnati). The Greek Revival Bell House in Bell Court in Lexington, however, was lavishly remodelled by Des Jardins after a fire in the 1880s, and is now open to the public. A 1904 account also mentions a distillery in Old Mexico, a summer cottage in Nova Scotia, and a church in Alaska!

It was suburban residences, however, that probably gave Des Jardins' picturesque talent the freest rein. A most valuable source, *The Autograph Book of Suburban Houses*, prepared by Des Jardins & Hayward in 1895, has recently been discovered. It appears to consist of about 175 sheets of exquisite India-ink original drawings

(hence the name "Autograph Book") of about 75 houses, most in the Cincinnati area. For each residence, there is a perspective of the exterior, in great detail and framed by convincing foliage; a number of houses also have first- and second-floor plans, and a very few also have interior views of the combined entrance and stair-halls. Their styles vary from Richardsonian Romanesque, Chateausque, "Queen Anne," and Shingle Style, to early Colonial Revival, but usually have quaint features of their own. The interior plans also reveal some fantastic spatial affects, particularly in the treatment of staircases and polygonal rooms. Many of these houses survive, although some are in deteriorated condition in no-longer-fashionable neighborhoods.

Des Jardins & Hayward exhibited residences in Cincinnati at the first exhibit sponsored by the Cincinnati Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (CAIA) held at the Cincinnati Art Museum (CAM) in 1901; designs for a university and a church at the second such exhibit (1902); and a court house, and a competition project for the Cincinnati Law School, *et al.*, at the 3rd CAIA/CAM (1903). Des Jardins & Sheblessy, interestingly, exhibited also at the 1st CAIA/CAM (1901; when J.F. Sheblessy was probably still located in Louisville); and various buildings at the 4th CAIA/CAM (1908). An article on "The Genius of Michael Angelo [sic]" by Des Jardins, originally given before the Cincinnati Chapter of the A.I.A. on May 20, 1902, was published in *The American Architect*.

Des Jardins and his partners designed many residences in Clifton, including the Clifton Presbyterian Church Parsonage, near Clifton and Bryant Aves (1889); the Dr. Augustus Ravogli House, 348 Bryant Ave (1892); the residence of Mrs. Robert Hosea (surely a close relative of Mrs. Des Jardins), Alexander and Glenmary Aves (1897); the Frederick P. Muhlhauser House (Mrs. Muhlhauser's maiden name was Diem; see the Diem-Berger House on this tour), 140 Wentworth Ave (1898; and Garage 1910); the H.A. Heister House, 143 Marion Ave (1906); the "picturesque boulder and shingle residence" of Mark Davis, Alexander opposite Hosea Aves (1907); the John H. Mittendorf House, 124 Hosea Ave (before 1908); the Robert F. Bahman House, 537 Evanswood Place (1908); and the Mrs. Warren Rawson House, 3791 Clifton Ave (1908; when she was to "divide the property into 25 building lots, remove her own former residence, and build a new one").

According to the 1903 *Dau's Blue Book*, Mrs. Samuel E. Des Jardins' maiden name was Hosea; they then lived at 2622 Eden Avenue, Mt. Auburn, and she "received" on Friday. In 1927 she lived as a widow at 3430 Brookline Ave. According to the *Bicentennial Guide* (1988), p. 222, her possible forebear, "Captain Robert Hosea (1811-1906)[,] was a steamboat builder and pilot, and later a wholesale grocer"; his *Clifton Town Meeting 2009 House Tour* - 11 - *Final Complete Text by Langsam, 9/9/2009*

home was located on the present site of St. John Unitarian Church on Resor Avenue in Clifton.

Albert W. Hayward (ca. 1861-1939) was a graduate of M.I.T. He was the partner of S.E. Des Jardins ca. 1893-1909 and 1913-15; of Harry W. Cordes ca. 1906-12; and of Edward M. Detzel, 1916-17. Hayward was probably secondary to the wayward but often wonderful Des Jardins; he and Cordes seem to have been as much developers and builders, or "Investment Architects" as they called themselves, as designers. They did claim design responsibility for a number of residences, as well as at least two large apartment buildings: one, at Ludlow (or Jefferson) and Brookline Aves in Clifton (opposite Hannaford's Cox House), was to cost \$100,000 and the other, at Reading Rd and Mitchell Ave, Avondale (probably recently demolished), twice that amount!

In his obituary, Hayward is described as having drafted Cincinnati's building code. The original Hotel Alms (by Samuel Hannaford & Sons) and the Werk Castle (by W.W. Franklin or G.W. Drach) are also mentioned, suggesting possible early experience in the offices of these prominent Cincinnati architects. Hayward had resided outside Cincinnati since ca. 1927 when he died.

John F. (Francis) Sheblessy (Chicago, 1873-1939), was educated at the Chicago Art Institute and the Armour Institute of Technology (now the Illinois Institute of Technology). In 1895 he entered the Chicago office of William LeBaron Jenney, whose 1879 First Leiter Building, considered the first "true" Chicago-School high-rise commercial structure, was possibly inspired partially by James W. McLaughlin's 1876-78 Shillito's Building at 7th and Race Sts. in Downtown Cincinnati. Sheblessy was later employed by the important Chicago firms of Holabird & Roche and Henry Ives Cobb, making him one of the most impressively prepared regional architects. In 1900 he moved to Louisville, Ky., working for the McDonald Bros., a major firm throughout the Southeast. After he moved to Cincinnati in 1907, he worked with S.E. Des Jardins until 1909, then began practice on his own. Sheblessy was a prolific and refined designer, particularly of Roman Catholic churches and other institutions in Cincinnati and vicinity. His son, Cliftonite Walter F. Sheblessy (Cincinnati, 1910-1995), specialized in engineering. Educated at Hughes High School, he received a B.S. Arch. from UC in 1932; M.S. Arch., M.I.T., 1933. He travelled extensively with J.F. Sheblessy, and practiced on his own 1939-42 and after World War II.

Edward H. Dornette

Edward H. Dornette (Cincinnati, 1874-1949), architect of the former Clifton Public School, attended Cincinnati public schools, as well as the Ohio Mechanics' Institute, and began practice ca. 1893. His first known work was moving and re-orienting the Greek Revival-Second Empire William Resor house, now 254 Greendale Ave, Clifton. He practiced with Gordon Sheppard 1899-1902. Beginning in 1898, his firm probably designed at least a dozen public schools during the first decade of the 20th century. They are in a variety of styles that reflect a reaction against the monumental grandeur of those by H.E. Siter, his predecessor as architect for the Board of Education, although Dornette was also responsible for the extravagantly Flemish-gabled Central Fairmount School (1906). In Clifton he designed the (German) Deaconess Hospital at Clifton and Straight Avenues (1900-1902), and also a Spanish Mission Revival Clifton Livery Stable & Garage at Clifton and Howell (1907). Dornette was appointed assistant building commissioner by the City of Cincinnati's Civil Service Commission on three different occasions, and was appointed a member of the Rapid Transit Commission in 1914.

William W. and J. Ward Franklin

W.W. (William W.) Franklin (London, England, 1848-1918) was educated in London, with a two-year course at Oxford. "Determining to adopt architecture as a profession, he entered the office of several of the best known architects in London, remaining three years. In 1866 Mr. Franklin came to America, landing in Boston, in which city, as well as in New York, he was employed in the study of his profession with several of the leading architects of those cities." Another account states that he moved to N. Orleans in 1864; travelled to Europe in 1866 for a professional education, studying in London and Paris; and moved to Chicago ca. 1871 (presumably just after the Great Fire). In any case, "In 1877, Mr. Franklin determining to enter into business for himself, came to Cincinnati, where he at once opened an office"; he practiced in Cincinnati at least 1880-1908, then with his son J. Franklin Ward. W.W. Franklin served as Professor of Architecture at the Ohio Mechanics' Institute for at least five years and is said to have been the author or publisher before 1903 of "Studies of Artistic Houses."

Although now little known, W.W. Franklin was one of Cincinnati's most prominent architects in the late 19th century. He was evidently a prolific and more than competent designer, especially of houses, some for quite prominent citizens, such as that for Henry Pogue of the former Pogue's Department Store (1892); the Frederick Lunken(heimer) House, on Luray Ave off Kemper Lane in Walnut Hills,

overlooking the Victory Parkway Bridge (before 1883); inventor Napoleon DuBrul's mansion above Colerain Avenue, called "Cote Bonneville" (1902-1904); and "Wiladel" (or "Willadel"), the William and Adele Werk Oskamp House, at 2397 Harrison Avenue, Westwood (now part of the Judson Village Retirement Community (1892-96; see Langsam, *Great Houses*). A number of W.W. Franklin residences in Clifton from the 1880s and '90s have also been identified.

J. Ward Franklin (Cincinnati, 1886-1978), a son of W.W. Franklin, was educated in Cincinnati and presumably trained in his father's firm. He practiced as a partner with his father 1908-1918; then on his own for a couple of years. For 30 years Franklin was the chief architect, specializing in residential design, for the Myers Y. Cooper Co., which developed much of Hyde Park, Mt. Lookout, and Kenwood, among other neighborhoods. Notable works by the Franklin partnership include the former Hyde Park Savings Bank on Erie Ave, Hyde Park Square (1910); and a "moving picture theater building" on Main St. S of Liberty in Over-the-Rhine (1909), which appeared in the popular film "Eight Man Out."

A number of cubic, earth-toned brick houses from the early 20th century by the firm have a more modern Prairie Style flavor with broad eaves and horizontal proportions, although often also finely detailed and crafted interiors; they may well have been designed by J.W. Franklin while working for his father. Among them are houses for Louis Fey, 263 Hosea (1906); Henry Morgenthaler, Whitfield NWC Terrace Aves (1907; and also two or three others at that intersection); Judge John Weld Peck, Hedgerow Lane off Resor Avenue (1908); Robert Bahman, 537 Evanswood Avenue (1909); and also the Clifton Realty Co., on Howell Ave (1908).

Hall & Burroughs

V. (Vernon) J. Hall (dates unknown) came to Cincinnati from Chicago in 1907; practiced with Guy C. Burroughs 1907- or 1909-1913. The firm's early work was relatively "modern" for Cincinnati: a number of the known residences by Hall & Burroughs are in Arts & Crafts variants of traditional styles, described as "bungalows," "Mission," or "in Japanese style," many of them stuccoed; several fine examples remain on Greendale Avenue and elsewhere in Clifton. The new "Stone Kote" exterior treatment was used for the Avondale home (1909) of Edward C. Hall, president of the important Hall Safe Co., who may have been related; and the 416 Resor Avenue residence in Clifton of Prof. Claude M. Lotspeich (1910).

Guy C. (Chaney) Burroughs (Oregon, Ill., 1881-1936) was educated at the

University of Illinois and Lake Forest University (or College), Ill.; then came to Cincinnati ca. 1907, perhaps with V.J. Hall, with whom Burroughs soon formed a partnership, 1911-13. Burroughs practiced with John H. Deeken ca. 1918-25; and with William F. Bertsch 1926-31. Best-known as a designer of fine Traditional residences, including those of B.H. Kroger and Mrs. George Eustis (see Langsam, *Great Houses*, for the latter), Burroughs was described in an obituary as a "pioneer in English architecture in the Ohio Valley." He is said, however, to have brought with him "a mixture of Georgian and Western types of architecture, then prominent in and around Chicago," probably referring to the Arts & Crafts mode represented by several houses by Hall & Burroughs on Greendale Avenue, Clifton (ca. 1909). Burroughs & Deeken designed the picturesque Gruen Watch Case Co. building on "Time Hill," E. McMillan St., Walnut Hills (1916-17; now part of the Union Institute), demonstrating "that a building headquarters for a place of business might be designed so as to be beautiful from an architectural standpoint as well as useful."

H. Eldridge Hannaford of Samuel Hannaford & Sons

H. (Harvey) Eldridge Hannaford (1892-1975), was a son of Harvey E. (Eldridge) Hannaford (1857-1923), who was himself a son and partner of Samuel Hannaford (1835-1911), the founder of the long-lived firm, which was known as S. Hannaford & Sons after 1887. Eldridge received a B.Arch. from Cornell University in 1913, and served in World War I. He practiced with the family firm until the 1960s, when it was acquired and eventually closed by Thomas Landise. His major work is the former *Cincinnati Times-Star* Building at 8th and Broadway (1930-33), a masterpiece of the Art Deco Movement with advanced technological and functional elements combined with high-quality craftsmanship and symbolism. According to the 1976 obituary of his wife Louise Ratterman Hannaford, H. Eldridge "helped to design the Cincinnati Gas & Electric building [although the 1929-30 company headquarters at 4th SWC Main are usually attributed to John Russell Pope of New York, associated with the local firm of Garber & Woodward,] as well as the following hospitals—Veterans' Administration, Deaconess [Clifton Ave and Straight St., 1926-28], Bethesda [Reading Rd, 1925-27], and Dunham [before 1937]." The firm's specialization in hospitals is also confirmed by the 1937 issue of *Architecture and Design* devoted to their work.

For further information on the long-lasting Hannaford architectural dynasty, see Betty Ann Smiddy's Website www.samuelhannaford.info. Photographs of the firm's early 20th-century work at the Cincinnati Historical Society Library at Union Terminal are available through the Cincinnati Memory Project,

www.cincinnatiemory.org.

Kruckemeyer & Strong

Edward H. Kruckemeyer (Cincinnati, 1886-1965), was educated and trained at the Ohio Mechanics' Institute, the University of Michigan, and M.I.T. (graduated 1911); then was associated with (Stephen R.H.) Codman & (famed M.I.T. Professor of Design Constant Desire) Despradelle, of Boston; and then returned to Cincinnati to work with Garber & Woodward, both of whom (Frederick W. Garber & Clifford B. Woodward) had also attended M.I.T. under Despradelle. In 1908 Kruckemeyer participated in a Class B Order Problem of the Beaux Arts Society of New York, listed as with the Atelier (A. Lincoln) Fechheimer (of Cincinnati). From 1914 until ca. 1919 he travelled in Europe with Charles R. Strong (also M.I.T., 1911), with whom Kruckemeyer then formed a partnership that lasted until 1960. Louis Skidmore of the outstanding firm of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM), which designed the significant Terrace Plaza Hotel in Cincinnati (1945-48) and other important later downtown buildings, had connections to Strong and worked for his firm ca. 1920.

Kruckemeyer & Strong designed a wide range of buildings, including the eponymous Group on Maple Street in Mariemont (1924-29); several on the University of Cincinnati campus and for the Cincinnati Zoo (1949-51); the Wyoming Civic Center; the General Protestant Orphan Home; the Chillicothe, O., Hospital; and worked at the former Longview State Hospital, Carthage (originally designed by Isaiah Rogers, with many later additions). They were responsible for extensive alterations to Music Hall and its wings in the late 1920s. Among commercial and institutional works were facilities for the Bardes Corporation (1956; Mrs. Louise Kruckemeyer, probably the architect's mother, was a Bardes, and lived at 230 Hosea Ave in 1908), Cook Well Strainer Co., Williamson Heater Co., and the Sattler (Hospital) Building (1927), E. McMillan NEC May St., Walnut Hills, and several public schools and additions. Although few of these may have been of outstanding quality, some designs such as the early structures at Lunken Airport have a handsome Stripped Classical and/or Moderne character, and they generally suit their contexts and period effectively.

Charles R. (Raymond) ("Chuck") Strong (Cincinnati, 1890-1968), son of a wholesale lumber dealer, was educated in Cincinnati and M.I.T. (graduated 1911); then associated with an architect in Boston, before travelling and studying in Europe (France, Ireland, Scotland, England, and Belgium) in 1914 with his M.I.T. classmate

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Edward H. Kruckemeyer; they returned to Cincinnati by 1919 (Strong having served in World War I, constructing air-force hangars in England), and practiced together until ca. 1960. Strong's experience in England (a surviving sketchbook emphasizes model planned communities in Britain) no doubt led to the firm's involvement with the K&S Group on Maple St., Mariemont (1924-29); and their Depression-era public-housing projects for the Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority including English Woods, Winton Terrace, and Millvale South. Strong's wartime job trip may also have affected their design of the early phases of Lunken(heimer) Airport in eastern Cincinnati (1927-30). According to the late George Roth, Strong employed Louis Skidmore (of SOM), who had been teaching manual training at the Ohio Mechanics' Institute, as a draftsman, then encouraged him to attend the University of Cincinnati School of Applied Arts and M.I.T., thus starting Skidmore's important career as an architect.

Tweddell & Wheeler

Richard H. Wheeler, president of the Cincinnati Chapter of the A.I.A., 1960-61, and his partner Richard Tweddell, met at Harvard University; both taught at UC/DAAP, Tweddell also at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. Their firm designed the ingenious, structurally exhibitionistic dining room and the sublimely simple yet evocative Oratory--like a purified barn with a silo as tower and a brilliantly lit Zen/Shaker interior--for the (Roman Catholic) women's retreat community at Grailville, Loveland, Clermont Co., O. (completed 1962).

Frank Lloyd Wright and His Taliesin Fellows/Associates

Frank Lloyd Wright (Richland Center, Wisc., 1867-1959) is too well known to need a biography here, but his and his Taliesin Associate' local work is worth focusing on. A Frank Lloyd [sic] "of Chicago" was to give a lecture on architecture as a fine art at the Emery Parish House of Christ Church Episcopal ca. 1910, as mentioned in the Cincinnati-based weekly periodical, *The Western Architect & Builder*. Only the recently restored Burton J. Westcott House in Springfield, Ohio (1904-1909; shown in a superb bird's-eye view in the 1911 Wasmuth edition of Wright's early work), represents Wright's early Prairie Style in Ohio, although there were numerous built and unbuilt commissions in the state after World War II.

Wright's known work in the Cincinnati area consists of three post-World War II residences, all designed and built in the last decade of "The Master's" long life with
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his Taliesin Associates. The first was the Boulter House included on this tour. The Gerald Tonkens house, Knight and Section Roads, Amberley Village (1954-57), is recognized as one of the best examples of the "Usonian Automatic" or concrete (here cinder) block version of the type Wright developed for the middle classes before and after World War II. The third late Wright residence in the Cincinnati area, the larger William Boswell House in Indian Hill (1959), is one of his least known and is said to have been altered in execution.

Abrom ("Abe") Dombar (born 1912), who was the first supervising architect for Wright's famed "Fallingwater," and his brother Benjamin ("Ben") Dombar (1916-2006) were among the earliest Taliesin Fellows at the Wrights' Taliesin compound in Spring Green, Wisconsin, during the mid-1930s. The Dombars practiced in Cincinnati, including several houses in Clifton, throughout their extremely long careers, and were very prolific. Ben supervised the construction of the Boulter House, and Abrom, the Tonkens House (with F.L.L. Wright's grandson Eric Wright). For further information on Wright and his associates in the Cincinnati area, as well as many other Modern buildings in Clifton, see Langsam, *Great Houses of the Queen City* (1997), and Greinacher, Meyer, Rissover, Snadon, and Warminski, *50 from the 50s: Modern Architecture and Interiors in Cincinnati* (Cincinnati, 2008).

THE TOUR HOUSES

I. “Stonehedge,” The Harry C. Hulbert House

By Buddemeyer, Plympton & Trowbridge

333 Lafayette Avenue

Owned by Dr. Sam T. and Rita Robertson

The Owners. This unique, eccentric yet monumental mansion was built in 1885-86 for Harries (usually called “Harry”) C. Hulbert (1853-1906), a son of William P. Hulbert, Sr. (1817-85), a distinguished entrepreneur and real-estate developer who contributed much to the architectural character of the city. The family home was “Greenhills,” the former Robert Buchanan Villa on Lafayette Circle. Harry C. Hulbert was an elder brother of Matilda Hulbert, who married first Peter Rawson Taft and later Frank Perin of “Bishop’s Place,” so brother and sister also lived near each other. Harry’s wife Elizabeth (“Bessie”) Johnston was a daughter of Judge Robert A. Johnston. It appears that their home on Lafayette Avenue was commissioned on the death of his father, shortly before their son, William P. Hulbert, Jr [II], was born, during the year it was completed. H.C. Hulbert seems mainly to have devoted himself to handling the family businesses and estate, but developed a number of commercial structures and enterprises in his own right, gaining recognition “as one of the reliable and progressive men of the city.”

In the 1930s the house was occupied by Joseph G. Roessler, vice-president and secretary of Roessler Brothers, Inc., printers, publishers, and book-binders. After World War II it was the home of Carl E. Huenefeld of The Huenefeld Company, inventive manufacturers of heating devices and other household appliances; several generations of his family “collected” great houses, including “Scarlet Oaks” and “Bishop’s Place,” also on Lafayette Avenue, both of which they later donated to the Bethesda Retirement community. “Stonehedge” then belonged to a merged family said to have amounted to a total of 16 children! Although alterations were made to accommodate them, particularly in the “pad”-like basement and adjoining patio, the essential fabric remained intact and has been gradually restored by the current owners under the aegis of preservationist Ken Hughes.

The Architecture. The architectural firm of Buddemeyer, Plympton & Trowbridge was so proud of this Hulbert residence that they used a vivid drawing of it by Trowbridge in an advertisement shortly after its completion. In a bold variant of the Shingle Style inspired by the 1876 celebrations for the

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Centennial of the Declaration of Independence, it was no doubt intended to evoke 17th-century New England colonial houses and their English Tudor forebears. The first floor was described by the architects as employing “erratic boulders,” anchoring the great mass to the ground. Above rise two overhanging stories of gridded structural half-timbering under the dominant gable; the visible grid allows remarkable freedom in the asymmetrical placement of windows, particularly at the corners.

Although illustrated in an advertisement for the firm designated “Buddemeyer & Trowbridge,” the Hulbert House was probably designed by Lucian (or Lucien) F. Plympton and originally delineated by his talented but short-lived associate James S. Trowbridge. In 1887 Edwin Buddemeyer joined Plympton, one of Cincinnati’s most creative late 19th-century aesthetic architects, who is best known for designing the innovative Fisher “Swiss Chalet” on Upland Place in East Walnut Hills. The structural use of half-timbering—rather than as merely superficial exterior decoration (like most “Stock-Broker’s Tudor” of the early 20th century, not to mention the plastic veneer of recent “McMansions”), as well as the use of a geometric grid in both elevations and plans, makes the firm’s works early exemplars of the Arts & Crafts Movement, even predating Frank Lloyd Wright’s similar concerns for authenticity and order. The details throughout were certainly designed by the architects and hand-crafted to avoid a mass-produced look. For instance, the delicate leaded glass of the windows is different in almost every room on both floors; it consists of geometric patterns, a feature of the Tudor and Jacobean periods.

The interior is approached through a cave-like low arched vestibule that suggests the influence of the great American architect H.H. Richardson, whose firm in Brookline, Mass., won the competition for the Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce Building the same year the Hulbert House was begun. Typically for the period, particularly the Shingle Style developed by Richardson in New England resorts such as Newport, R.I., during the 1870s, the entrance or “Great Hall” is the dominant room of the interior, integrating both the main staircase and a quaint “inglenook” for the fireplace—the former wrapping picturesquely around the latter in proto-Art Nouveau curves like those in the architect Plympton’s “Swiss Chalet” on Upland Place. The landing both curves out over the fireplace, allowing a hostess to greet her guests from on high, and displays three windows set high and deep (actually into a shallow projection on the exterior) with steps below the actual windows and a superb bit of chivalric painted glass in the middle opening.

The Hall is wider than deep, extending to the left from the entrance, just as the secondary elements seem to shift from the grid on the exterior. The Reception Room, or formal parlor, opens into it on the right, and the equally large Dining Room is ahead to the left. All three rooms consisted of main rectangular spaces with additional alcoves at one end: the stair and inglenook in the Hall; the main rectangular space of the Reception Room is divided from an alcove by a generous segmental arch that echoes at a larger scale the arched front window; and the farther end of the Dining Room (now all one space), which must originally have been partially separated the dining space from the service area by another arch, as can be detected by close scrutiny of the ceiling moldings, floor-board pattern, and the placement of a pair of secondary windows.

Left of the Hall fireplace (which has a later Rookwood-style mantel with a raised hearth) is an angled, arched door that matches the closet door on the other side. The former leads to the original Smoking Room, which had a wide bay-window that projected into the porch on the east side of the house before the porch itself was incorporated into the enlarged space now containing a billiard table. (See an 1886 perspective of the Hulbert House from the leading American professional architectural periodical, *The American Architect and Building News*, now hung over the Smoking Room fireplace). Another “Inglenook” backs up to the one in the Hall, with low, wide arches on brick piers, the mandatory built-in seating, and even notches along the high mantel shelf for pipes to be hung and displayed! This Smoking Room must have been the man’s domain, as the elegant Reception Room was the lady’s, with the joint Hall and Dining Room between. Raised plaster floral moldings, now gilt, frame the ceiling and wall-panels in the Reception Room, which has interesting colors chosen after analysis of the original scheme by Ken Hughes, who helped with recent restoration of the interiors.

The Upstairs Hall, like that below, was obviously intended as a family sitting room. The Master Suite across the front of the house (and projecting slightly forward above the stone first story) was at least two rooms originally, but the owners have combined them with a pair of arches reducing the apparent length and built-in cupboards on two sides.

An original Coachhouse and Stable at the rear of the property is big enough to have stored the Huenefelds’ 16 automobiles! Attached to the Kitchen is a large, barn-like but attractive frame addition that serves as a Party Room. Beside it a series of small pools winds down past a bridge and rock-gardens to a

basement-level patio that features a built-in barbecue pit and other amenities for family living and entertainment.

To Note: The refined Dining Room mantel is faced with precious hand-painted blue-and-white Dutch “Delft” tiles. A wallpaper mural at the top of the stairs leading to the former basement “pad” (recently renovated in a more restrained manner) displays a delightful “retro” scene by local artist Connie Coleman. Along with two backlit panels of stained glass from the owner’s previous residence, striking historic posters dominate the interior walls. These include a World War I poster in the Reception Room, and a culinary advertisement for “Rita” in the upstairs Hall, opposite a fascinating Soviet propaganda lithograph for Stalin’s first “Five Year Plan.”

II. Albert Diem-George M. Berger House

218 Hosea Avenue

Owned by Chris and Jen Frutkin

The Owners. Although built in 1895-97 for Albert Diem of the Diem & Wing Paper until recently located in Cincinnati and elsewhere, this elegant early Colonial Revival residence has been owned for almost a century by the present owner's family. George M. Berger (1871-1953), president of The John Berger & Son Co., who produced leaf tobacco for cigars, and his wife Petronella ("Nellie") Trefzger Berger, who moved here from 250 Hosea, bought the property in 1911. To accommodate their six children and two servants, they had the house enlarged to the designs of *John F. Sheblessy*, who had been a later partner of the original architect, *S.E. Des Jardins*; Sheblessy was also related to the Bergers by marriage. The house had various uses and was sub-divided into apartments for Dr. Alfred J. Berger in 1973, according to a plan by Walter F. Sheblessy, a son of John F. Sheblessy. Chris Frutkin, a descendant of George M. Berger, and his wife Chris Sizer Frutkin, acquired the property a decade ago and have returned it to single-family status, restoring many features and modernizing where necessary. The Frutkins are known for their sensitivity in developing historic buildings in Over-the-Rhine and elsewhere. They have retained and will display for this tour architectural drawings for both phases of construction and other Berger-family commissions.

The Architecture. Although in a definitely Late Victorian style, the Diem House had forward-looking features, particularly in the monochromatic dark-red brick surface and subtle terracotta ornament. The basic cubic block is emphasized by the hipped roof leading to a so-called widows' walk (once crowned by a slender balustrade, like the front-porch roof), and is crowned by matching chimneys. The façade is a formal, symmetrical composition, with elaborate but delicately scaled Neo-Classical ornament that encrusts the surface, evoking the refined Early Republican period after the American Revolution. Such detail includes the "switch-line" tracery of the second-story front sash windows, and low-relief panels marked on the original drawings as intended to be made of "Papier Mache" (a composition of pressed, dampened paper, although here plaster was actually used, according to the owner); these appear in the attic's arched gable and the narrow horizontal frieze at the top of the second story, which is "supported" by shallow Ionic pilasters, all within the central feature of the façade. The wide sweep of the curved front porch with slender Ionic columns is echoed in the Federal-style transom of the main entrance and the gable of the dormer aligned above; it reappears in the generous Dining-Room bay on the right side (to which a second story was added seamlessly in 1911) and the projecting Bathroom oriel on the left side.

The main entrance of the Diem House is flanked by a glittering bevelled-glass window on one side and a curvaceous terracotta panel on the other. One enters, without a vestibule, directly into the Entrance Hall, which has a full-width opening from the central corridor into the Living Room (perhaps originally designated as the male domain) on the right; wide double pocket-doors lead to the ladies' Reception Room with its original white-enamelled woodwork, on the left, used by the Bergers then as now as a music room. The main Staircase occupies the somewhat wider rear of the entrance hall, with the Dining Room to its right. The latter has a graceful full-width bowed end. A high "plate-rail" above the panelled wainscot wraps around the room. Another rather unusual mantel has bulbous pilasters supporting the curved shelf. Most of the woodwork is expensive quarter-sawn "golden oak," with concentric, "carpet-laid" oak floors. The main staircase has a rather fantastic newel post and is lit by a spectacular "Art Glass" window centered on vivid red roses, in a "Palladian" arrangement of an arched opening flanked by smaller rectangular panels. Throughout the formal front area of the house there is much use of superb bevelled and leaded glass.

To the left of the main stairhall is part of the generous service wing, which was farther extended into the west ell in 1911, when a matching east ell was added by the Bergers. Originally, the view from the main entrance led only to the main staircase, but since 1911 it has been opened into a long corridor that leads directly to the enlarged Kitchen and added Family Room. The stairhall and corridor have original and replaced wainscot panels of Lincrusta-Walton or Anaglypta, a low-relief "composition" equivalent of wallpaper—perhaps intended to evoke tooled leather—that was popular in the early 20th-century for use in high-traffic areas, as here; this pattern has an unusual, pristine design of Adamesque motives set within an adjustable grid.

Across the back of the first floor is the suite of family-oriented rooms added for the Bergers in 1911, and still used for that purpose. The Kitchen was splendidly up-dated in 2006 with a black honed-granite island and counters, appliances of restaurant quality and size, and a replacement cast-iron sink, although the typical tongue-in-groove wainscot is mostly original. Beyond a Breakfast Room with a shallow bay-window is the Playroom. This has the somewhat incongruous combination of a magnificent Rookwood Pottery green-tile mantel with low-relief oak leaves (very similar to the Dining-Room mantel in the Dieterle House next door).

The most unexpected part of the 1911 renovation, however, is in the Basement

below the back wing. The original Backstairs lead down to a new Billiard Room or “Rathskeller” with a handsome hooded mantel; in an alcove are representations of tobacco plants representing the Berger family’s former occupation. Its terrazzo wainscot and floors continue into the Indoor Swimming-Pool, which was installed before World War I: an exceptionally early example of a still-rare amenity. One climbs over a low parapet and down into the waters tinted by sea-green-and-blue tile that wraps around the rippling water and into the beautiful curved bay below the one in the Dining Room. This all makes an effective contrast to the brand-new exercise and steam rooms glimpsed through an interior window: modern amenities almost a century apart!

The owner recalls that his great-grandfather did not require a garage because the family automobiles were kept at the Bergers’ Meador Garage Co. (designed by Walter F. Sheblessy that still stands at Clifton and Dixmyth Avenues a few blocks away, so the chauffeur simply fetched them when needed!

III. The Edward C. Wettengel House

209 Hosea Avenue, southwest corner of Brookline Avenue

Owned by Mark W. Smith and Chris Ohmer

The Owners. This buff-brick house, approached through double stairs curving up from Hosea Avenue, was designed by *Des Jardins & Hayward* in 1905 and built in 1907 for Edward C. Wettengel, proprietor of “The Gem Gift Shop,” and his wife Louise Bieler; they had one child, Karl E. Wettengel, who became an attorney and married Florence Kleybolte, of another highly successful German-American family. The widowed Mrs. Wettengel continued to live there until her death in 1965. Some functional modernization was done for a previous owner, but the current owners and occupants have done much research and have made every effort to restore the remarkably intact main rooms to their original forms as far as possible. A three- (now two-)car street-level garage was designed by *Kruckemeyer & Strong* in 1919 and built in 1925; designs to install an elaborate library in the eastern porch never materialized. The owners will display several of the original blueprints for this tour.

The Architecture. The lot at the corner of Hosea and Brookline is long and narrow, and rises steeply from Hosea, so the house has the form of a long rectangle parallel to the lot, with an almost, but not quite symmetrical facade. Stylistically, the house is transitional from the Late Victorian Era to the new beginnings developing in the first decade of the 20th century. The exterior design combines early 20th-century “modern” wide proportions, projecting eaves, pale monochromatic surfaces, and little ornament except for the entrance feature and the Tuscan columns of the side porch, with somewhat more traditional interior layouts and decorations. Dramatic curved stairs arrive at the front door, which was originally sheltered by an iron and glass marquee (see the ca. 1915 photograph of the house displayed on the landing of the main stairs, and compare its former marquee with the similar feature still on the west side entrance of 210 Hosea opposite).

The paneled vestibule proclaims the first owners’ German-American allegiance by the motto “Unser Ruhe” (Our Rest or Refuge) inset in the mosaic-tile floor. A wide central hall--with elegant raised plaster garlands and floral cartouches edging the ceiling--belies the apparent shallowness of the layout, with two wide openings to the living room on the left, which was originally conceived as two separate rooms, a “Parlor” and a “Library,” but was realized as a single large space with built-in bookshelves flanking the handsome fireplace at the far end. French doors to the large porch and small windows flanking the mantel have nautical insets. The Dining Room to the right of the Hall extends into a bay-window overlooking Hosea, opposite a recessed arch for the exquisite built-in sideboard and glass-fronted

display cases, which were perhaps intended to exhibit some of the Gem Shop's "Fancy Goods and Bric-a-Brac." A fanciful painting of a Bavarian or Rhine River Valley castle is set within the arch, and original tapestry fabric covers the walls above the high paneled wainscot and china-rail. The dainty silvered Sheraton-style chandelier and wall-sconces appear to be original.

A convenient Butler's Pantry extends from the west wall of the main block to connect the Dining Room with the Kitchen, which has been modernized and fitted with polished quartz counters, lights under the cabinets, restaurant-quality appliances, and mosaic-tile floors. A collection of appropriate vintage china is not only on display, but used. Note the view through neighboring front porches from the double sink angled under corner windows.

Above the landing of the paneled staircase (over a lavatory with original fixtures) is a spectacular Late Victorian stained-glass window, with full-size figures of two intertwined young women painted on thicker glass. The decorative plaster-work continues in the ample second-floor landing. The bathroom over the entrance vestibule is mostly original, with stylish patterned windows, a mosaic-tile floor, a marble shower enclosure with horizontal "full-body spray," and original fixtures. "Her" bedroom to the right has a delicate oval wreath on the ceiling and curvaceous panels on the walls. "His" bedroom to the left has a restrained Georgian cornice and leads to the original "Nursery" adjacent.

To note: A collection of 19th- and early 20th-century portraits, including three by Cincinnati artist John E. Weis over the living-room sofa, as well as a tall painting of "The Virgin Mary as Queen of Heaven" from a Roman Catholic church in the Hall. The owners retain original drawings for the house, as well as a proposal for an elaborate Library intended to fill in the east porch, and blueprints for the triple (now double) garage built to the west, designed by Kruckemeyer & Strong. The Wettengel House was featured in a vividly illustrated article by Sue Goldberg in *Cincinnati Magazine's* "Home and Garden Section" (May 2008).

IV. The George F. Dieterle House

210 Hosea Avenue, northwest corner of Brookline Avenue

Owned by Harry Budke and Jim Goetz

The Owners. This large Early Modern residence, built in 1906, is the most architecturally progressive of the three at Hosea and Brookline Avenues. It was built for leading distiller George F. (Frank) Dieterle (1858-1947), an equally progressive and civic-minded citizen of Cincinnati with international business interests. He began with the old-established Union Distilling Co. and, after Prohibition, moved into the manufacture of industrial alcohol, just as his son, George A. (Andreas) Dieterle (1883-1968), who lived at 119 Hosea Ave, shifted to life insurance. His daughter and a later owner of the house is Louise D. Nippert, one of Cincinnati's most knowledgeable and generous patrons of the arts, particularly music, and founder with her late husband Louis Nippert, long owner of the "Reds" baseball team, of the Greenacres Foundation in Indian Hill. Philip Ruder, Concert Master of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, and his wife Ruth somewhat modernized the interiors, which have been restored by the present owners. Like 209 Hosea opposite, the few owners and continuing use as a single-family home have kept the interiors of this handsome residence remarkably intact.

The Architecture. Although the architect is not documented, it seems likely that the architects of this house were *Des Jardins & Hayward*, like its neighbors at 209, 218, and 222 Hosea, and probably others nearby. (Although the matching Garage, built in 1910, was designed by *Hall & Burroughs*, these partners had not yet arrived in Cincinnati from Chicago by 1906.) The design of the Dieterle House represents the early 20th-century reaction to the extravagances of late Victorian architecture, while retaining some elements of architectural eclecticism and individuality. The unusual exterior brick, of several tawny earth-tones laid in a rare "garden-bond pattern" (also used on 230 Hosea nearby), enlivens the basic rectangular form and mitigates the formality of some details. In many ways the house seems "modern," with its broad, generous proportions (including few but large windows), open, spacious interiors, and discreetly Arts and Crafts aspects. On the other hand, there are Neo-Classical details both on the exterior with its Tuscan columns on the generous, off-center front porch, and Georgian Revival keystones, and also in the suggestions of American Colonial and Jacobean Revival elements inside. Geometric Wrightian stained-glass panels in cabinet doors and even in pocket doors; gorgeous, almost *Art nouveau* Rookwood "Architectural Faience" fireplace surrounds; and *Craftsman*-style light fixtures are more "advanced" accessories, while understated carved wood mantels, finely-adjusted moldings, and curious variations of Classical triglyphs evoke traditional styles.

The central Hall is wide rather than long, as at the Hulbert House, with the fine Jacobean-inspired staircase rising within a smaller compartment at the rear, as in the Diem House next door. The ample Living Room (no longer a formal “Parlor”) that expands into a wide front bay-window also has an understated Jacobean (early 17th-century English) plaster ceiling-pattern. Octagonal lanterns in the halls and main landing have superbly austere Arts & Crafts styling, and the Dining-Room chandelier has simple but precious Steuben glass that complements the lovely, rather *Art nouveau* frieze of wooded scenes that was hand-painted on canvas above the high paneled wainscot and glass-fronted cabinets flanking the mantel. The deep stair-landing that leads to the second-floor with its generous upper Hall and Bedrooms, has even been used recently as a “minstrel gallery” for a family wedding.

The original large Pantry and Kitchen, as well as an added sun-porch, have been thrown together to form a contemporary “Great Room” combining the Kitchen and informal Living Room. A new deck overlooks the extensive, beautifully designed and maintained landscaped grounds that slope down at the rear along Brookline. A “secret garden” is ingeniously fitted within the foundations of a former greenhouse.

To Note: The owners have assembled a remarkable collection of Rookwood Pottery to complement the tile mantel surrounds, especially the bold green tile with a raised pattern of slightly tinted vine-leaves in the Dining Room (similar to one in the 1911 addition to 218 Hosea next door). A wide variety of Rookwood periods, designers and artists, shapes—including a rare ceramic crematory casket in a bedroom—and finishes is represented. Golden oak furniture is preferred throughout, to match the recently refinished woodwork. The backgrounds and furnishings have been kept restrained to focus on the Arts & Crafts treasures, although dainty striped wallpaper emphasizes the molded panels in one bedroom. A tiny niche for a telephone is set conveniently off the Hall in the broad backstairs corridor that leads to the side entrance, with its bronze-and-glass marquee suspended from lions’ heads above.

V. The George R. Plogstedt House

3619 Middleton Avenue

Owned by Karen and Zachary Kafoglis

The Owners. This substantial but rather plain residence, built in 1908-1910, is one of a group of early 20th-century dwellings along this block that were developed on what had for long been suburban estates with only occasional larger late Victorian mansions interspersed. It was built for George R. Plogstedt, a teller with the Citizens' National Bank, and other members of his family; by 1931 George's widow Hannah was living at 3661 Middleton. (It is possible that the Plogstedts were related to the Werks of "Wiladel" in Westwood, designed a decade earlier by the same architectural firm; see below.) Dr. Emil M. Strasser, a physician at The Groton Building at 7th NEC Race, occupied 3619 Middleton Avenue in the 1920s and '30s. By 1939 it was owned by Howard Ellerhorst, and then changed hands several times. Recent owners had made a number of changes, some of them--such as having the Living-Room walls stripped down to the brick and the front room combined directly with the Dining Room behind it--have been reversed by the present owners. They acquired the property less than a year ago, but have accomplished a great deal since then, creating an overall harmony of decorative approach, especially through mostly warm, organic colors and textures.

The Architecture. The Plogstedt House is an example of what is often known as an "American Four-Square": an earth-toned cubic brick block, usually with a large forward-facing gable, that is in effect an upright two-story version of an Arts & Crafts Bungalow. A Bungalow, by contrast, usually has a long, low-slung roof that descends over a wide porch, with the gables at either end. In both types, deep eaves with emphasized brackets, as well as the lack of historically-inspired European ornament, suggest inspiration from Frank Lloyd Wright's early "Prairie Style" work in the Chicago area, often with California and Japanese influences. Many of these Four-Squares appeared, as here, as contrasting infill houses among later Victorian dwellings, with their vertical emphasis, complex massing, and abundance of quaint details. In some ways, the Plogstedt House carries on the Arts & Crafts approach of the Dieterle and Wettengel residences on Hosea Avenue.

What is unusual about the Plogstedt House, however, is that the architectural firm responsible for the design has been identified. A reference in the Cincinnati-based *Western Architect & Builder* (edited during the first decade of the 20th century by Samuel Hannaford) indicates that the architect was William W. Franklin. The rather "modern" design may reflect the influence of his son J. Ward Franklin, who became a partner in 1907.

Typical of American Four-Squares, the Plogstedt House is basically a two-story cube, with four approximately square rooms on each floor, unlike some other larger examples that do retain the conventional central hall. The wide glass-panelled front door leads directly into the Hall, which includes the staircase (and sometimes also a fireplace, like that at the Hulbert House). Except for the enclosed kitchen and service area, the “public” rooms usually open into each other through wide pocket-doors recessed into the walls or through wider arches flanked by low built-in book-cases. Occasional room-width bay-windows break up the monotony of flat walls, allow more light to enter (particularly when houses are closely spaced), enlarging and varying the shape of individual rooms, and providing a sense that same-size rooms extend in different directions. Four-Squares usually have plain woodwork and moldings that sometimes suggest a period like the Colonial or Tudor Revivals, with an occasional hint of the Far East.

Here, the Hall is distinguished by a graceful, if somewhat old-fashioned, staircase with a handsome rippled-glass window on the landing, as well as a small-scale round-arched opening into the service area that suggests the American Federal style. The hearty Living-Room mantel is faced in earth-toned square tiles (possibly made by Rookwood or a related local tile manufactory such as Cambridge-Wheatley), with a diminutive Tudor-style frame around the hearth (the shelf appears to have been replaced). The present very appropriate square arch with piers on pedestals that extend from the walls between the Living and Dining Rooms was installed for the present owners by Chris Cain.

To Note: The previous owners had modernized the Kitchen and other functional features, but their major contribution is the large, attractive porch complex at the back of the first floor that extends the usable space of the Dining Room and Kitchen in good weather (it includes a hot tub at one end). A “Franklin” or “general-store” stove in a curved brick corner adds to the appeal of the Basement, which now contains the informal living spaces of the house. Also of interest is the wide triple garage at the back of this and the adjoining property, made possible and economically advantageous by being treated as condominiums by the adjacent property-owners, who were spared setback clearance requirements.

VI. H. Eldridge Hannaford House

437 Rawson Woods Lane

Owned by Ben and Chris Pantoja

The Owners. This home was designed and built in 1925-26 by a grandson of famed Cincinnati architect Samuel Hannaford for himself and his family. In 1921 *H.E. Hannaford* (1892-1975) married Louise Ratterman (1899-1976); they had a daughter, Anna. Louise Ratterman (the name seems to have been spelled both with and without the second “n”) was a daughter of Charles B. Ratterman, a carpet-merchant; *his* father John H. Ratterman was a prosperous businessman who came to Cincinnati from Germany in 1844, several years before the European revolutionary year of 1848 that brought so many German intelligentsia to Cincinnati and other American cities. (The better known Heinrich A. Rattermann [1832-1923] arrived in Cincinnati two years later, in 1846, and became one of the leading German-American spokesmen both locally and nationally.) Both Mrs. Hannaford’s Ratterman family and her maternal forebears, the Bodemers, occupied a number of residences on Hosea, Brookline, and Wentworth (formerly Marion) Avenues in the eastern part of Clifton near the three Hosea houses on this tour. Dr. Joseph A. Levinson, a well-known physician and pediatric dermatologist, and his family acquired the property in 1959 from the Hannafords and made some changes to up-date the interior. The present--and only third--owners bought it from him in 2001 and have been concerned to maintain and enhance its original character. This process has been eased because the original detailed specifications for the house have remained with the owners, and supply much interesting information about the high standards of construction, materials, and appliances required.

The Architecture. Both this Hannaford residence and the neighboring home at 421 Rawson Woods Lane that H.E. Hannaford designed for Clarence W. Stephens and his wife Emily Bodemer Stephens, a cousin of Mrs. Hannaford, belongs to a group of 20th-century Traditional houses that might be termed “Cotswold Cottages.” They are associated with the quaint village dwellings of the Cotswold region in south central England, and form a sub-type of the broader Tudor Revival (sometimes pejoratively termed “Stockbroker’s Tudor”) and the associated Normandy Manor Revival—recreations of English and French late Medieval styles, respectively. These designs have picturesque, irregular compositions with prominent but broken roof-scapes, low openings, strip windows, and extended eaves. They often employ a variety of materials treated to suggest a hand-crafted quality, both inside and out, including textured wall-surfaces, variegated slate or tile roofs, “hand-wrought” accessories, colored and rippled small-paned glass in casements. These features evoke the late 19th-century English reform movement spearheaded by William

Morris and his colleagues. Yet these Traditional or “period” houses usually employ up-to-date functional technology and have fairly open plans that align them to some extent with the more “modern” Arts & Crafts and even Prairie schools before and after World War I. In this, they are the more conventional counterparts of the Bungalow. The latter also have dominant roofs, but they tend to slope forward, emphasizing the horizontal lines and unified overall impression. In some respects, early 20th-century “Cottages” relate back to the late Victorian Tudor Revival represented on this tour by the Hulbert House on Lafayette Avenue.

“Cotswold” and related “Cottages” are often far larger than they seem at first glance, as their roofs slope so far toward the ground and the full extent of their facades is almost invariably broken by a series of vertical elements: porches, vestibules, chimneys, bay-windows, gables, and dormers, all facing forward, although the main masses may be expressed at second glance by the large slate roofs that often pull the whole composition together.

In the H.E. Hannaford House, a modest Vestibule with an original built-in radiator and tile floor leads through a pointed arch into the Living Room, which suggests a Medieval “Great Hall” with its beamed red-oak ceiling, textured plaster walls, built-in bookcases at the far end, and ample Tudor Revival fireplace of “genuine Travertine Limestone” accompanied by heraldic wrought-iron andirons and a fire-screen. Here as elsewhere the casement windows appear aged, with hand-wrought hardware and inset heraldic panels of amber glass. Beyond the Living Room is an original stone-piered porch with a slate floor that was filled in for Dr. Levinson by the noted Cincinnati Modernist architect Carl Strauss. It opens to a patio with fountain.

The Dining Room to the right is linked to the living room by a wide opening and features a fine wrought-iron radiator-cover in an ivy pattern below a wide strip-window. The Kitchen was enlarged and modernized for Dr. Levinson in 1997, but retains the original rectangular-leaded casement windows and moldings. A diagonal island combines a breakfast-table with a convenient raised oven. Polished granite counters, maple cabinets, and an earth-toned tile floor are complemented by blue-and-white china, including a matching bowl for the dogs!

Across the back of these rooms of the large front rooms that combined social family life are the family bedrooms along a lateral corridor. They consist of a generous Master Bedroom with a Dressing Room and a couple of other rooms, one now a Study. Accessed by means of a staircase in a narrow parallel corridor that connects the downstairs bedrooms with the Kitchen is the surprisingly spacious second floor,

nestled under the sloping main roofs. What were probably originally servants' quarters were converted by Dr. Levinson for his three boys (whose names are still on the doors). Now two rooms are delightfully and ingeniously decorated to evoke the owner's boys' interests: football for Kenzie and geography for Spencer. A TV rumpus room and a "secret" clubroom are squeezed inbetween.

In the spacious basement are such ingenious original conveniences as a "Snow White Cabinet Clothes Dryer" made by the Williamson Co., Cincinnati; a built-in refrigerator; and a "Health Guardian Incinerator." A modern gymnasium and other exercise facilities open out onto a lower terrace at the rear, perched above a stone retaining wall. A raised deck has recently been added at the rear of the house at the first-floor level, off the Kitchen. The back yard slopes steeply down to the wide ravine occupied by the Rawson Nature Preserve, one of Clifton's least-known amenities, which was set aside in 1925-26, when Rawson Woods Lane and Circle were laid out and the Hannaford House was built.

VII. The H. Blaine Goyert, Jr., House

3773 Middleton Avenue

Owned by Don and Chris Morsch

The Owners. This attractive ca. 1949 American Colonial Revival House is typical of many built after World War II, as an alternative to the various Tudor and Normandy styles leftover from before the War, as well as a few Mid-Century Modern residences. It is often hard to believe how small most new houses were during both the Depression of the 1930s and the post-war decade, when the economy was only slowly reviving with the beginning the Baby Boom, materials were scarce, and returning veterans had priority for loans. This property benefited then and now from a very desirable location, with varied topography and high-class neighbors, yet originally there were only six rooms, most of them tiny by today's standards. As a result, the current and previous owners have had to expand the house and landscaping around it, to create an up-to-date, livable, and appealing home.

Like a great deal of land from Clifton Avenue westward beyond Middleton Avenue, including the Nature Sanctuary, this property belonged in the late 19th and 20th centuries to the wealthy, prominent Rawson family; in fact, Frances H. Rawson and others sold it in 1948 to the builders of the house, H. Blaine and Madelaine [sic] Goyert, Jr. He was a commercial artist who no doubt fitted in with the other architects and artists, as well as academics, in the vicinity. The house changed hands several times until 1986, when it was acquired by Michael and Jane Donnelly. They converted the original garage into a Family Room off the diminutive Kitchen and added a Breakfast Room with a rather dramatic room above it. The present owners bought the property in 2004, commissioned the architect-builder Don ("Sam") Berger to present designs (some of which will be shown on the tour) and finally to enlarge and remodel the residence to its present form. This involved adding a large combination Family Room, informal Dining Room, and up-to-date Kitchen; converting the Garage back to its original purpose; and extending patios and landscaping all around the house. ("Before and after" photographs will be also displayed in the house during the tour.)

The Architecture. For more than half a century, this was known as the house with the "Mount Vernon" columns: six slender two-story square pillars across the front! But in 2004 they were removed and recently a relatively small but well-proportioned one-story porch was added, flanked by the original concrete terraces reclad with stone and defined by handsome wrought-iron fencing and brick piers. The typical postwar metal-framed windows throughout the house were replaced with "Retro" wood. Now the well-graded front lawn and curving drive provide a welcoming

approach.

In some respects the Goyert House aspired to be a distant version of the larger and more elaborate original Diem House at 218 Hosea Avenue. Both were inspired, not so much by the robust mid-18th-century Georgian or Colonial American period, as by the more refined late 18th- and early 19th-century Federal or Early Republican period. A visitor enters the Goyert House through a doorway crowned by a Federal-style transom that leads directly into the Hall, which is dominated by a graceful spiral staircase. The Living Room on the left, with its understated Colonial Revival mantel and new marble facing, leads to the spacious, light-filled addition. The Family Room is focused on a similar mantel arched to correspond to that over the stove in the Kitchen at the opposite end, as well as a media center disguised as a French Provincial “armoire.” The Kitchen has a similar flavor, with paneled cabinets, a central island and breakfast counter, and gorgeous black-and-pink “Venetian” polished granite counters under French Provincial-inspired cabinets. In the center of this large space an informal Dining Room, surrounded by glass, looks out onto the landscaped patio that extends to stone walls constructed by the previous owner. Other new patios are at either end of the house. On the second floor are several bedrooms, including one added over the Breakfast Room by the Donnellys, which has a cathedral ceiling and grand Palladian window.

To Note: The curved back of the spiral staircase has been ingeniously incorporated into the downstairs Lavatory and Backstairs. An artist decorated the Dining-Room ceiling), marbelized the Lavatory wall, and painted the walls of the back sun-porch with names of European cities the owners visited while he was stationed in Germany for several years. Works of art include a number of views of German cities and churches they grew familiar with, as well as interesting larger pieces of furniture. In the Family Room is an unexpectedly charming print of Santa Claus—with a beard sprinkled with diamond dust!--from Andy Warhol’s “Myth” series; another limited-edition print of Champagne glasses commemorating a German festival in 2000 is in the Dining Room, where a sparkling quartz-crystal chandelier complements a collection of cut glass.

VIII. The Drs. Cedric G. and Patricia Neils Boulter House
By Frank Lloyd Wright of Taliesin Associates, Spring Green, Wisconsin
One Rawson Woods Circle
Owned by Charles Lohre and Janet Groeber

Perched like a ship above the billows, the Boulter House rides among saplings and undergrowth on a rise that allows distant views over the houses opposite. The house was designed by *Frank Lloyd Wright and his Taliesin Associates* in 1953 and built in the mid-1950s, for two then young but active members of the University of Cincinnati's outstanding Classics Department. Appropriately, it seems to have subtle but unmistakable hints of Hellenism. It is also appropriate that this Mid-Century Modern landmark should be located on Rawson Woods Lane Circle above Rawson Woods Lane, where architects have congregated as designers, owners, and occupants since H.E. Hannaford started the trend there in the mid-1920s.

Dr. Patricia Neils Boulter had already had direct experience of working with Wright and the Taliesin fellows while her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Henry J. Neils, commissioned and built their own house on Cedar Lake in Minneapolis, Minnesota, beginning in 1949. Because of Mr. Neils' interests in architectural metals and stone, Wright produced an unusual house clad in pink scrap marble with aluminum window-framing. It is laid out on a three-and-a-half-foot rectangular grid (reduced from the intended four feet) within wings set in hexagonal relationships, like the much-publicized 1936 Hanna "Honeycomb House" in Stanford, California, built by another academic couple, except that there even the basic grid blocks are also hexagonal.

The Boulter House was designed shortly after the 1953 exhibition, "Sixty Years of Living Architecture: The Work of F.L. Wright," held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. It contains many of the features and furnishings of the popular Exhibition House by Wright erected in the Museum's garden. William Allin Storer recounts a famous story related to this commission: When the Boulters wrote asking in late 1953 if he would design them a house, the architect responded "Dear Cedric Boulter, We will. Send details," followed by extensive blank space and, at the bottom, the signature, "Frank Lloyd Wright." The result was both a local landmark and one that draws visitors from all over the United States and even the world. It is the most visible and accessible of the three Wright-designed residences in the Cincinnati area: the model Usonian Tonkens House in Amberly Village and the larger Boswell House in Indian Hill are hidden from the street and almost never open to the public, in contrast to the generous and welcoming attitude of Chuck and Janet Clifton
Clifton Town Meeting 2009 House Tour - 37 - Final Complete Text by Langsam, 9/9/2009

Lohre here in Clifton. A writer and a marketing-communication specialist who have evolved under the impetus of the house itself, they are devoted admirers of Wright and Taliesin, and have attempted to return the house and grounds to approximately their original form, while making necessary functional and environmental adjustments.

The Architecture. The Boulter House is an example of Taliesin's "Usonian" houses, which are intended to provide a feasible model for clients of modest income—in actuality, many of them academic fans of Wright—during the 1930s Depression and the post-war era. The diminutive actual size of the original house (like that of the very different but only slightly earlier Colonial Revival House nearby at 3773 Middleton Avenue) reflects post-World War II economies and the limited budgets of academics, however well-respected in their fields. Wright described the purpose of the Usonian House (he is said to have derived the name from a combination of "U.S.A." and "Utopia"): "To use our new materials--concrete, steel, and glass--and the old ones--stone and wood--in ways that were not only expedient but beautiful, was our Culture now. So many new forms of treating them were devised [i.e., by Wright] out of the working of a new principle of building, [that] I called it 'organic.' Moreover, the house itself was so proportioned that people looked well in it The [clients] and their friends looked better in it than when they were outside it."

The Boulter House was based on a four-foot module marked out in the red-tinted concrete floor, with only the ends of the south-facing terrace at parallel acute and obtuse angles, although the hexagonal theme reappears in the form of the exposed-block fireplace at the core of the house. These diagonals, however, have a dramatic effect, particularly since the house is set at an angle to the intersection of Rawson Woods Lane and Circle, a situation that is less obvious because the house is first perceived from below. The balconied second floor is hung from the ceiling: hangers extend through the bedroom closets from the exterior masonry wall along the north side. The bolts are exposed to show the method of construction. The northwest bedroom or study is cantilevered over the foundation of the building. The staircase of the entrance, with its African mahogany stair-treads, is also suspended by rods from the ceiling.

Typically for Wright, the visitor enters through a tight Entry and then, on moving into the Living Room, looks out from under a long, low Balcony through the elegantly fenestrated, two-story south wall at the surprisingly distant views. The approach encourages diagonal vistas, and the corner windows are mitered to enhance the flow between indoors and outdoors.

To one visitor shortly after the house was completed, the Boulter House conveyed a "classical" impression suited to the interests of the clients. The concrete-block foundation, in which each row is subtly set back or "battered" a tiny amount, suggests the stylobate platform of a Greek Doric temple (not to mention the Pre-Columbian American architecture that had inspired Wright ever since he had encountered it in 1893 at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. The tall openings of the great room form two window-walls, with alternating pairs of glass doors and windows set into the basic grid; they have superb proportions and permit views looking out over Rawson Woods Lane above the Rawson Nature Preserve. From outside the vertical elements are countered by the suggestion of Classical dentils running under the cornice and the large square fascia-panels consisting of concentric wood squares with small openings in the center that also provide glimpses of the view from the Balcony. Originally, tiny twinkling "tubular incandescent" lights were set between the pairs of beams that support the roof and wide eaves, creating a magical sparkle, particularly as reflected in the dark panes of glass at night, when they are easily confused with actual distant city lights.

In some ways the open-plan Living Room of the Boulter House, which originally accommodated a grand piano, yards of built-in bookshelves over the long banquette under the Balcony, and the grand fireplace that was intended to be the focal point of family life, are all reminiscent of the "Great Halls" of the Hulbert and Dieterle Houses on this tour. Here one is especially aware of Wright's brilliant interweaving of solids and voids; the horizontal Balcony that shoots out through the west window-wall and eaves; and the slender but load-supporting Douglas-fir vertical posts or mullions of the window-wall (set perpendicular to the plane of the glass surface) that disguise their actual structural function most effectively; and the natural colors and textures of Philippine mahogany stained Taliesin red and of the warm grey masonry, indoors and out. All built-in furnishings were designed at Taliesin, as were many of the original free-standing pieces supplied by Henredon. The Living-Room draperies in 20-foot panels were designed by Wright and manufactured by Schumacher. In contrast, the typical Wright "Workspace," as he called the Kitchen, is almost unbelievably tiny according to today's standards; the present owners, however, find it highly efficient and adequate for their needs, and indeed have gone to great lengths to restore it and integrate into the overall subtle "natural" color scheme of the whole house.

The image of a ship is further reinforced by the miniscule, cell-like bedrooms (with intermediary closets as sound-buffers as well as storage) lined up on the balcony "deck" overlooking the living space; the windows in the fascia opposite even suggest [square] portholes! Cedric Boulter's office in the "prow" at the farther end

is dramatically cantilevered out beyond the concrete/cement block foundations set into the hillside, which the current occupants have deliberately left somewhat wild as the grounds were at the beginning.

Much of the design work on the Boulter House was executed by *John H. Howe*, Taliesin's long-lasting chief draftsman, on whom Wright and the Fellowship relied for decades. *Benjamin Dombar* (1916-2006), one of the early Taliesin Fellows who practiced architecture in Cincinnati for half a century, supervised the construction. The house was acquired in 1989 from Mrs. Boulter by Dr. and Mrs. David Gosling, who in 1990-92 filled in the former (originally rather controversial) carport to link the house and Playroom, with the approval of Taliesin Associated Architects; supervision was again by Benjamin Dombar. Dr. Gosling, who was a Distinguished Professor at the University of Cincinnati, and director of the Center for Urban Studies at DAAP, was largely responsible for placing the site on the National Register of Historic Places in 1999, and also donated a preservation easement on it to the Cincinnati Preservation association.

IX. The Clifton School/Clifton Cultural Arts Center

3711 Clifton Avenue northwest corner of McAlpin Ave opposite Woolper Avenue

The Background. The Clifton School, constructed in 1904-1906 on the site of the 1870 Resor Academy and Literary Institute at the then-considerable cost of \$148,000, is the only public building within the former Village of Clifton and is still a prominent landmark; its red-tile roof and quaint cupola are visible from a considerable distance along Clifton Avenue from the south, marking the center of the residential area of Clifton. This is one of the more distinctive school designs by E.H. Dornette: most of them are Collegiate Tudor or Gothic in one form or another. The Clifton School has a classical dignity befitting its role in one of the historically and architecturally outstanding residential suburbs of Cincinnati.

The Architecture. The Clifton Public School (1905-1906) is perhaps the handsomest of Edward H. Dornette's early 20th-century educational buildings. Its cool Beaux-Arts Classical buff-brick walls with lavish stone trim serve as an understated platform for the handsome portico and vivid dome, which lend an almost Baroque effect. The subtle surface articulation and orderly, generously scaled openings are balanced by the warm red-tile roof and the charming copper cupola. In some respects, the style of the Clifton School is an institutional equivalent of such contemporary residences on this tour as the Dieterle and Wettengel Houses at Hosea and Brookline Avenues, but with a more Classical flavor.

The pale yellow brick of the walls and the overall monochromatic effect (except for the Arts & Crafts-inspired red-tile roof) is characteristic of the early 20th-century reaction to late 19th-century red brick with its aggressively contrasting stone and/or wood trim. The corners of the school's rather tall and narrow vertical units are articulated by colossal Tuscan pilasters. The two-story quadristyle Ionic entrance portico has a cartouche and other ornaments in its pediment, echoed by acroteria in the flat gable above the cornice. The square dome on the central roof supports the cupola; concave volutes anchor the corners of the clock-stage. Tiny stone pediments further distinguish the small windows of the entrance pavilion (the other openings, rather unusually, have no lintels at all). The entrance on the south side to McAlpin Avenue, linking the ground floor and first story, has handsome unfluted stone Tuscan engaged columns supporting a pediment above the dentillated frieze.

The grand main staircase and other distinctive original architectural elements that reflected the community's pride in its excellent educational facility were removed at various times, particularly during 1977 renovations. One of the most interesting and

impressive interior features does survive, however: the combined theater auditorium and gymnasium that occupies most of what appears from outside to be merely an attic. The space swells up into the interior dome under the cupola and spreads out to fill most of the top floor. A spectacular mid-Victorian crystal chandelier, perhaps from the earlier Resor Academy, almost miraculously still hangs down from the climactic cupola.

The west wing, the Clifton Community Center (1977), was designed by one of the more interesting Modernist post-World War II local firms, Richard Tweddell & Assocs. It continues the use of blond brick, with no articulation of the surfaces, but has a dramatic steep red-tile shed roof marking the entrance under a steel bridge that connects the wing to the original school building

A feature of the approach to the original main entrance to the original school is the ten-foot tall granite and bronze Probasco Fountain on Clifton Avenue opposite Woolper. With its play of concave and convex fluted forms above a panelled octagonal pedestal, it has a handsome and distinctive form, dictated by the original function, “to contain basins for drinking and also watering animals.” The Biblical inscription reads “Thirsty and ye gave me drink.” Passersby used a dipper that hung on the upper part, while horses drank from the lower basin, and side-bowls at ground-level provided water for thirsty dogs. The dome of the fountain is decorated with a chrysanthemum motive.

This fountain was erected in 1886-87 to the design of Cincinnati’s best-known Victorian architect, Samuel Hannaford, and represents an exceptionally rare and fine surviving example of it type. It was donated by the wealthy entrepreneur and civic benefactor Henry Probasco, a mayor of Clifton when it was an independent village. He also donated the original Fountain Square and its well-loved fountain in memory of his brother-in-law Tyler Davidson; and he generously supported the construction of Calvary Episcopal Church nearby on Clifton Avenue. Probasco’s unique and magnificent Norman Revival stone mansion, “Oakwood,” still stands on West Cliff Lane off Lafayette Avenue near the “Scarlet Oaks” Retirement Community. According to a probably apocryphal story passed down by Philip Spiess, Probasco had a horse named “Me,” which supposedly drank deeply at the Tyler Davidson Fountain Downtown, but by the time it reached the middle of Clifton its thirst needed further quenching, so its owner supplied a salutary second fountain.

For additional information on Clifton and the School, see Geoffrey J. Giglierano and Deborah A. Overmyer, *The Bicentennial Guide to Greater Cincinnati: A Portrait of Two Hundred Years* (The Cincinnati Historical Society, 1988), esp. pages 223-23.