

Collection #
P0351

BRENDONWOOD COMMON, INC. COLLECTION, CA. 1917–1924

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Processed by

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Indiana Historical Society
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Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	Visual Materials: 1 box of photographs Printed Materials: 3 pamphlets, 2 maps Artifacts: 1 leather case.
COLLECTION	Ca. 1917-ca. 1924

DATES:

PROVENANCE: Evaline H. Rhodehamel, Indianapolis, Indiana, August 1988.

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1988.0854

NOTES: **HOLDINGS IN OTHER INSTITUTIONS:** The Frances Loeb Library, Graduate School of Design, Harvard University, Cambridge Massachusetts has promotional material and letters related to the development of Brendonwood.

HISTORICAL/BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Brendonwood is a residential subdivision located on 350 acres between Fall Creek and East 56th Street in Indianapolis. Charles Sumner Lewis acquired the land in parcels between 1909 and 1915. He developed the site as a private, residential subdivision that was legally protected from commercial development.

Landscape architect George E. Kessler designed Brendonwood beginning in 1914. Civil engineer A. H. Moore supervised land clearance, grading, road construction, and utility installation starting in 1916. According to Kessler's plan more than 115,000 shrubs and rows of oak trees were planted to enhance the natural environment. Landowners became members of Brendonwood Common, Inc., a private, non-profit corporation established by Lewis for the purpose of maintaining the site's original integrity. The regulations of Brendonwood Common, Inc. prohibited the subdivision of original plots and contained provisions to ensure the protection and preservation of the natural features and landscape design. The first homes were completed ca. 1922.

Unfortunately the planted oak trees succumbed to disease and were removed in the 1950s. Up to the present time (2008) the subdivision has remained the private residential area envisioned by Lewis. The original concept of 110 single-family homes in a park-like setting has been maintained by generations of homeowners.

Born in Huntington, Indiana, Charles Sumner Lewis (1854-1931) arrived in Indianapolis in 1887. Lewis bought and developed real estate in Indianapolis, including Brendonwood. His children were: Edward R. Lewis, Charles S. Lewis, Jr., Montgomery S. Lewis, and Phillip C. Lewis.

Montgomery S. Lewis (1887-1954) graduated from Harvard University in 1911. He worked with his father, Charles S. Lewis, to develop and promote the Brendonwood subdivision. Lewis photographed the Brendonwood property beginning circa 1916. He lived in the development with his wife (Helen Heywood Lewis) and children beginning in circa 1922.

Lewis was a member of the Indianapolis Literary Club, the Indiana Historical Society, and other dramatic and civic organizations. He wrote the book *Legends that Libel Lincoln* (New York: Rinehart and Co., 1946). He also served on the board of Christamore House, a settlement house and community center for immigrants and African Americans.

Born in Frakenhausen, Germany, George Edward Kessler moved to the United States with his parents when he was three years old. He received architectural and engineering training in Europe, and returned to the United States in 1882 to begin his professional career. A resident of Kansas City and later St. Louis, Kessler designed parks and boulevards for the Indianapolis Board of Park Commissioners from 1908 until his death in 1923. Kessler's designs include University Park (1914), Garfield Park (1915), and Riverside Park (1922).

Born 4 January 1876 in Defiance, Ohio, Frank M. Hohenberger arrived in Indianapolis ca. 1902. He worked as a compositor for the *Indianapolis Star* newspaper until 1909, when he became a photographer for the H. Leiber Company. He rejoined the *Indianapolis Star* in 1914 but lost his job through a change in ownership in 1916. Hohenberger established a studio in Nashville, Indiana in the summer of 1917 and accepted commissions from clients across Indiana. Hohenberger died in November 1963.

The Benjamin D. Hitz family lived on Long Ridge Drive in the Brendonwood development from ca. 1924. Benjamin D. Hitz was associated with George Hitz and Company, a wholesale produce business. Benjamin Hitz's daughter, Evaline H. Rhodehamel, donated the materials in the collection.

Sources:

Berentes, Adeline Lewis, letter to the Curator of Visual Collections, December 1994. [Accession file 1995.0137]

Byrd, Cecil K. *Frank M. Hohenberger's Indiana Photographs*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993.

Bodenhamer, David J., and Robert G. Barrows. *The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.

Frank M. Hohenberger Collection. Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

"Montgomery S. Lewis." *Indiana History Bulletin* 32, no. 1 (January-December 1955).

Lewis, Charles S., letter to Theodora Kimball, 18 March 1920 [Coll. No. VF NAC 1695g27 Ind. Frances Loeb Library, Graduate School of Design, Harvard University, Cambridge MA].

O'Day, James. *Brendonwood: The Legacy of George E. Kessler Upon the Indianapolis Landscape. A Historic Landscape Report*. Muncie: Ball State University, 1988.

"Realty Pioneer Dead," *Indianapolis Times*, 5 January 1931, p. 5, col. 2.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection includes twenty-six black-and-white photographs of natural features in Brendonwood, a residential subdivision located eight miles north of downtown Indianapolis. The photographs show woodland scenes, country lanes, and views of Fall Creek before homes were built on the site. [26 black-and-white photographs, 7 x 11 inches, 17 x 28 centimeters, or smaller with descriptions written on the verso]

Montgomery S. Lewis made at least ten original photographs in the collection. Lewis made photographs for the promotional brochure "Brendonwood." The brochure describes the species of vegetation found at the site, the names and locations of roads, conditions and limitations relating to homes and lots, and attractive features of the development.

Images made by photographer Frank M. Hohenberger illustrate the pamphlet "Brendonwood, Land O' My Heart's Desire." The pamphlet describes the natural features within the community as well as planned amenities. One original negative from this series of photographs exists in the Lilly Library at Bloomington Indiana. The image shows a beech tree beside a roadway.

Another pamphlet, "A Brendonwood Colloquy," is a dialogue between "Brendonwood" and a prospective resident. The pamphlet discusses the cost of lots and the advantages of the community's amenities. A flyer titled "Brendonwood" and a fragment of a pamphlet titled "Brendonwood, A Self-Regulated Residential Zone..." are stored

with maps.

The material in this collection was originally enclosed in a brown leather portfolio that is embossed as follows: Mrs. Benjamin D. Hitz, Long Ridge. Brendonwood. The portfolio is stored separately with artifacts and the call number is: R1972.

CONTENTS

CONTENTS

1. From Hart's Leap-Looking N. E. over Golf Course
2. "Two Knolls" [P 352 Neg. B. Folio 5]
3. Golf Course-Looking west at junction of Brookwood and Braewick Drive
4. Bark-a-boom sloping down to the Serpentine [P 352 Neg. B. Folio 2]
5. The Serpentine

Bark-a-boom from the Serpentine

6. Brookpath from Military Drive
7. Looking down Braewick Road from Old Orchard
8. From Highdown Hill looking north
9. Indian Lodge
10. Fall Creek-Looking N. E. from foot of Winddoor Hill [P 352 Neg. B. Folio 3]
11. Beech Tree-Lower slope of Highdown Hill [P 352 Neg. B. Folio 5]

On Highdown Hill-looking south up around the Hills Road

The dam

Creek Bend At Sycamore Flats

The dam

Beech Tree-upper slope of Highdown Hill

Looking North East from Lawrence Drive at junction with Around the Hills Road and Old Orchard

CONTAINER

Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 1

Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 2

Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 3

Wood's Edge

Guard Hill-Looking N. E.

Roundtoft from Old Orchard Road

From Beech Head-looking North West

Burnwick-from Woodsnook

On Around the Hill Road near Lone Oak-looking N.
E. to Fall Creek

Long Ridge from Ridge Road

Long Ridge

Brendonwood
Indianapolis, September, 1917

Brendonwood, Land O' My Heart's Desire.
Designed by George E. Kessler & Company
Landscape Architects, St. Louis
Photographs by Hohenberger
[Indianapolis, Ind. : Brendonwood Common, Inc.,
191-?]

*A Brendonwood Colloquy. A Cautious Prospect
Questions the Feasibility of Brendonwood for One of
Not Considerable Wealth or Income. Brendonwood
Replies.*
[Indianapolis, Ind., Brendonwood, 191?]

Brendonwood
Indianapolis, Ind., 191?
1 Map; 21 x 36 cm.

*Brendonwood a self-regulated residential zone
consisting of 110 distinctive sites for country seats.*
[Indianapolis, Ind. : Brendonwood, 191?]
1 Map; 9 x 18 cm.

Brendonwood portfolio: a leatherette storage case
previously used for photographs in this collection

Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 4

Pamphlet Q:
F534.I55 B6552 1917

Pamphlet:
F534.I55 B74

Pamphlet:
F534.I55 B6551

Map Collection:
G4094.I55G45 191-.B65

Map Collection:
G4094.I55G45 191-.B651

Artifact Storage:
R1972

CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.

3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, P0351).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.