

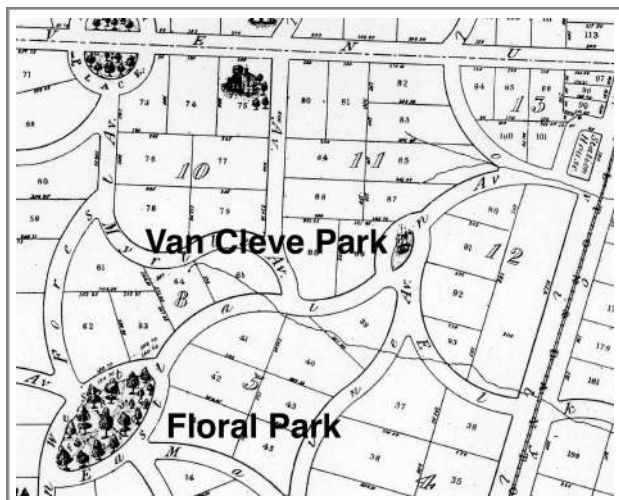


# Heritage News

A quarterly newsletter of Glendale Heritage Preservation, Summer 2026

## How Van Cleve Park Got Its Name

There are twelve named parks in Glendale, and four of those parks are named after Glendale residents. The oldest of those four is Van Cleve Park. It is the little brother to the larger and nearby Floral Park. This park is on the original plat map of Glendale drawn by R.C. Phillips in 1851. With admiration and appreciation, it finally received its name in 1937!



The Van Cleve family settled in Glendale after the Civil War. Elijah and Adelaide (née Cummings) built a house in 1866 at 745 Greenville Avenue. Their two sons, John and William, were brought up in their Glendale home.



Prior to settling in Glendale, Elijah Van Cleve signed up for the Union Army (1861) and joined the 5<sup>th</sup> Ohio Cavalry Regiment. Elijah married Adelaide Cummings of Glendale in 1863. Three years after joining the Union Army, he was discharged (1864) with the rank of Captain. Elijah died in 1917 at the age of 88, after his wife who had died in 1914. Their eldest son, John, died in 1921 at age 55, and was survived by his wife, Eva.

Elijah's son William was born in 1867, and lived in Glendale at his parents' home until his death in 1934 at the age of 67. William didn't marry, and at the time of his death, he had no living relatives.

William was, according to a report in the *Enquirer*, "...one of [Glendale's] finest and most respected citizens. Although he was a quiet and self-effacing man, he contributed greatly to the development of the community. He was one of the first members of the village Board of Public Affairs, known as the Waterworks Board, and served in that capacity for 15 years. He also served as a member of Council and as Clerk of Springfield Township."

In his will, William made bequests to friends and charities. However, he bequeathed the remainder of his estate, about \$14,000 (now \$350,000), to the village of Glendale. The income was to be used for the care and maintenance of public playgrounds and parks in the village.

On Monday, May 31, 1937, Mayor James Carruthers presided over a ceremony at the small park to dedicate it as the "Van Cleve Park" in honor of William A. Van Cleve.

A simple marker on a boulder at the center of the park bears the community's tribute to him.



*Submitted by Martin Sinnott*

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## **New Life for Gas Lights**

Glendale has 118 gas lights! Once oil-fired, the gas lights were introduced in 1872. Since then, they have become one of the defining characteristics of the village. While they never provided much street illumination, they were thought to have provided horse-drawn buggy drivers with directions at night.



The gas lights have been subject to damage or destruction by accident. The first gas light when traveling into Glendale from the east on Sharon Avenue, was downed by a falling tree limb in June 2021 after a particularly stormy night.

Although the parts were collected by the village service department, the gas light was beyond repair.

Fortunately, a new gas light has been installed to replace the fallen one. Even though the old gas light was probably over 100 years old, the new one does not look out of place. It continues to provide that distinctive ambience the village is famous for.



*Submitted by Martin Sinnott*

## America 250 - Glendale Outdoors Exploring Ohio's Natural Resources

Did you know that Glendale has more than 2,400 trees on public land with 50 new ones planted each year? This contribution, among others, from a commitment to natural resources to being the birthplace of statesmen, authors, artists, Olympic athletes, and more, is being lauded in Glendale's contribution to America 250.

America 250-Ohio Commission was formed through the OH Rev. Code 149.309. A commission of 29 members was charged with preparing Ohio to participate in the United States of America's 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. A theme was identified for each month of the year for Ohio. These themes included: January: "Ohio's Firsts and Originals," April: "Ohio Moves: Transportation" and October: "Ohio's Food and Farms," to name a few. A representative of the Ohio 250-Hamilton County committee asked Glendale Heritage Preservation to assist in providing a similar thematic listing related to Glendale, Ohio. The Glendale Village Council approved this undertaking in October 2025.



This request and subsequent products were within the purview of the mission of Glendale Heritage Preservation. The monthly themes would be completed for twelve months. The themes were researched by nine Glendale Heritage Preservation Trustees. Each month was to be submitted by Glendale Heritage Preservation to the Hamilton County representative. The complete submission of the year will be available on the Glendale Heritage Preservation website in December 2026. A companion exhibit, currently on show, entitled "Glendale: Looking Back Over 250 Years", follows the development of the area now known as Glendale from 1776 to 2026. Both ventures complement each other well in helping to understand the strong role this Village has had in contributions to the United States of America.



A sample of one of the 12 monthly themes (June- Glendale Outdoors: Exploring Ohio's Natural Resources) is included in this article. It is hoped that the information will be enlightening and strengthen a sense of pride during this 250<sup>th</sup> birthday!

- Glendale has been recognized by the National Arbor Foundation as a Tree City for 30 years.
- The Glendale Board of Park Trustees (now the Urban Forestry Board) was formed shortly after the village was founded in 1851 to be responsible for forestry projects on public property.
- Glendale has more than 2,400 trees on public land, with 50 new ones planted each year.
- Glendale's Arboretum was established in 2023 with labels and QR codes on 68 different types of trees throughout the village.
- Glendale has twelve public parks covering more than 90 acres.
- In the 1940s, Glendale purchased 13 acres of land as a green-belt buffer between the village and nearby industrial buildings.
- The curvilinear streets of Glendale, platted in 1851, are lined with sidewalks for ease of walking.
- Glendale's water comes from a pure underground source, the Miami Valley aquifer, providing water with a refreshing taste.
- Glendale has three active garden clubs: Glendale Garden Club (est. 1915), Glendale Garden Crafters (est. 1921), Village Gardeners of Glendale (est. 1948).
- Each winter, a section of Magnolia Avenue, known as Gunny Hill, is closed to allow sledding when there is sufficient snowfall.
- Glendale is home to a population of distinctive black squirrels, introduced in the 1940s from Harbor Springs, Michigan, by a local businessman.
- Town Run Creek runs the length of Glendale, draining rainwater into Mill Creek and eventually the Ohio River.
- For the last few years, wildflowers have been planted annually by volunteers around utility posts on public land.

*Submitted by Judy Skyllingstad*



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## An Exhibit to Celebrate America 250

In fifteen posters, Glendale Heritage Preservation Museum's exhibit, "Glendale: Looking back over 250 years," tells the story of how Glendale developed from the days when the area was inhabited by

Shawnee and Miami Indian tribes to modern times. Here are three examples of posters from the exhibit. The exhibit will run through summer and fall 2026. Opening hours are Thursday and Saturday 11-3.

