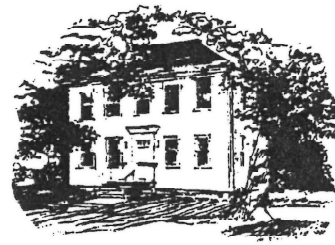


IMAGES

... then and now

From The Indian Hill Historical Society

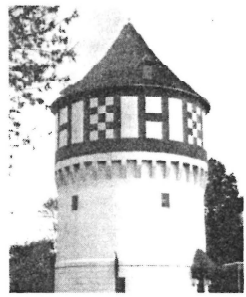


Buckingham Lodge
1861

The Indian Hill Water Tower

One of the visual landmarks of the Village is the Water Tower (1936) located on Miami Road near Indian Hill Road. Its history is tied in with the story of water supply for Indian Hill.

Before the development of Indian Hill in the twentieth century, water was supplied by wells and cisterns, often hand-pumped by local farmers. In the 1920's water was brought to Indian Hill from Madisonville by the City of Cincinnati. A sewer district was established with property owners paying for their own mains and extensions. Increasing population required larger water volume, so in 1933 the City started construction of the Water Tower, which was completed in 1936, with a 500,000 gal. capacity to provide the needed water pressure.



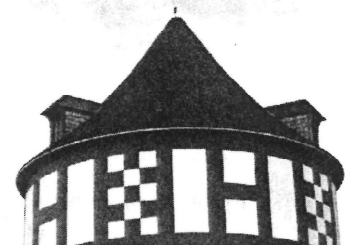
Medieval in appearance, the Tower has some notable architectural features. The concrete cylindrical base has an attractive entry with an unusual whimsical roof. The exterior is painted in a symmetrical pattern simulating brick, and the shingled roof has subtle flared eaves with two visually appealing dormers. The Tower's architecture integrity emphasizes its massive scale, and the architect, Charles F. Cellarius, was admired for his accomplishment; but the structural engineer, Fred W. Morrill, suffered criticism because the Tower leaked in its early years (since remedied.)

In 1941 residents, to preserve the independence and rural atmosphere of the village, voted to incorporate as the Village of Indian Hill, creating a separate entity from Cincinnati, which had hoped to annex this charming neighborhood. In 1946 Cincinnati's Council passed an ordinance providing that water should not be delivered to any mains outside city limits unless the users agreed to be annexed to the city. This would force Indian Hill to belong to the municipality, as village residents relied upon the Water Tower. The matter went to court, and after two years of legal battles, it was decided that Cincinnati did not have to supply Indian Hill with water. As a result, in 1948, the village adopted its own plan for an independent water supply system. A strip of land on State Route 126 in Camp Dennison (location of the current Water Works) was purchased; and wells, mains, a softening plant, and pumping facilities were installed on the banks of the Little Miami River. The same year, the City of Cincinnati called for a reimbursement of \$24,776 from the Village of Indian Hill, but allowed the Village to purchase the Water Tower in 1949 for \$62,075.

Ever since, the Water Tower has served Village residents with only one interruption. Water is pumped to the Miami Road site from Camp Dennison, where three underground tanks contain 3.2 million gallons of water. Adjacent to the Water Tower, a booster pumping station fills the Tower from below. Inside the enclosed tower the original dirt floored base is vacant, and water is stored 55 feet above in the "bowl," where pressure is maintained by electronic sensors monitored by Water Works personnel, under the supervision of Jim Fox, Water Works Superintendent.

In summer 1992, some local youths nearby were setting off bottle rockets, one of which landed on the Water Tower roof, which at that time was not fire-retardant. The Fire Department put out the blaze; and while the \$165,000 damage was repaired, the use of the Tower was suspended for several months. Back in action, the Water Tower now meets the needs of both its Indian Hill customers and some residents in neighboring communities.

In 1988, the Water Tower was designated an "American Water Landmark" by the American Water Works Association. Both its aesthetic posture and practical function earned this award, and this "fairy tale" looking structure is a fascinating feature of the Village today.



"Cat's Meow" replicas of the Water Tower are available as collectibles at the Indian Hill Historical Society.