

Constance Lee Menefee and Betty Ann Smiddy

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[constance@menefee.com](mailto:constance@menefee.com)

## **INTRODUCTION TO BETTY & CONNIE'S OVER-THE-RHINE TOUR GUIDE**

Cincinnati was incorporated as a frontier town in 1802. Its growth into a thriving industrial city was assured when the first steamboat was launched on the Ohio River in 1812. It was the Ohio River, plus access to key resources for building and manufacturing like iron, coal, timber, limestone, and clay, that established Cincinnati as a major business center by the mid-1800's.

Industry thrived: Cincinnati became home to soap and glycerin works, cooperages, lumber yards, foundries, stone yards, tanneries, meat packing houses, silversmiths, tanners, cabinetmakers, machine makers, boot and shoe makers, printers, potters, and many breweries, peaking at 36 by 1860.<sup>1</sup>

The central business district became crowded with a variety of businesses willing to pay high rents for access to the river. Later arrivals were pushed north, into a basin area that had the Miami-Erie Canal – the “Rhine” – as a rough south and west boundary. This basin area became a significant port of entry for increasing numbers of eastern Europeans who were fleeing war, conscription, economic depression, and feudalistic land inheritance laws. As the German-speaking community grew, the area across the canal became known as “Over-the-Rhine.”

The neighborhood was at once profoundly connected to the economic life of the city and separate in its strong European culture. Every block had businesses that provided the service and product necessities of life. To the Germans, that included churches, good food, and wholesome beer. A nickel beer bought a free buffet lunch. Local beers were 21 for \$1. In the evening, saloons were visited by itinerant food vendors. A favorite was the sausage man, “Wienerwurst Mike” (they were all called Mike). His condiments of bread and seasonings were carried by a small boy at his side while he carried the tin pail of mettwurst, bratwurst, frankfurters, and Vienna sausage. Others sold steaming corn on the cob, tamales, “bretzels,” and pickles.

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<sup>1</sup>Susan K. Appel. *Buildings and Beer: Brewery Architecture of Cincinnati*. Queen City Heritage 44 (Summer 1986): 2-20.

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A community of Germanic, English, Irish, and native-born Americans, rich and poor, lettered and not, skilled tradesmen, former soldiers, and businessmen, contributed to the phenomenal growth of Cincinnati as a leading U.S. city in the mid- to late-19<sup>th</sup> century. As a major manufacturing and cultural center, with a strategic position on the Ohio River, it was the Queen City indeed.

Estimates of Over-the-Rhine's peak population, around the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, vary from 43,000 to 50,000. It was a densely crowded, lively neighborhood, with a strong Germanic culture within a strongly Germanic city: in 1890, more than 57% of Cincinnatians were either German-born or native-born of German parentage. <sup>2</sup>

Much of the European character of Over-the-Rhine architecture dates from the period 1860 to 1900, when "new masonry structures replaced the original smaller frame buildings. Three- to five-story row houses predominated in the neighborhood. The majority of the buildings included a storefront at the ground level and apartments on the upper floors. Single-family homes, meeting halls, theaters, churches, stores, breweries, and light industrial buildings also were built during this period." <sup>3</sup>

The start of World War I brought a heavy anti-German backlash to Cincinnati and Over-the-Rhine. The German culture of beer and *gemütlichkeit* (a cozy sense of belonging and acceptance) was now viewed merely as dirty saloons and drunkenness. Any business or church with "German" in its name was blacklisted. In April 1918, Germanic sounding street names were changed: Bremen to Republic; Berlin to Woodward; Bismarck to Montreal; German to English; Frankfort to Connecticut; Wilhelm to Orion, Humboldt to Taft, etc. Fourteen streets had their names changed at this time: almost every one of them in Over-the-Rhine.

The teaching of German and all tolerance of the German language was dropped from the schools. All German books and newspapers were moved to closed library stacks. The anti-German hysteria contributed to the public sentiment for Prohibition in 1919, which closed most of the breweries and saloons. There was decreased use of the canal for transportation of goods, being superseded by the

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<sup>2</sup> G. A. Dobbert, G.A. *The "Zinzinnati" in Cincinnati*. Cincinnati Historical Society Bulletin 22 (October 1964): 209-220.

<sup>3</sup> IRhine.com website - [http://www.irhine.com/index.jsp?page=history\\_neighborhood](http://www.irhine.com/index.jsp?page=history_neighborhood)

railroads and the beginnings of auto traffic. The canals were drained and, in 1922, the start of the subway system and the wide boulevard of Central Parkway was under construction.

Over-the-Rhine's population slowly decreased as first- and second-generation immigrants moved out of the basin, up into the "seven hills." The formerly foreign immigrant neighborhood became home to new, American, migrants from Appalachia. Although the sense of community was strong, the lives of the Appalachians were marked by extreme poverty. Soon, African-Americans, displaced from their West End neighborhood by interstate highway construction, found a place to live and work, gradually replacing the Appalachian population who were moving out of the basin. Now the population is estimated at 7,000 or less.

Over-the-Rhine has been romanticized — or hyperbolized — by almost every group that claims a stake in its future. It is, from one time to the next, the most, the least, the best, the worst: a treasure-trove of architecture; a loyal, but poverty-stricken community; a home for the homeless; a refuge for the mentally ill poor; ground zero for churches and social welfare non-profits; the most crime-ridden area; a new arts community; training ground for social activists; or, maybe, as we like to think of it: Cincinnati's best kept secret.

More than one heyday of Over-the-Rhine has passed. Its historic buildings have withstood generations of families trying to make their way into the American dream, one way or another. "Over-The-Rhine contains the largest collection of 19th century Italianate architecture still standing in the United States. The entire 360 acre district of Over-the-Rhine, consisting of 6 districts of distinct character, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983. OTR has over 500 empty buildings, 2,500 empty units, and 700 vacant lots available for repopulation and renovation." <sup>4</sup>

The continued survival of the people and the buildings is still uncertain. New investment, hardy entrepreneurs, and long-time neighborhood business are all vulnerable to the current downswing of the U.S. economy.

*Enduring with grace* could be a motto of Over-the-Rhiners from many

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<sup>4</sup> Over-the-Rhine Chamber of Commerce - <http://www.otrchamber.com/>

generations. Nothing can be left to chance as we help revive and re-fill the streets of one of the country's few remaining architecturally intact, historic neighborhoods.

The Over-the-Rhine Foundation, committed to improving the quality of life in the neighborhood, has launched a Memory Project to capture the experiences and oral history of those who have lived and worked in OTR. This complements the foundation's preservation and restoration work.<sup>5</sup>

Betty Smiddy and Connie Menefee have connections to Over-the-Rhine: check out their biographies. They invite you to take a closer look: down, up, or sideways. Get to know the buildings, the people, and the history of this dynamic neighborhood.

## **BETTY & CONNIE'S OVER-THE-RHINE CONNECTIONS**

**BETTY ANN SMIDDY:** I am a native Cincinnati who has written two books published by Arcadia,<sup>6</sup> *Cincinnati's Golden Age* and *Cincinnati's Great Disasters*. Both are available at the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County or local bookstores.

I also have written a short history of Mt. Auburn, a history of Mt. Auburn's Church of Our Saviour, and completed the second edition of *A Little Piece of Paradise...College Hill, Ohio*.<sup>7</sup> I have written about Cincinnati architect Samuel Hannaford (see <http://www.samuelhannaford.info>.) I am a 1992 *Cincinnati Enquirer* **Woman of the Year** and was given a key to the City of Cincinnati for my volunteer activities.

My grandparents, John A. Hubert and Margaret Dipong, were part of the wave of eastern European immigrants arriving in Cincinnati at the turn of the 1900's. My grandfather came from Temessag, Hungary. His father apprenticed him to a barber while he was still in high school, paying the barber to train him, and for my grandfather to live with his family. After his apprenticeship and education were completed, John was sent to America to join his older brother, George, who

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<sup>5</sup> Over-the-Rhine Foundation - <http://www.otrfoundation.org/>

<sup>6</sup> Arcadia Publishing - <http://www.arcadiapublishing.com>

<sup>7</sup> Available at <http://www.samuelhannaford.info> under its title

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[constance@menefee.com](mailto:constance@menefee.com)

was already established in Cincinnati. This practice was called chain migration. John was only 16 when he arrived aboard the *Pannonia*. Their father apprenticed all of his sons because of impending military conscription. A war was brewing over there and he wanted them to have a chance in another country.

My 11 year old grandmother left Kathreinfeld, Hungary, accompanied by her father, and joined her older sister in Cincinnati. She was a servant in an Avondale household. She was so short that she needed to stand on a soap box to reach the sink to wash dishes. She learned English at free night classes held in the, then, new Avondale High School on Reading Road.

John Hubert and Margaret Dipong met at a dance and married in 1913, moving to an apartment above a candy store in Mohawk, where the Hungarians lived. My grandfather shared a barber shop at 234 Central Ave. After saving enough money at a local savings and loan, probably in a bar, they bought a house in Over-the-Rhine at 2224 Vine St.. That area is now considered lower Mt. Auburn.

This was where my parents lived when I was born and they were saving for their first house in Fairview. After they moved, I went every weekend by bus to stay with my grandparents. We often walked down Vine St., going to Findlay Market or further to downtown. We would take a bus back up the hill with our shopping bags. As we walked, my grandmother or my Aunt Margaret would tell me stories about what the buildings were in earlier times. It is because of my aunt that I developed an interest in architecture. She always urged me to look up at the rooflines of the buildings across the street.

**BETTY ON SAMUEL HANNAFORD:** If you pay close attention, you will discover that Samuel Hannaford and his various associates, including his sons, are connected to many historic properties both in Over-the-Rhine and the Cincinnati area.

One of Cincinnati's best loved architects, Samuel Hannaford, was born April 10, 1835, in Devonshire, England. His family came to Cincinnati and settled on a farm in Cheviot in 1845. After attending Farmers' College in College Hill in 1853, he started working with an architect the following year. He married three times, his last wife outliving him. He made his home in Winton Place, where he also was the mayor. Hannaford helped develop the first building codes for Cincinnati, urged smoke abatement, wanted to eliminate slums, and

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championed the building of the Mill Creek Valley sewer system.

His sons, Harvey Eldridge and Charles Edward, joined him to form Hannaford & Sons in 1887. After Samuel's death in 1911, this continued to be a prominent architectural firm until the 1960's, designing among other buildings, the Times-Star building, Cincinnati General Hospital, Deaconess Hospital, the annex to the state capitol building in Columbus, and the original buildings of Ohio State University. For more information about Samuel Hannaford go to <http://www.samuelhannaford.info>.

**CONSTANCE LEE MENEFE:** I am a native of St. Louis, Missouri. I grew up from kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, in Syracuse, New York, and moved into the city of Cincinnati, from Harrison, Ohio, in 1974.

Betty and I met in 1972 at the home of the late University of Cincinnati biology professor, Alex Fraser, Ph.D., as part of a McMicken Scholars Honors colloquium on death. Our friendship has sustained both of us through difficult times. We have many interests in common, and many that each can share with the other. I admit that my knowledge of Cincinnati history was meager until Betty suggested we write a history of some of the places and people in Over-the-Rhine.

And, in one of those lovely, quirky moments, my husband (John Burkhardt) and I bought the first house we looked at in 1989. When I called Betty to give her the address, she said in her usual matter-of-fact way, "That's where Bruce and I lived when you first met me." I had no idea!

I have lived in several Cincinnati neighborhoods: Clifton, Mt. Auburn, Over-the-Rhine, and, currently, College Hill, in Betty's old house. In Over-the-Rhine, I lived on Pete St. (the good end, as we always reassured people) in the late 1970's, next door to my husband-to-be.

John was from Chicago and had come to Over-the-Rhine, as part of the VISTA program, after graduating from the Krannert School of Management at Purdue University. When his VISTA stint came to an end, he stayed in Over-the-Rhine, managing the Liberty Co-op at 12 Green St. for the Franciscans. He eventually began working as a painter for the A.G. Hauck Co. (once located at 1109 Vine St. in Over-the-Rhine.)

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I spent ten years as a library assistant at the Main Branch of the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, riding the bus through Over-the-Rhine on my way to and from work, first from Mt. Auburn (53) and then from College Hill (17).

It was downtown Cincinnati and Over-the-Rhine that brought John and me together in 1974. A big band concert on Fountain Square drew me with some folk dancing friends. I was dancing—by myself—when John and his companions, also downtown for the music, espied me. We did not meet then. It was a week or so later that I met my future husband at King’s Row, a bluegrass bar in Clifton where I had an apartment. His friends recognized me and with plenty of elbow-nudging we finally met and the rest, as they say, is history. We got married in 1979. Our son, Jonathan Burkhardt, is a photographer and has a Masters in Chemical Engineering from the University of Cincinnati. He currently works in Over-the-Rhine at Park + Vine, 1109 Vine St.

I am an experienced writer, crack researcher, and intermittent visual artist. In addition to having written a small business column for the late *Cincinnati Post*, I spent two summers in Alaska, and visited Vietnam with a group of veterans in 1994. I was awarded an Ohio Arts Council Individual Fellowship in 1998 for poetry about the Vietnam War. For more, visit my website: <http://www.selfcraft.net>.

## **FIRST, A FEW IMPORTANT SIGHTS SOUTH OF THE RHINE**

### **Central Parkway and Court St.**

The fourth **Hamilton County** courthouse is on this site, completed in 1919. It is made of limestone and granite in the Renaissance Revival style. In the lobby stands the statue of Captain John J. Desmond, who died in the courthouse riot of 1884. Other memorials pertaining to that event are found in the main lobby. Each side of the court house contains a different quote.

On the north: “That the commonwealth may have a government of laws and not men.” This is from the Constitution of Massachusetts Bill of Right,

Article 30.

The east wall: "Equal and exact justice to all men of whatever state or persuasion religious or political." President Thomas Jefferson is the source of these words saying this in his first inaugural address.

The south wall has a quote from the Bible, Micah 6:8: "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly and to love mercy."

The source for the west wall has been attributed to President William Howard Taft; "The pure and the wise and equal administration of the laws forms the first end and the blessing of social union."

### **Court St. Market**

The original Court St. Market was a wooden, open sided building surmounted by a bell that would ring the hours and signal the start and close of the market. The market house was razed in 1915, but it has lived on with open air stalls near Vine St. Avril Bleh & Sons is the last custom butcher shop remaining. They plan to add a grocery store in 2008.

Court St. is wide because it once accommodated the width of the market house. Underneath the market house were brick lined tunnels used to run the pigs to the nearby slaughterhouses. These tunnels were also used by terrified citizens to hide in during the 1884 courthouse riot.

Betty and I think there should be a historical marker to Louis C. Graeter, for it was at the Court St. market house that he started his company by selling milkshakes. Graeter's has been a Cincinnati tradition since 1870, selling French pot ice cream, bakery goods, candy, and other delicacies.

### **15 W. Central Parkway**

AAA, the **American Automobile Association/Cincinnati Automobile Club** has been in this location since 1940. Built in 1904 as the Canal Telephone Exchange building, its handsome stone and brick exterior needed little maintenance through the years. It was the neighborhood switching office for the Cincinnati & Suburban Bell Telephone Co., and is Italian Renaissance in style; Hake & Kuck architects. It became out-moded in 1930 when direct dial service became available.

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### 1015 Vine St.

The **Cincinnati** building was purchased by the Kroger Co. for use as an annex. Kroger's had a mural painted on the north-facing building wall in 1983, by New York artist Richard Haas, to commemorate 100 years of business. It depicts the statue of Lucius Quintus Cincinnatus, after whom the Society of Cincinnati and this city was named. Look closely and you will see genuine windows and a doorway hidden among those painted. At one time, headquarters of the Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks was located here.

## WALKING UP VINE STREET

**VINE STREET**....." this great thoroughfare leads directly to the center of all the attractions to be found "Over the Rhine." <sup>8</sup>

For more than a century and a half, Over-the-Rhine, with Vine St. as its major artery, has excited argument, accolade, dispute, riot, comment, and even an "opera:" the *blueS alleY caT*. <sup>9</sup>

...."the visitor has no sooner entered the northern districts of the city lying beyond the Court St., across the canal, than he finds himself in another atmosphere—in a foreign land as it were. Germans and Americans alike love to call the district "Over the Rhine"...The visitor leaves behind him at almost a single step the rigidity of the American, the everlasting hurry and worry of the insatiate race for wealth, the inappeasable thirst of Dives, and enters at once into the borders of a people more readily happy, more readily contented, more easily pleased, far more closely wedded to music and the dance, to the song, and life in the bright open air."<sup>10</sup>

Once heralded as the "Paris of America," "The town was as wide open as a kitchen garden with amusements of all types, and gambling flourished like the proverbial green bay tree in almost every part of the city. Its inhabitants were deluged with beer and wine, principally beer; old Vine street sparkled like a huge Brazilian diamond by night...his

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<sup>8</sup> D.J. Kenny. *Illustrated Cincinnati*. 1875.

<sup>9</sup> Written by Joe Gorman; performed at the School for Creative and Performing Arts, 10 July-3 August 2003.

<sup>10</sup> D.J. Kenny. *Illustrated Cincinnati*. 1875.

*ears would be drinking in some high-class music; there would be congenial and cheery companionship everywhere about you, and a your right hand, would be a tall flagon of the best beer that was ever brewed in America.”<sup>11</sup>*

At one time, between 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Sts., there 23 saloons and concert halls. When temperance crusader, Carrie Nation, came to town, she said “...if I had undertaken to break all the windows of all the saloons on your Vine street I would have dropped from exhaustion before I had gone a block.” Not surprisingly, in 1899, it was estimated that, in Cincinnati, 41 gallons of beer would have to have been consumed by every man, woman and child, so great was the total consumption. Over-the-Rhine and the West End had 17 breweries between 1875 and 1900.

There was a bridge over the canal at Vine St.: “On the level boys, when a fellah started down Vine Street say about 1 or 2 in the morning after a night among the concert halls, even the malodorous canal took on a the aspect of a dimpling, singing brook, wending its sinuous, silvery way through meadows of green and purple. Looking over the railing of the canal bridge into the depths of the stream he saw mirrored there seven or eight moons provided, of course, there was a moon, and depending entirely upon his capacity to carry it...I will cite the famous bit of verse that John Kernell pulled at People’s. It follows:

*I stood on the bridge at midnight,  
While the clock was striking the hour,  
And fed the little fishes below,  
For the last evelen (sic) beers were sour.”<sup>12</sup>*

*“It is to be feared that the next generation, when the canal through the town gives place to a grand boulevard, will never hear what even the present generation seems to have forgotten that “over the Rhine” meant the German district above the canal where there were many beer gardens and theaters for the most delightful experience of ‘doing nothing.”<sup>13</sup>*

## **INTO OVER-THE-RHINE VIA VINE**

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<sup>11</sup> Frank Y. Grayson. *Pioneers of Night Life on Vine St.* 1924.

<sup>12</sup> Frank Y. Grayson. *Pioneers of Night Life on Vine St.* 1924.

<sup>13</sup> *Cincinnati, the Queen City, 1788-1912.*

**1109 Vine St. (385 Vine St.)** <sup>14</sup>

**Park + Vine**, Cincinnati's first green general store, was opened by Dan Korman in the spring of 2007 as part of the first wave of entrepreneurial businesses moving to Vine St. in the newly dubbed Gateway Quarter, centered at 12<sup>th</sup> and **Vine Sts.** Apartments are available above the store now, as they were when the building was originally built.

The earliest tenant in this Queen Ann style building was Charles Doerr, born in Saarbrücken, Germany in 1818. He immigrated to Cincinnati in 1839, founding Charles Doerr & Sons in 1858.<sup>15</sup> Doerr's always had a reputation for setting fair prices, manufacturing excellent products, and dealing honorably in business. As was the custom of the times, the family lived above their store. The Doerrs produced bakery goods, confectionaries, and were dealers, both wholesale and retail, of ice cream and chocolate. The business was known to "use nothing whatever but the purest and best" ingredients. The Doerr sons ran the company after the death of their father.

Buffalo Wings & Rings was listed here during the 1990's, apparently as an administrative location; it did not open as a restaurant on this site. The building was purchased and occupied by the A. G. Hauck Co.<sup>16</sup>, contractors and fire restoration experts, in the early 1960's. They remained until the late 1980's. Carolina Keifer's restaurant operated here during the 1940's until 1960. The Goth Manufacturing Co., a florist supply business, was in 1109 ½ in the 1950's. Emanuel Sammet had a restaurant in 1109 during the 1920's.

Behind **Park + Vine**, Doerr Alley runs parallel to Race and Vine Sts. and ends on 12<sup>th</sup> St. The alley was named to honor the entrepreneurial spirit of Charles Doerr. Its name carries the echoes of a time when, over a century ago, Doerr's was considered the gateway to the Over-the-Rhine entertainment district which began at the Canal and ended at Wielert's Beer Garden near Vine and 14<sup>th</sup> Sts.

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<sup>14</sup> Format of addresses: Current Address (When known, address prior to the 1897 renumbering when the major east-west divider was changed from Main St. to Vine St.)

<sup>15</sup> *Leading Manufacturers and Merchants of Cincinnati and Environs*. 1886.

<sup>16</sup> This Hauck family is no relation to the well-known John Hauck brewing family, per correspondence with Andrew C. Hauck, Jr. of Indian Hill.

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In 2005, Cincinnati City Council approved leasing a portion of Doerr Alley to Tender Mercies, a local nonprofit that provides housing and services to homeless persons with a history of emotional or mental illness.

**1111 Vine St.**

Site of **Cincinnati Temporary Labor**, owned and operated by Bob Lenhart since 1969. Lenhart has been a well-known property owner in Over-the-Rhine for a number of years.

L. Schreiber & Sons Iron Works was responsible for this elaborate storefront, as it was for Doerr's next door. Notice that the columns look like ropes and are topped with Corinthian pilasters. The building is Italianate in style.

In 1927, Gerwe Millinery Co. sold women's hats here. In the early 1930's it became Gerwe Schroeder, selling bridal veils. The 1940's welcomed Rueben Caplan, tailor. In 1952, Jack Bundman's, a men's clothing shop was here. Ambat Records, Inc. was here in 1964; Designer's Loft Interiors here in 1977.

**1113 Vine St.**

**West End Loan**

Current **Gary Wagner** moved to this location from **1126 Main St.**, 13 years ago. West End Loan has been in business in Over-the-Rhine for more than 50 years.

**1115 Vine St.**

In 1965, this building was sold to **Lyric Optical** by the William Beck & Sons Co., which carried costumes and theatrical goods. The long, lean lines of this Queen Anne style building can be most appreciated from across the street. The 5<sup>th</sup> floor cornice is elaborate and contains an urn and the limestone front has a flower motif.

**1117-1119 Vine St.**

This was formerly a store, then storage, for urban fashion and hip hop clothing store Deveroes (**1110 Race St.**) Acquired by the Ensemble Theater of Cincinnati (**1127 Vine St.**), renovation and expansion will double available space and is projected to be finished by 2010. GBBN Architects are handling the expansion design.

From the late 1920's until the late 1960's, J. B. Schroder Co., builder's hardware

and locksmiths, was here.

At 1119 Vine St., in the late 1920's, Joseph Maguire & Co., woolens, was here. By the early 1930's, Lang & Co., tailors, was here.

### **1125 Vine St.**

Administrative offices for the Ensemble Theater are located here. Although it has been refaced with brick, the original building details are still visible above the first floor door. In 1927-28, it was the location of Albert W. Lachenmann, who had a shop for bird fanciers. Edgar P. Nash, optometrist, had his office here in 1940. The 1125 Cafe was located here in the 1960's.

### **1127 Vine St.**

The award winning **Ensemble Theater of Cincinnati (ETC)** choose this location after an extended search in downtown Cincinnati. The original building was designed by Samuel Hannaford & Sons to house the German National Bank.

When the German National Bank moved into a new building downtown, its former location became the Italian Consulate and also housed the Union Savings Bank & Trust Co. In 1919, Union Trust merged with Fifth Third Bank to form Fifth Third Union Trust Co., and was here under that name into the 1960's. The Robert T. Morris Printing Company was located here in 1964; Jack Otto & Sons, printers, was here in the mid 1970's. The building front was repainted shortly after the building was converted into a theater in 1988. The columns are metal according to John Clubbe.<sup>17</sup>

The ETC inaugural production was *Deep Sleepers* and the theater did not receive its certificate of occupancy until two hours before the first curtain. D. Lynn Meyers, producing artistic director, remains at the helm.

### **1133 Vine St.**

**City Roots**, an urban garden store, operates here. Voted Best In the City: Shopping, by Cincinnati Magazine in 2007, the shop is home base for Lisa Yunker's urban landscaping business. It carries gardening and potting supplies, a variety of bonsai trees, as well as decorative indoor and outdoor plants. Fancy plants and cut flowers come and go at Lisa's discretion.

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<sup>17</sup> Clubbe, John. *Cincinnati Observed: Architecture and History*. Ohio State University Press. 1992.

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In the 1920's, Miller Brothers Wall Paper operated here. In 1952, Esberger Brothers, jewelers, were here, and, later, Frank M. Okura jewelry was here for many years. Word on the street says Okura was an excellent watch smith, but he sometimes got in trouble for making book. The 513 Sportswear store was listed here in 2002.

**1135 Vine St.**

The **Gateway Quarter** information center and rental office, located here, kept the familiar Bank Cafe clock sign, slightly modifying it to fit the new times in Over-the-Rhine.

In 1890, a saloon owned by John M. Kammeron operated here. In 1916, Frank Hee had a saloon here. For more than 30 years, either Frank or Walter Hee sold soft drinks or had a bar and restaurant here. The Hee family tenancy was broken for a period in the 1930's when Samuel Petroff operated a restaurant and sold soft drinks. From 1951 until 1982, Joseph C. "Bus" and Martha Lee Schroer owned and operated the Bank Cafe.

The, **Bank Cafe**, name referred to two corner banks that were across the street and one two doors away, which is now the Ensemble Theater. The Western German Bank, one of the banks across Vine St. was built in 1905. It was last operated by the Fifth Third Bank and was razed in 1979.

Somewhere along the **1200 block of Vine St.**, a Cincinnati first occurred. Ernest F. Kurfiss introduced Cincinnatians to the "bretzel." According to Robert Wimborg, in *Cincinnati: Over-The-Rhine*, Kurfiss arrived here in 1829 and started making the soft pretzels well known to Germans. The word derives from the Latin *bracchiatus*, having branches, because of the crossed arms of dough in the center. According to legend, monks made the dough in this shape to represent arms crossed in prayer.

No listing for Kurfiss, in various city directories, was found before 1839-40. At that time, Ernest F. Kurfiss occupied Building H, Number 56 in Lower Market, no occupation or product listed.<sup>18</sup> In 1842 and 1843, he had a coffee house and took in boarders in the Lower Market, between Sycamore and Broadway Sts. By

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<sup>18</sup> *Shaffers' Advertising Directory*, 1839-40.

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1846, he had bakery on Front St.

The first time that bretzel makers were listed in the *William's City Directory* was 1878; there were three, one in Over-the-Rhine. Simon Dorschug from Russia, married with two children, was at 152 Clay St. where he lived and had his bakery. His son, Friedrich, was a medical student.<sup>19</sup> In 1883, in addition to Simon Dorschug, there were two other "Bretzel Bakeries" in Over-the-Rhine: C. F. Lohmann at 29 W. Mulberry St. and Catharine Moser, at 85 McMicken Ave.

### 1150 Vine St.

**Gateway Condos** is a new development with apartments, townhouses, retail, and abuts a secure parking garage on 12<sup>th</sup> St.

In the late 1920's, from the corner of Vine St. and Central Parkway north, this block had Morris Aronoff, shoemaker; the I.M. Marshall restaurant; Charles Esberger & Co., jewelers who later moved to **1133 Vine St.**; Julius Gordon, dry goods; the business of Edward R. Glossinger, cigars, which re-located to **1201 Vine St.** as Glossinger Wine & Smoke Shop and stayed for more than 50 years.

### 12<sup>th</sup> & Vine Sts.

The Arch of Peace spanned 12<sup>th</sup> & Vine Sts., commemorating the Grand Army of the Republic's 32<sup>nd</sup> National Encampment in September 5-10, 1898.



This post card shows the North and South clasping hands, underneath, the motto "United we Stand, Divided we Fall."

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<sup>19</sup>1880 U.S. Census.

One of the main purposes of the G.A.R. was uniting the country after the Civil War. A service organization, their goals were loyalty, fraternity and charity. The G.A.R. provided relief funds for widows, orphans and needy veterans. They advocated the building of memorial halls throughout the county, included Cincinnati's at **1229 Elm St.**

This organization designated May 30 as Decoration Day, a day to lay flowers on the graves of the fallen Union Civil War soldiers. As that generation passed away, the day became known as Memorial Day, a day in which to honor of fallen of all wars.

### **WEST OF VINE ST. ON 12<sup>TH</sup> ST.:**

#### **15 W. 12<sup>th</sup> St.**

##### **Dana Hotel**

Behind Doerr Alley, at 15 W. 12<sup>th</sup> St., is the Dana Hotel, one of a variety of residences in Over-the-Rhine operated by Tender Mercies for the homeless mentally ill. According to the historical marker on the building, this location has been a hotel since 1879.

It has operated under a few different names: the Washington Park Hotel and the Hotel Brunswick. In 1901, it was the Hotel Hoemer managed by Henry G. Hoemer. It became the Hotel Homer in 1916, managed by M. Neubauer. Hotel Homer called itself "the home of theatrical people," offering the American, board and lodging included in the price, or the European plan which covers only lodging. The address in the past has been listed as **15-17 W. 12<sup>th</sup> St.**

##### **Drop Inn Center**

#### **217 W. 12<sup>th</sup>**

In its current location for 30 years, after a secret midnight move from **1324 Main St.** in 1978, the Drop Inn Center has been a flash-point for many urban development and re-development issues. When efforts to secure the building for a homeless shelter had reached a dead-end, neighborhood organizers, the late buddy gray (no capitals was his preferred style,) along with Bonnie Neumeier and others, led the trip during a blizzard. Building code issues, the original sticking point, were eventually worked out.

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The core of this building is the 1866 Anderson & Hannaford designed Miami Medical College. This independent college later merged with the University of Cincinnati's College of Medicine. Across 12th St. is the Ophthalmic Hospital building which in later years served the community as a local city operated health clinic.

### **1201-1211 Vine St.**

#### **Duncanson Lofts**

Twenty-five loft condominiums, over retail, were named after Robert Scott Duncanson (1821-1872), the son of a mulatto mother and a Scotch-Canadian father. He spent his childhood in Canada because of their integrated school system, but he joined his mother in Mt. Healthy in 1841. A self taught artist, Duncanson began his career in Cincinnati in 1843.

His local patron was Nicholas Longworth who commissioned him in 1850 to paint murals in the hallway of his home "Belmont," now the Taft Museum. After restoration, his murals there now glow with the same vibrancy as when painted. His best known painting is "Blue Hole, Flood Waters, Little Miami River," which hangs in the Cincinnati Art Museum. A locally well-known artist, Duncanson was a favorite of Queen Victoria and spent many years abroad as a highly respected artist where his color posed no barrier into a cultured society.

His painting of the "Land of the Lotus Eater's" inspired by Tennyson's poem was purchased by Queen Victoria and now hangs in Windsor Castle. In Italy he painted "Vesuvius and Pompeii" showing some of the recently excavated ruins. The painting is now in the collection of the National Museum of American Art, Washington D.C. After a life of creating art, he died in a Detroit mental institution, insane from lead and arsenic exposure from his paints. In his honor, the Taft Museum has the Duncanson Artist in Residence program.

### **1201 Vine St.**

**MiCA 12/v**, sister store to MICA contemporary craft owned by Carolyn Deinger in O'Bryonville, is in this corner store front.

MICA 12/v features unique contemporary artisan creations. During the build out, as much original material as possible was saved. Brick and pine floors from other renovations in OTR now have found a home in MICA 12/v. Carolyn's

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husband, Mike, retired from the U.S. Navy, is usually in the store.

Retail space below apartments at this corner have been used for various businesses: Glossinger's Wine and Smoke shop (for more than 50 years,) men's furnishings, and the Levy Shoe Co.

William Lindenberg, cigar sales, was listed at **1203 Vine St.** from at least the late 1920's until 1940. H. Warth & Sons, tailors, were here in 1964.

Max Frank, music house, was listed at **1205 Vine St.** in the late 1920's; in 1931, the Royal Restaurant was here; and Dave's Food Market was listed from the early 1950's into the early 1960's.

**1207-1209 Vine St.**

**Samax Apartments**

Walter Walker men's furnishings was located in **1207 Vine St.** in the 1920's. Max Franks, radio sales, was here in the late 1930's. By 1952, Henry L. Huthsteiner, cigar sales was here. Hewitt Sales Co., manufacturers agents, was here in 1964. Bob Lenhart's Cincinnati Temporary Labor began here in 1969.

**1210 Vine St.**

**John C. Weber's Café** has been razed. John C. Weber (1855-1938) was a bandmaster and had a long and famous career, both as an award winning conductor and owner of the Prize Military Band of America. He furnished musicians for both People's Theater and Heuck's Opera House and functioned as an employment service for musicians out of work. Germans loved uniforms and an "oom-pa-pa" band. He had a collection of medals given to him by the various crown heads of Europe; in 1937 he reputedly hocked them for \$50.

Saloons were the main place Germans drank; beer was draft and few brands were sold in bottles. For a drink at home, you'd send a child around with a "growler" — a tin pail with a lid — to be filled. Kids carrying a notched broom stick would carry six one-half gallon cans to quench the thirst of workmen in the streets. Weber's saloon retained its popularity with musicians even after Prohibition.

Harry B. Gerwe had a restaurant here in the late 1920's; later Meinrad Luethold had a restaurant; in the 1950's Alt Heidelberg Cafe was here; then Frank's Bar.

### **1211 Vine St.**

The facade of **Lavomatic Cafe** is graced with wonderful Art Deco terra cotta. Chef Jean-Robert de Cavel describes this urban wine bar as a place where people in the neighborhood can meet and visit, similar to the casual community that ebbs and flows in common gathering places like laundromats.

The idea for the name of the restaurant apparently came from a sign de Cavel found in the window of the building: "Furnished Apts. apply at Laundry Mat at 1211 Vine St."

The sign is baffling because no official record of a laundry in the building has turned up. However, a Sanborn® Fire Insurance Map, covering the period 1904 to 1930, notes a "frame building" and the word "pool" is written on the building. Water? Billiards? We're still looking for evidence of a laundry!

As part of the renovation and build-out of the Jean-Robert French Restaurant Group's first foray into Over-the-Rhine, a connector door was built into neighboring specialty retailer, **Metronation** at **1213 Vine St.**

In the late 1920's, the building housed the Hercules Malt Extract Co. managed by Richard Wagner. Over-the-Rhine had several malt companies which supplied home beer brewers. During Prohibition, home brewing became very popular, although many Germans had been making their own beer, wine, and root beer in cellars for years as part of their tradition.

From the late 1930's until the late 1960's, a Dettmer Hardware store was here. Dunrite Tailors Inc. was here briefly in the early 1930's. The Cincinnati Barber College was here in 1971, having moved from 1230 Vine St in the late 1960's. Printers Emergency Service was here in 1977; Astro Sound Music, record store, in 1983.

### **1213-1215 Vine St.**

**Metronation**, owned by George Crawford, Melissa Waters, and Jerry Schmidt, features contemporary accessories, furniture, and gifts. Experienced retail merchandisers, the trio is sensitive to changes in trends. They currently have a signature line of their own candles and soaps.

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According to the *Robinson's Atlas of 1883-1884*, Kissel's Concert Hall was located on this site, next to **1221 Vine St.** and one of Hubert Heuck's entertainment establishments, (the second) Heuck's Opera House.

In the 1920's, David Frisch sold shoes in **1213 Vine St.** Unity Supply Plumbing and also, Keidel Supply Co., plumbing services and supplies, were listed at **1213 Vine St.** during the 1930's. In the late 1920's, Michael Kronos had a restaurant in **1215 Vine St.** and during the 1930's, S. Tuchfarber, groceries was here. This has been known as the Williams Building.

In 1977, Cincinnati Barber College was listed in the Williams' City Directory at **1215 Vine St.**

### **1214-1220 Vine St.**

#### **Duveneck Flats**

The Duveneck Flats occupy two buildings with 15 residential units above retail spaces. Frank Duveneck (1848-1919) was born Francis Decker in Covington, Ky. His parents, Bernard Decker and Catherine Siemers, originally came from Westphalia, Germany. Bernard died of cholera when Frank was just 17 days old. Catherine married Joseph Duveneck and had 11 children. Joseph had a grocery store on nearby Green St. before moving to Covington where he had purchased property on Greenup and 13<sup>th</sup> Sts. Joseph built and operated a grocery store there, later making his own ale and converting the property into a beer garden.

Frank was apprenticed at age 12 to the Altar Building Stock Co., which specialized in church frescos, painting, gilding and carving. He traveled with the firm and was so talented that several of his co-workers sent him to Munich, Germany to study at the Royal Academy when he was 21. He was so successful that he next established his own school of painting in Florence, Italy. He stayed abroad until 1888, when, following the death of his wife, he returned to his parent's home in Covington. He became the director of the Cincinnati Art Academy until his death.

Over the years, street level stores have been Wallace Printing & Stationery, and Heimerdinger & Co., meats. Sand's Pharmacy operated on the second floor of **1214 Vine St.**

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**A Lucky Step** is a contemporary furniture and accessories store owned by Angelita Jones, founder of Eastern Personnel Services. Jones brought in the Federation of Black Cowboys (and their horses, of course) as part of her grand opening in February 2008.

This location has had a long history of furniture sales and interior design retail: Miller Brothers Wall Paper was here in the 1930's, Ideal Home Outfitters was here in the early 1950's. Star Furniture & Appliance Co. was here in the 60's, and Craft Furniture & Appliances was here in the 1970's.

**1221 Vine St.** <sup>20, 21, 22</sup> (**437 Vine St.**)

The last building on this site was the **Rialto Theater**, razed in 1959.

Originally, Francis B. Williams owned this land. He was listed in the *Williams' City Directory* at **437 Vine St.**, at least from 1855 through 1859. Williams first pastured his cows on the site and then built his home there.

In 1862, Loewen Gardens (a "pleasure garden") was operated at **437 Vine St.** by Joseph O. Loewe (spelling per city directory.) In 1875, Fritz Buchmann operated Loewen Gardens at **437, 439, and 441 Vine Sts.**

In 1881, this was the site of the Coliseum Theater, managed by Charles S. Smith, and, initially, leased for five years by Hubert Heuck from Francis Williams.

In 1883, Heuck razed the Coliseum Opera House and built a new theater, briefly called the New Coliseum, then the Queen City Theater, and finally, at the end of 1883, to Heuck's New Opera House.

Heuck proclaimed it "one of the finest theaters in the land." In addition to electric footlights (claimed by Heuck to be the first theater with them), Heuck put in a revolving door to protect himself from breezes, as he took tickets in the lobby. The one-bladed door, which Heuck invented, was not popular with his German friends. Giving into patron disapproval, he had them removed.

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<sup>20</sup> Robert Heuck II. *Hubert Heuck and his Opera Houses*. 1992.

<sup>21</sup> Robert Heuck. *More About Over-the-Rhine*. Bulletin of the Historical & Philosophical Society of Ohio. 20:4 October 1962.

<sup>22</sup> Ford, Henry A. and Kate B. *History of Cincinnati, Ohio*. L.A. Williams & Co.

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The family lived in an apartment above the theater. moving from above the People's Theater at **1301 Vine St.** Heuck, whose first wife died in childbirth, married Emma Mithoff, and his children from his first marriage, were joined by three more.

According to his son, Robert, Heuck drilled a hole in the floor above the box office so he could keep an eye things. In 1897, the family moved to 3336 Jefferson Ave. in Clifton.

In 1906, Heuck's family had to dissuade him from trying to name yet another venture "Heuck's Opera House." Heuck's new theater at 510 Vine St., built with the Shubert family, became the Lyric Theater.

After showing legitimate theater, the entertainment house slipped to burlesque and melodramatic plays in 1919. In 1926, it became a first run movie theater named the Rialto, lasting for 32 years. This has remained a parking lot since the Rialto was razed.

**1224 Vine St.**

In 2008, this building is under renovation, with residences over retail. In the 1920's, the Model Laundry, New Cincinnati Laundry Co., and White Star Laundry were listed here. In the 1950's, the Model Laundry was still here. In the 1960's, it was Empress Food Products Co. Most recently, this was Albert's Supermarket..

**1225 Vine St.**

**Recovery Hotel**

This 20 unit development provides temporary housing for men and women in substance abuse recovery. In the 1920's, the Royal Malt Extract Co. was here; the Club Cafe was here in 1964.

**1227 Vine St.**

**Contact Center**

For more than 30 years in Over-the-Rhine, the community-based Contact Center has fought to end poverty. Through community organizing and citizen testimony, it seeks economic and social justice. The center serves as the hub for the a variety of programs, including the Ohio Empowerment Coalition, Welfare Rights Coalition, and several block clubs.

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In the 1920's, Addison B. Clause, dry cleaners, was here; in the 1960's, Mrs. Frances J. Loos ran a restaurant here.

**1233 Vine St.**

**Masjid-ul-Ashab Mosque**

For many years this was Eck Brothers Realty and Eck Brothers Florist, whose name is seen in the mosaics on the stoop. Blue and white mosaics that once spelled out "Say it with flowers" are still partially visible in the sidewalk. Originally, the Eck Brothers were next door at 1231 Vine. They moved into this store in 1919 until the 1950's. Betty thought of this as the "turtle building," when she was a child, because the facings of false cobbles, made of terra-cotta, looked like turtle shells.

**1235 Vine St.**

Webster Stores Co., wall paper sales, was here in the 1920's and 1930's. From the late 1960's until at least 1991, Elegant Dry Cleaners was here.

**1237 Vine St.**

**Albert's Fashion World**

Herman Lackman constructed this 1892 building for investment on the site of old circus grounds<sup>23</sup> with money earned from his brewery on W. 6<sup>th</sup> St. Records list this building with the number **1239** up to 1930.

In the late 1920's, G.C. Bauer, drugstore, was located here and in 1942, Muhlberg Pharmacy was here. Various bars or bar-restaurant combinations have located here over the years: Curly's; Jean's; George's; and Judy's. Elliot's Grocery predated the current fashion and beauty supply company.

Lackman touted that his beer was made only with well water from his five wells. In 1890 he produced 45,000 barrels of beer. Lackman's brewery closed in 1919 and was absorbed into the Hudepohl Brewery that was adjacent to it.

As was the custom of the times, saloons owned by breweries served only their brand of beer: the saloon would have served only Lackman beer. A corner

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<sup>23</sup> ..."remember when the southwest corner of the Thirteenth and Vine Sts. was a circus lot"..... Frank Y. Grayson. *Pioneers of Night Life on Vine St.* 1924.

location was preferred for saloons because of the exposure it gave the store and because it was easier to spot police on the way, if beer was illegally sold on Sundays. In Over-the-Rhine, German custom overrode the law, and beer was sold every day of the week. Notice the decorated cupid, angel, lion and dolphin heads at eye level, and above, on this typical German corner saloon.

**1300 Vine St.  
buddy's place**

A project completed by ReSTOC (Race Street Tenant's Organization) and named after buddy gray (who preferred his name to be written this way), the slain neighborhood housing activist who founded the Drop Inn Center, this corner building has furnished units of permanent housing for women and men. A storefront is leased to the Miami University's Center for Community Engagement in Over-the-Rhine.

During the 1950's, it was one of several locations of the **Rosenberger Wall Paper Co.** Jimmy Skinner Music was located here from the mid-1960's until the early 1970's.

**1301 Vine St.** <sup>24,25,26</sup> **(455 Vine St. )**

**Venice on Vine**

The current tenant in the **People's Theater** building, "the original Heuck's Opera House," is **Venice on Vine**, a restaurant that operates as an educational program to provide on-the-job training to inner-city residents. The Over-the-Rhine Chamber of Commerce awarded their 2007 Business of the Year award to **Venice on Vine**.

The restaurant occupies what was the lobby and saloon of an entertainment complex owned by Hubert Heuck (1834-1907), patriarch of a modest entertainment empire (see **1221 Vine St.**) Some of the original decorative plasterwork has been preserved and customers sit in what was once the saloon. Before **Venice on Vine**, Ernest Schaengold's Men's Shop occupied the space for more than 50 years.

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<sup>24</sup> Robert Heuck II. *Hubert Heuck and his Opera Houses*. 1992.

<sup>25</sup> Robert Heuck. *More About Over-the-Rhine*. Bulletin of the Historical & Philosophical Society of Ohio. 20:4 October 1962.

<sup>26</sup> Frank Y. Grayson. *Pioneers of Night Life on Vine St.* 1924.

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Heuck's first wife was Christine Jungling Herancourt, step-daughter of George M. Herancourt of Herancourt Brewing.<sup>27</sup> Heuck and Christine had two sons, George W. (1867) and Alphonse L. (1868). Christine died in 1870 giving birth to their daughter, Christine. The Herancourt family allegedly blamed Heuck for Christine's death, believing that he did not secure a competent physician to attend the birth.

According to Robert Heuck,<sup>28</sup> son of the entertainment impresario the theater at **13<sup>th</sup> and Vine Sts.** was known as Heuck's Hall, a saloon, from 1869 to 1875. In 1877, Heuck tore down the existing saloon and replaced it with two buildings. This was his first theater; inside, the buildings shared a common interior. Eventually, this entertainment site would be re-named "The People's Theater."

Heuck lived above the theater with his second wife, Emma, and the three children from his first marriage. Hubert and Emma eventually had three children: Carl Hubert, born in 1883; Walter Heuck in 1882; and Robert born in 1892.<sup>29</sup> The family moved to 1221 Vine St., over the second Heuck theater, before moving to Clifton at 3336 Jefferson Ave. in 1897.

One of the parcels of land, running along 13<sup>th</sup> St., needed by Heuck for his opera house, was owned by Cincinnati brewer, Christian Moerlein. The parcel was mortgaged in early 1877 and Heuck paid it off in May 1879.

The back of the theater, which extended along 13<sup>th</sup> St., was remodeled by Samuel Hannaford in the early 1880's after a fire. The 13<sup>th</sup> and Vine St. corner had a large open tower which has been razed. This early description of **People's Theater** remains, however: "The rakish little cupola still perches atop the building like a number six hat on a number eight head; the building flaunts its brindle-colored coat with its green trimmings..."<sup>30</sup>

**People's Theater** was well known and hosted Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show and Wild Bill Hickock. Sarah Bernhardt performed at the Opera House and W. C.

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<sup>27</sup>Herancourt's was the first Cincinnati brewer to purchase an Arctic Ice Machine which produced up to fifty tons of ice a day. Holian, Timothy J. *Over the Barrel: The Brewing History and Culture of Cincinnati. Vol. 1. 1800-Prohibition.* Sudhaus Press. St. Joseph, MO. 2000.

<sup>28</sup>Robert Heuck. *More About Over-the-Rhine.* Bulletin of the Historical & Philosophical Society of Ohio. 20:4 October 1962.

<sup>29</sup>Emma was 42 and Hubert Heuck was 57 when their last child was born.

<sup>30</sup>Frank Y. Grayson. *Pioneers of Night Life on Vine St.* 1924.

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Fields appeared when it was People's.

*"It was a great week in theatrical circles when Buffalo Bill appeared in person in the 'Last Shot' at Heuck's. The famous scout had with him several equally famous plainsmen and two-gunmen, among whom were Wild Bill Hickock, California Joe and Texas Jack, whom we read about in the fascinating yellowbacks<sup>31</sup> of forty years ago. Wild Bill was the quickest man in the world on the draw and he was the surest shot. He had to be, for he was the marshal of such frontier towns as Hays City and Abilene in the old cattle days. There were several Indians also with the show. Wild Bill never could overcome his antipathy for the noble red man. He believed that the only good one was a painfully dead one, so he would amuse himself during the course of the thriller by firing his pistol at the calves of the Indians and burning them with the powder. He wound up the spectacular week by grabbing the chief and throwing him through the bass drum in the orchestra."*<sup>32</sup>

Buffalo Bill Cody appeared on March 3, 1879. Business must have been good because 84 barrels of Herancourt beer were sold during the week he and his troupe performed. Wild Bill had another connection, besides his performances, to Cincinnati. His wife, Agnes (Mersman) Thatcher Lake, had lived here, and for a time she and her first husband, Bill Thatcher Lake, were partners in the John Robinson Circus. The Lakes next formed their own traveling circus, which Agnes continued to operate following the murder of her husband, who had been trying to eject an unruly patron when the man shot him.

Agnes and Bill's daughter married Gilbert Robinson, son of the John Robinson Circus fame. Wild Bill and Agnes married March 5, 1876 in Cheyenne Wyoming.<sup>33</sup>

They honeymooned in Cincinnati; Wild Bill departed to the goldfields of South Dakota while Agnes stayed behind here to be by her daughter, Emma, who was having her first child. Agnes was still here with her family when she received word of Wild Bill's death, Aug. 2, 1876.

Hubert Heuck was the first to change a beer hall into a theater. Tables were

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<sup>31</sup>"Yellowbacks" were published in second half of the 19th century. They were popular books bound in boards with highly-colored graphics on the covers.

<sup>32</sup>Frank Y. Grayson. *Pioneers of Night Life on Vine St.* 1924.

<sup>33</sup>[http://uwacadweb.uwyo.edu/RobertsHistory/buffalo\\_bones\\_wild\\_bill\\_marriage.htm](http://uwacadweb.uwyo.edu/RobertsHistory/buffalo_bones_wild_bill_marriage.htm)

removed, chairs bolted down and outfitted with a rack over the back of the chair in front to hold beer glasses. He also supposedly was the first to have carbon arc electric footlights in his second **Heuck's Opera House**, at **1221 Vine St.**

He developed the "burlesque wheel" where performers and acts rotated through a circuit, guaranteeing a 30 week season for acts and actors. This circuit covered 37 vaudeville houses including other major cities such as Chicago, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, Pittsburgh, Cleveland and Columbus.<sup>34</sup>

A flamboyant showman, Heuck's motto was: "The play is the thing and Heuck's is the place." A long playbill of acts also could include boxing exhibitions by such champions as "Gentleman Jim" Corbett and John L. Sullivan.

The People's Theater closed in 1918 and, in 1919, was reopened with films and vaudeville. *"Heuck's theater as a home of the sensational ten-twenty-thirty attractions succumbed to the invasion of the moving pictures. The thrilling performances that you saw up there are still shown in celluloid form, with a lot of hokum added and in settings more elaborate, because they have been provided by nature. Thousands upon thousands of Cincinnatians alternately wept and laughed within its sacred walls. Now the memories cling to it like bats to the top of a cave."*<sup>35</sup>

### **1309 Vine St.**

#### **Suder's Art Store**

Sharon Suder is the store's third generation owner. In 1924, John Suder, Sr. purchased Biddlemeier's, a framing business and fine art sales gallery located at 1331 Vine St. He changed the name to **Suder's**. In 1931, the store moved to its present location at 1309 Vine St.

Local artists came to the shop to sell their paintings, and to accommodate them, art supplies were added to the store in 1940. The abundant art materials have crowded out the artwork, but the framing services and art restoration remain. Cino Tailoring Co. was in this location prior to Suder's.

### **1310-1312 Vine St.**

Joseph and Franklin **Rosenberger** opened their wallpaper business along this

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<sup>34</sup> *New Burlesque Wheel*. New York Times. July 28, 1915.

<sup>35</sup> Frank Y. Grayson. *Pioneers of Night Life on Vine St.* 1924.

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stretch of buildings in 1897. The brothers came from Germany and lived in Over-the-Rhine. Three generations worked in this business. George, son of Frank, was known as the “King of Wallpaper.” Later, George moved to Mt. Washington and started a branch of the store there.

The main store stayed on this corner, having expanded into several adjoining buildings, until 1984. There was another Rosenberger location ca. 1902 at **1720-1726 Vine St.** For both stores, paper rolls were brought on canal boats. Rosenberger’s owned a mill in Batavia, which has burned, to print the paper.

Betty Smiddy remembers that all the wallpaper at her grandparent’s house came from **Rosenberger’s**. Her Grandpa had a special pair of long bladed shears to trim the edges off the wallpaper.

Frank Rosenberger later patented an automatic wallpaper trimmer which eliminated this step. George’s son, Frank, still operates a wallpapering business from his home.

### **1313 Vine St. (469 Vine St.) Cosmopolitan Hall**

The sandstone, Italian Renaissance Revival building, erected here in 1885, was one of many union, beer, dance, and concert halls in Over-the-Rhine. It served the entertainment and meeting needs of Over-the-Rhine’s Germanic, Slavic, and other immigrant populations.

Its most recent tenant was the Warehouse, a gritty underground dance and night club named “Best Place to Dance” by City Beat in 2003. The Warehouse’s run was 1989 to 2004. The enormous dance hall was used for scenes in the 1991 movie, *A Rage in Harlem*.<sup>36</sup> Then it became one of the many empty Over-the-Rhine buildings waiting for either salvation or demolition.<sup>37</sup>

On this site, from 1850 to 1852, Bavarian-born Peter Noll operated his Cincinnati Brewery, one of the first lager-brewing companies in the area. He sold it to Karl

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<sup>36</sup><http://www.uc.edu/news/NR.asp?id=1382>. Press Release: University of Cincinnati. March 1, 2004. Mary Reilly.

<sup>37</sup>More than 500 buildings in OTR are empty per Michael Morgan, executive director of the Over-the-Rhine Foundation.  
<http://cincinnati.bizjournals.com/cincinnati/stories/2008/02/25/editorial3.html>

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Class and John Bauer, but their venture failed in a few years.<sup>38</sup>

After Noll's successors closed their lager brewery, William Riedlin took over the site, which became Tivoli Gardens (Tivoli Hall.) He was listed as the manager of Tivoli - concert hall, saloon, and beer garden - in 1885.

In 1885, F. Schaepperle's Music Hall<sup>39</sup> was also listed in the building. An earlier Schaepperle business was a restaurant and beer hall on the southwest corner of **Vine St. and 2<sup>nd</sup> Sts.**

By 1888, with William Riedlin's attention on his successful Bavarian Brewing Company on Pike St. in Covington, Kentucky, the building became Central Union Hall with Fred A. Schaub as the proprietor. Herman Knuwener operated the saloon.

The hall was used for meetings by a variety of organizations: the Carriage Makers' Union met every Friday evening; the Safe Makers' Relief Association met the first and third Wednesday in each month; the Cincinnati Sangerbund met every Friday evening; the Franconia Grove No. 8 of the Druids met every Tuesday; the Humania Lodge No.8 of the A. O. Good Fellows met every Sunday evening; and the Cincinnati Mutual Gardening Co., a building association, met Mondays.

Around the turn of the century, Cosmopolitan Hall,<sup>40</sup> as it became known, was an important meeting hall for unions. Labor activist "Mother" Jones (Mary Harris Jones) spoke at the hall on October 16, 1902. She had been arrested early in that year during the West Virginia United Mine Workers strike. At her trial, the presiding judge called her "the most dangerous woman in America;" however, he suspended her sentence so as not to make her a martyr.<sup>41</sup>

The building, under its many names, served the German citizens of Over-the-Rhine, as well as the Italian, Russian, Czechoslovakian, Hungarian, and Polish residents as a social center. It held weddings, dances, and feasts. Boxing matches

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<sup>38</sup> Holian, Timothy J. *Over the Barrel: The Brewing History and Culture of Cincinnati. Vol. 1. 1800-Prohibition.* Sudhaus Press. St. Joseph, MO. 2000.

<sup>39</sup> *Cincinnati Illustrated Business Directory*, 1885

<sup>40</sup> Musselman, Barbara L. *Working Class Unity and Ethnic Division: Cincinnati Trade Unionists and Cultural Pluralism.* Cincinnati Historical Society Bulletin 34 (Summer 1976): 121-143.

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.sparknotes.com/biography/motherjones/section4.rhtml>

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In 1911, Frank Duttenhofer was the proprietor of Cosmopolitan Hall. During Prohibition, the hall was apparently, not surprisingly, a speakeasy. <sup>42</sup> After Prohibition, Charles Duttenhofer sold soft drinks here. In the 1930's, Joseph Rosenberger (see **1310-1312 Vine St.** for his family wall paper business) operated an indoor golf course here. In 1952, the hall housed Bellonby Furniture, and, in 1964, Welsbach Sales Inc., electrical equipment.

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**IMAGINATION ALLEY** is a pocket park. The vivid archway and other mosaics

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<sup>42</sup> Singer, Allen J. *Stepping Out in Cincinnati: Queen City Entertainment 1900-1960*. Arcadia Publishing. 2005.

<sup>43</sup> Musselman, Barbara L. *Working Class Unity and Ethnic Division: Cincinnati Trade Unionists and Cultural Pluralism*. Cincinnati Historical Society Bulletin 34 (Summer 1976): 121-143.

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were designed and made by community residents. It is a collaborative effort between the Art Academy of Cincinnati, the Peaslee Neighborhood Center, and artist Suzanne Fisher. Yet to be completed is the *Long and Winding Road*, a mosaic pathway that will meander through the center of Imagination Alley. Mosaic art from the Over-the-Rhine Community Art Collaborative can be seen in a number of places in Over-the-Rhine.

**1321-1325 Vine St.**

**Kirby Building**

This **Queen Anne** style building housed retail and apartments, sorely needed by the influx of immigrants to Over-the-Rhine in the 1880's.

In the 1960's, Lizzie Lunsford, second hand store was listed at **1321 Vine St.** and Forster-Treuheit Co., manufacturer of artificial limbs, at **1325 Vine St.**

**1326-1342 Vine St.**

**Trinity Flats**, part of the Gateway Quarter's third phase, will consist of residential units and 7,500 square feet of commercial space at and **1331-1335 Vine St.** and **1332 Republic St.** The development will be a blend of rehabilitation and new construction.

**1327-1329 Vine St.**

A marvelous lion is centered in the sheet metal cornice of the Loewenstein building. "Loewen" is German for lion while "stein" means stone. The owner was Emanuel Loewenstein who was a partner in the Loewenstein Canning Company. Brothers Emanuel and David Loewenstein were packers of corned beef at 573 John St. (1890).

The Loewenstein Canning Co., managed by their brothers Gus and Ben was located at the north-west corner of John and Livingston Sts. and specialized in fresh and smoked meats. This Vine St. building, along with the Queen Anne style Kirby at 1321-1325 Vine St., reflected the growing need for apartments in this neighborhood in the 1880's.

**1327 Vine St.:** Louis & Roth florists were here in the 1920's; Jan & Dot's Ready-to-Wear in the 1960's; and Frank's Pharmacy in the 1970's.

**1329 Vine St.:** In the 1920's, Gus Luftschitz shoes was here and in the 1960's,

Dollar Shoe Store.

**1342 Vine St.**

Built in 1911, this small building was an early urban post office, Station V, open 7 am to 6 pm.

**West of Vine St.:**

**114 W. 14<sup>th</sup> St.**

**Over-the-Rhine Community Housing**

ReSTOC (the Race Street Tenants' Organization) and the Over-the-Rhine Housing Network joined forces in 2006 to create this organization. **OTR Community Housing** is "a non-profit organization that works to build and sustain a diverse neighborhood that values and benefits low-income residents."

**1400 Vine St.**

The **Cincinnati Color** sign is still prominent on this building even though the Deifel family moved their popular paint store to Dalton St. in the West End, after being in this location since the 1950's. They have another location in the Sharonville, Ohio.

From the mid-1940's until about 1955, Jeanne Martin operated a night club named Casa Grande. Loretta Bauman's restaurant was here in the late 1930's and early 1940's.

In the early 1900's, Fred Cullman operated a saloon here. In 1919, he had an auto garage for a number of years and, finally, a restaurant the mid-1930's. A Sanborn® Fire Insurance Map, dating between 1904 and 1930, indicates a lodge hall on the third floor. For a number of years, the Junior Order of United American Mechanics was listed at the northeast corner of **14<sup>th</sup> and Vine Sts.**, presumably one of the organizations using the lodge floor.

The Jr. OUAM was founded in 1853 in Philadelphia on the principles of healing from hatred and prosperity for its members. It distances itself from the OUAM, an earlier anti-immigration organization, according to a current website.<sup>46</sup> The original Order of United American Mechanics (also called the Union of Workers

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<sup>46</sup><http://www.jrouam.com/>

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and the Know Nothings) was founded almost a decade earlier, also in Philadelphia, and was a staunch nativist organization: they were anti-immigrant, anti-Catholic, and believed in only “buying American.”

In 1913, the German Red Men’s Club also met at **14<sup>th</sup> and Vine Sts.**

**1403 Vine St.**

The **Roh’s True Value Hardware** store, with a terrific Art Deco front, has been the place to come for washers, nails, and anything hardware for the last 80 years. They have a large selection of fresh water fishing equipment.

A location of Dettmer Hardware was here for a number of years into the late 1920’s.

**1408-1410 Vine St. (514-516 Vine St.)**

The **Central Assembly of God** owned this building until early 2008. Since the 1920’s, there have been a series of business in **1408 Vine St.:** Carl B. Franciso, auto laundry; F. A. Kemp Flooring Co.; and De Lux Auto Painters.

Henry Wielert came with his parents from Hanover, Germany in 1836. He was a tinner, working alongside his father until he entered the Civil War for the Union cause. He was wounded and discharged and became a bar owner in 1865, just a few years before he built this saloon (1873).

“The passing of Wielert’s, that fine old moist institution, was of such comparatively recent date that it is yet a keen cause of lamentation by those who loved their Bohemia. I doubt whether, in all the many years of its honored existence, it had an equal in the United States. This was because of its emphatic Old World atmosphere, its substantiability and its rigid respectability. From end to end it was operated under a silent discipline that made for the highest efficiency that could be attained in a place of its character. Its successive orchestras were high-class organizations of musicians, and its vocalists were of a high type.

“It was the haunt of Republican politicians, and the little round table that stood next to the northern wall of the main room is enshrined in the political history of this county. It was at that table, night after night, year in and year out, Sundays excepted, the late George B. Cox and his cabinet held court. It was at that table

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that political careers were launched, and there were many a hope of a political career was blasted-cut down in the very bloom of its sturdy infancy by a gruff 'no' that fell from the lips of the Old Boy. But the influence that germinated at that table over a few tall one radiated from it and permeated every part of the State and off times the nation.

"The old place never suffered the ignominy of a police raid until after the prohibition barrier to personal liberty was raised. Then the place drooped, languished and gently breathed its last. Gentlemen and fellow citizens, I would give my right eye at this very moment just for five minutes of the days of old — just long enough, in fact, to surround a sliced tongue sandwich, embellished with cottage cheese, and to wash it down with a standpipe o John Hauck's. As long as I am here to encumber the earth the memory of that combination shall never die...

"One sight that filled the eye and still warms the cockles of my heart when I think on it was that presented when one of John Hauck's wagons, drawn by four huge horses in brass-mounted harness, drove up to Wielert's laden with 100 kegs of the old lager. The cellar, where this beer was to be deposited, was fully 100 feet back from the sidewalk. Wielert would not permit the kegs to be rolled back there, as that would shake the beer up too much, so the men had to carry them back on their shoulders...When beer was needed in the garden, it was carried up out of the ice-filled cellar, a keg at a time and carefully placed on the buck."<sup>47</sup>

In the years before Prohibition, this beer garden was the largest and most famous of them all and the center of much of Over-the-Rhine's political clout. "Boss" George Cox held court there every evening at the round table (*Stammtisch*) reserved for him. Patrons of a less infamous sort were artists and musicians. One of the artists, Henry Farney, sketched the interior of Wielert's as well as its people. Farny was a French immigrant who is best known for his paintings of Native Americans although in his younger years he contributed illustrations to the McGuffey series of readers. Prohibition ended Wielert's and the building's next occupants were a funeral parlor, flooring store, and later still, a church. The wrought iron of the beer garden canopy can be seen from the lot at 1407 Walnut St. where it backed into the Central Turner Hall. A block deep, the beer garden was a staple wherever space allowed. Bands would play into the night, while

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<sup>47</sup> Frank Y. Grayson. *Pioneers of Night Life on Vine St.* 1924.

lattice-work provided privacy yet let breezes through. If you didn't place an order, Wielert's automatic meal was Wiener Schnitzel, fried potatoes, rye bread and Hauck beer.

Wierlert's also had a side room where business was conducted and tables were reserved for regular patrons. Ladies could be served in these rooms without having to be seen by the regular saloon crowd and slipped in by a side entrance.

Many building and loan companies (*Bauervereine*) got their start in saloons, operated from a cash box. Having endured bank collapses in their own country, the German patrons felt that the saloon owners and beer barons were more trustworthy, and convenient than a bank. People would come in weekly to deposit a quarter or fifty cents toward their dream of home ownership. No matter how meager the salary, through thrift they could eke out a few pennies to save towards their dream—a middle class respectable brick house on their own plot of land. This land hunger led to twenty six of these local savings and loans by 1870.

Next door to Wielert's was his rival, Schickling's, described as a "more boisterous resort."

**1431 Vine St.**

**Smitty's Men's & Boy's Wear** has lit up the street here with since the 1960's.

**1432 Vine St.**

**Pohlar's Cafe** has occupied this building for more than 75 years. In the 1920's, it was Pohlar & Hodapp, purveyors of soft drinks.

**1521 Vine St.**

**RAZED**

**Empire Theater**

An early movie house, the Empire opened in 1909. The blue and white façade was added in 1936. It closed in the 1960's and sat empty until 2004. It regained notoriety when the developer, LaShawn Pettus-Brown, fled Cincinnati after defaulting on a loan from the City of Cincinnati. With renovations only started, the roof collapsed and the building had to be razed. The developer was later arrested, convicted, and imprisoned.

## Vine & Liberty Sts.

### 1615 Vine

**St. Francis Seraph Ministries** provides outreach to members of the Over-the-Rhine community. Voted Best Do-Gooders on the 2007 Best of Cincinnati list published by CityBeat. The Order is responsible for Roger Bacon High School. The church has a soup kitchen and operates the **Sarah Center** for women at **1600 Vine St.**

Liberty St. once was the boundary of the City of Cincinnati. Anything north of Liberty was out of the City's jurisdiction. The first Catholic Church (1819) was constructed on the north-west corner of Vine St. and Liberty under that ruling, since Catholics were not permitted to have a church within the city limits until 1825.

A decision was made to replace the modest church with a larger one in 1858. It is run by the Franciscan Friars of the Province of St. John the Baptist. St. Francis of Seraph church was designed by James W. McLaughlin and dedicated to St. Francis of Assisi. McLaughlin was a leading local architect, whose father, William, was partner in McLaughlin & Shillito merchants. His sister Louisa was an artist and early co-founder of Rookwood Pottery. McLaughlin is best known for designing the original building of Cincinnati Art Museum and adjacent art school.

According to Catholic teachings, a seraph is a six winged angel, one of which appeared to St. Francis when he received the stigmata. St. Francis was consecrated in December 1859 and originally served a large German Catholic population. Within its confines it contains the earliest Catholic cemetery in Hamilton County. The bones and tombstones were moved to a crypt within the church. The statue of St. Francis above the doors was cast at the same foundry as the Tyler Davidson Fountain. The current yellow glazed brick veneer was added in 1925 to preserve the original church building whose bricks had been baked in parishioner's ovens and had begun to crumble. The Seminary portion of the church moved to Mt. Airy in 1924 and closed in 1980. The college building is next to the church on Vine St. and the school on Liberty St. and has been converted to apartments. Hannaford & Sons designed the school and were responsible for the new brick veneer of the church.

### **1622 Vine**

The **Guild Haus** has been renovated into lofts. There were a cluster of brewery related buildings on the Kauffman site. The John Kauffman Brewing Company was founded in 1856 by John Kauffman, George F. Eichenlaub (Kauffman's father-in-law) and Rudolph Rheinbold in the area of lower Reading Rd. The first of the Vine St. buildings on this site was built in 1863 and the Reading Road location closed. In 1871, Kauffman's was the fourth largest Cincinnati brewery with buildings on both sides of Vine St. and on Green St., covering 5 acres by 1894. Their beer was sold throughout the country and, in 1871, they produced 50,000 barrels. Note the horizontal band of carved hops across the building which indicated this was the malt house, completed in 1886. The brewery closed in 1919. A little street running behind the building, Hamer, was location of the stables and other brewery buildings. These were used by Husman Potato Chip Co. until recently.

### **1637 Vine**

Tucker's Restaurant has been a neighborhood mainstay for over sixty years, owned and operated by E.G. and Maynie Tucker. Known for its reasonably priced food, it was awarded a "Best of Cincinnati Award for Breakfast." It is now operated by the second generation of the Tucker family. Another Tucker's operated by Maynie's first son, Bob, is located on 13<sup>th</sup> St. between Vine and Walnut Sts.

The Lindner Ice Cream Co. was here in the 1950's.

### **1719-1725 Vine**

This Renaissance Revival apartment building was built in 1876 as an investment by Kaufman and Eichenlaub. The architect was native Cincinnati, George W. Rapp, who specialized in designing breweries ca. 1869. Rapp was a former president of Cincinnati Chapter of Architects. Breweries needed to be more than big box modern factories; they also needed to be aesthetically pleasing, memorable, impressive and as fire-proof as possible. The 1863 on the cornice refers to when Kauffman brewery moved to Vine St.. This building caught fire in 1988 and has languished until now. The Kaufman Building, L.L.C. is planning renovations and building stabilization.

### **1720 Vine**

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**John Stenger, Jr.** started a restaurant at this location in 1933. Originally the family had a saloon but like most others, the business ended with Prohibition. Known for its large portions of good food (especially open-faced roast beef and pork chop sandwich's) and famous for its mock-turtle soup, this restaurant and saloon once was an institution for the Findlay Market crowd. Notice the wooden verandas that were a hallmark of Over-the-Rhine. The Germans used their narrow, deep lots to the maximum because of high land development costs. Exterior staircases replaced interior ones and the narrow porches were used to hang out laundry and to sleep on in hot, summer nights.