

Approximate boundaries:

N-W. Calumet Rd (partially); **S**-W. Good Hope Rd;
E-Pacific RR Co.; **W**-N. 76th St

NORTHWEST SIDE *Brynwood*

NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION

Brynwood is not a residential neighborhood. The Wisconsin Club Country Club occupies a large area at the neighborhood's center, and there is a business/industrial corridor along North 76th Street and West Good Hope Road.

The topography of Brynwood is hilly, with gently rolling to fairly steep inclines. While there is no public green space in Brynwood, there is an undeveloped wooded area adjacent to the railroad tracks that define the neighborhood's northern border. See photos below.

HISTORY

Over 50 neighborhoods on Milwaukee's northwest side once comprised the Granville Township in Milwaukee County, which extended from Hampton Avenue on the south to County Line Road on the north, and 27th Street on the east to 124th Street on the west. The Milwaukee neighborhood of Brynwood was once in the Town of Granville. The neighborhood got its name from the Brynwood Country Club (now the Wisconsin Club Country Club) that was established in 1927 within today's neighborhood's boundaries.

Early populations

According to the *Milwaukee Sentinel* (March 22, 1877) there were originally three small settlements in Granville. The first, in 1835, was the family of Jacob Brazelton which included 11 sons. The second was duo Daniel R. Small and W.P. Woodward from Indiana who pitched their tents in the center of the Granville area shortly after the Brazelton family arrived and later built homes. The third group of settlers, the Joseph R. Thomas family and S.C. Enos, arrived shortly after Small and Woodward.

Within a few years a new group arrived from the town of Granville in Washington County, New York. The assemblage included the Evert, Brown, Crippen, Lake, Dutcher, and Norton families. They gave their new home the name of their former home in New York.

But it was not these earliest settlers that established much of the culture of Granville, Township. That role belonged to a wave of Pennsylvania "Dutch" (i.e., Germans) who arrived just a few years later from Telford, Pennsylvania, including the Wambold, Leister, Scholl, Barndt, Price, Bergstresser, Borse, Klein, Martin, Huber, Groll, Horning, and Lewis families. The Pennsylvania Dutch, under the leadership of Samuel Wambold, quickly established the German Evangelical Lutheran and Reformed Church (now known as Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church) in 1847. The following year, the church's pastor, Wilhelm Wrede, called a meeting of local Lutheran ministers at the church. This group would later become the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. A museum of these early synod activities now stands on 107th Street (see outings).

Today's neighborhood-
Brett's Farmhouse tavern
(now closed) on S. 60th St.



In the 1840s there were over 200 people living in Granville Township, and the numbers continued to grow. A small Irish community settled on Granville's eastern border to the center of the township. Initially they set up tents, built brush shanties, and log cabins. But during these early years, Granville Township remained strongly German, and more Germans arrived every year.

Below is a profile of one of the first families to settle in the area that is today's Brynwood neighborhood.

Brynwood family profile

(Information from U.S. Census and other public documents)

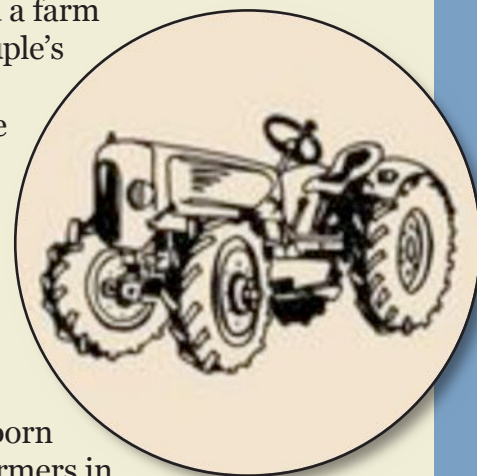
The Launs

Generations of the Laun family had farmed in Granville since 1860. One of their farms was on the southern border of today's Brynwood neighborhood.

In 1856, George and Maria (nee Beier) Laun emigrated from Germany to the United States. The couple traveled to Wisconsin where they purchased a farm in Granville Township (exact location not known). One of the couple's four children was Rudolf Laun (born 1843). Nineteen years later, Rudolf joined the Union Army and served his new country for the duration of the Civil War. Upon his return, he took a job in Germantown as a wagon maker. Perhaps it was there that he met Sophia (nee Graeszel). She had previously been married to a man named Siebenhuenner and had three children. She married Rudolf Laun in 1870 and returned with him to Granville. Rudolf and Sophia added at least two children to their household during their marriage. One was named Edward.

Edward W. Laun (born 1871) married Louisa Bischoff (born 1873) in 1896. Louisa was also a child of German immigrant farmers in Milwaukee. Shortly after they wed, the couple purchased land and opened a farm at 64th Street and West Good Hope, on the boundary of today's Brynwood neighborhood. By 1900, the couple had two children and owned their farm outright. They were able to afford one farm laborer.

By 1910, Edward and Louisa had five children. The youngest was Raymond Rudolf Laun (born 1908). It was Raymond who would ultimately take over management of the farm. He and wife Minnie (nee Krause) operated the family business until the late decades of the 20th century and then retired in Ozaukee County. Raymond died in 1990.



Movement toward annexation of Granville

In 1956 the residents and property owners of Granville Township were given a choice to consolidate with the City of Milwaukee. Needing services that Milwaukee could offer—especially water--the majority of voters said yes to the referendum. By the 1960s, the western portion of Granville (16.5 square miles) was annexed by Milwaukee and the eastern section consolidated as the Village of Brown Deer. Milwaukee became one of the few large cities in the United States that still had working farms within its boundaries.

Brynwood specifics

While the area that is today's Brynwood neighborhood never attracted more than 10 residences, it did attract venues for some of the finest leisure time activities in Milwaukee—for both those of abundant and those of modest means. All of these were on Brynwood's southern boundary on Good Hope Road between 62nd and 72nd Streets.

Brynwood Country Club and Golf Course Established in 1927, the Brynwood Country Club operated an 18-hole golf course until 2009 when it was taken over by the Wisconsin Club. The Wisconsin Club, operating at 900 W. Wisconsin Avenue, is the only private club of its kind in the Midwest in terms of its amenities and prestige. When it assumed control of the Brynwood facility, the Wisconsin Club completely renovated and redecorated the clubhouse, including the first-floor reception area and lounge, two dining rooms, and ballroom.

Melody Top Theatre. For 24 consecutive summers, from 1963 to 1986, Milwaukee's Melody Top Theatre entertained area audiences with well-known musicals presented "in the round." The theatre offered a mixture of popular musicals and classic operettas, usually with a star performer or two in each production such as Chita Rivera, Van Johnson, Jane Powell, and Christine Ebersole. The theatre had both indoor and outdoor characteristics and was family-friendly.

Uihlein Field. For decades, Uihlein Field was home to the Milwaukee Polo Club (technically just across Brynwood's border). Today the club operates out of Hartland, Wisconsin. In 1991, the County Board Committee on Parks, Recreation and Culture voted to replace the polo field with a 65,000-seat indoor soccer building and outdoor fields. The fields and stadium later became home to the Milwaukee Rampage and the Milwaukee Wave United. Today it is Uihlein Soccer Park, a 7,000-seat soccer-specific stadium built in 1994—open for league and general public use.

A new population arrives in the former Granville Township

While the area that would become the Brynwood neighborhood did not attract new settlers, the surrounding area did. In the second half of the 20th century African Americans began to migrate to the former Granville area. This happened for two reasons: (1) the need for housing following the razing of over 8,000 homes in the African American Bronzeville community in the late 1950s through the mid-1960s (see Halyard Park neighborhood), and (2) the availability of family-supporting jobs in industry in the former Granville community. For a time, and to some extent now, many African Americans were able to realize middle class dreams.

Current populations (as of 2021)

Today, Brynwood has just seven residents and two homes. In terms of population, it is the third smallest neighborhood in Milwaukee.

RECURRING NEARBY OUTINGS (Health conditions permitting)

In the following section the website addresses have been eliminated due to technical problems with the various ways different web browsers display PDF files. Website information on these events is available through the book *Milwaukee Area Outings on the Cheap*. See below.

UIHLEIN SOCCER PARK			
When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Mon.-Fri., 9am-4pm	7101 W. Good Hope Rd.	Open play for the general public; youth under 18 must be supervised by adult; no equipment provided.	unk

TOUR OF MUSEUM OF WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD (WELS)			
When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
By appointment	Salem Lutheran Landmark Church, lower level, 6814 N. 107th St.	Tour of more than 1,000 artifacts and pictures of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod	Free, but donations welcome

GRANVILLE BID CAR, TRUCK, AND BIKE SPECTACULAR			
When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Late Sep., Sun. 10am-3pm	Russ Darrow, 7676 N. 76th St.	Exhibition of iconic custom vehicles.	Free

JULY 4TH CELEBRATION			
When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
July 4th, 9am-10pm	Noyes Park, 8235 W. Good Hope Rd.	Parade, Doll Buggy, Bike & Trike, and Coaster judging, games, fireworks.	Free

OPEN SWIM			
When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Daily, 1-5pm, holiday times vary	Noyes Park, 8235 W. Good Hope Rd.	Open swim year-round at indoor pool with diving boards, locker rooms, vending machines.	unk

These outings are provided courtesy of MECAH Publishing.

QUOTES FROM RESIDENTS

In *The Golden Years of Yesteryear* by Emily Treichel Boehlke (reprinted in *A History of Granville* by Miriam Y. Bird, 1996), Treichel Boehlke writes about her family's history in Granville from the mid-1800s through the late 20th century. The following are passages from this work.

“When my Grandparents Treichel were first married and lived in their one room cabin, the Indians would stop in and admire their baby. . . At Grandfather Hackbarth's the Indians set up camps in the woods every spring and fall when they came to do their trading in Milwaukee.”

“Weddings in the 1860s and later were quite different from today. The invitations were hand written by the bride and groom and they were the hosts, not the parents of the bride. . . the silk material for the brides' dresses was only 18 inches wide, so for a fancy dress, it took 18 to 20 yards of material. It was not unusual for a man to wear his wedding suit 20 to 25 years, or as long as it fitted.”

“. . . the settlers were having church services at the home of Ernest Zautcke, who had brought a reed organ from Germany to help him with his singing. One of the men could read a text from the Bible and the other religious books which they had brought from across. Mr. Zautcke then donated land for a church and school on the corner of [today's] Hopkins and Silver Spring Roads. They were served by visiting pastors from Milwaukee and vicinity.”

“School [of her parents] was then held at the house of one of the member's house one month and at another one the next month, whoever had a room big enough to seat the children.”

“The housewife had to plan well ahead for her household. There was the Arab that would come about once a month with two heavy suitcases full of notions and yard goods for house dresses. When he begged for a night's lodging the housewife would get a spool of thread for payment. Also a man with a big basket of oranges and bananas would come. Bananas were 25 cents a dozen for nice large ones. Later a baker would come once a week with bread and sweets.”

“Every mother had to be well-schooled in home remedies. . . Plants and herbs were gathered in the summer to be dried and stored for the winter, to be used for any and all ailments.”

“Grandfather would sit and knit many mittens and stockings for all the grandchildren while Grandma read to him and tended her many plants of which she had quite a variety.”

“Even the first street cars were propelled by horse power. There were only 2 lines, one on 3rd Street to Williamsburg, a section of the city at North Avenue and Center and [one] further north (an all-German settlement).”

“In the beginning of the 1900s, there was no Silver Spring Drive, not even a wagon trail west of Hopkins Street. But the plans were made to have a road there, so one of the farmers would ride through the woods with horse and wagon or on horseback as best he could, so it would be legally kept as a driveway to the next mile west.”

“During the first World War, all gathering of people was forbidden, due to the spreading of the flu. So at Freistadt Church only every other pew could be sat in, so all the people east of the church came for early services and all those west of the church came for later service. Also all talking and preaching was to be done in English, but Pastor Wehrs insisted on preaching in German as many of his older members could not understand English.”

“There were about 12 to 14 neighbors that exchanged labor. This was a hard job for the ladies also, with breakfast at 6, lunch at 9, dinner at 12, another lunch at 3, and supper at sundown. No 8 hour days.”

“When the first threshing machine came out the farmers started to raise barley for the Breweries in Milwaukee. My father raised quite a lot of it and we girls had to man the farming mill in the evening when milking was done and our lessons were finished. This was a cold and tiresome job until enough was cleared for a load to be hauled to town the next day.

Quotes from an oral history of the Granville neighborhoods currently being conducted by Urban Anthropology Inc.¹—About THEN.

“Everyone went to the Melody Top when it was open. You just could not wait until the weather warmed up. It was a place you could take your kids to—if old enough--and just have a great time under the big top.”

“There was a public school that was there for a number of years. I think there’s a few charter schools in the area [now]. And the Marcus Theater on Good Hope and 76th—in that area there. There was a little recreation cart right on 76th on Good Hope. It was mini golf. It sat there for years but somebody finally bought it. It’s changed because a few charter schools appeared in the last few years. I think as far as restaurant’s, it’s still fast-food places. As far as entertainment, it’s pretty limited.”

“There was the Uihlein Polo Fields that is now the soccer park out there. There was the Melody Top Theatre. It was a small theatre and that used to be right on 76th and Good Hope Road. And there was this round-like, big tent building, and you would go and see plays there.

Quotes from the oral history of the Granville neighborhoods—About NOW

“There’s meal programs in the summer. And basketball camps. Only for the impoverished kids that live in the woodlands though. The rest of them have no activity whatsoever. There’s just that one soccer field up there.”

“We don’t have a lot of recreational stuff up there. So really whatever people are doing, they’re not doing in Granville. The soccer fields tend to be very white/suburban. We don’t have a lot of activities. I would say the golf courses are very multicultural. Otherwise, we really do not have much going on.”

“There was the movie theater that was there, mini golf place, the mall. And it all kind of disappeared.”

“There is the soccer facility if you can afford the hourly fee, but we are very short on parks in this entire Granville area. Of course, there are woodlands and open fields for activities like baseball or just kids’ play.”

¹ Urban Anthropology Inc. complies with human subjects requirements of formal research and asks informants to sign informed consent forms that stipulate anonymity, hence names are not provided with the quotes.

PHOTOS



Today's neighborhood-
W. Hemlock St.
east of S. 60th St.

Today's neighborhood-
Businesses on Good Hope Rd.



Today's neighborhood-Abandoned house on N. 76th St. north of Good Hope Rd.



Today's neighborhood-The clubhouse of The Wisconsin Club Country Club.

For more information on the history of Granville, refer to Miriam Y. Bird's *A History of Granville Township*.

For more information on Milwaukee neighborhoods, refer to John Gurda's *Milwaukee, City of Neighborhoods*.

Do you have great photos of this neighborhood? Are you a resident with an interesting quote about this neighborhood? Do you have recurring outings, additions, corrections, or general comments about this neighborhood? Please email your input to Dr. Jill Florence Lackey at: jflanthropologist@currently.com



www.urban-anthropology.org