

Approximate boundaries:
N-W. Calumet Rd; S-W. Clinton Ave;
E-Sam's Club; W-N. 79th St

NORTHWEST SIDE *Buchel Park*

NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION

Buchel Park is a mainly flat neighborhood about the size of one city block. Most of its area is woodland. There is one street (North 79th) in the northwestern corner of the neighborhood with recently built colonial style houses on either side of the street. There are no businesses in Buchel Park. See photo 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 tiny Milwaukee neighborhood of Buchel Park was once in the Town of Granville and was part of the hamlet of old Granville Station. Buchel Park may have been named after the large Buchel family that operated a series of high-end restaurants in the Greater Milwaukee area in the second half of the 20th century. The restaurants included Buchel's Colonial House, Alpine Village Inn, Club Riverside, and the Ulao Inn.

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-
View of N. 79th 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.

Old Granville Station

Today's Buchel Park was part of a Granville hamlet known as Granville Station. The current Milwaukee neighborhoods of Granville Station, Riverton Heights, Polber Heights, Buchel Park, and sections of Land Bank once comprised old Granville Station. The hamlet was centered on the south side of Brown Deer Road at 107th Street and Granville Road. An 1858 map shows a hotel, two stores, two general stores, a wagon maker, and a blacksmith in the hamlet. By 1886, the hamlet had added a painter, an undertaker, a brick factory, cigar factory, two schools, and two general stores. The population was 115. The area also had a railroad line with two stations that closed after World War II.

Economic prosperity in Granville

Except for the downturn of the Great Depression, economic prosperity reigned in Granville. This was due partially to the work ethic of these early residents. The township remained predominantly rural through the early half of the 20th century. Gradually industries began to open in Granville. Beginning in the 1960s, a Milwaukee Industrial Park and Land Bank was constructed between West 76th and West 91st Streets. The area eventually became the most concentrated base of industrial employment in Wisconsin— today including industrial parks and over 75 companies.

Movement toward annexation

In 1956 the residents and property owners of Granville 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.

A new population arrives

In the second half of the 20th century African Americans began to migrate to the neighborhood. 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. As in most German-dominated areas in Milwaukee, the integration of the new population proceeded relatively smoothly. Many African American families were able to purchase homes and move into the middle class.

Unfortunately, the deindustrialization movement that began in the 1980s arrested this course. Manufacturing employment in Milwaukee fell 77 percent, from a peak in 1963 to the present. These statistics, however, did not seriously affect the neighborhoods that once comprised old Granville Station. Surrounding Buchel Park was a project that began development in the 1960s and grew to become one of the greatest industrial concentrations in the State of Wisconsin. See more details in the [Land Bank](#) neighborhood.

Current populations (as of 2021)

Buchel Park comprises approximately one block in the former Granville area and is Milwaukee's smallest neighborhood, in terms of physical size. There are fewer than 50 residents living in Buchel Park. No other demographic information was available.

RECURRING NEARBY OUTINGS

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.

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, fire-works.	Free

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.

“This was once all part of Granville Station and had its own identity.”

“Granville Station--that was also very rural and almost entirely farmland when we moved there. And then as I grew up there, the subdivisions were developed around our home, and you know, some industries and some shopping centers and I remember a lot of the annexation activities that took place. And there were some battles between Brown Deer and what-was-then the town of Granville and then eventually of course the city of Milwaukee annexed the area that included Granville Station.”

“I don’t even think we learned [about] the differences in religions. We were the only right and correct one. But I don’t recall--maybe other than some flippant remarks by some people--and there was a wide variety of people as I’m sure there is today. . . I don’t recall a lot of overt attitude differences. I mean the farming community that I worked on--that farm had different people of different religions. And it never was a big thing.”

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

“Without those manufacturing businesses out there, Granville would be in a whole lot worse shape. And we do think we are the largest employer in the state of Wisconsin. There’s still something good going on up there. So, the City’s decision to develop that land for manufacturing was a really good decision on their part.”

“More manufacturing is done there in the Granville area than anywhere else in the State of Wisconsin. More than the valley, more than the city invested in [the] central city.”

“Prior to my time we didn’t have any community-based organizations and I am just trying to build that up right now. We had churches, churches, churches, and I am a minister so that’s no dis to any of the churches. We have not had the organizations that are in the community day in and day out, knocking on doors and building bridges in those relationships until now. With the coalition that we have--SDC, Crossway- a church locating in Grafton German town, Granville BID, rez care, a number of organizations that have the focus of Granville but they work with the city—so I am just trying to bring back community-based organizations.”

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.

PHOTO



Today's neighborhood-View of N. 79th St.

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