

What's in a name?

origins of names for the Akron Public Schools



*The original Bowen School,
currently the site of the Akron Public Schools' Administration Building*

What's in a name?

A traveler met three stonecutters along a road and asked each what he was doing. The first man responded that he was cutting stone. The second said he was shaping a cornerstone. But the third proudly smiled and said: "I'm building a cathedral."

Although our schools are not cathedrals, many are named after people with the same attitude as the third stonecutter. Whether they were education-, business- or civic-oriented, these people were leaders who thought about today and the day after, and could communicate that vision to others. They were men and women who saw the big picture in Akron.

What's in a name? was originally published in 1980, updated and revised for the 150th anniversary of the Akron Public Schools in 1997.

On the cover

Three schools have been located on the 70 North Broadway site. The first, called "Broadway School," was a house which was used as a school in the 1850s. The second, pictured on the cover, was called "Bowen School." It was built in 1870 and named for Dr. William Bowen, a physician, teacher, editor and member of the Akron Board of Education. In 1916, the original Bowen School was razed and a new school was built on the site. Bowen School was closed to students in 1939 and became the Administration Building in 1939.

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Buchtel High School

Constructed: 1931

Additions: 1955, 1971, 1984 (gym)

Named in honor of John R. Buchtel (1822-1892)

John R. Buchtel was one of Akron's leading industrialists and philanthropists. He helped to organize and finance a number of Akron firms and was also one of the early investors in the rubber company of Dr. Benjamin F. Goodrich.

Buchtel is best remembered for his role in the founding of the Universalist college originally named in his honor, which today is the University of Akron. Over the course of his life, Buchtel and his wife contributed more than \$500,000 to the college.

Central-Hower High School

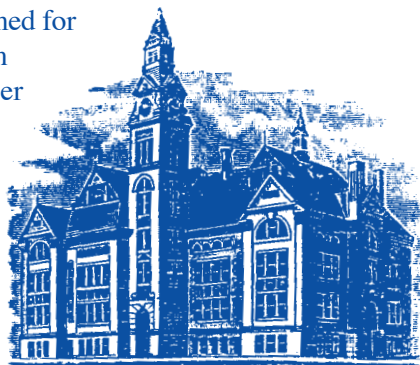
Constructed: 1973 (1924 auditorium included in new complex)

Opened: September 1975

The name of Central-Hower High School was adopted in 1970 when the student bodies of Central High School at Forge Street and Hower Vocational School at Exchange Street were merged into a new high school facility on the site of the old Central building.

Both of the original schools have a rich tradition. The original Central building on the Forge Street site opened in 1886. Known as Akron High School, the school was renamed Central High School in 1911 when the Akron Board of Education opened a second high school — South.

Hower Vocational School was named for M. Otis Hower (1858-1916), an Akron manufacturing leader. He was an officer of the American Cereal Co. (the forerunner of the Quaker Oaks Co.) as well as many other area enterprises.



East High School

Constructed: 1955

Opened: September 1955

Addition: 1971

The present East High School on Brittain Road opened in September 1955. The school replaced the older East High School facility on Martha Avenue which is now known as Goodyear Middle School.

Ellet High School

Constructed: 1950

Additions: 1957, 1975

Annexed by the city of Akron in 1929

The bulk of the land in the Ellet District was purchased in 1810 from Simon Perkins by three sons of Samuel Ellet, an early settler who moved into the area that year.

The Ellet District was annexed to the city of Akron in 1929, and became part of the Akron Public Schools the same year.

The present Ellet High School on Woolf Avenue opened in 1950. The school replaced the older Ellet High School on Canton Road which served both elementary and high school students. That facility is now known as Ritzman Elementary School.

Firestone High School, Campus for International Baccalaureate and Visual & Performing Arts

Constructed: 1962

Opened: September 1963

Named in honor of Harvey S. Firestone (1868-1938)

With capital acquired in a buggy tire business, Harvey S. Firestone came to Akron in 1900 and with three associates organized the Firestone Tire & Rubber Co. The ingenuity and aggressiveness of Harvey Firestone in providing tires for the automobile industry resulted in the rapid growth of his company and helped to make Akron the rubber capital of the world.

Firestone had a keen interest in civic affairs in Akron. His family continued this tradition, donating funds for the natatorium facilities at Firestone High School.

Garfield High School

Constructed: 1926

Opened: September 1926

Additions: 1958, 1963, 1965-66, 1987

Named in honor of President James A. Garfield (1831-1881)

Garfield High School was named for James A. Garfield, 20th president of the United States. The school was formally dedicated on November 19, 1926. James R. Garfield, the son of the slain president, gave the principal address at the ceremony.

In 1966 Garfield High School became the first comprehensive high school in Akron when it opened an addition for vocational education facilities.

Kenmore High School

Constructed: 1916, with an addition in 1917 (both razed in 1975); additions in 1952 and 1955; an almost entirely new school built in 1980

Originally part of the Coventry Township District

Annexed by the Akron Public Schools in 1929

The village of Kenmore was developed by the Akron Realty Co. The members of the company originally planned to call the new town Hazeldale or Hazelhurst in honor of the daughter of N.R. Steiner, one of the company's stockholders. For some reason now unknown, Steiner selected Kenmore instead. Some people believe Steiner named the town for a beautiful Long Island or New Jersey estate by that name while others contend it was named for Kenmore Castle in England.

The Akron Realty Co. sold the first lot in the development in the spring of 1901. In 1908, the village of Kenmore was incorporated.

In 1916, the Coventry Township Schools built a school on the present Kenmore High site. Due to the rapid growth of the village of Kenmore, an addition was added the next year. The school housed elementary and high school students for several years. More additions were made in 1952 and 1955. In 1975, the oldest parts of the school were razed and in 1980 almost an entirely new school was built.

North High School

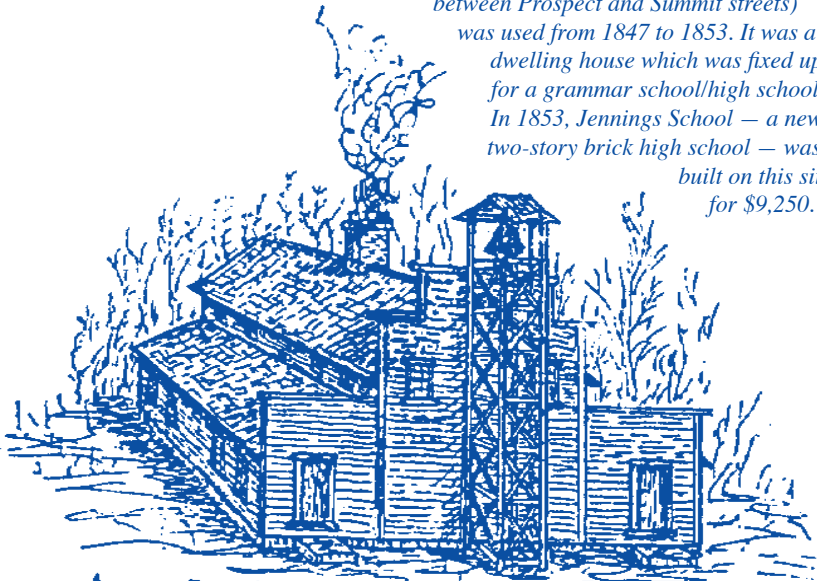
Constructed: 1931

Additions: 1953, 1964, 1970

North High School was originally located at what is now Jennings Middle School. In 1931, the present North High School was built on Gorge Boulevard. The new building housed 10th-, 11th- and 12th-grade students. The school then officially became North High School.

Two wars and a depression delayed the completion of the building for 24 years. In 1955, a major addition including an auditorium, cafeteria and gymnasium was completed. Then in 1970, a vocational wing was added; and in September 1972, North High became a four-year high school once again.

Akron's first grammar school/high school building (at Mill, between Prospect and Summit streets) was used from 1847 to 1853. It was a dwelling house which was fixed up for a grammar school/high school. In 1853, Jennings School — a new two-story brick high school — was built on this site for \$9,250.



Goodrich Middle School

Constructed: 1930 (as an elementary school)

Additions: Converted to a junior high in 1954, 1967

Named in honor of Benjamin Franklin Goodrich (1841-1888)

In 1870, Dr. Benjamin F. Goodrich came to Akron, secured financial backing and established the first rubber factory west of the Alleghenies, on the banks of the Ohio Canal near Exchange Street. Previously he had practiced medicine, prospected for oil, worked in a shipping company and entered the real estate business. He had also acquired ownership of a small rubber company in New York, which proved to be a losing venture.

From 1881-82, Goodrich served on Akron City Council.

Goodyear Middle School

Constructed: 1918 (the original East High School)

Addition: 1952

Named in honor of Charles Goodyear (1800-1860)

In 1844, Charles Goodyear discovered and patented the vulcanization process, basic to the rubber manufacturing industry.

F.A. Seiberling purchased 12 acres of land in East Akron and launched a company in 1898 to which he gave the name, Goodyear, in order to perpetuate the name of the inventor who had discovered vulcanization. The area surrounding the company became known as Goodyear Heights.

By the time the new East High opened in 1955, the old Goodyear building had undergone alterations (including an addition) and become a junior high school. Its name was also changed at that time. The conversion of the old building to a junior high was part of a systemwide adoption of the 6-3-3 plan of elementary, junior high and senior high schools. The 6-3-3 plan enabled the Akron Public Schools to house the burgeoning enrollment of the post-war baby boom and, at that time, provide modern high school facilities.

Hyre Middle School

Constructed: 1960

Additions: 1963, 1971

Named in honor of Robert G. Hyre (1894-1961)

Robert G. Hyre began his career with the Akron Public Schools in 1929 when the Ellet District became part of Akron. From 1934-1950, he served as principal of the old Ellet High School and was given the task of organizing the new Ellet High School. He continued as principal of this new school until his resignation in 1956.

Innes Middle School

Constructed: 1959

Addition: 1964

Named in honor of Walter J. Innes (1909-1944)

Walter J. Innes was a 1926 honor graduate from Kenmore High School. In 1932-33, he taught physical education in the Akron Public Schools and in 1934 he returned to Kenmore High to teach history.

The life of Walter Innes was characterized by his desire to serve. With the advent of World War II, he felt the priority of service to his country and, in 1942, joined the Army. He was killed in action in France in 1944.

Jennings Middle School

Constructed: 1915

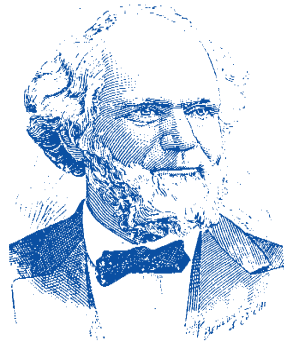
Additions: 1917, 1921, 1957

Named in honor of Isaac Jennings (1822-1887)

Reverend Isaac Jennings has been called the father and founder of the Akron Public Schools.

On May 16, 1846, a public meeting of Akron citizens was held “to take into consideration our present educational provisions and the improvement, if any, which can be made therein.” Reverend Jennings was made chairman of a committee appointed to work out a plan to be presented to the legislature.

On November 21, 1846, a meeting was held at Mechanics Hall, and



a report was submitted. It provided for incorporating the whole town into one school district; for grading the schools into primary, and secondary, and later a high school; for free admission to all schools; for support of all by general taxations; and for the election of a school board having full supervision of school matters.

This plan for school organization was later adopted by the Ohio State Legislature.

Roswell Kent Middle School

*Constructed: first building 1882,
present building 1954*

Additions: 1960, 1977 (LRC)

*Named in honor of
Roswell Kent (1798-1871)*

Roswell Kent became involved in the manufacturing of woolen machinery. He was married to Eliza Hart, the first white child born within the present city limits of Akron. Her parents had been the first settlers of Middlebury.

The first Kent School was located on South Arlington Street and functioned as an elementary school. It closed in 1940 and was sold in 1946.



Litchfield Middle School

Constructed: 1959

Addition: 1964

Named in honor of Paul Weeks Litchfield (1875-1959)

In 1900, Paul W. Litchfield came to Akron from Boston, assuming the role of superintendent of the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. In 1926, he became president of the company, relinquishing this role in 1940 but remaining as chairman of the board and chief executive officer.

Litchfield felt strongly about the value of education, regarding it as a primary force in the lives of individuals. He was one of the first technically-trained, college-graduated men to enter the rubber industry. He established the Goodyear Training Center and was an active, ardent supporter of the Akron Public Schools and the University of Akron.

Perkins Technology Middle School

Constructed: 1872 (first building), 1920 (second building), 1954 (third building)

Addition: 1975

Named in honor of Colonel Simon Perkins (1805-1887)

Simon Perkins Jr., son of General Simon Perkins, founder of Akron, came to Akron in 1835. Colonel (the title is honorary) Perkins was a promoter of the Atlantic and Great Western Railroad and the Akron branch of the Cleveland & Pittsburgh Railroad (known later as the C. A. & C. Railroad).

Perkins served as a state senator and Summit County's first representative. He was a trustee of Portage Township and first president



of the Akron Rural Cemetery (Glendale).

Among the many donations of land made by Colonel Perkins were the town parks of Union and Grace.

In 1949, Perkins Elementary School, located on the south side of West Exchange Street between Bowery and Locust streets, no longer housed elementary students. Because the district did not want to lose the name of one of the city's founders, the Perkins name was resurrected when the Mull Avenue middle school was built in 1954.

Riedinger Middle School

Constructed: 1979

Named in honor of Mabel M. Riedinger

Mabel M. Riedinger began her long and illustrious career in education as a teacher in the Akron Public Schools in 1926. She taught at Bryan, West and Buchtel. In 1947, she joined the faculty of the University of Akron, where she became a teacher of teachers.

Dr. Riedinger served as a member of the Akron Board of Education from 1950 to 1970. In 1975, she returned as a board member for a five-month interim appointment. While serving on the board, Dr. Riedinger chaired the Committee on Instructional Policy, guiding decisions central to the development of a sound educational program.

In addition to her tenure on the Board, Dr. Riedinger had a major influence on teacher education programs, and established a remarkable record of community service.

Recognizing her many achievements, the Akron Board of Education — in March 1977 — decided to name the new middle school to be built in Opportunity Park in her honor.

Barber Elementary School

Constructed: 1929

Opened: February 1930

Addition: 1953

Named in honor of George Barber (1805-1879)

In 1845, George Barber — founder of the match industry in Akron — purchased a fledgling match manufacturing business, one of the first west of the Allegheny Mountains. Although he turned out good matches, his business was plagued by financial difficulties due to a poor sales distribution system. Consequently, he traded his factory for a hotel in 1852.

After a year, he again embarked in the match business, being more successful the second time with the assistance of his son, Ohio Columbus Barber. By 1862, O.C. assumed the management of his father’s business which in 1868 was incorporated as the Barber Match Co.

The company grew rapidly during the 1870s. Strike-anywhere matches, as they were called, came into general use throughout the nation. When George Barber died in 1879, the fledgling business he had started was making one-fifth of all the matches manufactured in the United States. His son, O.C. Barber, founded Barberton and became known as the “Match King of America.”

Barrett Academy

Constructed: 1972

Opened: November 1973

Named in honor of Dr. Clinton Delos Barrett

During World War II, Dr. Clinton Delos Barrett served as chief executive officer of the first war dog training center in the United States. After the war, he came back to Akron where he was instrumental in eradicating rabies among dogs in Summit County. He was chairman of the Summit County Animal Protective League and president of the Ohio State Veterinary Association.

Dr. Barrett served as a member of the Akron Board of Education from 1952 to 1972.

Bettes Elementary School

Constructed: 1927

Additions: 1952, 1964, 1980 (LRC)

Originally part of Tallmadge Township Schools

Annexed by the Akron Public Schools in 1931

Named in honor of Captain Nathaniel Bettes (1747-1840)

Nathaniel Bettes, a native of Massachusetts, was one of the “minutemen” who answered the alarm after Lexington and took part in the siege of Boston. He entered the Revolutionary War as a private, and in five years rose to the rank of captain.

After the war, the state of Massachusetts awarded its Revolutionary soldiers grants of bounty lands in the West. Bettes, however, did not take advantage of this land grant award in Ohio until some 30 years later.

In 1810, Bettes, at the age of 63, moved with 20 members of his household to Ohio. The journey by covered wagon took the Bettes clan six weeks. Bettes and his brother Mills ultimately settled in the area now known as Bettes Corners.

Betty Jane Elementary School and Annex

Constructed: 1929

Opened: October 1929

Additions: 1953, 1956, 1958, 1963, 1968 (primary building)

Originally part of Tallmadge School District

Annexed by the Akron Public Schools in 1931

Named in honor of Betty Jane McBrayer (1921-1927)

Betty Jane McBrayer was the daughter of Thomas McBrayer, president of the Tallmadge Board of Education. As president of the school board, he had worked to ensure that a new school would be built on Darrow Road.

McBrayer’s daughter had attended a portable building on the site of the present building before she died. After the new building was completed, the townspeople offered to name the new school McBrayer because of his untiring efforts in making it a reality. McBrayer, however, asked that the school be named instead in memory of his little girl, Betty Jane.

Case Elementary School

Constructed: 1957

Addition: 1963

Named in honor of Anne T. Case (1880-1966)

Anne T. Case was the first woman president of the Akron Board of Education. She became a member of the Akron Board of Education in 1934 and served 24 years.

Case was active in other community organizations. She served as president of the YWCA, Summit County Federation of Women's Clubs, and Akron Council of Home and School League. (The latter was the forerunner of the present Akron Council of Parent-Teacher Associations.) She was also a member of the City Recreation Commission.

Crosby Elementary School

Constructed: 1877 (first building), 1923 (second building)

Named in honor of Dr. Eliakim Crosby (1779-1854)

Eliakim Crosby helped to make Akron a manufacturing center. In 1825 he contracted to build a section of the Ohio Canal between Bethlehem and Zoar. About the same time, he purchased an iron smelting furnace in Middlebury, and embarked on the manufacture of plows and other iron agricultural implements.

In need of more water power for his manufacturing enterprises, he

constructed the Cascade Mill Race which conducted water from the Little Cuyahoga River to a point near Lock 5 on the Ohio Canal. Completion of the race led to the founding in 1833 of the village of Cascade.



Crouse Magnet School for Math & Applied Science

Constructed: 1920

Addition: 1929

Named in honor of George W. Crouse (1832-1912)

George W. Crouse served as a teacher, county auditor and county treasurer as well as manager, secretary-treasurer and president of a farm machinery manufacturer. Along with other prominent leaders, he lent money to Dr. B.F. Goodrich to build the first rubber plant in Akron.

Crouse was also a trustee of Buchtel College, a county commissioner, and member and president of both the Akron Board of Education and City Council.

In 1885, he was elected to the Ohio Senate and in 1886 to the U.S. Congress. His service won for him a high reputation of integrity and intelligence for it was often said that “George Crouse’s word is as good as his bond.”

Erie Island School

Constructed: 1958

Additions: 1965, 1974

According to folklore, Erie Island, located in Copley Swamp, was the stronghold of the Erie Indians. In the mid-17th century, it was here that the tribe made a last, but unsuccessful, stand against the invading Iroquois.

It could well be that the playground which now contains swings once was a hunting ground for Erie braves.

Essex Global Telecommunications & Modern Languages Elementary School

Constructed: 1966

Addition: 1968

Named in honor of Martin W. Essex

Martin W. Essex began his term as superintendent for the Akron Public Schools in 1955. He was involved in a wide range of assignments in educational policy-making at the local, state and national levels. He directed the campaign for a constitutional amendment to create a state board of education and headed a five-year study of education in the Soviet Union.

During his superintendency, the Akron Public Schools' system built 10 schools in 10 years to house the children of the post-war baby boom. In 1964, school enrollment peaked at 59,070 students. Toward the end of his tenure, the Akron schools launched specialized programs for pupils from economically disadvantaged homes as state and federal funds became available. Akron was one of the first school systems to submit and secure grants for disadvantaged pupil programs.

In 1966, Essex left Akron to become Ohio's superintendent of instruction, a position he held until his retirement in 1977.

Fairlawn Elementary School

Constructed: 1929

Originally part of Portage Township

Annexed by the city of Akron in 1931

Additions: 1949, 1952, 1954, 1958 (primary unit), 1972 (LRC)

In 1931, the city of Akron extended its western boundary to include Fairlawn School, once a part of Portage Township and named for the village of Fairlawn.

This area can trace its "school" to the 1820s. The "new, modern building" constructed in 1929 contains, in its cornerstone, the names of the children and teachers of the school and a history of Portage Township.

Findley Academy

Constructed: 1906

Addition: 1926

Named in honor of Samuel Findley (1831-1908)

Samuel Findley assumed the superintendency of the Akron Public Schools in the fall of 1868, staying on in this position for 15 years. He was very active in professional affairs, serving as editor and publisher of the *Ohio Educational Monthly* after his retirement.



Firestone Park Elementary School

Constructed: 1917

Opened: 1919

Annexed by the city of Akron in 1916

At the turn of the century, five men met to organize a company which would become one of the most prosperous and well-known in the world — the Firestone Tire and Rubber Co. Shortly thereafter, 1,000 acres of land southeast of the factory were purchased and set aside for a residential development to be called Firestone Park.

It was the wish of Harvey S. Firestone, founder of the company, to provide an area which would meet the spiritual, educational and recreational needs of the plant workers. In 1917, one year after the area had been annexed to the city of Akron, he deeded land to the Board of Education for a school — Firestone Park.

Throughout his life, Firestone enjoyed visiting the school and donating many items to it.

Forest Hill Elementary School

Constructed: 1914

Additions: 1926, 1964, 1993

Originally part of Portage Township Schools

Annexed by the Akron Public Schools in 1916

Forest Hill School, a part of the Portage Township Schools when it was constructed in 1914, took its name from the woods in which it was located. The original buff-colored brick structure contained four rooms. In 1916, Forest Hill became part of the Akron Public Schools.

Glover Elementary School

Constructed: 1918

Opened: September 1918

Additions: 1924, 1927

Named in honor of Nathan L. Glover (1842-1923)

Nathan L. Glover was the first supervisor of music education in the Akron Public Schools. In September of 1872, Glover was hired as a vocal music teacher for the Akron schools. For years, he was the entire music department, going to each school and conducting a music class in each room about every two weeks.

He organized annual music festivals and formed glee clubs and choruses in each high school. Later, he became supervisor of music, coordinating the work of a staff of itinerant music teachers.

Glover retired as head of the music department of the Akron Public Schools in 1921 after 49 years of service with the school system. He was succeeded by his daughter, Nellie Glover.

Harris Elementary School

Constructed: 1922

Named in honor of Malana A. Harris (1842-1904)

Originally part of Portage Township Schools

Annexed by the Akron Public Schools in 1916

Harris School is located on the site of the former Caldwell School, built in 1906 by the Portage Township Schools. In 1916, the Akron Board of Education annexed Caldwell and it became part of the Akron Public Schools' system. A four-room annex was added shortly afterward.

In 1921, the Akron Board of Education razed the original 1906 building and built a major addition to the school. Apparently, the school board intended to retain the name of Caldwell for the Dayton Street school; however, a controversy concerning school names began to brew which ultimately involved the Dayton Street school and the proposed school on Merriman Road now known as King School.

The end result was that the Dayton Street school was renamed for Malana A. Harris, a former Akron teacher who was instrumental in the growth of the kindergarten program in Akron. Harris began her teaching career in the Akron Public Schools in September 1875.

Hatton Elementary School

Constructed: 1957

Additions: 1961, 1965

Named in honor of Otis C. Hatton (1886-1957)

In 1917, Otis C. Hatton came to Akron to teach at Central High School. During the ensuing years, he served successively as principal of Glover Elementary School, Mason Elementary Teachers' College Observation School and East High School. In 1934, he was appointed assistant superintendent, a post he held until 1942 when he was named superintendent.

During his 13-year superintendency, Hatton guided the Akron school system from the curtailments of the depression years. Among his more important accomplishments were the reopening of kindergartens, the reestablishment of the full-length school day for high school students, and the launching of an extensive building construction program.

Heminger Elementary School

Constructed: 1905

Addition: 1964

Named in honor of McClelland C. Heminger (1862-1945)

McClelland C. Heminger taught school for more than 20 years and for several years served as a member of the Coventry Board of Education.

In 1900, he entered the lumber business. By 1901, he had become very involved with the incorporation of Kenmore and so joined the Akron Realty Co. where he served as secretary, treasurer and general manager.

It was while he was general manager of the company that Heminger donated land for a school in Kenmore — a school which would proudly bear his name.

Highland Park Elementary School

Constructed: 1922

Additions: 1956, 1963

Originally part of Coventry Township

Annexed by the city of Kenmore in 1920

Highland Park School is located in an area which originally was a part of Coventry Township and was served by the old Tamarack School near Nesmith Lake. This area — also referred to as Oakwood — was annexed by the city of Kenmore in 1920.

Largely through the efforts of A.R. Ritzman of the Heminger-Ritzman Realty Co., a residential allotment was opened called Highland Park.

Shortly after the allotment opened, a school was constructed to serve the children of this new area, children who had been attending school in portable buildings and children from the old Tamarack School. The new 14-room brick building took its name from the residential allotment which had spawned it, Highland Park.

David Hill Elementary School

Constructed: 1928

Named in honor of David E. Hill (1825-1901)

In 1851, David E. Hill joined with three other men to become manufacturers of water pipe. Two years later, one of the partners invented a machine to make vitrified sewer pipe, thus making this company the first sewer pipe factory in the United States. By 1871, the company was incorporated as the Akron Sewer Pipe Co.

In 1873, Hill formed another pipe company — the Hill Sewer Pipe Co. — with himself as president. In 1900, the two companies merged to form the American Sewer Pipe Co.

Besides founding the sewer pipe industry, Hill also served as the first president of the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co., a member of City Council, a county commissioner and as a member of the Middlebury School Board.

Hotchkiss Elementary School

Constructed: 1927

Addition: 1965

Named in honor of Henry V. Hotchkiss (1859-1924)

Henry Vernon Hotchkiss came to Akron in 1900 to become superintendent. For the next 20 years, under his direction, the Akron Public Schools' system experienced great expansion. From 1910-1920, three high schools and 13 grade schools were constructed; and many additions were made to older buildings.

Besides functioning as superintendent, Dr. Hotchkiss was the business manager for the Board of Education.

Among the innovations which occurred under his regime were: free books and supplies for all students; gyms and cafeterias in the high schools; open-air schools with free lunches for undernourished children; and special classes for the deaf, crippled and blind.

Hotchkiss was built to relieve a temporary school which had been functioning on the fourth floor of Goodyear Hall.

Jackson Elementary School

Constructed: 1928

Named in honor of Andrew Jackson (1833-1905)

In 1864, Andrew Jackson — no relation to the president after whom he was named — began a career in the lumber business which enabled him to become very prominent in Akron's commercial circles.

Jackson was active in community affairs and served two terms as a member of the Akron Board of Education.

King Elementary School

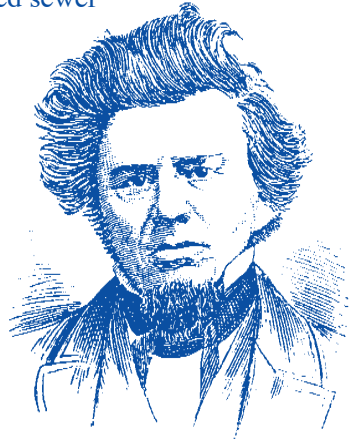
Constructed: 1923

Named in honor of Leicester King, David L. King and Henry W. King

King School was named for three members of the King family. Leicester King served as an associate judge of Trumbull County for seven years before coming to Akron. In 1834, Judge King was deeded a third interest in North Akron by General Simon Perkins and Dr. Eliakim Crosby. Later, Judge King purchased Dr. Crosby's interest. In 1840, Judge King helped to build the Cascade Mill. He was a key promoter of the Pennsylvania and Ohio Canal, and it is said that he was responsible for changing the plan of the canal route so it would come through Akron instead of Middlebury.

David L. King, son of Judge King, shared his father's interest in business. David King was secretary and treasurer of the Akron Sewer Pipe Co., a leading manufacturer of vitrified sewer pipe.

The most important member of the King family in the history of the Akron Public Schools is Henry W. King. King was secretary of the citizens committee which drafted the bill embodying the Akron Plan of free graded public schools passed by the state legislature in February 1847. The Akron Plan became the model for tax-supported schools in Ohio and throughout the nation.



Lawndale Elementary School

Constructed: 1912

Opened: 1913

Additions: 1916, 1922

Originally part of the Coventry Township District

Annexed by the Akron Public Schools in 1929

The first Lawndale School was a one-room frame building on Wilbeth Road. The school was named for an area of Kenmore known as the Lawndale Allotment.

In 1912, a four-room brick school was erected on 25th Street. Because of the rapid increase in enrollment, additions were added to Lawndale in 1916 and 1922. In 1929, when Kenmore was annexed to the city of Akron, Lawndale became part of the Akron Public Schools.

Leggett Elementary School

Constructed: 1889

Additions: 1914, 1921

Named in honor of

Mortimer D. Leggett (1821-1896)

Mortimer D. Leggett, Akron's first superintendent of schools, served from 1847 to 1849. In addition to his duties as superintendent, he was principal of the grammar school at an annual salary of \$500.

During his short tenure, he was responsible for the formal organization of the Akron school system. When the new school board was unable to honor his request for additional compensation, he resigned his post.



Lincoln Elementary School

Constructed: 1910

Opened: September 1910

Addition: 1919

Named for President Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)

Lincoln School was named for Abraham Lincoln, 16th president of the United States (1861-1865).

Construction of the school was started in 1909, the 100th anniversary of Lincoln's birth. The school opened in September 1910. The original building had 12 rooms including a kindergarten. In 1919, a major addition provided 12 additional classrooms, a kindergarten room, a combination auditorium/gymnasium and a swimming pool.

Margaret Park

Constructed: 1917

Opened: Spring 1918

Additions: 1920, 1928, 1930

Named in honor of Margaret Barnhart (1874-1913)

Margaret Barnhart, a leader in the establishment of public playgrounds, moved to Akron in 1898. She believed supervised playgrounds would help eliminate juvenile delinquency and took the lead in establishing public playgrounds in Akron. The city named the park along the northeast shore of Summit Lake in her honor.

Barnhart was also instrumental in the establishment of the new Children's Home and the Juvenile Court.

Mason Elementary School

Constructed: 1913

Opened: September 1913

Addition: 1919

Named in honor of Frank H. Mason (1852-1931)

Frank H. Mason, Akron industrialist and philanthropist, came to Akron in 1879 and took a job in the millroom of B.F. Goodrich Rubber Works, Akron's first rubber company. He rose through the ranks and, in 1907, was elected vice president. In 1912, when Goodrich and Diamond Rubber Co. merged, he became vice chairman of the board of directors.

In September 1910, the Akron Public Schools suspended medical inspections in the schools due to lack of funding. Concerned about the curtailment of health services, in 1912 Mason offered to underwrite the cost of employing visiting nurses in the schools for one year. In recognition of his generosity, the Akron Board of Education named the proposed school on Beaver Street the “Frank H. Mason School.”

McEbright Elementary School

Constructed: 1920

Named in honor of Thomas McEbright (1824-1894)

In 1864, Dr. Thomas McEbright came to Akron and soon became one of the area’s prominent surgeons. For many years, Dr. McEbright served as a faithful and interested member of the Akron Board of Education.



Miller South School for the Visual & Performing Arts

Constructed: 1956 (South High School)

Opened: September 1956, closed 1980, reopened as Miller South in 1993

Additions: Lakeshore Annex - 1971, 1975

Miller South School for the Visual & Performing Arts opened in the fall of 1993, following a parent, student and staff interest survey which indicated community support for a visual and performing arts school.

The former South High School was closed in 1980. The school then became the South Education Center. In honor of Akron’s first African-American principal, George C. Miller, the building was renamed George C. Miller South Education Center.

Pfeiffer Elementary School

Constructed: 1917

Addition: 1960

Named in honor of Jacob (1861-1945) and William Pfeiffer

In the early 1890s, brothers Jacob and William Pfeiffer, along with three others, opened a company called the Miller Rubber Co. By 1896, Jacob had bought out three of the partners. In 1900, he was president and William was secretary-treasurer of the company. During the late 1920s, the company ran into financial difficulty; and in 1930 it was purchased by the B.F. Goodrich Co.

The two Pfeiffer brothers donated land for the building of a school which was originally called Overlook after the allotment surrounding the school site. The name was later changed to Pfeiffer to honor these two prominent Akron citizens.

Portage Path School of Technology

Constructed: 1908

Additions: 1916, 1973

The Cuyahoga River was a major link in travel among the Indians who journeyed from Lake Erie to the Ohio River. Another important link was the Tuscarawas River.

In Summit County, these two rivers were separated by a distance of only eight miles, with a trail connecting them. This trail was known as "Portage Path." It ran from Old Portage (five miles north of Akron) one-half mile west, rising more than 300 feet in one mile. It followed the present Portage Path south to Copley Road, through Perkins Woods, dropped near Manchester Road and then ended at a landing near Long Lake.

By 1850, a small stone building known as the Chestnut Grove School served as the first school in this district. By the early 1900s, the growth of the city and continued westward expansion led to the building of a new school which took its name from the famous Indian trail of so long ago.

Rankin Elementary School for Technology

Constructed: 1925

Additions: 1926, 1953, 1968

Named in honor of George T. Rankin (1843-1927)

George T. Rankin worked in the Akron Public Schools for over 40 years. He served as superintendent of construction and was later a member of the Akron Board of Education.

The first unit of Rankin School consisted of eight rooms. The following year 15 classrooms, an auditorium and a gymnasium were added. The school accommodated pupils in kindergarten through eighth grade.

Rimer Elementary School

Constructed: 1928

Annexed by the city of Akron in 1929

Named in honor of William F. Rimer (1870-1947)

William Frank Rimer moved to Kenmore in 1919. At that time, a one-room school — Allenside — was located at the corner of Foust (now Wilbeth) and Manchester roads.

In 1924, seven acres of land were purchased from Herman Camp and a portable building was placed on the site.

When bonds were sold in 1927 for a new building, Rimer was principal of Kenmore High School. A.R. Ritzman, a member of the Kenmore Board of Education, said, “Why wait until a man is dead before honoring him? Mr. Rimer, although he has lived here a short while, can never be sufficiently reimbursed for the work he has done in the schools.”

In 1929, all of Kenmore was incorporated by the city of Akron.

Ritzman Elementary School

Constructed: 1891 (as the original Ellet High School)

Additions: 1895, 1921, 1952, 1964

Renamed in honor of John Curtis Ritzman (1875-1963)

John C. Ritzman went to work for the Ellet Township Board of Education in 1913. From 1929 to his retirement in 1944, he served as custodian for Ellet High School.

Shortly after the new high school was constructed, additions were made to the old building. The Ellet community decided to show their admiration for the many years of loyal service which Ritzman had provided the district by renaming the building in his honor.

The Academy at Robinson

Opened: 1912

Additions: 1916, 1924 and 1985

Decommissioned: 1979, reopened in 1980

Renamed in honor of Henry Robinson

Henry Robinson was a pioneer manufacturer of clay products, banker, civic leader and one of the original benefactors of Akron City Hospital.

Robinson opened in 1912 and was decommissioned in 1979. The building reopened in 1980 as the result of a federal court suit filed by parents. Students from Fraunfelter were reassigned to Robinson with the subsequent closing of Fraunfelter School. The building was almost completely remodeled, and additional land was purchased to enlarge the playground.

Schumacher Academy

Constructed: 1929

Opened: September 1929

Additions: 1950, 1953

Named in honor of Ferdinand Schumacher (1822-1908)

In 1856, Ferdinand Schumacher — known as the Cereal King of America — started an oatmeal processing plant on Howard Street. His business grew rapidly. By 1880, he was the foremost miller of the world.

Following a disastrous fire in 1886 which destroyed an eight-story Jumbo Mill, Schumacher merged his business with that of the Akron

Milling Co. In 1891, this concern was consolidated with the American Cereal Co. which, in 1901, became the Quaker Oats Co.

Schumacher was an ardent prohibitionist. He owned various temperance hotels in Akron and was a generous contributor to church organizations.

His wife, Mary L. Schumacher, continued the tradition of philanthropy through generous gifts to Schumacher School. When the school opened in 1929, she gave the school a baby grand piano; and in her will, she established a trust fund of \$5,000.

Seiberling Elementary School

Constructed: 1921

Opened: September 1922

Named in honor of Franklin Augustus Seiberling (1859-1955) and Charles Willard Seiberling (1861-1946)

F.A. and C.W. Seiberling were looking for a new investment opportunity when they realized the potential of the infant rubber industry. Rubber tires for bicycles and buggies were just then becoming popular. They organized the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co., named to honor Charles Goodyear, inventor of the rubber vulcanizing process.

The success of the new company was due in large measure to the inventive genius and skill of the Seiberlings. F.A. was known as the “brain” and C.W. as the “heart” of their various enterprises.

The Seiberling brothers lost control of Goodyear in 1921. Six months later, they launched the Seiberling Rubber Co., which grew to be one of the largest rubber companies in the United States.

C.W. Seiberling donated countless hours to community activities. He was responsible for the organization of Akron’s Community Chest in 1919 and helped launch both the Girl Scout and Boy Scout movements.

F.A. Seiberling and his wife Gertrude built one of the finest homes in Akron, Stan Hywet Hall. Seiberling’s imprint also is visible in Goodyear Heights, a model community which he helped plan for his factory workers.

In November 1919, F.A. Seiberling donated a 10-acre tract in Goodyear Heights to the Akron Board of Education on the condition that the site be used for public purposes and plans for any school building would be subject to his approval. In March 1921, the school board moved ahead with plans to construct a new school in Goodyear Heights and voted to name it “Seiberling School.”

Smith Elementary School

Constructed: 1918

Addition: 1955

Originally part of the Coventry Township District

Annexed by the Akron School District in 1929

Named in honor of Fred E. Smith (1857-1940)

Fred E. Smith was a leader in the early development of the town of Kenmore.

The town of Kenmore was developed by the Akron Realty Co. The founders of the company laid out the town along the street railway line of the Northern Ohio Traction and Light Co. between Akron and Barberton.

The original town plat included 1,500 lots, 1,000 of which were owned by the Akron Realty Co. The first lot was sold in 1901.

In 1908, Fred E. Smith purchased the entire holdings of the Akron Realty Co. In the same year, Kenmore was incorporated.

Smith donated the site on which the school bearing his name was built.

Stewart Primary School

Constructed: 1968

Opened: September 1968

Named in honor of Horace St. John Stewart (1897-1968)

The life-long avocation and vocation of Horace St. John Stewart — a well-known African-American leader in Akron — was photography. He came to Akron and established a photography studio here in 1932. He was a member of the Professional Photographers Association of America.

Stewart made significant contributions to the public and social welfare of Akron through service on various boards and committees, including the Community Service Center, the Urban League, and the Glendale Branch of the Welfare Board. He also was a life-long member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

Voris Elementary School

Constructed: 1930

Named in honor of General Alvin Coe Voris (1827-1904)

General Alvin Coe Voris served as a lawyer and legislator. However, his political career was interrupted by the Civil War. In September 1861, he entered the army as a lieutenant colonel of the 67th Regiment, and became its commanding officer the following March. In 1865, he was promoted to major general for distinguished service in the field.

After the war, General Voris resumed the practice of law. He was later elected to the Constitutional Assembly and served as judge of the Court of Common Pleas for Summit, Medina and Lorain counties.

Windemere Elementary School

Constructed: 1924

Opened: September 1924

Additions: 1948, 1952, 1954, 1972 (LRC)

Originally part of the Springfield Township Schools

Annexed by the Akron School District in 1929

Windemere was originally part of the Springfield Township District. The school — which is located on the top of a hill — was named for its location. Over the years, students and teachers have claimed that it is the windiest spot in Summit County.

Former Akron elementary and secondary schools

Former Akron elementary and secondary schools

<i>Name of school</i>	<i>Year of construction</i>	<i>Last year to house students</i>
Allen	1879	1967
Bowen (<i>Now Administration Building</i>)	1916	1939
Bryan	1896	1978
Colonial	1915	1964
Fraunfelter	1904	1980
Grace	1890	1977
Guinther (<i>Now houses Adult Basic & Literacy Education</i>)	1958	1993
Henry	1883	1978
Howe	1879	1972
Hower Vocational (<i>Formerly Perkins Elementary</i>)	1920	1975
Kent (<i>South Arlington location</i>)	1891	1940
Lane	1902	1980
Miller (<i>Now Conrad C. Ott Staff Development Center</i>)	1900	1973
Perkins (<i>Renamed Hower</i>)	1900	1949
Spicer (<i>Earlier buildings on site</i>)	1927	1968
Thomastown	1921	1973
Thornton (<i>Formerly South High</i>)	1910	1979
West	1913	1980



Grace schoolhouse, South Maple and West Exchange streets



Henry schoolhouse, North Forge Street

Akron's first school



This is Akron's first schoolhouse, at what is now the corner of Broadway and Buchtel. The Stone School (now known as the Old Stone School) was built on this site. The Old Stone School, built around 1840, is the oldest school in Akron. The school was restored and reopened in 1967. Today, every third-grade class visits the Old Stone School for a half-day to study history and heritage.

Credits

The primary source for this information was *What's in a name?*, compiled in 1980 by Frances James, Dr. B. Susan Brown and committee members Pamela Lightner, Joann Robb and Arldon Smyth. Reference sources included the archives of the school system, *Akron and Summit County* by Karl K. Grismer, and *Construction Costs of School Buildings - Additions - Improvements* by the Architect's Office, Akron Board of Education. The artwork was taken from *Fifty Years and Over of Akron and Summit County* by Samuel A. Lane. A special thanks also goes to Al Ploenes.



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reprinted 11/99