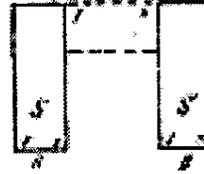


History of the Michael Solomon Pavilion

Edmund Cordray, September 2003

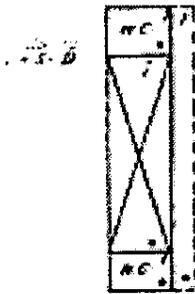
The earliest picture I have of the pavilion dates to 1911. In the book "Dayton Comes of Age" on page 134 there is a picture of "C. P. Rodgers in his biplane at the NCR Country Club, 1911." The NCR Country club of 1911 becomes what is now known as Hills and Dales park, Community Golf Club, and the Michael Solomon Pavilion. The building in the background in that picture is the dance pavilion. The picture implies that, at least for a brief period in 1911, the building was used as an airplane hanger. There is a Smithsonian article about the "Martin J.V. K-III Kitten" which states that test flights were done at the Hills and Dales Community Country Club in 1919.

The gala dedication ceremonies of the new Hills and Dales Park and Community Country Club were held the weekend of June 8 and 9, 1918. Newspaper articles indicate that an extra floor was added for dancing with music by two orchestras, the considerably enlarged Lytle's band and the "Gyrating Orjazztra." The Lytle's band played for dancing both days of the dedication. At the time of the dedication facilities at the park included wading pools, bridle paths, picnic grounds, billiards, swings, baseball, sand piles, polo, golf, and of course a dance pavilion. The Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of 1918 shows several buildings at the "Community Country Club." The "Dance HO," a "Men's Club HO" just south of the dance hall of approximately the same size as the dance hall, a "Woman's Club HO," offices, WC's, and some other buildings in the complex. See the figure below.



COMMUNITY COUNTRY CLUB

0



Located 3 3/4 Miles S. of Court No. 4
2 3/4 Miles from Fire Dept
Corner Brown & Patterson St's
-NO EXPOSURE ANY SIDE-



FOOT 25 W.E. OF
HALL & MEN'S CLUB

Figure 1, Sanborn Map - 1918

The Sanborn map was reprinted in 1956. The reprinted map shows the current golf club house which was built in 1955, the woman's club house of 1918, the office building of 1918, and the dance house of 1918. Two buildings that are noticeably missing from the reprinted map are the men's club house, the companion building to the dance hall, and the WC's.

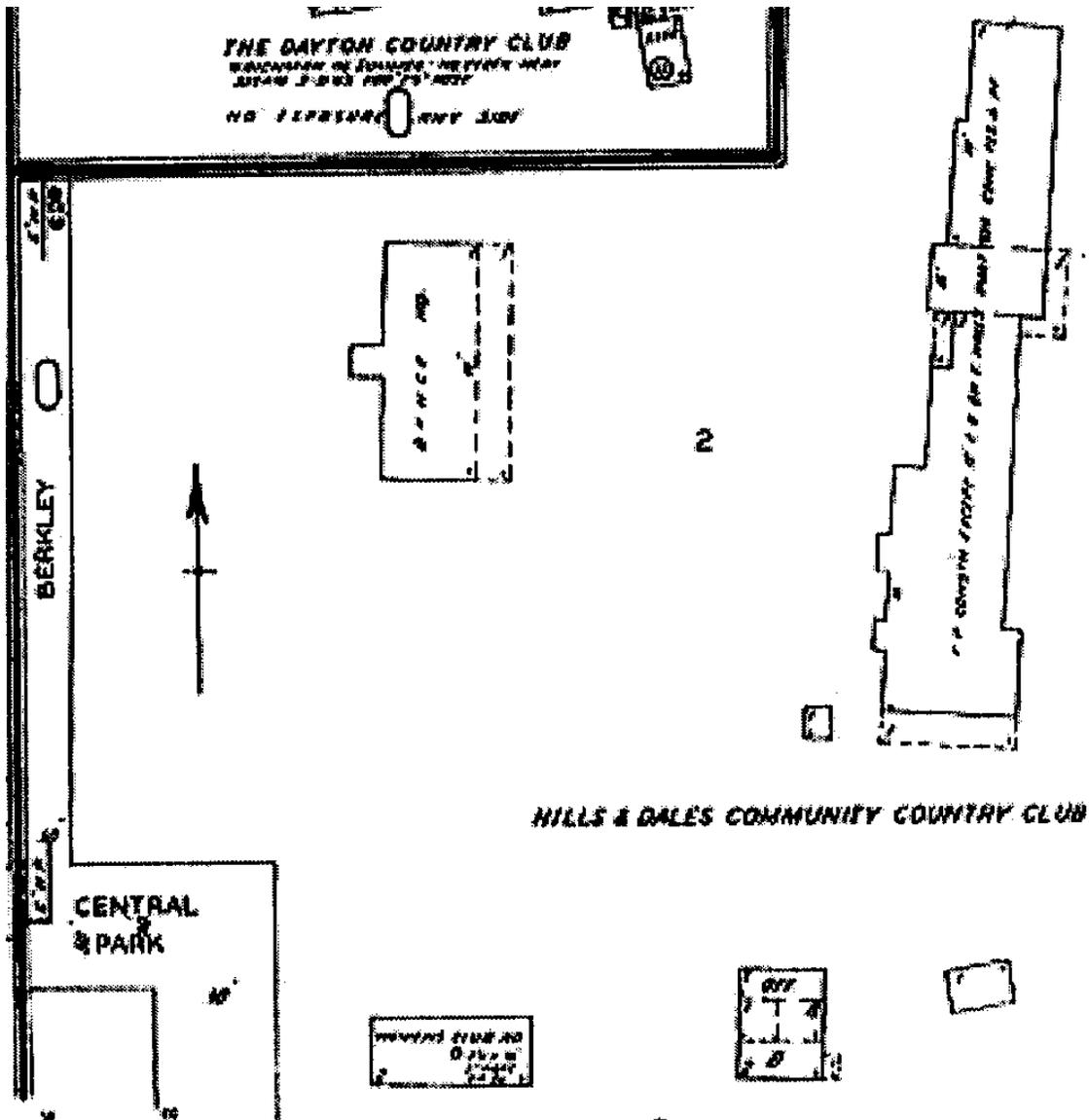


Figure 2, Sanborn Map Reprint 1956

In the book "An Oakwood Scrapbook" there is an architectural drawing by the Olmsted Brothers firm showing the Community Club buildings in the same layout as the Sanborn map of 1918 and shows the location of the building on the property. See the figure below. Using this drawing and the Sanborn maps, the Michael Solomon Pavilion is located where the dance hall is shown on the Sanborn maps. It is the northern building of the two largest buildings in the southwest corner of the property.

HILLS *AND* DALES PARK MONTGOMERY CO. OHIO. PLAN SHOWING ROADS TO BE PERMANENTLY RETAINED AS PUBLIC WAYS.

Scale 1" = 200'

OLMSTED BROTHERS, Landscape Architects
BROOKLINE MASS.
CHARLTON D. PUTNAM, Civil Engineer
DAYTON OHIO
1919

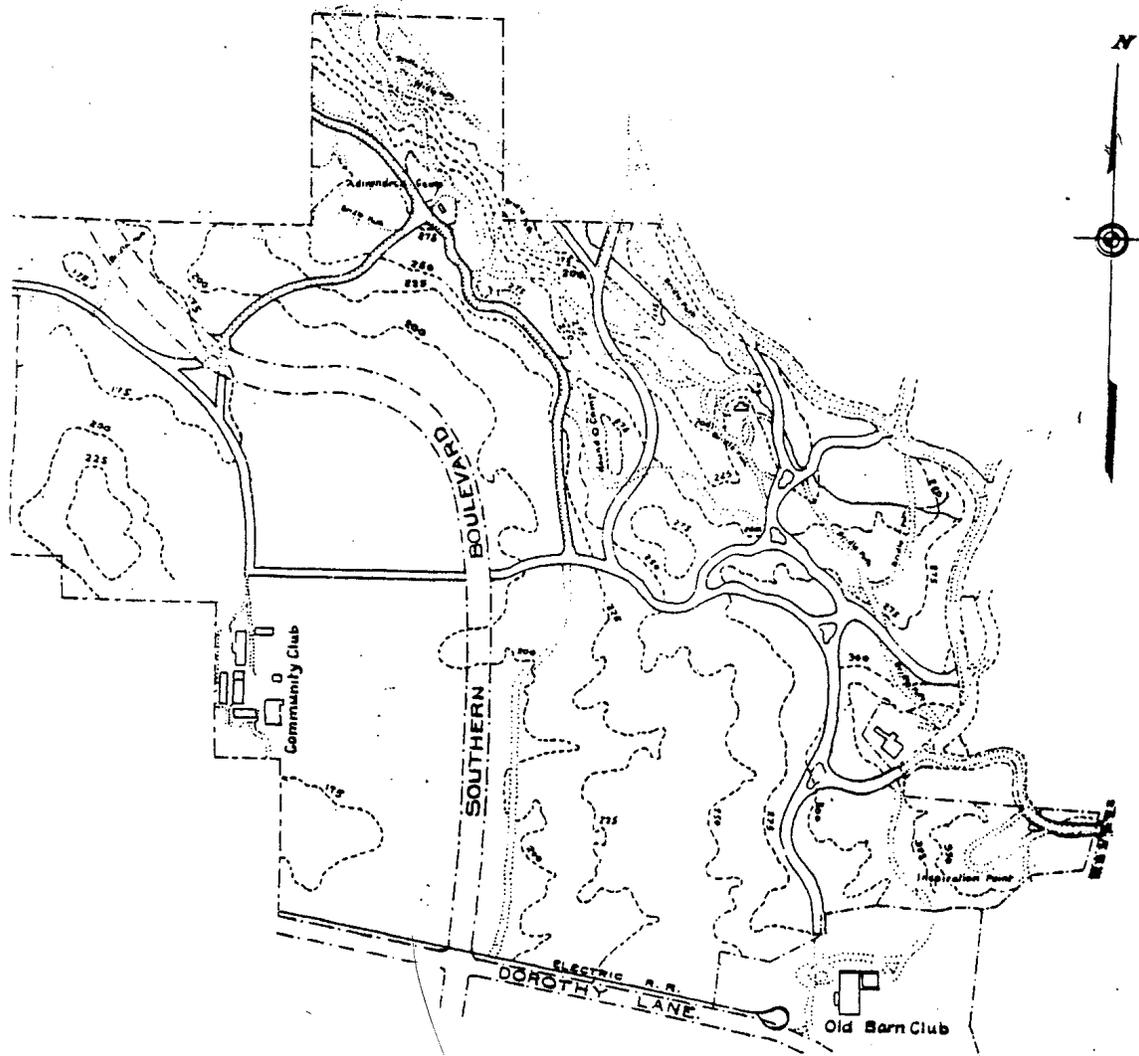


Figure 3, Olmsted drawing of Hills and Dales - 1919

The next event that I have that is important in the history of the Pavilion is the formation of dance clubs. Michael Solomon started working for the City of Dayton in 1929. During the late 1940's (1947) and early 1950's Mike started promoting dancing in the Dayton area. In 1947 the Dayton Folk Dance Club was formed. The year 1950 saw the formation of the Dayton Square Dance Club and the Dayton Associates (now the Dayton Whirlaways). The Dayton Round Dance Club was formed in 1951 and in 1952 both the

Miami Valley Round Dance Club and the Miami Valley Folk Dancers were formed. During the summer months, the dance clubs met at the Community Pavilion (Michael Solomon Pavilion) and during the winter many of the groups met at Burkhardt Center, schools, and other recreation centers.

In 1955, 15 dance clubs formed the Miami Valley Dance Council (MVDC). Three of the original clubs, the Dayton Associates (Dayton Whirlaways), Miami Valley Round Dancers, and Miami Valley Folk Dancers are still dancing!

Through the efforts of members of the dance clubs comprising the Miami Valley Dance Council (MVDC) and the legal efforts of Bill Wolff, in 1961 not only is the pavilion saved from demolition but the decision is made to have it winterized. The Miami Valley Dance Council pledged a donation to furnish the kitchen.

On November 29, 1964 the winterized pavilion was dedicated as the “Michael Solomon Pavilion.” The introduction of a Miami Valley Folk Dancers (MVFD) syllabus from November of 1964 states that the Pavilion is now their permanent year round home and not just their summer home.

In 1968 the City decided to replace the floor of the pavilion with a new wood floor. The MVDC pledged \$ 1,500.00 to the project. The new floor was dedicated in August of 1970.

Due to an austerity program, in December of 1971 the City of Dayton decided to close the pavilion. Roland Mock and others made a presentation at a City Council meeting where the MVDC offered to assume some of the financial responsibility for the pavilion. As a result of this presentation, the City rescinded their decision.

On November 11, 1984 the Dayton Daily News printed an article about Michael Solomon. Referring to about 1950's and the MVDC, the article in part reads “the dancers got exclusive use of an aging pavilion, the remaining structure from a country club complex that had burned, at the Community Golf Course.”

During the winter of 1987 the water pipes froze and burst causing extensive damage to the floor. The MVDC voted to pay for repair of floor damage. The repair cost was passed on to the clubs that used the pavilion.

In the early 1990's the City upgraded the electrical panel of the pavilion, replacing the old electrical box and adding switches for each row (or two) of overhead lights. Also during the 1990's the City moved the water pipes from the unheated attic to inside the heated building. Additionally, in an effort to prevent the water pipes from freezing the water pipes were also wrapped with heat tape. As of September 2003 the water pipes have yet to freeze up again.

Due to complaints about the smell of natural gas, a member of the Miami Valley Folk Dancers called DPL to investigate in January of 1996. The representative from DPL, not

realizing that the stove was hard plumbed in (current code requires flexible gas connections) pulled the stove out breaking the stove's manifold and making for an exciting day. The stove was repaired for a cost of \$ 413.21 of which DPL paid \$ 282.32. DPL did not pay for the upgrade for the flexible gas line with a quick disconnect.

In 1997 The City of Dayton discussed having the MVDC pay for all utilities at the pavilion and discontinues paying for producing the MVDC Dance News. As a result of this discussion, the usage fees for the pavilion increase from 10¢ per head per event to 25¢. The current fees of between \$ 15.00 to \$ 35.00 per four hour time block were instituted in 1998. When the MVDC was presented with a several thousands of dollars bill for water, they asked "how much of this was used at the pavilion?" The City is still providing utilities for the pavilion.

In 1998, the Golf Course presented a five-year plan which included tearing down the pavilion for additional parking spaces. Riverscape was mentioned as a possible location for a new building. Over 100 dancers attended the Kettering zoning board meeting for discussion of this proposal. The plan to demolish the pavilion was dropped. However, the parking lot was redesigned to add some additional parking. As a result of this parking lot re-design, the pavilion is now surrounded by the parking lot.

Starting in 1999 the Michael Solomon Support Committee (MSSC, a committee of the MVDC) starts taking a more active role in building maintenance. The woman's bathroom was updated by replacing the vanity, floor tile, and wallpaper. The bathroom stall dividers were also re-painted.

The MSSC had the floor refinished at a cost of \$ 9,247.50 in 2000.

The MSSC had the old roof torn off and replaced in 2001 at a cost of \$ 11,035.00. The heater vent pipes were replaced as part of the roof replacement. The old vent pipes had corroded through and during rainstorms, water would leak down the pipes.