

NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION

North Granville is still a largely rural area with few through streets between the major arteries. Some working farms and forested areas still exist in the neighborhood. Most dwellings are large apartment complexes, with a few condo villages.

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 North Granville was once the far northwestern tip of the Town of Granville.

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).

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.

Movement toward annexation

Economic prosperity reigned in Granville, due partially to the work ethic of these early German farmers. The town remained predominantly rural through the early half of the 20th century. Gradually industries began to open in Granville and the area eventually became the most concentrated base of industrial employment in Wisconsin—today including industrial parks and over 75 companies.

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.

The following is a sample of some of the businesses that were incorporated into Milwaukee at the time of annexation.

Businesses on W. Brown Deer Road in North Granville in 1963

| <i>Address on W. Brown Deer</i> | <i>Name of business from the <u>Milwaukee City Directory</u></i> |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 9906 | Geipel Certified Sod Inc. Landscape Gardeners |
| | |
| 11122 | Schuette Movers of Milwaukee |
| | |
| 11340 | White Company Asphalt |
| | |
| 11400 | Central Ready Mix Concrete Company |
| | |
| 11500 | W. Gasket Manufacturing Company |
| | |

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.

Current populations (as of 2017)

Few of the original German Lutherans currently reside in the North Granville neighborhood. Today the neighborhood has just over 1,000 residents. Slightly over half are African Americans, with the remainder almost evenly divided among Latinos and European Americans. Slightly less than half the residents in North Granville live in low income households (where annual incomes are under \$25,000).

North Granville has a few interesting anomalies. One is gender. While most neighborhoods anywhere tend to have an even number of males and females, this is not the case in North Granville. In this neighborhood there are significantly more females—in fact almost one-fifth more than men.

A second anomaly is home ownership versus renting. Nearly 95 percent of the properties in North Granville are likely to be rented. This is probably due to the fact that the large apartment complexes were those that were developed in the area in the last half of the 20th century, as opposed to single family homes.

A third anomaly is occupation. North Granville has twice the number of people employed in the hospitality industries (over 20 percent) than the average for Milwaukee. In addition, nearly one in ten residents of North Granville are employed in farming, compared to less than 1 percent for the City of Milwaukee overall.

INTERESTING FEATURES

- **Coca Cola Enterprises**, at 11800 W Brown Deer Rd.
- **Aragon Industries**, at 11500 W. Brown Deer Rd., a manufacturer of defense, appliance, restaurant, construction, agricultural, and other equipment.
- **Colonial Pointe Apartments**, at 8831-8843 N. 96th St., a small “village” of apartment houses.

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. 107 th 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. 76 th St. | Exhibition of iconic custom vehicles. | Free |

| JULY 4 TH CELEBRATION | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|-----------|
| When? | Where? | Description and contact info | Admission |
| July 4 th , 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. | \$4, \$3 kids <12 |

| BUTLER FARMERS MARKET | | | |
|---|--|---|-----------|
| When? | Where? | Description and contact info | Admission |
| Early Jun.-mid Oct., Mon. 12- 6pm | Hampton Ave. at 127 th St. | Fresh produce from Wisconsin farmers, baked goods, arts, crafts, activities. | 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. | \$4, \$3 kids <12 |

These outings are provided courtesy of MECAH Publishing. To access the book that provides nearly 600 outings—all priced under \$10—for the entire Greater Milwaukee area, go to <http://mecamilwaukee.com/NonFiction.html>

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.”

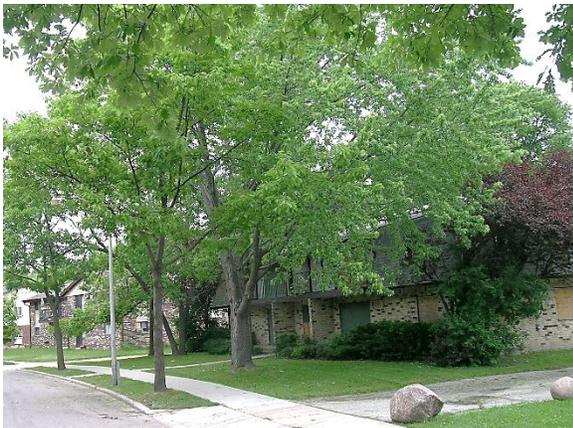
“During the first World War, all gathering of people was forbidden, due to the spreading of the flu. So at Freistadt Church only every other pew could be sat in, so all the people east of the church came for early services and all those west of the church came for later service. Also all talking and 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.

If you currently live in North Granville and would like to say something about the neighborhood, please contact Dr. Jill Florence Lackey at JFLanthropologist@sbcglobal.net.

PHOTOS



Condos and apartments in the North Granville neighborhood



Coca Cola enterprises

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 JFLanthropologist@sbcglobal.net