

Houses of Lake Road Walking Tour

Lake Forest, IL



 **HISTORY
CENTER**

LAKE FOREST-LAKE BLUFF

About Lake Road



1881 map

- Lake Road is one of the **very few straight roads** in the park-like, curvilinear Plan of Lake Forest by landscape designer Almerin Hotchkiss (1857), running north-south across the deep ravines alongside the steep Lake Michigan bluff edge. The bluffs here rise 50' to 100' above the lake.
- Due to the riparian nature of the landscape, many homes along Lake Road are located much closer to the street's edge than elsewhere in east Lake Forest.
- Most of the earliest homes and estates in town were built further inland, closer to the railroad station or Lake Forest University. The now-demolished Amzi Benedict residence (see 810 Lake Road) was an exception.
- It was during the country estate era of the 1890s and early 1900s that home sites began to populate Lake Road, both the result of new development from Chicagoans building summer places and the subdivision of larger parcels by second-generation Lake Foresters. Few of the homes from this period are extant (see Ioka, Briar Hall, House in the Woods) – Halcyon Lodge (1350 Lake Road) is an exception.
- Most homes on this tour come from one of three periods: pre-WWI 1910s (Shaw, Adler); mid-1920s-1930s (Adler, Frazier, Lindeberg, Anderson); or 1950s-1960s (Frazier, Colburn, Cerny, Milman).

The Tour



Start at the [south end of Lake Road](#) (south of Spring Lane) and walk north toward Lake Forest Cemetery



Notes:

- Some listed homes have been demolished; others may not be visible due to vegetation or fences/walls. It's worth checking back in fall or spring!
- Largely, more recently constructed homes are not featured – although some day they may be!
- When you see a [blue link](#) in the text, click for more photos or information from our online exhibit.

620 Lake Road “Bluff’s Edge”

[west side]



- Built 1925
- Original owner: Wayne Chatfield-Taylor and Adele Blow Chatfield-Taylor
- Architect: Andrew Rebori (Rebori, Wentworth, Dewey and McCormick)
- Style: Georgian Revival
- Notes:
 - Wayne Chatfield-Taylor, grandson of [Senator Charles B. Farwell](#), was an investment banker who served as Under Secretary of Commerce and Assistant Secretary of the Treasury under President Franklin Delano Roosevelt; he was also economic adviser to the European Recovery Program after WWII
 - This was formerly the site of “**House in the Woods**,” the 1892 Dudley Winston and Grace Farwell Winston estate (pictured below; razed 1920s).



650 Lake Road

[west side]



- Built 1926
- Original owner: Gilbert E. Porter III and Anne Horry Kilby Porter
- Architect: Walter Frazier
- Style: Colonial Revival
- Notes:
 - Gilbert E. Porter III was the son of a law partner in the prestigious Chicago firm of Lincoln, Isham & Beal. His father was the counsel for the Chicago elevated railways.
 - Anne Horry Kilby Porter was the daughter of Thomas Erby Kilby, a successful Alabama steel and railroad engine and railroad car industrialist. They married in 1920.
 - The home suffered a fire in the attic in 1941, causing \$15,000 of damage to the then-valued \$60,000 house. The *Chicago Tribune* reported that women of the neighborhood helped carry furniture to safety.



700 Lake Road

[west side]



Current house: Built 2007

Formerly the site of:

“Swiss Cheese” House

- Built 1965; razed 2005
- Original owner: Irving Walker “Ike” and Frances Colburn
- Architect: [I. W. Colburn](#)
- Style: Modernist
- Notes:
 - The most infamous of his local works was Colburn’s own house on Lake Road, built in 1965. The home, marked by distinctive towers with elongated arches and circular cutouts that gave rise to the moniker “Swiss Cheese House,” was seen as a modern masterpiece by some, and as a neighborhood eyesore by others.
 - This striking work became famous among mid-century modernists and infamous in the local community, where a neighbor described it as a “faux Taj Mahal” in a critical letter to the Lake Forester.
 - The Colburns weathered the local controversy for nearly a decade, but the house did not stand up quite so well to the elements. In 1973, preparing to sell, Colburn had the towers removed. The remaining house, much less dramatic, was eventually razed in 2005.



810/840 Lake Road

[west side]



810: Built 1976, renovated 1991



840: Built c. 1900, multiple additions 1948-1985

Formerly the site of:
“Ingleside”

- Former address: 1010 East Deerpath
- Built 1860; burned down c. 1975
- Original owner: Amzi Benedict and Catherine Walmath Benedict
- Style: Italianate
- Notes:
 - Amzi Benedict was a cloth merchant with the firm of Field, Benedict & Co. A founder of the community, he served as Lake Forest mayor twice, 1877-78 and 1884-85.
 - His daughter Enella Benedict was a portrait and landscape painter who studied in Paris at the Academie Julian. She taught art at Hull House and at the School of the Art Institute.
 - Another owner, in the early 1900s, was Robert Harvey McElwee, a banker, lumber baron, and notable golfer.
 - **840 Lake Road** was originally the home’s private garage, built by McElwee.
 - Architect Walter Frazier undertook restoration work on the house in the 1940s



900 Lake Road

[west side]



- Built 1957
- Original owner: George Keil
- Architect: Jerome Cerny
- Style: French Provincial
- Notes:
 - Residing here by 1959 was [Dr. Ernest Volwiler](#), chief chemist (1920), Director of Research (1930) and Chairman of the Board (1958) at Abbot Laboratories.
 - Dr. Volwiler was inducted into the Inventors Hall of Fame for his work with Dr. Donalee Tabern on [Sodium Pentothal](#), a groundbreaking sedative, in 1936.



925 Lake Road

[east side]



- Built 1956
- Original owner: Sterling Morton and Sophia Preston Owsley Morton
- Architect: [Ralph Milman](#)
- Style: Georgian ranch
- Notes:
 - Sterling Morton, chairman of the Morton Salt Company, built this house down the street from his former home at 975 Lake Road when the family relocated to Santa Barbara for most of the year; he passed away in 1961 and the family sold the home shortly thereafter.
 - Formerly the site of “**Beach Brow**,” home of Abbey Farwell Ferry (daughter of John V. Farwell and widow of William Henry Ferry), demolished c. 1950.

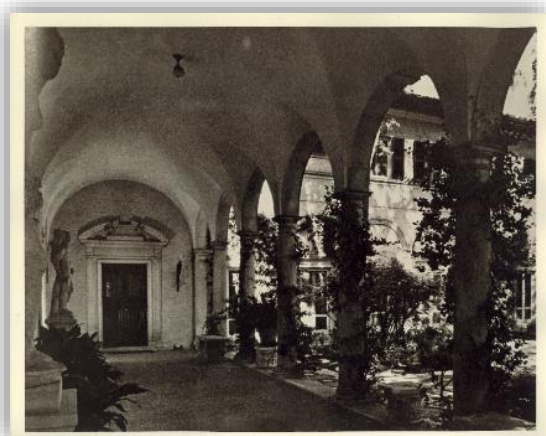


955 Lake Road

[east side]



- Built 1917
- Original owner: Charles Burrall Pike and Frances Alger Pike
- Architect: David Adler and Robert Work
- Landscape architect: Adler and Ralph Rodney Root
- Style: Italian Renaissance
- Notes:
 - Charles B. Pike was a banker and real estate investor. He served as president of the Chicago Historical Society from 1927-1941 and played an essential role in the construction of the current Chicago History Museum building in 1932.
 - The previous Lake Road house of the Pikes, designed by Arthur Heun in 1905, was destroyed by fire in 1914.
 - Adler used the foundation of the previous house, with added walls, as the core of a garden on the lake side. It took 100 men three months to dig the foundation for a sunken courtyard opening onto Lake Michigan in back.
 - This pushed the new house to the west, closer to Lake Road. Adler brought balance to the plan by secluding the residence behind the high wall of the entrance court; he combined this with a cross-vaulted loggia arcade along the courtyard, thus maintaining an open atmosphere. The courtyard was paved with stones from the beach below.
 - Check out the [Villa Terrace Decorative Arts Museum](#) in Milwaukee for a similar Italian Renaissance lakefront home designed two years earlier by Adler



975 Lake Road

[east side]



- Built 1939
- Original owner: Sterling Morton and Sophia Preston Owsley Morton
- Architect: [Ralph Milman](#)
- Landscape architect: Milman and Donald Hoyt
- Notes:
 - Sterling Morton was chairman of the Morton Salt Company and a notable supporter of the Art Institute.
 - His grandfather Julius Sterling Morton served as Secretary of Agriculture under President Grover Cleveland and founded Arbor Day in 1872.
 - His father Joy Morton established the Morton Salt Company and the Morton Arboretum.
 - Other notable residents: A. B. Dick Jr. and Helen Aldrich Dick, by 1954.

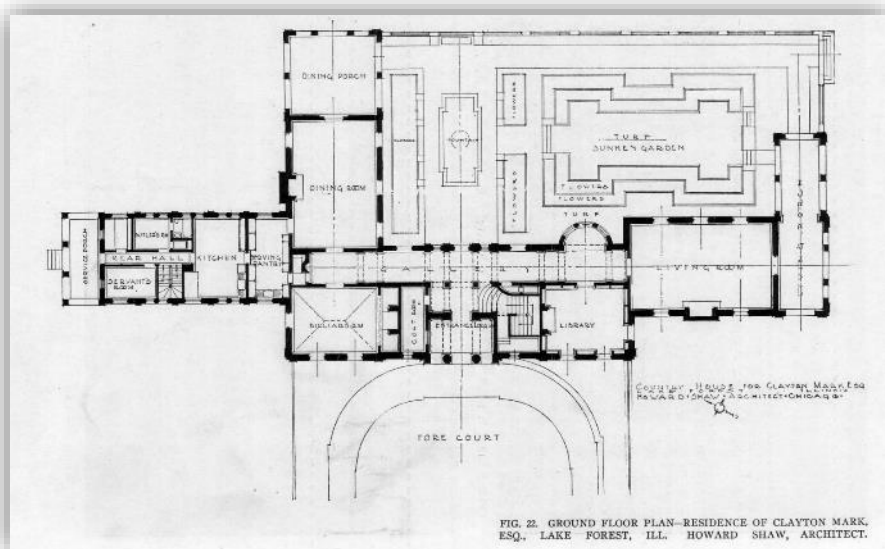


999 Lake Road

[east side]



- Built 1914
- Original owner: [Clayton Mark and Anna Lareau Griffith Mark](#)
- Architect: Howard Van Doren Shaw
- Landscape architect: Rose Standish Nichols
- Style: Italian Renaissance
- Notes:
 - Clayton Mark was a prominent steel industrialist and education reformer who presided over both the Chicago Board of Education and Lake Forest College's Board of Trustees
 - Mark also commissioned Shaw to design a planned community for employees of Mark Manufacturing Company, Marktown in East Chicago, Indiana (only about 10% was built due to WWI and the subsequent recession)
 - The Marks had nine children; Shaw planned for large family meals in the dining room and dining porch. All of the children's bedrooms on the second floor have a view of the lake and are connected to the master bedroom suite.
 - The estate originally spanned 20 acres, to Hawthorne on the west and including the Morton place to the south



1101 Lake Road

[east side]



- Built 1959
- Original owner: William and Alice Warner McLennan
- Architect: [I. W. Colburn](#)
- Landscape architect: Marshall Johnson, Colburn
- Style: New Formalist
- Notes:
 - William McLennan was the son of Donald McLennan, (see 1345 Lake Road). He served in the Navy in WWII.
 - News articles at the time called this “a modern interpretation of Palladian style”; the home garnered accolades from the American Institute of Architects and was featured in a *Life* magazine spread.
 - The house is a square of glass walls within an arcade of brick arches – each side measured 72 feet.
 - The central courtyard, 20’x20’, features a glass roof and glass interior walls and is graced by a Sylvia Shaw Judson sculpture of a ballerina.



1133 Lake Road

[east side]

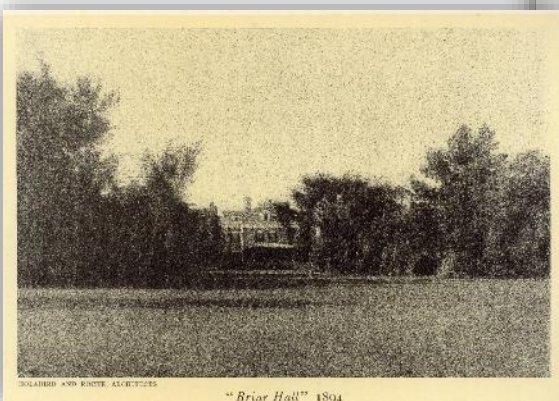


- Built 1964
- Original owner: Edward Byron Smith and Louise Dewey Smith
- Architect: Walter Frazier and Montgomery Orr
- Style: French

Formerly the site of:

“Briar Hall”

- Built 1895; razed 1963 due to lack of central heating system
- Original owner: Byron Laflin Smith and Carrie Stone Smith
- Architect: Holabird and Roche
- Landscape: O. C. Simonds
- Style: Georgian
- Notes:
 - Byron L. Smith was the founder of Northern Trust Company; E. B. Smith, the original owner of the current house, was his grandson.
 - Estate originally bounded by Woodland at north, Barberry at south, and Meadow at east.
 - In order to create sufficient grounds around the house, the Smiths’ put a bend in Lake Road, which remains today.
 - The house featured an extensive arboretum that stretched three blocks to the west, featuring diverse plantings from all over the world.



1150 Lake Road

[west side]



- Built 1959
- Original owner: John S. and Louise Gale Runnells II
- Architect: [I. W. Colburn](#)
- Style: Mid-century modern
- Notes:
 - John S. Runnells II served in Europe in WWII with the 71st Infantry Division.
 - His grandfather John Sumner Runnells was a U.S. district attorney in Iowa and later counsel for the Pullman Company; John S. Runnells II also worked for Pullman before moving into investment banking with Farwell Chapman and later William Blair & Co.
 - The family relocated to Texas in the 1970s and operated the Runnells-Pierce Ranch, started by his great-grandfather in the mid-1800s.



1161 Lake Road

[east side]



- Built 1966
- Original owner: John McLaren and Nancy Townsend Simpson
- Architect: Walter Frazier
- Notes:
 - This house is also located on the former Byron L. Smith property, Briar Hall (see 1133 Lake); the former estate house was sited here.
 - John M. Simpson presided over the steel firm A. M. Castle & Co.
 - His father James Simpson was the president of Marshall Field and Company in the 1920s; he also developed the Merchandise Mart and ran the Chicago Plan Commission.

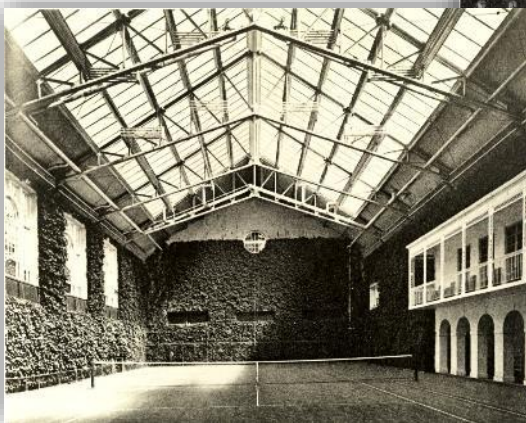


1315 Lake Road

[east side]



- Built 1931
- Original owner: Helen Shedd Reed (Keith)
- Architect: David Adler
- Landscape architect: Feruccio Vitale, Rose Standish Nichols
- Style: Georgian Colonial Revival
- Notes:
 - The home is built of Pennsylvania gray mica stone, which has a shiny slate look rarely seen in Chicago.
 - The interior features 30 rooms, including 14 bedrooms, 10 bathrooms, and 12 fireplaces, and includes over 20,000 square feet of living space.
 - The estate bisected Lake Road, extending to Elm Tree on the west. Across the street were gardens, a gardener's cottage (**1310 Lake Road**), and a tennis house (1235 Elm Tree, pictured lower left).
 - Helen Shedd Reed and her sister Laura Shedd Schweppe (daughters of John G. Shedd, president of Marshall Field & Co.) donated the funds to build the Lake Forest Library in 1931.
 - The house sits on the former site of **Elsinore**, the Abram Poole estate built in the 1880s.

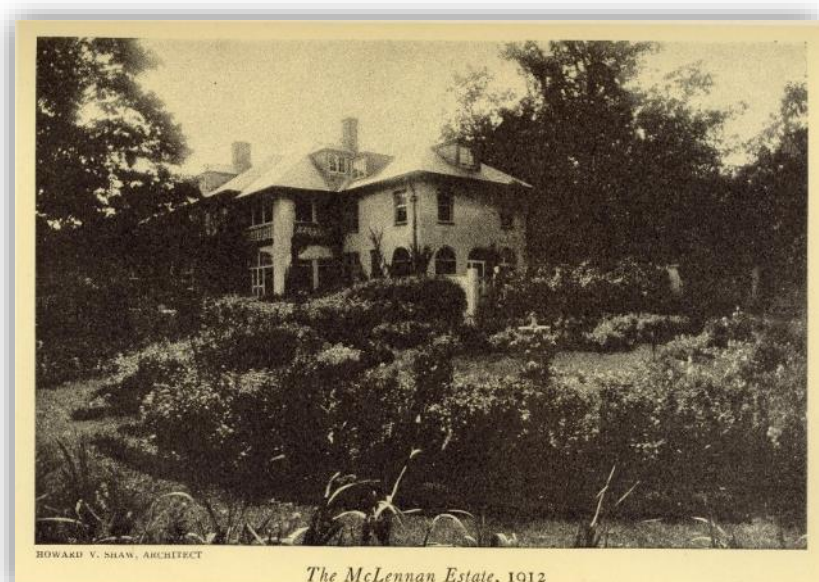


1345 Lake Road “Stornoway”

[east side]



- Built 1912
- Original owner: Donald R. McLennan and Katherine Noyes McLennan
- Architect: Howard Van Doren Shaw
- Landscape architect: Rose Standish Nichols
- Style: Mediterranean
- Notes:
 - Donald R. McLennan cofounded the insurance brokerage firm Marsh & McLennan in 1905. He and partner Henry Marsh pioneered risk management and brokers acting as buyers of insurance for the client, rather than sellers.
 - The McLennans' son William later resided at **1101 Lake Road**
 - The estate's former coach house is extant at **1381 Lake Road**.



HOWARD V. SHAW, ARCHITECT

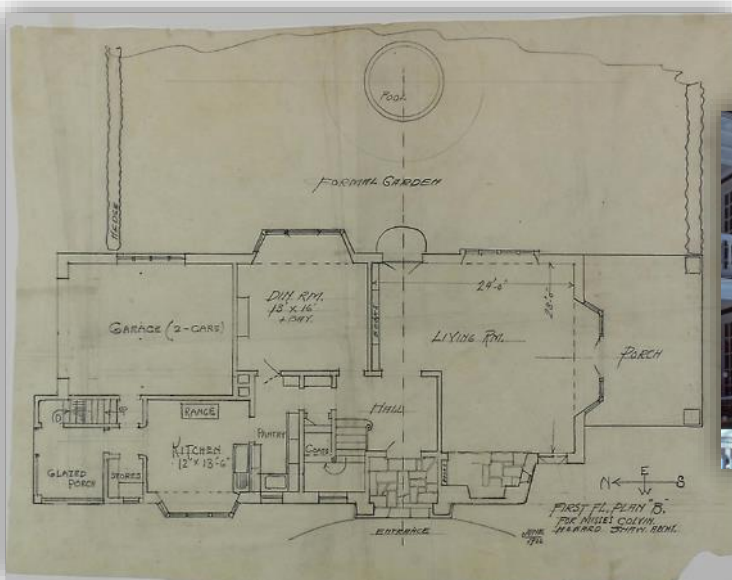
The McLennan Estate, 1912

1350 Lake Road “Halcyon Lodge”

[west side]



- Built 1905
- Original owner: Catherine and Jessica Colvin
- Architect: Howard Van Doren Shaw; renovated by David Adler (1937); addition by Stanley Anderson (1964)
- Landscape architect: O. C. Simonds
- Style: Georgian Revival
- Notes:
 - A 1908 *Chicago Tribune* article noted the Colvin sisters were “enthusiastic automobilists and drive their own cars.”
 - They funded the flagpole in Market Square in 1917.
 - In 1922 and 1923 Catherine and Jessie took a trip around the world.
 - They were longtime patrons of arts, culture and education in Chicago and Lake Forest, such as Hull House.
 - The Colvins were women’s suffrage advocates and temperance reformers; Catherine served as president of the Lake Forest League of Women Voters 1931-33.

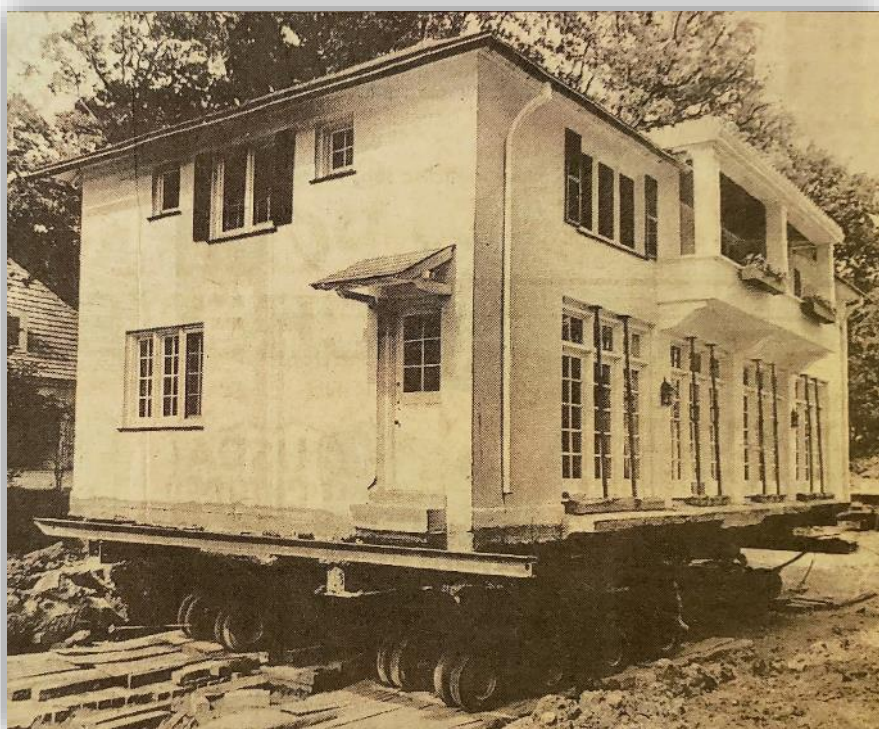


1381 Lake Road

[east side]



- Built 1912
- Coach house for **1345 Lake Road**, “Stornoway,” owned by Donald McLennan and Katherine Noyes McLennan
- Architect: Howard Van Doren Shaw
- Notes:
 - This house was subdivided from the McLennan estate in the 1970s. It was originally located at the northwest corner of the property, oriented to the south.
 - In 1984, owners Rob Ringo and Sharon Brown had the 200-ton house turned 90 degrees and rolled about 50 yards on dollies toward the bluff; an addition at the time connected the house to the garage.



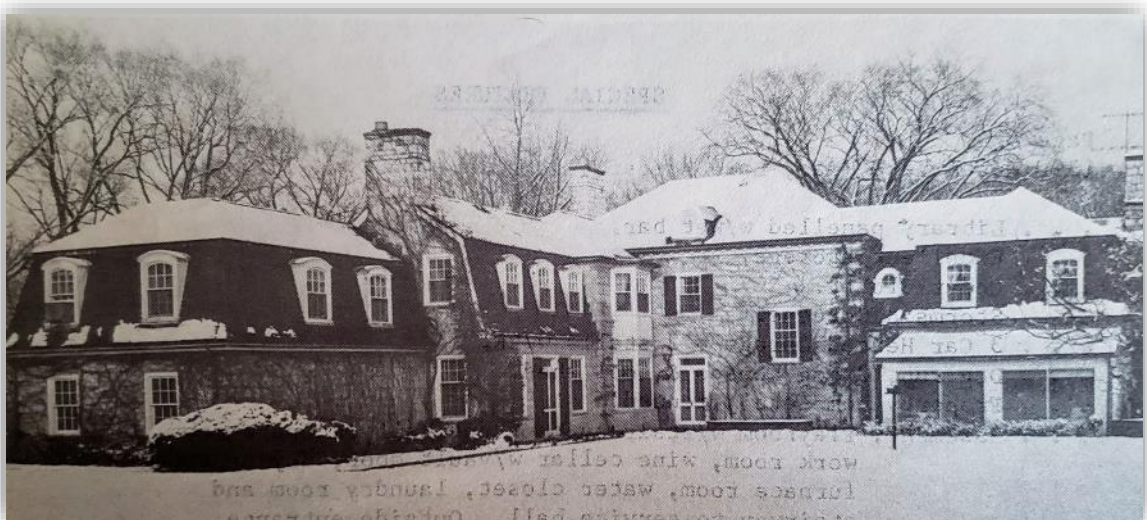
Lake Forester, 1984

1390 Lake Road

[west side]



- Built 1936
- Original owner: Walter Paul McBride and Claire Childs McBride
- Architect: Stanley D. Anderson
- Landscape architect: Marshall Johnson
- Style: Colonial Revival
- Notes:
 - W. Paul McBride, a Chicago investment banker, was mayor of Lake Forest from 1951 to 1954. He served in the Navy in WWII.
 - McBride's father, Walter T. McBride, was a Detroit manufacturer of railroad cars.
 - Claire Childs McBride was the daughter of [Edith Newell](#) and [C. Frederick Childs](#), founder of C. F. Childs and Company, a firm that bought and sold government bonds (1911).



1421/1435 Lake Road

[east side]

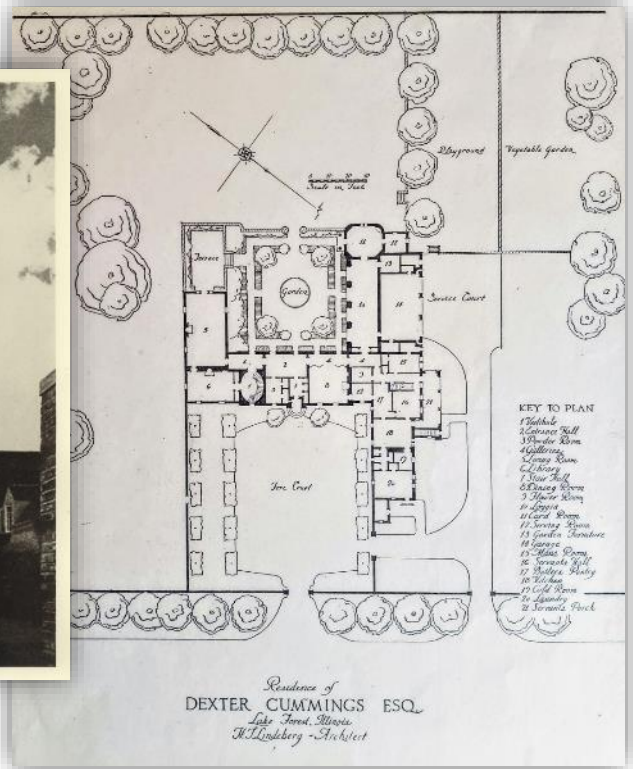


- Built 1928/1931
- Original owner: Richard Bentley and Phoebe Norcross Bentley
- Architect: David Adler/[Ambrose Cramer](#)
- Landscape architect: David Adler, Annette Hoyt Flanders
- Style: Dutch Colonial Revival
- Notes:
 - **1435 Lake Road** was originally the garage/coach house for the Bentley property; it was converted to a residence by Stanley Anderson in 1950.
 - Richard Bentley was editor-in-chief of the American Bar Association and a member of the firm Tenney, Bentley, Howell, Askow & Lewis.
 - Phoebe Norcross Bentley was appointed to the board of trustees of LF College and was president of the Girl Scouts Chicago Council from 1934-38.



1460 Lake Road

[west side]



- Built 1930
- Original owner: Dexter Cummings and Emilie Hoyt Cummings
- Architect: Harrie T. Lindeberg
- Landscape architect: Rose Standish Nichols
- Style: French Eclectic
- Notes:
 - Attorney Dexter Cummings was an accomplished golfer who won the intercollegiate championship twice in the 1920s.
 - The high brick wall opens to a rectangular court. The tall hipped roof is characteristic of Lindeberg, who also designed the Onwentsia Club (1927).
 - This house occupies the southwest corner of the 11-acre estate of Dexter Cummings' father, D. Mark Cummings, called Ioka (1903) (see next tour stop).



Note the speed of construction: ground was broken in October 1929 (lower left); the exterior walls, roof and chimneys were complete by March 1, 1930 (lower right)



1475/1490 Lake Road

[east and west sides]

Current homes:



1475: Built 1994



1490: Built 1989

Formerly the site of:

“Ioka”

- Former address: 1455 Lake Road
- Built 1903; demolished c. 1960s
- Original owner: David Mark Cummings and Ruth Dexter Cummings
- Architect: Frederick Wainwright Perkins
- Style: English
- Notes:
 - D. Mark Cummings was a broker and banker. He (Onwentsia champion, 1909) and the Cummings children Dexter (see 1460 Lake Road) and Edith were all talented golfers. [Edith Cummings](#) won the British and U.S. Women’s championships in 1923. She appeared on the cover of *Time* in 1924 and served as inspiration for Jordan Baker’s character in *The Great Gatsby*.
 - The residence was demolished c. 1960, after the death of Ruth Dexter Cummings in 1959.
 - **1490 Lake Road** sits on the site of the former Cummings coach house, but is largely a total rebuild.



List of sources

- History Center of Lake Forest-Lake Bluff
 - House files
 - Photograph collection (available at <https://lflbhistory.pastperfectonline.com>)
 - [Online exhibit](#)
- Lake Forester archives
 - [1898-1944 online via Lake Forest Library](#)
- Chicago Tribune archives
 - [Online via ProQuest](#)
- *Classic Country Estates of Lake Forest*, by Kim Coventry, Daniel Meyer and Arthur Miller (2003).
- *Lake Forest: Art and History Edition*, American Communities Company (1916).
- *Creating Chicago's North Shore*, by Michael H. Ebner (1988).
- United States Federal Census accessed via Ancestry.com
- "Lake Forest Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, originally published 9176, updated 2012.