

FOX POINT

files

by Douglas H. Frazer



Beginning about 1900, well-heeled Milwaukee residents who lived along N. Prospect Avenue began building summer homes in Fox Point, mostly along the bluff. Fox Point was then part of the Town of Milwaukee. The Town was perennially strapped for funds; it could not or would not provide Fox Pointers with police protection. Summer residents banded together and hired a Mr. Brackett as a watchman to patrol the area during the winter when the homes were vacant. This was strictly a foot patrol. In about 1912, these residents hired Albert Arndt. Arndt was succeeded by Henry Plank and finally Oscar Klug. Plank and Klug patrolled their beats on horseback or in a Model T Ford.

Arndt lived in what is now the Village of Bayside. He would patrol his beat three times a day, checking on the various summer homes in Fox Point. If the hour was late when Arndt finished his beat, he'd spend the night in one of the homes since he had the keys for most. One night when preparing to bed down in the Goodrich home, he was awakened by a noise at the front door. Arndt drew his pistol and fired through the door. The prowler disappeared into the night. The stranger ran to the streetcar station at Bradley Road and boarded the streetcar heading back toward Milwaukee. The conductor noticed that the passenger was bleeding and informed the motorman to stop at the next telephone. Back then, telephones were located on telephone poles about a mile apart. The sheriff was waiting to take the culprit into custody when the streetcar crossed into Milwaukee at Edgewood Avenue.

At trial, the prosecuting attorney also happened to have a summer home in Fox Point that had been burglarized. The defendant denied having robbed any other homes in Fox Point. "Then how come," retorted the attorney, "you happened to be wearing my boots?"

The lack of services from the Town of Milwaukee was a principal reason Fox Point residents voted in 1926 to form the village. The new Village quickly created a police department, locating it on Green Tree Road at the current site of the Wheel and Sprocket parking lot. The department consisted of Chief Earl Carey and three officers; John Farmer, Frank Paulus, and Al Cass.

Before incorporation, Fox Point had been ideal place to take the



Combined Force circa 1960



Traffic Stop circa 1958

A Short History of the Fox Point Police

family car out for a spin. Because of the minimal police presence, a driver could "open her up" with very little chance of getting "pinched" by the police.

Chief Carey changed that. Carey served notice that the speed laws would be rigidly enforced. The department's equipment consisted of three motorcycles used all year round. In addition, the chief used his own unmarked convertible. In June 1931, the department added a radio-equipped squad car. The reputation of the police department spread. Motorists began exercising more caution driving in the Village. By July of 1936, Fox Point roads had the least violations in the county. Chief Carey remarked: "A few years ago the Justice of the Peace had as many as twenty-five violations in a week, now it's two or three. It's almost come to the point when we could dispense with our Justice of the Peace for traffic court and put our officers in tuxedo jackets where traffic violations are concerned."

Then, as now, animal control was a concern. Once the speeding problem was under control, Chief Carey waged a campaign against animal trapping in the Village. A feeding station was set up at Village

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Hall (then on the southeast corner of Dean Road and Lake Drive). It was reported in February 1936, that fifty to sixty pheasants appeared daily at the station. Carey was also active in training hunters and their dogs in the art of trailing and scenting game. Although the village prohibited shooting game within municipal limits, the chief did encourage target shooting.

In February 1957, Village Manager Colonel Erhard A. Teschan reported that, after study, the fire and police departments would be combined. "In 1956," he said, "19 hours had been spent fighting fires and 56 hours had been spent opening windows, rescuing cats from trees, etc."

Harold Olson became chief of the combined fire and police departments and was instrumental in making Fox Point one of the safest communities in the county. He had joined the force as a police officer in 1929 and chief since 1939. In 1961, Olson's last year as

police chief, the Village, with a population of about 7,300, had only seven burglaries. The four squad cars logged a total of 190,000 miles of patrolling, an average of 21.6 miles every hour. He retired on July 15, 1961.

In the late 1960s the Village police wanted to double the then normal \$3 illegal parking fine if couples were apprehended in the act of kissing. The board declined to enact the necessary ordinance and news of this appeared in newspapers across the nation. One telegram read as follows:

President, Fox Point Village Board:

Our heartfelt thanks go out to you for refusing to levy a fine on kissing in cars. All such proposals smack of a threat to the great love affair of Americans with automobiles – no small part of which embraces fond memories of courtship by car light. A hasty vote by the Fox Point Village Board might have struck a death blow to spoon, moon, June, and love in bloom. In the name of all car-lovers, in general, we salute you and thank you."

Signed Lincoln Mercury Division
Ford Motor Company

[Note/Source: I'm indebted to and borrow from a discussion of the subject in Fox Point - A Planned Village Its Heritage and Development 1843-1976, published by the Bi-Centennial Committee and the Village Board of Fox Point (1978).]

Douglas H. Frazer is a trustee on the Fox Point Village board. The views expressed are his own and not necessarily those of the village, the village board, other village board members, or Best Version Media, LLC.

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- ✓ To reduce energy use at electric baseboards and hot water radiators, for hot water heating systems insulate pipes running through unheated spaces. Use R-6 or higher fiberglass insulation to wrap ducts in unconditioned spaces.
- ✓ Frozen water pipes that break can cause lots of personal and property damage. These supply lines need to be kept warm during the winter. Long term solutions include air sealing/insulating to the cold side of these pipes. Temporary solutions would include getting access to the area where the pipe froze and wrapping it with an electric heat tape. If you enjoy heating the out of doors, this could be a permanent solution. But the real solution is to air seal and insulate.



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