

more

★ **COLUMBUS** ★

Unforgettables

A Further Collection of Columbus Yesterdays and Today's

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Benn Blinn's Kite Park

This is just a small part of Fancyburg Park, one of five parks in Upper Arlington. It was sold to the city by Benn Blinn, who once operated a nursery in the area and gained fame—and even some notoriety—for his kite-flying exploits. Upper Arlington picked this park for the first Benn Blinn Kite Day held in November, 1985. The entrance to the park is located at

Where Pleasure Reigns—*This is just a small part of Fancyburg Park, one of five parks in Upper Arlington. It was sold to the city by the late Benn Blinn in 1973, who once operated a nursery in the area and gained fame—and even some notoriety—for his kite-flying exploits. Upper Arlington picked this park for the first Benn Blinn Kite Day held in November, 1985. The entrance to the park is located at 2630 Kioka Ave. between Swansea and Zollinger roads. Benn Blinn died in April, 1986, at the age of 76.*

2630 Kioka Ave. between Swansea and Zollinger Rds.

Fancyburg Park was purchased from Benn Blinn, an Upper Arlington resident, in 1973. The 22-acre park is located in the west central section of Upper Arlington and serves the neighborhood and the whole city as one of Upper Arlington's five community parks.

Remembered well by many long-time Arlington residents as a garden area where they could go on weekends and pick flowers, vegetables, and especially pumpkins during season, the park now serves as a major recreation area.

The purchase agreement with Blinn included these conditions: The land must be used exclusively for park and recreation purposes; Sunset Dr., located at the extreme west end of the property, should not be paved during Blinn's lifetime, and the name of the park should be "Fancyburg."

According to Blinn, the name



"Fancyburg" dates back to the time he and Mrs. Blinn first visited Upper Arlington and were so impressed by the community and the place where they decided to live that they referred to it as "Fancy Burg."

Old timers in the Arlington area will recall that Benn Blinn, famous for his "Blinn Boards," small roadside advertising signs, had as a hobby the flying of large kites at high altitudes. They were attached by fine wire to mechanized

spools. His colorful high flying kites were more or less grounded by the Civil Aeronautics Board after a rash of complaints from TWA pilots and other fliers out of Don Scott Airport, who complained that Blinn's hobby was endangering their approaches to Port Columbus and the OSU airport.

Blinn did comply, but he did continue flying his kites—at a much lower altitude.

A final note on Benn's kites.

Back in November, 1985, the Upper Arlington Parks and Recreation Department scheduled the first annual Benn Blinn Kite Day. It was a huge success and a fitting tribute to Blinn, who is still considered a world-renowned kite expert.

The scene for this initial kite day was, naturally, Fancyburg Park, where Benn once operated his nursery business . . . and flew his kites.

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The Lavender Lady

*By Keith McNamara,
Columbus Attorney*

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One of my early recollections as a young man, in the late 30s and 40s, was the "Lavender Lady," who was almost a permanent fixture, in all kinds of weather, in front of the Lazarus department store on S. High St.

This very passive looking middle-aged woman would stand very quietly, backed up to one of the Lazarus High St. front display windows, with her tray of lavender hitched to a yoke around her neck.

As I recall, her few customers

did buy the little clusters of this fragrance. Yes, I do have vivid memories of "the Lavender Lady" (always dressed in flowing purple clothes) selling her little packages to passersby, but to this day I have not been able to get any information from old newspapers or other source material about her background, or even her name.

In fact, I even wrote Don Weaver, Larry Connor, Howard "Sam" Thompson (all former

newspapermen), and Charles Y. Lazarus, and, unfortunately, none could add any further information on this Downtown Columbus personality.

Who knows? Perhaps some reader in this volume of *More Columbus Unforgettables* may have some of the answers or information about her. She was and still is, unforgettable in my memory. I'm sure there are others who remembered her. Let's hope so!

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