

Memories of Lake Hellums

Arrel & Myron Toews

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Toews

The whimsical painting of [Lake Hellums](#) shown above hangs in lobby of the former [Youngblood Hotel](#) (302 N Independence, Enid OK), a 14-story (+ 2 below) art-deco building built in 1930 by Bass Construction Company for future oil/gas man [Lawrence S Youngblood](#) (1905-1965). The building was later known as Hiland Tower when owned by oil tycoon Harold Hamm from 1992-2015, when it housed his Continental Resources petroleum firm. It is currently named Independence Tower.



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Lake Hellums was an amusement park and swimming lake located approximately 2 miles N and 1 mile W of N Enid OK (current address is 1122 W Lake Hellums Road, Enid OK 73703). It was in operation from about 1925 until 1965, and the **David & Rosa Toews family** went there often for picnics and other gatherings with friends and family during the 1950-60s.



To get there, we'd turn W off US-81 just S of those three large mansions, then drive by the **Jerry Oven Dairy** on our way to Lake Hellums. Lake Hellums Road was paved with asphalt in 1953.

This project is an attempt by brothers **Arrel and Myron Toews** to consolidate their own memories and those of others about this iconic place of our childhood. We have included as much information and documentation as we have been able to collect, including vintage newspaper ads and period photos, and encourage others to send any memories, photos, or other information to us.

Vintage newspaper ads obtained from online search engines such as newspapers.com have been helpful in creating a timeline for the evolution of this amusement park - **yellow boxes** highlighting Lake Hellums or simply Hellums in these ads and articles are the unfortunate artifact of the search process, so kindly bear with us on that.

Some information on the [Enid City Railway Company](#) and their **Lakewood Electric Park**, located on N Cleveland N of the city and a [possible precursor to the Lake Hellums Park](#) we knew in our youth, is from the 20 March 1909 Enid Daily Eagle (p 822 of Garfield County Oklahoma 1907-1982 Volume II; 1982. The company operated street cars in Enid from 1907-1929, including a line that ran N on Cleveland Avenue to their new Lakewood Electric Park (see photo at R). Cleveland Avenue passes on the W side of the section where Lake Hellums was located.

Lakewood Electric Park consisted of twenty-three acres of oak forest and an artificial lake covering eight acres. Amenities included a bath house, band stand, open-air theatre auditorium, pavilion, boat house, bowling alley, scenic railway, and other varied amusements.

Perhaps unlikely, but we believe this might have been the [original version](#) of what would eventually become [Lake Hellums Amusement Park](#). Current Enid city limits end at Carrier Road (OK-45); Lake Hellums is 1 mile N. Enid city limits in 1909 were likely further S.

THE ENID CITY RAILWAY COMPANY

From Enid Daily Eagle - March 29, 1909

The Enid City Railway Company, C.H. Bosier, President; Clarence Kline, Superintendent, has ten miles of street railway, built or now under construction, equipped with modern, new electric cars, running to three depots, Oklahoma Christian University, the Enid Cemetery, Baseball park; (the finest ball park in the state, built and owned by this company) to the main residence sections of the city, to public library, court house, all hotels . . . In fact giving the most complete service to the public. This line also goes to:

LAKWOOD ELECTRIC PARK ENID'S GREAT OUTDOOR AMUSEMENT RESORT

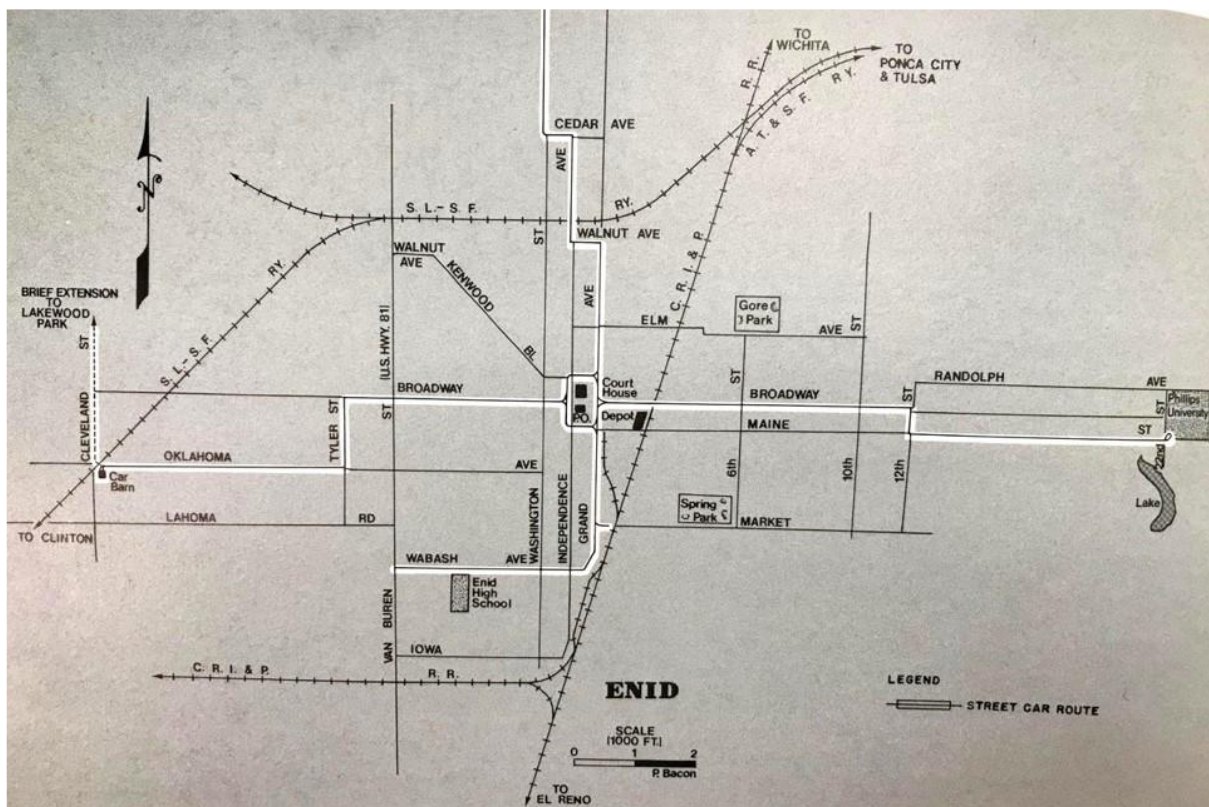
**Twenty-three Acres of Oak Forest . . .
Finest Dancing Pavilion in Southwest
. . . In Fact there are Few, if Any,
More Beautiful Pavilions in America.**

AN ARTIFICIAL LAKE is now being constructed covering eight acres. Plans have been made to fill this lake with water at any cost this spring. The boat house and full complement of steel boats are already there.

Bath house equipped with bathing suits for ladies and gentlemen. Band stand and Open Air Theatre Auditorium, Scenic Railway, Bowling Alley, Luncheon Park, Varied Amusements.

A trolley map of the Enid City Railway is shown below (from "When Oklahoma Took the Trolley," by Allison Chandler and Stephen F. Maguire, Interurbans Press, 1980). Note the "Brief extension to Lakewood Park" above Cleveland Avenue at far L.

"Trolley service began June 3, 1907 & carried 386,575 passengers thru the remainder of 1907. Enid Electric and Gas Company provided electricity for car operation. In 1908, it owned 9 motor cars and 6 trail cars. On-duty policemen, firemen, and postmen rode free, as did children under five with adult supervision. The route took 14 minutes and covered 6.92 miles of line. The route covered all three railroad depots, [Oklahoma Christian University](#) (later Phillips University), the [Enid Cemetery](#), baseball parks, residential areas, the [Carnegie Public Library](#), [Garfield County Courthouse](#), and hotels. It lasted until 1929."



A 1908 photo of downtown Enid showing its trolleys (& horses and buggies) is below (Wikipedia). Looking E down E Broadway, corner of Grand Avenue and Broadway.



Dr. Harkey David Hellums

First, a bit of background on the eponymous [Dr HD Hellums](#). He was born 21 March 1880 in Texas County MO, and passed away on 4 October 1939 in his home at Lake Hellums. He received his DDS degree from Kansas City Dental College, KCMO in 1906. His earthly remains rest in the [Enid Cemetery](#). His legacy includes both his popular amusement park as well as his dental practice and his **"I work for white people only"** advertised business motto. In 1910, his practice was located at 128 W Randolph Street, Enid OK, above the Owl Drug Store, but it was later on the 3rd floor of the American National Bank Building (201 N Grand; later First National Bank). Photo at L below shows N side of Enid Square (W Randolph Street) in 1910, while R photo shows American National Bank at far R, ca 1930s.



A paperweight (or perhaps ink blotter or coaster) compliments of Doc Hellums is shown at right.

[Downtown Enid History](#) is a very useful site for old Enid things, including locations of businesses, with lots of vintage photos (see examples above).



Some early newspaper ads are below: The **Enid Times**, **Enid Daily Eagle**, and **Enid Morning News** were all being printed in the **1920s**. Ads on this page are from **1925**.

**PUBLIC INVITED TO
LAKE AT HELLUMS**

A special invitation is extended by Dr. H. D. Hellums to everyone to visit his new summer resort to day. Swimming, boating and picnicking will be the principal amusement of the day. In the evening, Lakeside airdome will open with Reginal Denny in "Oh! Doctor."

The beach at Lake Hellums has a sand bottom and is said to be very fine for swimming. A life guard is on duty at all times. Lake Hellums is five miles north on the pavement and then a mile west. The Red Ball Taxi company will operate their big bus to the lake from 3 o'clock Sunday afternoon on, at hourly periods.

SWIMMING Northern Oklahoma's GREATEST RESORT BOATING
COME OUT!! ENJOY YOURSELF!!

LAKE HELLUMS

—Lake Hellums is fed by some sixty-odd fresh, cool-water springs and three large-bore windmills pumping a steady, heavy flow of spring water every hour of the day.

The entire area of the lake is sand-bottomed and an outlet of perfect filtration keeps the water in splendid sanitary condition.

The caretaker chemicalizes the lake twice a week, and the bath house, dressing rooms and towel rooms are scrubbed and disinfected every day.

Professor Hawks has been engaged for a limited time to supervise our swimming and will give six lessons to every one desiring to learn to swim.

The following prices are the most reasonable charged at any large resort in the State:

Swim, clothes checked, and towel.....	20c
Swim, suit furnished, clothes checked, and towel.....	30c

Stay in as long as you like!

INVITATION
I cordially invite you to personally inspect this fine, improved amusement park

Signed:
Dr. H. D. Hellums

Best of Transportation Facilities
Red Ball Buses leave Enid for lake 6:30, 7:30 and 8 p. m. on week nights.
2:30 4:30 5:30
6:30 7:30 a.m.
Sunday nights.

Everything for Your Pleasure
—Gasoline station
—Lunch stand
—Cold drinks
—Sandwiches
—Etc.

Fishing Soon

PICNICS

Golfing Soon

LAKE HELLUMS NEWS

4th. of July Celebration
Barbacued Buffalo and Beef
Special Fire Works
Races—Prize Fights and
Other amusements.

Swimming every day and night
Lake entirely lighted at night.
Swim as long as you like.
Clothes checked, towel furnished 20c.
Suit furnished 10c extra.
All clear spring water—lots of shallow water for waders.

Boating and Picnicing
SUNDAY NIGHT
HOOT GIBSON
In
"LET 'ER BUCK"
8:15
"Spend your evenings at Lake Hellums."
Drive 5 Miles North and 1 1-4 Miles West.

LAKE HELLUMS

Cool Off At Lake Hellums Sunday



DRIVE OUT TODAY

Lake Hellums is now open for swimming, boating, and picnicing. Get in your car, drive five miles north on the paved road, then one and a quarter west—and you drive right into Lake Hellums.

Swimming - Boating - Picnics

Everything is new at Lake Hellums, new bath house, showers, new boats, and everything is electrically lighted. The water in the lake is clear with a sand bottom all over. The lake is fed by a clear cool spring.

**Big Formal Opening
SUNDAY, MAY 31ST**
Airdome Opens Also

Bring Your Picnic Basket



Always Open

HOW TO GET THERE

Drive five miles north, and a mile and a quarter west. The Lake Hellums is open every day in the week. The resort is open to the public from 7 in the morning till 11 at night. "Rusty" Allen and his wife are in charge of the grounds and concessions.

Gas Station On Grounds




Note the presence of a gas station and lunch stand, bus service by Enid's Red Ball Bus Company, and an appearance by Hoot Gibson (1892-1962)! Sixty springs and three windmills helped keep the lake full of fresh water. Ads below are from 1925 (L) and 1927 (R).

LEARN TO SWIM

*We Will Teach
Your Boy or Girl
to Swim*

AT
LAKE HELLUMS



Lake Hellums is open from 7 a. m. till 11 p. m. The best spring water in Oklahoma, sand beach, all well electrically lighted.

PROF. HAWKS
will teach you to swim in six lessons.
Clothes Checked and Towel
Furnished, 20c

**ENID
Transport Bus**

To
LAKE HELLUMS
DANCE

Bus will leave North East
Corner of Square every dance
night at—
8:30 P. M.
9:30 P. M.

LEAVES **LAKE HELLUMS**
9:00 P. M.
12:00 MIDNIGHT

Fare 25c—Round Trip 40c

SPEND YOUR SPARE
TIME
AT
LAKE HELLUMS'
RESORT
SWIM, FISH, GOLF AND
PICNIC
DANCE
Tuesday, Thursday and
Saturday Night
Enid Transport Bus runs every
hour on Sunday's.
Two Trips Dance Nights
From N. E. Corner of Square.

A collage of old photos of Lake Hellums is shown below - note fishing lake at top, cottages and picnic grounds in middle, and swimming lake and amusements at bottom. Date unknown. East wall of Enid's Pastimes Bar, later Napoli's; photos & assembly by Myron Toews



Lower photo caption (lower R; ←); "2nd Annual Bathing Beauty Contest, 1928"

Additional newspaper ads are shown below, in chronological order as best we can determine. Where no date is indicated, we have done our best in the context of other ads. Ads below are from **1928** (L), **1934** (C), and **1935** (R). Although Doc Hellums worked for white people only, he DID hire [Chuck Morrison's Hot Colored Band](#) to perform in his [Rollerdrome!](#)

DANCING
At
LAKE HELLUMS
Every Tuesday and Saturday Night
Big Sun Rise Dance, July 4
From 12:00 o'Clock until Daylight
Good Music and Order
Come out and look us over
For information call
R. W. Hill
Phone 2362 or 2687

BOYS' SUMMER CAMP
ONE WEEK OF OUTING
July 10 to 17
LAKE HELLUMS
For Boys Ages 8 to 12
A Camp of Character, under careful adult supervision.
—LEARN TO SWIM
—LECTURES FOR BOYS
—GOOD EATS
—GAMES
—CONTESTS and TROPHIES
Enroll on or Before July 5th at Sourbeer Drug Store
A Day's Schedule
MORNING
8:30 Practice, setting up drill, dip in the lake, slacks out.
9:00 Ping-pong, breakfast.
9:30 Chapel service and lecture for boys.
10:00 Camp work, cleaning the cabins, etc.
11:00 Morning activities under adult supervision; games, fishing, boating.
12:30 Morning swim.
12:00 Dinner.
AFTERNOON
1:00 Camp inspection, recreation.
4:00 Afternoon swim.
4:35 Tutorial: flag lowering.
5:35 Supper.
6:30 Campfire games.
7:30 Camp fire skits, songs, etc.
8:30 Vendor service: include ice cream.
9:00 Taps, lights out and quiet for a good night's rest.
HARRY E. AUSTIN,
Camp Director
Address: University Station, Enid, Okla.
For information write to Phone 624

TREASURE HUNT
Every Wed. Night 8 o'clock
\$25 in cash will be distributed in our swimming pool. COME OUT AND GET YOUR SHARE.
LAKE HELLUMS
RAY STECK, Lessee

New Popular SWIM PRICES
Children, under 6...FREE
Children, 12 or under 10c
Children, under 15...15c
Adults, before 4 p. m. 15c
(Except on Sundays and Holidays)
Adults, evenings...25c
LAKE HELLUMS
RAY STECK, Lessee
Phone 9520F111

2 F 1 Every Thursday Night
R O 1
Any 2 Swimmers 25c
LAKE HELLUMS
RAY STECK, Lessee

SKATE TO CHUCK MORRISON'S HOT COLORED BAND
Fri. Nite, June 21, 8:30 to 12:30
J. Patton 25c, 4 Positions 40c
LAKE HELLUMS
ROLLERDROME

WHEAT QUEEN ENTRY BLANKS
Name
Age ..Weight....Height....
Address
Rules: Age 14 to 21 and live on farm. Entries must be in before July 4th.
Cash prizes to winners. Free season swim tickets to all entries.
LAKE HELLUMS
Mail Entry to Ray Steck, Enid

Lower R is an entry blank for the **1935 Wheat Queen Beauty Contest** - anyone 14-21 years of age and living on a farm was eligible, although there were likely no male entries.

The earliest actual photograph (**June 1925**) we have found of Lake Hellums visitors is from Hilda Brunken's photo album ([Oklahoma Brunken Cousins](#)) - Hilda grew up near Lahoma OK and visited Lake Hellums with friends. "Up through part of the 1950's Lake Hellums was a favorite getaway for people to escape the heat. Kind of like an early water park. The smaller of the two larger lakes was for swimming." Photo is titled "[A picnic at Lake Hellums.](#)"



Ads below from 1945 (L), 1947 (C), and 1948 (R). Note presence of "shooting gallery and other concessions" in 1947 and "new modern miniature golf course" in 1948.

DANCING NIGHTLY
LAKE HELLUM'S
 PAVILION
 ORCH. TUES., SAT., SUN.

FIREWORKS
FOR SALE
 AT BEAUTIFUL
LAKE HELLUMS
 Buy 'Em & Shoot 'Em
 Plenty of Room
SWIM — FISH
ROLLER SKATE
FREE PICNIC
 Grounds
 LIGHTED
 Plenty of Fish
 U-Catch 'Em

 Spring water pool
 Sandy Beach
 Shooting gallery
 and other
 Concessions
 AT BEAUTIFUL
LAKE HELLUMS

AT BEAUTIFUL
LAKE HELLUMS
 You Will Enjoy Our New
 Modern Miniature Golf
 Course — Also
SWIM — FISH
ROLLER SKATE
FREE PICNIC
 LIGHTED
Grounds
 Plenty of Fish
 U-Catch 'Em

 Spring water pool
 Sandy Beach
 Shooting gallery
 and other
 Concessions
 AT BEAUTIFUL
LAKE HELLUMS

SWIM
PICNIC — FISH
 AT ENID'S MOST BEAUTIFUL
 PLAY GROUND
LAKE HELLUMS
SATURDAY, MAY 26 IS
LAKE HELLUMS DAY
SWIM and PICNIC
FREE
ALL DAY

Ads below from 5 August 1950 (L), unknown but likely 1950 (C), and 1953 (R). Note the inclusion of the Merry-Go-Round in the 1950 ad, the earliest known mention of this iconic structure.

SQUARE DANCE
 BIG MID-SUMMER JAMBOREE & SHOW
LAKE HELLUMS — ENID, OKLAHOMA
 HOMER AND BETTY HOWELL in the exhibition rounds and their
 two Squares of Exhibition Dancers, doing beautiful Squares and
 Waltz Quadrilles.
 Dancing at 8:30 P. M. with Homer Howell calling.
 Adm. at Gate 1.50 Couple Saturday, August 5, 1950
LAKE HELLUMS
 Swim — Merry-Go-Round — Miniature Golf — Square Dancing

• • OPENS SUNDAY • •
 Beautiful
 Lake Hellums
 ★ Picnic Grounds
 ★ Golf Course
 ★ Shooting Gallery
 Other Concessions

 Bring The
 Family To
LAKE
HELLUMS
 North of Enid
MERRY-GO-ROUND
OPEN
MAY 1

At Beautiful
LAKE HELLUMS
FREE
CASH
 for the
 4th
 ENJOY THE 4th at
 BEAUTIFUL LAKE HELLUMS
 4 miles North and 1 mile West of Enid
 ★ FREE
 MAMMOTH
 DISPLAY
 ★ FREE FISHING
 ★ FREE PICNICING
FIREWORKS
 Bring the family and friends... come early and stay late! You'll enjoy every minute
 of the Holiday at beautiful Lake Hellums.
 * All ages. 25¢ Admission to the park... over the year regular admission to the park...
 * * * * *

Beauty Pageants at Lake Hellums

Lake Hellums was also the site of beauty pageants! The first one was held in 1927 (see p 5). The 21 September 1980 Enid Morning News has an article (p A-3) about the [1930 Lake Hellums Beauty Pageant](#). Contestants are shown below at L, with winners at R. First prize was a diamond ring from [Adams Jewelry](#), 2 pair of \$1.85 hose from [CR Anthonys](#), a \$5.50 meal ticket from [Jones Café](#), and a free permanent wave! All contestants got free passes to Lake Hellums (admission at the time was 25¢), even including the two masked (overweight?) contestants (first row at L).



[Elaine Horsley Walden](#) won first prize. [Marcelle Hahn Klein](#) won second prize - a \$15 gift certificate from a local dress shop specializing in Parisian fashions (try finding one of those in downtown Enid these days!). She was a patient of Dr Hellums, and he asked her to enter the contest during a clinic visit, even giving her a free swimsuit - he had a selection in his dental practice in the American National Bank Building (see p 4). [Eddie Collins](#) won third prize. 1930 winners, first to third, (L/R) are shown in R photo above.

Our first cousin, [Gerry Lou Toews Reimer](#), daughter of [Henry G and Elsie Toews](#), was the Kremlin OK entry to the 1948 Pageant; she was sponsored by [FW Zaloudek](#).

The ad for the annual bathing beauty contest is from the 2 July 1955 Enid Daily Eagle.

KREMLIN, OKLA.
Entry in the
LAKE HELLUMS
JULY 5TH
BATHING BEAUTY
REVUE



GERRY LOU TOEWS
Daughter of
Mr. and Mrs. H. G. Toews
Kremlin, Oklahoma
Sponsored by
F. W. Zaloudek

ANNUAL BATHING BEAUTY CONTEST
and **GIANT JULY**
MONDAY,
JULY 4th
2 p.m.

A Galaxy of Beautiful Girls!

Plan Now to Attend

Fun for ALL THE FAMILY! PLENTY OF ENTERTAINMENT... BEAUTIFUL SHADE and SPACIOUS PICNIC GROUNDS!

- * FISHING
- * BERRY JELLY BREADS
- * SHOOTING
- * GOLF
- * WINDMILL SOFT TACKLING

* SWIMMING POOL OPENS 10 a.m.

* COME...Bring Your Family and Friends!

* ADMISSION - 25c All Ages

* Biggest 25c Entertainment Feast of Mississippi!

* BEAUTIFUL

LAKE HELLUMS
Northwest of ENID

The beauty pageant ad from 1947 at R is very poor quality but it is included because it notes the grand opening of the new miniature golf course, thus dating the addition of this attraction.

Also below is an article about Carolyn Rathmel's 1950 JR Sunday School class of the Kremlin Christian Church - 40 attendees in all!

The junior class of the Kremlin Christian church and their teacher, Miss Carolyn Rathmel held a picnic at Lake Hellums Tuesday evening. They invited others of the Sunday school to attending, making an attendance of forty present.

ENJOY THE 4th
SPEND THE DAY AT BEAUTIFUL
LAKE HELLUMS

THESE BEAUTIFUL GIRLS AND MANY MORE WILL COMPETE IN A BIG BATHING BEAUTY CONTEST AND THE TITLE OF HARVEST QUEEN



ALSO SWIMMING RACES - DIVING CONTESTS
FANCY DIVING - SENSATIONAL FIRE DIVE AND
MAMMOTH FREE FIREWORKS DISPLAY
STARTING PROMPTLY AT 10 P. M.

ANNOUNCING GRAND OPENING
Lake Hellums Miniature Golf Course

FINEST IN OKLAHOMA - 18 HOLES COMPLETE WITH ALL NEAR MISS FAIRWAYS AND GREENS - PLAYS JUST LIKE BEST BRAND-COOL, SWEET-LOTS OF FUN

FISH - SWIM - PICNIC - ROLLER SKATE
MINIATURE GOLF - SHOOTING GALLERY, etc.

ADMISSION AT GATE - 25c PER PERSON
NO EXTRA CHARGE FOR PICNICING OR FISHING
8 HOURS DAILY - 1 HOUR IN P.M.

Newspaper photos from 1953 are shown below:



Fourth of July Fun at Lake Hellums

The three young ladies above are doing what a portion of the thousands who will flock to Lake Hellums July 4th will be doing. The girls are Judy, Mary and Joyce. The Enid Events, 02 Jul 1953, Thu, Page right are Judy & Mary. Judy is a cousin of Mary and Joyce, who are the daughters of...



EHS Band Picnics at Lake Hellums

The Enid high school band as well as a number of other high school students spent Wednesday afternoon at Lake Hellums. The band members got together for a picnic and the others were undoubtedly just looking for a place to beat the heat. Shown above ready for a spin on the merry-go-round are Tommie Lou Wright, Sandra Byers, Beverly Diener and Belya Clark.

More Detailed Information on the Lake Hellums Carousel

There is considerable false information online and in the press regarding the Lake Hellums/Meadowlake Park Carousel - what follows is what we believe to be reliable information, largely obtained from the [National Carousel Organization](#); their [USACensus link](#) is the definitive site for specific carousel information.

The [Lake Hellums Carousel](#) is a Model MG36 Classic Wooden Carousel-class merry-go-round constructed in 1949 by the [Allan Herschell Company](#) of N Tonawanda NY ([Wikipedia link](#) is also informative). Its early life included a traveling carnival, but it was operating at Lake Hellums by at least [5 August 1950](#) (see p 8). It has 27 jumping horses (9 sets of 3), with 3 standing horses and 2 chariots. Three of the jumpers (1 row) are smaller horses suitable for small children, located in front of a chariot. It had a [band organ](#) and was powered by a gasoline engine. It ran clockwise. Tickets for riding were sold at a nearby ticket kiosk.



The carousel was given to the City of Enid in 1957 and placed in [Meadowlake Park](#) on the S side of town. The carousel still has all of the original factory horses, although some of them have been restored and repainted in locally popular motifs (e.g., OSU Cowboys, OU Sooners). The original gasoline engine at Lake Hellums was replaced by an electric motor when it was moved to Meadowlake Park, and it now has recorded music instead of the original band organ. Motor direction was reversed in 2002, so it (and those jumping horses!) now run counterclockwise. For many photos of the carousel in its current location, see

[The Allan Herschell Carousel at Meadowlake Park](#) (well worth a look!).

It is currently operated by Enid's Kiwanis Club, which also operates the miniature train. There are also adjacent [airplane and auto car rides](#), operated by the Lions Club - perhaps these are from Lake Hellums as well? All are well worth a visit, as is the Meadowlake Park Ferris Wheel.

[Incorrect information](#) about the

carousel includes *Enid Buzz*, as well as Elaine Warner's 28 June 2002 *OK Living* article.

Carousel Restoration

The Enid Kiwanis Club is grateful to these major donors and many others for their financial support and work in making this carousel restoration project possible. Built by the Allan Herschell Company of North Tonawanda, N.Y. in 1949, its early life was as part of a traveling carnival, and in 1950 became a feature at Enid's Lake Hellum's Amusement Park. In 1957, it was acquired by the AMBUCS, given to the City of Enid and placed in Meadowlake Park. Now refurbished and restored it is reopening May 2014, for the enjoyment of all, young and old.

Arrel's Memories of Lake Hellums

I was born in 1948, so my memories are from the 1950-60s. I remember many visits, almost all with a picnic in the picnic grounds to the S of the amusement area. I do not recall ever swimming in the lake, most likely because such activities were generally frowned upon by righteous Mennonites in those days. I do recall the skating rink/dance hall across the swimming lake, a large white building partially built over the lake on piers, with open windows and white solid shutters propped open - to me it seemed a long ways away, in particular because it was verboten - again, strictly off limits for devout Mennonites - but keep reading too! The depiction of the skating rink in the cover painting agrees very well with my memories. I do, in fact recall some reticence among overly devout Mennonites about there being "Hell" in the [Hellums name](#), but we went anyway and always had a grand time!

If I remember correctly, the parking lot was in the SE corner by the intersection, along what is now Lake Hellums Road. Then a picnic area to the NW and a pathway to the amusement park/swimming lake. Walking N, you would encounter a circular Shetland Pony ride and another ride with either wooden airplanes or cars (cannot remember which; maybe both, maybe these are now at Meadowlake Park in Enid - they seem very similar to me!). Then a small ticket kiosk sort of between the rides and the wonderful carousel, with the arcade/dressing room building to the L (W). More specific information on the carousel is below. There must have been toilets as well, but I was young so don't remember them.

The [arcade building](#) had at least 4 game stalls, the first being a [fishing venue](#). You got a fishing pole (short stick with string and a magnet at the end) and there was a trough of running water all along the front of this concession. You'd put your bait (magnet) into the water and catch a wooden fish with a magnet on top and a number on the bottom. The number corresponded to a little junky prize, which was fine with me since it was such great fun just to do it. Lots of bigger prizes on the wall in the back, like dolls and big teddy bears and other stuffed animals, but I never knew of anyone who won one. Most prizes were things like little "clickers," woven bamboo Chinese finger puzzles that you stick your fingers into both ends and then can't pull them back out, twisted-wire puzzles, stuff like that.



Next was a [ring toss/bottle venue](#), with pop and milk bottles to try to loop the rings onto, with a similar selection of prizes. Then a [dart/balloon concession](#), with a compressed air tank and attendant constantly filling new balloons, again with unattainable real prizes.

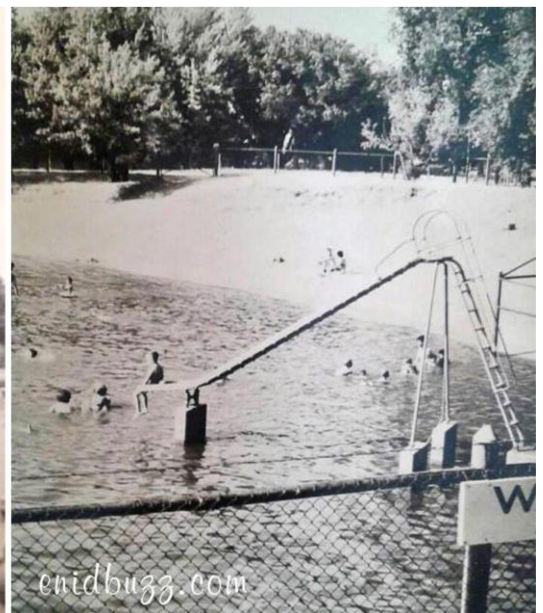
But the most amazing venue for me was the last one, just before the dressing rooms. A literal [shooting gallery](#) with real .22 caliber rifles and some kind of live ammo. Moving ducks

and bulls-eyes and other targets, lots of noise from gunfire and music, with guys (maybe even some gals?) aiming and shooting away with everyone standing close by. Still beyond me why someone was not wounded by ricochet every evening there, but then I'm not a shooter myself - never have been, never will be.

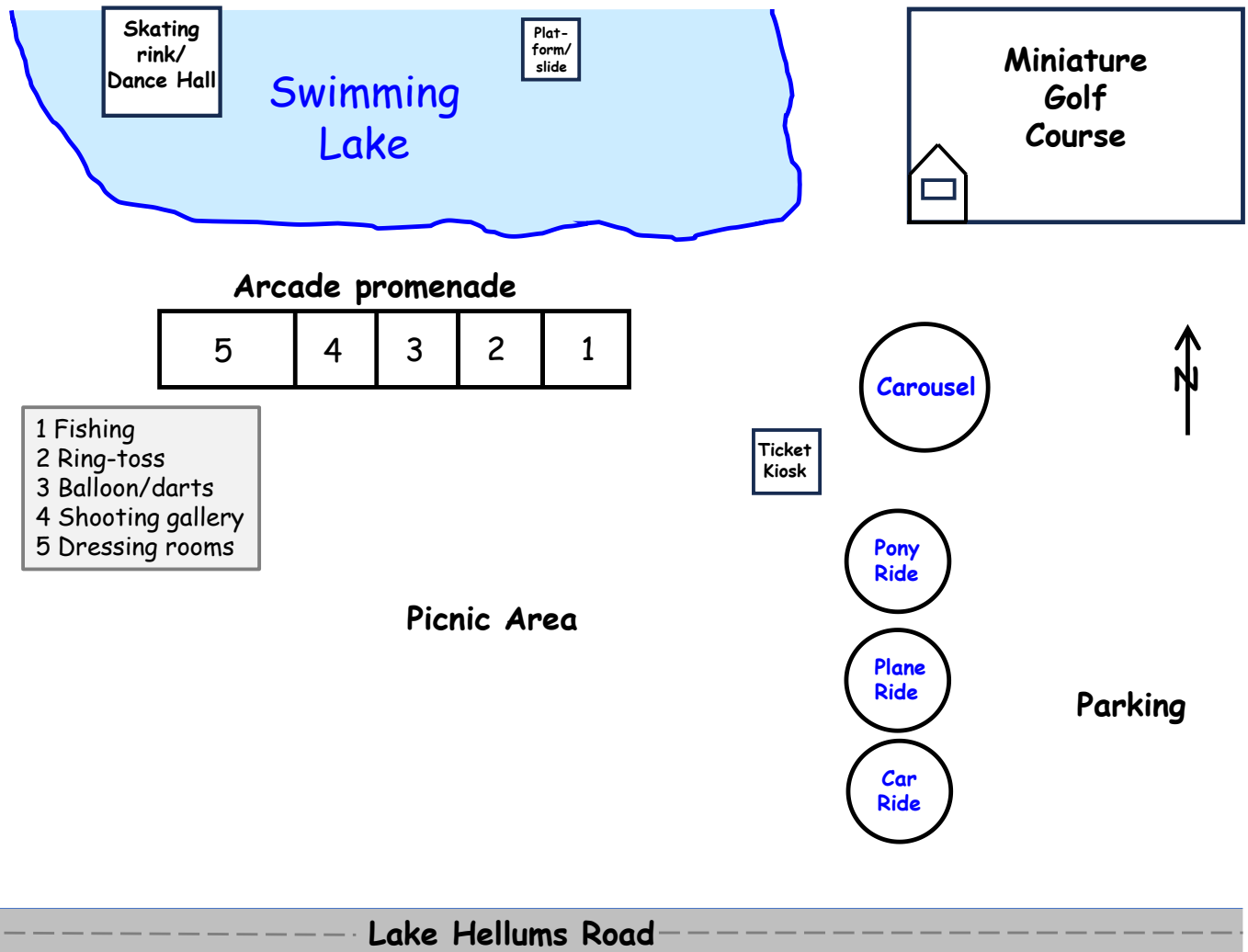
There was a very nice complex [miniature golf course](#) just E of the S end of the swimming lake and N of the carousel, with the ticket office where you'd pick up your club, ball, and scorecard in the SW corner of the course, closest to the arcade and carousel. We played the course often and it was quite unique and challenging, with raised castles and elaborate obstacles and other adornments, a different world from later Putt-Putt 2-dimensional courses. The final hole, just N behind the ticket office, had an elevated end where the golf balls had to ascent a steep slope before falling down into a selection of holes, one of which would yield a free game, but that was literally beyond a long shot - we never managed that!

The swimming lake was very popular for swimming, with bordering sandy beaches to the S, E and W and several slides that ended above the water. There was also a platform in the middle of the lake, N end, I think with a slide, as well as a little pier on the S side you could walk out on and then jump into the lake. [Peggy Smith Harris](#) remembers doing this repeatedly! The bath house had those wire baskets with numbers on them and a big safety pin with the same number, so you could get your clothes back when finished swimming. In the early days, basket rental was 20¢, with a towel included; you could even rent a swim suit for 10¢ extra! The lake was spring-fed, windmill supplemented, and electrically lighted at night. Peggy also remembers a [Last Day of School picnic](#) at Lake Hellums during her late grade school years. The [Delbert Ross family](#) likely ran the pony ride at Lake Hellums.

Photos of [swimming lake](#) are below (both from Enid Buzz, dates unknown): Note slides and elevated pier in the photo at L, with the arcade/dressing room building in the back. Photo at R shows slide and sandy beach, looking NNE from promenade in front of the arcade.



A map of the amusement park/swimming lake portions of Lake Hellums from Arrel's memories is below. Structures are not to scale:



Other Folks' Memories of Lake Hellums

[Joanne Zaloudek](#), daughter of FW and Helen Zaloudek and first cousin of Peggy Smith Harris, says she went there a lot! She drove there with a carload of friends, before she was officially old enough to do that (no license yet!) - down the dirt roads, then across US-81 to get there. She remembers the skating rink over the swimming lake, with low walls and large windows so you could see the lake while skating.

[John Regier](#) (now living in Reedley CA), brother of our Uncle Jake Regier (wife was Anna Voth Regier), also remembers going there often in the 1940s and early 1950s - the Isaac and Sarah Regier family lived not far away. He agrees that the Hell in Hellums might have caused concern for some Mennonites but not in his family. His grandfather was a Deacon in the North Enid Mennonite Brethren Church and John says he never felt pressured not to go and have a great time with his male and female friends. He says the miniature golf course

initially had sand "fairways" before carpeting was eventually installed, "so it took a good 'wack' of the ball and at times it ended in the parking lot." He played almost every time he went because it was a good place to meet girls from his church.

He also well remembers the swimming lake, where the N Enid MB Church Choir once had a swimming party. "Early suits were one piece, black, brown, or dark grey, and the style for boys and girls almost the same except girls a little more modest. The big thing was they were woolen and itched like crazy until you got into the water - soon cotton appeared, with colors and patterns."

Some have described the water as 'murky' or muddy, but compared to farm ponds it seemed to John to be pure and clean (no water snakes or snapping turtles!). "There were two high springboards (8' and 10' high), each mounted on 6 wooden poles, W side of the lake. The real highlight of the swimming lake was a [tall wooden slide/"mini-roller coaster" ramp](#) on the N side, facing the skating rink/dance hall, that was 40-60' high. For 25 cents for three rides, you were provided a flat wooden board, approximately 24-26" wide and 55 - 65" long. A slot in the center of the track allowed for small metal wheels on which the board rested and also kept it from leaving the track. You would sit flat on the board with feet extended to the front and held on to small slots on each side. The track down was shaped like a backward 'S' and one would almost feel weightless in the drop down the track before leveling out and skimming a distance over the water, then plunging into the lake."

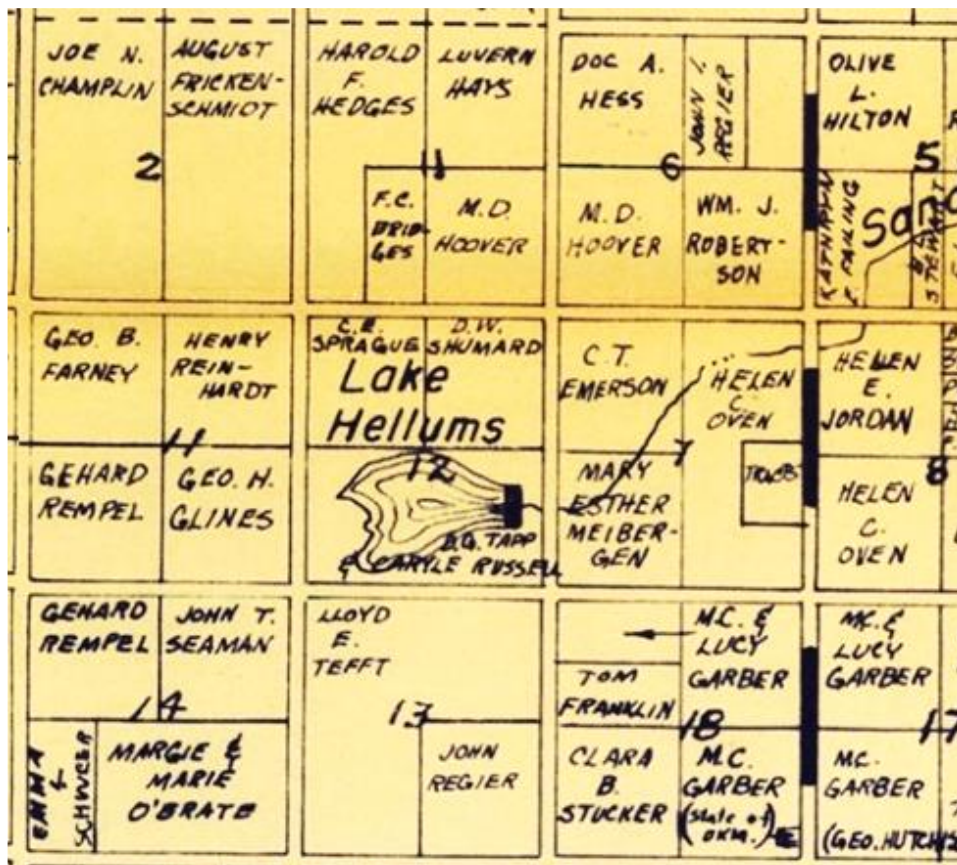
[Faith Mary Janzen Heinrichs](#) remembers attending [Girl Scout day-camp](#) after her fourth grade, and learning to swim in the murky lake. "There was a wooden platform at the opposite end of the lake from the sandy beach. Only the big kids were able to swim all the way across the lake to get to it and then dive off the elevated stand." She remembers being there with her cousin [LaDonna Janzen Hopkins](#), Abe and Lydia Janzen's daughter and Gary Janzen's sister. The scout camp itself was located N of the swimming lake.

[Dennis Toews](#) remembers attending a [Franz Family reunion](#) at the cottages and picnic area located N of the swimming lake. I remember attending this reunion as well, but as hired help! My parents, [David and Rosa Toews](#) were hired to cook burgers and hotdogs and otherwise cater a meal there - I well recall it because I was under strict instructions to not have a good time playing with friends there but to stay close to the outdoor grill and help my parents with the food! A great memory, nonetheless!

[Errol Wofford](#), son of [OB](#) and [Virginia](#) and brother to [Max](#) and [Sharon](#), also has some nice memories. He says his Mom and Dad met for the first time at Lake Hellums! OB was a lifeguard there and taught skating lessons at the skating rink built out over the water. Errol remembers swimming and playing miniature golf there many times.

Ownership and Sale of Lake Hellums Properties

The land on which the Lake Hellums Amusement Park and associated areas were located are part of 2 quarters (160 acre plots) in the Banner Township of Garfield County OK; their legal descriptions are SE/4-12-T23N-R7W (amusement park area) and the farm to the W, SW/4-12-T23N-R7W (fishing lake and surrounding areas). For some orientation, a portion of the [1951 Garfield County Ownership Map](#) from the [OSU Digital Collection](#) is shown below: The extent of the actual Lake Hellums is not geographically correct. At that time, it was owned by DG Tapp and Caryle Russell. This is basically the timeframe in which the Toews family was visiting Lake Hellums. Heavy dashed N/S line denotes highway US-81.



Additional ownership information from our [Garfield County Map Collection](#) is that these farms were owned in **1901** by SW Joneson (SW/4) and S McLaughlin (SE/4), and in **1906** by J Bese (SW/4) and ME Shockley (SE/4).

HD Hellums and wife Bessie purchased these lands between **1924-26** from a Mr. Askew, and they basically retained ownership until Doc Hellums passed away in **1939**. It then passed to Messrs. Russell and Tapp in **1944-45**.

On 2 September **1955**, the amusement park (SE/4) was offered for sale by owner **Paul Russell**, but it failed to sell (see next page). Note that the park was still in operation at the time of this attempted sale, with Mr. Russell desiring to retire.

PUBLIC AUCTION - LAKE HELLUMS

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1955
Beginning at 2:00 P. M.

Lake Hellums Park is located on black top road four miles North and one mile West of Enid, Oklahoma.

160 Acre pleasure resort, wooded rough terrain, with three nice lakes. Swimming, Miniature Golf Course, Picnic Areas, Dancing, Skating and Fishing facilities, Merry-Go-Round and other leased concessions such as shooting gallery, doll racks and etc. There is approximately \$30,000.00 worth of equipment. Most popular resort within 75 miles of Enid, Oklahoma, - Population 40,000.

Will sell in 3 parcels or as 1 unit. The West 70 acres includes 1 large **lake**, timber and grass. The NE 40 acres has large **lake**, nice wooded picnic areas and native grass. The Concession area and Swimming Pool will have 50 acres, all buildings, golf course, and 9 room modern house.

All maintenance equipment, swim suits, and miscellaneous articles used in operation are to be included in the purchase price. The potentialities of this park are unlimited, the Park is now in operation and making money. Present owner desires to retire.

TERMS: Twenty per cent of the purchase price will be required day of sale and the balance upon approval of title. Loan finance can be arranged.

PAUL RUSSELL, Owner

Sale conducted by the Winchester Real Estate Auction Company and Ray E. Williams Real Estate Auction Company, Enid, Oklahoma.

Delbert Winchester, George Schultz and Charles R. Williams,
Auctioneers

Eventually, in 1956, it was sold to [Harold Groendyke](#) ([Groendyke Transport](#)); the [Groendyke family](#) retains ownership to this day.

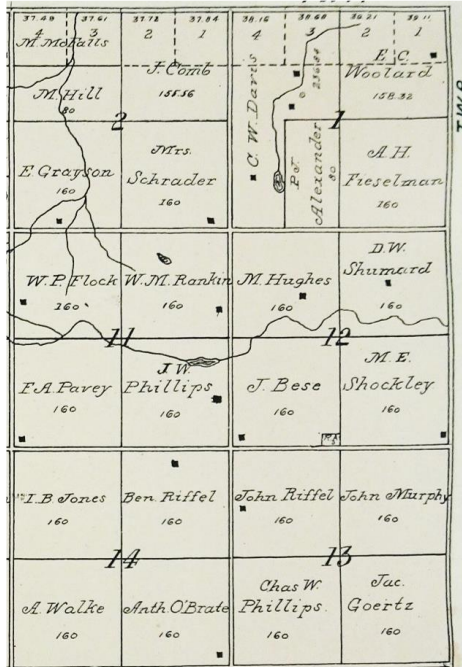
During the late 1950s - 1960s, Groendyke land and farm holdings, including Lake Hellums properties, were managed by [Wayne Brewer](#), father of Ladonna, Marilyn and [Leon](#), and brother to veterinarian [Jess Brewer](#). Groendykes built a [lodge](#) on the property, near where the arcade/dressing room building was located (I think actually on the same site!), and it has hosted various gatherings and gala events, including the [Grand National Quail Hunt](#) in some years. The Toews Brothers (Galen, Arrel, Myron) visited with John (?) Groendyke there a number of years ago, but we failed to gain much relevant Lake Hellums information. There is also a [Groendyke Ranch](#) near [Nash OK](#). Special thanks to [Ellis Toews](#) for much of the information directly above.



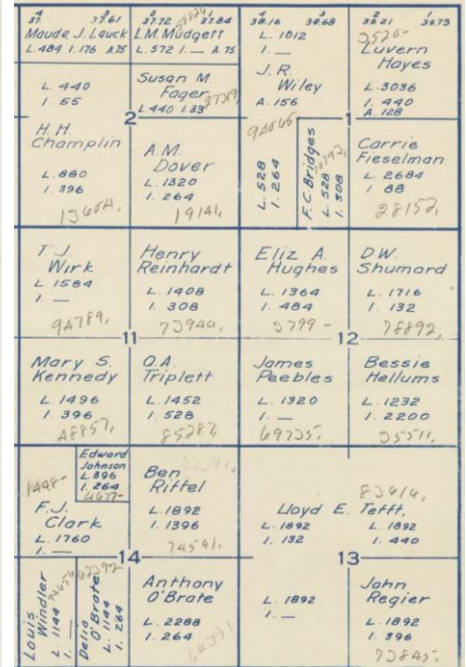
Additional plat maps, from our [Toews Brothers Garfield County OK Map Collection](#), showing [Lake Hellums properties](#) (SW/4 and SE/4 of Section 12 of Banner Township) are below: Banner Township is W of N Enid Township and S of Keowee Township. **1901** map is from an Eagle Publishing Company (Enid OK) advertising atlas, a copy of which is in the [Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center](#) in Enid OK. The **1906** map is from the [Standard Atlas of Garfield County Oklahoma](#) (George Ogle & Company, Chicago). The **1936** map is from the WPA Map Collection in [OSU Digital Map Collection \(Garfield County\)](#).



1901 Enid Eagle



1906 Ogle Atlas



1936 WPA Maps

Aerial Maps of Lake Hellums

The 1954 aerial view map of the Lake Hellums area is shown below. An annotated version is at bottom.

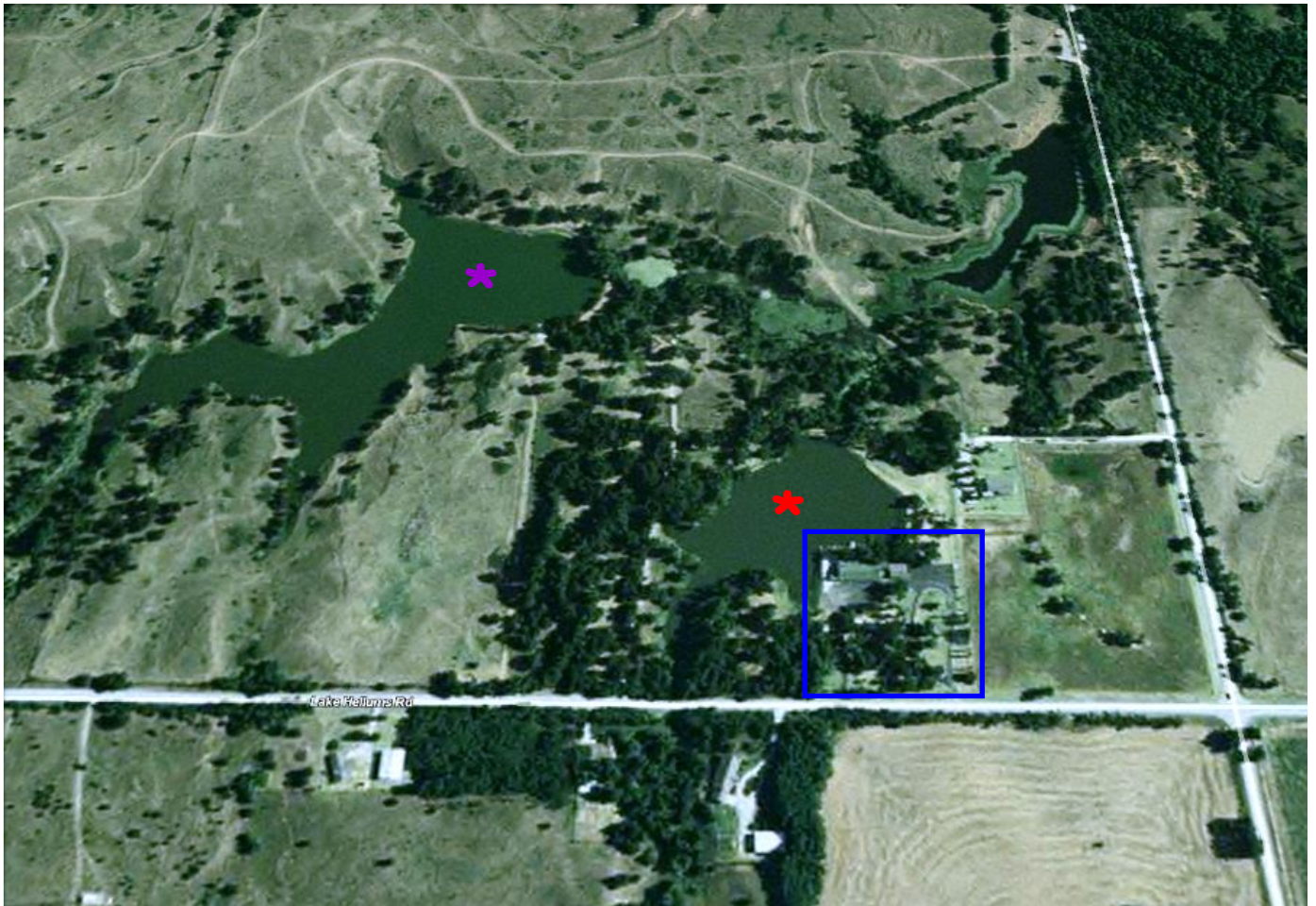


- Key to Annotated Map**
- 1 Fishing Lake
 - 2 Swimming Lake
 - 3 Skating rink/dance hall
 - 4 Arcade/dressing rooms
 - 5 Miniature golf course
 - 6 Carousel
 - 7 Pony/car/airplane rides
 - 8 Swimming lake platform/slide
 - 9 Doc Hellums residence
 - 10 Picnic area
 - 11 Parking
 - 12 Main entrance
 - 13 Road to cabins/cottages
 - 14 Cabins/second picnic area

W Lake Hellums Rd (N2870 Road)

N Van Buren St (N2870 Road)

The current (2023) Google Maps view of the Lake Hellums area is shown below. The blue box indicates the location of the former amusement park. Note both the former swimming lake (*) and the fishing lake (*) to the NW. E/W road is W Lake Hellums Road and N/S road is N Van Buren Street (N2870 Road). You can still see faint remnants of the original main entrance at the SE corner of this farm, right at the intersection.



End Notes & Concluding Remarks

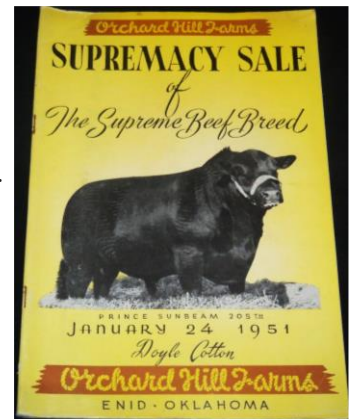
Some miscellaneous notes: Music for the Lake Hellums carousel was provided by a band organ. [Band organs on carousels](#) covered the wind and percussive sections of the orchestra. They utilized [Wurlitzer](#) Style-150 perforated paper rolls similar to those for player pianos, except that rolls contained up to 10 songs instead of only one. In order to provide continuous music, band organs used dual-roll frames. One role rewinds while the other plays.

We don't know the brand and model of the Lake Hellums band organ, but Wurlitzer 165, 157 and 153 models were popular for carousels from the 1920-30s onwards. The [Wurlitzer 153](#) was the most common style of organ on any American carousel.

With its attractive facade featuring ornate carvings, paintings and in many cases lights, just looking at it gave reason for its immense popularity! The brilliant sound of the organ was due to its bright array of pipework, cleverly fitting in the somewhat compact case perfect for the center of a carousel. A Wurlitzer 153 band organ is shown at R - this is not the instrument from the Lake Hellums carousel.



A bit about those three mansions just N of Lake Hellums Road: The **three large mansions along US-81** were built by [Herb H Champlin](#) - yes, the [Champlin Refining](#) guy! Daughter [Alice "Marie"](#) married [Doyle Cotton](#) and they lived in the N house. Mr. Cotton owned [Orchard Hill Angus Farms](#), which had a world grand-champion bull, showed [black angus cattle](#) all over the US, and held a yearly production sale. [Orchard Hill Farms](#) was located E across US-81 and $\frac{1}{2}$ mile N of these mansions. [Dillard Bryce](#) was the farm manager and his son [Alex](#) a best friend of mine (Arrel) in early grade school at



Kremlin. The [Crumpackers](#) lived in the middle house (later [Doc Abe \(AW\) Janzen](#) family too). Jerry Oven's mother was a Crumpacker. Herb Champlin's daughter [Helen Champlin](#) married [David Jeauld "Jerry" Oven](#) and they lived in the S house with the [Jerry Oven Golden Guernsey Dairy](#) directly behind it to the W. The [Lorenz Family](#), including [Howard](#) and [Alfie](#), worked at the dairy. Howard was the father of [Mike Lorenz](#), former Dean of both KSU and OSU Veterinary Schools, and Alfie was the father of [Sonny Lorenz](#). [Hugh Veal](#) also worked at the dairy - his son [Eddie](#) was another best friend of Arrel in grade school at Kremlin. The Lorenz family, as well as Messrs Bryce and Veal later worked for Doyle Cotton managing/operating Orchard Hill Farms.

We encourage interested readers to explore the many [hyperlinks](#), shown [underlined in purple](#).

This document is available online on our toewsbrotherskremlin.info website. This same site also has writings about [Kremlin history](#), [Kremlin School](#), [Kremlin Railroads and Train Wrecks](#) including the [1948 Rocket wreck](#), and Myron's compilation of all [One-Room Schools in Garfield County](#). All well worth exploring! Other entries coming soon - check back.

Some [useful information](#) was obtained from:

[Oklahoma's Merriest Go-Rounds](#) (Elaine Warner), 28 June 2002 *Oklahoma Living*. Note some dates are incorrect in this article, but it is still useful.

[In Memoriam: Bob Varga 1928-2009 - A Tribute to Bob Varga and His History of Oklahoma Carousels](#), *Carousel News & Trader*, August 2009, pp 29-36 - Much of what we know about Oklahoma's rich carousel history is due to the lifelong efforts of Bob Varga. This article is well worth looking at for anyone interested in OK carousels. www.carouselnews.com

The [National Carousel Organization website](#) has much information on all things related to carousels, including the former [Lake Hellums carousel](#), as well as photos of its current incarnation at Enid's [Meadowlake Park](#).

[Enid Buzz](#) occasionally has nostalgic articles and vintage photos posted on their website, although again, not all are historically accurate. Still worth a look every now and then.

Also special thanks to many who supplied personal memories, including [Peggy Smith Harris](#), [Joanne Zaloudek](#), [John Regier](#), [Faith Mary Janzen Heinrichs](#), [Dennis and Ellis Toews](#), [Errol Wofford](#), and more.

We hope you enjoyed reading and examining this document. We welcome any comments, memories, edits, and additional photos and other information. This will always be a work in progress, and we appreciate hearing from interested readers. Please don't keep us waiting!

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