

# McKnight Reynolds Plaza Grows With Development, Community

By CONNIE CONNOR

The area's youngest shopping center — the McKnight Reynolds Plaza — is rapidly growing with the Reynolds-Transfer community.

Reynolds—once the training site for soldiers during World War II — has become a hamlet of new homes and young families.

The roar of sports cars and motorbikes have taken the place of the noise from tanks and jeeps. Children's voices enroute to the modern junior-senior high building (once the site of the army hospital) or to the new elementary school down the street replace the orders sounded out by sergeants of war years.

Not much evidence is left of the

army base, except perhaps a few cement boulders from one of the many buildings that made up the base or a few patches of asphalt which may have led to a barracks or supply building.

## Named After General

Shortly after Pearl Harbor, in the spring of 1942, the federal government purchased some 2,400 acres of land four miles south of Greenville to begin the construction of the camp. The camp, known as the Shenango Personnel Replacement Depot until the sum-

mer of 1943, when the name was changed to Camp Reynolds in honor of General John Fulton Reynolds, a Civil War general killed in the battle of Gettysburg. A total of 45,000 soldiers were quartered there during this period.

When the war finally ended and plans were being made for the abandonment of the camp, ideas for its post-war use sprang up.

Men from Sharon and Greenville — in conjunction with other interests in the vicinity—attempted to conclude arrangements for the

building of an 1800 bed veterans' hospital. The idea never materialized.

By this time, the War Assets Administration controlled the area for disposition. In 1946, Silas F. Moss was elected president of the Business Men's Assn., and work began in earnest to acquire the camp or a part of it to be developed industrially for the benefit of not only Greenville but the entire area. During the summer of 1947, 57 acres of Camp Reynolds, with buildings totaling 251,164 square feet of floor space and two miles of railroad sidings were purchased.

The original price of the 57 acres had been \$200,000 but the trustees managed to have it reduced to \$40,500, which was paid to the WAA. Warehouses were leased to Westinghouse, David Hoppenstand, R. D. Werner Co. and Guy Gully and Associates.

After renting the warehouse area, the association trustees turned their attention to additional lands, where they encountered more problems.

## Land Purchasing Hitch

William Templeton, who owned 258 acres of land in the center of the area, induced many of the former landowners to exercise their priority and to repurchase their land. Templeton in turn attempted to buy their land.

After months of negotiation, the trustees were able to purchase all the lands in the area with the

exception of that owned by Templeton. After several conferences with the man, he offered to sell his property.

Later they purchased five additional buildings with floor space of over 300,000 square feet, over two miles of railroad sidings, about eight miles of paved roads, 639,000 square yards parking areas and water-bound roads. The purchase price of land and buildings was \$76,620. By the end of 1950, the association had received about \$170,000 from rentals and lease-purchase agreements. There were, however, operating expenses to be met—repairs to railroad sidings, taxes, insurance, maintenance, repairs to roads, etc.

An engineering firm — Gannett, Fleming, Corddry and Carpenter, Inc. of Harrisburg, had laid out an overall plan for the area's development. Two large areas were provided for industry, as well as sites for a school, church and shopping center.

Homes began to spring up as lots were sold. During 1950, 61 houses were built and sold within the limits of the development. All homes were prefabricated in the industrial area.

The Reynolds Development is

now administered by the Camp Reynolds Development Committee composed of Luther J. Kuder, chairman, Norman Mortensen, and J. P. Dart, all members of the GBMA, and the managing engineer Robert B. Parker Jr., who are working for a bigger and better Greenville and vicinity. The committee is now concentrating on making the area of use to industry.

As for industrial use — the area is a convenient one. Only four miles from Greenville, it is served by four leading railroads. In the development itself, there are nearly 19,200 feet of railroad siding from four spurs off Pennsylvania Railroad.

Gas and electric power are supplied by the United Natural Gas Co. and the Pennsylvania Power Co. and telephone service by the Pymatuning Independent Telephone Co. The water supply, Reynolds Water Co., of which there are five million gallons available daily (enough to supply a small city) and the sewage disposal system, Reynolds Disposal Co., are owned and operated by the GBMA.

LET'S GO SHOPPING  
AT REYNOLDS PLAZA

GOLDEN DAWN FOODS McDOWELL BANK  
REYNOLDS LANES DRUG STORE  
UNITED STATES POST OFFICE ECONOMY LAUNDRY  
WILL BUILD TO SUIT TENANT

## Reynolds Bowling Lanes Beginning Of Idea of Developer Carl McKnight

Reynolds Bowling Lanes was the first business enterprise to be erected at Reynolds Plaza. The lanes, owned and operated by Carl McKnight, is in its eighth season of business this year.

The lanes, which provide recreation facilities for the Reynolds and Transfer communities, opened in 1958. The structure, consisting of 11,000 square feet, consists of a snack bar and 12 lanes for bowling. There are presently 16 leagues who bowl regularly, as well as five summer leagues each year.

McKnight, who owns the 37 acres on which the plaza has been constructed, was an Erie railroad train dispatcher in Youngstown for 21 years and a railroad telegrapher for 14 years. He retired in 1958 to go into the bowling business. In 1947 he built the Reynolds Drive-In Theater and operated it until 1960 when he leased it to a Youngstown theater opera-

tor. Michael Wellman, Sharon, currently is operating the drive-in under a long-term purchase agreement.

The McKnight enterprises are situated on what was once a 58-acre farm owned by the McKnight family since 1845. During World War II, the farm was sold to the federal govern-

ment and became part of the huge Camp Reynolds Replacement Depot. After the camp was deactivated, McKnight repurchased the 58 acres in 1946 for the drive-in theater enterprise.

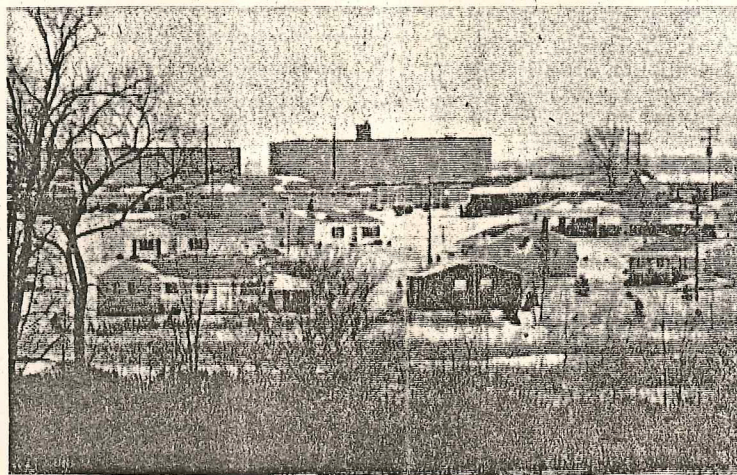
Ten acres of the land has since been purchased by the Albee Homes, Inc., Niles, O. With the sale of the drive-in property to Wellman, McKnight relinquished an additional 11 acres, leaving him with 37 acres which makes up the plaza area.

The plaza, in addition to the bowling alley, consists of the Reynolds Golden Dawn, Reynolds Drug Store, Reynolds Laundromat, Transfer Post Office and McDowell National Bank Branch Office.

Negotiations are underway for the vacant building located between the Post Office and Drug Store. The structure consists of 10,500 square feet of space and has sewer, gas and city facilities available for use.



Carl McKnight



CHANGING FACE—Homes have sprung up where soldiers trained to fight a world war and a school (background) replaces a war camp hospital in Reynolds.