

## Hugo "Otto" Marcks

October 26, 1876 - January 30, 1938  
*Betty McMillen*

Community character and folk hero, Otto Marcks, has a granite stone monument dedicated in his honor on the Lakeside Middle School campus (formerly Riverview High School and later replaced by the Lakeside Junior High School in 1951) on Woodside Avenue.

Upon Otto's passing in 1938 the Lakeside Chamber of Commerce, citizens and organizations funded the monument because Otto was considered to be a dedicated friend to Lakeside students and the community. The gray stone monument holding a flag pole was carefully erected in a prominent place in front of the auditorium and office. The marker on the monument reads. "Dedicated to the memory of Hugo Otto Marcks, Citizenship, He lived for others, 1876-1938."

Otto served as clerk of the Board of Trustees for the Lakeside Union School District for nearly 25 years. He and his wife, Otilie, owned and operated a general store/market on Sycamore Street for many years. According to 96 year old, Edna Kouns, who graduated from 8<sup>th</sup> grade in 1928, Otto helped many folks during the depression by allowing them to have groceries and supplies even when they could not pay for them.

Recently the Lakeside Middle School has been making plans to remodel and update the school and the thought of moving the monument had been discussed. The Lakeside Historical Society inquired about the rumor of the demise of the monument and set up a special meeting with Todd Owens, the Director of Maintenance, for the school district.

According to Todd, Woodside Avenue will be widened to accommodate a new water pipe, the school, which is already short of parking spaces will loose at least 12 feet all across the front of the campus. They need to increase the parking lot toward the East. Since the flag pole monument is in the way they propose to move it to the West end of the parking lot. They are inquiring about the feasibility of picking it up in one piece for a move or dismantling it to be moved rock by rock.

According to Marcella Williams, a former student at the school, there was a time capsule placed in the monument by Lakeside students and citizens. Items were placed in a glass lined metal container for citizens to find in the future. Steve Mull, now the Principal of LMS, is a history buff at heart and his eyes gleamed as he talked about having a special event to unearth the time capsule with the community joining in.

Near the flag pole monument a huge pine tree struggles to survive. Otto Marcks had a hand in helping Mrs. Wilkensen bring the little tree to Lakeside and plant it at the school . . . "so the children of Lakeside would have a Christmas Tree." Many school events were held around that tree. Back in the old days folks could not just go down to the local mall to buy a Christmas Tree, so they would often go to the river bottom and cut a branch and bring it home to decorate with handmade ornaments. That is why Mrs. Wilkensen wanted to purchase a "real" Christmas tree for the children. Principal, Steve Mull's



Hugo and Herbert "Otto" Marcks

vision also includes a "Tree Lighting" event for the community to pay tribute to the huge Pine tree.

Over the years several Oak trees were planted by students in the front yard of the school. One tree was planted to honor Edna Koun's Father, Stuart D. Swink, who passed away in 1960. He loved kids and was a well liked friend and supporter of the students and attended many of their ball games and events, they wanted to honor him as well.



Riverview High School with flag pole behind students. c.1940's