

*Beautiful Ohio: Visions
of What Used to Be*



Artwork created by Anthony Pesce



TECUMSEH

Tecumseh was a brave, courageous warrior of the Shawnee Indian tribe

Encouraged his people to return to traditional ways, cultivate their land, and avoid liquor

Courageously and fiercely fought the white men that were taking over the land

Used his ability to prophesy in his quest for unity of the tribes

Master tactician, great speaker, charismatic

Shawnee chief, admired by many, not just the Indians

Experienced many battles fighting for his beliefs

He believed the land belonged to everyone and the sale of land invalid unless all agreed

Carol Rudder

THE FINAL BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE
(Excerpt from John Adams's Diary, Sept. 15, 1813)

It was a cold and gray day.
Freezing water, ships everywhere.
No time for peace or questions.

My leader said to blockade the British fleet.
With only nine ships we did.
The British fired.
Our ships were outnumbered.

Oliver Perry, our leader,
Was jumping from ship to ship.
Finally he said,
"We have met the enemy, and they are ours."
With those powerful words
We win the battle.

William Gordon

A BOY'S MEMORIES OF DOWNTOWN CLEVELAND

I remember when I was a little boy my mother would take me downtown with her every Saturday. I looked forward to Saturdays. It was like a holiday to me. Downtown Cleveland had department stores from Public Square all the way up to 14th St. and what is now called Playhouse Square.

I remember my mother doing her shopping in the department stores, and we would always have our lunch at Kresge's 5-and-10 store before heading back home.

When Christmas holidays came, my mother would always take me to May Company department store for me to see Santa. Santa would ask me if I had been a good little boy. I would always answer him with a yes, although I might have been spanked by my mother the day before.

I remember other good times in downtown Cleveland. My father would take me to sporting events at the Cleveland Stadium. Cleveland had only one stadium at that time for baseball and football games. I thought that Cleveland had the best tasting hot dogs at the stadium. I was able to see some great baseball and football players. Cleveland also had Cleveland Arena down about 30th St. and Euclid Avenue for other sporting events.

I also remember having good times at the Public Auditorium. My father would take me to concerts to see Jazz at the Philharmonic. I was also able to see some great musicians like Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, among others. Today, jazz is still my choice of music.

Those were some happy days that I can remember about downtown Cleveland, and I am thankful for them.

Conrel Penland

RIPLEY, OHIO, HISTORICAL RIVER TOWN

Ripley, Ohio, was founded in 1812 on the banks of the Ohio River, located on State Route 52, approximately 50 miles east of Cincinnati. Ripley is well known for its many historical sites, which include the Rankin House, Carolyn's Miniature Museum, and the Ripley Museum.

A visit to Ripley is like a step back in time, a simpler time, free from the hustle and bustle of modern-day living. We begin our trip with a visit to Ripley's most prominent historical attraction, the Rankin House.

Located on Liberty Hill, it overlooks the Ohio River and the town of Ripley. The house takes its name from the Reverend John Rankin, who was very prominent in the antislavery movement at the time. The Reverend Rankin and his family moved into the house in 1822. The house was a stop on the Underground Railroad, used as a rest stop by many desperate slaves fleeing the South to freedom in the North. A candle was left burning in a window as an "all clear" signal to runaways waiting on the Kentucky side of the Ohio River. Getting the "all clear" signal, they would be rowed across the river in rowboats. This would bring them to Front Street, where many of the "conductors" on the Underground Railroad resided. From Front Street they would climb the 100 steps to the Rankin House. This staircase of steps runs the entire length of the hill. The house is open during the summer months for tours.

Next on our list of sites to see is Carolyn's Mini Rooms Museum. Here you can stroll through a general store, blacksmith shop, 50's garage, Barbra Streisand's living room, or dine in a Japanese restaurant, all in miniature. Carolyn Arp made these unique miniature rooms. Many years and thousands of hours went into the making of these miniature

treasures from common everyday items, including using an ashtray as a reflecting pool. There is much to see at Carolyn's Museum.

Another intriguing place of interest that we visited in this quiet town was the Ripley Museum, which is housed in a Federal style house built in 1837. It features 10 rooms, each representing a different event or period in the history of Ripley.

The John P. Parker House is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. John P. Parker was an ex-slave who moved to Ripley in 1848 from Cincinnati. He founded a blacksmith and foundry business in Ripley, while helping slaves escape the South through the Underground Railroad.

Ripley and the surrounding area is also well known for its covered bridges. Ripley has two, which were built in the early 1900's. A highlight of the year in Ripley is its annual Tobacco Festival, which draws visitors from near and far. This festival was started in 1982 to recognize the tobacco-growing families in the surrounding areas. Some of the events at the Festival include a tobacco spitting contest, a tobacco stripping contest, an antique car show, clogging contests, live music, and lots of good food.

If you visit Ripley during the winter months, you can join the local residents at the high school for a bluegrass show. These shows are held once a month during October through April, featuring some of the best touring groups in the bluegrass genre, including J. D. Crowe, Nothin' Fancy & The Gary Waldrep Band who travel all the way from Alabama. This type of music fits in perfectly with the atmosphere of Ripley. The shows are attended by both young and old, a real melting pot of the community. The school Spanish class, as a fundraiser, provides refreshments and food. These shows

were playing to a packed house long before the recent upsurge in the popularity of bluegrass music.

You can get into the mood for your step back in time long before you get to the Ripley city limits. Just tune your radio to WAOL-FM 99.5. This Ripley-based station plays nothing but Classic Country and a limited amount of Bluegrass music 24/7. Roy Acuff, Johnny Cash, Buck Owens and all your favorites come alive again at the touch of your radio dial. It's a perfect companion on your way to a step back in history, to another time and place.

If you are looking for a getaway for a weekend, a place to slow down from the everyday rat race, to reflect on the past, to be at peace with the world for a while, I sincerely recommend Ripley, Ohio.

Vickie A. Hargraves

THE DREAM

Ohio is turning two hundred years old this year. As I look back in our rich history I think of all the men and women that made our great state what it is today. When I turn the pages of the history book I stop in the 1900's where I see two brothers that had a dream like most of us. Their dream was to fly. Everyone said that if God wanted us to fly, he would have given us wings. Instead he gave us the power to do anything that we want to do if we put our minds to it.

The Wright Brothers' dream was to fly; there were challenges in front of them. It took time, money, and investors that believed in their dream to make this a reality. The Wright Brothers also had their bike shop and family to think about.

Like all good things, there are ups and downs. Like learning to read for the first time you need someone to help you get through the hard times when things just don't make sense. Or your car breaks down and you need to fix it when you have little money and you need your car badly. The Wright Brothers had the same problems, but it did not stop them and it paid off at the end.

After the first flight the Wright Brothers could not stop. They had to make the plane stay in the air for a long period of time. This is like after you learn to read you cannot stop learning. You need to keep your dreams in sight. Times do get hard, but we all can make a difference in Ohio if we all learn to read and work together on this task. Just like the Wright Brothers, you too can be flying--the sky is your limit. There is no stopping you as long as you keep your dream alive.

Dale Sherman

A TOUR AROUND THE CIRCLE, THEN AND NOW

I live in Deerfield, Ohio. This was once the home of Ulysses S. Grant's grandmother. Her name was Rachel Kelley Grant, and she is buried in Deerfield. There is an arrow-shaped marker above her tombstone that tells everyone that this is where Ulysses S. Grant's grandmother is buried.

Deerfield once was a booming town. It had railroads, a tannery, and a sparkling water plant. There was also a big hotel, a boarding house, a church and stores. All that has changed now. This is what the area is like now.

On one corner, there was a gas station, but now it is a vacant lot. Behind this lot is the Deerfield Garage and recycling bins. On the side of this is a house that used to be a hotel. Next to the house is another vacant lot, where there was once a store called Starcher's (no relation to me).

If you cross State Route 224, there is now a boat sales place that sells boats, pontoons, and cabin cruisers. This was once the sparkling water plant. Next to this was the old Methodist Episcopal Church, but it is now a vacant lot used by truckers to park their rigs.

Going across Route 14 there is a restaurant. Next to this is Mike's Circle Drive Through. Directly across the street is the old Post Office, which is now an antique store. Next to the old Post Office is the old town hall and a house which was once a boarding house.

If we go down Route 224, past the hotel/house toward Route 225, the next thing we will see is Deerfield Farms, which used to be Ulysses S. Grant's home and tannery. Now there is farm equipment for sale on this site. You can get everything for your farm from a silo to fencing. Up Route 225 is Deerfield's old school house, now a store and Nemenz' Restaurant. Turning around and going back, there is a house and the Friends' Church. It's been there a long time and they are making improvements on it and enlarging it.

Now we are going back the way we came, but on the other side, going toward Route 14 is the old town hall, and next to this is the house that used to be the old boarding house. Going on down you see Route 225 going off Route 14, and there is the new Methodist Church. Behind the church is the new town hall. On down is an empty building that used to be Walker's Hardware. Turn around, and you will see the American Legion Hall and the new Post Office.

There have been many changes in 200 years. Some of the changes have not been good for the Circle, but many of the old structures have been saved. Deerfield had its celebration of 200 years in 1999, and a good time was had by all. It is nice to look back at our past, visit today's Circle, and hope for a better tomorrow.

Carrol Starcher

OHIO'S FAMOUS CHIEF

Ohio Country it was called; clear boundaries were not there.
Indians were the first to come; this land was in their care.

On the way to counsel one quiet starry night,
A Shawnee Chief and his wife knew the time was right.

Through the sky a shooting star, a glowing flash of light,
To the Shawnee couple, a son was born that night.

Tecumseh was the newborn, his name meant "Shooting Star."
His father thought the flashing light, a sign he would go far.

His father died in battle. His mother went out west.
Left to raise the child, his brother did his best.

He was a gallant warrior, hunting was his pride.
A Shawnee Chief he became and took it all in stride.

Angered by the white man that came to take their land,
Tecumseh knew that it was time that Indians take a stand.

Tecumseh was a peaceful man; he chose to live in peace.
It could only happen when the taking land would cease.

He traveled through the country, to villages far and near
With encouraging words for all the tribes to listen and to hear.

To strive for tribal unity was on Tecumseh's mind;
When this came to be, there would be a sign.

He told them all of happenings that would come to be,
He told of trembling earth and of falling trees.

The bones of every man would shake
As they experienced this giant quake.

Some battles fought were won; some battles fought were
lost.
The fighting would continue at whatever the cost.

Tecumseh died a hero, fighting for his land.
He never gave up hope. The Battle of Thames was his last
stand.

Carol Rudder

