

Places



REFLECTIONS ON GROWING UP IN SOUTHERN OHIO

When I was a little girl in Southern Ohio, I had a lot of adventures. For one thing we had a lot of snakes. We had copperheads, black snakes, and tree rattlers. Fortunately, I never got bit. Whenever I would go outside to play my grandmother would always remind me to watch where I walked. To this day when I am walking around outside, I find myself looking down at the ground – a habit that has helped keep me safe.

I was somewhat of a tomboy and loved to do all the things the boys did. I used to climb trees, swing on a rope, and play softball.

I can remember helping my grandfather by carrying hay doodles home to help keep the cow fed during the winter. I would go to a hay field about a mile away and stick my pitchfork straight down into a pile of hay. I then would carry it home over my shoulder. It took many trips to keep our cow fed.

One particular Halloween the neighborhood kids were out for mischief. The Bishop boys tried to knock over our outhouse. When they were unable to knock it down they decided to fill the inside of the outhouse with the hay doodles I had carried for our cow. Imagine my surprise when I discovered all the hay when I was hurrying to use the outhouse the next morning. My grandfather had to dig a path so we could get in.

Another very fond memory I have is attending the old one-room schoolhouse. We would ride the “school bus” – an old car with a wooden bumper on which was painted the words School Bus.

Our teacher was Miss Edna Dirth. We would sit in desks facing each other and do our *seat work* until *we were* called up front to the *recitation bench* to go over our *lessons* with the *teacher*.

I have so many fond memories of growing up in Southern Ohio. I know that a big piece of my heart is buried there in Vinton County. It was a hard time but a good time. We didn't have to deal with the things that kids are forced to deal with today.

-Ida E. Osborn

MOVING TO OHIO

I was introduced to the Ohio lifestyle when I was twelve years old. My mother, two younger sisters and myself moved to Brittany Hills on the north side of Columbus. It was very difficult adjusting to Ohio after living in Detroit, Michigan.

It was very difficult to leave my family and friends and all that I was used to and come here. I was afraid because I didn't know anyone down here. The school system especially was a shock. It was very different from what I was used to. For one thing it seemed that the Ohio schools were further behind. I had to do things that I had already done. The main difference though was that in Detroit the schools were not as integrated as they were in Ohio. It was a very big adjustment to attend school with people from many different cultures.

Last, but not least, was the difficulty of living with people I didn't know. When we first came down, we lived with my mother's boyfriend's family. We had to watch everything we said and did because we didn't know how they would react to us.

Even though it was a difficult move, I can now say that Ohio is a great place to live. Most of my family has now relocated to this area and we are all living here very happily.

-Karlita Love

RESTORING OF THE GAMMON HOUSE

The Gammon House is a historical house, that was used as a safe-haven to shelter runaway slaves before the Civil War in the 1850s. John Gammon , a free black man in Champaign County, Ohio, and his wife Rebecca were charter members of a Methodist church in Urbana, Ohio.

George and his wife, Sarah (Sallie), had seven children and he worked as a carpenter. He built his home there. They used their home to help furnish clothing and food for the underground railroad slaves.

The underground railroad got its name from stories told that as a slave owner was pursuing his runaway slave across the Ohio River on the Ohio side, the owner lost track of the slave and made a remark that they must have jumped on an underground railroad train to have disappeared so fast. The title caught on. The city of Springfield and Ohio Historic Preservation refers to the house as an underground railway station. History of URR is published in American Mysteries and Daughters of Jerusalem, written by Thomas W. Burton, M.D. published in Springfield, in 1925. He obtained a lot of information on the Gammon House, through the daughter of George and Sarah Gammon.

Cornelia S. (Gammon) Henderson, tells many stories of their mother and father helping a train load of runaway slaves during the night.

The house is still standing and restorations are being done. I have had the privilege of having the house in my family tree.

My uncle, William Daniels, purchased the house in the early 1990s. He passed away and left the property to his friend who is now fulfilling my uncle's dreams to restore the house for its history, so that people would not forget the history of Uncle George and his wife Aunt Sallie for their efforts to help people in bondage, and the dream lives on. Free at last, thank God Almighty, we're free at last.

-Karla Howard

STARTING OVER IN OHIO

My husband and I moved to Ohio from California and lived with my aunt for two and a half years. Then, we went back out to California to get our children. We flew back to Ohio with our children. We met a wonderful couple. We worked for them for five years. Our children got sent back to California and we moved out of our aunt's house. Our daughter told us to call Shirley and Ed. I called them and they came over and helped us move to their house. Ed got my husband, Vence, a job at the hospital. We looked all over Franklin County and found a house. They bought the house for us and Shirley put a letter in the Booster newspaper to tell the people of Columbus that we were just starting out here in Ohio. Then people in Ohio donated the things like furniture, sheets, kitchen appliances, a bed, a couch, etc. All of this helped make me happy and excited. Now we both have full time jobs. I just passed my driver's test and got my Ohio driver's license. I'm going to school and hopefully in June, we will have our children back home in Ohio.

- Ruth Villarreal

ROSCOE VILLAGE

In the spring of 2001, I was privileged to visit Roscoe Village along with two of my classmates and our teachers. Roscoe Village is a restored canal town near Coschocton, Ohio. This trip was the result of an essay contest we had entered. This trip was an experience I will never forget.

As I walked back in time, I began to get a glimpse of what life was like for our forefathers. It had been a rainy day and it was still somewhat drizzling as we approached a canal boat. This boat and the story of what life was like for the people who lived and worked on it were truly amazing to me. I had never before considered what their lives would have been like.

The sanitation issues were very disturbing to me. I thought, "How could anyone have lived that way?" Then I realized that they didn't know any better. They did their cooking in little pots that hung from the side of the boat. These pots were heated by coal. These same pots were used to heat the water they used to wash themselves. I discovered that when they had to use the rest room they used buckets and then dumped it overboard into a canal or river.

People were not the only passengers on these canal boats. Horses were also kept on the boats and their wastes were also dumped overboard.

Once we left the boat and went into the village itself, we visited a one-room schoolhouse. Paper was not available to them so they had to do their work on pieces of slate. I saw that there were all kinds of homes in the village. Some of the people were wealthier than others, but all of them worked very hard.

I had never visited an historical village like this before. I began to understand just how difficult their lives were. This experience has made me appreciate even more the time and day in which I am now living. It gave me a new outlook on life and for that I am very grateful. I am looking forward to taking my children there someday.

-Treva Jackson

CEDAR LAKE

THE OLDEST MAN-MADE FISHING LAKE IN OHIO

I would like to tell you some history about a man-made fishing lake in the State of Ohio. It is located in Goshen, Ohio, Clermont County. This lake was dug and owned by the Jones family in 1936. I chose to write history on this lake because it has so many unique things about it.

It is called Cedar Lake; it ranges in depth from one foot at the bank, up to thirty five feet in various other parts of the lake. It holds the record for the biggest catfish, shovelhead, blue cat, carp, trout and burbot. When fishing this lake for these types of fish, you must use different techniques, and different types of baits. Depending on what you are fishing for, on the time of year, and the temperature of the water, you need to decide what type of bait to use, as most fishermen or fisherwomen would know.

The fish in this lake range in weight from ½ lb.-120 lbs. You could catch any size. This family has put a lot of time and money into making this lake what it is today in the year 2002. In 2000, they pulled out all the fish, drained the lake, and dug it deeper, to make it bigger to hold more fish and make for better fishing. When you catch a fish from this lake, you must throw it back, except for small channel cat to pan fry. The owners pay you to return the fish to the lake. They pay what they call a "bounty" on the fish, adding up to one dollar (\$1.00) per pound. You place it on a scale, then release it back into the lake.

This lake also has a big building which the family lives in on the lake. This building has a big building on the front, which is called a bait house. Here you purchase bait, tackle and several other items needed to fish. You may also trade in your old fishing gear on new supplies. They have a restaurant inside with great food. You can order your food, go back to your spot to fish, and they will page you over a public address system when it's done. This comes in handy when you are fishing for money; time can be a big factor. I will get more into that on the next page.

This is a family operation; all the children pitch in to work this lake to make it a success. I, myself, have fished this lake many times. The all-night fishing is the most fun. Also, more fish seem to be caught at night after the sun goes down. People like myself have stood out in pouring-down thunderstorms to fish. These are people who really take their fishing seriously.

The Jones family also decided several years ago to start up a business buying semi-trucks and installing big tanks on them to deliver and transport fish to other Ohio lakes, as well as lakes in other states.

To fish this lake you must purchase a fishing ticket; the cost is eight dollars (\$8.00) per person. You may only use two fishing poles per ticket.

Here comes one of the great things about this lake: you can win lots of money, prizes, even new cars. They hold a one hundred dollar (\$100.00) jackpot every weekend. Every Friday, Saturday and Sunday, if you catch the biggest fish of the day on a regular eight dollar (\$8.00) ticket, you win one hundred dollars (\$100.00). They also hold a Super Jackpot that ranges from five hundred dollars (\$500.00) to five thousand dollars (\$5000.00) and more depending on when someone wins it. You must catch a fish 45 lbs. or over to win the Super Jackpot.

They also hold tournaments on holidays, giving away lots of cash and prizes every hour of the day. They sell raffle tickets for one dollar (\$1.00) for a chance to win new fishing poles, free passes, hats and T-shirts. On the big tournaments, they only sell so many tickets at one hundred dollars (\$100.00) each. This is where you could win a new Corvette, or another kind of new car; or you can take the cash, which usually is around ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00). It is your choice.

You may fish this lake year round. Winter fishing is a lot different than summer fishing, and of course a lot colder. Sometimes you have to cut holes in the ice in order to drop your hook. Trout is the fish of choice in the winter season. There are several different types of trout, which come from up north. So when the temperature is cold, the fish you usually catch in the summer bury themselves in the bottom of the lake, down into the mud and into the deep rock holes. until warm weather comes again.

There is a lot more to tell you about this great lake. If you ever have the opportunity to go fish here, you should give it a try. It is a friendly and nice place, family owned. The family welcomes everyone with a warm, friendly, smiling face. It is a really good time if you like to fish. It is relaxing and peaceful. The Jones family works hard to keep this lake going and to make it what it has become today. They travel to conventions, sports shows, etc., to sell fishing materials and teach people about fishing. They have had many articles written about them in a variety of newspapers and magazines.

I would like to dedicate this history to the one who started this great lake, which would be Bill Jones, the deceased father. His loving wife Joanne, still works hard keeping up with all the grandchildren and helps out a lot in the

store. Monica Jones, daughter, takes care of the daily operation, carrying on the tradition started by her late father. And Danny and Kent Jones drive the trucks that haul the fish. Without them, the lake would not have become the great success that it has. This lake will remain in the Jones family, being passed down through the generations.

This lake is well known in the state of Ohio—Cedar Lake, the oldest man-made lake in the state, a favorite of many.

-Vickie Hargraves



Vickie Hargraves holding a 21 lb. 8oz. Shovelhead caught at Cedar Lake



Cedar Lake - Goshen, Ohio

MALABAR FARM

Malabar Farm is a place of peaceful surroundings. It has a long history. Malabar is now an Ohio State Park where people of all ages can go to see how a farm works; they can also see how it got started. In the big house Malabar gives tours on the estate and shows who stayed there at times in the different rooms.

The Farm started in the spring of 1815. "At the age 52, Revolutionary War hero, Colonel MacDougal, left his comfortable home in Maryland to start a new life in Ohio wilderness" (DeVault, 1996, p. 2). Mr. MacDougal called it The Farm.

In 1938, Louis Bromfield lived with his family for 15 years in Europe. It was a bleak time for Europe because it was on the verge of the second world war. Mr. Bromfield had a 50-year lease on an eighteenth century stone house and some land with it. Mr. Bromfield later found out that Germany had used that path twice to invade Paris. The family didn't feel all that safe anymore even though they loved the place. They knew their grandchildren wouldn't come to see them there (DeVault, 1996).

Louis Bromfield told his wife and children to leave Europe. They went to live with his parents in Mansfield, Ohio. Mr. Bromfield stayed behind to give as much help as he could in Europe. His comrades, after a while, persuaded him to return to America to warn them of the German uprising and growing threat (DeVault, 1996).

When Mr. Bromfield met up with his family once again, they went looking for their home. They had been driving for a while. When he came off Pinhook Road, the whole valley covered by snow lay before them. They had been driving all afternoon in the southern parts of Richland County looking to find Pleasant Valley Road, which he vaguely remembered from 30 years earlier. He truly felt that he was home (DeVault, 1996).

Mr. Bromfield later changed the name The Farm to Malabar Farm. Mr. Bromfield would roam the countryside at election time talking to people he knew or just came across. People thought he might have changed because of his living in Europe but later found that he was just a regular dirt farmer like themselves.

Mr. Bromfield's fame from scads of books, magazine articles, and newspaper articles was widely syndicated. Every Saturday morning NBC radio would

broadcast his "Voice from the Valley" program. Bromfield was the best known and most loved American farmer (DeVault, 1996).

The house that was built, known as the "big house," was made for everyone's enjoyment. It had 32 rooms and a "Hollywood mystique." The house brought many well-known stars like James Cagney, Joan Fontaine, Errol Flynn, Shirley Temple, and many more. Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall were married at Malabar Farm on May 21, 1945, where Mr. Bromfield was best man (DeVault, 1996).

Today, Malabar Farm is an Ohio State Park with more than 180,000 visitors a year. This big house is kept the way it was built, so people can tour it and see how the house really was in earlier years. Malabar Farm has special events at times, too. Today, Malabar Farm is a working farm, so Mr. Bromfield and his family can still be proud of it.

-Mike Geesedi

DeVault, George (Ed.). (1996). Return to Pleasant Valley. Chillicothe, Illinois:

The American Botanist.

NICE TIMES AT THE GREEK FESTIVAL

I was asked out to the Greek Festival in Columbus, Ohio, last year. I went with my friends John, Karen, and Roger. It was the Labor Day weekend.

This was my first time attending this festival. We ate some Greek food. It was very filling but delicious. My favorite foods were the desserts! There was one that was a pastry. It was called Baklava.

After we ate, we played some carnival games. Although I did not win anything, I had a great time trying! We saw some handmade crafts. Most of the crafts were for sale. I saw some horse puppets.

I liked the Greek costumes. My favorite part of the festival was the Greek dancing. We learned several dances. I had so much fun that I want to go back next year!

-Marcia Lones

CALIFORNIA TO OHIO

When I first moved to Columbus, Ohio, I was thinking, "Why am I going to a new state?" I really didn't understand why because I was happy in California. Maybe it's because of the violence and all the people getting killed 24 hours a day, and you can see people selling drugs on the streets.

I guess I should tell you the real reason why, because life on the streets is not what you are looking for. This is the real thing. You might be wondering why I want to write about life on the streets. It is not like a lot of people know what it is like living on the streets. Some of you might think all of this is crap, but I'll tell you one thing, I'd rather die than be living on my knees.

The person who told me this is no longer with me. He passed away on December 25, 1998. It has been three years since he died. He was a priest of a small church of Oakland, California. His name was Ben Haros. He was an ex gang member. He gave up the gang because he saw how life was back in his day and it hasn't changed since then. I think it's time for us to start making some changes...the way we eat and the way we treat each other because I haven't seen any progress.

I'm 21 years old and I'm from Tracy. It's located in the crazy town of Oakland. The reason why I wrote this is to show you just how life is in a society like this. I hope men and women like me don't make the same mistakes. Get out of this gang life! Take it from me because I was there and I know how hard it is and even harder if you have a kid to take care of.

Now that I'm living in Ohio, it's kind of a relief because you can go anywhere you want without being afraid of getting shot or robbed. I think Ohio is a peaceful state for somebody from California or New York because you don't see anything bad on the news. I'm glad to be in Columbus because I can spend time with my family and friends. I don't have to "watch my back" twenty-four hours a day. I can walk around downtown without having to worry about anything.

I'm starting to like Ohio. When I first came I couldn't get used to the weather. Face it, somebody from sunny California is not going to get used to the weather just like that! I haven't seen a lot of places where somebody can have fun, but I don't worry about having fun. The only thing I care about is getting my GED so I can be somebody. I would like to go back to California for a moment, but I have to make a sacrifice.

-Yves Perez