

# ANDERSON Insights

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

P. 1-2	Introduction / Local Post Offices	P. 43-44	Some of Andersons First Vehicles
P. 3	Anderson's Historians	P. 45-46	Anderson School- A Remembrance
P. 4	ANCOR History, WWI Projects	P. 47-48	Photos Over the Years
P. 5-6	Early School Days	P. 49-50	All Things Sherwood Forest
P. 7-8	Wagons, Cars and Beechmont Avenue	P. 51-52	New Historic Photo Archive, Thank you Janet Heywood
P. 9-10	Shopping Local Through the Years	P. 53-54	Summertime Through the Lens of History
P. 11-12	Winter a Century Ago	P. 55	Five Mile Chapel
P. 13-14	The "Great Storm" of 1915	P. 56	Historic Dig
P. 15-16	A Fine Farming Community	P. 57-58	History Room Spans Centuries
P. 17-18	"Come, Gentlemen, and Push"	P. 59-60	Township Names
P. 19-20	Anderson Landmarks	P. 61-62	The Durhams- a Pioneer Family
P. 21-22	Summer Fun in Anderson Township	P. 63-64	Interurban Railway Innovative, Short-lived
p. 23-24	ABCs of Anderson Roads	P. 65-66	Pioneer Preacher Francis McCormick
P. 25-26	Iconic Anderson in New History Book	P. 67-68	Anderson, Newtown Share Connections
P. 27-28	Anderson Township Heritage Center's History	P. 69-70	Anderson's Neighbor Mt. Washington
P. 29-30	Farms of Anderson	P. 71-72	Winter a Century Ago
P. 31-32	Historic Markers a Reminder of the Past	P. 73-74	Mall Memories
P. 33-34	Celebrations in Anderson Township	P. 75-76	General Protestant Home Memories
P. 35	Clark Stone House	P. 77-78	Revolutionary War- Connections to Anderson Township
P. 36	Focus on James Clark- Entrepreneur, Legislator		
P. 37-38	Turpin Corn Crib Deconstruction		
P. 39-40	Remember the Great Flood of 1937		
P. 41	Legacy Signs Share History		
P. 42	Historic Sites Chronicled by Local Explorer		



## Anderson Township History in the making

Allan - A - Dale

**Remembering Our History,  
One Story at a Time**

The interesting history of Anderson Township and its pioneer beginnings has been documented for almost 15 years in the township's Anderson Insights publication. Through a collaboration with the Anderson Township Historical Society, the township newsletter and the society have helped present, preserve and protect historic information and artifacts related to Anderson Township.

History Notes articles have appeared in Anderson Insights since 2012, and these articles continue to be perhaps the most popular section of the publication. With the help of several authors over the years, the History Notes stories have delved into memories about local schools, historic buildings, seasons, transportation, noted residents and more.

We hope this booklet will help you appreciate and enjoy your own community's past and present by learning about some of the people and places that are familiar to you.

**HISTORY NOTES**

**Revisit local village post offices of 1887**

The *Williams' Hamilton County Directory of 1887* included the names of the heads of households in Anderson Township, listed by their local post offices. These post offices were usually located in general stores.

Some past and current post office names are familiar: California, Mt. Washington and Newtown. Others may only be known to history buffs and long-time residents. Do you remember Cedar Point, Cluff, Fruit Hill, Forestville, Cherry Grove or Sweetwine?

**Cedar Point** was the post office in the general store of John B. Kilduff located on the Cincinnati, Georgetown & Portsmouth Railroad and Ohio Pike, 10 miles east of Cincinnati. Today, this location is known as the corner of Beechmont and Burney Lane. The **Cluff** post office was in the store of Jacob S. Kuhn on Clough Pike, east of today's Berkshire. *The 1887 Directory* described the land as "somewhat hilly but fertile."

The **Fruit Hill** post office was also on the CG&P railroad line and Ohio Pike, 11 miles east of the city. The surrounding country produced "large quantities of fruit, vegetables

and berries." We know Fruit Hill as the busy corner at Beechmont and Salem. The **Forestville** post office was in a general store further out Ohio Pike, 12 miles east of the city. The area was known for "large quantities of fruits, berries, and vegetables, which find ready sale in the Cincinnati market." Today this location is the corner of Beechmont and Wolfangel.

The **Cherry Grove** post office was also on Ohio Pike, 13 miles from the city, centered at today's corner of Beechmont and Eight Mile. Cherry Grove was described as "beautifully situated and surrounded by rich lands." Large quantities of fruits, berries, and vegetables were raised there. The **Sweet Wine** post office was along the Ohio River, near where Five Mile intersects Kellogg today. The surrounding country was "well adapted to the growing of grapes" and large quantities were shipped from Sweet Wine. These village post office names remind us of Anderson's agricultural past and some are still attached to businesses today.

*Photos from the Anderson Township Historical Society Collections*



*Cedar Point Post Office in Kilduff's General Store (Beechmont & Burney) ca. 1900*



*Forestville Post Office in Hopper's Grocery (Beechmont & Wolfangel), ca. 1910*



*Maddux & Weil Blacksmith Shop at Cluff (roughly at Clough & Berkshire), ca. 1900*

**A History Note**

# Over time, local historians have preserved Anderson's story through photos and words

The year 2013 marks Anderson Township's 220th anniversary since its founding in 1793. Anderson residents are fortunate that local historians collected and preserved records and images to illustrate Anderson's story.

Some may remember Stephen Smalley (1900-1977), who wrote and lectured in the 1960-70s, and Marjorie Frame (1916-1988), who was a guiding force in organizing the Anderson Township Historical Society in 1968. The Historical Society keeps a number of their interesting publications in print. Smalley's booklets are illustrated with a wealth of photographs, both those he took and older ones that he collected. Some of the finest images were taken by Mary Emily Shinn (1885-1970), who used high-quality photographic equipment in the early years of the 1900s to document historic locations.

On this page are few early views that Shinn photographed and Smalley described. At the corner of Salem Road and Sutton stands the Salem Methodist Church, constructed in 1863. The bricks from an earlier church building were used for the adjacent structure that served as the Anderson Township District Five School. Smalley describes the church yard as one of the most interesting in the county. Among

the early settlers buried there is Rev. Francis McCormick (1764-1836), a Revolutionary soldier who established the first Methodist church in Northwest Territory.



*Sutton's General Store (Beechmont and Corbly), photo by Mary Shinn about 1907.*

The son of another early settler, Stephen J. Sutton (1816-1905) built the first merchandise mart in Anderson Township in 1846 at the northwest corner of what is now Beechmont and Corbly. (The area was incorporated into the city of Cincinnati in 1911.) He named the post office located in this store Mt. Washington in honor of our first president. Smalley describes the general store: "Most anything could be purchased from boots to shoes to tobacco, flour and molasses, even schoolbooks, McGuffey's Readers... It was a place where everyone seemed to meet, to get mail, to discuss the news." The brick building



*Beechmont Suspension Bridge, photo by Mary Shinn about 1910. Photos from the Anderson Township Historical Society Collections*



*Salem Methodist Church (Salem and Sutton), photo by Mary Shinn about 1910.*

was replaced in 1939 but the corner has remained a busy retail site.

Settlers in Anderson faced the problem of crossing the Little Miami River to get back and forth to Cincinnati. Over the decades the solutions varied from a well-used fording spot, located roughly at the end of what is Elstun Road today, to a wooden bridge called the Union Bridge since Hamilton and Clermont counties shared the cost to the magnificent suspension bridge built in 1876 at the foot of Beechmont Hill. This scenic bridge was replaced after it was damaged by the high waters of the 1913 flood. Today we easily drive over the latest Beechmont levee and bridge, barely noticing the river below.

Publications of historical interest are available through the Anderson Township Historical Society in the History Room at Anderson Center and at Historical Society events. They include *Anderson Township: How It Began* by Marjorie Frame and a number of Stephen Smalley's booklets: *McCormick's Settlement Salem Village*, *A History of Mt. Washington, Now and Then in Anderson Township*, *The Interurban Railway*, and *The Cincinnati, Georgetown and Portsmouth Railroad (vol. 1 and 2)*.

*The History Room at Anderson Center is open year-round: Tuesdays 6-9 p.m., Wednesdays and Sundays 1-4 p.m. For further details, call 231-2114.*

# ANCOR's history reveals ancient sites, WWI projects

As Anderson is in the midst of a planning effort for the northeastern section of the township known as the ANCOR area, some have asked the question of how this area got its name. Although not known by many in the community, the ANCOR area is one of the most fascinating and historic parts of the township. In this area, the history of human occupation can be read in the details of the earthworks that once stood here.

The Turner Earthworks, named for a property owner in the 1800s, included walls, enclosures, circles and mounds that stretched across Mt. Carmel Road. Recent work has established that Hopewell peoples occupied the site between A.D. 53 and A.D. 537.

The term ANCOR comes from the United States government World War I project that occupied the area in 1918. The Air Nitrates Corporation (ANCOR) was a huge project, established during World War I to build a facility to extract nitrogen from the air to make nitrates that could be used to manufacture explosives. In April 1918, it was announced that the U.S. government would build a \$15 million plant on the 1,300-acre site that had been acquired on both sides of Broadwell Road. For three months starting in August

1918, 6,000 men worked to lay the sites for industrial buildings, warehouses, homes, highways, railroad sidings, water and sewage systems. The whole project collapsed in November 1918 when the peace treaty ending WWI was signed. For a time, there was a post office for the site called ANCOR and the name remained even as the area turned back to farmland and the government liquidated its holdings.

Before 1918, the area had been known as Pleasant Valley. The far northeast corner of the area (in the Virginia Military Survey #1775) was once owned by George Washington himself although Washington did not come to Anderson.

Reminders of the early farms of the valley can still be found.

In the 1920s an airplane manufacturing plant operated in an ANCOR building. By 1940 the two ANCOR warehouses still standing were surrounded by cornfields dotted with abandoned concrete pillars. In 1970 local historian Stephen Smalley, who had been a surveyor on the 1918 project, described five industries occupying the ANCOR site, including the world-renowned Senco Products. Currently intensive planning efforts are focused on the future of this landscape that combines historical and natural resources and modern development.



*Above: ANCOR station on the railroad, 1922. Above right: Concrete foundations for the ANCOR plant as seen in 1930. Right: ANCOR construction site, late summer 1918. Photographs from Anderson Township Historical Society collections.*



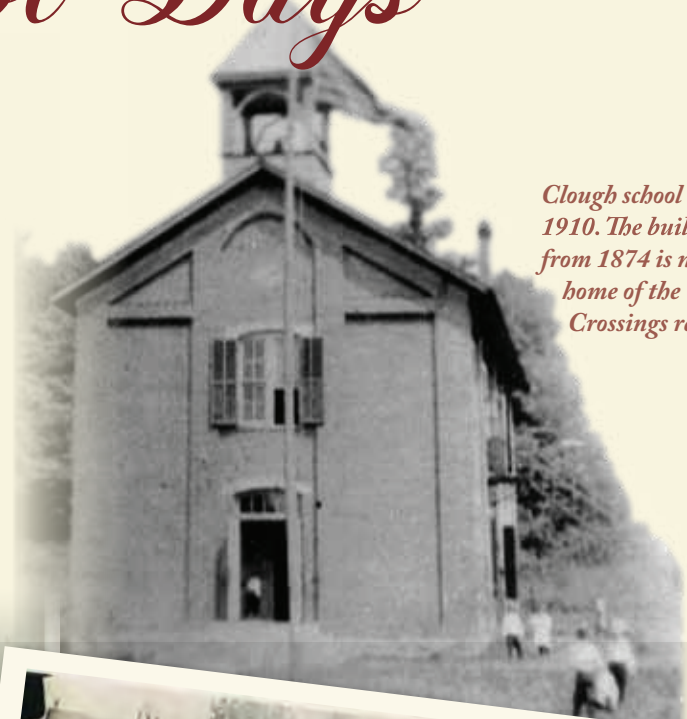
# Anderson Township's Early School Days



*Little Dry Run school, about 1902*



*Asbury school, 1896*



*Clough school about 1910. The building from 1874 is now the home of the Clough Crossings restaurant.*



*Fruit Hill school, fourth through eighth grades, about 1912*



*Uniontown school, about 1911*

*Photos from the collections of the Anderson Township Historical Society*

*Safely tucked away, school photographs survive over decades. They remind us of a long-standing commitment to the education of Anderson's children.*

As early as 1826, the trustees of Anderson Township organized 12 school districts providing schoolhouses within walking distance of children through the area.

By the early 1900s there were 15 schools in the township: Asbury, California (2), Cherry Grove, Clough, Eight Mile, Five Mile, Fruit Hill, Lafayette (Pleasant Valley), Little Dry Run, Mt. Summit, Newtown, Salem, Sweetwine and Uniontown. These were one or two room schools with one or two teachers, offering an education through the eighth grade.

A photo from 1896 shows the students at the Asbury school, once located at the northeast corner of Asbury and Woodruff roads. The bell in the tower could be heard at homes throughout the district. Behind the school were the privies, one for girls and one for boys, separated by a tall fence.

Images taken in about 1902 at the school near the intersection of Little Dry Run Road and Bridle Road show the children both at play and posed with their teacher. The 1874 Clough school building is currently a restaurant. In about 1911 the students at the

Uniontown school also look particularly well-groomed for their photo. This building is now a private home on Clough Pike near Ohio 32. In 1912, pupils of the Fruit Hill school, once located on Beechmont near Salem, posed informally on the grass north of their school.

The era of rural schoolhouses ended here in 1927 when the voters of Anderson Township passed a bond issue of \$165,000 to build a consolidated school. The new Anderson Township School, built at the corner of Beechmont and Forest roads, opened in the fall of 1929 with 525 pupils and 16 teachers. It offered courses from the first grade through high school. Eighteen students made up the first graduating senior class of the township in 1931.

AS THE DECADES ROLL...

WAGONS OR CARS: SERVICES ON BEECHMONT A LONG TRADITION



*Sheldon Hardware's International delivery truck, at today's 7721 Beechmont, decorated for the Fourth of July in 1913.*



*Ayer Motor Car Company, corner of Beechmont and Wolfangel, about 1923.*

Long before the phrase "Beechmont Automile" was coined, residents of Anderson Township have headed to Beechmont Avenue to meet their transportation needs. Back when it was a toll road (called the Cincinnati & West Union Turnpike, before the privately-owned road was purchased by Hamilton County in 1905), Beechmont Avenue was the place to find what you needed.

Jones & Maddux Manufacturers of Carriages, Wagons, Plows operated from 1872 to 1920. John W. Jones had been a blacksmith in Withamsville before he and his son-in-law William A. Maddux opened their operation just west of Eight Mile Road at what would be today's 8338 Beechmont, near what is McCall's Flooring today.

The facility operated with three forges along with three large anvils and was a training ground for several young men



*Jones & Maddux Manufacturers of Carriages, Wagons, Plows, located at today's 8338 Beechmont, about 1900.*

who went on to open their own shops in the area. Just across the pike at what would be today's 8325 Beechmont, which is the Crossings of Anderson shopping center, William J. Hammer (1852 - 1927) had

his carriage and wagon manufacturing shop. The services of these blacksmiths and carriage/wagons makers remained essential to the farming community even as automobiles and trucks became available.

*W. J. Hammer Carriage & Wagon Manufacturer, at today's 8325 Beechmont, about 1900.*



In the early 1900s, Douglas Sheldon owned the hardware store at what would be today's 7721 Beechmont (now the Festival Market center). He purchased a very early International delivery truck for his business. In 1916, William Emerson Ayer, who grew up on his family's farm off Nagel Road, opened one of earliest, probably the first, car dealerships in the township: the Ayer Motor Car Company. This site is near what is today the corner of Beechmont and Wolfangel.

The company handled Ford automobiles, Ford trucks and Fordson tractors. A report from 1920 describes how Ayer built "a modern structure, fully equipped to care for every angle of the business." Today, nearly 100 years later, shoppers will find businesses lining Beechmont, able to care for every angle of their automotive needs.

*Photos from the collections of the Anderson Township Historical Society.*

# HISTORY

## Here's What 'Shopping Local' Meant 100 Years Ago

Decades before big box stores, the businesses of Anderson Township clustered along Beechmont Avenue. We are fortunate to have images of a few of these early shops.

In 1915, an enterprising woman Freda Vetter (1894-1971), who grew up in her family home at Asbury and Beechmont, opened a drugstore near the southeast corner of today's Beechmont and Corbly. The window display featured "Ice Cream and Soda Water 5 Cents." In the photo of Vetter at the counter, notice the phone booth, decorative plants and the shelves of patented medicines. She employed Anna Smedley, a trained pharmacist, to prepare prescriptions.

Also in 1915, Harry Dunn (1884-1973) took over the shop of Frank Hopper in Forestville (the area around the intersection of today's Beechmont and Wolfangel). Hopper operated a popular combination of barber shop, confectionery, and tobacco shop with three pool tables. Dunn replaced the pool tables with a grocery store and for a while Jim Davis joined him as partner.

Dunn's homemade ice cream was famous throughout the area. In the photo of Dunn standing in the grocery section, notice the impressive rack of Streitmann crackers and cookies for sale. Display banners advertised "Back to Old Time Price! Kellogg's Corn Flakes" and "Bayer Tablets of Aspirin." The calendar on the wall dates the image to June 1923.

D. Sheldon Hardware was on the south side of Beechmont in Forestville, now the Festival Market area. Look at the variety of wares sold: cement, paints, lanterns and teapots. The calendar shows April, likely 1923. In 1927 Douglas Sheldon (1850-1931) sold the store to the Forestville Fuel and Supply Company. An advertisement in Anderson High School 1955 yearbook summarized: "Try Forestville First -- Hardware, Builders' Supplies, Feed, Gas, Oil, Electrical Appliances." When Beechmont was widened in 1959-60, the store moved into a new building. Some of today's readers may remember shopping at the Forestville hardware and may still even be using some tools and appliances purchased there.



*D. Sheldon Hardware, Forestville, with Douglas Sheldon (left) and Theodore Hawkins (right), photo ca. 1923.*



*Outside Freda Vetter's drugstore, near southwest corner of Beechmont and Corbly, photo 1915.*



*Harry Dunn at his soda and cigar counter, photo ca. 1923.*



*Unloading at Dunn & Davis Grocery at Forestville, Jim Davis (left) and Harry Dunn (right), photo ca. 1923.*



*Harry Dunn in his grocery store, photo June 1923.*



*Interior of Sheldon Hardware with D. Sheldon, T. Hawkins and Wilbur Hawkins (l to r), photo ca. 1923.*



*Interior of Freda Vetter's drugstore, photo 1915.*



*Forestville Fuel and Supply Co., successor to Sheldon Hardware (at what was 7715 Beechmont Ave.), photo ca. 1941.*

*Photos from the collections of the Anderson Township Historical Society*

## Winter a Century Ago Includes Snow, Sports and Play

Photographs from years past tell us how Anderson Township residents coped with winters filled with ice and snow.

The winter of 1917-18 was one for the record books with more than three feet of snow, lasting into March. A photo on page 7 shows Mr. and Mrs. Van R. Johnson waiting for a passenger train car to Cincinnati. Two interurban electric railways crossed at this point on Beechmont Avenue. You can see the intersecting wires overhead in the image.

The C.G. and P. line operated in Anderson from 1877 to 1935, carrying both passengers and freight. These tracks ran cross country and crossed Beechmont at Forestville. A branch of the Interurban Railway and Terminal Company also ran through Anderson in 1903-1918 on tracks along Beechmont/Ohio Pike out to Bethel. The Johnson family home was the house on the left, today the location of Frisch's. If you kept a horse and sleigh, snow-covered streets were not an obstacle.

Winters with freezing temperatures meant that ice could be harvested from local ponds, supplying the iceboxes of the early 1900s. Frozen ponds also gave opportunities for sports and play. We are fortunate to have images taken at a pond once located southwest of the intersection of Beechmont and Birney, behind what is now Guardian Angels School. This pond supplied water to the original St. Gregory Seminary and was known as "Seminary Pond" to local residents. These images remind us of the many ponds that once dotted the farm-based community of Anderson.

The photos also give us clues about winter clothing of the early 1900s. One close-up of a fashionable lady shows that a fur muff and wrap were just the thing for a cold day. Snow means building snowmen, of course, and we have a photo of one made for a WCKY-radio contest by the Leuser family, who lived in the log house on Clough Pike for many decades.



*Cutting ice on "Seminary Pond." Photo about 1900.*



*Skating on "Seminary Pond." Photo about 1910.*



*Sleigh of the Langdon family of Mt. Washington. Dr. Langdon used the sleigh to reach patients when snow covered the ground. Photo about 1910.*



*Snowman at the Miller-Leuser Log House on Clough Pike. Photo about 1940.*



*Dressed for winter, Bessie Johnson Davis posed at a house on Beechmont Avenue near Collinsdale Avenue. Photo about 1915.*



*Waiting for the railway on snow-filled Beechmont Avenue in the winter of 1917-18. The house on left is the location today of Frisch's.*

*Photos from the collections of the Anderson Township Historical Society. Text and research courtesy of Janet Heywood.*



*One fellow trekking through the snow on Beechmont from Wolfangel toward Asbury. Photo 1918.*

# HISTORY

## The 'Great Storm' Caused Havoc a Century Ago

On the list of severe weather events in Ohio history is the "Great Storm" that struck Cincinnati and vicinity, including the Anderson area, on Wednesday, July 7, 1915.



Cherry Grove Evangelical United Brethren Church at the northwest corner of Beechmont Avenue and Eight Mile Road was heavily damaged by the 1915 storm.



Interior of the Cherry Grove E.U.B. Church after the storm.



Remains of the Cherry Grove district school.

The storm moved from Missouri across Illinois, Indiana and Ohio. Headlines spoke of tornadoes, but no funnel clouds were seen. Newspapers described the extensive damage and loss of life in the Cincinnati region—38 people killed, more than \$1 million in damages (\$23 million value in 2015), homes and buildings demolished, steamboats overturned, trees uprooted, crops flattened. There were no deaths in the Anderson area during the storm, but sadly an electrician doing repairs on a pole on Beechmont was killed by a live wire four days later.

Near the corner of Beechmont and Eight Mile, the Cherry Grove Evangelical United Brethren Church building was heavily damaged. The congregation was able to repair the church. Tragically the church had to be rebuilt again after a fire in 1924. The Cherry Grove United Methodist Church, as it is now known, moved to Eight Mile Road in 1969. Today, McCall's Flooring occupies the former E.U.B. Church building at 8342 Beechmont Ave. Across the street, the Anderson public district school was demolished by the 1915 storm and had to be replaced.

In Newtown, scarcely a house escaped damage and the village streets were blocked by trees. In nearby Mt. Washington at Sutton and Corbly roads, the former Methodist Protestant Church, built in 1851, lost its roof and steeple. This building was repaired with a patch where its steeple once stood and was used by local groups until it was razed in 1960.

At 2249 Beechmont Ave., the Colter Canning Company, famous for canned tomatoes, was the area's major industry. A quarter million tin cans on hand for the summer were lost. A rear wall collapsed; the roof landed on a nearby home.

Throughout the area, stands of timber, fruit and shade trees, shrubbery, farm crops and gardens were damaged. Farmers were hard hit; corn was flattened and tomatoes looked blighted. Few people had cameras but Ed Collord, who lived near Wayside Avenue, took images that help us appreciate the massive clean-up effort. Today we have advance storm warnings to help us prepare for the power from such strong winds.

*Photos from the collections of the Anderson Township Historical Society. Text and research courtesy of Janet Heywood.*



Shade trees around this house near Wayside were blown down. Photo by Ed Collord



At Sutton and Corbly roads, the former Methodist Protestant Church lost its roof and steeple.



Cleaning up the many fallen trees was a hard job. Photo by Ed Collord.

# HISTORY

## Anderson Township circa 1902: A Fine Farming Community

A 1902 brochure for the Cincinnati, Georgetown and Portsmouth Railroad praised the suburban and rural districts east of Cincinnati and north of the Ohio River, saying that no other area was so beautiful and healthful. The brochure described the post office at Fruit Hill in Anderson as the center of a fine farming community.

We are fortunate to have a photograph of the splendid farm of Aaron Hopper (1820-1895) called "Fruit Hill." The name of this farm that stretched east of Markley Road inspired the name for the nearby post office at the corner of Salem and Beechmont. Aaron Hopper was one of 12 children of Abraham and Elizabeth Hopper from New Jersey, who bought hundreds of acres in Anderson in about 1814. He was raised as a farmer and started a produce outlet in Cincinnati to sell fruit and other products of his farm. His business thrived; he served as a township trustee, school board member and county commissioner.

An illustration published in 1877 shows the farm of William H. Markley (1826-1904) along Five Mile Creek. The Markley family arrived in Anderson from Pennsylvania in about 1814. Their orchards covered the hillsides. They also operated a saw mill and grist mill. Farming was the major occupation in 19th century Anderson; 84 percent of those with an occupation in the Williams Hamilton County Directory of 1887 in what is the township today were farmers. This directory emphasized the very fertile land of the township, yielding large quantities of fruit, berries and vegetables which found ready sale in Cincinnati.

The 1870 federal census included an agricultural schedule that gives details of the 336 farms in the township, ranging in size from 6 to 500 acres. Corn, wheat, oats and potatoes were the major crops, with orchard and market garden produce generating significant revenues of more than \$116,000 (more than \$2 million in today's currency). Most farms reported keeping one to three milk cows and three to eight swine. Revenues from animals slaughtered totaled nearly \$77,000. More than 1,300 tons of hay was harvested as food for livestock.

Anderson remained a farming community well into the 1900s, but today most of the farmlands of Anderson have been replaced with homes and wooded areas. As we tend our lawns, flower beds and gardens, we carry on the tradition of cultivating its fertile soils.



A farm harvest in fields now filled with the homes of Fox Chapel, 1920s



Swine in a pen on a farm on Birney Lane, about 1912.



Hay harvest in fields near Wayside Avenue, 1916.



15 Residence of W. H. Markley, Five Mile Road near Birney Lane, 1877.



Farmyard of the Hicks family on Clough Pike, opposite Bartels Road, about 1920.



Fruit Hill, the farm of Aaron Hopper, Markley Road, about 1880. Photo by Andrew Fitch McCall, Jr. of Bethel.

Photos from the collections of the Anderson Township Historical Society. Text and research courtesy of Janet Heywood.

## 'Come, Gentlemen, and Push'

For nearly 60 years the Cincinnati, Georgetown and Portsmouth Railroad (C. G. & P.) served the residents of Anderson Township.

Historian Stephen Smalley recorded that the railroad's old nickname "Come, Gentlemen, and Push" was no joke because sometimes passengers did indeed have to get out and walk up the steep grade of Mt. Washington hill.

But the establishment of rail service from the C. G. & P. depot in Cincinnati's East End out to Mt. Carmel in October 1877 was a blessing to the community. It is hard to imagine how slow and difficult travel was by horse-drawn buggy or wagon.

In 1873 Henry Brachmann, a Cincinnati wine merchant who owned a fine home and considerable land along Beechmont Avenue west of Birney Lane, started the organization of this railroad, then called the Cincinnati and Portsmouth. The company raised funds for construction costs by selling bonds to residents of the area. Local farmers signed deeds giving the railroad 60-foot wide right of way across their lands, without pay, in the anticipation of the benefits of easy travel to Cincinnati, being able to ship fresh produce to market and receive heavy goods.

The railroad twisted cross-country across the township with stations at California, Mt. Washington, Cedar Point (near the intersection of Beechmont and Birney), Fruit Hill, Forestville (near today's intersection of Beechmont and Wolfangel) and Cherry Grove. The line reached Georgetown by 1886 but never extended to Portsmouth.

In 1902 the line was reorganized with new owners and changed from a steam railroad to a railroad powered by electricity. A company brochure boasted that "possibilities for high speed are great, and it is expected that an average speed of about forty miles an hour will be maintained with the utmost safety." In 1925 there were 16 daily runs on the main line and 16 runs on a branch line to Coney Island.

Competition with automobiles, trucks and buses brought an end to the line in the 1930s. The last passenger car left Georgetown on October 31, 1935, 80 years ago.

The C. G. & P. Railroad ran almost exactly down what is now the main hallway of Nagel Middle School. In 2007 a plaque and mural were placed in the school corridor, commemorating "this once-great railroad that served our community so well."



Sketch from a 1898 C. G. & P. brochure. Actually the steam locomotives could not pull more than three cars up the grade of Mt. Washington hill.



Wreck at Forestville in 1910 when the C. G. & P. Post Office car (on the left) collided with an express car of the I. R. & T., a competing electric railway, operating along Beechmont from 1903 to 1918. Photo by Cindy Johnson Ayer.



The first C. G. & P. locomotive, purchased in 1877. Still in use when the photo was taken in 1897.

Opposite: Car at the C. G. & P. Station at Cedar Point. A concrete curb, part of the retaining wall for the station platform, can still be seen today, running diagonally from Birney opposite Ambar. Photo about 1905.



C. G. & P. car #55 at the Carrel Street Station in the East End. Photo about 1910.



Rare view, looking east along the Ohio River, showing the tracks of the C. G. & P. over the Lick Run trestle to the Cincinnati Waterworks being built in California. The main line continued off to the left. Photo about 1900, when the C. G. & P. was still using narrow gauge track on main line and both narrow and standard gauge track on the new line to California.

# HISTORY

## Anderson Landmarks- Can You Recognize Them?

Check out the vintage map and images of a few memorable locations in Anderson. Can you recognize these places?

East of the intersection of Clough Pike and Bartels Road stands the oldest house in Anderson, the log house built by Ichabod Benton Miller some 220 years ago. Miller was the surveyor who laid out Clough Pike in 1805. The Miller-Leuser Log House is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and has an Ohio Historical Marker.

Another site honored by an Ohio Historical Marker is the Salem Methodist Church at the corner of Salem and Sutton. The first log church was built there in 1810 by Rev. Francis McCormick, a Revolutionary War soldier who introduced Methodism into the Northwest Territory. In 1828, a larger brick church was constructed. Then in 1863, the present frame church was built and the bricks were reused for the school building next door.

In 1874, a two-story school was built on the north side of Clough Pike across from today's Berkshire. It served as the Anderson District 13 school until the local schools were consolidated in 1929. Today the Clough Crossing restaurant is located in this historic building.

Coney Island remains a landmark of the Anderson area, dating back to its start in the 1870s as Parker's Grove, a delightful picnic area. On June 21, 1886, it opened with great fanfare as "The New Coney Island of the West." Lake Como was created in 1893 with the first Shoot the Chutes ride installed two years later. Splashing down in a

boat onto the water was a treat on a hot day. Although it has changed over the years, Coney still attracts crowds who enjoy the cool breezes over the lake.

As you travel around Anderson marveling at the changes occurring in the township, take time to notice the landmarks that remind us of the past.



Salem School, Anderson District 5 school, students and their teacher B. J. Maddux, photo about 1913. It is said the large dog in the first row came to school every day for nine years, along with the Shannon children.



Glimpse of the Lake, Excursion Boat and Shoot the Chutes near Cincinnati, O.

Coney Island postcard, about 1910. The Shoot the Chutes ride, first installed in 1895, was enlarged and rebuilt several times until it was removed in 1922. Scenic Lake Como, created in 1893, remains today.



U. S. Geological Survey map, 1914 edition. Houses and other buildings are marked by tiny black dots. Two electric railways ran through Anderson. The framework of roads is familiar to us today, minus, of course, the interstates and connectors of recent decades. Can you find your neighborhood on the map?



Clough School, Anderson District 7 school on Clough Pike across from Berkshire. Today it is the Clough Crossings restaurant. Photo about 1910.



Miller-Leuser Log House, photo June 1920. The Log House is now owned by the Anderson Township Historical Society and is open for public tours on the first and third Sunday afternoons of the month, May to October.



Today's Salem Community Church at the corner of Salem and Sutton, photo about 1910. At that time the building on the left was the Anderson District 5 public school.

Photos from the collections of the Anderson Township Historical Society. Text contributed by Janet Heywood.

## Summer Fun - Delights of the Past in Anderson

How do you stay cool and enjoy the summer months? Long before central air-conditioning, houses were built to include shady porches where families could spend time on warm days.

Often homes were constructed with floor layouts featuring a central hallway with doors at either end to promote cross ventilation. Rooms had high ceilings with multiple windows. Shutters and curtains would block the hot sunlight while letting air circulate. We have a marvelous image of the Aaron Hopper family relaxing on their comfortable porch in the summer. You can see the doors and window are open so breezes can blow through the house.

The shade offered by tall trees was prized in the summer months. Deciduous trees were often planted around houses to block the hot rays of summer sun. Once leaves fell in the fall, sunlight was welcomed in the winter months. Groves of trees provided cool places for recreation. One of the attractions of Coney Island since its early days in the 1870s was "the majestic shade trees."

Casual photography was not common a century ago. Fortunately, a member of the Ebersole family whose home was on a hill overlooking the Ohio River did take photographs of the family enjoying themselves in the summer: posing in the shade, enjoying watermelons on the lawn and boating on the river. Notice the light-colored, loose-fitting dresses of the women and the casual wear of the men. The women's enormous hats played a practical role in providing shade.

Another popular summer activity in the early 1900s was participating in local baseball teams. Picnicking was fun as well. On

Labor Day in 1922, Thelma Widman and her girlfriends celebrated by walking down to the creek alongside Clough Pike. They spent the day cooking eggs and bacon and wading in the water. Thelma recorded in her album that two of the girls "worn (sic) their socks rolled on our way home. A glorious day." Whether you choose to spend time in air-conditioned comfort or decide to indulge in watermelons on the lawn, enjoy the glorious days of summer.



Stanley Ebersole enjoyed boating on the Ohio River on his friend Bert Finch's launch "Laura." Photo about 1900.



The Aaron Hopper family relaxing on their shady porch in about 1885. Photo by Andrew Finch McCall, Jr. of Bethel. Notice the central hallway with open doors to let air circulate through the house.



Ebersole family and friends enjoying watermelon on the lawn. Photo about 1900.



The Labor Day 1922 picnic also included wading in Clough Creek.



Stanley Ebersole and relatives pose under tall trees, gathered around one of the features of their lawn. Photo about 1900.



The Forestville/Cherry Grove baseball team in the summer of 1909.

Text courtesy of Janet Heywood. Photos from the collections of the Anderson Township Historical Society.

## Some A, B, Cs of Anderson Roads

The framework of Anderson roads was established early in the history of the township. In the 1800s, major area roads were turnpikes, set up as profit-making businesses charging tolls.

Today's Beechmont was part of the Ohio Turnpike Company until September 1905 when Hamilton County purchased it. The local name "Beechmont Avenue" for the public highway was inspired by a property owned by Richard and Ida T. McComas along Clough Creek. The couple called their home Beechmont because of a hilltop grove of magnificent beeches.

In July 1805, settlers along Clough Creek petitioned the commissioners of Hamilton County to survey a road from the headwaters of the creek to the county line. Ichabod Benton Miller was hired to survey the road. He submitted his completed survey on November 5, 1805, along with his bill for \$9.25. In about 1830 the road was established as privately operated toll road. Clough Pike remained a toll road until acquired by the county by the year 1912.

Birney Lane, once known as the "road to Markley's Mill," was laid out as a public road in about 1842. Vincent Shinn, who owned property along the route from Beechmont to the mill on Five Mile, suggested that the road be named in honor of abolitionist James G. Birney, the antislavery presidential candidate of 1840.

Four, Five, Seven and Eight Mile roads took their names from the creeks along which they ran. The creeks were named based on the approximate distance along the Ohio River from the mouth of the creek to the mouth of the Little Miami. Today we know Seven Mile as Asbury Road. In 1835, a group of Methodist families built a chapel near what was then the north end of the road. They called it

Asbury Methodist Church in honor of Bishop Francis Asbury and the nearby area became known as Asbury.

The building was removed in 1921, but the cemetery on a hill above the chapel remains; Forest Road now runs along the base of the hill. In 1895 the road was extended north to intersect the Ohio Turnpike, giving us the busy intersection of Asbury and Beechmont.



Clough Creek Turnpike Company stock certificate, 1875. Clough Creek, like the township itself, was named in honor of Richard Clough Anderson (1750-1826), the Virginia soldier who served as the principal surveyor of Virginia Military District, the Ohio land that included Anderson Township.



Asbury School, Anderson District #15 school, built in 1891, located on what is today the northeast corner of Asbury and Woodruff. Teacher Martin Wheatley posed with his students, first to eighth graders, in about 1893.



Here's an early view of Beechmont, running across the new 1907 bridge over Clough Creek. Today this is the area near Elstun Road at the foot of the hill up to Mt. Washington. Photo by Mary E. Shinn, about 1909. In the early 1900s, the spelling "Cluff" was often used for "Clough."



Asbury Methodist Church, about 1900. The chapel inspired the name Asbury Road for what was once known as Seven Mile and briefly Stockton Road. The church congregation grew, relocated and is today the Anderson Hills United Methodist Church.



Birney Lane, looking south from Beechmont, about 1900, from a 1905 book with the poem "On Burney's Lane." Some people began using the spelling "Burney" in the late 1800s. Today deeds and signs in the township have the intended spelling "Birney," but in the area incorporated into Cincinnati, "Burney" is used.



The newly purchased public roadway Clough Pike was in need of major repairs. Local farmers Clifford (second from left) and Charles (with the white horses) Wittmeyer were hired for road construction. The crew moved soil to fill in areas where the road was washed out. Photo from 1912.

## Images of Historic Anderson Township to be Published in Book

Since its founding in 1968, the Anderson Township Historical Society has been collecting images that document the history of the Anderson area and the lives of its residents. We are currently assembling a collection of historical images to be published in book form by Arcadia Press as part of its *Images of America* series.

The book is being published in cooperation with Anderson Township in celebration of Anderson's upcoming 225th anniversary in 2018.

Photos do tell interesting stories. Some may illustrate quiet moments such as the photo of girls in front of a house on Sutton Road. Mary Shinn took this image of her home and young neighbors in around 1930 when the house was a century old.

A 1915 image shows a group of friends dressed in summery clothes, relaxing at what is today the corner of Beechmont Avenue and Wolfangel Road. In the 1920s, this spot became the location for one of the first car dealerships in Anderson. Now the area is under construction as it is converted into a new shopping and dining destination.

In 1913, a local resident sent a friend a postcard of the brickyards in Newtown. She wrote: "This is a view of Newtown,

ain't it swell?" The brickyards are gone but some older houses in our area still have bricks stamped "Newtown." In about 1905 if you wanted to make a telephone call, you would likely go to your neighborhood store to use a phone. Notice the Bell Telephone sign in the photo of the general store at Beechmont and Burney Lane.

In 1929, district schools were consolidated into a central school at Forest Road and Beechmont that offered classes through high school. The first graduating class proudly included a photo of the first Anderson School orchestra in the 1931 yearbook. Think how school musical activities have flourished over the last 85 years! Decades ago local teenagers had fewer options for entertainment; during the days of World War II some gathered at a Youth Canteen sponsored by a local merchant.

The Anderson Township Historical Society is actively collecting images in the next few weeks. If you would like to share your photos, the historical society can arrange to scan them. Contact Janet Heywood at ATHS, P.O. Box 30174, Cincinnati, Ohio 45230, leave a message at the ATHS office at 231-2114 or contact the society by email at: [Research@AndersonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org](mailto:Research@AndersonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org).



A store has been operating at the corner of Beechmont and Burney Lane since William Taylor opened the first store in 1848. This photo from about 1905 shows the Heitel family who owned the store in the early 1900s. Notice the telephone sign.



In 1913, postcards of local sights in the Anderson area were available. This card shows the brickyards in Newtown operated by the Friedrich family from 1904 to 1936. The company was one of the largest brickyards in the Midwest, producing more than 25,000 bricks a day.



The Andersonian of 1931 included a photo of the first Anderson School orchestra and explained how the orchestra had "become an important part in our school and in other community meetings." The group included nine violins, four clarinets, three coronets, three saxophones, one sousaphone and two piano players.



A cherished photo from about 1915 was saved by one of the ladies in the group. They gathered in a yard on Beechmont Avenue near a lane that later became Wolfangel Road.



In 1945 during World War II, local teenagers found a place for entertainment at the Youth Canteen held in a building at the corner of Beechmont and Corbly in Mt. Washington.



By 1930, the northwest corner of Beechmont and Wolfangel was developed as a car dealership. First it was a Ford dealership of Emerson Ayer and then it was the Wilson Motor Company.



Three young neighbors posed at the front of photographer Mary E. Shinn's house on Sutton Road in about 1930. The house was built by Shinn's grandfather Joseph Hine in 1831. Today it remains one of the oldest houses in the area.

## Anderson Township Heritage Center Now a place to celebrate, venue was once home to farming families

Today the Anderson Township Heritage Center at the southeast corner of Eight Mile and Forest roads is the site of such landmark events as weddings, baby showers, birthdays and anniversary celebrations.

Let's look at its history. Remember that Anderson Township was part of the Virginia Military District reserved by Virginia to reward her Revolutionary War soldiers. The Heritage Center is in the Virginia Military Survey of 1,000 acres called #608, awarded to Captain Abraham Hite in 1797.

Captain Hite sold Survey #608 to Leven Powell of Virginia for \$5 in 1802; then Powell sold the 1,000 acres to James Taylor of Campbell County, Kentucky, for \$2,000 in 1810.

Real estate agent Taylor sold sections to settlers, including about 100 acres to James Belvel in November 1812. It is thought that James Belvel (also spelled Bellville) built the core of the house, today's Heritage Center, in the 1820s. James and Catherine Belvel raised 10 children in the house. In 1856 the Belvel heirs sold the house to neighbor Moses Markley.

In 1860, Markley and his wife Malinda were living in the house with four sons, two daughters and a servant. The house was expanded with an addition at the back. In 1880, widow Markley was living there with her son Joseph. A Victorian-style porch was added to the front of the house. After the death of his mother, Joseph Markley sold the property to local farmers Frank Rath and Absalom Jones, who rented the house.

In the late 1800s-early 1900s, the area was farmland with few houses. The Keel family lived at what is today 983 Eight Mile Road. Their farmhouse was built around the original cabin where Moses Markley lived before he bought the larger Belvel home.

At today's 1030 Eight Mile Road, William Johnson built a farmhouse in the

1850s; Charles H. Hopper expanded it in the 1890s. At the corner of Eight Mile Road and today's Beechmont Avenue, George Powell operated a general store and was postmaster of the Cherry Grove Post Office from 1878 to 1909.

During the 1900s, four families owned the Heritage Center house, including Emma Striker Kempton, 1918-1941; Robert and Martha Craig, 1941-1946; Frank and Corinne Grieme, 1946-1960; and Donald and Gayle Smith, 1960-1991. In May 1991, Donald Smith sold the house with 5.3 acres to the township.

The Heritage Center home was built in the 1820s and was home to a family with 10 children.

*Images from the collections of the Anderson Township Historical Society. Text compiled by Janet Heywood.*



*Albert and Mary Mardis rented what is now the Heritage Center when the property was part of the Jones and Rath farms. Photo about 1912. Left to right: Prince the dog, Albert Mardis, Virginia and Rachel Mardis, Fred Schipler; Sylvia, Fred and Alberta (with doll) Mardis; Alma Schipler; Elmer and Mary Mardis. Sylvia Mardis married Fred Schipler in 1914; Fred Mardis married Alma Schipler in 1916.*



*The Heritage Center property in March 1968. Photo by Stephen Smalley.*



*Farmhouse of the Keel family, once at today's 983 Eight Mile. Photo 1918. The house was built around the original log cabin of the Markleys.*



*Home, store and post office at southeast corner of Eight Mile and Beechmont in 1906. Owner and postmaster George Washington Powell (1849-1933) is standing at left.*



*Farmhouse built in 1850s at what is today's 1030 Eight Mile. Photo from 1940s.*



*Map of southeast Anderson Township in 1847. Large numbers are Virginia Military Survey numbers. Dashed lines are roads. Notice the house of J. Belvel, today's Heritage Center, near "600." ("600" was map maker's error; should be "608.") Virginia Military Survey numbers are still part of today's land records.*



*Beautiful gravestone of James Belvel at Asbury Cemetery. "In Memory of James Belvel, who died Dec. 1st, 1841, Aged 53 years & 10 months." Verse: Say not he's dead, he lives indeed . . . sing your friend to worlds on high.*

## Views from the Early 1900s Illustrate the Farmlands of Anderson

(New Anderson book... continued from page 1)

Photography once required a fair amount of preparation. It was not something anyone could do with a pocket camera or a mobile phone, so it is a delight when we find photos of people at their leisure. An image in the book shows Doug Sheldon using his International Harvester truck to take a Sunday School class for an outing. Thelma Widman and friends took a long hike on Labor Day 1922 and photographed their cookout along Clough Creek. Today, that image is preserved for our appreciation.

One image (not included here) includes the fields of the John Van Saun farm along Eight Mile Road. Another farming image (not included here) from 1916 shows us harvest time in the fields along the Ohio River. Although fields have been replaced by residential development, some early farmhouses remain as private homes. Many have modern additions but can still be recognized.

While the book is a significant undertaking incorporating images from the 1870s through the 1920s, the Anderson Township Historical Society continues to collect images documenting local history. Images from the last 50 years as well as older ones are being sought.

If you would like to share your photos, volunteers from the Historical Society can scan them. Contact Janet Heywood, research chair, at Anderson Township Historical Society, PO Box 30174, Anderson Township, Ohio 45230, leave a message at the historical society office at 231-2114, or email the society at [Research@AndersonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org](mailto:Research@AndersonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org).



Thelma Widman and her girlfriends got up early on Labor Day 1922, went for a hike and then cooked their breakfast of cocoa, fried eggs and bacon along Clough Creek.



Two Wolfer brothers celebrated their silver wedding anniversaries on April 12, 1899, with a large family gathering at the Wolfer farm, located on today's Hunley Road.



Jacob Markley's farm along the Ohio River near today's Five Mile Road, depicted in the Illustrated Atlas of the Upper Ohio River and Valley, published by Titus, Simmons and Titus Company of Philadelphia in 1877.



Five children of Aquilla and Harriet Durham, all born in a log cabin along today's Little Dry Run Road, posed for the camera at the Durham celebration on May 13, 1896. A large crowd of Durham descendants celebrated the 100th anniversary of the arrival of the family in lower Little Miami Valley with "feasting and merry-making."



Doug Sheldon of Forestville used his International Harvester delivery truck to take a Sunday School class out for a ride and a picnic in about 1916.

## Plans for 225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

A grassroots committee is working to finalize special ways to commemorate and celebrate the township's 225-year history. The committee is still researching ideas and welcomes suggestions for promotions, but has settled on a few projects that will be undertaken in honor of next year's anniversary.



In conjunction with Anderson Community Television, a series of historical narratives will be produced that explore families, important historic buildings, organizations, and businesses that have left a mark on the community's history. These short videos will be made available on the township's and ACTV's YouTube channels to provide a multi-media history resource of Anderson Township.

Besides incorporating a new 225<sup>th</sup> logo into the township's media presence, Anderson officials also note that nearly each township-sponsored event in 2018 will have some connection to the 225th anniversary. An event for the month of March, which is the month in which it is believed Anderson Township was founded, and opportunities for a community-wide open house of historic places are being discussed. Some events may tie into those of the Anderson Township Historical Society, which celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2018.

"We're looking forward to showcasing our rich history throughout the year," said Trustee Vice President Dee Stone.

# HISTORY

## Historic Places Serve as Markers to the Township's Past

A drive through the township reveals still-standing structures

As Anderson Township celebrates its 225th anniversary, historic places around Anderson serve as reminders of the area's past.

It's not so hard to be aware of details from long ago when traveling through the township. When driving along Clough Pike, try to imagine you are one of the chain carriers helping surveyor Ichabod Benton Miller lay out the roadway along the creek in 1805. At the corner of Clough Pike and Bartels Road, you can admire the log house Miller built on 440 acres of land he bought in 1796.

James Clark and his family arrived in Anderson in 1797; about five years later he built the impressive stone house you see along Clough at the corner of today's Hunley Road. Clough Valley was a fertile area; local family farms flourished in the 1800s. In 1874 a two-story district school was built on Clough Pike across from today's Berkshire Road.

After the Anderson district schools were consolidated in 1929, this school building was used by American Legion Post 484. In 1943, enterprising Flora C. Hess (1892-1986) bought the building and opened the Mt. Washington Tavern that she managed for 40 years. Since 1997, the building has been the location of the popular Clough Crossings restaurant.

More than two centuries ago, James Belvel (also spelled Bellville) bought 100 acres at the corner of Eight Mile and Forest roads. In

the 1820s he built the core of the house that is today's Anderson Township Heritage Center. Families can now rent this township property for their own events and celebrations.

At the Salem Community Church on the corner of the Salem and Sutton, the Ohio Historical Marker erected in 1969 recognizes the accomplishments of Francis McCormick (1764-1836). He established Methodist churches in the wilderness of southwest Ohio, first at Milford and then at the village of Salem that he founded in Anderson in 1805. The Salem Methodist Church complex was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1982.

When you drive along Five Mile Road, remember that settlers in the early 1800s cleared the hillsides to establish farm fields, grazing land and vineyards. In 1844, Jacob Markley donated property on Five Mile for the first United Brethren in Christ Church in southeastern Hamilton County. The building stones came from the nearby creek and hillsides. A bell tower and entrance were added in 1896. The Five Mile Chapel and cemetery were entered in the National Register of Historic Places in 1978.

*Images from the collections of the Anderson Township Historical Society. Text by Janet Heywood, research chair, Anderson Township Historical Society.*



A vintage photograph shows youngsters arriving at the Clough District School in about 1910. Today it is the restaurant Clough Crossings.



From 1943 to 1983, Flora C. Hess operated the Mt. Washington Tavern at the former school building at 6892 Clough. Photograph by Stephen Smalley, March 1968.



The Clark Stone House at the corner of Clough Pike and Hunley Road, seen in this 1971 image, will be the site of a celebration later this year when its Ohio Historic Marker is installed.



Salem Methodist churchyard. Photograph, 1959. Salem Community Church today offers services in the expanded church building at 6137 Salem Road.



Today's Anderson Township Heritage Center at Eight Mile and Forest, photographed 50 years ago by Stephen Smalley.



The Miller-Leuser Log House, 6540 Clough Pike, is owned by the Anderson Township Historical Society. Tours are offered in May through October and at special events. The Log House was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1974 and awarded an Ohio Historical Marker in 2010. Photograph, 1926.



In this early 1900s photograph, the hills above Five Mile Chapel were open fields. Today the property at 6975 Five Mile Road is owned by the non-profit Five Mile Chapel Society which rents the chapel for services.

# HISTORY

## Gatherings and Celebrations Bring Us Together Through Time

Gatherings and celebrations-what brings people together? Looking at photos collected over the decades is a reminder of what brought groups together in the past.

One of the early images in the Anderson Township Historical Society's collections is a gathering for the birthday of W. Forrest Hopper on July 24, 1890. Cincinnati weather records mention a high temperature of 84 degrees that day; the folks in the photo look comfortable sitting on lumber at the family farm on Markley Road. It is likely that a photographer was hired for the event. Taking photographs required an investment in equipment and training to use it.

Some of the most common images in the society's collections are those of school classes. Students knew in advance a photographer was coming and the classes usually posed formally in front of the school. In 1912, students at the Fruit Hill District School, once located on Beechmont across from Salem, chose to walk down the hill from the school and sit in the grass. School photos were saved by parents, children and grandchildren and became such sacred relics that few would discard them.

By 1920, interested people with a mind for technology were acquiring equipment for taking and developing photographs. Wallace Scott (1904-1957) of Mt. Washington took photos of the local July 4th parade that year. He also preserved them in an album.

We can enjoy the elaborate float of the Mother's Club and the sight of armed young women marching alongside a decorated car.

In June 1924, Children's Day at the Clough United Brethren Church, located in the triangular intersection of Clough Pike and State, was captured by a formal photograph of more than 50 children, beautifully dressed for the occasion, posed on the entrance steps.

Some of the largest annual gatherings in Anderson once took place on the first Sunday in September after Labor Day. The General Protestant Orphan Home moved out to Beechmont Avenue in 1950 and hosted its 101st Annual Orphan Feast on September 10. A parade started in Mt. Washington and marched along Beechmont for the opening ceremony at Beech Acres. So popular was the event that massive traffic jams resulted as an estimated 75,000 people attended the day-long event. *The Cincinnati Enquirer* reported that the day was a great success despite the long waits in traffic.

Think of the multitude of images of gatherings we record so easily today. How many will be left in a form that can be viewed a century from now? What will our descendants think of the images from today?

*Images from the collections of the Anderson Township Historical Society.  
Text by Janet Heywood, research chair, Anderson Township Historical Society.*



In 1912, classes from upper grades of the Fruit Hill District School, located on Beechmont across from Salem, posed for a photograph down the hill from the school.



In June 1924, the children attending the Clough United Brethren Church posed for a formal portrait on the steps of the church building, then located at the triangular intersection of Clough Pike and State.



In 1950, the General Protestant Orphan Home moved out to Beechmont Avenue, on today's Beech Acres Parenting Center site, and held its 101st Annual Orphan Feast on September 10. A parade started in Mt. Washington and marched along Beechmont for the opening ceremony at the site.



Two photographs taken by Wallace Scott at the July 4, 1920 parade in Mt. Washington illustrate the marchers and their elaborately decorated vehicles.



Family and friends gathered on July 24, 1890, for the birthday of young W. Forrest Hopper, son of Charles M. and Nancy Anna Hopper, at the family farm along Markley Road.

# HISTORY - 225 YEARS

## An Anderson Township Treasure - the Clark Stone House

Still standing after all these years, Clark home is unique in many ways

In the early 1970s, almost 50 years ago, local historian Stephen Smalley (1900-1977) prepared an article about the remarkable stone house at the corner of Clough Pike and Hunley Road. Smalley wrote "Of all of the remaining pioneer homes in Anderson Township this one is, without a doubt, the most interesting. It was built by James Clark Sr. in the year 1801. Clark arrived in the township before the turn of the last century and although there were several families who had settled here before he did, there were very few homes in this neighborhood before this one. None of these homes was as substantially built. The beautiful job of masonry from field stone stands as a monument to the man who built it." In the 1970s, the Joseph Messmer family lived in the house and Mrs. Genevieve Messmer asked Smalley not to publish the article for fear of vandalism.

Today the Clark Stone House is no less remarkable. In 1995 when the Messmer heirs wished to sell the property, it was purchased by Anderson Township. The township has preserved the house and outbuildings. Since 2004, the grounds have been rented to Greenfield Plant Farm. The house has recently been awarded an Ohio Historical Marker that will be dedicated at a celebration on September 16, 2018.

Historian Stephen Smalley speculated that James Clark (1765-1852) was not interested in living in a log cabin but wanted his home to remind him always of the home he left in Virginia. The fireplaces are massive and the mantels primitive. In the 1970s, Smalley was fascinated by the beautiful wooden door hinges that were long enough to cover the entire width of the door and swing on hand-fashioned wooden pivots. In the basement there is a log of enormous size which is a main support of the house. Stone steps still lead to the outside from the basement. The Eastlake-style porch on the east side was added in the late 1800s; and a one-story frame addition was constructed on the north side.



Joseph (1865-1915) and Matilda (1866-1941) Leuser posed with their children Lawrence (1889-1964), Antoinette (1892-1970), Genevieve (1894-1978) and baby Lorena (1903-1935) in front of the house in about 1905.

Adam Leuser purchased the property from the Clark heirs in 1864. Leuser family history suggests that they had been renting the house from the Clark family since the mid-1850s. Adam Leuser's son Joseph became the next owner in 1896 and in 1923 his daughter Genevieve (1894-1978) and her husband Joseph Messmer became the owners. The Messmer family lived in the house and raised their family of five children there. Joseph Messmer (1891-1984) operated a florist shop and greenhouse at the property for many decades. (See page 7 for story about James Clark.)

Images from the collections of the Anderson Township Historical Society.  
Text by Janet Heywood, research chair, Anderson Township Historical Society



Matilda Leuser was photographed with her three daughters, daughter-in-law and first grandchild on the steps at the west side of the house in 1912. Left to right: Antoinette, Emma Kuntz Leuser (1889-1969), baby Clara Leuser (1912-2007), Matilda, young Lorena and Genevieve. Emma Leuser was the wife of Lawrence Leuser.



A view of the house in 1982 surrounded by outbuildings.

## Early Township Resident James Clark Made His Mark Here

The entrepreneur and state legislator built his home on Clough Pike after adventure-filled move from Virginia with his family

The life of little-known pioneer James Clark may not have been a subject found in history books, but he made his mark here in Anderson Township. Still standing proudly after more than 200 years is the formidable eight-room stone house he built in around 1801, which was inhabited until the 1990s.

James Clark (1765-1852) came to the Anderson Township wilderness, traveling by flatboat and wagon with four children under age nine, and a wife who was six months into a pregnancy. His journey to Anderson was a two-month 700-mile odyssey. During his travels, he was robbed, lost his horse, endured sickness, dealt with a broken wagon and traversed mountains and rivers.

After spending several years building his home along the peaceful setting of Clough Creek, he lived the rest of his life here with his wife, Susannah, and 10 children.

During his lifetime, Clark became a contributor to the Anderson community and the larger Ohio region, serving as a justice of the peace, a state legislator and as a judge. As part of his service as a state legislator, he traveled by horseback to Chillicothe (the state capitol at the time) to meet with other legislators. He also helped found a church, a grist mill and an orchard, and served as a teacher.

**Dedication of James Clark Stone House Ohio Historical Marker set for Sunday, Sept. 16, at 2 p.m.**



Don Perry from the Anderson Township Historical Society is a descendant of pioneer James Clark. He stands at Clark's gravestone at the Clough Baptist Church Cemetery off Bridges Road.

The current vice president of the Anderson Township Historical Society, Don Perry, is a descendant of the James Clark family. "James Clark was one of the many early Anderson Township settlers who made incredible sacrifices and took risks to establish a new life and community here," Perry noted. "Like many others, he faced many obstacles and through hard work and intelligence helped make Anderson what it is today." James Clark is Perry's paternal fourth great-grandfather.

A journal of Clark's family adventure has been preserved and is housed at the Cincinnati History Library and the Museum Center. Anderson Township has a printout of the text of the diary online. Go to [AndersonTownship.org](http://AndersonTownship.org) and type in the key word: diary.

Enjoy a brief video created by Anderson Township about the James Clark Stone House and its owner by going to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oTNHa98O8SI>.



## History Room's Reminder Echoes Anderson's Fertile Past

Turpin corn crib from ca. 1840 preserved in reconstructed display

Today we may enjoy corn-on-the-cob or our daily frosted flakes without ever thinking about the many decades that corn was a major crop in Anderson Township. The crop supplied food for people and livestock, was distilled into alcohol, and provided a major revenue source for local residents.

A dramatic reminder of the township's agricultural past is the reconstructed portion of a historical corn crib in the History Room at Anderson Center. One of the largest land owners of the early settlement days was Philip Turpin (1775-1834) from Virginia, who owned a 1,000-acre tract along the Little Miami River. He moved west in 1797 and first lived in Kentucky, coming over to the township to manage his fields that were planted with corn by 1800. He then built a large brick home on his land here, overlooking the Little Miami River on north side of what is today's Ohio Route 32 just east of Clough Pike.

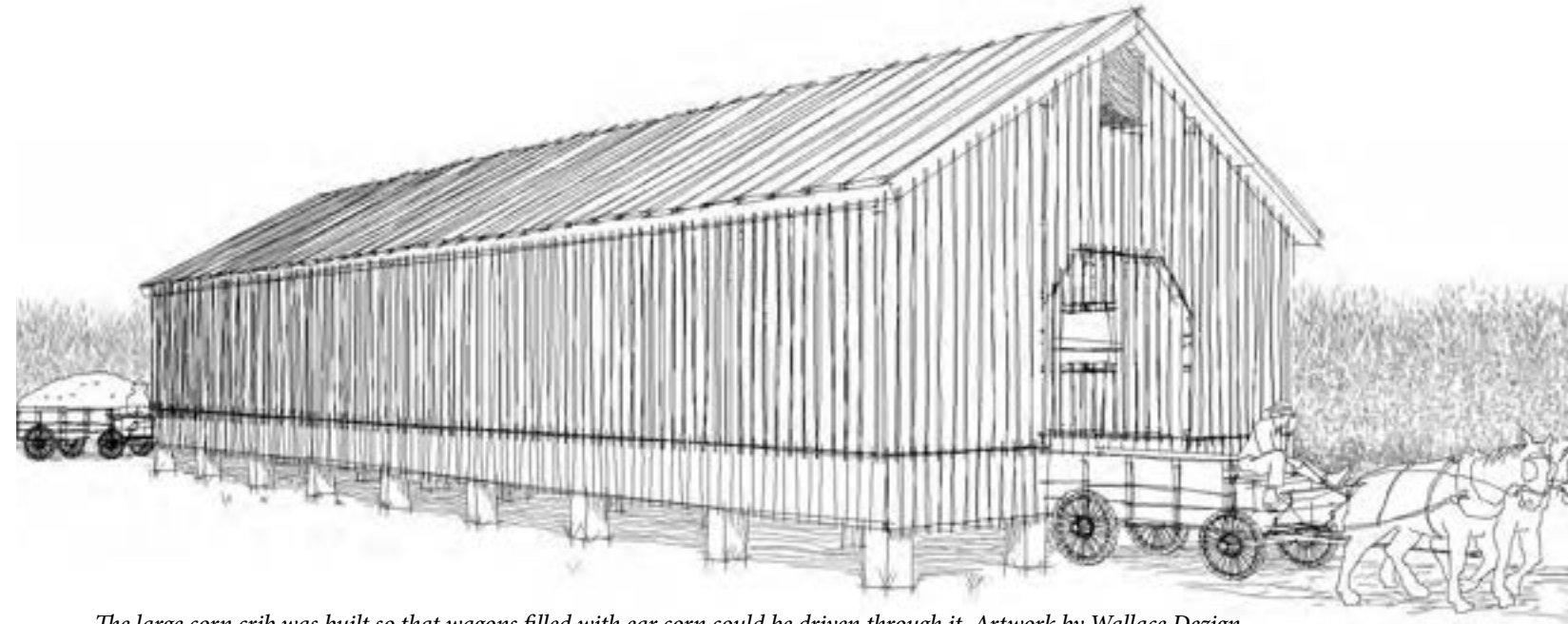
Philip Turpin's sons Ebenezer S. (1808-1879), Edward J. (1814-1886) and Aaron F. (1827-1851) and their descendants continued to farm the Turpin land. Corn was a crop that grew well in the bottom land along the river. The Turpins operated a mill along the Little Miami and a distillery on Clough Pike. In about 1840 the Turpins built at least two large corn cribs of sawn sycamore from nearby large old trees. The cribs were built to dry and store ear corn, which is corn left on the cob after the husks have been removed. The corn could be stored until used to feed livestock, ground into cornmeal or sold when corn prices were high.

Agricultural census schedules from 1850, 1860 and 1870 show us the amounts of corn grown here in the mid-19th century. The 1850 census recorded 194,430 bushels produced on 228 Anderson farms; 1860 recorded 213,965 bushels on 308 farms and 1870 recorded 174,505 bushels on 336 farms. Although almost every farm raised some corn, the Turpin farms were the large producers: 30,000 bushels of corn in 1850; 25,000 bushels in 1860 and 8,000 bushels in 1870. Yields of corn at that time were about 25 bushels per acre.

After a major flood in 1883, the Turpins moved one corn crib to higher ground south of Route 32 (Batavia Road) into the triangular intersection with Clough Pike. It was assembled on creek rock piers and massive beams. This corn crib remained dry even during the 1937 flood and was in use for many decades. In 1994, the Anderson Township Greenspace program purchased 104 acres including this corn crib from a Turpin descendant. Although the crib was in disrepair, it was a fascinating reminder of past farming practices. Anderson Township Trustees encouraged salvaging parts of the structure for display in the History Room.

Today the corn crib's sycamore wood that was likely growing when George Washington was president frames the History Room. The designers of the room, Charlie Wallace and Tom Brown, created an illustrated display that shows how the corn crib was used.

*Images from the Anderson Center History Room and collections of the Anderson Township Historical Society. Text by Janet Heywood, research chair, Anderson Township Historical Society.*



*The large corn crib was built so that wagons filled with ear corn could be driven through it. Artwork by Wallace DeZign.*



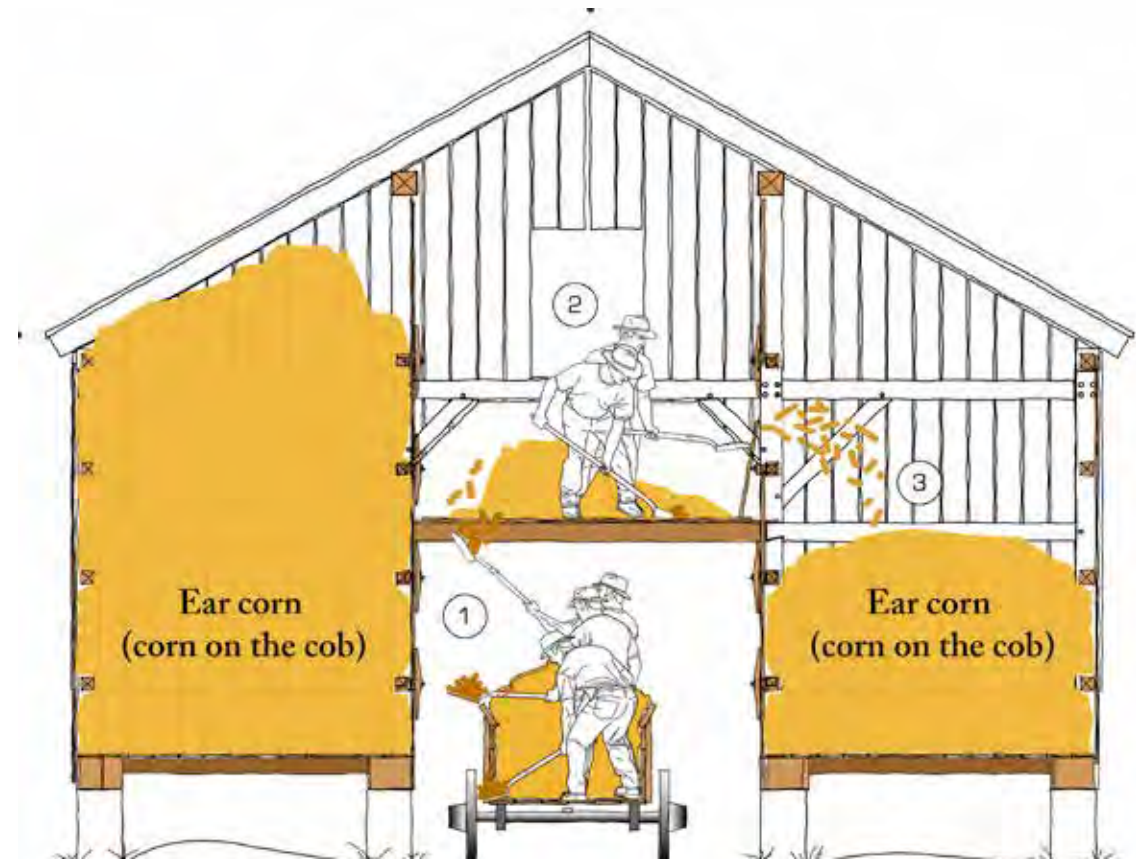
*View of the corn crib in September 2007. When in use, it held about 7,000-9,000 bushels of ear corn. About 25 percent of the crib was salvaged for use in the History Room.*



*This interior photo from 2007 shows the post-and-beam structure of the crib, using one-inch in diameter hand-carved pegs.*



*The construction details of the original crib are on display in the History Room.*



*In the corn crib, the ear corn was shoveled out of the wagons and up into two floors of drying and storage spaces. Artwork by Wallace DeZign.*

## Remembering Effects of Great Flood of 1937 in Anderson

When the proverbial “April showers bring May flowers” rhyme is remembered, also recalled may be stories of disastrous floods brought by heavy winter and spring rains. Many longtime Anderson families have a scrapbook or a collection of newspaper clippings about the great flood of 1937. The Ohio River flooded from West Virginia to Cairo, Illinois. Here the Ohio River and tributaries such as the Little Miami River climbed out of their banks, flooding about one-sixth of Hamilton County. More than 100,000 people were driven from their homes in Greater Cincinnati. Property damage was estimated in excess of \$25 million, which is more than \$245 million in today’s currency.

**During the height of the flood, Coney Island was covered; only the tops of the Wildcat roller coaster and a few buildings could be seen.**

Anderson Township was cut off from the rest of Hamilton County as the waters rose and closed all the connecting bridges over the Little Miami River. On January 21, 1937, water poured over the Beechmont Levee closing the main highway, uprooting telegraph and telephone poles, breaking the gas main and carrying away the electrical wire standards. The Ohio River reached its highest point in recorded history with a crest at 79.99 feet in Cincinnati on January 26, 1937. The photos on these pages were taken by township residents showing the flood’s effects in the Anderson area.

After the Cincinnati waterworks and power plants were inundated, all electric power and water were turned off except for limited periods for almost two weeks. Anderson School was closed from January 25 to February 8. The Cincinnati Automobile Club published a map showing a 69-mile detour necessary to travel from Cincinnati to Mt. Washington.

Low areas in Newtown, California and the Ohio riverfront area of the township were completely submerged. Residents were evacuated. Many buildings in these areas were torn from their foundations and swept away. Some 200 refugees were housed at Mt. Washington School and then moved to Anderson School when a lack of electricity stopped the heating system. Thirty families were cared for at the American Legion Hall on Clough Pike (now Clough Crossings Restaurant).

During the height of the flood, Coney Island was covered; only the tops of the Wildcat roller coaster and a few buildings could be seen. Coney Island faced enormous cleanup and repair work after the waters receded. Reports are that it took some 200 workers more than four weeks to clean up the grounds. The popular Wildcat ride was repaired and upgraded; some new buildings were needed.

Over the decades since 1937, the building of dams and locks and the installation of floodwalls, levies and pumping stations have reduced and contained the effects of river flooding. Residents, however, are very mindful that times of heavy rainfall can lead dangerous flooded roadways not only near the major rivers but also near the many creeks of the township.

*Images from the collections of the Anderson Township Historical Society.  
Text by Janet Heywood, research chair, Anderson Township Historical Society.*



Looking down a main road in Newtown on January 27, 1937. Diary entry said about view: “Houses were upset and covered with water. Newtown was almost washed away. Pitiful sights everywhere.”



This photo illustrates the destruction of homes and businesses in California, Ohio, during the 1937 flood.



Entrance of Coney Island as the flood waters were receding.



Most of the Newtown area was under water in January 1937.



As far as one could travel on Five Mile Road heading toward Kellogg Avenue without using a boat, January 1937.



View looking west toward the Kellogg Avenue bridge over the Little Miami River, January 1937.



View of Coney's entrance showing some of the flood debris left behind.



After the flood waters dropped, travel was restored across what is now called the Beechmont Levee along Lunken Airport. The image shows some of the flood damage. It is said that the 1937 flood gave rise to the airport's nickname “Sunken Lunken” and made clear the need for a new airport on higher ground.

# HISTORY

## Legacy Signs Take Viewers on Well-Traveled Routes in History



As lasting remembrances of the celebration of the 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Anderson Township in 2018, Anderson Township has erected three legacy panels installed outdoors at public locations.

In the background on each of the large two-sided panels are sections of a Department of the Interior U.S. Geological Survey map (1914 edition) showing the topography, roads and buildings of the time. The panels include nearly 100 illustrations recalling the early history of the township as well as highlighting more recent developments.

Viewers may wish to make special trips to see each of the panels or perhaps just pause to notice a highlight or two. One panel is at the corner of Clough Pike and Hunley near the historic James Clark Stone House, one is in the traffic circle at Anderson Towne Center between Bar Louie and the AMC Dine-In Theatre, and one is along the main path at Kellogg Park just above the parking lot (6701 Kellogg Ave.). These three locations were chosen because they are well-traveled routes in today's Anderson that also were major pathways through the area in the past.

**THE CLOUGH PIKE SIGN** includes a portrait of Richard Clough Anderson (1750-1826), surveyor general of the Virginia Military District, land between the Little Miami and Scioto rivers awarded to Virginia after the Revolutionary War. Anderson set up his office in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1784. Anderson Township was the only portion of the county that was part of the military district.

The township, Clough Creek and Clough Pike were named for the surveyor general. Illustrations on the sign also recall the work of surveyor Ichabod Benton Miller who laid out the road along the creek in 1805. The permanent displays include images of the families who over the decades lived in the Miller-Leuser

Log House that Miller built on 440 acres of land bought in 1796. Alongside these images are farms and families of the fertile Clough Creek area, plus illustrations of businesses, churches and schools.

**THE BEECHMONT AVENUE DISPLAY** recalls the many decades of development of this major roadway and significant place of commerce. Illustrations help viewers appreciate the changes in Beechmont from its days as a dirt road once part of the privately-owned Ohio Turnpike, to a narrow roadway with the IRT railway track running alongside it, which has evolved into today's multi-lane thoroughfare. Panel images trace the development of the area with its shops, churches, schools, restaurants and businesses.

A photo from 1912 shows what today's busy Beechmont and Eight Mile Road intersection looked like when a young Harold Z. Maddux was trying out his new bicycle in the crossroads. Maddux (1898-1995) grew up to be a teacher and principal in the Forest Hills schools. Maddux Elementary School is named in his honor.

**THE KELLOGG AVENUE PERMANENT SIGN** depicts the wide variety of activities found along the scenic riverfront from today and yesteryear. Images detail the area's role as farmland and an important transportation route in the past. They also reveal growth as an entertainment destination as Coney Island, River Downs (now Belterra Park), River bend and public parks have developed and changed over the decades.

*The legacy signs were funded by the non-profit Anderson Township Betterment Commission and designed by Wallace Design. Images and information were drawn from the records of the township and from the collections of the Anderson Township Historical Society. View all signs online at [AndersonTownship.org/225](http://AndersonTownship.org/225).*

*Text by Janet Heywood, research chair, Anderson Township Historical Society.*

JULY 2019

## HISTORY NOTES

## Historic Sites Chronicled by Local Explorer

In 1960 a young Mt. Washington resident named Don Bogosian took his passion for hiking along the Little Miami woods and turned it into an endearing collection of information. His explorations inspired two books and the creation of a one-of-a-kind hand-drawn map of Anderson Township's historic and prehistoric sites.

Bogosian started collecting information mostly in the woods along the Little Miami and Ohio rivers. He would hear stories about a historic site that someone had seen and he would hike, ride a bike or take a canoe to a location and take notes on what he observed.

Everything from old building foundations, remnants of forgotten railroads and trails to early Native American ceremonial and village sites was discovered in his travels.

Notes and thorough research in books about previous archaeological surveys of Hamilton County and Anderson Township helped him tie the academic research to his first-person observations.

In 1967, Bogosian had been attending the Mt. Washington Centennial celebrations. Mt. Washington residents led by Marjorie Frame, Stephen Smalley and others began the formation of the Anderson Township Historical Society.

Bogosian soon joined the newly formed society so he could share his love for history and the information he had been collecting.

Bogosian overheard a comment from someone in the community proclaiming that, "There are no significant archaeological sites in Anderson Township."

He knew otherwise. He went to his new friends in the society and met with members of the Little Miami Preservation Society and shared his handwritten notes and map sketches.

The members of both the Anderson Township Historical Society and the Little Miami Preservation Society encouraged Bogosian to formally make his map and consolidate the information into a booklet entitled "Some Historic Sites on the Lower Little Miami River."

The actual process of making the map took six months matching sketches and notes to a municipal map created by the Regional Planning Commission of Hamilton County, Ohio.

That booklet sold in 1970 at one of the Anderson Township Historical Society's early Country Store events. It went out of print in 1990. A few digital scans are available through the society.

The original hand-drawn map has remained with Bogosian. A version that was created on an old blue line architectural map was stored at the society's offices. For the most part it remained a hidden treasure in the society's collection.

During a recent examination of society archives, the map was rediscovered. With the recent archaeological exploration along the Little Miami Scenic Trail at the Turpin dig site, there is renewed interest in this 54-year-old map.

November 2021

The society's map was fading due to the nature of the copy technology used in the early 1970s. The original map will be scanned at high resolution so the historical society can preserve the information and also print a full size copy of the map to display at the history room.

For more information and images from Bogosian's book visit [www.andersontownshiphistoricalsociety.org](http://www.andersontownshiphistoricalsociety.org).



*Don Bogosian in the Anderson Township History Room with a map he created of Anderson's historic and prehistoric sites that he personally visited.*



*Details of the hand-drawn map pinpointing historic and prehistoric sites in Anderson.*

*Text and photos by Nick Greisd, Anderson Township Historical Society's Research Chair*

# HISTORY

## Some of Anderson's First Vehicles, Owned with Pride

In January 1933, the *Cincinnati Enquirer* announced the Cincinnati Auto Show opening at Music Hall, praising the skills of modern designers and builders. The article noted that it was less than a quarter of a century since the first automobiles appeared on our streets and remembered the days when car tires were much like bicycle tires, lights were gas not electricity and the only starter was a strong right arm. Fortunately, some proud Anderson Township owners of the earliest generation of vehicles had photographs taken.

Douglas Sheldon (1850-1931), who owned a hardware store on Ohio Pike (today's 7721 Beechmont), purchased an International truck and offered delivery service as early as 1913. William Emerson Ayer (1893-1936) opened an early service station for the new machines on the south side of today's Beechmont. In 1916, he also opened a Ford dealership, the Ayer Motor Car Company, near today's corner of Beechmont and Wolfangel. The W. A. Smith Ice & Coal Company in California, Ohio, was offering truck deliveries by 1918.

In 1911, the Thomas Mathews family purchased their car from Sears and Roebuck. Family legend is that it stayed in use until 1923. An early image of Ohio Pike shows a Ford Model T with a 1915 license plate near the Van Johnson home posed with one of Johnson sisters at the steering wheel. Off in the distance the road runs through fields where today would be seen the intersection of Beechmont and Five Mile. It is said that Model T had wheels 52 inches apart, the same as many wagons of the time so that cars could travel on the same ruts in the roads.

The Coney Island Racetrack operated in the summer seasons of 1925 and 1926 and attracted huge crowds for horse racing. Many attendees arrived in their own automobiles necessitating the need for a new development - parking lots!

The number of motor vehicle registrations in Ohio was 10,644 in 1908, the first year of statewide required registration. Ohio first required driver's licenses in 1935. Today, Ohio has nearly 8,794,000 licensed drivers and it is hard to imagine our cities and countryside without automobiles and trucks. But think of the changes in the last century. Will future generations smile at the images of the vehicles of our day?

*Images from the collections of the Anderson Township Historical Society. Text by Janet Heywood, research chair, Anderson Township Historical Society.*



*A. E. Jewett of Newtown traveling across a local railroad bridge in his Atlas automobile in a photo dated 1916. Atlas vehicles were produced in Massachusetts from 1907 to about 1913. One of the models was a touring car with the driver on the right-hand side.*



*William A. Smith at the wheel of his Ice & Coal Company delivery truck in about 1918. The truck had a chain drive, solid tires and side curtains.*



*Coney Island Racetrack, photo from summer season of 1925 or 1926. Later in the 1930s the horse racing track reopened and was known as River Downs. Today it is the site of Belterra Park. Notice the number of parked cars.*



*The Thomas Mathews family in their car that they bought in 1911 and kept in use to 1923.*



*In 1913 Douglas Sheldon stands in front of his hardware store on what would be 7721 Beechmont Ave. today. He drove a modern International Harvester delivery truck.*



*The Ayer Motor Company once on today's Beechmont at the intersection with Wolfangel Road. William Emerson Ayer had opened a service station on the south side of the road in about 1910. In 1916 he opened the dealership handling Ford cars, trucks and tractors on the north side of the street.*



*Ford Model T, Ohio 1915 license plate, with Johnson sisters and friends. They are parked along today's Beechmont near the intersection with Collinsdale Avenue. Today the fields in the distance are the busy commercial area at Beechmont and Five Mile.*



*Douglas Sheldon's International delivery vehicle in use in 1922 with Theodore Hawkins (1871-1957), who worked with Sheldon for many years. The license plate reads "T34010, Ohio 1922."*

# Anderson School : 'One of the Best Schools ...'



The school buses, privately owned, and their drivers from the 1931 yearbook.



The faculty of the Anderson Township School serving classes from first to 12th grade from the 1931 yearbook.



Staff of the 1931 yearbook published by the senior class with superintendent Robert Wright and principal Florence Bath (seated center first row).

**Ninety years ago, in the school year 1929–30**, the Anderson Township School opened in a new two-story brick building located at what is today the southeast corner of Beechmont and Forest. This building brought the children of the township together in one large facility. It opened with 525 pupils, from first to 11th grade. Nine school buses, privately owned, picked up students. The faculty included a staff of 16 teachers. The school was a major step forward for education in the township.

In 1826 the trustees of Anderson Township organized the local schools into 12 school districts. Over the years some district schools closed and others opened, depending on the neighborhood population of children. These local schoolhouses with one or two teachers offered classes from the first to eighth grade. Today the Clough Crossing Restaurant (6892 Clough Pike) occupies the District 7 School and is a reminder of these early schools. Anderson families who wanted an education beyond the eighth grade for their children had to decide for them to attend high school in Cincinnati or elsewhere.

### Eight schools consolidate

In November 1926, a resolution was passed by the voters of the township to consolidate eight Anderson district schools. In 1927, a bond issue worth \$165,000 (equivalent to more than \$2.433 million today) was passed to build a central school offering classes through high school. The school board purchased nine acres from the Markley estate on Ohio Pike for about \$1,000.

Walker & Norwick, Architects, Dayton, Ohio was chosen to design and supervise the construction of the new school building. *The Dayton Daily News* (April 17, 1927) highlighted the experience of architects George R. Walker and Henry O. Norwick, praising their firm as having designed more than 60 fine modern school buildings, more than any other living Ohio architects. The article pointed out that the little schoolhouse “has had its day and the large two-story, well-arranged building has taken its place.” New buildings were designed to accommodate present use and to provide for future extensions. The article mentioned how community life in rural districts found splendid meeting places in these modern school buildings.

The W. H. Howard Construction Company was selected to build the school. By June 1929, the Board of Education posted notifications calling for proposals for furnishing and installing equipment. The lists included desks for students and teachers, tablet armchairs, office furniture, science and vocational furniture, cafeteria equipment, auditorium chairs, window shades, auditorium and stage drapery, lockers and electric light fixtures.

### First yearbook created in 1930–31

The first senior class of 1930–31 produced the first yearbook, *The Andersonian*. This yearbook included photos of the 18 seniors along with class histories and group photos of the seventh to 11th grades. There were reports of sports including boys’ basketball and girls’ basketball, the student senate, Hi-Y Club, Girl Reserves, Thespian Dramatic Society, the school orchestra, Glee Club, and the monthly school newspaper, *The Lantern*. The first high school commencement was hosted Saturday, May 23, 1931.

Yearbooks, newspaper accounts and many personal stories tell of the decades that the central school at Beechmont and Forest played an important part in community life. The pride expressed by the first graduating class in attending one of the county’s best schools lives on.

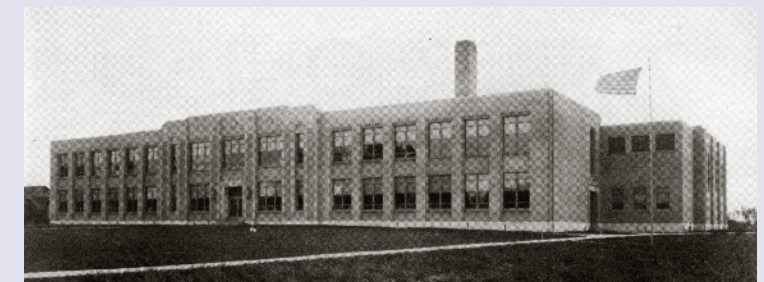
### After 1933

The school building served its purposes well. Additions were constructed: a new cafeteria in 1933, additional classrooms nearby in 1947, an adjacent building for the high school in 1949, a new gymnasium and additional facilities in 1950, more classrooms in 1951 and 1955, and a west wing in 1956. A new Anderson Senior High School was opened in fall 1961. In the 1950-1970s, satellite elementary schools were built in various parts of the township.

Turpin High School opened in 1976. In the 1970s the original Anderson School served as the Anderson Middle School. On September 23, 1979, a celebration honored the 50th anniversary of the building. June 1982 marked the closing of the building as a school. It was used as community center until being sold in 1986 after which it was razed, and a commercial facility took its place.



The central entrance to Anderson Township School with the hallmark lanterns that became a symbol of the school. The high school newspaper for many years was known as The Lantern.



New school building from the 1931 Andersonian yearbook. The two-story building might look simple, but the interior had elaborate arrangements to promote health, comfort, utility and economy. Fresh air, good sanitation, easy facilities for access, along with good lighting and heating, were major features.



The school orchestra pictured in the spring of 1931. The orchestra was recognized as an important part of the school and other community meetings.

Images from the collections of the Anderson Township Historical Society.

Text by Janet Heywood, research chair, Anderson Township Historical Society

# Local Photos, Illustrations Help Tell Us Who We Were Long Ago

Illustrations and photos from many decades ago remind us how the residents of Anderson Township over the years may have spent some of their time. One of the earliest published depictions of Anderson is a drawing of the prosperous farm of Jacob Markley overlooking the Ohio River along today's Five Mile Road.

Take a close look at the details. Two steamboats travel along the river, animals are grazing in the fields, several carriages are travelling along the river road, men are working with teams of horses in the fields and by the large barn, the hillsides are fields planted with crops. You'll see trees growing near the houses and along the bank of the river - a very busy scene some 143 years ago.

Family gatherings were opportunities for memorable images and often photographers would be hired to come to take group portraits. On May 13, 1896, the Durham family hosted a picnic celebration to observe the 100th anniversary of Joshua Durham's arrival in the area. Five children of his descendants Aquilla and Harriet Durham posed for the camera. Newspaper coverage of the day spoke of much feasting and merrymaking. After the William Burnes family moved out to a farm on Birney Lane in 1907, their relatives and friends from Cincinnati came out to visit. Thanks to the interurban railroads that ran through Anderson in the early decades of the 1900s, it was possible for the city dwellers to make a day trip to the countryside as a special event.

*Images from the collections of the Anderson Township Historical Society Text by Janet Heywood, research chair, Anderson Township Historical Society*

By 1900, there were a few stores on today's Beechmont east of the intersection with today's Wolfangel. In 1915, Henry Dunn operated a grocery and tobacco shop there that was famous for his homemade ice cream, a real treat on a summer's day. A photo from about 1918 of William A. Smith of California, Ohio, depicts a new company truck delivering ice and coal. The image appears to have been taken in the summer, so it was likely ice he was planning to deliver to local families.

Churches were centers of community activities year-round. Thanks to a well-preserved photograph, children can be seen gathered for Children's Day in June 1924 at the Clough United Brethren Church at Clough and State. All appear to be in their best Sunday clothes. Doesn't every girl dream of a large white bow for her hair?

As the decades passed, more families owned their own cameras to preserve family events. In about 1930, the Leuser children who lived in the log house on Clough Pike near Bartels Road posed for a graceful image in their front yard. From 1948, a day with a family's young puppies has been preserved. In those days, having a hound dog as a family pet, watchdog and hunting companion was common and homes were waiting for the pups.

Today, thanks to mobile phones and other ways to create images and videos, our lives can be recorded in great detail. Think what insights, treasures and possibly amusement future viewers will find in being able to see how we are living today and surviving the challenging times of spring 2020.



*This handsome illustration was published in 1877 in the Illustrated Atlas of the Upper Ohio River and Valley by the Titus, Simmons & Titus Company of Philadelphia.*



*Harry Dunn at his combination confectionery, tobacco shop and grocery on what is today's Beechmont Avenue was famous for his homemade ice cream.*



*In 1948 James Heywood, his daughters and a neighbor watched new puppies gobble up a meal at their home on Burnes Avenue.*



*Children's Day was celebrated at the Clough United Brethren Church, then at Clough Pike near State Road in June 1924.*



*The Leuser children and friends posed at their log house on Clough Pike in about 1930.*



*The William Burnes family hosted day trips on to their farm in Anderson for their family and friends from Cincinnati in about 1910.*



*William A. Smith offered deliveries of ice and coal.*



*On May 13, 1896 the Durham family celebrated the 100th anniversary of the arrival of their ancestor Joshua Durham in the area. Five children of Aquilla and Harriet Durham posed for the camera. The Cincinnati Enquirer reported that the family celebrated with feasting and merrymaking.*

# Anderson Welcomes Robinway, Friar Tuck and All Things Sherwood Forest in Post-War Boom

**Dramatic growth in housing during 1950-1979 added more than 8,800 new homes to township.**

If you were a long-lived migrating bird who visited Anderson Township in the decades of the 1950s through 1970s, you would have experienced first-hand the dramatic developments as the number of new houses built increased and the population rose. From 1950 to 1979, more than 8,880 new homes were built, compared to some 626 constructed in the decade of the 1940s. (By comparison, 329 homes have been added in Anderson in the last 10 years.)

During Anderson's post-war boom, many farm fields and orchards became clusters of new homes with driveways, sidewalks and well-tended lawns. One of the remarkable residential developments was Sherwood Forest, constructed and sold by the Joe Graue Construction Company.



The symbol of Robin Hood with his bow and arrow was used for Joe Graue's Sherwood Forest development. This is the handsome cover of a full-color brochure explaining some of the house choices available from the Joe Graue Realty Company.

Joseph H. Graue (1921-2003) began building single homes after he returned from naval service in World War II. He acquired financial backing and built houses on streets he named Shangrila and Ticonderoga in honor of carriers on which he served in the Navy.

In September 1956 he acquired 50 acres of what became the 110 acres of Sherwood Forest. His wife Helen suggested finding a name that reflected the many trees on the property. Charley Floyd is said to have suggested Sherwood Forest. Graue's secretary Marjorie Snyder then started naming the streets and house models after characters in the tales of Robin Hood. The first models were shown on September 25, 1957, and more than 3,000 people attended. The houses along Little John Court were sold out in just days.

At that time Robin Hood was not just a character of folk legends; in the mid-1950s a popular TV series "The Adventures of Robin Hood" was produced in England. The U.S. series starred Richard Greene and ran weekly for four seasons.

To locate Sherwood Forest on a current Anderson map, look west of Five Mile and State roads, south of Clough Pike and Bridges Road, east of Berkshire and Paddison and north of Paddison. Street names recall the tales of Robin Hood such as Locksley Drive, Maid Marion Drive, Little John Court, Friar Tuck Lane, Kingsway Court and Robinway Drive.



Joe Graue and his team continued work on building houses in the Sherwood development for some 20 years, leading to more 600 homes built. One brochure from the company illustrated seven model homes. Potential residents could choose from "The Cambridge," which featured four bedrooms and two bathrooms in a split-level home; "The Princess," offering three bedrooms and two baths in a ranch-house style; "The Locksley," a spacious colonial with three bedrooms and two baths; and "The Little John," a two-story colonial with four bedrooms and baths.

Due to the influx and growth of families, the Forest Hills School District built and opened the Sherwood Elementary School on Grantham Way for full operation in the fall of 1970. Thanks to appreciative and caring owners over the decades, the homes of Sherwood Forest in Anderson continue to serve old and new generations of residents.



"The Allan-A-Dale" home appeared in a later brochure illustrated with photographs. It was described as a charming brick ranch with an attached two-car garage. The text mentioned the wood-paneled family room and three bedrooms, two bathrooms and an abundance of closets.



This sketch shows "The Riverdee," a four-bedroom brick two-story colonial home from one of the earlier brochures produced by Graue Realty Company. The home included a two-car garage and was shown with an optional New Orleans balcony.



*This Site* was developed to help residents to a better way of life

Many Sherwood Forest homes and their locations appeared in a large brochure. The development is located roughly west of Five Mile, south of Clough, east of Berkshire and north of Paddison.



The "Sir Richard" model was an imposing two-story colonial, designed for a large or growing family.

Images from the collections of the Anderson Township Historical Society. Text by Janet Heywood, research chair, Anderson Township Historical Society.

# Historic Photo Archive Evolving into Digital Library



With thousands of Anderson Township-based historical items in its care to be enjoyed by the next generation, the Anderson Township Historical Society has taken a big step forward in safeguarding these important artifacts.

The effort to protect local information and artifacts has been ongoing since 1968. In those five decades since its inception, Anderson Township Historical Society members have provided thousands of hours of effort preserving and indexing innumerable donated historical documents, photographs and genealogy records.

However, in recent years some members of the society recognized they were not current on the most updated preservation methods, thus making it difficult to find or share all the snippets of information and photos that flowed into the organization's possession.

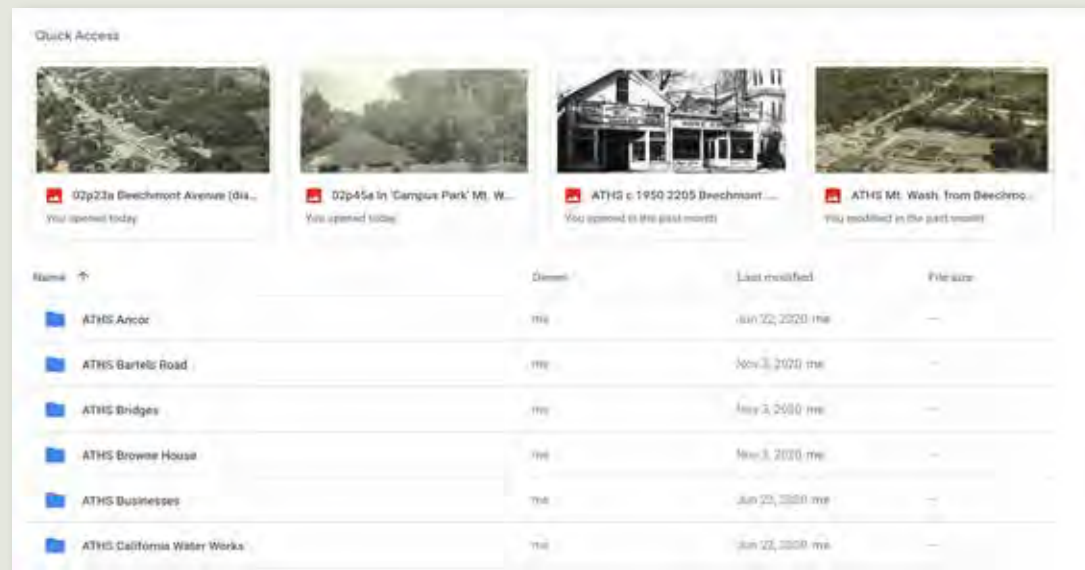
In early 2020, the society's research chair Janet Heywood met with board trustee Nick Gressle and Lesley Gressle to discuss organization of the images into a digital library. The idea was to create a searchable database that could be accessed from home computers and mobile devices.

According to Nick, it was important this digital library also easily cross references the actual images in the physical collection should researchers wish to access hard copies for the society's print and book projects and for other researchers to use.

In 2020, image binders were gathered for scanning at high resolution. In some cases, the images were digitally repaired, eliminating issues caused due to passage of time.

In the past 12 months, the historical society has organized more than 800 high resolution images into easily-searchable categories. He anticipates the library could be open mid-year for individuals to enjoy.

Organizers learned as they dug into the material available. While scanning and cataloguing all of the architectural structure images, it was evident that many of these structures of the past were gone today. Thus, organizers added an additional wing of the digital library with the help of Google Maps. Images that the society has on file with an



**Categories page:** This is an example of the categories that will be in the Anderson Township Digital Library. Everything from images of structures to early settlers of the area will be available to review and download.

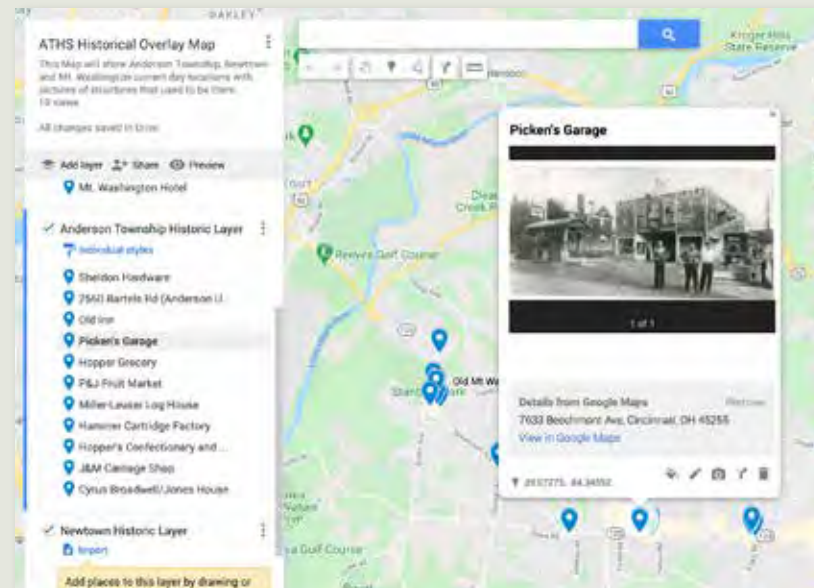


**Wedding 1912:** Users can also zoom in to see the detail in the images from the Anderson Township Historical Society. This one is from a 1912 wedding.

address are now being overlaid on a current day digital map. This will show users where a building was and what is now in its place.

Janet Heywood, who began this project, passed away in January of 2021 after a brief illness. (See sidebar information on Janet Heywood.) "The project she started is still in progress and will be a wonderful tool for future students and historians alike," noted President Don Perry.

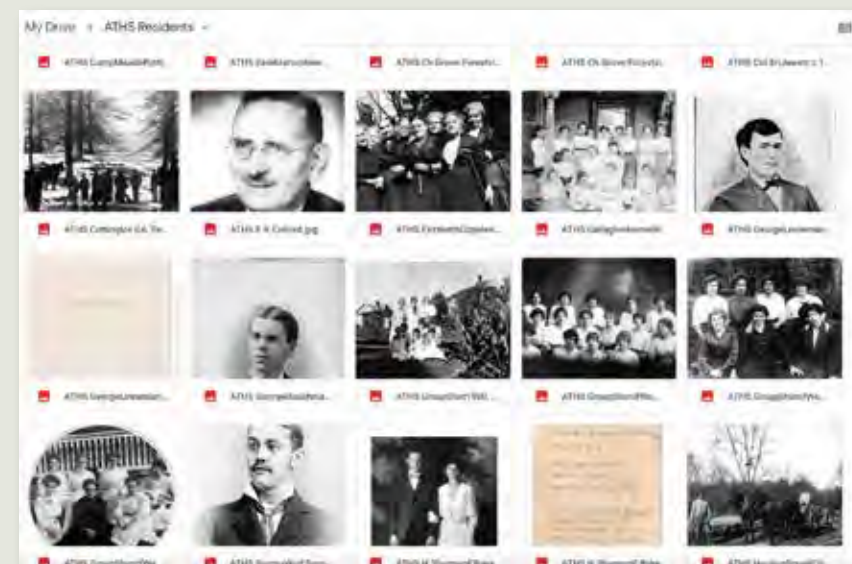
The digital library will be available for use for members-only at first. A current membership to the Anderson Township Historical Society is \$10 a year, which would provide digital library access. For more information go to [AndersonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org](http://AndersonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org).



**Map overlay:** The library also will include a Google Maps feature where images of properties long gone can be overlaid onto the current day map of the area.



**Broadwell House:** Once a user enters a category, they will find high-resolution images. This is an example of the historic Cyrus Broadwell Jones Home.



**Residents category:** The residents category has images of some of the early settlers of the area dating back to the 1800s.

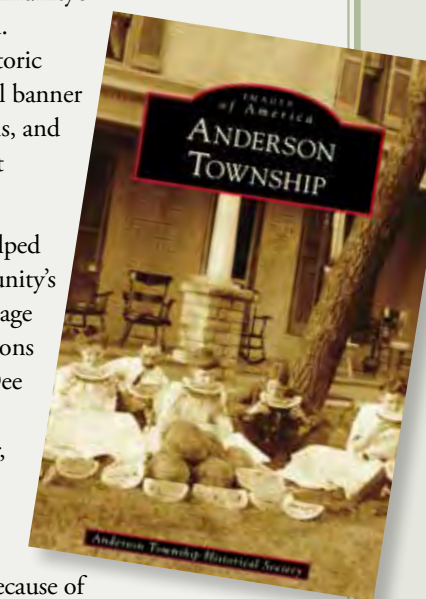
## Remembering 'History Notes' Author



**JANET HEYWOOD**, the longtime author and researcher who made Anderson Township history come to life on the pages of this newsletter, died January 16, 2021.

For the last six years she shared historic photos from the Anderson Township Historical Society's collection and little-known information with *Anderson Insights* readers about important places, interesting culture and long-lost families who called this area home. She also was the writer for the township's Facebook page "Throw Back Thursday" stories each week since its debut in 2015. As part of her work with the historical society, Heywood also organized and wrote the Images of America "Anderson Township" book just in time for the community's 225<sup>th</sup> celebration. She supplied historic expertise on local banner commemorations, and other 225<sup>th</sup> event observations.

"Janet simply helped keep our community's history and heritage alive for generations to come," said Dee Stone, township trustee vice chair, and "our community is stronger and more cohesive because of her efforts."



# Summertime Seen Through the Lens of History

A photo collage inspired by the variety of experiences through the past decades of Anderson Township residents in summer is brought to you by the Anderson Township Historical Society. Learn more at their new website at [AndersonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org](http://AndersonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org).



Island Queen ferry unloading at Coney Island



Ebersole family eating watermelon



PEP Club circa 1925



July 4th celebration at "Campus Park" in 1922



Mt. Washington July 4th Parade - 1922



Holiday parade



Ferris wheel at Coney Island circa 1920

## Tour Local Historic Log House



Tour the Miller-Leuser Log House at 6550 Clough Pike during open houses sponsored by the Anderson Township Historical Society. The log house is open from 1 to 4 p.m. on the first and third Sundays of the month through October.

Visit the oldest home in the township and one of the very few remaining houses built by the pioneers who settled in the Ohio River valley in the late 1790s. Docents available inside the log house will explain the old interesting tools and how they helped the settlers thrive in the early wilderness.

Free tours are offered by volunteers from the society who share historical information about the area and its pioneer past. Visit the barn with an extensive collection of early farm equipment, a two-seater outhouse and learn about Anderson's farming heritage. Volunteer gardeners maintain the Memory Garden and other areas around the house and barn. For more information on the historical society's new website, visit [andersontownshiphistoricalsociety.org](http://andersontownshiphistoricalsociety.org).

## Township History Room Reopens

The History Room at Anderson Center has reopened. Community history from Native peoples to the present is displayed at this special room with artifacts, hands-on displays and more.

The room is open from 1-4 p.m. the second and fourth Sundays of the month.



Anderson Township History Room at Anderson Center

## Five Mile Chapel: Church With No Congregation Still Stands

Tucked along the banks of the Five Mile Creek sits the historic Five Mile Chapel, one of Anderson Township's oldest standing structures.

Constructed in 1844, the stone building is still open every day, cared for by the volunteers from the Five Mile Chapel Society, Inc. Although without a congregation for more than 50 years, the church is maintained by this dedicated group of volunteers who preserve and protect the non-denominational facility through each season.



Early photo of Five Mile Chapel



Five Mile Chapel

Built of native stone found in the area, the structure on Five Mile Road is remarkably intact, considering it has not been in regular use since 1963. This beautiful church once housed one of the first United Brethren in Christ churches built in the area. Early settler Jacob Markley donated the land and along with others gathered stone from the creek and surrounding hills in the Five Mile Valley and built the structure by hand. In its later years the church was used by a congregation from the Evangelical United Brethren Church.

A hilly graveyard graces the side of the church, filled with names that live on in Anderson Township. On Markley's gravestone, visitors view a serious look at one of the founders of the congregation, created by sculptor Thomas O'Hare. The stone is signed by O'Hare.

It is easy to drive by Five Mile Chapel and never see it. Hidden away behind trees on the banks of the creek, the church is located between Birney Lane and Ayers Road at 6977 Five Mile Road. A Five Mile Chapel sign hangs near a bridge on the south side of Five Mile Road.

Members of the Five Mile Chapel Society open the facility for weddings, baptisms and other events. The site was listed on the National Registry of Historic Places in 1978. Learn more at [fivemilechapel.org](http://fivemilechapel.org).



Inside Five Mile Chapel



Jacob Markley headstone



Photos courtesy of the Five Mile Chapel Society and the Anderson Township Historical Society.

## Turpin Dig Returns in May; Project Seeks Volunteers

The archeological dig that started last summer on Anderson Township Greenspace on the former Turpin homestead site resumes this year. The Miami Valley Recollection and Reconnection project will be in full swing mid-May through mid-June.

Plans for the dig include re-excavations at the Turpin site as well as engaging visitors with an improved and expanded augmented reality app prototype.

According to Dr. Rob Cook from The Ohio State University, this year students from Ohio State and Indiana University, along with staff and interns from the Cincinnati Museum Center, will be working at the site. Community volunteers are also encouraged to get involved in the field and lab work.

"Work will continue in the area where we found part of a wall-trench house last summer as well as in one of the Fort Ancient villages located in the western part of the site," Cook said. "At the end of the upcoming season, we hope to have relocated a total of four wall-trench houses on



either side of each of these villages so that we can better understand their overall composition and construction dates."

Further excavations in the historic Turpin family homestead area will continue, with a focus on the main house itself and surrounding areas. Organizers hope to locate a trash dump to be able to understand change over time from the late 18<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Cook said.

The augmented reality additions will include at least one more of the Fort Ancient villages, Cook noted. "This will provide a great opportunity to see both where houses were as well as ones we are looking for at the same time," he said. "This technology is a wonderful way to more fully experience this important site."

Anderson Township is partnering with the Recollection and Reconnection project by offering a variety of support. "We're in a somewhat unique position where residents can watch as Anderson's history is unearthed before their eyes," noted Township Administrator Vicky Earhart. "For some, that history is very personal, for others, it's a way to understand how our past helped shape the community that we hold dear today."

For more information about the project, visit: [www.facebook.com/MVRR.OhioArcheology](http://www.facebook.com/MVRR.OhioArcheology). To sign up to volunteer, send a note to: [miamivalleyrecollections@gmail.com](mailto:miamivalleyrecollections@gmail.com).



## Log House Open Houses Scheduled for May-October



The Anderson Township Historical Society opens the historic Miller-Leuser Log House for visitors from 1 to 4 p.m. on the first and third Sundays in May through October.

The Miller-Leuser Log House is at 6550 Clough Pike, just east of Bartels Road. During the open houses, docents from the historical society are on hand to share history and details about the structure. The log home is one of the few buildings remaining in Anderson Township from early pioneer days.

# History Room Spans Centuries with Lore, Artifacts



*The Anderson Township History Room in Anderson Center*

To truly appreciate a place, it helps to know its history. And what better place to learn about Anderson Township than at our very own township History Room?

Located in the lower level of Anderson Center, 7850 Five Mile Road, the room is a collaborative effort between Anderson Township and the Anderson Township Historical Society. From its prehistoric roots, to its significance in the story of America's western expansion, to more recent cultural developments, the History Room provides a unique panoramic look into our past.

Ever wonder how Anderson Township got its name? Are you curious about old buildings or how the area looked compared to today? The answers are here in words and photos. Of special interest to all visitors are the artifacts on display donated by local residents, including arrowheads and pottery fragments. Modern items include photos and objects from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

**If your interest in our township's history has been piqued, be sure to check out some of these items found in the collection:**

**Corn Crib:** A portion of a large corn crib constructed in the early 1830s and later moved in 1884 to the corner of Clough Pike and S.R. 32 frames part of the History Room. The corn crib represents the agricultural connections of the community's heritage from 1793 to the 1920s.

**Four televisions** from the 1940s to the 1960s: As the television era grew and became one of the defining technologies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, four television sets in the room reveal how these were quickly modified in the span of 20 years.



*The History Room includes the background story of a local corn crib.*



*Four television sets reflect changes in technology.*



*A long rifle owned by the John Bridges family is on display at the History Room.*

**Long Rifle:** On display is a long rifle owned by the family of John Bridges, the first European settler in the area. He built a log cabin and settled here when the Garrard/Martin group arrived on December 23, 1790 and first settled on the banks of the Little Miami River off today's Elstun Road.

**Arrowhead Collection and Prehistoric Artifacts:** The first residents of Anderson Township were the Native Americans. The collection includes a variety of Indian stone tools and other items including projectile points, grooved and ungrooved axes, drills, scrapers, blades, game balls, pottery and effigy forms. Fluted points were used as a spear point for hunting big game by the earliest Paleo-Indians 12,000 years ago.

**Log Dog:** This sawing tool used to secure logs in place probably is from 1800 to the 1900s. It was used to move heavy round logs in rivers and lumber mills.

**Slates and Desks:** To the delight of younger school children visiting the history room, school desks and slate tablets for lesson-learning are available for hands-on exploration. The items are from the school days of the late 1800s and early 1900s before pencils and paper were used.

**Replica of Ancient Turpin Stone Frog Pipe:** A plaster cast replica of a stone pipe found in Anderson Township by the Turpin family in the late 1800s is on display in the history room. The original frog pipe was said to be traced to the middle Fort Ancient period, A.D. 1200-1400 and is housed at the Cincinnati Museum Center.

**Real Detective Magazine:** A 1957 grocery store ambush on Beechmont Avenue at the Thriftway Supermarket turned deadly for two safecrackers. The true crime magazine detailing this bold heist, and a recount of the stakeout of Hamilton County Sheriff's deputies that interrupted this unlawful act, is available for perusing.

When you visit, chances are you'll find your knowledge of Anderson Township expanded and your appreciation for this bustling community greatly enhanced. And that's what history is all about.

The Anderson Township History Room is open the second and fourth Sundays of the month from 1-4 p.m. Admission is free and docents are available to discuss items in the room.

*Text by Tom Brown; photos courtesy of the Anderson Township Historical Society.*



*Students in the History to Schools program enjoy artifacts in the History Room.*

# Township Names Speak of the Not Too Distant Past

*Sweetwine, Forestville, Cherry Grove, Fruit Hill looked different a century ago, but their names live on.*



Cherry Grove School-southwest corner Eight Mile and Beechmont



Hammer Carriage Shop-near Eight Mile and Beechmont in the Cherry Grove area

“Old Timers” of Anderson Township will remember a township that looked far different from the bustling suburban community we know today.



Ohio Pike at Burney Lane in Cedar Point

Even as recently as the 1950s, as long-time residents may recall, Anderson’s past was rooted in farming. Small reminders of that past are still around—a cemetery here, an old house there, or perhaps an old barn. But other telltale signs exist if one knows where to look.

Take, for example, your cell phone. Have you ever received a local call and the name “Fruit Hill” appeared on the screen? That name, as well as other names like Sweetwine, Forestville and Cherry Grove, harken back to farming outposts in the 1800s when locally grown fruits and vegetables sustained the people and the businesses that served them and were transported to markets in Cincinnati.

## Sweetwine

The area of Sweetwine was described in the *Rand McNally Atlas* of 1895 as having a post office but no railroad service. The Sweet Wine post office was along the Ohio River, near where Five Mile intersects Kellogg Road today. The surrounding country was “well adapted to the growing of grapes” and large quantities were shipped from Sweetwine. Sweetwine Lodge at Woodland Mound Park is a reminder of that era.

## Forestville

According to the 1895 *Rand McNally Atlas*, the estimated population of Forestville, located near today’s intersection of Beechmont and Wolfangel, was 71 people. The Forestville post office was in a general store further out Ohio Pike, 12 miles east of Downtown Cincinnati. The area was known for “large quantities of fruits, berries, and vegetables, which found ready sale in the Cincinnati market.”



Kilduff General Store in Cedar Point



Fruit Hill Store-Clem and Mont Davis, 1925, near Beechmont and Salem



Samuel Hopper’s Grocery Store and post office in Forestville



Forest House Hotel near Wolfangel and Beechmont in Forestville

## Cherry Grove

On the eastern edge of the township, the Cherry Grove post office operated, 13 miles from Downtown Cincinnati. It was centered at today’s corner of Beechmont and Eight Mile to the Clermont County line. Cherry Grove was described as “beautifully situated and surrounded by rich lands.” Large quantities of fruits, berries and vegetables were raised there also. Presumably cherry trees were grown as well.

## Cedar Point and Cluff Valley

Another area less well known to current township residents was Cedar Point. In 1915, this area consisted of a post office in the general store of John B. Kilduff located on the Cincinnati, Georgetown & Portsmouth Railroad (CG&P) and Ohio Pike, 10 miles east of Cincinnati. Today, this location is known as the corner of Beechmont and Birney Lane. A short distance away was Cluff Valley (Clough Pike). The Cluff post office was in the store of Jacob S. Kuhn, east of today’s Berkshire Road. The 1887 directory described the land as “somewhat hilly but fertile.”

## Fruit Hill

The area of Ohio Pike (Beechmont Avenue) and Salem Road was known as Fruit Hill. Like adjoining locations, it had a post office and the Cincinnati, Georgetown & Portsmouth Railroad ran through it. Similar to all agricultural production in the township, Cincinnati was the primary market for the fruits and vegetables of Fruit Hill farms.

Historic area names are still occasionally referenced, as they are used by the U.S. Census Bureau as “census designated places.” These noted locations, like Mt. Carmel, aren’t incorporated but have been geographic areas referenced for years.

As you travel its roads, think about Anderson Township’s beginnings, and try to imagine the farms and homesteads that dotted the land. Farming communities were small, but their names still carry on, and legacies have helped today’s Anderson Township.

*Text by Tom Brown; photos from the archives of the Anderson Township Historical Society.*

## The Durham Pioneer Family Left its Mark on Anderson

In 1940, local historian and genealogist Marie Dickore wrote an article in the *Cincinnati Times-Star* newspaper about a man named Aquilla Durham. He was a pioneer who farmed and hunted the land of the lower Little Miami River valley just east of today's Village of Newtown. **Although the Durham name is not known by most people living in Anderson Township today, Aquilla lived a remarkable life, and his story is worth knowing.**

Following the Revolutionary War, the Village of Newtown (originally Mercersburg) grew as a result of the flow of people seeking new opportunities in the west. Many were former veterans of the War for Independence and their families, while others were simply ordinary people willing to endure incredible hardships for the hope of a more prosperous life. Aquilla Durham was one of these people. His story represents the story of many others who settled in the Little Miami River Valley and in our township.

In 1722 the Durham family sailed from England to settle in Maryland and raise a family. Among the children was Joshua who, seeing the promise in the newly-opened lands of the Ohio Territory, traveled by flatboat in 1796 with his family, arriving at the mouth of the Little Miami River on the birthday of his 17-year-old son Aquilla.

After investigating the countryside, the Durhams settled on land which was **watered by a stream called Little Dry Run**. It was here that Joshua Durham and his wife erected a cabin and established a farm with the help of their 10 children. The Durham farm originally occupied land that is today Anderson Township's W. M. Johnson Hills Park.

**Over the next few years Joshua's son Aquilla acquired a reputation as an excellent hunter and scout.** Meriwether Lewis and

William Clark were searching for men with such skills as they traveled down the Ohio River in 1804 prior to their exploration of the Louisiana Purchase, and Aquilla was invited to join them. He declined however, citing his pending marriage to Harriet Thompson. According to information from genealogist Dickore, Aquilla continued farming and together he and Harriet raised a family of 10 children.

Numerous stories were told over the years of **Aquilla's adventurous life** by his grandson Samuel. As a hunter, Aquilla excelled. It was said that in one day he shot 13 deer, butchered them, and brought the meat to his home.

During the War of 1812 General William Henry Harrison hired Aquilla Durham to guide his army to engage the British at the fort in Vincennes, Indiana. Aquilla then returned home to drive livestock through the wilderness back to Vincennes to supply the army.

As a farmer Aquilla, like most farmers in the valley, sold wheat and produce in Cincinnati, a three-day round trip, first by pack horses and later by the first covered wagon in the valley. Aquilla died in 1870 at the age of 91.

Unlike some local families like Wolfangle and Markley, there is no street named for the Durhams. However, the family left its mark in other ways. In 1897 Samuel Durham published a book entitled *The Pioneer Settlers of the Lower Little Miami Valley* in which he states: *These pioneer settlers of this western country seemed to have been especially created for the work before them, and they fearlessly undertook it...their trials and hardships seem but a dream to us, we know so little of them.*

But, as he reminds us, with a longing for freedom and with determination, endurance and self-sacrifice, pioneers like his grandparents helped shape the township, the state and the nation.



The Durhams had 10 children, all born in a log cabin on Little Dry Run Road. Five attended the Durham family reunion in 1896. Left to right: Alazanah, Harriet, Winfield, Leander and Thompson.



1938 aerial photo of the estate of W.M. "Mack" Johnson and his wife Marian, now the W. M. Johnson Hills Park. The land was originally the farm of the Durham family.



Aquilla and Harriet Durham, circa 1850s



Marian and Mack Johnson in the doorway of their home MariMac Manor, when he presented the home to his wife as a wedding gift in 1940.

Text by Tom Brown. Photos courtesy of Anderson Township Historical Society and Anderson Park District.

# Interurban Railway in Anderson Innovative, But Short-Lived

Shortly before the turn of the 20th century, a new mode of transportation was introduced that would help move people and products from outlying areas into and out of the burgeoning American cities.

It was called the **interurban railway, an all-electric railway similar to a streetcar** that operated in Midwest cities like Indianapolis, Pittsburgh, St. Louis and Cincinnati.

In Cincinnati, construction of an electric interurban railway did not begin until 1902, due to resistance from streetcar companies in the city. On the eastern side of the city, three lines comprised the Interurban Railway and Terminal Company (IR&T), which led from Cincinnati to Lebanon, New Richmond (along the Ohio River), and to Bethel (following the route of Ohio Pike (Beechmont Avenue)).

The two lines traversed Anderson Township and made it possible for area farmers to more quickly transport produce and for people to more conveniently travel to downtown Cincinnati.

Due to the tight spacing and sharp curves on city streets, the IR&T's cars were smaller than most interurbans in other cities and were equipped with two trolley poles for electrical contact.

For the eastern lines, power was generated at a power station located on Kellogg Avenue across from Coney Island on the east side of Sutton Road. Cars also were stored at a car barn at this location as well. Additional power was generated at substations in Forestville and Amelia.

After branching off of the eastern division at Coney Island, the suburban division of the IR&T progressed up the hill along Sutton Road. Upon reaching Beechmont Avenue, a stub traversed north for a few blocks to serve the Mt. Washington business district. The construction of Kellogg Avenue in the late 1920s and additional changes in the 1950s removed any trace of the route.

This line through Anderson Township to Bethel was in direct competition with another interurban railway, the Cincinnati, Georgetown & Portsmouth Railroad (CG&P).

The CG&P was a steam railroad that had been around since 1877. It served many of the same suburban areas and paralleled the IR&T in many places. In 1902, the CG&P was electrified for passenger service, while continuing steam operations for freight. The company closed in 1935.

While passengers on the IR&T line through Anderson Township to Bethel numbered 337,000 in its peak year, this count was light compared to other lines, and it was abandoned in 1918. The remaining lines to Lebanon and New Richmond were abandoned in 1923 as cars and trucks grew in number.

Nevertheless, the history of this innovative but short-lived mode of transportation is evidence of an expanding city and of growing suburban areas like Anderson Township.

*Text by Tom Brown. Some photos from the collections of Anderson Township Historical Society and Earl Clark.*



*The IR&T Suburban Traction line at stop 43 in Tobasco, looking west along Ohio Pike at the intersection of Mt. Carmel-Tobasco Road, circa 1905. Today this is the middle of the Ohio Pike I-275 interchange. From the collection of Earl Clark.*



*The IR&T trestle at Berkshire Road in Mt. Washington.*



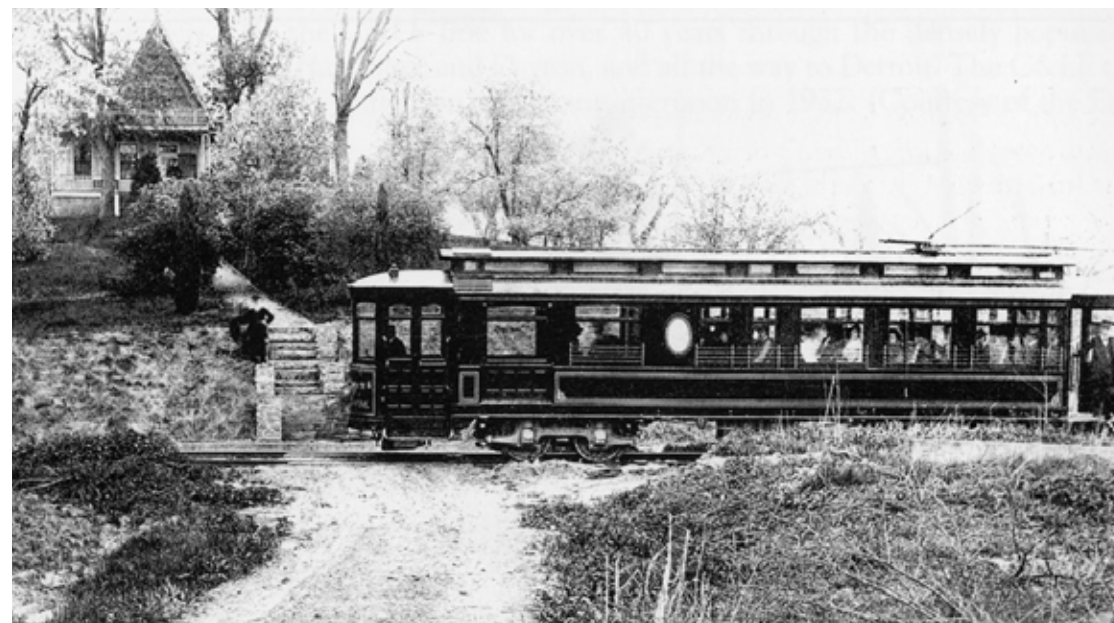
*The car barn stored the interurban trolley cars.*



*Coney Island was a popular destination point for both the IR&T and the CG&P.*



*Handbill from the early 1900s*



*This IR&T Eastern division car stopped at the foot of Eight Mile Road and Kellogg Avenue in 1903. From the collection of Earl Clark.*



*Anderson Township Depot*



*The IR&T power station and car barn located on the west side of Sutton Road across from Coney Island. From the Earl Clark collection.*

# HISTORY NOTES

## Francis McCormick-Anderson's Pioneer Preacher

The history of Anderson Township is rooted in the story of the nation following the American Revolution. If you know where to look, that history continues to speak to us today. The story of Rev. Francis McCormick is one that still resonates, and one that can give township residents pride.



The Rev. Francis McCormick

Much of what we know about McCormick comes from Mary Shinn (1885-1970), a township resident and descendant of McCormick. Shinn is pictured with the later Salem Church facility in a photo dated from 1908 on page 9.

As a 17-year-old Virginian, son of a well-to-do Virginia Presbyterian minister and landowner, McCormick stood silently with the Marquis de Lafayette and thousands of other Continental soldiers watching the surrender of Lord Cornwallis to General George Washington at Yorktown. It was 1781.

Young McCormick grew up in a home where the family altar and keeping the Sabbath was an important part of life. However, in a short time his father abandoned religion and built a whiskey distillery. Having grown up “wild and reckless,” he was bigger and stronger than most men at age 23. At that age as he was more than 6 feet tall and 240 pounds. McCormick had earned a reputation as a heavy drinker and “Sabbath breaker.” Soon

however, his marriage to Rebecca Easton and the appearance in Virginia of two Methodist circuit rider preachers would change the course of his life.

Methodism was new to America and, while attracting many, was strongly opposed by others. Along with his father, McCormick vehemently denounced the Methodists as they preached against his lifestyle choices. Although he prohibited his wife from attending their meetings, Rebecca went anyway and returned a “converted” woman. According to McCormick family history, when the young man attended one of the meetings with his wife, he became agitated, angry, and then alarmed. Soon he was convinced that despite his proud service as a soldier under Lafayette during the American Revolution, he was in fact a sinner in need of God’s forgiveness.

Of his experience at a meal held after a preaching service, McCormick said

*I was quite charmed with the love, simplicity and union that prevailed. Surely, thought I, these are the people of God. Yet when the invitation was given, I went home angry. While miserable beyond expression, I went again.*

Eventually, McCormick says, he surrendered himself to God.

*...it appeared to me that all the wickedness I had ever committed stared me in the face.*

*Living in the midst of a hundred relatives, all enemies of the Methodists, how can I stand opposed by such a number. Then it appeared as though I heard a voice. “My spirit shall not always strive with man!” This had such an effect on my mind that I was resolved to make the trial, let consequences be what they might.*

McCormick joined the “Methodist Society” in 1790 and was heavily ridiculed by his family for his “ranting about the sect from over the seas.” His father promised him a farm if he would give up his association with the church; then McCormick was disowned when he refused. Years later however, his dying

father asked his son who had “got religion” to pray for him.

In 1792 McCormick was given a license to preach. He and Rebecca moved to Kentucky in 1795 where the young man hoped to overthrow slavery and whiskey distilling. Two years later they departed Kentucky for Ohio, settling in the Little Miami Valley in the area soon to be named Milford, with a deed for 1,000 acres for services rendered in the War for Independence. He quickly built a cabin which served as his home and as the first Methodist church in the Northwest Territory. He and Rebecca were joined by family from North Carolina and friends from Kentucky, as well as by Rev. Phillip Gatch who had been tarred in Maryland for his Methodist principles.

After nine years, the McCormicks moved to Anderson Township, building a log church in 1810 at the present site of Anderson Hills Church-Salem Campus. The log church was visited by many itinerant preachers and families, some of whom traveled from as far away as 40 miles. The area became a small community which McCormick named “Salem” meaning “peace.”

In 1828 the log church was torn down so a new school and brick church could be built on the site. From his cabin window McCormick could look out on the little church which was the center of his life. He died peacefully in 1836.

As told by those present at his passing, his final words were “Glory, honor, immortality, eternal life.” He and Rebecca are buried in the Salem Episcopal Methodist Churchyard Cemetery in Anderson.

*Text by Tom Brown. Some photos from Anderson Township Historical Society collection.*

List of references as cited by author Mary Shinn:

- “History of the Methodist Episcopal Church”
- “Daniel’s History of Methodism”
- “Howe’s Historical Collections of Ohio”
- Recollections of relatives



A lithograph of Salem Church in 1862 as it appeared in the magazine Ladies’ Repository.



Mary Shinn photographed herself in front of Salem Church in 1908. The church building was built in 1865.



Francis and Rebecca McCormick are buried in the cemetery at the corner of Sutton and Salem roads in Anderson Township.



A lithograph of Salem Church in 1862 as it appeared in the magazine Ladies’ Repository.

## Historical Society Office Open for Township Research

*Want to delve into local genealogy or research an event related to Anderson Township? The Anderson Township Historical Society’s research facility is open on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and by appointment.*

Historic documents, photos and displays are stored at 6550 Clough Pike, the home next to the Miller-Leuser Log House.

Archivist Melanie Woodworth, who manages the society’s collections, said the organization is **working to make their materials more accessible to the public.**

“Our collections are available for prospective research, personal or scholarly study or for local organizations,” she said. Resources include artifacts, historic photographs, maps, cemetery records,

newspapers genealogy records, house histories, and a wealth of material on local history.

For more information call 513.231.2114 or email [president@AndersonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org](mailto:president@AndersonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org).

## HISTORY NOTES

# Anderson and Newtown Share Many Connections

The Village of Newtown and Anderson Township are first cousins, with a common ancestry and shared history. While today Newtown contracts with Anderson Township for fire and EMS services and the Forest Hills School District serves the two communities, each has its own governmental structure and unique identity.

Thousands of people travel each day through Newtown, but most probably know very little about the history of the village, one of the oldest communities in southern Ohio.

Before recorded history, the region of southern Ohio, and more specifically the area between the Little Miami River and the Ohio River which became Anderson Township, was populated by a variety of prehistoric people. They left archaeological evidence of their presence here in several ways, including the mounds they built.

The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 defined a framework for the future expansion of the nation west of the Allegheny Mountains, including the establishment of townships. Each township was approximately 36 square miles. Newtown is an incorporated village of approximately 2.25 square miles within Anderson Township.

In 1792 the first settlement was established in what would become Anderson Township. A strong stockade with four blockhouses was built near a natural spring by 12 men led by Revolutionary War veteran Captain Aaron Mercer and the surrounding forest was cleared. The spring was located at what is now Jones Lake Management Inc.

Mercer's son-in-law surveyor Ichabod Benton Miller laid out 28 lots for a nearby village, which was originally known as Mercer's Station and then Mercersburgh. By 1816 the settlement was called Newtown. Miller's homestead still stands at Clough Pike and Bartels Road, serving today as the home of the Anderson Township Historical Society.

Although initially threatened by hostilities with Native American tribes, the Treaty of Greenville in 1794 brought peace to the region. People put down roots in Newtown, built homes and established businesses. The village was incorporated in 1901 and many of the earliest structures still stand.

*Text by Tom Brown. Information and photos from the Anderson Township Historical Society and "Newtown, Ohio-200th Anniversary Bicentennial Edition."*



*Judson Harmon, born in Newtown, was governor of Ohio 1909-1913.*



*The Newtown Brickyard was established in 1904 and employed up to 40 men producing bricks from clay.*



*Map from 1869 shows Newtown in the northern part of Anderson Township.*



*Men in canoe near the covered bridge over the Little Miami River.*



*The home of Baptist preacher and doctor John Richmond Lambert who performed the first Cesarean section west of the Alleghenies in 1827.*



*Newtown mail delivery 1905, the first horse-drawn mail delivery in Ohio.*



*Newtown resident Clyde Durham astride his horse at the U.S. Cavalry Camp in Georgia in 1898.*



*The Air Nitrates Corporation, or ANCOR, was known by all Anderson Township residents for its vast size and potential importance to the U.S. in World War I. It was located in the area of Broadwell Road and closed in 1918, the same year it was built.*

# HISTORY NOTES



*Celebration of new Mt. Washington bus fleet, 1935*

## Mt. Washington: Anderson's Next Door Neighbor

Our township has several major access points, the most significant of which is Mt. Washington, the easternmost neighborhood of the City of Cincinnati. Mt. Washington has a history that is worth knowing because it provides a fuller understanding of Anderson Township's origins and growth.

When a small group of settlers stepped off a flatboat on the shore of the Ohio River at the mouth of the Little Miami River in 1790, a new chapter of the township's history began.

The settlers included John Garard, Joseph Martin, and the Rev. John Corbly Jr. who intended to purchase large tracts of land originally surveyed as part of the Virginia Military Survey within Anderson Township. The land was granted as payment to Revolutionary War soldiers from Virginia.

This first settlement was a large defensive structure named Garard's Station. Stephen Sutton arrived at Garard's Station in 1793. He built his log home, which still stands today in Mt. Washington, in 1795 on the hill above the Little Miami River. Along

with others, these were the founders of today's Mt. Washington.

As Anderson residents know, Mt. Washington is today a prospering community of homes and small businesses; however, it wasn't always that way. In its early days, Mt. Washington was a quiet rural community of productive family farms, as was Anderson Township.

In time, businesses sprang up, mostly along Ohio Pike (Beechmont Avenue) to serve the needs of both rural communities.



*The suspension bridge over the Little Miami River at Beechmont Avenue, under construction about 1874.*



*Stephen Sutton log house, c. 1915 built in 1795*



*The Mt. Washington water tower under construction in 1939. It went into operation in 1940.*



*Mt. Washington School, 1870-1932*



*Wolff home, Beechmont Avenue and Corbly Road*



*Members of the Ebersole family of Mt. Washington, around 1900*

In 1846, John L. Corbly, grandson of the Rev. John Corbly mentioned earlier, subdivided and sold much of his land, one of the original tracts, and a post office was established. Another subdivision of Corbly land was made in 1849. In 1867, Mt. Washington became an incorporated village. The incorporation took in a small part of what was known as the Bland Survey. Within the Bland Survey but outside of incorporation was Salem Village, the site of Rev. Francis McCormick's Methodist church at the corner of Salem and Sutton roads.

The remaining portion of that tract east of the church was purchased by Vincent

Shinn. Shinn was an admirer of James Birney, an ardent abolitionist and candidate for U.S. president in 1840 and 1844. Shinn called the road Birney Lane that ran to Markley's Mill.

Originally Mt. Washington could only be reached from Cincinnati by fording the Little Miami River at Flinn's Ford. In 1836, a wooden bridge was built closer to today's Beechmont Levee. A suspension bridge replaced it in 1876. The result was easier access to and from Mt. Washington and Anderson Township, greatly improving the ability of farmers to transport produce into the Cincinnati market.

Although in 1900 Mt. Washington consisted of only about 800 residents, the City of Cincinnati recognized its potential for growth and in 1911 the village of Mt. Washington was annexed. Street names that were already in use in the city had to be changed as a result. For example, Beacon had been Cherry, Beechmont had been Ohio Pike, and Berkshire had been Bogart.

The annexation enhanced the distinction between the identities of Mt. Washington and the township. As the saying goes, good fences make good neighbors, but even without fences Anderson Township and Mt. Washington continue to be good neighbors with a shared history and mutual commercial dependence.

*Photos courtesy of the Anderson Township Historical Society. Text by Tom Brown.*

# HISTORY NOTES

## Winter a Century Ago Includes Snow, Sports and Play

Photographs from years past give hints on how Anderson Township residents coped

The winter of 1917-18 was one for the record books with more than 3 feet of snow, lasting into March. A photo on page 9 shows Mr. and Mrs. Van R. Johnson waiting for a passenger train car to Cincinnati. Two interurban electric railways crossed at this point on Beechmont Avenue. You can see the intersecting wires overhead in the image.

The C.G. and P. line operated in Anderson from 1877 to 1935, carrying both passengers and freight. These tracks ran cross country and crossed Beechmont at Forestville. A branch of the Interurban Railway and Terminal Company also ran through Anderson in 1903-1918 on tracks along Beechmont/Ohio Pike out to Bethel. The Johnson family home was the house on the left, today the location of Frisch's. If you kept a horse and sleigh, snow-covered streets were not an obstacle.

Freezing temperatures meant that ice could be harvested from local ponds, supplying the iceboxes of the early 1900s. Frozen ponds also allowed for sports and play. We are fortunate to have images taken at a pond once located southwest of the intersection of Beechmont and Birney, behind what is now Guardian Angels School. This pond supplied water to the original St. Gregory Seminary and was known as "Seminary Pond" to local residents. These images are a reminder of many ponds that once dotted this farming community.

The photos also provide clues about winter clothing of the early 1900s. One close-up photo of a fashionable lady shows that a fur muff and wrap were just the thing for a cold day. Snow means building snowmen, of course, and we have a photo of one made for a WCKY radio contest by the Leuser family, who lived in the log house on Clough Pike for many decades.

*This article originally appeared in the fall 2015 Anderson Insights. Text by Janet Heywood, photos courtesy of the Anderson Township Historical Society.*



*Sleigh of the Langdon family of Mt. Washington. Dr. Langdon used the sleigh to reach patients when snow covered the ground. Photo about 1910.*



*Cutting ice on "Seminary Pond." Photo about 1900.*



*Skating on "Seminary Pond." Photo about 1910.*



*Waiting for the railway on snow-filled Beechmont Avenue in the winter of 1917-18. The house on left is the location today of Frisch's.*



*Dressed for winter, Bessie Johnson Davis posed at a house on Beechmont Avenue near Collinsdale Avenue. Photo about 1915.*



*Snowman at the Miller-Leuser Log House on Clough Pike. Photo about 1940.*

# HISTORY NOTES

## Memories Made as Center of Community Changed

### Mall Memories

Do you remember any of these stores? Woolworths, Mabley & Carew, Potter Shoe Store, and Hot Shoppe are some older shops that long-time township residents will remember at the Beechmont Mall.

Newer residents of Anderson may not even know there ever was a mall on the land that is today's Anderson Towne Center. It was just an empty field north of Beechmont Avenue from west of Wolfangel Road to Five Mile Road for many years. Before that, it was farmland, as was much of Anderson Township before the construction of I-275 and even Five Mile Road in the early 1970s.

In 1969, all that changed. The township was transformed with the building of Beechmont Mall, the first mall in this part of Greater Cincinnati and touted by its developer as "the finest in this part of the state in scope and facilities."

### A New Challenge

Like many suburban communities, Anderson Township had no central downtown area. So, in the early 1970s, Beechmont Mall became the "hub" of Anderson. However, because of growth and available land to the east, retail offerings shifted to the Eastgate area. This and the lack of continuation of Five Mile



Beechmont Mall entrance in 1989



Car wash fundraiser



1969 Holiday flyer



1977 clearance sale flyer

**"As a child, the culmination of a shopping trip with my mom was a dessert at the Woolworth coffee shop."**

*Jenny Rapien Kaepfner, 2007 Forest Hills Journal*

Road to the northern part of Greater Cincinnati diminished Beechmont Mall's vitality over time.

Over the next few years, township trustees attempted, with little success, to encourage property redevelopment with various owners and investors. In 2002, the mall was sold to Victory Investments. A survey of residents that same year noted that the absence of a focal point in the township was a significant concern.

### The Vision

Anderson Township and Victory Investments immediately began to discuss possible incentives for developing the mall property. Construction of a new shopping center to replace the mall began in 2003-2004. In 2005, the Anderson Towne Center was open for business. Highlights of this development (which maintained Macy's and Kmart) included the world's largest Kroger (at the time), a streetscape area, a new office complex on the former Thriftway site, and six out-parcels for future use along Beechmont or Five Mile.

As the town center was taking shape, the focus was on acquiring property to the



Anderson Days aerial view at Beechmont Mall

north of today's Towne Center Way. The site was being eyed as a potential site for a civic/government center and a mixture of other uses, including offices and restaurants. This vision was consistent with the township's original "Superblock" plan for township's center, dating back to 1990.

Anderson's 2003 acquisition of this property was key to facilitating the redevelopment of the former Beechmont Mall, including required stormwater detention (Anderson Lake). Further, it helped establish the "center" of the community. Anderson Township's investment in public infrastructure along Five Mile Road, construction of the Anderson Center Station Park & Ride and Anderson Center, led to additional private investment in medical and professional offices.

Major Five Mile Road corridor enhancements reinforced Anderson's "front door" from I-275. Soon thereafter followed the Anderson Center Station Park & Ride in 2005, Anderson Center in 2008, and the southern extension of the Five Mile Trail connecting to the Anderson Towne Center in 2009.



Anderson Center Station Park & Ride

**"In its 'glory years' I can safely say that the mall was a regular destination for everyone in my family...as I got older, we headed to the mall often to fill in time between when school ended and when the bus left to take us to whatever game we were playing that evening."**

*Cindy Williams, 2007 Forest Hills Journal*

Drive down Five Mile Road today, and you will see the latest addition to Downtown Anderson, an exciting contemporary development named Vantage at Anderson Towne Center. It will encompass 224 luxury apartments with a lower-level METRO facility, when completed in the coming months. Its addition puts a former tax-exempt property back into a tax-generating role, not to mention adding an upscale housing opportunity in the heart of the township.

*Text by Tom Brown. Photos courtesy of Anderson Township.*

# HISTORY NOTES

## General Protestant Orphan Home Has Deep Roots in Township

Many township residents will remember the Orphan Feast parade which traveled down Beechmont Avenue



Aerial view of the Orphan Feast, which drew tens of thousands each year to its fall event

The general landscape of Anderson Township has undergone significant changes over the years, and it continues to evolve as community needs shift. A notable example of this is the relocation of the Beech Acres Parenting Center, formerly the General Protestant Orphan Home, to a location closer to the families it serves.



In 1948, the German General Protestant Orphan Home purchased “The Beeches,” a 60-acre farm on the boundary of Mt. Washington and Anderson Township. At the site, the children would come to camp for a few weeks each summer, enjoying outdoor activities amid pasture and beech trees.

Board Chair Everett Townsley donated one-third of the purchase price for the new location, which came to be called Beech Acres. The facility consisted of six cottages, each housing 10 to 12 children, and a handsome administration building arranged around a grassy circular lawn. The cottages were age and gender-based and could house up to 16 children. House mothers lived with the children. In 1950, 104 children moved into the new orphanage and attended school in the Forest Hills School District.

Today, the cottages are gone, but the Townsley Administration Building remains. In 1950, the Orphan Feast relocated from Mt. Auburn to its new home “in the country,” attracting a record 80,000 people with hundreds of volunteers. Many township residents will remember the Orphan Feast parade, which traveled down Beechmont Avenue.

cholera epidemic in Cincinnati. In the city alone, 6,000 people died, roughly 5% of the entire population. The German community was especially hard hit, resulting in a high number of orphaned children. In response, the German Protestant Aid Association established the German General Protestant Orphan Society to raise funds to purchase land in Mt. Auburn and build a facility to care for these children. The orphanage opened in 1851 with a significant amount of funding coming from an annual event called the Orphan Feast.

The Orphan Feast became the city’s big fall event each year. Residents could plan their attendance in advance because it was always hosted the first Sunday after Labor Day. By the 1940s, the Orphan Feast brought in \$50,000 thanks to the involvement of many vendors, business owners, politicians and well-known citizens. Leadership roles were coveted.



This relocation led to the acquisition of the land by the Anderson Park District. The purchase and demolition of cottages on the site expands the size of Beech Acres Park and will enable the park district to offer additional amenities to township residents.

The orphanage has a fascinating history that dates to 1849, the year of the devastating

Board Chair Everett Townsley donated one-third of the purchase price for the new location, which came to be called Beech Acres. The facility consisted of six cottages, each housing 10 to 12 children, and a handsome administration building arranged around a grassy circular lawn. The cottages were age and gender-based and could house up to 16 children. House mothers lived with the children. In 1950, 104 children moved into the new orphanage and attended school in the Forest Hills School District.

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## Remembering the Orphan’s Festival

Every year, my father and other volunteers from the Cincinnati Fire Department would spend a day prior to the event assembling booths. We would sit on our porch on Glade Avenue hearing the PA announcer from the festival while simultaneously smelling ripening fruit from a nearby apple grove. We knew then that summer was over.

—Craig Eggers



Above: What’s a festival without a raffle? For many years a new car was the grand prize.

I marched in the parade every year from the age of five to 21 with Little Steppers and Hi-Steppers. Two years I marched it twice, with AHS Color Guard then ran back to join the rifle line with Hi-Steppers. After the parade ended we always stayed to listen for parade results and hang at the festival. Some of the best years of my life!

—Jenny Zeis

We lived on Beechmont across from what was then called St. Gregory Seminary and the parade went by our house. We always had company over to watch the parade so it was almost like a holiday.

—Trish McCormick

My grandpa used to have a booth there every year for Freeman Foods. They gave away fruit baskets. I marched in the parade once with “Little Steppers” baton group.

—Dawn Pfeffer Malone



Goldfish and parakeets were prizes that many children won at the festival games.



Rides were a favorite activity at the feast. Photo courtesy Dick Swaim, Cincinnati Enquirer.

## Orphan Feast Facts:

- Hosted annually for 137 years on the Sunday after Labor Day to solicit financial donations to care for orphans
- Evolved into Cincinnati’s big fall event
- Netted over \$50K in the 1940s
- Set an attendance record in 1950 (the year it moved to Anderson Township, the 100th anniversary)
- Became the largest one-day fundraiser of any not-for-profit organization in the Midwest in a 40-year period
- The home closed in 1986, after years of diminishing attendance



For years, the Shriners, the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars were an important part of the kick-off parade, as seen in this parade along Beechmont Avenue.

Text by Tom Brown. Photos courtesy of Beech Acres Parenting Center unless noted.

## HISTORY NOTES

# Anderson Township's History Closely Connected to the Birth of Our Nation

Bells were rung, muskets fired, and bonfires burned in celebration throughout the 13 colonies at the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776.

This July, our nation celebrates that “day of deliverance” 250 years ago, as John Adams said we would, “with Pomp and Parade, with Shews, Games, Sports, Guns, Bells, Bonfires and Illuminations from one End of this Continent to the other.”

But beyond our modern commemoration of America's birth, what is Anderson Township's historical connection to the nation's founding?

The connection lies with the people who came to reside in the township a few years after July 4, 1776, whose names are not well known, yet were as much a part of those revolutionary years as the founders whose names highlight our nation's birth.

### Who were the settlers?

A description of these earliest settlers appears in a small book published in 1897 by Samuel Durham. His parents were among the earliest settlers in the area. In “The Pioneer Settlers of the Lower Little Miami Valley,” Durham writes:

*“Whoever can trace his lineage back to the early emigrants to the Miami Country, comes of a stock which may be extolled on grounds that will bear scrutiny. They were a brave, frugal, industrious and religious class of people, whose work was a noble one, nobly done... Their trials and hardships seem but a dream to us, we know so little of them.”*

With the Treaty of Paris in 1783, the United States was able to firmly take its place among nations and turn its attention to the future with the passage of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 to organize and govern land north of the Ohio River and east of the Mississippi.

Veterans of the Revolutionary War in Virginia were rewarded for their service with land in the Virginia Military District in southwest Ohio. And so it was that in the late 1780s and 1790s, many who were willing to risk the dangers of the frontier found their way to the banks of the Ohio River and to Anderson Township.

**Major Benjamin Stites** of the New Jersey militia arrived in 1788 as leader of a flatboat expedition and established Columbia, the first permanent colonial settlement in the Miami Valley north of the Ohio River. Columbia was in the vicinity of the present-day Lunken Airport. This event preceded even the founding of Losantiville (Cincinnati).

### Captain Aaron Mercer

Also well known among the early emigrants and directly connected to Anderson Township was **Aaron Mercer**, who had served as a captain in the Virginia militia beginning in 1777. His company joined with the Continental Army at the Battle of Brandywine, Germantown and Monmouth. They later guarded British troops after the surrender of General Cornwallis at Yorktown in 1781.

Captain Mercer arrived in 1790 at a small fort at the mouth of the Little Miami River, founded by **John Gerard** from Pennsylvania. At considerable risk, Mercer moved up the Little Miami River in 1792, where he established Mercer's Station, soon to be called Mercersburg. Mercersburg later became what we now call Newtown, and Mercer Elementary School is named for him. His daughter, Sarah, was married to Ichabod Miller, whose log home (the Miller-Leuser Log House) still stands on Clough Pike and is one of the township's most noted historic landmarks.

Like Aaron Mercer, other Revolutionary War veterans settled in Anderson



The historical plaque that marks the site of Garard/Martin Station in early Anderson.



John Rose was 16 years old when the Declaration of Independence was signed. He served in the New Jersey militia and settled in Anderson Township.

Township, five of whom are buried in Rose Hill Cemetery, located at the north side of State Route 32, just east of Eight Mile Road. They include **Mathias Felter, John Ferris, Gershom Hubble, William Neves and John Rose.**

John Rose, 1760-1837, served in the New Jersey militia. With his family, he farmed and owned an inn and store.

Another veteran, **Inslee Anderson**, served as a private with the Delaware regiment and is buried in Mt. Washington Cemetery.

While history often seems too distant to be meaningful to modern life, it can teach us valuable lessons about ourselves as individuals, as a community, and as a nation, and deepen our appreciation of the hardships endured for the benefit of future generations.

This year, we recognize and honor these earliest pioneers of Anderson Township, a revolutionary generation “who seem to have been especially created for the work before them, and who fearlessly undertook it.” (Durham)

Text by Tom Brown. Photos from the Anderson Township Historical Society unless otherwise noted.



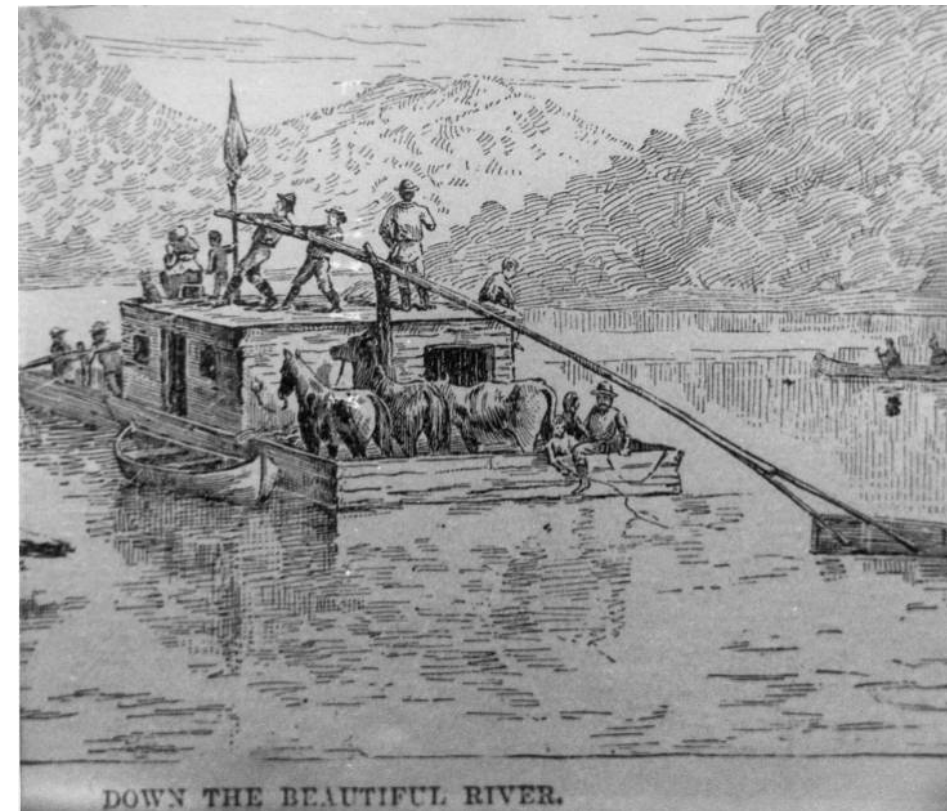
Fort Recovery in Meigs County is an example of a fort, or “station,” on the Ohio frontier. Photo: Ohio History Connection



Several veterans of the American Revolution are buried at Rose Hill Cemetery in Anderson Township off S.R. 32 east of Eight Mile Road.



The Miller-Leuser Log House has been standing since 1796. The picture on the right is a current photo of this symbol of our pioneer heritage.



A flatboat traveling the Ohio River was a common mode of transportation for settlers like those who established Gerard's Station at the mouth of the Little Miami River in 1790.



Powell Grocery Store 1906



Little Dry Run School 1880



Carvil Hawkins House 1895



Sherwood Forest House plan



Salem Church 1900

*Anderson Township  
History in the making*



Allan-A-Bale



Maddux & Weil Carriage Shop 1910



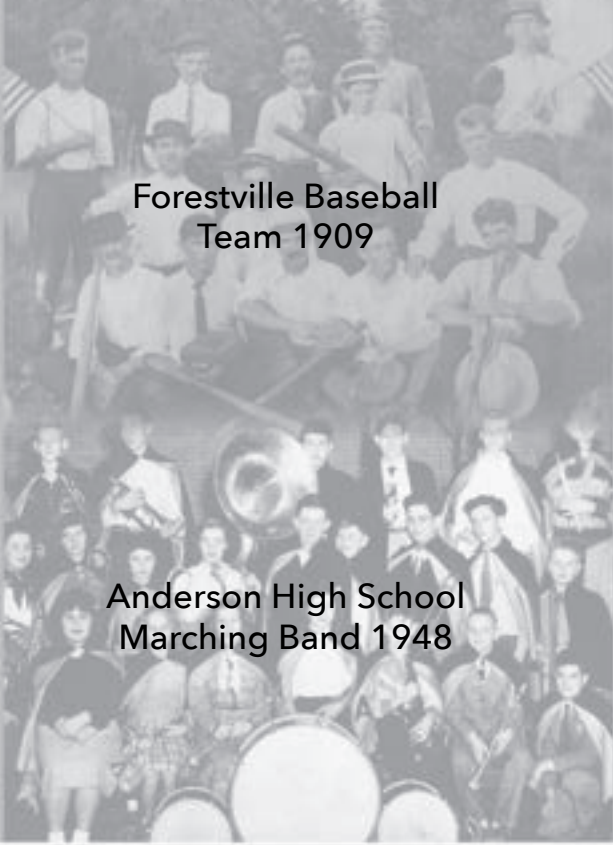
Combs-Hehl Bridge 1979



Beechmont Ave. 1971



Ohio River Boating 1900



Forestville Baseball Team 1909



General Protestant Orphan Feast



CG&P Railroad 1877



Anderson High School Marching Band 1948



Smith Ice & Coal Truck 1018