

Logan

Saturday, June 19

The Hocking County Fairgrounds will be available for camping on Saturday, June 19th at noon. Also, due to the Washboard Festival, local accommodations may be booked on Thursday and Friday. For more information you can contact: 1-800-hocking or www.1800hocking.com.

However, it does seem to be a fantastic year to get to the GOBA starting point early and to spend time in and around Logan. There are extensive hiking trails in the parks and preserves in the Hocking Hills.

The Washboard Music Festival in Logan starts on Thursday night. Bands from England, Canada, Nevada, California and Ohio will play. You can tour the Columbus Washboard Factory in Logan from 9 AM to 8:30 PM on all days. The factory is also their store so you can pick up some GOBA momentos. They carry washboards and other folksy items.

Speaking of shopping, the Mingo Trading Company at 245 W. Main, is a small shop that carries medicinal herbs, and Native American made crafts. The Logan Art Gallery is at 65 W. Main. And the Hocking River Emporium is across the street. Out on St. Rt. 33, just north of Logan, across from St. Rt. 374 is the Hocking Hills Market that is an indoor and outdoor flea market with eateries and a large antique mall. If you think that I may be encouraging you to spend a few dollars locally, you are absolutely correct.

At Bush's Restaurant, at 428 E. Front St. you get down home cooking and conversation. While I was there, a man at the counter brought up a former waitress,

"Where's Shirley?"

"She went to West Virginia to be nearer her kids."

"How many she got?"

"Three or four, has custody of only one. Her mom's got the others."

"She miss the hills?"

Then I was served grits, home fries and two eggs over easy. While you are riding this year's GOBA, you might wonder why somebody left Logan to be in the hills.

The Carriage House and Museum is at 64 N. Culver St. Admission is free but donations are welcome. They will be staying open later than usual on Saturday night.

Governor Thomas Worthington owned the land where Logan is now. He had the town laid out in 1816 and named it for the famous Mingo, Logan.

Manufactured goods came into Logan on covered wagons and produce went south on flatboats to New Orleans via the Hocking River. In 1840 the Hocking Canal, a sidecut of the Ohio and Erie Canal reached Logan. Because the produce went south, Logan had southern sympathies before and during the Civil War. It was unpopular to be an abolitionist in Logan.

However, a Republican 'Lincoln Club' was active in Logan. Their brochures were printed in German to help keep the movement secret. The Civil War years were difficult ones in Logan because the market for produce in the south was cut off. People had to use wheat for currency. There was racial tension and the African Americans living in Logan were singled out as the cause of the war.

Before the Civil War, Logan was reputedly a wild place and emigrants were advised to not go to Logan as it was "...infested with thieves and robbers of the vilest of all God's race." People tended to take the law into their own hands and settled disputes with fights.

In 1848 iron ore was discovered in the neighboring hills. The ore was first shipped to an iron smelting furnace in Muskingum County. But coal and lime, needed for smelting, were also present so Logan Furnace was built along with some dwellings for the workers. Thirteen additional furnaces were built in this region and it was a profitable business until richer ore was discovered in the Mahoning Valley near Youngstown. Little smelting occurred here past 1883. Then the area turned to the business of extracting oil and coal, and making clay products.

Clay tile, flue linings and chimney tops are made today at Logan Products across the street from Bush's restaurant.

All iron ores are mingled with clay seams and are present beneath coal veins. It was natural to produce the brick to build iron furnaces as appropriate building stone wasn't always available. The search for iron ore brought on the discovery of coal and clay. This brought prosperity to the Hocking Valley in the 1870s. There were 385 railroad coal mines and at least 17 immense clay factories. The iron boom brought men and money from all parts of the world. The clay industry took off from there and this week you will see some streets of locally-made brick in Athens, Nelsonville, Shawnee, etc. Some of this brick is in buildings on this year's GOBA route, around the United States and in even in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Enjoy Logan; it is a much more civilized city now but still a lot of fun.

Logan to McConnellsville

Sunday, June 20

This morning as you head out of Logan and onto the GOBA route, you are heading into the most dramatic landscape of Ohio and its history. You will first pass through the tiny hamlets of Gore, (a gore describes a triangular piece of land) and Oreville, named for the iron ore that was mined in this area. There were two iron-smelting furnaces in Gore in the 1800s.

A half-mile from Gore, is an unmarked grave. The person buried here was accused and convicted of killing three family members in Gore in 1877. Even though the accused was from Gore, no one wanted him to be buried in the village because of his alleged participation in the crime.

Next you come into New Straitsville. It is difficult to imagine the thriving businesses and homes that lined the main street during New Straitsville's boom time of coal mining, oil drilling, clay production and iron ore refining. New Straitsville was built as a coal-mining town when "The Great Vein" of coal was discovered near Straitsville, a small community a mile north of here. Three furnaces produced pig iron that was shipped out on the Hocking Valley Railroad. People also worked at the New Columbus Clay and Terra Cotta Company in New Straitsville. The first oil well was built in town in 1909. After that, over 100 wells punctuated the earth and the sky.

With the resources being discovered and exploited in New Straitsville and the Hocking Valley, a railroad was needed to get them out of the valley. It was at first a challenge to get financing for building the railroad. After some failed attempts, the Straitsville Branch of the Columbus And Hocking Valley Railroad was completed in 1871. During the period from 1870 to 1900 the population in this area quadrupled, mainly from migration. The earliest migrants were already experienced miners from Ohio, surrounding states, England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. The major portion of men who came here in 1870 were young, American-born men in search of opportunity in this new boom economy.

After the first migration, Italians, Swedes, Germans, Hungarians and African Americans came here to work in the mines. Those who were originally miners and who dominated New Straitsville and Shawnee did not welcome these immigrants. In 1888 only 10 African Americans lived in New Straitsville. None were living here by 1900. New Straitsville became known as one of the hot beds of resistance to inexperienced miners who would accept low pay. They were hired on to work for low wages and to break labor strikes. Mine operators weren't necessarily greedy. They too were subject to market forces beyond their control.

There was a small settlement of African Americans who lived a few miles south of New Straitsville at Payne's Crossing; (this is not on the GOBA route.) It is marked today by Payne's Cemetery. Although not enforced, it was fewer than 10 years ago that laws governing who could and who couldn't live in New Straitsville were removed from the books.

In the 1870s hundreds of thousands of tons of coal were shipped out of New Straitsville. However, the economy of New Straitsville depended on faraway markets, decision-makers who controlled supply and demand, and the weather. As a result, the miners could rarely support their families because of the uncertainty of their work. Naturally demand for coal fluctuated through out the year and according to the overall economy of the nation.

In the early mining days, miners were responsible for buying their own mining equipment. Often they bought these items from the company store and these costs were deducted from their pay. At first they were paid by the bushel. Later they were paid by the ton. Between 1875 and 1900 they were paid between 37¢ to \$1 per ton. Winter tended to bring better times since more coal was needed for heating but the labor market became uncertain in spring. If the economy was poor, a miner worked fewer than three months in a year. In a good year, e.g., 1879, a New Straitsville miner worked ten months in a year.

The miners also had trouble getting enough work because there were too many miners. They accused the companies of hiring more than enough men so more would be in debt to the company store.

"New Straitsville Currency," or scrip, was common in town until it was outlawed. It could be used at non-company stores but was devalued.

Where a miner was placed in the mine was up to the mine boss. This was known as the "free-turn system." "Room miners" had limited access to coal cars and "entry drivers" had the right to fill as many coal cars as they could and were placed where coal was the best and most accessible. It was this system and the abuse by the company store that led to The Great Hocking Valley Coal Strike of 1884-85. This event is described later.

From 1873 to 1897 the country went through a series of economic panics and the coal market suffered. The instability of the coal market was of concern to both the miners and the coal company operators but how they each viewed solutions to the problems put them at odds with each other. Two-thirds of the workers in New Straitsville were miners so this put New Straitsville at the center of labor unrest.

Labor problems in the Hocking Valley started with the building of the Hocking Canal. The canal connected Athens, and towns in between, to the Ohio and Erie Canal in Carroll. When the railroad tracks were being laid in December

1870 to New Straitsville, the men walked off the job because the caboose that they had been using for shelter was removed. As a result, one man suffered frostbite from sleeping out in the cold.

In 1871 a 45-day labor stoppage began in the mines around New Straitsville before a newly formed union struck a deal with the mine owners on wages.

In 1873 all coalfields were hit hard because of an unusually warm winter. Miners wages and hours were significantly cut. Miners called for railroads to lower their fees to help bring the industry out of its slump. At the same time, they formed the National Miner's Union.

In April of 1874 every Hocking Valley coalfield was involved in a strike. There was violence in New Straitsville and the mayor deputized "responsible" strikers to help maintain order.

John Martin, of New Straitsville, was one of the more liberal mine operators and gave in to some of the miners demands. However, W.B. McClung, of the Straitsville Iron & Coal Company, refused any concessions. The newly formed union broke down and the miners went back to work.

McClung brought African American miners to his mines from West Virginia. These miners were seemingly willing to work for lower wages. Racial tensions erupted, shots were fired and seven men were badly hurt.

The miners went to the operators and asked to have the 50¢ per ton reinstated, as they couldn't live on 37¢ per ton. John Martin agreed to the higher scale, but McClung did not. The coal in New Straitsville was 10 feet thick and in other parts of the Hocking Valley it tended to be 6 feet thick and the miners should have made more around here, but there were still too many miners and too few mining days.

When you are in new Straitsville, it is worth the short walk up to Robinson's Cave. It is across the Main Street from the Monday Creek Restoration Project office. Along the path are signs and photographs illustrating the beginnings of the United Mine Workers and the social activities that centered on this modest sandstone overhang.

Many of New Straitsville's wooden buildings have burned and very few have been maintained. Still to this day, fire helped determine the fate of coal mining in this area.

In 1884 mine operators met in Shawnee and planned to reduce the pay rate from 60¢/ton to 40¢/ton of mined coal. The miners, naturally, became angry and met in Robinson's Cave and then and there they made the decision to strike. A separate small group of men decided that if they couldn't work, nobody would and made plans to set fire to the mines. They met at the Plummer Mine because it was the furthest from town. They loaded mine cars with oil-soaked kindling,

lumber and coal and shoved them into a few mine openings. Next they fired four other mines. When the fires were discovered, men tried to put them out but they couldn't. The strike that began in October 1884 ended in March 1885 but there were few mines where men could be employed and they received only 50¢/ton.

The major oil concerns in New Straitsville were Chartiers Oil and Kachelmacher Oil. Niles Kachelmacher, a Norwegian, was dubbed the 'Norwegian Count.' He had local interests in coal, and the Columbus and Hocking Valley Railroad and owned the largest coal yard in Columbus. He owned many of the oil derricks in New Straitsville. He also developed the Greendale Brick Co., which was near here but the GOBA route doesn't go through Greendale.

Kachelmacher suffered from varicose veins and he donated his entire two million dollar estate to the city of Logan to establish a varicose vein research facility in Logan. Kachelmacher Park on the south bank of the Hocking River honors him.

You crossed Monday Creek before coming into New Straitsville; it was Ohio's third most polluted creek. It flows into the Hocking River and was biologically dead due to acid mine drainage. After Ohio's high sulfur coal became less desirable and the 1977 Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act was passed, the coal industry in southeastern Ohio declined further. Against tough odds, the Monday Creek Restoration Group is making progress in reducing nonpoint source pollution from farming, acid mine drainage and untreated sewage from entering Monday Creek. Fish species are returning and aquatic diversity is increasing.

When you see acid mine drainage it is usually orange, white or black. Orange is the most common color we see around here. Iron oxidizes out of the water when it hits the air and turns surfaces a distinctive orange color. White indicates dissolved aluminum and black creek rocks are colored with manganese. Water percolating through the earth into the mines and then flowing out of them causes this pollution. Water running over gob piles, discarded piles of low-grade coal, also adds to the stream's pollution.

Shifting back to the 1920s and the coal fields, miners and mine owners were experiencing impossibly difficult times. The U. S. government had stepped in to control railroad-shipping rates for coal. The mines in West Virginia and Kentucky produced more coal than Hocking Valley mines, yet it cost the same, regardless of distance, to ship coal to the industrialized Lake Erie area. Hocking Valley couldn't compete during the relatively prosperous time during WWI much less after the war when demand dropped and the Great Depression occurred.

Many (some say most) people in New Straitsville turned to making moonshine after Prohibition was enacted in 1919. Making good moonshine was already a skill of the people of Scotch-Irish heritage. Before Prohibition, they made a pure and natural product: corn and creek water, cooked in copper and fired with wood. However, during Prohibition demand went up and quality went down. Sugar was substituted for cornmeal, carbide sped up fermentation and coloring agents were added to make it a desirable golden color. It is estimated that there were 175 stills operating in abandoned mines and hollows around New Straitsville. Mines were good places to hide stills because some had flooded entrances and could only be reached by using a flatboat. A man would have to lie flat on his back and walk the boat in with his fingers. Mines weren't private property so even if an agent would find a still, it didn't indict a particular person. However, some distillers, independent souls to the core, set up stills in town.

Most operations had a capacity of 55 gallons and so were small. A few, maybe ten, had a capacity of 300 gallons. Somehow "Straitsville Special" became known much further than its possible influence. One resident attended the Chicago World's Fair in 1933 and a policeman was surprised to hear that she was from New Straitsville. "New Straitsville Special" enjoyed a reputation of good quality and there are theories as to why this was so. It could have been the use of sulfur water taken from the mines, the constant temperature of the mines, or the use of charred, wooden kegs that mellowed the whiskey's kick.

There was a great demand for sugar, corn, rye, bottles and kegs in that day. Individual grocers were required to report to the government when they sold large quantities of these. The owner of a New Straitsville Kroger went to jail for failing to do so. One resident remembered going with his father to abandoned mines to deliver 100 pound bags of sugar. Sometimes the supplies would be loaded into a coal car and brought inside that way. Moonshiners could also pick up their goods in smaller quantities from different suppliers to avoid the law.

A local tinsmith made tin ceilings until prohibition and then he had copper sheeting and tubing shipped in so he could manufacture stills.

The price of moonshine dropped and few could support their families by producing it. Prohibition was repealed in 1934 and so that was the end of "New Straitsville Special."

New Straitsville celebrates this era with The Moonshine Festival held annually over Memorial Day weekend. Producing moonshine is illegal in the U.S. It is made during the festival but is poured out onto the ground as ATF agents look on.

During the Depression only the oil workers had jobs. The mines and brick factories closed. Long before that, steel had taken the place of iron. Storekeepers

and doctors extended credit and assumed that they would rarely be paid. On Main St. you might notice a two-story home that was a finer home but is in need of repair. That was a doctor's home.

The WPA and CCC provided jobs in New Straitsville to fight the mine fires, teach first aid and build outhouses in town. The mine fires were a large problem as they threatened building foundations, damaged oil wells and the thin soil, already not ideal for farming, made it even more unsuitable for grazing and farming. One person said that it baked the potatoes right in her garden. WPA efforts to stop the fires contained them somewhat.

In the 1930s there was much media interest in the fires and the WPA's concerted effort to put them out. Even famed newscaster Ernie Pyle did a radio broadcast from New Straitsville. During the broadcast, somebody would pour water on a fire to make it give out a great whooshing sound. Two concessions set up to capitalize on the tourists who traveled here to view the mine fires. However the companies feuded and vandalized each other's signs and tensions between the tour guides were very real.

The fires burn today but their locations are difficult to pinpoint. Occasionally someone walking over the hills will notice smoke coming from the earth and feel warmth. The hillside that abutted the school building in New Straitsville had to be removed because the gymnasium grew too hot from the mine fires. In 2003 a developer proposed building new homes here, but the plan was scrapped because of problems with land subsidence from the mines and mine fires.

During the Depression, the United States Forest Service began buying land around here and Wayne National Forest was established. Men were hired to plant trees, build a forest service road by hand, and build and man a fire tower. In 1943 surface mining got the coal out faster and WWII helped pull this area out of the Depression. In spite of this, families still moved out during WWII to work in steel mills and they never returned. New Straitsville's population continued to decline.

In 1922 there was a nationwide coal strike that New Straitsville miners participated in. That same year an operator bought a slack pile and asked miners to load it into cars. The miners wouldn't do it for the wages offered them. Then the operators employed men brought from out of town, called 'scabs.' They camped along the road between New Straitsville and Shawnee. A confrontation between the miners and the 'scabs' began. Shots were fired and one union miner died and others were wounded in the fighting.

Today ATVers camp in New Straitsville and ride the trails in Wayne National Forest. In addition to the snack stop you can get food at the Country Kitchen Restaurant on Main St./St. Rt. 93.

From New Straitsville it is just a few miles over a hill to Shawnee, another faded mining town. The Shawnee town sign says that it was the home of the Knight's of Labor Union Movement from 1870 to 1880. By the late 1870's Shawnee had four iron furnaces, coal mines and a greater population than now.

The Knight's of Labor was established in 1869 and reached a peak membership of nearly three-quarters of a million members by the middle of the 1880s. The Knights of Labor was an inclusive group. It sought to unite together all "producers." Producers included anyone that constructed a physical product in the course of their workday.

The organization even allowed women and African Americans to join its ranks. Together, the producers sought an eight-hour workday, an end to child labor, better wages, and improved working conditions. In Ohio they had only 800 members in 1880. By 1887, 17,000 Ohio workers belonged to the group. Membership in the Knight's of Labor declined rapidly after that as the American Federation of Labor gained influence in the 1890s.

It is just a matter of luck that Shawnee hasn't burned to the extent as other Ohio towns have. There are many old, dry wooden buildings left in Shawnee. Many of them are vacant and have "condemned" posters tacked to them. They are quaint and charming and reflect their boom town roots. Not many of them have seen any paint in the past half-century.

The Tecumseh Theatre looms large in front of you as you ride into town. It was built as the Improved Order of the Red Men (IORM) Hall. The IORM is the nation's oldest patriotic fraternal organization. It got its start in 1765 with colonists working underground to fight for freedom. The Red Men reference is because they patterned their practices and procedures after the Iroquois democratic form of government. You can read about the theatre and its construction on a sign next to the building.

As can be expected, Shawnee was much larger than it is today and wrapped over nearby hills, but the homes, industry and people that lived in these neighborhoods, Welsh Hill and New York Hollow, are gone.

The Shawnee Restaurant is a small diner on Main Street. I hope that you can stop in at the Shawnee Community Exchange Gift Shop and pick up some souvenirs to help you remember GOBA and southeastern Ohio.

Next you drop into Moxahala. The first white person to build his home here located it by a strong spring that flows today. It is behind the 1926 abandoned school that you see up on a hill. Moxahala may be a Native American word for elk's horn and the town was named for Moxahala Creek. Some older residents of Moxahala said that the town is named after two chiefs, one named Moxie and the

other, Hala. There wasn't any doubt that Native Americans inhabited this spot as lots of artifacts have been found here.

While never large, Moxahala was at one time also a booming community. A couple of saw mills ran here and then a geologist came through and found a seven-foot vein of iron ore and a vein of high quality fire clay. The town had two hotels, five stores and a blast furnace owned and operated by the Carnegie Steel Company. Carnegie built homes for its workers. This area was known as Red Row because all of the houses were painted red. None of the Red Row houses or railroad company houses are left.

In 1880 a pottery was built for manufacturing stone and earthenware. Apparently it was of excellent quality and is attributed to the fine clay found about a mile from here.

In 1904 the Chapman coal mine opened up about one mile west of here and was one of the top producers in the state at the time. Many people moved here for the work and the company built 300 houses to help house them.

In 1905 two Columbus men came to Moxahala and sold stock for a brick plant to be built here using the local fire clay and coal to run the furnaces. After all the stock was sold and a few bricks were made, the men skipped town and the plant folded. The clay continued to be mined. It was crushed and loaded onto trains and sent to the Claycraft Company in Shawnee.

Like the other towns in this area, Moxahala came back to life during WWI with the opening of two coal mines. Natural gas served the area but the service was unreliable and the distributor was ordered to shut down.

There was a bit of revival of Moxahala during WWII and you can see the veteran's memorial at the bottom of the school hill erected shortly after WWII ended.

In 1965 the Peabody Coal Company began to strip mine the coal in and near Moxahala. After they finished strip mining, Peabody opened a deep mine at Moxahala. This led to a population increase, as most of the miners were not from this area.

The A&B Carryout is in the tiny community of Portersville.

Then it's all ridge riding and downhill into Malta. I looked into the Morgan County Dungeon that used to serve as the county jail and was a bit disappointed with its small size. It was in McConnelsville and then Malta rebuilt it along the river as a tourist attraction.

On Malta's town sign it tells you that it was the home of James Naylor (1860-1945). Naylor was a prolific writer of early Ohio history. He wrote a number of poetry books and historical novels focusing much of his attention upon the people involved in the struggles between frontier settlers and Indian

tribes in the Ohio territory. I looked up one of his books and it is embellished with many words, much like a Victorian home was embellished with lots of decoration.

An early settler of Malta suggested the name. He had spent some time on the Isle of Malta and the view of the Muskingum River prompted his memory of the Mediterranean Sea. Without the dams on the river, it was likely much more scenic.

After Malta, you cross the river into McConnelsville.

When Morgan County was formed, there was competition among many communities to gain the county seat. The men from McConnelsville slipped off unnoticed at night and traveled to Columbus and behind closed doors, gained the county seat. Today, around the town square, you can appreciate the Classic Greek style of the 1845 courthouse and the 1890 Opera house. In the basement of the Opera House are tunnels that led to hotels. Performer's walked to their dressing rooms via these tunnels.

Many beautiful homes line Main St. The Evelyn True Button House, run by the Morgan Co. Historical Society, is at 142 East Main St. It is a Victorian home that also houses a doll collection and Evelyn's father's former medical practice.

Frances Gage lived at 284 N. Kennebec St., known then as Mount Airy. She was very active in the temperance movement, and in women's suffrage. Susan B. Anthony visited the Gage family at this house.

If you notice some stained glass work in McConnelsville, it could be the work of Chuck Borsari. Borsari burned out on his political job, took a stained glass course for relaxation and realized his passion was in glasswork. He and his wife escaped to the hills of Morgan County over 30 years ago and are still here.

While in McConnelsville I had nice lunch at the Blue Bell 50s Diner. The coffee tasted super fresh. I suspect that the best meal in town is to be had at the Howard House Restaurant at 507 E. Main St. It is out by the Commons, a grassy area that was originally set aside for a military parade grounds.

If you can get to Miner's Park where the shovel from the Big Muskie is located, do it. It is up a long and steep hill on St. Rt. 78.

The thing about GOBA is that it usually leaves you with a feeling of wanting to do and see more outside of GOBA week. Today's ride will hopefully leave with you with the feeling of wanting to return and experience this great route again.

McConnellsville to Marietta

Monday, June 21

Fortunately when you leave McConnellsville this morning you stay mostly in the Muskingum River Valley. Not far out of town you pass one of the 10 dams and 11 locks installed on the Muskingum. Starting in the 1840s the locks and dams made the river commercially navigable from Marietta to where it connected up with the Ohio and Erie Canal in Dresden, a distance of 90 miles. This allowed goods to travel to markets and other shippers at Lake Erie.

The river is now run as the Muskingum River Parkway and is designated a Historic Civil Engineering Landmark. Park personnel operate the locks by hand. Pleasure boaters and history buffs travel the river and enjoy going through the locks.

On Riverview Rd. you will pass the stately Maple Grove Farm on your right. It is a private residence. There is an Ohio Historical Society marker describing it. You will also pass an octagon shaped house on your right.

Many cabins and weekend properties line the Muskingum River between McConnellsville and Stockport. There is one climb here that is very, very doable.

The snack stop is in Stockport, but if you are looking for a second breakfast, CJ's restaurant is on Main St. between 2nd and 3rd. They open early and are looking forward to some GOBA riders stopping in.

The Stockport Mill Inn is on the river overlooking one of the dams and a lock. It gets its electricity from hydroelectric generators. When there is excess electricity produced, it is sold to AEP. The output varies according to the water levels in the upper and lower pools and the difference between the two. The old generators rusted and ceased working in 2003. The mill was sold and the new owner's son rebuilt the generators using better steel than was used on the original ones. A computer runs the system and if and when the computer detects trouble, the system is shut down and an emergency power supply takes over.

Across the street from the Stockport Mill Inn is the Stockport Hardware Inn B&B.

Next you cross the Muskingum River and go by Big Bottom State Memorial. It's named Big Bottom because of its location in a wide flood plain. The memorial is to a massacre that occurred in 1791. A group of Ohio Company settlers were attacked by Delaware and Wyandot who were growing increasingly agitated by the number of settlers moving into the Ohio country. It marked the start of four years of warfare in Ohio.

You will see the AEP Muskingum River coal-fired power plant on the other side of the river.

In the heyday of steamboat traveling on the Muskingum, many people made their living on the river. Jane Macmillan, 'Old Jane,' was one of the few women who piloted boats. In the 1840s she was a co-owner of the Zanesville Packet and worked a variety of jobs on the boat. Isaac Hook, a Muskingum River pilot, also piloted a steamboat on the Mississippi during the Civil War delivering supplies to the Union Army.

Most steamboat travel was uneventful but in 1852 the Buckeye Belle's boiler exploded while it was in the canal between the locks in Beverly, killing 24 and injuring 10.

Next you pass through Beverly/Waterford and cross the Muskingum again and leave it for the most part. From here on downstream to Marietta, the river becomes more remote. There is evidence of many prehistoric Hopewell mounds and villages along the river but they aren't identifiable today to the casual observer. There were mounds in Marietta also along Sacra Via.

You roll into Marietta that lies at the confluence of the Muskingum and Ohio Rivers. This territory west of the Appalachians had been traversed, traveled, traded, trapped and squatted on for quite some time but Great Britain didn't allow settlement, nor did the newly-formed United States after the Revolution. However, many Revolutionary War soldiers were impoverished because they had received little or no pay at all. They then asked to receive shares in the form of acreage in the Northwest Territory in return for their service. The Ohio Company was formed in Boston to answer the question of state formation and to distribute the land to these soldiers.

Rufus Putnam led 48 people to the confluence of the Ohio and Muskingum Rivers in the winter of 1788 to lay out and settle Marietta, named in honor of Queen Marie Antoinette of France.

Because there was still a serious threat of Indian attack, they built a fortification called Campus Martius or 'Field of Mars.' Campus Martius had been in ancient Rome and Mars was the God of War. Fort Harmar was already there, on the opposite bank of the Muskingum, and it offered some protection, otherwise it would have been more logical for the settlers to travel further and settle in the more fertile, but unprotected valley of the Great Miami River.

They came in the winter carrying some food with them as they expected to clear the land and get crops in by spring. Bear, deer, squirrels, elk, wild turkeys, bison and wild pigeons were abundant in the Northwest Territory's forests. There was also an abundance of fish in the Ohio River and its tributaries. Squatters, who were already here, were skilled at hunting and fishing. Surprisingly though, the Ohio Company settlers had come from areas that had long been settled and so they were inexperienced in the style of hunting needed to be successful in the

vast and dangerous forest they found here. Surprisingly they weren't particularly good at fishing.

They needed to remove the trees to be able to grow crops. The only method that they had was to girdle them and wait for them to die. In the first year, the trees still had their branches and leaves and they shaded the corn crops. Not much corn, a staple that could be kept through the winter, was harvested. The Indians had been browbeaten into ceding their land north of the Ohio River and given little payment for it. They had not wanted to give up the land, so when they gathered around Marietta in late 1788 in preparation for signing additional treaties, they slaughtered a lot of game. It was first for their own use and secondly they wanted to try and starve out the settlers. They even piled some of the dead animals near the settlement. By March and April 1789, food for the settlers was very scarce. There wasn't very much money either to buy supplies from traders who came down the river from western Pennsylvania. In the next few years frost damaged most of the corn crop, and harvested corn became moldy and was indigestible.

People of the Ohio Company set out to establish more settlements and mills, especially gristmills. They chose Waterford and built a mill on Wolf Creek in 1790. There was already an area cleared, probably by Indians, where they planted crops. The Waterford Mill had to be abandoned in early 1791 with the onset of a general war with the Indians. Occasionally a party of 20 to 30 armed men would travel to the mill and grind corn.

Being from New England they were skilled at tapping Maples and making syrup but they lacked suitable kettles for boiling the sap.

Fish were abundant, but in summer, preserving the fish was a problem. Salt was scarce and expensive. Only later was salt discovered near Pomeroy, Ohio.

Even though these settler families were near starvation they were generous with each other. A backwoodsman who lived opposite Marietta had lots of land cleared and grew hundreds of bushels of corn. Speculators offered him high prices for his corn, but he sold it for regular prices to the starving settlers.

Eventually crops became more successful and game increased, but the settlers' worries weren't over. Indians continued to raid settlements particularly in Kentucky. After the massacre on Big Bottom occurred, men kept watch over each other while they worked in the fields.

It wasn't until the Treaty of Greene Ville was signed in 1795 did the settlers in Waterford and Marietta feel safe. Eventually the farmers were blessed with a surplus of corn, flour and pork. Never again were they destitute and near starvation.

Most likely you will feel well fed today and tomorrow in Marietta.

Optional Loop From Marietta

Tuesday, June 22

This is one of the prettiest rides ever. You will first climb out of the river valley but the views today are worth this initial climb. You will cross I-77 a few times and there is a gas station with snacks about 7 miles out.

GOBA snack stops will be at the Salem Liberty Elementary School. The next opportunity for food is at the Dalzell Store a little over halfway around the loop. It is a particularly nice store where you can get sandwiches made to order, drinks, etc. There is some inside seating. After that, the second GOBA snack stop will be in Stanleyville. Stanleyville may have served as a 'station' on the Underground Railroad.

Again, I would recommend this ride if you enjoy scenery.

Staying In And Around Marietta

Today you can visit the Campus Martius Museum, (hopefully) between the hours of 9:30 AM and 5 PM. It is on Putnam St. Inside it is Rufus Putnam's house restored to its original configuration when it was a part of Campus Martius. After serving in the French and Indian War and the American Revolution, Rufus Putnam became a surveyor and as such became interested in the Ohio Country. The museum displays artifacts from the original settlers as well as some Native American artifacts.

The exhibits also describe the migration of rural Ohioans to cities between the years 1850 and 1910. This affirms what you've already seen while riding here from Logan. It also describes the migration of Appalachian people from Kentucky and West Virginia to Ohio's industrial centers between 1910 and 1970. As a contemporary example, Dwight Yoakam was born in Kentucky in 1956. His family moved to Columbus, Ohio with hopes of creating a better life. One of his performance jackets is on display in the museum.

Downtown Marietta is a nice place to walk, window shop, relax over a cup of coffee, etc. There are antique stores, the Schafer leather store, Turquoise Spirit, Rossi Pasta, Barking Dog Used Books and Art Shop, dress shops, wine shops, and bakeries.

Marietta, as can be expected, experiences flooding and recovers each time. The most devastating flood on record was in 1913 when the river crested at 58.9 feet. The last major flood to occur here was in 2004 when Hurricane Ivan came through and the river rose to 45 feet, 10 feet above flood stage. After the waters receded, the community held an, "Ivan Fest," a street party to help the businesses affected by the flood and to honor the residents who helped clean up. Marietta is more interested in keeping the old rather than tearing it down and putting up new.

The Sternwheeler Festival will be held in Marietta on Sept. 10 thru 12 just in case you want to plan a return trip. The American Sternwheel Association is headquartered in the Lafayette Hotel in downtown Marietta.

The W.P. Snyder Jr. is a circa 1918 towboat normally moored in Marietta at the Ohio River Museum. It was originally built as a Carnegie Steel Co. boat and worked out of Pittsburgh towing coal on the Monongahela River. The W.P. Snyder Jr. is the only steamboat in the country that hasn't been converted into another use (a restaurant) and that still floats on a river. It is off getting its hull redone and will be back in Marietta in time for the festival.

Also in Marietta is the Valley Gem Sternwheeler, a paddleboat built for the Muskingum River. It fits below the bridges and in the locks. The paddle is propelled by a diesel engine and a generator provides electricity. The Valley Gem is named after the most successful packet boat that went between Marietta and Zanesville carrying people, animals and goods.

Marietta College traces its roots from the Muskingum Academy that was founded in 1797. The college was founded in 1835. Marietta College graduate, Edward Powell Foster and his wife created the universal language, "Ro." They published an English-Ro dictionary and related articles about the created language. He thought of it as a means for world understanding. The language structure is logical and Foster did an excellent job of promoting "Ro" but apparently no one but he and his wife used the language. They received support for working on Ro from the president of the First National Bank of Marietta, the Universal Language Society, the International Auxiliary Language Association and Dr. Melvil Dewey, of Dewey Decimal System fame. Their book, *Ru Ro Outline of a Universal Language*, was first published in 1919. It was republished a few years ago in honor of its historical significance.

Naturally I tried to translate the Great Ohio Bicycle Adventure into Ro but was unsuccessful with a direct translation. The closest that I could come up with is: to eb juli and kec in gasib, (to gather and travel in friendship.)

A bit of gossip: In 1947 Marietta College's Board of Trustees asked the then President, Dr. William Shimer to resign because he had divorced his wife and married the Dean of Women. The Board said that he wasn't setting a good example for the students. Apparently though he was a popular president. During his hearing, residents, professors and students gathered outside and paraded with signs saying, "Let him without sin, cast the first stone." Dr. Shimer was Dean of Bucknell University in Pennsylvania before coming to Marietta. I do not know where he went or what happened to him after his time at Marietta College.

Some of you may travel to Blennerhassett Island, a West Virginia State Park. In 1797, Harman Blennerhassett and his wife, Margaret (nee, Agnew), moved to

the island and lived in a blockhouse while their mansion was being built. The Blennerhassetts were originally from Ireland but left in disgrace after Harman married Margaret, who was his niece. He was 36 and she was 17.

In their new home, the couple lived a wealthy lifestyle they could ill afford. Harman conducted scientific experiments and formed an extensive private library. They lavishly entertained important people at their Ohio River home, including Aaron Burr.

In 1805-06 the Blennerhassetts financially assisted Burr in his scheme to break away the western part of the United States and spearhead a new government. This included the Ohio country. Aaron Burr had commissioned the construction of 15 flatboats on the Muskingum River and collected provisions there for a force of 500 men.

Thomas Jefferson had received word that Burr, his former vice president, was leading “a deep, dark, wicked and widespread conspiracy” to invade the Spanish colony of Mexico with a force of 7,000. Ohio Governor, Edward Tiffin, believed that Burr intended to “erect a government independent of the United States,” and ordered that the Muskingum boats be captured.

When the troops came on Dec. 9, 1806, they captured 11 of the boats, but four got away to Blennerhassett’s island.

Harman fled to Kentucky the next day. Margaret was away in Marietta. When she returned, she found that forces from both Ohio and Virginia had ransacked their home. She fled with their three children. Burr was captured and brought to trial in Virginia and acquitted of treason. Blennerhassett was released after the government failed to convict Burr.

The Blennerhassetts briefly returned to their mansion, but now destitute from Harman's support of Burr, they sought their fortunes in Mississippi. The Blennerhassetts' former home was burned either by the Virginia militia or by a former slave. Twenty slaves lived in a single building on Blennerhassett’s estate. This was allowed since the island was in Virginia, a slave state. West Virginia became a state in 1863. Cajoe Phillips, one of their former slaves, moved north to Waterford. He is buried on a hill above Waterford.

The Blennerhassett’s had a life of misery following the trial. They moved to Missouri to grow cotton, but the bottom fell out of the cotton market shortly after that. They had a total of five children but few made it to adulthood and all of the grandchildren died in infancy. The Blennerhassetts moved back to Ireland and lived with Harman’s sister. They died paupers.

There are a few Blennerhassetts in Illinois and in the United Kingdom.

During the 1980s, the Blennerhassett house was reconstructed on its original foundations.

Marietta to Athens

Wednesday, June 23

When you leave Marietta it is going to be a challenge climbing out of the rivers' valley, but it has to be done. After you are up the hill, traveling along on St. Rt. 676 makes for a nice ride.

You pass Lane's Farm Market on St. Rt. 676. Mr. Lane is the third generation owner of the farm. Like many farmers around here, they practice no-till farming.

Next you go through Churchtown. It is pretty clear that this small community was named for the inspiring steeple of the St. John the Baptist Catholic Church. It can be seen for miles around.

The General Store in Watertown opens at 7 AM. Watertown was named for Sherman Waterman who was killed by Indians in 1795. Later, Red Riding Hood Flour was ground in the mill that was on Wolf Creek. The First National Bank of Watertown was here also. The post office is in an old auditorium building and is worth seeing just by going off of St. Rt. 676 for ½ block.

After Watertown, you see Melo=Crown Stogies advertised on the side of a barn. In the 1940s they were distributed by Pollack's Wheeling and one could get 3 of them for 10 cents. I found them advertised in the sports sections of 1952-53 Pittsburgh Gazette newspapers. At that time, the Mail Pouch Tobacco Co. in Wheeling, West Virginia distributed them and they cost only 5 cents apiece. Today Melo=Crown Stogie memorabilia are collectible.

At the intersection of St. Rt. 550 and Co. Rd. 6/Burnett Rd. you are near Boord State Nature Preserve. This is not on the official GOBA route. If you wish, you can get there by turning left/south onto C.R. 6 and going ¾ mi. Take the right fork at C.R. 69 and go 1/2 mi. to the signed preserve. There is a ¾ mi. long trail that goes through a hemlock ravine, created by the Permian age Dunkard sandstone located in this area. There are state-listed threatened plants growing in the nature preserve.

In the 1920s Lon Jobs was monitoring oil well drilling in this area and he found that he had a lot of time on his hands. To pass the time he would carve figures in the soft Dunkard sandstone. An Indian head that he carved is at the end of an abandoned road near Bartlett. Its location isn't given in order to help protect it from vandals.

There is a Marathon gas station in Bartlett. As you head up and out of town there is a sandstone boulder on the left, opposite the Bartlett cemetery. It used to sit in front of an old home that was torn down a few years ago.

In Sharpsburg there is a BP Station and the Gilchrist Convenience store at the intersection of ST RT 550 and 377 if you need some snacks.

Gifford State Forest is .1 mile to the east of this intersection where there is a four-mile long trail. The trees that were planted here are genetically superior plants that produce superior seeds. These are used in the Division of Forestry's tree nurseries. The seedlings grown from these seeds are made available for reforestation on public and private lands.

Next you come into Amesville where you find Kasler's Country Kitchen, Gifford Park and Manna House. This is the second time in just a few miles that you've run into the name Gifford.

Gifford actually relates to William Gifford Selby from Marietta. In 1908 William married Marie, a local girl. They followed reports from the first transcontinental automobile race between Seattle and New York. They then decided to drive the course themselves so loaded their touring car with spare parts and camping equipment. They made the trip in six fewer days than the winning car. Marie Selby became the first woman to cross the country by automobile.

William's father formed the Selby Oil and Gas Company and William was a partner in the company. It became one of the country's principal drilling firms and in 1948, the company merged with Texaco.

The Selbys became quite wealthy and moved to Sarasota, Florida where today you may visit the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens and other Selby landmarks. The Selbys didn't have any children but shortly before William died in 1956 he set up the Selby Foundation to give financial help for furthering people's education.

How it is that William Gifford Selby donated the land for Gifford State Forest land in 1959 must have been a result of the foundation granting the donation. The provision made for the forest is that it be used for research and experimentation. The Selby's or the Selby Foundation must have given a donation for Gifford Park in Amesville. Or the other theory is that it was actually Frank Gifford from Sharpsburg who gave the property. Frank Gifford had a huge and rambling hardware store in Sharpsburg. He also owned a lot of land in Amesville.

At the corner of Harrison and Liberty Streets you can enjoy a unique sculpture garden. GOBA riders have permission to view the sculptures but be aware that they are on private property. Loder Lampela created these sculptures. He received his Masters in Fine Arts in Mexico. He taught welding at Tri-County Joint Vocational School in Nelsonville. He's had art shows featuring his sculpture and painting. Mr. Lampela died a few years ago but happily his legacy is still leaving a mark in Athens County. He was a positive force in Amesville and once served as the town's mayor.

Amesville's sign proudly proclaims the founding of the Coonskin Library. In 1803 the people of Amesville met to discuss the needs and conditions of their new community. Even though this was a rough spot carved from the wilderness, the people here desired reading material. It was mentioned that everyone in town had to share one newspaper that when it finally arrived here, was already two weeks out of date.

They decided to raise money to buy some books but the trouble was that there wasn't much money in town since most transactions occurred through barter. What they did have were fur-bearing animals living in the surrounding forests. So residents donated pelts, mostly from raccoons. The following spring, Samuel Brown and Ephraim Cutler went east with the pelts and sold them. With the money raised they bought 51 books on religion, travel, biography and history and brought them back to Amesville. The books circulated among the citizens until Ephraim Cutler was named librarian.

These original 'coonskin books' are at the Ohio Historical Society, and in Ohio University's Alden Library. The Coonskin Library Museum will have a display at the snack stop in the Grange Hall.

Amesville is on Federal and McDougal Creeks and that makes the town prone to flooding. In 1998 eight inches of rain fell on the surrounding hills. This put State Street under nine feet of water. Some buildings were razed and the town hall was moved to higher ground.

When you come into town on St. Rt. 550 you may notice a cool set of steps over your left shoulder and a white frame Methodist church over your right. Behind the church is a trailer full of canoes. Apparently the canoes' owner paddled one into a house during the 1998 flood. The home's previous owner, an environmentally-minded person who moved to the property where he runs his nursery business, constructed the steps. Athens County is rediscovering its agricultural roots after coal and other resource extraction practices. Athens Countians also embrace arts and crafts as reflected in these steps.

About a half mile west of Amesville was the small village of Mudsock. It is now gone. The first word, mud, is self explanatory since Mudsock was along Federal Creek and I'm sure that in the early days horses could be up to their withers in mud. The second word is believed to have been derived from an old Norse word, sokka, meaning 'to cause to sink.'

It's another 6 or 7 miles to the Athens campground from here and Athens, for all of its earthy-arty nature, may seem fairly cosmopolitan after today's beautifully rural ride.

Athens Century

Thursday, June 24

When you first head out of Athens you will ride up Dairy Lane, a brick road. It goes by the former Athens Lunatic Asylum built in 1874. The extensive complex of buildings is now called the Ridges. On Dairy Lane, you go past the State Psychiatry Cemetery Entrance where you can take a walk. This is only one of the cemeteries associated with the old mental hospital.

When a person died while a resident here, the state gave them a small, white stone with only a patient number on it. Hospital records tell who belongs to which number. Family members could choose to install more complete grave markers. The Civil War left shell-shocked (post traumatic stress disorder) veterans in its wake and a number of them lived and died here. Metal, veteran's plaques accompany their graves. The country as a whole responded to this need with similar facilities.

Herman Haerlin, who studied under Frederick Law Olmstead (the designer of Central Park), designed the hospital grounds. The grounds were originally much more elaborate and featured a park like-setting with ponds, a spring and a waterfall. Local citizens came here for picnics and outings. These features were removed when freeway interchanges were built at the bottom of the hill and the Hocking River rerouted.

When the asylum first opened it was a wonderful and effective place even though the diagnoses were (as we now know) misguided. Patient numbers matched the space that the hospital was designed to hold.

Contrary to today's practices, many lobotomy treatments were performed here in an effort to treat violent patients. Lobotomies were successful except patients became listless. Later, medications were introduced and while less brutal and nonfatal, they produced results similar to those gained by a lobotomy.

Billy Milligan was the most notorious patient to be housed here in more contemporary times. In 1977 Billy Milligan, convicted of rape, was the first person to have a successful insanity plea after he was diagnosed with multiple personalities. When Milligan roamed Athens unsupervised, he was transferred to the Lima State Hospital for the Criminally Insane. In 1982 he was transferred back to Athens. Later he escaped and was found in Miami and returned to Athens. The court freed him from all state oversight. Billy Milligan was last known to be living in California in 2000 and there has been talk of making a movie about him. In the "The book was better than the movie category," *The Minds of Billy Milligan*, by Daniel Keyes is a great read.

1972 was the final year for patient internment at the hospital. By 1981 there were fewer than 300 patients. The hospital closed in 1993 and Ohio University

took over renovating the main building into offices and galleries into what is now called 'The Ridges.'

Today you can visit The Kennedy Museum of Art in Lin Hall up at 'The Ridges.' There will be a number of displays, e.g., the architectural drawings for the asylum, "Cultural Order/Natural Chaos Sculptures and Drawings' by Sunkoo Yuh and sand painting weavings.

On the other side of Dairy Rd. is the Southeastern Dairy Barn Cultural Arts Center. The exhibit at this time is, "Quilting Traditions: The Art of the Amish." Admission is between \$3.50 - \$5.00. Volunteers will be available to lead you on barn tours. The Dairy Barn was originally built and owned by the Athens State Hospital. When it was no longer needed, the barn faced razing but local citizens saved it and turned it into this nonprofit art center. Like The Ridges, it is on the National Register of Historic Places.

On Baker Rd. you will see an interesting yard filled with homemade yard art from found objects.

You come into Albany where there is a BP gas station.

By the 1950s, 90% of the population of Albany was made up of African Americans because of its location along the Underground Railroad.

Over the decades there have been a surprising number of educational institutions in Albany. Lamira Lewis, who came to Ohio via Oberlin College, started a private school in Albany in her parent's home. With the success of Lamira's school, her parents started the Lewis Academy in a separate building.

The townspeople formed a stockholding company and purchased the Lewis Academy. They continued the liberal practice of the school by admitting women and African Americans. The name was changed to the Albany Manual Training Academy. In the 1850s 300 students were enrolled and 80 were in the collegiate department while Ohio University had 78. The manual training aspect of the university taught farming, brick making and how to run a sawmill.

Eventually the school couldn't pay its debts and it was taken over by the Cambellite Church a.k.a., the Disciples of Christ Church. The school continued in its reduced state as Franklin College but the manual training courses were eliminated and African Americans were no longer admitted. Franklin College was moved to Wilmington, Ohio where the facilities were sold to the Quakers and it became Wilmington College.

The Baptist-run Atwood Institute in Albany was an all-white school but didn't receive much support so it too faded away. In 1850 people who objected to the Atwood Institute started the Citizen's Academy, a racially-integrated school, but it lasted only five years.

The Enterprise Academy in Albany was founded by African Americans for African American students and was likely the first school in the country of this nature. It did receive heavy support from locally important people. By the end of the 1870s, the enrollment at the Enterprise Academy began to drop as there were burgeoning free alternatives to education and segregation began to decline. The women's dormitory was destroyed by fire and it was uninsured. The school closed in 1886.

T.J. Ferguson had been the president of the Enterprise Academy and a cofounder of the Ohio Colored Teacher's Association. He also served on the Albany City Council and was the first African American to serve on a jury in Athens County.

Just south of Albany you enter Meigs County. As you ride through here it shouldn't come as any surprise to find out that Meigs County is one of the poorest counties in Ohio and has the least per capita income at \$16,436. The population of Meigs has dropped from 29,813 in 1890, when there was coal mining here, to 22,838 in 2009.

The Harrisonville fire station is today's official lunch stop at mile 29. There is also a small, former gas station on St. Rt. 143 that houses a modest store.

North of Harrisonville, on the right side of St. Rt. 684 I photographed a rock standing alone on the side of a hill. I read about a Devil's Tea Table of Harrisonville and wondered if this was it. There is mention of a Devil's Tea Table Rock that was near McConnelsville. (It either fell down or was taken out with dynamite in the early 1900s.). Reputedly the Harrisonville Devil's Tea Table had the perfect size depression and even convenient tie down spots for holding a man to the rock. The blood of white men would spill out because of the tilt of the rock. This seems like a useful story to keep children from playing on the boulder.

The 57-mile loop turns north at Darwin to return to Athens. There are just a few houses in Darwin. Along the way at about the 46-mile mark is an organized water stop, with restrooms, in the community center in the tiny burg of Shade. Never let it be said that GOBA hasn't provided you with 'Shade.' The Lodi General Store is also here.

At the 37-mile point, the Century loop continues south. Four miles later, where the GOBA route crosses St. Rt. 7 at Five Points where you will find a gas station and fast food for food on your own just to the left.

Not far from your ride on Eagle Ridge in the Shade River Valley, Ambrose Bierce was born. His family moved when he was four so he wouldn't have remembered life in Meigs County. Bierce was a prolific writer and his work tended to the cynical. His most famous work is *An Occurrence at Owl Creek*

Bridge and three movies have been made of that story. His disappearance in Mexico after he joined Pancho Villa's army as an observer in 1913, was one of the great mysteries of the time.

Next you will leave the Ridges and enter the Ohio River Valley proper. The Belleville Locks and Dam are on your right and you can pull in there and look at the dam and make use of the restrooms and water fountain.

Reeds Country Store is in Reedsville.

When you head up and leave the Ohio River, you will be riding through the Shade River Forest. It is dotted with natural gas wells that were installed in the 1930s, 40s and 50s.

In Tupper's Plains, at the 71-mile mark, pick up your well-deserved Century patch at Washburn's Dairyyette from the fine volunteers of Meig's County Tourism. Please thank them for their help on GOBA and later, take a look at their website, www.meigscountytourism.com.

Also in Tupper's Plains is a BP gas station to your left. If you turn right/north onto St. Rt. 7 you can get to Annie's Place less than a half mile away. It is a sit-down, informal restaurant.

The Century continues west through Alfred and Flora where there are no services. In Alfred, where I took a wrong turn, I ended up turning around in a cemetery up on a hill where I found an Indian mound.

Very soon you go through Darwin and the Welcome Stop in Shade. The Lodi General Store is in Shade.

Next you reenter Athens via a well-deserved and screaming descent that darn-it-all should be done with caution.

Athens to McArthur

Friday, June 25th

The Hockhocking Adena Bikeway that you take this morning travels along the Hocking River and a good bit of it is through riverine forest and goes by sandstone cliffs. The woods will be rich with birds, mammals and a great diversity of plants. The spring wildflowers have faded so it may be difficult to appreciate the biological diversity along the path because most of us will just see green vegetation. An OU student did a plant survey along the bikeway. The list showed 250 plant species native to Ohio and 88 nonnative species. Copperhead snakes have been sighted on this path so if you see a snake that you can't identify, just leave it alone.

While in Nelsonville you may notice a large white cross up on a hill. Mr. Walter (Bud) Schwartz had it erected in his wife's, Betty's, memory in 1973. When it was first installed, newspapers in both Europe and here in the U.S. ran pictures of it as the "World's Largest Metal Cross."

The body of the cross is 4 feet by 4 feet, the cross arm is 25 feet in length and the body is 65 feet tall. It is anchored to a base of concrete that rises 8 feet above the hilltop. The cross is lit at night and Mr. Schwartz paid the electric bill each year until his death. A trust fund that he had set up took over after he that. Mr. and Mrs. Schwartz lived in Columbus but Betty had grown up in Nelsonville and often said that she missed her hometown.

In 1981 strong winds damaged the Cross. Bud was not a rich man. He sold his home and moved into a trailer so he could help with the rebuilding costs. The Cross was put back in place and then vandals damaged the Cross' lighting system and each time the bulbs were replaced, vandals broke them again.

Then in 1996, a Nelsonville bank president wanted to get the Cross lit again. He organized the bank's board of directors and local volunteers and got the Cross wired in such a way to make it more difficult for vandals to darken it. Betty finally got her wish and both she and Bud are both buried in Nelsonville.

In Nelsonville's Historic Public Square is the 1879 Stuart Opera House. In the canalng days, George Stuart ran a showboat, The Arizona up until the Arizona sank in the Ohio and Erie Canal. Stuart returned to the then booming coal-mining town of Nelsonville with a plan to build an opera house.

Th Opera House hosted entertainers and local events, such as graduations, all the way up until 1924. Then it sat empty and quiet for 50 years until a non-profit organization formed to restore and use the Opera House as a theatre and cultural arts center.

In 1980 fire gutted Stuart's Opera House. It was rehabbed again and the building has served as the center of Nelsonville's cultural life since 1997.

Also around the Historic Square in Nelsonville are galleries and a coffee shop. You may want to browse here for a while. The other great place to shop is the Rocky Outdoor Gear Outlet Store located at the end of the bike path.

Rocky Boots was started in 1932 as The William Brooks Shoe Company. Up until a few years ago, Rocky Shoes and Boots was one of the few remaining shoemakers in the United States.

Their bread and butter products are hunt and work boots. Over the years they've acquired and developed other lines, such as casual footwear, socks, inner soles, and outdoor apparel.

The shoe manufacturing industry in the United States was at an all time high in the 1950s. Between 1970 and 1980 over 300 domestic shoe manufacturers

closed their doors permanently. Dropping import prices were strangling Rocky Boots. In 1979 the owner asked for a 50 cent increase per pair and the primary distributor of Rocky Boots balked at the increase and agreed to pay it only until they could find a cheaper source for the boots.

The shoe industry resurged somewhat in the US with an increase in specialty shoes. The Rocky name was adopted along with more savvy marketing. Rocky sounded tough and all-American and a picture of a Big Horn Sheep was associated with Rocky Boots. Even though shoe manufacturing was declining in the U.S., Rocky Boots stayed the course of domestic manufacturing by being an early adopter of Gore-tex boots. However, by 2000 the company had gone public and the Board of Directors wanted to see greater profits and manufacturing went overseas.

To date, Nelsonville's most famous citizen is Sarah Jessica Parker. She was born here in 1965, one of eight children. Her family moved to promote her career.

Robbins Crossing is a reconstructed village of log buildings set in 1850 Ohio. It was built in conjunction with Hocking College as a stage for environmental students to practice their craft.

Heading south on Kimberly and Carbondale Rds. out of Nelsonville you enter Zaleski State Forest for some really pretty riding. There is a hill at Carbondale before you turn onto St. Rt. 56. Just make it up this hill and the rest of today's ride is more on the order of rolling. Early in the 20th century the Carbondale Coal Company ran a number of mines in this area and was the main employer. There aren't any jobs here and the small collection of mobile homes and burned buildings that are still standing reflect this.

Zaleski Forest has one of the earliest white pine plantations planted by the state. Some interesting plants along with a few orchids grow in this pine forest. Wild boars, wild pigs, wild hogs or razorbacks are different names for the same animals. These feral pigs have escaped from hunting preserves and are living in Zaleski Forest. Hunters may hunt them since they are nonnative and destructive to wildlife habitat and eat ground nesting bird eggs, reptiles and amphibians. Reports say that boar meat is good to eat.

On St. Rt. 278 is the chimney left over from Hope Furnace, an iron smelting furnace that was in operation in the late 1800s. Opposite the furnace is the beginning of a hiking trail. All of the trails combined on this side of St. Rt. 278 add up to 25 miles. The Olds Hollow trail goes by the Pioneer Cemetery and is 1.5 miles long. Next you go by Lake Hope where you can swim at the beach, rent canoes, kayaks, rowboats and paddleboats by the hour or you can just hang out for awhile. Also, a special here just for GOBA: feed hummingbirds. Learn to

feed them by hand and how to make a hummingbird feeder. Look for signs pointing to this activity.

The town of Zaleski was named for Peter Zaleski, a Polish exile who lived in Paris. Back in the 1800s when a geologist discovered coal and iron ore in this area investors were needed to extract and develop the resources. Nobody could come up with the money here so one man sailed to Europe. He found a willing and wealthy investor in Peter Zaleski. Zaleski was a banker and a financial agent for wealthy Polish exiles. The man then sailed back and was able to buy up thousands of acres of land and convince the railroad to come through here. The Zaleski iron furnace was built, but the chimney cracked almost right after firing which was repaired with a liner. Zaleski was a mining town but it never prospered in part because of the Financial Panic of 1857. The Panic began with the loss of an Ohio bank, but spread as railroads failed, American businesses failed and Americans feared that the US government couldn't pay its debts. The impact of the Panic finally eased with the onset of the Civil War.

Peter Zaleski never came here even though he invested close to a million dollars in the land, railroad line, laying out the company town, getting houses built, and setting up the coal mines. One time when he was expected, the townspeople built him a 'castle,' in his honor. A lady who had waited on Queen Victoria, oversaw it. Charles Dickens stayed overnight in the castle and great preparations were made for him. They painted the horses' hoofs gold and decorated their manes and tails in British colors. The castle was later dismantled and the parts were sent elsewhere and possibly used on the modest homes here in Zaleski.

When you get to US 50 you are in Prattsville. Twelve years ago a pilot made a forced landing here. He said that the cause of the incident was that the plane had reached its "fuel endurance." We've all reached our own "fuel endurance."

US 50 was laid out by Duncan McArthur in 1799 and called College Township Road. It connected two reserves of land set aside for the establishment of Ohio's first two land grant colleges, Ohio University and Miami University in Oxford.

McArthur is the county seat of Vinton County. Vinton County is the least populated county in Ohio with 12,806 residents. McArthur itself tips the scales at around 1900 people. McArthur gained importance way when US 50 came through, but the railroad went south of town and activity at that time centered around the railroad.

A brick plant operated south of McArthur from 1906 to 1963. Today lumber, especially treated lumber, comes out of McArthur.

The thing about McArthur and its people is that even though they are few in number they have a can-do attitude that makes them unmistakable citizens of the universe. There is the only collection of biographies that doesn't put me to sleep.

As a sampling, Frank Nixon, Richard Nixon's father came from this area. Their biographies are straight forward in how they lived and then lost their lives. They lost them in skating accidents, mining accidents, automobile accidents, in the Civil War, in childbirth, in an explosion at the Austin Powder Plant. It was common for children to never make it out of infancy. They worked as farmers, coal miners, carpenters, coal washers, sawyers, teachers, truck drivers and railroaders working as engineers, train dispatchers and telegraphers. Some of them became CCC workers hired to build the Lake Hope Dam during the Depression. Their marriage licenses are framed and hanging in living rooms.

They have first names reminiscent of the days of flowered wallpaper and front porch sitting. Try not to think of those things when you hear, Ella, Flora, Malissa, Eli, Homer, Emma, Jarrot, Octa, Luther, Ora, Adda, Velma, or Cyrus.

The Trinity Episcopal Church is a fine landmark built of McArthur brick. It was designed and built in the Gothic Revival style and resembles an English country chapel.

McArthur to Logan

Saturday, June 26

Today there are trees and fields and rolling terrain. I truly and honestly couldn't come up with anything to write about today's route.

It seems as if everyone: the forgotten and displaced Native Americans, the beleaguered African Americans, the relatively prosperous coal mine operators, and the downtrodden laborers all had difficult lives. Economic depressions hit the hardest in non-diverse economies, like those found in the coal-mining towns. The wildly successful leave southeastern Ohio and the people who love it here either return or never leave. Strong patriotism towards country is boldly displayed on barn roofs, flags, etc. Ironically it lives alongside a strong independent spirit that is manifested in outlaw behavior. It was sold as 'New Straitsville Special' in the 1920s and could possibly be sold as 'Meigs County Gold' today.

Involuntary institutionalization of the mentally ill began after the Civil War and started to be phased out in the 1960s. Governments make grants based on populations and the low populations here don't reflect the need.

If you don't already have your own particular love affair going on with Appalachia Ohio, I hope there is now a flicker of interest.

Julia Schmitt