

## MINGO JUNCTION—THERE'S SO MUCH MORE!



All along the banks of the Ohio River are communities whose histories go back to the earliest days of our country. The Village

of Mingo Junction is no exception. Founded in 1770, Mingo Junction was originally home to the Mingo Indians. Maps from the 1750s show a settlement of Mingo Indians in an area called "Mingo Bottom", which is present-day Mingo Junction.

On a trip to inspect the lands for locating claims, Colonel George Washington passed through the area in October 1770 from Fort Pitt. He actually surveyed the area from Brown's Island to Cross Creek in Mingo. As he described in his diary, there was a steady snowfall all day. The area was inhabited by seventy members of the Six Nations as well as an abundance of wild life including geese, ducks and turkeys. On a return trip in November, Washington recognized the commercial possibilities of the river.

He was right. Mingo Junction started to develop as the county entered the industrial age. The river made it a marketable location for heavy metal manufacturing. The coal found in the surrounding mountains was an asset in the production of steel, which Mingo helped to provide to build the country.

Although Mingo became a railroad junction in 1853, was the land place for supplies during the building of the S&I Railroad, was a camp during the Civil War and was considered the leading figure in the county's history, there was no resemblance of a village until 1869. At that time, there was one small frame house and a railway station. Although the area had been referred to as "Mingo" for a century and a half, "Junction" had to be added once a town was actually established since another post office in the state was using the same name.



Woody Hays

The Village can boast of being the hometown of several notable people. In 1916, 24-year old Bill Batsch broke into the big league when he began playing for the Pittsburgh Pirates. Emil Drzayick, Jr. played baseball for the Cincinnati Reds. Joe Fortunato played for the

Chicago Bears and the Cleveland Browns and Art Strutt played for the Steelers. Clyde Marshall played fullback for Ohio State University in 1948 and may have been Mingo's first Buckeye football player. And, although not a Mingo native, Woody Hayes began his coaching career at Mingo High School.

There have been prizefighters: Pete Drazich was the South Pacific Heavyweight Champion and John Weldy was the champ of the Atlantic fleet during World War I.

The band, Wild Cherry with Rob Parise, had a number one hit song in 1976. Before Kool there were "Spud" cigarettes. Lloyd "Spud" Hughes invented the first menthol cigarette in the early 1920s. He sold the patent in 1924, and Spud became the fifth largest selling cigarette in the nation by 1932.



The Village has its claim to fame in Hollywood, too. Several movies or scenes were filmed there such as *All the Marbles* starring Peter Falk, *Reckless* with Daryl Hannah, and most notably, *The Deer Hunter* with Robert DeNiro and Meryl Streep.

Take a walk down the streets of this village of 3,631 in population, and you can still see the remnants of the past. At the base of Commercial Street is the watering trough at what was known as Potter Spring. Several buildings are listed on the National Register of Historic Places including Central High School (aka Mingo Junction High School) and a section of Commercial Street between McLister and Highland Avenues, was designated an historic district in 1987.



Watering Trough at Potter Spring

Mingo Junction, Ohio—a small manufacturing community that's made an impact not only in the region but in the country.