

COMMUNITY PROFILE: MT. PLEASANT, OHIO

It was a primary stop on the Underground Railroad. The first abolitionist newspaper in the United States, the "Philanthropist," was published there. It was the site of Ohio's first abolitionist convention. It was home to Moses Fleetwood Walker, the first African American to play major league professional baseball.

Originally known as Jesse Bob Town, the Village of Mount Pleasant was established in 1803 by Robert Carothers, an Irishman from Virginia, and Jesse Thomas, a Quaker from North Carolina. Incorporated in 1814, the village was home to many Quakers who came to the area to escape the slavery controversy.



East Main Street Early 1900's

As early as 1817, slaves were making their way to Mount Pleasant where they knew they would receive help in their quest for freedom. The number of slaves crossing the Ohio River working their way towards Mount

Pleasant increased to the extent the village became a well-known station of the Underground Railroad.

The local residents built a school for free black children, and established a Free Labor Store in 1857. The store sold no products that were produced by slave labor. By 1820, the village was a center for pork packing and shipping and for the milling industry. It also boasted the largest wheat market in the state.

Many historical buildings line the streets of Mount Pleasant including the Free Labor Store which is thought to be the only one of its type still in existence. Several stations of the Underground Railroad – the John Hogg Home, the George K. Jenkins Home, as well as the Free Labor Store – are still standing. The Quaker Meeting House, built in 1814, is listed on the National Register.

The residents of this small village of 535 (2000 Census) can certainly be proud of the major historical contribution made to not only the state, but also the nation.



The Quaker Boarding School



The Quaker Meeting House, built in 1814, was the first yearly Quaker meeting house west of the Alleghenies.

The building which can hold up to 2,000 people, has an auditorium with a balcony. Because the Quaker men and women met separately, the auditorium can be divided into two rooms by lowering a wooden partition.



First opened in 1867, Mount Pleasant High School was the first public high school in the area.

The first public school, however, opened in 1835. Previously children attended private or Quaker schools.

The Mount Pleasant Historical Society offers tours conducted by costumed guides from April through October. Reservations are required. For more information, call the Historical Society at 1-800-752-2631 or (740) 769-2893.