

COMMUNITY PROFILE - WINTERSVILLE, OH

What makes the Village of Wintersville, Ohio unique? According to Mary Sanders, who contributed to a booklet written for the 1972 Wintersville Community Days, it's because Main Street has always been in almost the same location today as it was in Indian times. The name of the street has changed—including being "Steubenville Street" at one point - but throughout the course of time, people have traveled that same path to pass through the Village on foot, on horseback, driving wagons and eventually motor vehicles.



Little, if anything, remains of the Village as it looked in 1800 when two brothers, Isaac and Isaiah Winters settled in the area. The original plan, actually designed by Isaac's son, John, in 1831, included 40 lots laid out in a double row on each side of the road which is now Main Street. All the lots had 60-foot frontage and were 160 feet deep. The first house was built by Mr. Greelin, and the first business was a hotel and store owned by one of the Winters brothers. And, although Steubenville was so close for shopping, Wintersville had its own resources. There was a boot shop and sewing machine shop. Mr. John Ross was the village undertaker who even made his own caskets. Entrepreneurship was alive and well in the 1800s. One homemaker collected rags and old carpets and reweave them into new rugs for sale. Another lady collected hair and wove them into hair switches.

It was a tight-knit community where the residents looked out for each other and enjoyed life together. In the spring and summer, peddlers would arrive in their wagons selling their wares. There was an Italian man who came weekly with a fresh assortment of fruits. There were medicine shows—and there were the gypsies who would come in caravans selling trinkets and telling fortunes.

The Village witnessed Morgan's Raid although details vary. It is believed that on Saturday, July 25, 1863, a skirmish took place at the Two Ridge Presbyterian Church at the intersection of State Route 43 and U.S. 22. where Morgan was overtaken by the 9th Michigan Calvary of Monroe County, Michigan. Two men were gravely wounded, and a third died and is buried in the cemetery by the church. There is also a report that during the raid a young lady, Margaret Dougherty, was mortally wounded when she leaned out the window to observe the skirmish. Another source noted she recovered from her wounds.

Besides the Presbyterian Church, two other historic buildings remain. The first is the Wintersville Grange on Fernwood Road. Although the grange was established in 1905, a permanent building wasn't erected until 1914. The grange was a source of social life for the residents and has the distinction of being the first in Jefferson County.



The other is a one-room school building located on Bantam Ridge Road where children would gather on the lawn at recess and play games or sit under the massive oak trees and sip a cool drink of water drawn from the old well—or in the wintertime huddle around the pot-bellied stove inside to keep warm.



Those days are history. Gone are the old farms, the boot shop, the feed store, the people who struggled through the depression and sending their loved ones off to war. What remains is a legacy of a people who worked hard and took pride in their community—just like the people who live there today.