

The City of Moraine Historical Markers Map



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City of Moraine Historical Markers: a self guided tour

1) Soldiers Home Road

Following the Civil War, Union veterans were provided domiciliary care, medical and hospital treatment for all injuries and diseases. Indigent and disabled veterans received care at the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers located four miles north on Gettysburg Ave. Many veterans traveled this road to reach the "Soldiers Home." Other Civil War road names in Moraine include Union and Infirmary Roads.

2) Laughead Log Cabin

The former site of a log cabin built in 1803 by David Laughead, a Revolutionary War veteran, great-grandfather of William B. Laughead, creator of Paul Bunyan stories. The 1 ½ story cabin featured a winding, narrow ladder stairway to the second floor and "steeple notching" or upward cuts where the logs meet at the corners.

3) The Pinnacles

The Pinnacles consisted of a gorge with unique large boulders created during the ice age on its slopes. The strange geologic rock formations (also known as the Devil's Backbone) overlooks the Great Miami River. The updraft created by the terrain attracted soaring birds. From 1897 to 1899 the Wright brothers biked here and observed buzzards (turkey vultures) soaring gracefully above the river valley. In the summer of 1899, while watching the birds at Pinnacle Hill twist the tips of their wings as they soared into the wind, the Wright brothers developed their wing warping theory.

4) Johnny Appleseed Site

In the 1820's during a hike from Urbana to Cincinnati, John "Johnny Appleseed" Chapman planted a grove of apple trees just west of Dorf Dr. in German Village. On September 23, 2010, honoring the 236th birthday of John Chapman, Moraine rededicated a plaque and planted four second generation apple trees from seeds originally planted by Johnny Appleseed.

5) First Schoolhouse

In 1885, Moraine's first schoolhouse was a brick building built on land the township board of education bought at the corner of Vance and Pinnacle Roads. Albert Patterson was the first teacher. In 1890, attendance at District No. 12 school was 14 but in 1891 only six children attended. Today the former schoolhouse is a private residence.

6) Crume Brick Company

In 1848, early settler Jacob Hammel purchased a canal boat, trafficked on the Miami & Erie Canal for three months and then manufactured brick for five years. The brick company was known then as the Crume Brick Company, the oldest industry in Moraine. After quitting the brick company, Mr. Hammel devoted his attention to farming making a specialty of tobacco.

7) Wright Seaplane Base

A quarter mile south at the inner bend of the Great Miami River was one of the world's first seaplane bases. The Wright brothers tested their hydro-aeroplanes in 1912 along this stretch of the river. May 2013 marked the 100th anniversary of the first public demonstration of the Wright Model C-H Hydro-aeroplane flown by Orville Wright and mechanic William Jacobs.

8) The Ohio Electric Railway Company

The Ohio Electric Railway Company was an interurban system formed in 1907 and ran from Toledo to Cincinnati until 1927. This system provided efficient passenger service to scores of small towns in western Ohio between these major cities. In the early 1900's most rural roads were unpaved and primarily traveled by horse drawn buggies and wagons. In wet weather and in winter, these roads were often impassable. The OERC lines ran behind Ellery and Fulton Avenues.

9) Great Miami Turnpike

The dirt road constructed in 1840 connected Dayton to Cincinnati. Traveled by foot, horse, wagon or stagecoach was eventually paved with Macadam (compacted broken stone). The road is still one of southwest Ohio's main north-south roads.

10) Zion Memorial Church

The first church in Moraine was Zion Memorial United Church of Christ and cemetery established in 1820. The first church was built of logs with a stone foundation. Between 1820 and 1826, the first ministers were circuit riders on horseback. The congregation erected a two story brick building dedicated in May 1860. In 1886 and again in May of 1933 the church survived tornado damage to the roof, steeple and structure.

11) Famous Historical Street Names

When the plat was developed around 1916 by Charles Kettering and Edward Deeds for housing development for workers at nearby Dayton Wright Airplane Company, the streets were named for famous scientist Thomas Edison (renamed Blanchard Ave. for Thomas Blanchard Assembly Line) Charles Steinmetz (electrical wizard), Guglielmo Marconi (radio) and Robert Fulton (steamboats and first practical sub and torpedoes).

12) Historic Blanchard Ave.

In 1917 fourteen homes were built on Edison Ave. (now Blanchard Ave.). Gas Lines were installed, the street paved and sidewalks, curbing and gutters provided. The houses were occupied by workers at Dayton-Wright Airplane Factory. The homes appear to be Sears Roebuck and Company mail-order homes. These homes could be ordered from catalogs from 1908 to 1937 and were shipped pre-cut, numbered and blueprinted to fit together. The homes ranged from \$650 to \$2,500. Charles Kettering and Colonel Edward Deeds named the other street names in this neighborhood in honor of famous inventors Charles Steinmetz, Marchese Marconi and Robert Fulton.

13) Dayton-Wright Airplane Company

As part of the newly formed Moraine Development Company owned by Adam Schantz, Colonel Edward Deeds and Charles Kettering, the Dayton-Wright Airplane Factory was completed in 1917. Experimental work in the history of flight was performed in Moraine. Together with Orville Wright and H.E. Talbot the Delco-Light building was used to manufacture the country's first bomber: the DeHavilland DH-4. Of the 4,846 planes built in the US, 3,106 were built in Moraine for use in World War I. After the war, this building was used by Frigidaire Division of General Motors.

14) Delco-Light & Frigidaire

Owners of the Moraine Development Company, Charles Kettering and Colonel Edward Deeds, formed the Dayton Engineering Laboratories Company (DELCO) and experimented with the starting, lighting and ignition systems for automobiles. After inventing the self-starter, DELCO manufactured the systems. In 1915, Kettering invented the Delco-Light set which enabled isolated farms—previously lit by kerosene, candles or gas, if available—to utilize electricity. The sets were manufactured on this site in Moraine with that building later used by the Frigidaire Company for the manufacture of self-contained refrigerators.

15) Moraine Field

Dayton's first Municipal Airport was owned by Bernard Whelan and Howard Rinehart, test pilots at the Dayton-Wright Airplane Company. In April 1926, Rinehart-Whelan offered to the City of Dayton, without cost, the Moraine Flying Field for use as a Municipal Landing Field for visiting commercial airplanes. In August 1926, Dayton City Manager F.O. Eichelberger agrees to have a sign painted on the hangar roof "Moraine Field, Dayton Municipal Airport" for a fee of \$70. Although Dayton does not sign an agreement to own, lease or operate it, the airport remains in private hands and serves as Dayton's "official municipal airport" until 1928 when airmail service was switched to Wright Field in Dayton.

16) Miami & Erie Canal

Construction began in 1835 and was completed in 1845. Beginning in Toledo and ending in Cincinnati creating a water route from Lake Erie to the Ohio River. Boats up to 80 feet long were towed along the canal by donkeys, horses or oxen on a prepared towpath. The canal ran along this site in Moraine from West Carrollton to Carillon Park. Canal Lock 22 was located at the corner of Dryden Road and East River Road. The canal was abandoned for commercial use after the historic 1913 flood damaged it.

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"A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots."

- Marcus Garvey

For additional information and historical photos visit
ci.moraine.oh.us/historical-markers