

# GEAUGA DEFINED





William S. Young  
President



Mary E. Samide



Craig S. Albert

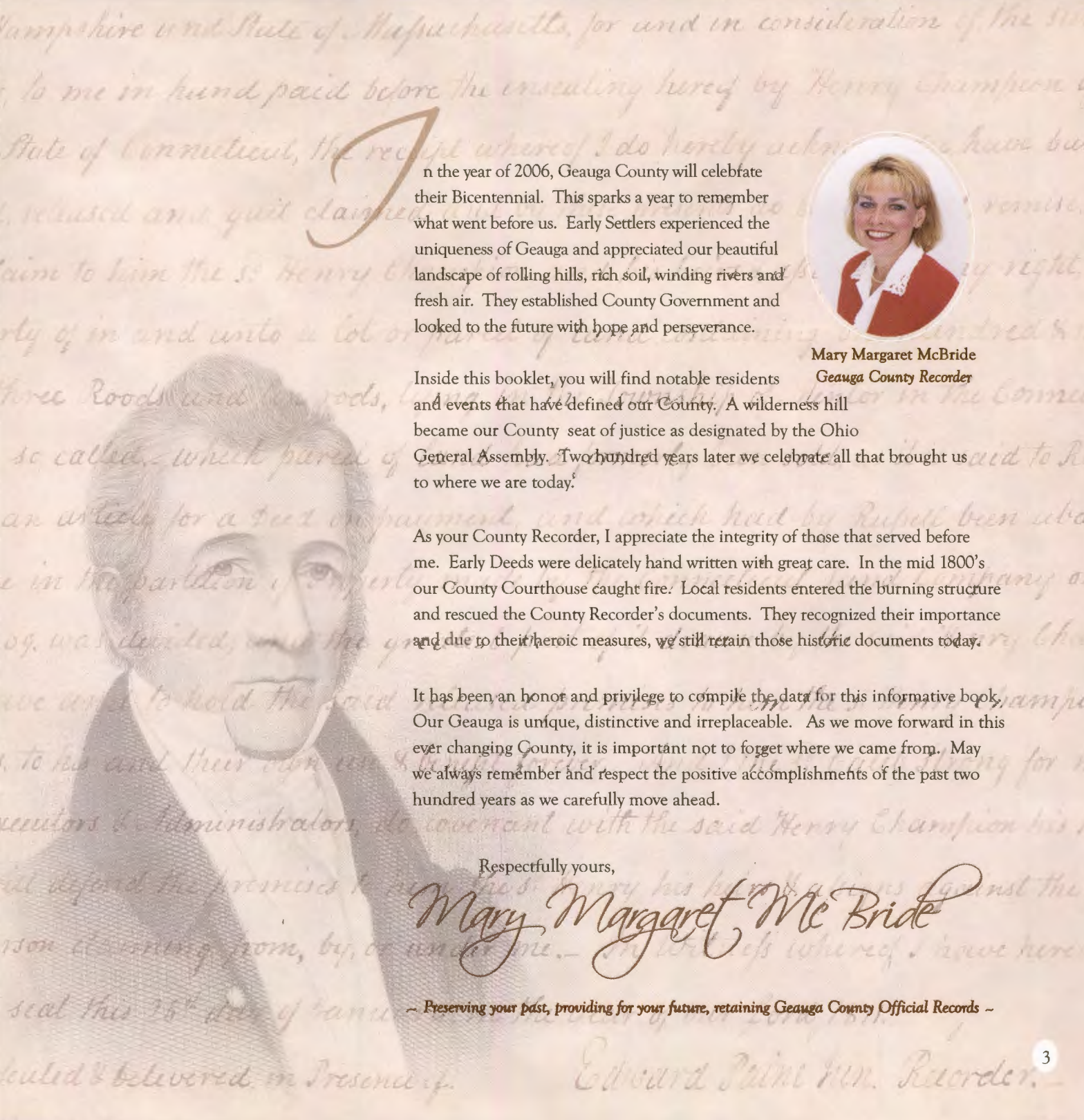
*Geauga County Board of Commissioners*

There are important times in our lives that we cherish and relive. We often do not realize the importance, but later down the road the memory of the event pervades our mind. In fact, it becomes a historical watershed for us. In Geauga County, this is one of those times. Each and every one of us alive today is part of the 200-year bicentennial celebration of Geauga County. This is a magical time that will not return.

As Geauga County residents, we can look back at where we have been, where we are today, and where we are going. This time of reflection draws us through an odyssey of adventure that is uniquely Geauga County. And we at the Commissioners' Office want to share with you our most important assets, successes and accomplishments that have been documented through the years.

This is your story, the Geauga County resident. It is about your county in which you chose to raise your family, build your home, and realize your dreams. And the magic of it all is history will underscore that we have been blessed and bestowed with the best life has to offer.

*Mary Samide*



In the year of 2006, Geauga County will celebrate their Bicentennial. This sparks a year to remember what went before us. Early Settlers experienced the uniqueness of Geauga and appreciated our beautiful landscape of rolling hills, rich soil, winding rivers and fresh air. They established County Government and looked to the future with hope and perseverance.



Mary Margaret McBride  
Gauga County Recorder

Inside this booklet, you will find notable residents and events that have defined our County. A wilderness hill became our County seat of justice as designated by the Ohio General Assembly. Two hundred years later we celebrate all that brought us to where we are today.

As your County Recorder, I appreciate the integrity of those that served before me. Early Deeds were delicately hand written with great care. In the mid 1800's our County Courthouse caught fire. Local residents entered the burning structure and rescued the County Recorder's documents. They recognized their importance and due to their heroic measures, we still retain those historic documents today.

It has been an honor and privilege to compile the data for this informative book. Our Geauga is unique, distinctive and irreplaceable. As we move forward in this ever changing County, it is important not to forget where we came from. May we always remember and respect the positive accomplishments of the past two hundred years as we carefully move ahead.

Respectfully yours,

Mary Margaret McBride

~ Preserving your past, providing for your future, retaining Geauga County Official Records ~



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# Geauga County

## FACTS

Established	Act - March 1, 1806
2004 Population	94,602
Land Area	404.1 square miles
County Seat	City of Chardon
Named for	Native American word meaning "raccoon"

### LAND COVER

Total Urban (open impervious surfaces)	261,060.5	3,775.0
Agriculture/Open Urban Areas	84,984.5	
Shrub/Scrub	17,751.1	
Wooded	137,500.7	
Open Water	2,448.7	
Non-forested Wetlands	14,453.8	
Barren	146.7	

### LARGEST AREAS (census 2000 estimate 2004)

Bainbridge twp	10,916	11,232
Chester twp	10,968	11,008
Munson twp	10,968	6,691
Newbury twp	5,805	5,926
Auburn twp	5,158	5,832
Russell twp	5,529	5,594
Chardon city	5,156	5,283
Chardon twp	4,763	4,891
Middlefield twp	4,418	4,610
Hambden twp	4,024	4,499

### POPULATION BY AGE

	Number	Percent
Total Population	90,895	100.0%
Under 6 years	7,390	8.1%
6 to 17 years	18,323	20.2%
18 to 24 years	5,966	6.6%
25 to 44 years	24,051	6.5%
45 to 64 years	24,307	6.7%
65 years and more	10,858	11.9%
Median Age	38.7	

### EDUCATION

Public schools	34
Students (Average Daily Membership)	12,933
Teachers (Full Time Equivalent)	767.7
Student-teacher ratio	16.8
Expenditures per student	\$9,027
Graduation rate	95.3
Non-public schools	7
Students	2,098
4-year public universities	0
Branches	1
2-year public colleges	0
Private universities and colleges	0
Public libraries	2
Branch libraries	6

### VOTING

Number of precincts	96
Number of registered voters	65,396
Voted in 2004 election	51,059
Percent turnout	78.1%

### STATE PARKS, FORESTS, NATURE PRESERVES, AND WILDLIFE AREAS

Facilities	5
Acreage	2,253.68

### MAJOR EMPLOYERS

Chardon Local Bd of Ed	Gov't
Duramax Inc/Johnson Rubber	Mfg
Geauga County Government	Gov't
Great Lakes Cheese Company	Mfg
Kenston Local Bd of Ed	Gov't
Masco Corp/KraftMaid Cabinetry Inc	Mfg
Meyers Industries/Dillen Products	Mfg
Pentair Inc	Mfg
PolyOne Corp	Mfg
University Hospitals Health System	Service

### TOTAL POPULATION

1800	
1810	2,917
1820	7,791
1830	15,813
1840	16,297
1850	17,827
1860	15,817
1870	14,190
1880	14,251
1890	13,489
1900	14,744
1910	14,670
1920	15,036
1930	15,414
1940	19,430
1950	26,646
1960	47,573
1970	62,977
1980	74,474
1990	81,129
2000	90,895

### ESTIMATED

2001	91,786
2002	92,672
2003	94,102
2004	94,602

### PROJECTED

2010	98,820
2020	104,813
2030	109,181

## CREATING A COUNTY

On December 31st, 1805, the Ohio General Assembly formed our County, naming it Geauga. Our County prior to this time was part of Trumbull. The Ohio General Assembly, in creating our County, included land as far north as Lake Erie, encompassing the land that is today Lake County. Geauga stretched east to the Pennsylvania border including today's Ashtabula County and west to include today's Cuyahoga County.

Some of the first Government Officials conducting business in our new Geauga County included:

- James A. Harper, County Recorder who recorded his first Deed in 1806 when Griffith Williams sold Acreage in Burton for \$100.00 to Simeon Rose.
- County Commissioners:  
Ebenezer Merry, Orestes K. Hawley, Nathaniel Doan
- Edward Paine Jr., Clerk of Courts
- Abraham Tappan, County Surveyor
- Robert Breck Parkman, Prosecuting Attorney
- Joel Paine, Sheriff
- James Montgomery, Coroner
- Judges included:  
Calvin Pease  
John Walworth  
Jesse Phelps  
Aaron Wheeler

In 1810, the government served a Geauga County population of 2,917 residents.



# Timeline



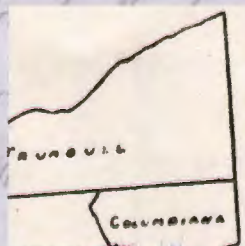
The Connecticut Western Reserve includes all or part of 14 counties in northeastern Ohio. The Reserve extends 120 miles westward from the Ohio-Pennsylvania line, and is bordered on the south by the 41st parallel of latitude and on the north by Lake Erie.

All of Erie and Huron counties are in the Reserve as is the easternmost extension of Ottawa County and the Erie Islands. Connecticut's western land claims were based on several royal charters. On surrendering its western land claims to the United States on September 13, 1786, Connecticut retained this reserve, which the state anticipated would be a New Connecticut in size and influence. In 1795, most of Connecticut's Western Reserve land claims were sold to the Connecticut Land Company which in turn resold the land. *From The Official Ohio Lands Book, 2002*

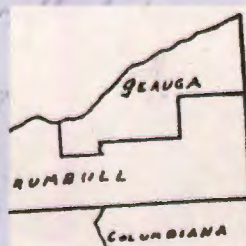
- 1798: First permanent settlement at Burton.
- 1805: Geauga County created by the Ohio General Assembly on December 31st.
- 1806: First Commissioners Session held.
- 1823: First Geauga County Fair held in Chardon on the Square in October. Benjamin Wright Jr. sentenced to be hanged for the murder of Zophar Warner.
- 1840: Lake County established from northern Geauga.
- 1868: Great fire in Chardon destroyed Main Street and Courthouse in July.
- 1874: Newbury Women's Suffrage Political Club organized.
- 1899: Maple Leaf Route of the Cleveland and Eastern Interurban began service to Geauga County.
- 1913: 4H Clubs established in Geauga County.
- 1926: First Annual Geauga County Maple Festival.
- 1962: Fair's name changed to The Great Geauga County Fair.
- 2006: Geauga County Bicentennial Celebration.



1799



1803



1806



1812



1840



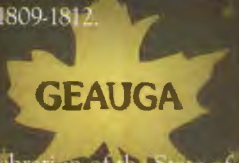
# Symbols

## RACCOON

In early Geauga County, Native Americans identified the Grand River by the numerous wild cats that roamed its shores. The Seneca called these animals "Joaga." In 1755 when the area was mapped, Lewis Evans labeled the river "Cheraga." Henry Howe referred to the river as the "Sheauga ~Sepe" in his *Historical Collections of Ohio*. These names were probably derived from the Native American language. The wild cats that were referred to by the Native Americans as Joaga are today known as Raccoons. When the Ohio General Assembly created our County, they named us for that roaming river.

## THISTLE

In 1808 a wilderness hill within one mile of the geographical center of Geauga was designated the county seat of justice by the Ohio General Assembly. The area was named Chardon (a French word meaning thistle) after its landowner, Peter Chardon Brooks. Since the hill was three miles away from any road, and trees had to be cleared for a square, the Courts met in Champion (near Painesville) from 1809-1812.



## FLAG

In the year of 1953, for the 150th celebration of the State of Ohio, a sesquicentennial Committee was formed in Geauga County. This committee put forward a contest to design a Geauga County Flag. A young artist, Raymond Diedrich from Chardon was the awarded contestant. He was one of sixty Geauga County residents to present a design. The Diedrich green flag, with Geauga inscribed in the middle of a maple leaf, was surrounded by sixteen stars representing our Geauga Townships.

# GEAUGA COUNTY COURTHOUSES

Our Geauga County Courthouse is on the National Register of Historic Places. Its architecture is High Victorian Italianate on a conservative post-Civil War plan. It was designed by prominent Cleveland architect Joseph Ireland who also planned the 1876 Daniel Eels home on Euclid Avenue's Millionaire's Row. The Courthouse's elegant brick and stone construction with its window arches, cluster trefoils, and paired eaves brackets, is echoed in our Main Street buildings, creating a harmony of design in the Chardon Courthouse Square Historic District, that also includes Main Street, and 7.5 acres of the original 11 acre park.



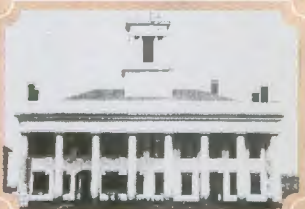
1806-1808 at New Market



1812-1813 at Chardon



1813-1823 at Chardon



1824-1868 at Chardon

1806- Our County Commissioners met for the first time in New Market which was located between Fairport and Painesville on the Grand River.

1808- County seat of justice was designated at Chardon.

1811- Samuel Phelps, County Director, purchased 96 lots from Peter Chardon Brooks for \$400.00 and the Commissioners appropriated \$61.87 to hire men to chop down the trees on the square.

1812- Captain Edward Paine Jr. moved into a newly constructed cabin on the square, used it as a Courthouse as well as family living quarters, established county government, and helped found the town of Chardon.

1813- The King Courthouse, made of log and frame construction and costing \$600.00, was built by Samuel King behind the current site of Randall Block near the Water Street intersection.

1824-1829- A Courthouse with eight graceful colonial columns and an overhanging roof with balustrade was built on the current site of Court Street and the Lawyers Title Building. In 1845 a cupola was added.

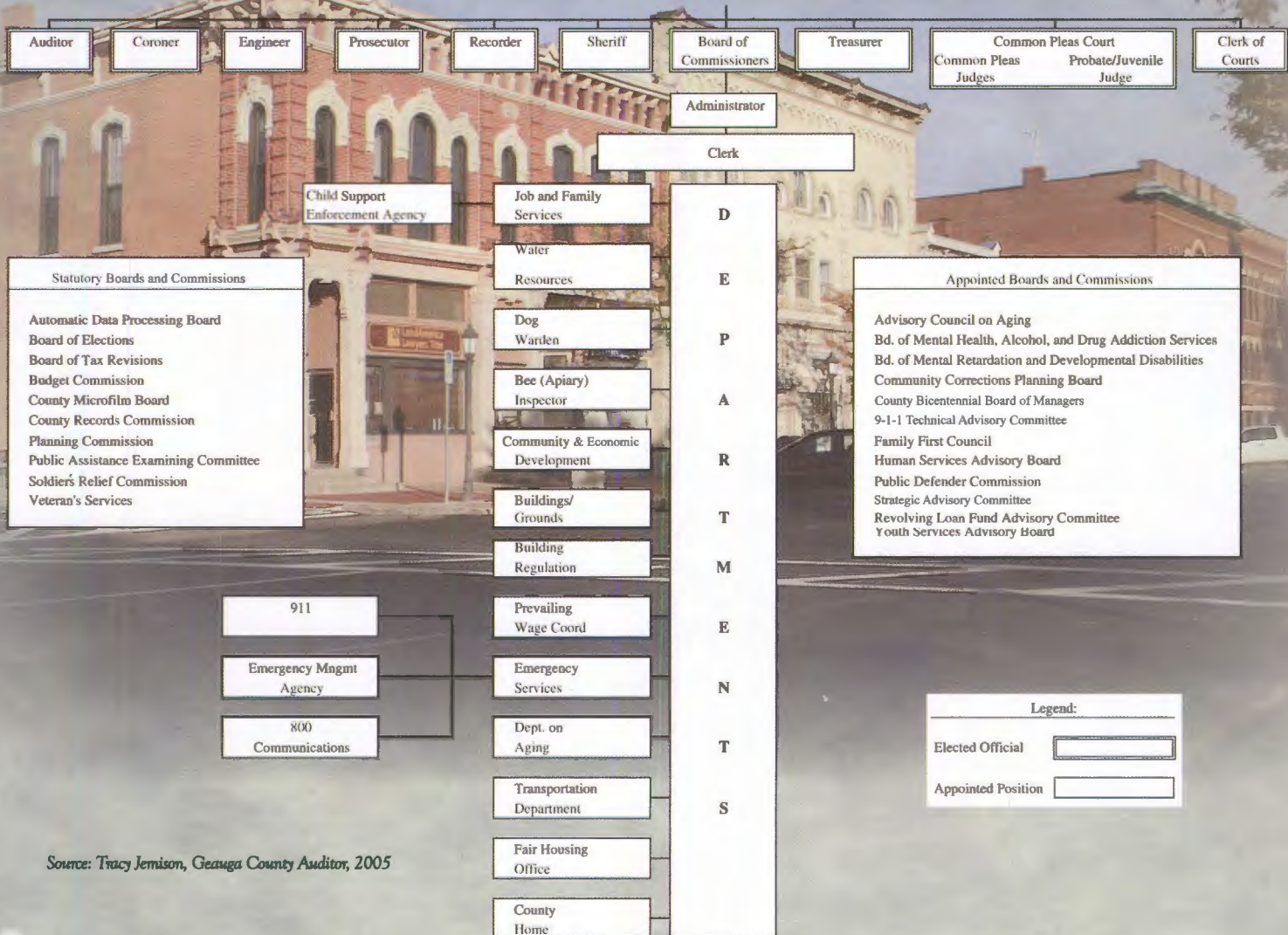
1868- The Great Fire of Chardon swept down Main Street destroying buildings, including the courthouse, from the south corner of Main and Water Streets almost to the north corner of Main and Center Streets. Only the 1830s white clapboard Methodist Church remained intact.

1869- The rebuilding began of our current Main Street buildings and Courthouse. These were rebuilt with brick and stone construction to deter further fiery disasters. On August 23, 1870, Judge Philo B. Conant presided over the first court session in the new courthouse. The courtroom is still in service on the second floor.

1908- An Edward Howard clock was added to the bell tower by public subscription but was damaged in 1940 when it was electrified. In 1995 local members of the National Assembly of Watch and Clock Collectors restored the antique clock to today's working condition.

# County Organization

## CITIZENS OF GEAUGA COUNTY

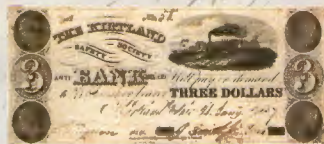


Source: Tracy Jemison, Geauga County Auditor, 2005

## OFFICES & DEPARTMENTS

### AUDITOR'S OFFICE

It is the County Auditor's job to see that the funds of Geauga County are distributed properly.



### BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

County Commissioners are the legislative and executive body for county government with taxing, budgeting, appropriating and purchasing authority. They also hold title to all county property. Other responsibilities include hearing and ruling on annexations, establishing water and sewer districts, serving on the board of revision, records commission and planning commission, as well as appointing all department heads of offices under the Board of County Commissioners and appointing members to a variety of boards and commissions.

**AIRPORT AUTHORITY** - The Geauga County Airport Authority manages the Geauga County Airport.

**BUILDING DEPARTMENT** - The Building Department issues building permits and inspects new structures to ensure governmental standards and regulations.

### COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Department of Community and Economic Development develops and implements strategies and programs to retain and expand county businesses and increase jobs. This Department administers the Geauga Revolving Loan Fund and the County Local Revolving Loan Fund Program. Community Development programs address homebuyer assistance, public improvements, fair housing, septic and well improvements and rehabilitation of existing housing stock. This Department is a HUD certified housing counseling agency.

**DEPARTMENT ON AGING** - The Department on Aging serves the seniors of Geauga County.

**DOG WARDEN** - The Geauga County Dog Warden Department picks up stray dogs, reunites dogs with their owners, gives dogs up for adoption, & destroys them if a suitable home is not found.

**EMERGENCY SERVICES** - The Geauga County Department of Emergency Services manages the county's Emergency Management Agency, 9-1-1 Operations, and 800 MHz Radio Communications System.

**JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES** - Geauga Job and Family Services provides economic assistance and employment services, child and adult protective services, and child support services to both custodial and non-custodial parents.

**MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT** - The Maintenance Department provides upkeep and repair of buildings and equipment used by county employees.

**PLEASANT HILL COUNTY HOME** - Geauga County Pleasant Hill Home provides assisted care for ambulatory men and women.

**SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT** - The Geauga Soil and Water Conservation District conserves, protects and enhances the soil and water resources of Geauga County by providing leadership, education and assistance to all.

**TRANSIT PROGRAM** - Geauga Transit is the public transit system serving all of Geauga County, funded in part by the Federal Transit Administration, Ohio Department of Transportation, the Geauga County Commissioners, and you.

**WATER RESOURCES** - The Department of Water Resources maintains and operates over forty facilities to comply with all applicable Ohio Environmental Protection Agency's rules and regulations.

Source: [www.co.geauga.oh.us](http://www.co.geauga.oh.us); Tracy Jemison, Geauga County Auditor

# CHARDON

## CLERK OF COURTS (LEGAL OFFICE)

The Geauga County Clerk of Courts legal office is responsible for keeping all records pertaining to the Court of Common Pleas and the Eleventh District Court of Appeals. This office also files notary certificates.

**AUTO TITLE OFFICE** - The Auto Title Office provides titling services for automobiles, trailers over 4,000 lbs., motor homes, manufactured homes, watercraft, and APVs. This office also processes passport applications.

**PASSPORT PROCESSING** - This service answers the most common questions regarding passport applications and provides information regarding the passport application service offered by the Geauga County Clerk of Courts.



## CHARDON MUNICIPAL COURT

Chardon Municipal Court deals with criminal cases (misdemeanors and traffic violations) along with small claims and civil cases under \$15,000.00.

## CORONER'S OFFICE

The coroner investigates causes of deaths as a result of criminal or other violent means, by causality, by suicide, or in any suspicious or unusual manner, or when a person dies suddenly when in apparent good health.

## COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

Deals with civil, criminal, & domestic cases.

## ENGINEER'S OFFICE

The County Engineer designs, constructs and maintains the county road system, including county bridges, guardrails, signs and signals.

**HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT** - The Highway Department maintains the county roads and bridges, guardrails, traffic signals and signs, and removes snow and ice from county roads.

## METROPOLITAN HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Geauga Metropolitan Housing Authority provides decent, safe and sanitary housing for the low-income population.

## PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

The Prosecuting Attorney is the county government's chief criminal and civil legal representative in court.

## RECORDER'S OFFICE

The county recorder has the important and indispensable task of keeping the vital records pertaining to ownership in real estate (land) and to all encumbrances or liens upon it.

## SHERIFF'S OFFICE

The Sheriff is the chief law enforcement officer for the county.

## TREASURER'S OFFICE

The Treasurer is the custodian of county government's assets & revenues.

# STATUTORY & APPOINTED BOARDS

## ARCHIVES & RECORDS CENTER

The purpose of the Geauga County Archives and Records Center is the preservation and management of Geauga County's historic records.

## BOARD OF ELECTIONS

The Board of Elections is responsible for the elections in Geauga County.

## AUTOMATIC DATA PROCESSING BOARD

Focusing on centralizing county computing services to provide data sharing, resource compatibility and interagency cooperation. The Department of Information Technology works for the board to accomplish this.

## PLANNING COMMISSION

Responsibilities of the Geauga County Planning Commission include review of subdivisions, review of zoning amendments, providing zoning advice to local communities, providing census data, and preparing community land use plans.

## LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Local Emergency Planning Committee provides emergency planning for chemical spills.

## VETERANS SERVICES

The purpose of the Veterans Service Commission is to assist veterans and their dependents in filing for federal, state and county benefits and to provide financial assistance to those in need.

## BICENTENNIAL BOARD OF MANAGERS

The mission of the Geauga County Bicentennial Celebration Board of Managers is to promote and coordinate county-wide participation in Geauga County's Bicentennial events in 2005/2006. The focus shall be on education, commemoration, legacy, and celebration. E-mail address: [geauga200@alltel.net](mailto:geauga200@alltel.net).


## BOARD OF MENTAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES

The Geauga County Board of Mental Health and Recovery Services provides leadership in the development, implementation, and evaluation of mental health and substance abuse programs.

## BOARD OF MENTAL RETARDATION & DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Bessie Benner Metzbaum Center serves children and adults with developmental disabilities such as mental retardation, autism, cerebral palsy, spina bifida, and traumatic brain injuries.



A vibrant red cardinal is perched on a snow-laden branch, looking towards the camera. The background is a soft-focus winter scene with snow-covered trees and branches.

# Voting

## IN GEAUGA COUNTY

In a democracy, it is important that each individual takes the responsibility to educate themselves on the issues at hand and exercises their right to vote.

Currently there are approximately 65,396 registered voters in Geauga County. Typically, we have one of the highest turnout percentages in the state, which may be as high as 80% for a Presidential Election.

Registering to vote is a simple process. You may register to vote if:

- You are a U.S. citizen
- You will be at least 18 on or before the general election
- You will be an Ohio resident for at least 30 days before election
- You register to vote at least 30 days before the election

You may register at many locations, including:

- The Board of Elections
- The office of any Bureau of Motor Vehicles
- Public libraries
- Any public high school
- County Treasurer's office

If you wish to vote by absentee ballot, you must send a completed application to the Board of Elections. The application need not be in any particular form, but must contain all of the following information:

- Elector's name
- Elector's signature
- The address at which the elector is registered to vote
- Elector's date of birth

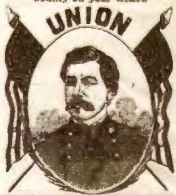
Source: Arch Kimbrew Jr. Director of the Geauga County Board of Elections

- One of the following:
  - a) The elector's driver's license number; or
  - b) The last four digits of the elector's social security number; or
  - c) A copy of the elector's current and valid photo identification or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows the name and address of the elector.
- A statement identifying the election in which ballots are requested;
- A statement that the person requesting ballots is a qualified elector;
- If the request is for primary election ballots, the elector's party affiliation (Democratic, Republican, or Non-Partisan);
- If the elector wants the ballots to be mailed, the address to which they shall be mailed.

Once the Board of Elections receives your completed absentee application, a ballot will be forwarded to you.

Source: Arch Kimbrow, Jr., Director of the Geauga County Board of Elections.

According to the Law of Ohio you must write the name of your County on your ticket.



**UNION**

THE UNION MUST BE PRESERVED AT ALL RISKS  
[Quoted from Mr. Cullen's Letter of Acceptance.]

**Democratic Ticket**  
Election Tuesday, Nov. 6, 1864.

FOR PRESIDENT,  
**Geo. B. M'CLELLAN,**  
OF NEW JERSEY.


FOR VICE PRESIDENT,  
**Geo. H. PENDLETON,**  
OF OHIO.

FOR ELECTORS

OF President and Vice President of the United States

CHARLES REEBELIN  
THOMAS W. BARTLEY  
JOHN L. VATTIER  
JOHN SCHIFF  
WILLIAM J. GILMORE  
LUTHER SMITH  
CHARLES N. LAMISON  
WILLIAM B. TELFAIR  
WILLIAM H. CREIGHTON  
JUDSON A. BEEBE  
EDWARD S. STOWE  
JAMES G. HALY  
HENRY C. MOORE  
JAMES EMMITT  
CHARLES H. JOHNSTON  
NEAL POWER  
ROBERT A. CONSTABLE  
OLIVER J. SWANEY  
CHARLES M. ATEN  
DAVID R. PAIGE  
SIMEON L. HUNT.

County, Ohio.



For President,  
**ABRAHAM LINCOLN**  
OF ILLINOIS.

For Vice President,  
**ANDREW JOHNSON,**  
OF TENNESSEE.

Electors.

JOHN M. CONNELL, } *At Large.*  
JOHN P. BIEHN,  
JOHN K. GREEN,  
STANLEY MATTHEWS,  
LEWIS B. GUNCKEL,  
STEPHEN JOHNSTON,  
WILLIAM L. WALKER,  
MILLS GARDNER,  
HENRY W. SMITH,  
OZIAS BOWEN,  
JACOB SCROGGS,  
WILLIAM SHEFFIELD,  
GEORGE A. WALLER,  
HENRY F. PAGE,  
JAMES R. STANBURY,  
JOHN H. McCOMBS,  
FREDERICK W. WOOD,  
LORENZO DANFORD,  
JOHN McCOOK,  
SETH MARSHALL,  
ABNER KELLOGG.



**ELLEN MUNN**  
(1833-1908)

There is very little information regarding Ellen's early years, but based on her later activities, Ellen was a progressive woman. She was an advocate of daily cold-water showers. She was a founding member and recording secretary of the Northern Ohio Women's Dress Reform Movement in 1870. As a Bloomer girl, Ellen regularly walked around with bloomers under her dress as protest against the confining women's clothing of the time. Ellen was also a founding member and recording secretary of the Newbury Women's Suffrage Club. Established in 1874, it was one of the earliest clubs dedicated to equal rights for women.

Source: Kirstie Giles

# Notable Residents

## CAPTAIN EDWARD PAINE, JR.

1776-November 29, 1848

Captain Paine was the son of General Edward Paine. He married Mary Phelps, daughter of Judge Seth Phelps, and had four children—Ellen, Sedley, Seth, and Edward. Moving to Chardon in 1812, Captain Paine and his family were one of the first families to inhabit Chardon. Serving as a vital key in establishing Geauga's government, as well as the town of Chardon, Captain Paine held many offices over the years. Beginning in 1806, he served as the first Auditor. He served as the first Clerk of Courts from 1806-1828 and as Recorder from 1811-1832. He was Clerk of the Board of Commissioners from 4 June 1806-1 September 1806. Paine held the following offices in the Geauga County Agricultural Society: Correspondence Secretary 1824-1826, Treasurer 1824, and Vice President #1 in 1827. At the 1st Annual Geauga Cattle Fair & Show on 23 October 1823, Captain Edward won Best Ewe and 2nd Best Ewe.



## EDWARD PAYSON LATHAM

March 2, 1839-January 5, 1921

Born in Troy, Geauga County, Ohio, he was the son of R. R. and Amanda Latham. He married Ellen Vanzandt 27 October 1857 and had one child, Lillie. During the Civil War, "Pace" joined the Ninth Independent Battery where he received the No. 1 position in a detachment for cannoneers. Due to an accident while firing a salute to celebrate the routing of Colonel Raines from Cumberland Gap in 1862, Mr. Latham lost the sight in one eye and had to have both forearms amputated. After the war, he manufactured cheese at his Spring Brook Cheese Factory in Troy. He served as County Infirmary Director from 1885 to 1891. In 1892, "Pace" was elected to the Board of Commissioners, a position he retained for six years. He was board president for a total of 3 1/2 years. "Pace" also served on the Soldiers Relief Commission from 1887 to 1905. He served as president and vice-president of the Geauga County Agricultural Society. Latham's life proved that even an injury like he had couldn't prevent him from working hard and being an important asset to Geauga.



## ALFRED PHELPS

April 3, 1792-1864

Moving to Geauga County from Cayuga County, New York with his sister and brother-in-law at the young age of 11, they became the first settlers of Parkman. His father, Seth Phelps, did not move with his family to Parkman until 1819. In the War of 1812, Alfred was wounded at the Battle of Queenstown and taken prisoner, but was released on parole. During the Civil War, he served for Chardon. Alfred married Anne Towsly of Aurora, New York in July 1820. They had six children: Eliza (died at age 12), Seth Sedyard, Alfred Jr., Mary, Edwin E., and Lucius T. (died in infancy). Alfred was very involved in the early government of Geauga County. He served as County Prosecutor from 1819-1828. For a brief time in 1832, he served as County Recorder. From 1835-1840, Alfred was Treasurer of the Geauga County Fair and in 1845 he was President of the Fairboard. During that time (1843-1844 and 1845-1846), he also served as Representative to the Ohio General Assembly. From 1852-1858, he was the Geauga County Probate Judge. Phelps was also a County School Examiner. Along with his many government positions, Alfred established the first newspaper press in Chardon.



## ALBERT GALLATIN RIDDLE

May 28, 1816-May 16, 1902

Born in Monson, Massachusetts, his family moved to Newbury when he was one year old. In 1845, Albert married Caroline Avery of Chardon while serving as Geauga County Prosecuting Attorney from 1840-1846. As a Representative in Ohio State Legislature from 1848-1850, he was also Secretary of the Geauga County Fairboard in 1849. In 1861, he was elected as a Republican to the 37th Congress for two years. From 1863-1864, Mr. Riddle served as consul in Matanzas, Cuba. Riddle also published a number of novels, biographies, and recollections, including entries in the Williams Brothers History of Lake and Geauga Counties 1878 and the Geauga County Pioneer and General History 1880.



## HELPING TO SHAPE GEAUGA COUNTY

### HON. HENRY K. SMITH

*August 10, 1832-August 6, 1914*

Born in Parkman, Geauga County, Ohio, Henry was the third of seven children born to Marsh Smith. Henry moved to Chardon at age 19, and at 21 married Harmony Stocking, daughter of D.W. and Mary Wells Stocking, on 22 February 1854. They had three children-Stuart S., Halbert Dennis, and one that died in infancy. Beginning his career in politics at age 21, he worked in the law office of Messrs. Riddle & Thrasher. Just three years later in 1856, he was admitted to the Bar. After a short time, Henry was appointed Deputy Sheriff and Geauga County Treasurer. In 1857, he was appointed Clerk of Courts to replace A. H. Gotham, who had died while still in office. From 1858 to 1862, he served as County Prosecutor. He served two terms as Justice of the Peace for Chardon. Then from 1867-1908, Smith was elected to serve as Geauga County Probate Judge.



### PETER HITCHCOCK

*October 19, 1781 - March 4, 1854*

Born in Cheshire, Connecticut, Peter was the son of Valentine and Sarah Hitchcock. He graduated from Yale College in 1801 and was admitted to the bar in March, 1804. After two years of practicing law, he and his young bride Nabby Cook whom he married on December 12, 1805, migrated to Burton in 1806. Hitchcock was one of the earliest attorneys in Geauga as well as a teacher for the Erie Literary Society at the Burton Academy. His political career began in 1810 with his election to the Ohio House of Representatives. After two years in the House, he was elected to a variety of political offices including the Ohio Senate, 1812-1816; U.S. House of Representatives, 1817-1819; Ohio Supreme Court, 1819-1833; Ohio Senate, 1833-1834; and Ohio Supreme Court 1835-1854. In 1850 he also served as a delegate to the Ohio Constitutional Convention and is sometimes called the "Father of the Ohio Constitution."



### DR. JULIA GREEN

*8 May 1847 - 26 March 1925*

Born in Mantua, Ohio and moved to Newbury at the age of 14, Dr. Green graduated from the Cleveland Homeopathic College and practiced medicine in Adrian, Michigan for several years. She was married to Apollon D. Green in November 1865, and had two children, Forest and Louie. They were divorced in 1884. In 1874, she was a founding member of the Newbury Women's Suffrage Club, serving as the correspondence secretary alongside Ellen Munn, leading pilgrimages to Union Chapel, which was dubbed the 'shrine' or 'cradle' of women's suffrage. Dr. Green died in 1925, and is buried in Welton Cemetery in Burton.



### SEABURY FORD

*(15 October 1801 - 8 May 1855)*

Born in Cheshire, Connecticut, he was the third son of John and Esther Ford. They moved to Burton, Ohio, in 1807. Graduating from Yale in 1825, he studied law under Samuel W. Phelps and Peter Hitchcock and was admitted to the Bar in 1827. Seabury married Harriet Cook on 10 September 1828 and had 5 sons: William R., Samuel M., Seabury C., George Henry, and Robert Neil. Ford began his public career as secretary pro tem of the "Temperance Society of Burton and Vicinity." He was the Geauga County Representative in the General Assembly of Ohio from 1835-1841 and again from 1844-1845. He served in the Senate representing Geauga and Cuyahoga Counties from 1841-1843 and 1845-1846. Finally, Mr. Ford served as Governor of Ohio from 22 January 1849 through 12 December 1850.



# Lay of the Land

Our Geauga landscape is breathtaking with its rolling hills and rich farmlands but it is our elevations that account for our statewide recognition as Ohio's "snow capital."

Highest elevation - Troy Township,  
Sugarloaf Mountain - 1396 feet

Lowest elevation - Russell Township - bridge at the  
entrance to the Hillbrook Club - 844 feet

Gauga County is located in the glaciated Appalachian Plateau, one of Ohio's five physiographic regions.

The Wisconsin Glacier, the last ice sheet to cover Geauga, carved valleys and drainage systems for the Grand (Gauga), Cuyahoga, and Chagrin Rivers that rise to flow south out of the county, then fishhook abruptly northward into Lake Erie. Only Silver Creek of Troy Township flows south over the state watershed divide to empty into the Mahoning River system, from which it flows into the Ohio River, then the Mississippi. Springs and seeps such as Moccasin Falls in Munson abound throughout the county, contributing to Geauga's rich water resources.

Thompson Ledges presents a striking exposure of Sharon Conglomerate (a sandstone and pebble mixture) which underlies much of Geauga County. An ancient river is responsible for the sediments that became the conglomerate. The conglomerate now helps supply much of the county's groundwater. Along with the water, Thompson Ledges provided building stone. Large sandstone blocks from the quarries traveled throughout the county and beyond as bridges for roads and railroads, bridge abutments and culverts.

Gauga's geographical center today is near Alderman's Pond just northwest of the intersection of Butternut and Osmond Roads in Claridon Township.



# Education

## AND HIGHER LEARNING

New Englanders migrating into Geauga believed in a sound educational system including public schools supported by tax dollars and institutions of higher learning.

### BURTON'S ERIE LITERARY SOCIETY AND CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY

In 1803, the same year that Ohio became a state, the General Assembly passed an act incorporating the Erie Literary Society in Burton and granting its members a charter to establish an academy or college with the power to confer community degrees. The result was the Burton Academy but the institution's growth was hindered by fire which destroyed the first building, the War of 1812, and a sweep of malarial-type sickness that reached epidemic proportions in 1823. Dissatisfied with the lack of progress, the incorporators, led by David Hudson, successfully petitioned the state legislature to allow them to move the institution from Burton to Hudson where it was renamed Western Reserve College in 1826. The school moved to Cleveland in 1882, federated with Case Institute of Technology in 1967, and is known today as Case Western Reserve University.

### KENT STATE UNIVERSITY - GEAUGA

Founded in 1964, the Geauga regional campus of Kent State University is located on 87 acres in Burton, Ohio, and serves over 900 students. It is Geauga's only institution of higher learning.

### JAMES A. GARFIELD AND THE GEAUGA SEMINARY OF CHESTER

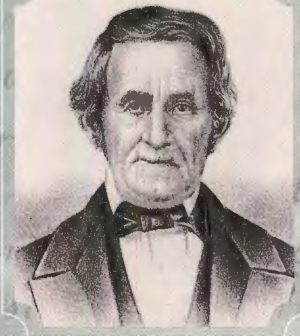
In 1841 the Free-Will Baptists of Chester established their own Geauga Seminary which was successful enough to inspire the incorporation of the Western Reserve Free-Will Baptist Academical Society for the purpose of promoting and encouraging education. When the Free-Will Baptists transferred their patronage to Hillsdale, Michigan, the academy was purchased through subscription by Chester residents.



Its most famous student, James Abram Garfield, attended in 1849-1850, before he went on to become the 20th President of the United States.



## COMMUNITY BOUNDARIES



"There are townships on this Western Reserve which are more thoroughly New England in character and spirit than most of the towns of the New England of today... [Geauga's early settlers] preserved here in the wilderness the characteristics of New England as it was when they left it at the beginning of the century. This has given to the people of the Western Reserve those strongly marked qualities which have always distinguished them."

Address delivered by General James A. Garfield, 16 September 1873. Published in the Pioneer and General History of Geauga County, Burton, Ohio, 1880. Reprinted 1973.

Among those Yankee qualities was a belief in a central green or common area that could be shared by the members of a community. In Geauga, that belief manifested itself in central town squares in Thompson, Chardon, and Burton as well as corner parks at major intersections in Parkman, Huntsburg, Claridon, and Chester Townships.



## TOWNSHIPS

Auburn	1817	Middlefield	1817
Bainbridge	1817	Montville	1822
Burton	1806	Munson	1821
Chardon	1812	Newbury	1817
Chester	1816	Parkman	1817
Claridon - Created as Burlington in 1817		Russell	1822
Hambden	1811	Thompson	1817
Huntsburg	1821	Troy - Created as Welshfield in March 1820; Renamed Troy on December 31, 1834	

## GEAUGA MUNICIPALITIES

Aquila Village	1880
Burton Village	1895
Chardon Village	1851; became a city in 2001
Middlefield Village	1901
South Russell Village	1923

## definitions

**town•ship:** a unit of local government administered by three elected trustees with specific legal powers; an area of surveyed public land generally equal to 25 square miles


**vil•lage:** an incorporated town with a population of less than 5,000 inhabitants; governed by an elected council in proportion to population

**city:** an incorporated town with definite boundaries and legal powers with a population of more than 5,000 inhabitants; governed by an elected council in proportion to population

**mu•nic•i•pal•i•ty:** a political unit such as a village, town, or city incorporated for local self-government



# Early Settlers



Auburn	Bildad Bradley and Family 1814-1815
Bainbridge	David McConoughy and Family moved into their home on Thanksgiving Day. 1811
Burton	Thomas UMBERFIELD, possibly Isaac Fowler's and Amriah Beard's Families as well. 1798
Chardon	Jordan or Norman Canfield 1812
Chester	Justice Minor, Philo Minor and Harvey Suffield all with families 1801-1802
Claridon	Stephen Higby or Selah Bradley or Asa Cowles 1808-1810
Hambden	Dr. Solomon Bond or Joseph Bond, James Bond Jr., Stephen Bond and Andrew Cowee. 1801-1803
Huntsburg	John Finley or Stephen Pomeroy and Family. 1802-1808
Middlefield	Romoyne and Hillman, Mr. and Mrs. Hill and Mr. Lemin or Isaac Thompson and Family, James Thompson. 1797-1799
Montville	Roswell Stevens and Family and/or the Wilcox family 1814-1816
Munson	Samuel Hopson and Family and Lemuel Rider 1815-1816
Newbury	Vene Stone, Lemuel Punderson 1802-1810
Parkman	Robert Parkman and Family 1804
Russell	Gideon Russell and Family 1818
Thompson	Isaac and Lois Palmer or Joseph Bartlett and Family 1800-1808
Troy	Jacob and Anna Welsh 1810-1811

# Geauga County

## MAPLE FESTIVAL

The Geauga county Maple Festival began in 1926. Geauga County News announced that Chardon was “going to treat the general public to a good old fashioned maple sugar eat.” The first Festival, held on April 9th and 10th, featured free dishes of maple syrup, a sugar camp, tapped trees, an ox team gathering sap, and a maple sugar display. Festival planners had expected 5,000 visitors but worried that attendance would be lessened due to an April ice storm. However, when over 15,000 visitors attended, our tradition began and continues to present day, held each weekend following Easter.

The tradition of tapping sugar maple trees in early Spring dates back to Native Americans, but was brought to Geauga by New Englanders, who used maple products as alternatives to more expensive commercial sweeteners. Maple sugar production in Geauga County generates at least \$2,000,000 annually.

Source: Dr. Randy James, Geauga County Extension Agent, Ohio State University Extension Office



# The Great

## GEAUGA COUNTY FAIR



The Great Geauga County Fair is Ohio's oldest, continuously operating county fair. Every year on Labor Day weekend, Geaugans gather at the Fairgrounds in Historic Burton.

The first Geauga County Fair was held on October 23rd, 1823, on Chardon Square. The exhibition included feminine arts, table linens and grass bonnets. Rail pens were constructed for the livestock exhibition. In 1853, a permanent Fairgrounds was established in Burton.



In 1962 the Fair's name was changed to "The Great Geauga County Fair." The Ohio Bicentennial Commission honored our Fair in 2003 with an Ohio Historic Marker for its significance in State Agriculture. The Flower Hall and the Domestic Arts Hall are on the National Register of Historic Places.

Through the years, young and old alike have cherished and preserved this special tradition and have carried it forth from generation to generation.

## OUR AMISH NEIGHBORS

**AH-mish:** probably from German *amisch*, from Jacob Amman or Amen, 1693 Swiss Mennonite bishop of or relating to a strict sect of Mennonites who were followers of Amman and settled in America chiefly in the 18th century

In 1886, Samuel Weaver and M. Troyer were some of the first Amish to purchase land in eastern Geauga County. Today, Middlefield Township is the main focus of an Amish Culture Area that includes Burton, Parkman, and Huntsburg Townships. The County's Amish is estimated at 12%, making it the fourth largest population of Amish in the world.



The average family includes 6 to 7 children who often attend specialized Amish schools rather than traditional public schools. The first Amish school was founded in 1950 in Parkman as a result of the public schools mandatory attendance policy, which negatively impacted the Amish farmers ability to farm his land. Since the Amish use no motorized farm equipment, human labor demand is multiplied.

Amish initially focused on large acre dairy farms and the production of cheese. Today, however, many have turned to produce farming since a 5-6 acre "farm" can provide a living to an Amish family. Others have moved into factory positions involving carpentry, masonry and sawmill trades. The primary mode of transportation is still horse and buggy and the recently increased construction of buggy paths in Geauga County has afforded the Amish safer travel.



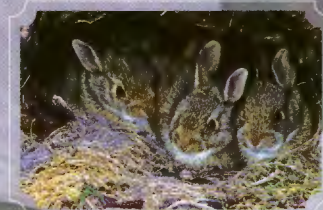
# Preserving Landscape



*"This generation will not be remembered for what it has built, but rather, for what it has protected." Will Rogers, President of the Trust for Public Land*

## PARKS

The mission of the Geauga Park District is to preserve, conserve and protect the natural features of Geauga County and to provide the opportunity for people to enjoy and appreciate those resources. Historic Punderson State Park was the home of Newbury's first permanent Settler, Lemuel Punderson, and includes a glacial kettle lake formed during the last Ice Age.



## HEADWATERS

Headwaters Park is managed by the City of Akron per a 1996 ten year lease signed by the Geauga Park system. Five hundred acres of land surrounds a four hundred and twenty five acre reservoir. Bald eagles among other bird species can be seen from the trails that provide access through woodlands and meadows.

## PUBLIC LAND

With a 241% increase in Geauga population between 1950 and 2000, farmland has decreased by 67%. There is a strong effort to preserve and protect our farmland. The "Keep Geauga Green" movement is striving to keep local budgets operating in a reasonable balance and maintain open space with thoughtful action.

# Landmarks

## SITES LISTED ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

### AUBURN

Free Will Baptist Church,  
11742 East Washington St.

### BURTON VILLAGE

Burton Village Historic District (Public Square & North Cheshire up to the Post Office and Berkshire High School)

Dr. Erastus Goodwin House  
14465 Main St.

Great Geauga County Fairgrounds  
Domestic Arts Hall and Flower Hall

### CHAGRIN FALLS

Lost Lane Farm, private residence,  
address restricted

### CHARDON

Courthouse Square District including  
the Courthouse, Park, all of Main Street  
(Ohio Historic Markers)

### CHESTER

District School #2,  
7798 Mayfield Rd. at Caves

Walter C. White Estate  
(now Hawken School)

### CLARIDON

Congregational Church,  
Rt 322 & Claridon-Troy Rd.

Lot Hathaway House 12236 Old State Road

### MIDDLEFIELD

Batavia House/Century Inn,  
14979 South State St. (Ohio Historic Marker)

### MUNSON

Fowlers Mill Historic District

### RUSSELL

Lucius Tambling House  
14025 Chillicothe, Private residence

### TROY

Fox Pope Home,  
17767 Rapids Rd., Private Residence

## SITES NOT LISTED ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER BUT WITH OHIO HISTORIC MARKERS

### BAINBRIDGE

Burns Lindau Building and Rt. 306

### BURTON VILLAGE

Great Geauga County Fairgrounds

### THOMPSON

Thompson Ledges Park



Auburn Free Will Baptist Church



Century Inn - Middlefield



Fowlers Mill



Claridon Congregational Church



# Credits

## **Geauga County Bicentennial Board of Managers**

Phone: (440) 279-1770, 279-1790

Email: [geauga200@alltel.net](mailto:geauga200@alltel.net)

For more information about Geauga's bicentennial events, visit the Geauga Bicentennial Board's website at [www.geauga200.org](http://www.geauga200.org). Web space generously sponsored by Simply Connect of Chardon.

The Bicentennial Board of Managers is a project of the Geauga County Board of Commissioners. The mission of the Bicentennial Board is to promote and coordinate countywide participation in Geauga County's Bicentennial events in 2005/2006. The focus shall be on education, commemoration, legacy, and celebration.

## **Geauga Bicentennial Board**

Bari Oyler Stith, Ph. D., President

Anne Prusha, Vice President

Anifa Stocker, Treasurer

David Beten, Secretary

Paul Newman, Secretary

William Patterson

Teresa Runion

Alice Sems

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Geauga County Community Improvement Corporation

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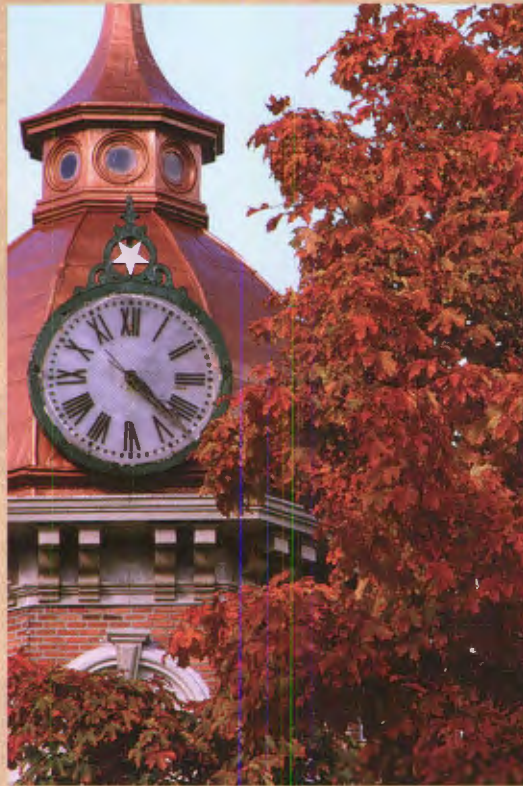
Courthouse and maple seedlings courtesy of Paul Newman

Back cover image: Courtesy of Paul Newman

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WE'RE IN THE HEART OF THIS COMMUNITY.



HOWEVER, IT FEELS LIKE THE COMMUNITY  
IS IN THE HEART OF US.

We're proud to both work and live in Geauga County –  
and to be a part of the bicentennial celebration.

**FirstEnergy**  
**Foundation**