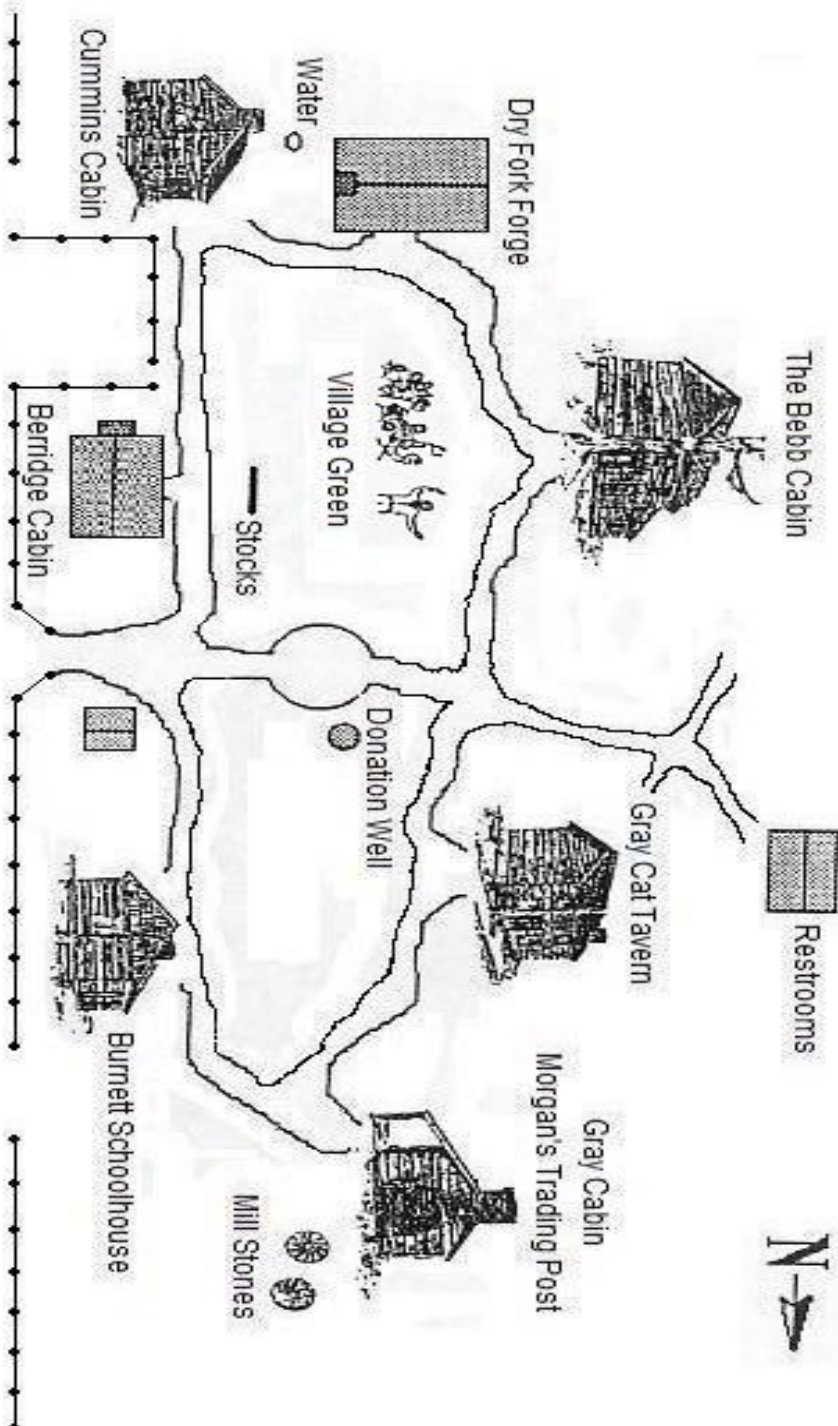


VISITOR GUIDE

Pioneer Village



GOVERNOR BEBB METROPARK
1979 BEBB PARK LANE
OKEANA, OHIO 45053
For more information about programs
call MetroParks of Butler County at **513-867-5835**
or visit the parks website at www.yourmetroparks.net

Welcome to the Pioneer Village. This is a collection of historic log houses and buildings which have been moved from other locations in the area. These reconstructed log houses represent a typical early 19th century American settlement found in this region. Use this visitor guide as you walk through the Pioneer Village to discover the life of these earlier times. There is a map on the back of this brochure for your convenience.

If you have an interest in historic preservation and interpretation, you may wish to get more involved by becoming a volunteer with MetroParks of Butler County. Please contact us at the phone number on the front of this brochure.

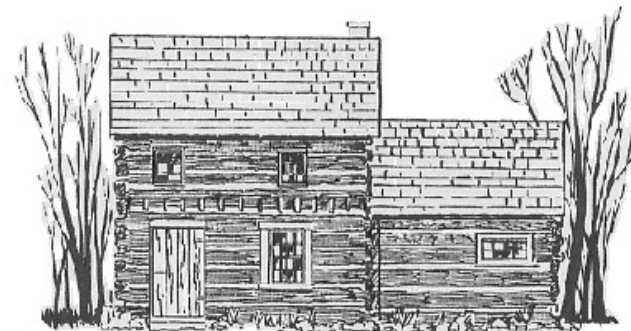


MetroParks of Butler County was established in 1955 in accordance with Chapter 1545 of the Ohio Revised Code. It is a separate political subdivision of the State of Ohio and is governed by a three member Board of Park Commissioners appointed by the county's Probate Judge. MetroParks mission is to provide a superior park system that maximizes the community's quality of life through conservation, education and recreation.

Berridge Cabin: Built near Hamilton in early 1800's. Exact age unknown. Donated by Richard Berridge and restored here in 1992.

This log house is an example of a typical homestead. It features a wrap-around stairway, hidden behind a doorway. This cabin belonged to the family of William McClellan, the first sheriff of Butler County.

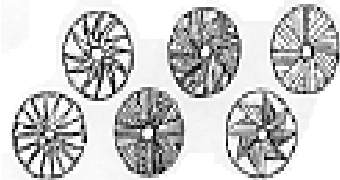
Stocks, or a better term pillory, like this in front of the Berridge, were used for public discipline of non-violent offenses.



Thank you for visiting the Pioneer Village at Governor Bebb MetroPark

Mill Stones

Villages were often located near a gristmill that usually used a water wheel to create the power needed to turn grinding or mill stones. These stones were used in pairs, one on top of the other. With only one pair of mill stones in place, processing grain was slow. The mills would grind corn because the stones could not turn fast enough to grind wheat. Now look across the road to see the...



**Covered Bridge: Built in 1850 near Oxford.
Restored here in 1969-1970.**

One of only two originals left in Butler County, this bridge made transportation easier. Many of the bridges were owned by individuals who would charge a toll until the cost of construction was paid. The roof was used to protect the wooden decking and the sides helped the bridge to appear like a barn to livestock. This apparently helped the cattle to be less afraid to enter. This bridge is called the "White" bridge by locals, as the other covered bridge, outside of Oxford, is the Black Bridge.



Burnett Schoolhouse: Built in the early 1800's. Located in Shandon and donated in memory of Paul Burnett. Restored here in 1985.

Early schoolhouses were one-room log houses built by members of the community. They also served as meeting houses and church buildings on Sundays. The source of heat during cold weather is a Franklin wood stove. Pupils sat on log benches and there was no need to have storage space for books since there were few of them and the property of the school master/marm. The teacher had no real requirements to meet. Many times he/she was hired on the basis of his/her ability to discipline the students. Students were taught basic subjects and discipline was rigorous. Attendance was irregular depending on the work which the children needed to help with at home.



Cummins Cabin: Built near Brookville, Indiana pre-1860, moved to Hamilton in 1936. Donated by George Cummins. Restored here in 1965.

Up to 12 people may have lived in this frontier cabin. The furnishings were often made of split logs and "used" lumber, since other materials were scarce or expensive. The simple items the family brought, to the new settlement, would include a long rifle, axe, hoe, iron pot, some pottery, and wooden noggins (cups), along with a sack or two of corn for food and planting.



The Village Green

On a warm summer day in the early 19th century, you might find village residents gathered here listening to a politician "stumpin" his way across the state. A "stumpin" speaker climbed upon a tree stump and used that as his speaking platform. The village green was also the site of town meetings and outdoor festivals. In larger cities the village green was used as a grazing place for livestock.

Dry Fork Forge: The forge was constructed on this site using traditional methods.

The blacksmith and his helpers were important and essential to early village life. They made and repaired tools, hardware, gun parts, fixed wagons and coaches, shod horses and oxen. The blacksmith was a skilled craftsman whose abilities kept the settlement running smoothly.



Bebb Cabin: Built in 1799 near Okeana. Donated by Carl Hesselbrock and restored here in 1959.

William Bebb, Ohio's 19th governor, was born in this log house in 1802 and spent his boyhood years here with his parents, who were Welsh immigrants. This building is not typical of most early log houses. Downstairs is the living room and a bedroom as well as the kitchen. The children would have slept upstairs in the loft area. The 3-sided fireplace, which is a very unusual feature, served as a source of central heating. Note the small size of the door frames. The pioneers were smaller than we are today. The center beam for this cabin is Black Walnut and it took 10-12 men to lift it into place. Most logs in the cabin are of White and Red Oak with a few walnut and yellow poplar. Many trees at the time this cabin was built were 5 to 6 feet in diameter which is why it was possible to obtain logs as large as the ones you see here.



Gray Cat Tavern: Built around 1795. Donated by Raymond Gray. Restored here in 1965. Originally joined to the Gray Cabin as one building. Restored here in 1965.

A traveler who came across a cabin with an old jug tied to a pole or an "ordinary" sign in front, had just found a tavern. Here there would be a spare room or two where lodging could be found. Horses would be stabled and fed. A shilling (a very small amount of money) or two would pay the entire cost of a night's stay with food. No menu was needed since everyone ate the same meal prepared for the day, which changed daily. Night life was loud and merry, but short since travelers needed their rest for the next day's journey.



Gray Cabin: Built about 1795. Donated by Raymond Gray from his farm near Oxford. Originally joined to the tavern as one building. Restored here in 1965.

Trading Posts

The owner of the trading company was really a "jack of all trades." He would cut hair, sew up a suit of clothes and serve as the town lawyer. Items sold as the trading company included salt, molasses, rum, tea, hardware, dress goods, bar iron, gun powder and shot, farm supplies, flour and a few spices. The store was the hub of village activity. Mail was delivered here, elders would gather for games and gossip. Bartering or trading would be going on constantly.

Summer Kitchens

A summer kitchen is typically a rectangular, one- to two-story structure near the main house. Depending upon the construction of the main house they were either semi-detached or completely detached. Because of the advancement of newer technologies such as the cookstove, during the summer, this type kitchen kept the oppressive heat out of the house, giving it the name "summer kitchen."

The summer kitchen was the center of productive work throughout the day. The fire was going at all times in order to speed up the cooking chores. The summer kitchen's history goes as far back as the 18th century but it wasn't a term that was widely used until the 19th century. It was typically a woman's job to work in the summer kitchen.

Many summer kitchens were in use until the end of World War II. Several summer kitchen structures still stand today.