



Lancaster (Images of America: Ohio)

By Connie L. Rutter, Sondra Brockway Gartner

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Lancaster, Ohio, with a population of around 35,000, sits snuggled among the rolling hills at the base of a sandstone bluff that the Wyandot Indians called “Standing Stone.” Just east of the Hock-Hocking River in Fairfield County and a few miles southeast of Columbus, Lancaster was founded on November 10, 1800, by Col. Ebenezer Zane (1747–1811). The city’s rich history is celebrated today in one of the most significant historic districts in the Midwest, known as Square 13. The city offers a walking tour of the area, originally designed in 1800. In a 24-block area, 89 buildings have been designated on the National Register of Historic Places, and the Sherman House Museum is listed as a National Historical Landmark.

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Editorial Review

Review

Title: Book of Lancaster photos on sale soon

Author: MICHELLE GEORGE

Publisher: The Eagle-Gazette

Date: 9/25/2010

There's something about old photographs that Connie Rutter just loves.

She recalls one such photo, which appears on the cover of her new book, "Images of America: Lancaster," that shows a family sitting on the top of Mount Pleasant in 1904.

Rutter calls attention to a small child in the picture who is sitting dangerously close to the edge of Mount Pleasant, looking as though he or she could tumble off at any moment.

"That photo struck me as funny," Rutter said. "You'd certainly never see something like that today."

The photo is just one of more than 200 rare images that Rutter and co-author Sondra Brockway Gartner have included in their new book, which is published by Arcadia and set to be available online and appear on bookshelves Oct. 4.

It took about a year for the two women, who live in Licking County, to sift through the hundreds of photographs they've collected showcasing Lancaster's history.

"We had to find the photographs and then research the history of the photos," said Gartner, who has written similar books on Buckeye Lake, Newark and Licking County. "We went to the Fairfield Heritage Association for help and also got a lot of help from the Ohio Glass Museum."

Arcadia Publishing is best known for its Images of America series, which chronicles the history of communities like Lancaster. With more than 200 vintage black-and-white photographs, each book celebrates a town or region, bringing to life the people, places and events that define the community, according to Arcadia's website.

Both Rutter and Gartner, who each have ties to Fairfield County, said they were excited to do an Images of America book on Lancaster. They said they acquired a number of photos from Gartner's father Chance Brockway, who enjoyed collecting historical photographs.

They also bought a number of old photos from the Old Shoe Factory Antique Mall and borrowed photos and postcards from several Lancaster residents they met while doing their research.

"Anytime we met someone from Lancaster, we'd ask, 'Do you have any old photos?'" Rutter said with a laugh.

Rutter said the fun part was collecting the photos, but the hard part came later, when the women had to pinpoint the time periods, places and people in some of the photos.

"You'd look at photo and you look and look and then suddenly one little thing will pop out at you to tell you the year (it was taken)," Rutter said.

The women also encountered problems with some of the older photos, particularly those taken during the Civil War, that were grainy or out of focus.

"The thing Arcadia is looking for is quality, so if the resolution (of the photo) is bad, we weren't able to use them," Gartner said.

While Rutter and Gartner did have to pass up several photos because of bad resolution, the book still is filled with plenty of rare images depicting events such as the Flood of 1948, the 1897 construction of City Hall and the 1913 Fairfield County Fair.

Gartner said some of her favorite photos in the book are ones that show her own family members, including her great grandmother and grandmother.

Rutter said she just loves the photos that have people in them.

"It gives you this amazing insight into how people lived when you looked at their clothes and the way that the downtown looked," Rutter said. "While writing the book, I was surprised at the history of Lancaster; I was amazed at the attorneys and lawyers and the number of famous people that came from there."

About the Author

Connie L. Rutter has always had a love of history. She is a longtime resident of the Hudson Avenue Historic District in Newark, Ohio, and before retirement worked for the Licking County Historical Society. She is coauthor of Licking County with Sondra Brockway Gartner. Sondra Brockway Gartner's interest in photography was passed down from her father, Chance Brockway. This is her fourth book with Arcadia's Images of America Series; her previous works were Newark, Buckeye Lake, and Licking County.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Janet Maldanado:

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