

Northern Kentucky Views Presents:

Part 4

History of Owen County: Accomodations

by

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ACCOMMODATIONS
Owen, County

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Tourists traveling through Owen County will find hotel accommodations in Owenton, Monterey and New Liberty. At other points private homes can easily be located where the food and beds are excellent and rates are low. The hotel accommodations are very good. The hotel in Owenton is equipped with all modern devices for the comfort of the traveler, including water, lights and heat. The beds are comfortable and sanitary, the rooms light and clean, and the food all that could be expected in any first class hostelry. The large and convenient lobby provides a gathering place for those who seek companionship or a point to meet friends or customers. On the other hand the individual rooms provide privacy for reading or business correspondence. The host and hostess, Mr. and Mrs. Marston, strive to make each guest comfortable and to give to the entire place an air of homeliness. There are numerous private lodging houses where guests receive the best of treatment in all particulars.

There are no tourist camps or public camp sites in the county other than recreational which will be described later. However, anyone with camping equipment will find accommodations in every section of the county if they are able to furnish satisfactory references or otherwise satisfy the owner that they are of good character and that no harm will come of their visit to the community. Traders, so-called "Gypsies" or anyone who does not present a pleasing appearance are looked on with suspicion and as a rule, are unwelcome guests to the neighborhood. These suspicions have been so often verified in the past that all comers of the type described above are looked upon as bad until proven good.

There are several roadhouses in the county which provide the tourist with diversion and some have rooming accommodations. All serve food and beer and soft drinks. Dancing and pool may be enjoyed at these places. On occasion dancing is to orchestral music but more often to machines requiring cash deposits for operation. There are three roadhouses near Owenton, one at New Liberty and one at Gratz and several in adjoining counties near the Owen county line.

There are several fishing camps in the county. One of these, that of Charles Hudson at Monterey, is located on the bank of the Kentucky River at Lock No.3. Cabin accommodations may be had at reasonable fees and fishing costs are low. Monterey provides an excellent place for those who want to fish. Nestled at the foot of hills with a broad valley between it and the river on a concrete (Taft) highway, the town itself lends enchantment to those seeking relief from work or crowded city conditions. Cedar creek empties into the river close by and the two combined, along with the dam in the Kentucky, form a fisherman's paradise. The scenery is beautiful, the air invigorating, the sport enjoyable, the roads are good and if one wishes more diversion it may be had at Owenton, the county seat, ten miles to the north or at Frankfort, the capitol of the state, eighteen miles to the south.

There are several fishing camps at Gratz. Like Monterey, Gratz is also on the Kentucky river. Noted for its hospitality to strangers this historic old town is the site of a new free bridge across the river which provides a direct outlet to Louisville which is only a matter of two hours drive distant. Two miles up the river is Lockport in Henry county where there is an excellent bathing beach. Boats, fishing and bathing may be had at Gratz. The cedar clad

hills interspread with red bud blossoms and the paler green of forest trees form a beautiful sight in the spring of the year when fishing is at its best.

(The R.N. Greene fishing camps at Lusby's Mill on Eagle creek provide not only for fishing but for bathing and tennis. The nearby town furnishes all commodities necessary and tourists from Covington and Cincinnati as well as other places are frequent visitors there. A new road (state highway) will soon be completed and will greatly add to the convenience of the traveler in reaching the camp. The people of the neighborhood know how to make tourists enjoy themselves and one need not suffer a dull moment while on a vacation to this delightful community.

The largest fishing club of the county is the Thomas Lake Fishing Club of Owenton. Organized two years ago the club provides a maximum number of fifty members. Membership dues are paid annually and have been used in stocking Thomas Lake with brim, bass, and newlight and in the beautification of the surroundings. Thomas Lake is municipally owned and was a PWA project. It is situated about two miles from Owenton close to the Owenton-Gratz Road and has a CWA paved road leading to it. It is not open to the public, except by invitation of the club members, for fishing. Here is a clubhouse of logs taken from one of the older houses of the county. The reconstruction has been done in such a skilled manner that the house gives the appearance of having been built there originally. A huge old fashioned fireplace in one end provides heat. A lean-to is built of logs cut and rough hewn from the hill above the cabin. The main room, about twenty feet square, opens on a deep porch. The building is surrounded by native trees and a woodland stretches along the hillside above the lake. Birds and squirrels sing and play unmolested in the trees.

Stone pathways lead to a minnow pond on the top of the hill and an automobile driveway gives year round access to the club house. Close by are flower beds, the pump house and the dam at the lower end of the lake. Bridges across the lake provide passage without the necessity of walking entirely around the water. Fishing piers extending out into the water enable the fishermen to cast further out and also provide seats for the tired or indolent angler. The hill side opposite the woodland is grass covered and terraced. On this side much individual attention has been given by members of the club as their oven, flower beds and tables attest. Retaining walls have been built where needed. These walls are of limestone and are nicely white washed. A great deal of the work has been done with WPA labor and it is remarkable the skill that has been attained under an able and efficient foreman. It is believed that this lake will soon be opened to the general public as the fish will soon be large enough and numerous enough for all.

Handicraft is not a forgotten art in the county and with proper stimulation could be made a source of considerable revenue as well as an attraction to tourists. Charles Barnes of Hesler makes beautiful cedar chests of regulation size which he sell for \$6.00 and up. These chests are made of native wood and finished entirely by hand, with the exception of metal fastenings. When polished in the natural colors they compare favorably with any found in furniture stores. Mrs. John Walton of Monterey offers a variety of needlecraft for sale to the general public. Mrs. J. P. Alexander of Wheatley has a reputation extending into several states for her quilts and comforts. There are many others whose work ranks with these and whose names may be had from the county fair secretary, Mr. Stokely Orr of Owenton, Kentucky, Route 4.

Bibliography

Horace Ransdell, Secretary Thomas Lake Fishing Club, Owenton, Ky.

Howard Borders, Foreman, Thomas Lake Beautification Project (WPA)

A. E. Rose, Deputy Sheriff and Farmer, Owenton, Kentucky.

Personal observation