

History of Dover

In 1806, Christian Deardorff and his brother-in-law, Jesse Slingluff, purchased 2,175 acres of land including part of the present site of Dover for \$4,622. Deardorff filed a plat of Dover at Zanesville, county seat of Muskingum County, in 1807. The plat was square and contained 256 lots. Streets were Front, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th and intersecting streets were Race, Market (now N. Wooster Ave.), and Walnut. In the center was a large square (now public square) reserved for a courthouse and public offices. However, when the county was formed in 1808, New Philadelphia was chosen as the county seat.

The building of the canal between 1826 and 1830 boosted the growth of Dover. The only canal tolling station in the county was located here. By 1840, Dover, a flour mill and warehouse center, had a population of 598. During the canal era, the post office became known as Canal Dover, to distinguish it from other Ohio towns known as Dover. The Canal Dover post office became Dover post office on December 18, 1915. In 1933, the present Dover Post Office building was erected as part of a PWA project.

In 1842, Dover was incorporated as a village. Dr. Joseph Slingluff served as the first Mayor. After a brief time, the village charter was allowed to lapse and there was no form of village government until 1867, nearly 20 years later. The City of Dover was incorporated on December 6, 1901.

Dover remained a milling center for many years. The first steel rolling mill began operation in 1867, later acquired by J.E. Reeves and associates in 1882, becoming the foundation of the Reeves Steel Manufacturing. Today, most of the raw materials that go into the manufactured products of Dover come from Tuscarawas County.

Railroads opened a new era. The Cleveland and Pittsburgh Railroad Company (later to become part of the Pennsylvania Railroad), chartered in 1836, came into Dover in 1854.

Two of Dover's well known attractions are Warther's Museum and J.E. Reeves Victorian Home and Museum. Warther's Museum is a showcase of Ernest "Mooney" Warther's hand carved wonders. Using only a knife, files, and native ingenuity, he carved the history of steam locomotives and trains dating from 250 B.C. to the present day. He also carved an 18th century steel mill, with irate foreman and sleeping worker, as well as many other intricate carvings. The Smithsonian Institution appraised it as a "Priceless Work of Art". The museum also includes his original workshop and Mrs. Warther's button collection of over 73,000 buttons arranged in beautiful designs on the walls and ceilings.

The J.E. Reeves Victorian Home and Museum is a step back into another century. The Reeves home is a 17 room mansion topped with a third floor ballroom with each room carefully restored and containing nearly all of the original furnishings of the Reeves family. Located behind the home is a turreted Carriage House Museum, which features a Military Exhibit containing memorabilia from the Civil War through W.W.I.I. A rare Rauch and Lang electric car, the Reeves family sleigh, and their handsome 1892 carriage are also housed in this building. The property is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

If you wish to receive more information on the History of Dover contact the Tuscarawas County Convention and Visitors Bureau at 124 East High Avenue, New Philadelphia, Ohio, 44663, call (330) 602-2420, or visit our website at www.ohiotimelessadventures.com. For further information contact the Tuscarawas County Public Library in New Philadelphia at (330) 364-4474 or the Tuscarawas County Historical Society at the Tuscarawas Campus of Kent State University at (330) 339-3391 Extension 47494.