

History of the "Twin Cities" Dennison and Uhrichsville

The twin cities of Dennison and Uhrichsville are nestled in the hills of East Central Ohio midway between Columbus and Pittsburgh. The town of Uhrichsville was laid out first in 1822, but not incorporated until 1866 and was originally named Waterford by Michael Uhrich, its founder. It was renamed to Uhrichsville six years later because the early settlers persisted in calling it "Uhrich's Mill" and because of confusion in the mail system caused by two settlements bearing the name of Waterford. The town of Dennison was laid out in 1865 when the Dennison Land Company was formed but was not incorporated until 1873. The company purchased a large tract expressly to build the town. The name is that of Governor William Dennison.

For Uhrichsville, with the coming of the canal era, wheat buying and shipping was the chief business. Uhrichsville became a central station for the Cleveland wheat market as Uhrich's mill expanded by building first one warehouse and eventually five more. Uhrichsville was the outlet for nearly all the grain raised in the Stillwater Valley. The clay industry also flourished in the early 1900's and prosperity continued until the late 1950's and early 1960's. At one time the area could boast of as many as a dozen plants. The clay industry did decline and in recent years new industry has begun to move into the area to replace the clay industry including aluminum reclamation plants, plastics and ceramics, as well as many small businesses.

As for Dennison one of its leading industries was the Dennison Coal Company, which had extensive mines just south of town, and a tramway extending into the P.C. & St. L. Railroad yard east of the shops. A large coal tippie supplied the engines with coal. During WWI and WWII, the town of Dennison was the sight of canteens, serving the men of the Armed Forces. The World War I Canteen worked out of a boxcar which was placed on a siding by the railroad. The Red Cross was the supervising organization for the Canteen in WWI. The volunteers would be notified when a train with servicemen would be passing through the village. The volunteers would hurry to fix sandwiches and coffee for the servicemen. The Canteen for World War II was in operation from March 19, 1942 until April 8, 1946. To get the project started, a play was presented with \$200 being raised. The Salvation Army became supervisor for the Dennison Canteen. The Canteen was begun in a gas station on Center and Fifth Street. The canteen grew too big for the location and moved to the depot restaurant. Dennison became a famous name to servicemen and around the globe. Because of the canteen, Dennison was dubbed "Dreamland".

If you wish to receive more information on the History of the "Twin Cities" 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.