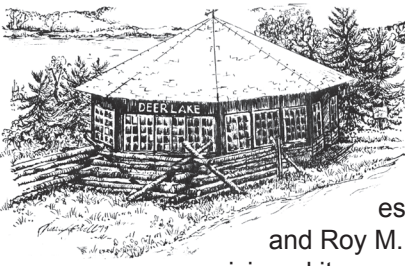


HISTORY OF DEER LAKE



DEER LAKE PARK is unique. It is safe to boast that there is no other family development quite like it anywhere.

From the earliest moments of its inception in 1938 when two real estate developers, Robert E. Morgan, Sr. and Roy M. Norris came here from Pittsburgh and envisioned its possibilities, it has been forever protected from the invasion of commercial interests and set aside for wholesome family recreation.

The peacefulness of this small mountain valley is still apparent. Walk on an evening around the 77-acre spring-fed lake and listen to the peaceful chant of crickets punctuated by the deep, rhythmic croaking of numerous frogs from their perches on lily pads. Walk on a morning along the trails and drink in the delighted song of countless birds reciting their daily litany of praise. All this is set against a placid, mirrored lake on which small boats laze quietly.

Perhaps the most important legacy passed on in the transfer of the original deed to Deer Lake Corporation was the fact that as far as possible the land retains this sylvan characteristic. It is safe to say that it has.

The first mention of the Deer Lake area in written history may be found in Ellis' History of Fayette County. In 1822, the same year the Stone House on Route 40 was erected, Joseph Wiggins built the "Finest house in Wharton Township." Sportsmen of the day called it "the fox hunter's paradise." This was the old house situated on the rise above the present gatehouse. The house was destroyed by fire in 1949.

From 1822 until 1906, several generations of the Wiggins family occupied the land. In 1906, it was purchased by Charles Seaton from both the Wiggins and Burrie families.

In 1908 Mr. Seaton cleared the 77 acres now covered by the lake, built the dam and enclosed the park area with a fence 10 feet high, topped with barbed wire. He then stocked the lake with bass and trout, started a herd of deer and maintained the enclosure as a wildlife preserve.

The late Attorney D.W. MacDonald of Uniontown, a grandnephew of Mr. Seaton, recalling that he spent many early vacations here, once described the original estate.

According to Mr. MacDonald, the farm was practically self-sustaining, with very large gardens, a large reservoir of spring water on top of South Hill, now known as "The Knoll." Below the house was a small duck and fish pond. Water from the reservoir was piped the several hundred feet to the main house.

Part of the original estate included two farm houses, a cottage for domestic help, a laundry, ice house, garage, wagon shed, cider mill, scale house, corn cribs, hog pens, chicken house, blacksmith shop and many smaller buildings.

Mr. MacDonald also recalled that in the winter, area residents would cut ice on the upper portion of the lake and store it in sawdust for the year's supply.

The main house was occupied by Mr. Seaton until his death in 1924. It later became the home of Mr. And Mrs. Robert E. Morgan, Sr. and their six children.

Mr. Morgan, more than any other person has been responsible for the direction in which Deer Lake has been developed.

In December 1938, Mr. Morgan and Mr. Norris purchased the lake and the 769 acres of land surrounding it, Seaton's Lake as it was then called. A chief stipulation of Mr. Seaton's will was that the lake and the area around it be preserved as much as possible in its natural state.

Engineering and survey work began in the Fall of 1938. The "Washington Oak" located in the park in the front of Lot No. 16, was the main reference point for all of the survey work. The tree was so named for the first U.S. President who may have traveled this way between Fort Necessity and the site of the Jumonville "skirmish."

Stone was obtained from a quarry on the property located behind the Lutheran Church on the Ohiopyle Road. A large crusher prepared the stone at the quarry. Trucks hauled the stone to the park where road graders and rollers began the first roads at the gatehouse, Lafayette and Deer Lake Trails.

The stone from the quarry was used in the construction of several homes at the lake and also at Oxford Park in Mount Lebanon, the Pittsburgh development owned jointly at the time by Mr. Morgan and Mr. Norris.

The first cottage erected at Deer Lake was that of Lou Pflaum on Lot No. 12. Before it was completed however, Mr. Pflaum was called to service in World War II and he sold the site. Mr. Pflaum could not stay away from Deer Lake. In 1956 he returned, bought Lot No. 197 and built a new home.

In 1939 and 1940, fourteen homes were built, and the men started on the long hard task of building roads and clearing land. The hard road along the lake was built by the men themselves, the women bringing them sandwiches and coffee at noon to save time and energy.

The gatehouse, now used as a meeting place by the owners, was erected in 1940 and served as a sales office.

In 1942, the Morgan-Norris partnership dissolved with Mr. Morgan retaining sole ownership of Deer Lake and Mr. Norris retaining sole interest in Oxford Park.

Mr. Morgan, a man of great vision, visualized this setting as a place

where the tired businessman could bring his family to relax and escape the heat of the city; a place where the children would be safe and could roam at will and give mother relief from the constant care that goes with accident-prone city streets.

The fine spirit of cooperation, which exists among Deer Lake residents, dates back to the earliest days. Soon after initial improvements were made, owners offered their services in supervision, on work parties and in monetary contributions. Improvements, at the swimming area, on the beaches, on the bridges over the spillway and erection of the tennis courts are examples of this genuine cooperation.

Out of this spirit of cooperation in the early days came formation of a Lot Owners' Association. The first meeting of this group was held on January 17, 1941 at the Webster Hall Hotel in Pittsburgh. Fourteen members attended and George Ley was appointed temporary chairman.

The Lot Owners' Association was the forerunner of the Deer Lake Improvement Association, formed in 1958. At that time, Mr. Morgan, through the Deer Lake Corporation, conveyed ownership of the lake and approximately 65 acres of park surrounding it to the Association. In return, the Association assumed responsibility for maintenance of the entire lake property, providing watchman service to insure privacy, upkeep of the property through road maintenance, grass mowing and maintenance of the dam, swimming areas, beaches, tennis courts, etc.

During the winter of 1941 several meetings were held in Pittsburgh. The bylaws and rules and regulations that would govern Deer Lake were written. George Ley was elected as the first president.

The first annual meeting was set for October 18, 1941, the second was held in October 1942. Since then, the annual meetings have been held in August.

In September 1981, some 43 years after founding Deer Lake, Mr. Morgan passed away. Happily, he lived to see the last parcel of land owned by Deer Lake Corporation transferred to a new owner. In one of his last conversations with his family concerning his beloved Deer Lake, he confided solemnly, that he felt his days of stewardship had come to an end and that Deer Lake was now in the capable hands of the "dear ones" who had come here to share his dream of peaceful solitude.

There have been many "dear ones" in Deer Lake's proud history. Certainly it is impossible to name them all and praise their contributions. However one man stands alone for the caliber of contributions he made. That man is Al McKenna who passed away in November 1985. Among his accomplishments is the new cantilevered dock at the swimming area, the school bus shelters, and the bridges which were all prefabricated in his basement. The most notable has to be the covered bridge which spans the spillway, which not only bears his unique stamp of craftsmanship, but also bears a plaque placed there respectfully by a loving community in Al's memory.

Presidents of the lot owners' group, now incorporated as the Deer Lake Improvement Association, were elected at the Annual Meeting in:

1941	Mr. George Ley	1972	Mr. William Brinich, Jr.
1942	Mr. Herbert Wehe	1973-74	Mr. Lowell C. Newman
1943	Mr. C.O. Emerson	1975	Mr. Arthur Christopher
1944-45	Mr. Hubert Holland	1976	Mr. George Reid
1946	Mr. S.L. Woodward	1977-78	Mr. James Foutz
1947-48	Dr. Lester Bartlett	1979	Mr. Jack Hughes
1949	Mr. Herbert Wehe (Mr. Wehe resigned in May, and Mr. Thomas Eazor finished his term.)	1980	Mr. Terry Scott
		1981	Mr. James Foutz
		1982-84	Mr. Rolland Herring
		1985-86	Mr. William Schonage
1950-51	Mr. L. Jones	1987-88	Mr. James Foutz
1952	Dr. William Patterson (Dr. Patterson became ill early in 1953 and Vice President Woodward served for the remainder of the year.)	1989-91	Mr. Elmer Barthel
		1991	Mr. John Buchanan
		1992	Mr. James Foutz
1953-54	Mr. Harry Lindsay	1993-94	Mr. James Foutz
1955-56	Mr. Frank Robison	1994-95	Mr. Walter Gillis
1957-59	Mr. W.L. Lohrentz	1995-2004	Mr. William Cowher
1960-62	Mr. Paul G. Shanor	2004-06	Mrs. Rhonda Jackson (Mrs. Jackson resigned and Mr. Nelson finished her term)
1963	Mr. H.S. Stockdale		
1964	Mr. Glenn Marchando		
1965-66	Mr. Rolland Herring	2006	Mr. Daniel Nelson
1967	Mr. George M. Rigg	2006-2016	Mr. James Foutz
1968	Mr. Weldon Rambo		
1969-70	Mr. Daniel Ziegler II	2016-2021	Mr. James Thieman
1971	Mr. Nicholas Knezevich (Mr. Knezevich resigned In March, & Mr. William Brinich, Jr. finished his term.)	2021-Present:	Mr. James Foutz

The governing body of the Deer Lake Improvement Association is an elected board of directors and a president. Other committees are at work handling the many diverse phases of Association activities, and to these people we express our thanks and appreciation. It takes continual review, study and planning, and plain hard work by many people, to keep the Association functioning properly so as to provide the varied services that members desire.

Since the formation of D.L.I.A. many improvements have been made to make our community a better place to live. More activities are being held every year-creating a close community.

Due to our restricted budget many of the improvements have been made through volunteer labor, donations and with the help of the Women's Auxiliary fund-raising activities. We hope that each member will become active, giving of his or her time and talents to make Deer Lake a very special place to live.