

Thank you Marion

Strongsville prepares for Industry

A study of Industry goes back to the early days of Strongsville as a town. Strong built the dam and grist mill at Albion the second year he was here. ¹⁸¹⁷ A few years later other businesses were added along the river. There was a saw-mill, distillery, a carding works, a tin shop, a scythe and snath factory, two wagon shops, a machine shop and several blacksmiths shops. This formed a very good Industrial Park.

Many of you know about the winter fire of 1843 which burned all the industries except the grist mill, ^{It is still} which operated into this century under the management of Rachel's father and before him her grandfather.

Another group of industries, in this early period, existed around the corner of Drake and Hunt Rds. There was a grist mill a basket factory, and a buggy and wagon factory.

There was another group of businesses a mile East of the center called East Mills. It had a grist mill, a saw mill and a blacksmith shop. Water power was available in all these centers. Pieces of the dam at the Drake area and the East Mills area are still visible.

There was places of business in other ^{area} places through the town. Blacksmiths, saw mills and asheries were common. About the only export Strongsville had was potash. It was obtained from the ashes of burning trees. They had to be eliminated to grow crops.

By and large these industries caused no great objections ^{see section} by the people, because they were providing a service to the local people and usually the nearest family was on the next farm about 1000 feet down the road.

In 1940 s & 1950s the Chamber of Commerce met in the hall above. I think there were about 100 chairs. At many of these meetings most of these were filled and sometimes as many as 25 stood in the rear. *New England Town meeting*
As Cleveland grew from just a port of entry for settlers going farther south, to a Village and then to a city, a few industries became very objectionable because of their noise, fumes, pollution or litter. This caused many people to hold to the opinion that industry as a whole was objectional.

This false idea that all industry was bad had to be countered with the argument that with satisfactory controls industry could *be an asset* add tremendously to the tax duplicate without adding to the cost of schooling, police protection or garbage collection. *again*

In 1954 there was action taken to lease the Tomes property, here on Pearl Rd. 300 acres at \$600 per acre for industry. *only* Mr. Mickey Crouse was to sell the property.

a general idea
Following this action, the Chamber appointed a committee to publicize this project. This committee consisted of L.O. Bean, *chair* Ben Sprague Sr. Irvin Hunger, Lorin Neeper, Gordon Geager, Millar Cardine and Howard Chapman. The members of this committee proceeded to visit other communities having the same problem to find out what they were doing. Others went to communities where they had established an Industrial Park. Some wrote to distant communities for brochures. *for* Two years the Chamber rented space in the Richards building at the fair to publicize the Park, we had a large picture *this area* of ~~Strongsville~~, showing the Cross roads of the nation going thru Strongsville. We gave out 2000 brochures one day. *sample* One man going by the booth was handed a brochure, he asked what's the catch no catch just wanted everyone to know where Strongsville is. *Cross Roads* He shook his head as he walked on.

As time passed and no parcels^w ere sold, Chamber appointed Paul Kocher as Public Relations Person to get things moving. One whole evening was spent discussing Industrial Development following a talk by Ray Hartman of the Electural Company. *List* During this period, in most every meeting something was presented about the difficulty of getting into^{the} property because of the rolling land so much brush making it almost impassible only by foot or air. In addition there was a very large barn at the entrance to the property. *Picture* During these years we would often see planes ~~planes~~ flying over this area and we would say to ourselves there is another prospect.

About ten years after the Tones property was first leased for industry Council determined they could level the area put in *roads* gas and elecricity and levy an assessment against the property when sold. The Council decided to put this idea on the ballot. With the help ov the Chamber the \$350,000 project was started. *if passed + the*

Sander John was a member of Council at that time. He can give a good description of what went on from the passage of the levy *after* He may be able to site some incidents that happened during this ten year period that *I* have forgotten. thank you for listening.