

In This Issue

Our regular readers have probably been wondering what became of the spring issue of the *Northeast Ohio Journal of History*. Whereas we had the content for this edition months ago, we met with unanticipated (and lengthy) technical challenges in endeavoring to upgrade the website. Thus, in the interests of accuracy, we have decided to call this the "Summer 2004" issue. This is a one-time adjustment, however, and the fall issue will still come out as scheduled. We apologize for the delay, and hope it has not caused too much inconvenience to our subscribers.

We also trust that our readers will forgive the wait for this issue once they see what awaits them inside. For example, our feature article takes us for a trip out to the bars. In "Tavernocracy: Tavern Culture on Ohio's Western Reserve," Adam Criblez argues that the humble local tavern had oft-neglected but vital social, cultural, and political influences on the residents of early nineteenth century Northeast Ohio. Absent other social institutions on the frontier, Criblez notes, the tavern provided an important forum for people of all classes to meet and discuss the issues of the day.

For those of our readers who wish to meet and discuss issues of the day without threat of hangovers, we are very pleased to introduce our new discussion board. Taking advantage of the technology available to us as an electronic journal, we believe this new feature will make our journal more interactive and serve to engender substantive debate, discussion, and exchange of information for all people interested in the history of Northeast Ohio.

To get the ball rolling in this new "virtual tavern," we have reprised Gregory Wilson's item "Thinking About Regions" in our "Notes and Comments" section. The *Northeast Ohio Journal of History* is by definition a regional history publication, but how should that region be defined? Politically? Geographically? Culturally? Environmentally? Wilson, *NOJH*'s Publication Director and Assistant Professor of History at the University of Akron, means to provoke discussion and debate with this piece. To add your part to this debate, please post your thoughts on the discussion board.

For this issue's virtual museum exhibit, we are extremely fortunate to feature Jack Gieck's photographic tour of Cascade Locks Park in Akron, Ohio. One of Northeast Ohio's most

important local historians, Gieck takes the reader through the nearly forgotten landmarks of the old Ohio and Erie Canal lock system near downtown Akron, deftly illustrating the history that is often literally right under our feet.

In addition to the usual book reviews, we also encourage the reader to explore the other features of our site. For those who missed earlier issues, please visit our "Archives" link, which contains the entire contents of our first volume. We have expanded our "Research Links" feature, adding not only more primary sources but also more links to local historical agencies. We strongly encourage the reader to suggest or send new links for this page. The same is true for items in "Current History," which is a clearinghouse for information on events of a historical nature in Northeast Ohio. Because we update this section constantly, please feel free to send announcements for it at any time.

We would also like to remind our readers that printer-friendly versions accompany each item. These PDF files are not only easier on the eyes when printed, but also contain basic issue data and page numbers for convenience in citation.

As always, please address any inquiries about this project (or about any other aspect of the journal) to the editor at kkern@uakron.edu. We welcome all comments and suggestions.

Kevin Kern