



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Cuyahoga Valley
National Park

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Farming in the Valley: 2011 Oral History Project

The following are transcripts from five audio clips in the **Childhood Adventures/Having Fun** section. Visit <http://www.nps.gov/cuva/historyculture/having-fun.htm> to view the entire page.

Pat Morse tells stories about a rope swinging game she and her childhood friends invented, and the near disaster of building a dangerous bonfire.

Rope Swing

“We would swing in the hay mow in the barn. There were kind of raised towers, like, from where they stored equipment below. And the rope hung clear from the roof of the barn, and we’d go from one side to the other on this rope. When all of the girls were doing that, the boys were trying to knock us off of the rope. *~laughs~* And we thought it was such fun! *~laughs~*”

Playing With Fire

“One time we decided we were going to build a fire. These are the kind of things you did for entertainment when you had no TV. We decided we were gonna build a bonfire because it was cold. The easiest thing to catch fire was the straw in the barn, but we knew that would catch fire *too* much, so we went into the straw and hay mow, carried that straw, a trail going right outside to the barn door, and we built our fire against the barn door, and thought we were being so careful. *~laughs~* My mother didn’t switch me very often but that was one time. *~laughs~* Luckily she was looking out the window. Our kitchen window was just across the yard from the barn, and she saw this smoke, so she called and got the neighbors and everybody there to put the fire out. It *did* burn the barn door, but luckily that was all. It could have been *horrible*, really. Oh my goodness! But again, that was entertaining, so . . .”

Fishing and 4H

Daniel Emmett of Richfield lists some of the fun activities he remember sharing with his childhood friends.

“We walked down to Furnace Run and went fishing. All the boys in my neighborhood, we all played basketball and baseball. We were, most of us were in the 4H club, which was educational *and* fun.”

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A Little Paradise

Josephine Davis describes the natural features that made her family's farm in Brecksville so special.

“Down over the hill we had waterfalls and a pond, a spring-fed pond, and we had a crick. The waterfalls was a result of a quarry that had been there for years. When they cut out the stone, they automatically created a falls, which was very interesting to a young person. And in the creek . . . I played in the crick and turned up the stones and there were minnows in the crick and there were fish in the pond. I spent probably more than half of my life down over the hill by the waterfalls and the crick and the woods. We picked mushrooms, and in the fall of the year we picked hickory nuts and walnuts and hazelnuts, and of course in the summer it was berry-picking time. We had like our own little paradise or Garden of Eden!”

Music at Home

Children also found entertaining activities indoors. Marjorie Osborne Morgan, who grew up in Everett, describes playing and listening to musical instruments with her family.

“In later years, my mom and dad had a square-dance orchestra and had another man playing with them, and they went around to, like, the grange halls and played for dances on Saturday nights. We were all musicians. I played the piano, and then as I got older I played the trumpet. Yeah, so we had a very musical family, and that was one of the things that we used to do. My grandmother played the piano. Before that she would pop corn in one of those big iron kettles that you set down in the stove. And they always had those big, yellow, sweet Delicious apples in the cellar, and we could eat popcorn and eat those great big, good Delicious apples and listen to her play the piano. That was our entertainment.”