

OAK HARBOR LOG CABIN- ADOLPHUS KRAEMER PARK

(The Log Cabin at Adolphus Kraemer Park – In actuality, this structure depicts the more permanent Log House of the 1850's to the 1870's. Log cabins in the Great Black Swamp in the 1830's were typically a temporary, hastily built structure made of un-hewn logs, bark roofs, wood chimneys, animal skin doors and lacking any windows.)

1883-1907 – First Town Hall is built on this site. – It was a red brick structure with meeting room, jail, & fire department steam engine room. The building and its steeple were extensively repaired in 1894. The building was torn down around 1907, perhaps due to earlier problems with the steeple and rest of building.

1907-1996 – Second Town Hall is built on this site. Costing \$13,773.00, it featured a second floor Opera House that seated 400 on a sloped floor with a balcony. The stage was 25'x25'x25' with side dressing rooms. Main floor of the building had a meeting room with a small stage. A jail was in the Northwest corner of the building. The small room on the Southwest corner was used as the Oak Harbor Public Library from 1908-1936 and later the Light & Water Utility Office. The building, after years of non-use and neglect was torn down on February 6 & 7, 1996.

1996-2003 – Property was vacant. A stone garage on the southwest corner of the property, dating from at least 1907, was the only structure on the property. It housed the Oak Harbor Fire Department after they lost their room when the old Town Hall was torn down; staying here until the early 1930's when they moved to the present Water Street location. The garage then became the Oak Harbor Street Department until they moved out in late 1970's. Since then the Oak Harbor Police Department has used it as a vehicle & storage garage.

2001 - Marge & Bill Priesman donated a 2 story log cabin that was on property, once owned by Dorothy & Cy Franck (Marge's parents), south of the Vogel Road/State Route 163 intersection, west of Oak Harbor. The 2 story cabin, last occupied in the 1940's, was thought to be from the 1850-1870 era. Nothing of the interior and original furnishings was left in the cabin; however, Dick Martin has donated a small scrap of wallpaper that was still found on the wall of the cabin in the 1960's. (See framed wallpaper scrap on wall)



2001 -The cabin was dismantled by the Oak Harbor Lions Club (Heavy equipment provided by Red Horse National Air Guard, Camp Perry) and moved to the Ottawa County Fairgrounds. It was put into outside storage, at the east end of the Fairground, with the hopes of it being to the first building of a proposed historical village at the Fairgrounds. This did not happen and concern was raised about the slow deterioration and loss to campground fires of the unmarked wooden timbers.

2002 - In May, 2002, the Village of Oak Harbor Council announced the Log Cabin, stored at the Ottawa County Fairgrounds, was to be erected on part of the old Town Hall property just across from the Post Office. The Village allocated \$7,500 in 2002 and \$5,000 in 2003 to pay for structure costs. Oak Harbor Lions Club would provide the direction and labor to rebuild the Cabin.

2002 -Groundbreaking for the Log Cabin was 10:00 AM on November 9, 2002.

2003 - The logs and timbers for the Log Cabin were moved from the Ottawa County Fairgrounds to the building site in January, 2003. Actual construction of the Cabin was started in May, 2003, with ground being dug for a concrete foundation (stone facing installed later). The foundation was completed in June, 2003.

2004 - By October, 2004, the exterior of the Log Cabin was completed. Not enough original timber was usable to rebuild the cabin as the original 2 story. It was rebuilt as a 1 story cabin. Even then, some logs and timber from a barn of about the same age were needed to complete the 28'x 20' Cabin. A new, attached concrete chimney (with stone facing), was added, as well as new materials being used for the roof, floor, windows, doors, and fireplace.

2005 - Ownership & maintenance of the Log Cabin was given to the Village of Oak Harbor in July, 2005. Final occupancy permit was issued in November, 2005. (Electricity, for winter use, was added in 2008.)



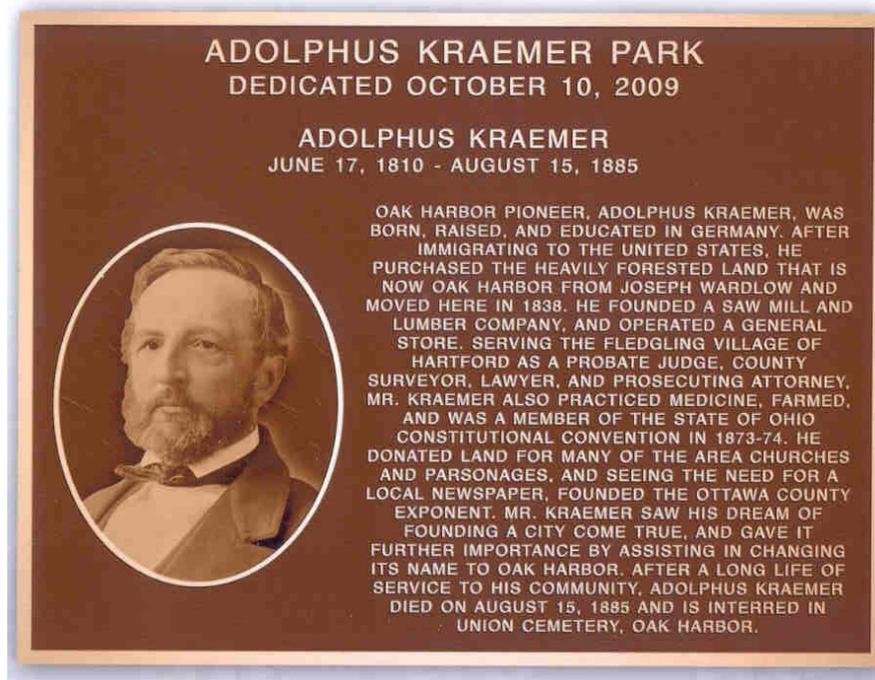
2007 - The Oak Harbor Log Cabin Association (non-profit) was formed in 2007 to promote the use of the Log Cabin through various educational programs. This year was the beginning of the annual 3rd grade school educational programs, and the annual Sunday Night Music Series. (Log Cabin stationary, drawn by Diane Krieger, was made available 2008.)

2007 – 2008 – Period furniture was put in the cabin, both by donated articles and articles purchased by members of the Log Cabin Association, during 2007 & 2008. While none of the furniture was originally used in the Log Cabin, it is mostly period correct for the 1850's – 1870's.

2007 – 2008 - A stand-alone, enclosed popcorn stand was donated in 2007 by Mr. Jack Kemp. This popcorn stand was run by his father in the 1940's & 1950's, and stood, in the summer months, on the northwest corner of Locust & Water Streets. It was stored indoors in the winter months. After refurbishing by the Oak Harbor Lions Club, popcorn, made at the stand, was made available at the Sunday Night Music Series starting in 2008.

2009 - In 2009, Frank Gluth (Local Historian & Ottawa County Exponent columnist – Tales from an Old Timer) & the Log Cabin Association succeed in having Oak Harbor Village Council name the site – “Adolphus Kraemer Park” (Res. 5-2009) to honor the “Father of Oak Harbor”. The Park was dedicated Oct. 10, 2009 during the Annual Oak Harbor Apple Festival (1979-present). The great, great, grand children of Adolphus Kraemer attended and took part in the ceremony. Ann Williams Kalih, Bill Williams, & Karen Below Schultz.

Adolphus Kraemer – June 17, 1810 – Aug. 15, 1885. (See Stone & Plaque – Entrance walkway). While not the founder of the Village of Oak Harbor (Hartford) in 1835; 1836 being the earliest record of Kraemer's business dealings here, & 1838 being the year he moved his family here from Toledo, he is credited with the early growth & prosperity of the Village. . Once here, he ran a saw mill & general store. As a lawyer, he served as a Probate Judge, County Surveyor, & Prosecuting Attorney. He founded the Ottawa County Exponent (1871). Without the ambition, knowledge, & drive of Adolphus Kraemer, this Village may not have survived.



2017 – Educational, musical, & social activities at Adolphus Kraemer Park are coordinated by the Log Cabin Association. These include the 3rd Grade Educational Day, Apple Festival Tours, Sunday Night Musical Concerts, Easter Egg Hunt, Halloween Treating Night, Santa Claus Greeting the Children, and the Village Christmas Tree Lighting.

The Village owns and maintains the Log Cabin and Adolphus Kraemer Park. Use of the Log Cabin is administered by the Log Cabin Association. Contact: Jane Whitaker 419-304-5877 or Karen Johns 419-898-0820