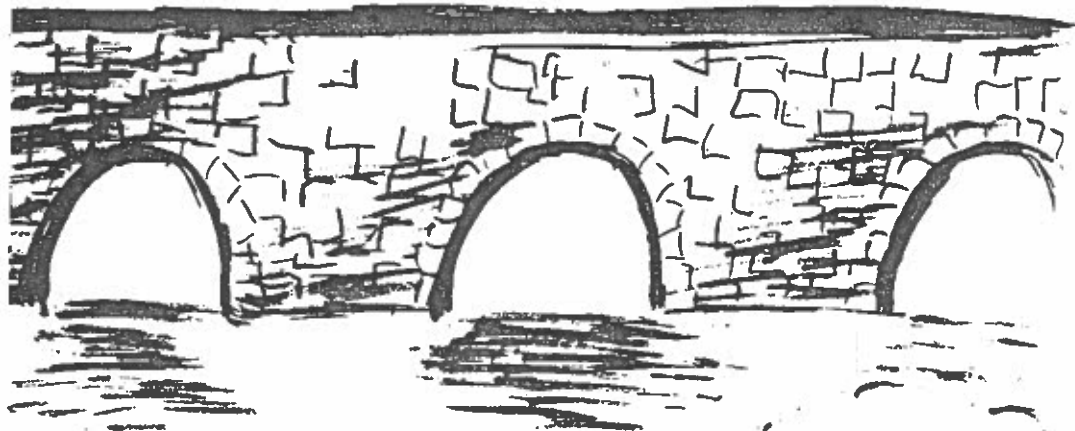


LOOKING AT BELLAIRE

10



EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT

by

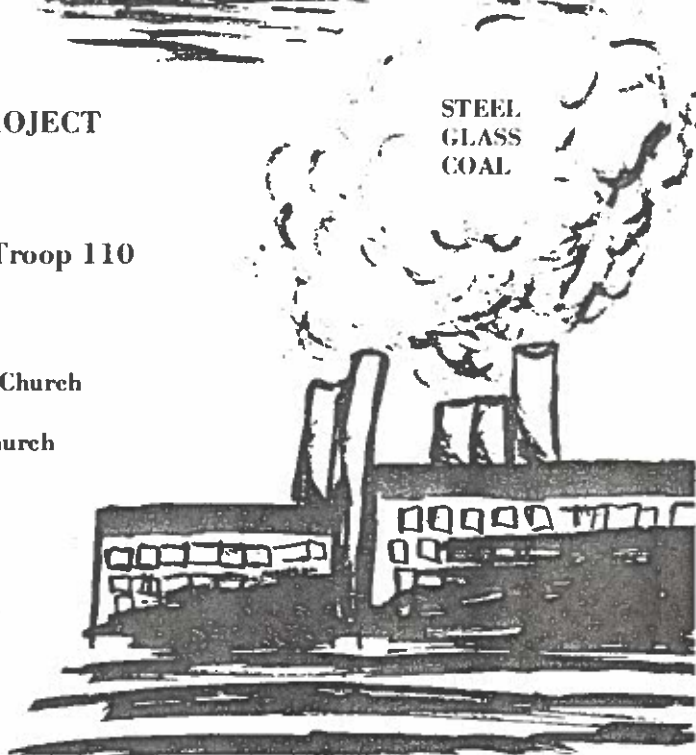
Scout John Robison - Troop 110

Sponsored by

First United Methodist Church

**The Presbyterian Church
Bellaire, Ohio**

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Bellaire lies in the fertile valley of the Ohio River, bounded on the east by the river and on the west by the beautiful rolling hills, which have given Eastern Ohio the title of "Switzerland of Ohio". The first permanent settlement was effected in 1803, the same year in which Ohio became a state.

In 1832 "Bell Air", named after Jacob Davis's home town in Maryland, consisted of six log cabins. Bell Air made little progress until 1854 when the Central Ohio Railroad from Columbus was completed. In 1862 the name was changed to Bellaire to avoid confusion in the distribution of railway freight. Bellaire was incorporated on May 22, 1860.

During the civil war a pontoon bridge was maintained from Bellaire to West Virginia for the movement of troops. Twenty-six additions to the city were made from 1856 to 1879. This was a very big time for growth in Bellaire. For 20 years after completion of the Stone Bridge in 1871 the population of Bellaire grew 500 percent.

Through all this and until the mid 1920's Bellaire's main industry was coal. Coal died down then and so did the population of Bellaire. The Carnegie steel mill closed at this time and that hurt Bellaire also.

Since glass houses were the main industries of early Bellaire, I will begin with them. The first flint glass house was the Belmont founded in 1861. It was soon followed by the National in 1869, the Goblet Works in 1876, the Ohio Glass Works in 1878, the Bellaire Bottle Works and Aetna Glass Works in 1880.

Rodefer-Gleason Glass was established in 1877. In the early years it manufactured lantern globes, lightning rod balls, and vault lights. About 1880 the company began making blanks for other companies to decorate. The Rodefer-Gleason Glass Co. has operated on the same site, at 22nd and Union Street, longer than any other glass company in the history of the United States.

Imperial Glass was organized in 1901, was two years in building and produced its first glass in 1904. This was the first concrete foundation for a factory in the United States; the others used sandstone block. Imperial Glass was conceived by Edward Muhlemen. In 1910 production of iridescent glassware increased, new colors added, and carnival glass as we know it today was developed. During WW I demand for glass increased and automatic machines were used. Imperial Glass could not keep up so they specialized in expensive hand made items. In 1940 Imperial bought the Central Glass Works of Wheeling, in 1958 it acquired all the molds of the Heisey Co. of Newark, Ohio and in 1960 bought the Cambridge Co. of Cambridge Ohio. In 1973 Imperial merged with Lennox, Inc.

The Stone Bridge connecting the Central Ohio Railroad with the B & O Railroad was completed in 1871. Up until this time people traveling the railroads had to get off one train and be ferried across the river where they would board another. At the time of its completion the bridge was the longest stone arch in the United States. Practically all of the stone for the bridge was quarried near where the City Park now lies. This area was called Union Square.

Many farmers from the near-by area helped in the cutting of the stone. Cost of the bridge was estimated at 1.5 million dollars. The construction of the bridge began in 1867, but it wasn't until June 21, 1871 that engine number 519 took the first trial run from Bellaire to Benwood.