

Researching Rendville: Resources

The Rendville Historic Preservation Society

The Rendville Historic Preservation Society is a volunteer and nonprofit organization founded in 2015. The organization is committed to leaving a legacy for future generations through the preservation of the history, heritage, and the physical structures of the Village of Rendville. The group organizes community events, works to document the history of Rendville, and plans various other projects.

Link to the website with more public information about the group:

<https://rendvillehistory.org/about/>

Rendville Facebook Community:

Many families connected to Rendville, past/ current residents, and local community members stay in touch through Facebook. There is a group connected to the Historic Preservation Society where participants share photos, memories, and relevant news or other material.

Rendville Historic Preservation Society Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/RendvilleHistoricPreservationSociety>

James Karales Photographs -- Digital Repositories at Duke University

The Digital Repositories at Duke University contain 51 photographs of Rendville made between 1953 and 1957 by the 20th-century American photojournalist James Karales. The photos are publicly viewable on the website.

Website Link:

https://repository.duke.edu/dc/karales?f%5Bspatial_facet_sim%5D%5B%5D=Rendville+%28Ohio%29

Little Cities Archive

The Little Cities Archive serves as a repository for all forms of information about the history of the Little Cities of Black Diamonds area which includes southern Perry, northern Athens, and eastern Hocking Counties of Ohio. The physical archive is located on West Main Street in Shawnee, Ohio. The extensive archival materials can also be accessed online.

Link to online site and archive: <https://littlecitiesarchive.org/>

Link to information about Rendville in Archive: <https://littlecitiesarchive.org/tag/rendville/>

Genealogy at Perry County Libraries

The libraries of Perry County hold information that can assist with personal genealogical research. The New Lexington (Main) branch has a room in their lower level with a collection of vast material for this purpose. It is recommended that appointments are coordinated ahead of time.

New Lexington (Main) Branch Address: **(117 South Jackson St, New Lexington, OH 43764)**
Call the library to connect with reference staff: **740-342-4194**

Library website with more information: <https://www.pcdl.org/genealogy>

List of local resources compiled by library: <https://www.pcdl.org/node/49>

List of Ohio specific resources compiled by library: <https://www.pcdl.org/node/51>

Ohio History Connection

The Ohio History Connection (OHC), formerly the Ohio Historical Society, is a statewide history organization with the mission to spark discovery of Ohio's stories. The OHC is a large organization that oversees many different physical sites, events, and educational programs. They also manage an extensive archive and library with a large collection of newspapers, photos, manuscripts, books, maps, and government records. For those interested in genealogical research they also manage an index of death certificates. They also occasionally hold workshops that help guide familial and genealogical research.

The main building and library is located at 800 E. 17th Ave., Columbus Ohio, 43211
Call to speak with someone for more information: 614-297-2300 or 800-686-6124

Link to Website: <https://www.ohiohistory.org/>

The Ohio History Connection's page about Rendville:
<https://ohiohistorycentral.org/w/Rendville. Ohio>

Rendville's Historical Marker Listing (Managed by the Ohio History Connection):
<https://remarkableohio.org/index.php?/category/1204>

Multicultural Genealogical Center in Chesterhill, Ohio **(7540 Marion Street, P.O. Box 125, Chesterhill, Ohio 43728)**

The Multicultural Genealogical Center in Chester Hill Ohio has a variety of resources for studying South-East Ohio's African American history. The center's collection includes a library of 600 books, as well as collections of papers and letters, research collections, and other resources. This includes the Perdreau collection, which contains census records, biographies, excerpts from books, personal interviews, and more, including Connie and Michel Perdreau's articles and publications resulting from their dedicated research. The center has published several books documenting African American life in Southeast Ohio, including heritage cookbooks, photo books, memorials and tributes, as well as collections of stories.

Link to online site: <https://mgcenterchesterhill.org/>

Link to Resources Page: <https://mgcenterchesterhill.org/resources-at-mgc/>

Link to Books (available for purchase): <https://mgcenterchesterhill.org/books-2/>

The Knox County Ohio Black History Digital Archives

The KCOBHDA is a project of the Kenyon College Rural Life Center and exists to provide the public with online free access to historical records of the Black community life and experience in Knox County, Ohio. While Rendville is located in Perry County, this archive holds online free access to historical records of the Black community life and experience. The Archives are currently under the directorship of Kenyon Professor Ric S. Sheffield. Professor Sheffield can be contacted at sheffier@kenyon.edu.

Link to website: <https://digital.kenyon.edu/knoxcobha/>

Black in Appalachia:

Black in Appalachia is a community service for Appalachian residents and families with roots in the region. Black in Appalachia works to highlight the history and contributions of African-Americans in the development of the Mountain South and its culture through research, local narratives, public engagement and exhibition. The organization has developed a Community History Project Digital Archive as a public, searchable archive of digital materials related to African American history in East Tennessee, which is developed to grow to include other materials from the region Appalachia. The Black in Appalachia Podcast interrogates what it means to be Black in Appalachia through historical and contemporary stories of people, places and experiences, creating a space where under-told stories can be heard and Black identity can be reclaimed.

Link to Website: <https://www.blackinappalachia.org/>

Link to podcast online: <https://www.blackinappalachia.org/podcast>

(Podcast is also available on Google podcasts, Apple podcasts, Spotify, Stitcher)

Link to Online Community Archive: <https://www.blackinappalachia.org/community-history-archive>

Rendville Cemetery Website:

In Spring 2020, the Rendville Historic Preservation Society (RHPS) and the Ohio State University Center for Folklore Studies began work on a preservation project focused on the Rendville/Scotch Hill cemetery. This website serves as a living repository for the documentation of the cemetery and includes a list of known burials, photographs of the headstones, videos of walks taken through the site, audio recordings, and other information collected about the cemetery.

Link to Website: <https://u.osu.edu/rendvillecemetery>

Center for Folklore Studies at OSU -- Archive with Rendville Documents

The Center for Folklore Studies at the Ohio State University supports the learning, teaching, research and outreach of folklorists and students of folklore. The Folklore Archives contain extensive collections of Ohio folksongs and music, local and Midwest folk narratives, oral history, folk customs, beliefs and practices, and documentation of material culture. The Folklore Archives contain contributions from students, faculty, and independent researchers spanning over 60 years. The Ohio Field School Collection contains audio interviews, photographs, event recordings, and ephemera collected by CFS faculty and staff, and graduate and undergraduate students enrolled in the Ohio Field Schools course. This includes documentation and information collected from the Spring 2020 collaborative cemetery project.

Link to Center for Folklore at OSU Website: <https://cfs.osu.edu/>

Link to Ohio Field School Digital Collections: <https://cfs.osu.edu/archives/collections/ohio-field-school>

Ohio University Archives

Ohio University has an extensive library collection that includes various materials relating to Rendville. Some of this material is available online through their digital archives. Residents of Athens, Hocking, Meigs, Morgan, Perry, Vinton, and Washington Counties, as well as all Ohio University alumni, are eligible for community borrowing from the physical collection.

Link to Ohio University Digital Archives: <https://www.ohio.edu/library/collections/digital-archive>

Books and Other Documentary Projects about Rendville:

Across the Color Line, Documentary by Burr Beard

Runs 18 min

This documentary examines the history of Rendville and was created by Burr Beard while completing an MFA at Ohio University.

Viewable Online: <https://vimeo.com/268649364>

Richard L. Davis and the Color Line in Ohio Coal: A Hocking Valley Mine Labor Organizer, 1862-1900, Book by Frans H. Doppen

This biography provides a detailed portrait of Richard L. Davis, one of America's more influential labor organizers and lived in Rendville, Ohio. Davis called upon white and black miners to unite against wage slavery, and was one of two African Americans at the founding convention of United Mine Workers of America in 1890.

Link to listing on Google Books:

https://www.google.com/books/edition/Richard_L_Davis_and_the_Color_Line_in_Oh/ch1FDQAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0

Rendville, Ohio: An Historical Geography of a Distinctive Community in Appalachian Ohio, 1880-1900, Dissertation by Sherry A Dibari

This thesis paper was written by Sherry A Dibari as part of her doctoral work at Ohio University in the Department of Geography and the College of Arts and Sciences. This thesis discusses the history of Rendville and argues that African Americans in Rendville were agents of their own social change during the nineteenth century. By utilizing a network of social organizations and an interracial labor union, they established the framework for a successful African-American community.

Link to Dissertation on OhioLink:

https://etd.ohiolink.edu/apexprod/rws_etd/send_file/send?accession=ohiou1307303263&disposition=inline

The Town Least Likely, Article in Ohio Magazine by Charles H. Nelson, July 1986

This article is a profile of Rendville written by a professor of sociology at Muskingum University in the summer of 1986 and includes photographs of the town by Robert Flischel.

Link to Article in LCBD archive:

<https://jwinnenb.files.wordpress.com/2011/08/rendvilleohiomagazine1986.pdf>

The Story of Rendville, Article in Buckeye Hill Country, Vol 1, Spring 1996 by Charles H. Nelson

This article contains details about Rendville's founding, accounts of life in the town from 1870-1900, and includes an anecdote from prominent resident Joseph T. Williams.

Link to Article in LCBD Archive:

<https://littlecitiesarchive.org/2011/05/23/the-story-of-rendville-an-interracial-quest-for-community-in-the-post-civil-war-era/>

Other Books of Interest Relating to Black Appalachian Studies:

Gone Home, Race and Roots Through Appalachia, Karida L. Brown (University of North Carolina Press, 2018)

https://www.google.com/books/edition/Gone_Home/8GpnDwAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0

Blacks in Appalachia, William H. Turner and Edward J. Cabbell (The University of Kentucky Press, 2019)

https://www.google.com/books/edition/Blacks_in_Appalachia/P7QeBgAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0

Black Huntington: An Appalachian Story, Cicero M. Fain III (University of Illinois Press 2019)

https://www.google.com/books/edition/Black_Huntington/-x2UDwAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0

African American Miners and Migrants: The Eastern Kentucky Social Club, Thomas E. Wagner and Philip J. Obermiller (University of Illinois Press, 2004).

https://www.google.com/books/edition/African_American_Miners_and_Migrants/a9EKqec1R_gC?hl=en&gbpv=1