

HUMAN INTEREST

No Longer a Town, Cherry Fork Doing Just Fine

BY [ROD HISSONG](#) | OHIO

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CHERRY FORK, Ohio – It's not a town anymore.

- Cherry Fork used to be known as North Liberty until it was changed in the 1800's
- 22 people voted in favor of disincorporating in 2014, five voted against it
- The town is home to a farm supply store, two churches, a post office, and the township fire department

In 2014, 22 residents of Cherry Fork voted to disincorporate. Approximately 150 people live in the small Adams County community. Five people voted against the ballot measure.

But little else has changed. At least not in the last five years.

The town's population has been relatively unchanged for decades.

Initially, Cherry Fork was called North Liberty. But confusion ran amuck with North Liberty in Knox County and so the name was changed in the mid-1800's. The name Cherry Fork comes from the creek that cuts through the southern edge of town.

In 1802, according to historical records, Samuel Wright built a mill along the creek. Today, it's the [Cherry Fork Farm Supply](#), a locally owned operation with a few employees. It's the only source of jobs in the small town.

Most people commute an hour to Cincinnati for work, or 20 miles east to Peebles to work at a GE facility. The Walmart in West Union, ten miles south, also provides jobs.

Russ Brewer has lived in Cherry Fork for 60 years. A retired schoolteacher, he worked at the school in town before it closed in 1989, the result of consolidation.

"It was close to the job and I like small towns," Brewer said from his back patio on the edge of town.

Today, aside from the farm store – there are no employers in Cherry Fork. The post office is open for about two hours every day. There are two churches and the volunteer township fire department is located on the main strip.

"We had three stores, two doctors, of course the mill was here – the farm store. Three service stations, full-service stations, a restaurant. So I mean there were a lot of things that are not here now that were here then."

An antiques store is closed, but the sign still sits out front of the building. A rusted Pettit's Grocery sign hangs offering evidence of something long since gone.

When the fire department built its current facility, it was attached to the old school's gymnasium – which acts as the township's community center. Behind the building is a park which includes a playground and basketball and tennis courts.

State Roads 136 and 137 pass through. Farmland surrounds the former town now designated a "census area."

“Going skinny dipping in the creek right down the road, 60 years ago,” Brewer said laughing. “That’s probably where we’d be today, is we’d be skinny dipping. It has a lot of memories. Fond memories.”

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