Destination Lodi

A Historical Journey

Lodi Boots and Saddle Club

Seventy-five years ago in September 1944, a group of dedicated people, riding enthusiasts, met at the home of Sherman and Catherine Sparr, organizing a club known as the Happy Hours Saddle Club. The membership began to grow and many local people, as well as non-locals joined the group.

Early members who contributed to the growth of the club were Rex Berry and wife, Ray Daughtery, Carl Still, C.W. Whitmore , whose father was a horse jockey, Helena and Esther Falk, the Sparrs, Ed Burge and Claude Shepperd.

Other members helpful in the early years were Herm Elliot, oldest member, Mr., and Mrs. Archer Dague who drew many to the horse shows with the chicken bar-b-ques. Mr. and Howard Smith, Mr. and Mrs. C. Lucas, Mr., and Mrs. Vern Miner were instrumental in the early years of the club.

July 11, 1945, the club officially became the Lodi Boots and Saddles Club, adopting gold and green for the club colors during a chuck wagon breakfast at the Mabry Farm.

The first saddle club show was held on July 4, 1945, at the Mabry Farm

Early activities that got the club rolling included trail rides, parties, riding breakfasts and parades. Stated in an article in the Lodi Advertiser, members often took on projects. One project was rebuilding the barn on the Bryson farm near Chippewa Lake. The group had planned a trail ride over to raise the barn, but due to an early fall storm the adults drove cars. Two children Karreen Sparr and Charlie Mabry braved the storm and drove two ponies in a cart to Chippewa and back even though they were nearly snowed under.

During the 1960’s the club initiated a queen contest with Doris Ramey winning the crown.

One year the club constructed a float for the Lodi Fall Fair that featured an old miner’s camp, complete with a mule belonging to Doc Mabry.

During the 1970’s, the club often co-sponsored by other groups had become one of the largest one day shows in the state of Ohio. I remember attending shows in a pasture on Highland Drive.

The Lodi Boots and Saddle Club was a non-profit organization who donated hundreds of dollars for local parks, hospitals, and other charities.

The club was once the oldest continuing saddle club in the state. Another number one for Lodi!

We will be closed the 4th Sunday except by appointment starting in November through March, please call me at 330-635-7294. There will be Lodi Winter Wonderland on December 7 starting at 4pm that includes Santa, real reindeer, horse and carriage ride to Lodi Depot, and bon fire with lots more. And we will be opened. We will have a quarterly meeting January 23 at 7pm. All always welcomed.