

FREEMAN LAKE TRAILS*

The 5 mile trail around Freeman Lake, plus three side loops provide a variety of options for walking, jogging, or sitting and enjoying nature.

0.2 mile trail markers begin at the WILLIAM HALFACRE TRAILHEAD at the north end of the lake off Ring Road. There is a parking lot and display kiosk. The first 0.2 miles of the trail is paved. Along the south and west sides of the lake the trail is grassy and open. It crosses the dam and passes through the entire Freeman Lake Park - see map.

The dirt trail along the north and east shores winds through a variety of woodlands with birds and wildflowers in season. Ducks, geese and swans are lake residents and other water birds are frequent.

At the 1.4 trail marker, the FREEMAN LAKE and PIRTLE TRAILS briefly overlap and cross GENERAL BRADDOCK CREEK at a hillside called the EMERALD CATHEDRAL. There are benches for walkers, school classes or Sunday concerts.

The 3/4 mile PIRTLE NATURE TRAIL has labeled trees, interpretive stations and a trail display kiosk at the parking lot on Pear Orchard Road. (See Pirtle Interpretive Guide).

At each end of the dam the 3/4 mile CLAYSVILLE LOOP leads down to the north end of the JOHN HELM TRAIL (which can be followed to the HELMWOOD MALL).

The ROTARY-SCOUT LOOP is a pleasant 7/8 mile walk with a bench to sit quietly and enjoy nature. There is a display kiosk where the trail begins at the ROTARY SHELTER parking lot.

HISTORY AND THE FREEMAN LAKE TRAILS**

CHRISTOPHER MILLER CREEK

Christopher Miller, 1768 - 1828, was captured by the Shawnee and Delaware Indians when he was 15 and held 11 years until he was released by troops of General Anthony Wayne. He joined this outfit as a scout, interpreter and emissary. He later returned to Severns Valley, married and reared a large family. He was a Justice of the Peace, Sheriff and a member of the Legislature of Kentucky.

GENERAL BRADDOCK CREEK

General Braddock, a negro man belonging to the estate of Jacob VanMeter, was emancipated 19 March 1796. Several years previous General was said to have killed 9 Indians. He was married to Becky Swan on 9 April 1797 by Josiah Dodge, a Baptist minister of Severns Valley Church. They were "free persons of color" and their marriage was the only one recorded in the Hardin County Marriage Book A

JOHN GERRARD RUN

Reverend John Gerrard, probably was born in 1740 and came to Kentucky from Pennsylvania. He was married to Susannah, a daughter of Joseph VanMeter, Sr. Gerrard was the first pastor of the Severns Valley Baptist Church. In the spring of 1782, Gerrard went into the woods to hunt game and never returned. Just what happened to him was never learned.

FREEMAN LAKE, CREEK AND TRAIL

At a meeting of the Land Commissioners, held at the Falls of the Ohio, 23 November, 1779, the following entry appears; Elisha Freeman this day claimed a preemption of land at the state price, lying on the first right hand fork of the creek that Severn's cabin is built upon, in Severns Valley, a branch of the Green River. The will of Elisha Freeman, written in 1818, listed four sons and two daughters.

JOHN COX PIRTLE

John Cox Pirtle was probably the foremost advocate of education in the late 1800's in Hardin County. At one time he was Superintendent of the Elizabethtown City Schools. He was responsible for the establishment of the High School in Howe Valley - his native community. He was born in 1866, and died in 1947 in the family home.

CLAYSVILLE LOOP

Claysville was the name given a small settlement on the north edge of Elizabethtown. Here was located a tollgate across the Louisville and Nashville Turnpike, a sulphur well, a blacksmith shop and several residences.

* Printed by Greenspace, Inc. Map prepared by city of Elizabethtown Engineering Department

** Information from HISTORY AND THE ELIZABETHTOWN GREENBELT by Margaret Richerson. Other trail guides are available at the E-Town Recreation Department and at the Elizabethtown Tourism and Convention Bureau.