

Interview with Charles Mosher

On a rainy Saturday morning I found Charles Mosher on the deck of his home on Morrow County Road 121. He was eating his lunch when I drove in without previous notice. I hadn't heard from him or his wife Ruth for several months, and had several conflicting reports about their health, so I was delighted to see him there. He soon let me know with a big hug that he was also delighted to see me. We had a lot of catching up to do.

My first involvement with the Moshers was about in 1985. At that time they were living in Marion, Ohio and Charles was on the faculty of Harding High School as the Occupational Work Adjustment instructor. He and Ruth had made of video tape of their interviews of the workers at the Marion Engineer Depot for their family so they would know of his involvement with the Prisoners of War held there during World War II. They offered a copy of the tape to the Marion County Historical Society that also included interviews with workers at the Scioto Ordnance Plant. When I saw it I was immediately impressed with its historic value and knew it would interest a wider audience than they anticipated. I suggested that the video tape be transcribed, photos gathered, and that a book be published.

Ruth patiently undertook the transition to digital format, and we had many interesting sessions learning computer skills. Her transcriptions were in the order they were recorded so I undertook to edit them into chronological order. This involved many sessions with Charles sorting out what happened when.

In 1987 the book was published, sponsored by the Publication Committee of the Marion County Historical Society. The many others involved in its publication are noted in the acknowledgments that Charles wrote. It is in its third printing and is still available on the Marion County Historical Society web site.

All of this is in way of introduction to our visit this morning. Charles is now 83 years old, has partial vision in only one eye, is diabetic, and only recently was hospitalized for two weeks with an infection in his foot. He is still writing, and with him that word “writing” is literal. All of his works are handwritten and were transcribed by Ruth. He recently finished a fictionalized account of Tom Lyons, the Wyandot Indian who lived in this area. Since Ruth is no longer able to type this manuscript and others, and his audience is deprived of enjoying them

Of his published works I edited his “Lest We Forget” that is a collection of stories on the history of Morrow County. His “The Silent Bell” is the story of the one-room schools of the area. His “Stories My Grandfather Told Me” were written for his granddaughter Andrea, but are enjoyed by all. These are hardbound books, but he has published several smaller booklets with historic backgrounds such as “The Tale of Maheetah.”

As we sat on the deck and shared memories I learned of his wide acquaintances. His memories of high school girl friends, and of his brother Ralph, were as vivid as if they happened yesterday. He made friends with the doctors and staff of the hospital during his recent stay there. When Ruth was in a nursing home he brought comfort not only to her but to all who came in contact with him. His determination to remain cheerful in the face of present circumstances was obvious. And his delight in my visit was gratifying to see.

I felt impelled to write of today’s visit with Charles Mosher. I hope we will have many—and more often than in the past few years. He and Ruth have enriched my life in so many ways.

**Trella H. Romine
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