

Lifestyle

The Sum(mer) of its Parts



Ohio City

Matt MacDonald

Summer is officially upon us. "Reasons" to be inside (if any at all) are few and far between. The need to be outside doing God knows what for whatever reasons has transitioned from fleeting thought to something that is quite real, quite tangible.

When I had just crested my 20's, I was known throughout my family as "the house sitter". It was a pretty sweet gig! About once every three months, I would get the call from one of my brothers or my sister telling me that they would be going out of town and they would like to know if I would be willing or able to "hold down the fort".

As if there would be any doubts.

I was the perfect candidate: I had no previous history of hooliganism, I had a small but tight group of friends and I was more responsible than most people ten years older than me.

When I first started out house sitting it was for my oldest brother who at the time had a condo in Ohio City. Being that I was a bit on the ignorant side back then, I had never heard of Ohio City nor had I any clue as to where this was. What makes things worse is that I am still a little bit on the ignorant side, if I hadn't of taken on this summer project I would not have learned that Ohio City was an actual city and remained so for about 20 years.



*Historic and ever-under-construction bridge joining Cleveland and Ohio City
(Image courtesy of Google Images)*

Should you find yourself participating in any of the [Ohio City Home Tours](#) this season, keep that in mind. Locally known as the "Weekend in Ohio City" or the "Evening in Ohio City" these events are celebrating 25 years this year and is all possible thanks to the tireless effort of Ohio City volunteers. Tickets are all ready on sale and going fast!

What seems to have fallen from common knowledge is the fact that Ohio City and Cleveland were bitter rivals back in the day as well as how Ohio City came to an end and was gradually incorporated back into Cleveland, proper.

Back in the day, the Columbus St. Bridge was the first bridge that spanned the Cuyahoga River. Prior to the building of this bridge, travel *and* commerce had to pass through Ohio City if they were traveling from the West. The building of the bridge meant a lot of potential income for Ohio City businesses would be lost. So, in October 1836, a group of 1,000 volunteers descended upon the bridge with the intent of blocking any sort of passage across it. When the volunteers arrived there, the Cleveland Militia, and then Cleveland mayor, John Willey, was already there waiting. Suffice it to say, a riot broke out. The following month, the courts had ruled in favor of Cleveland and the Columbus Street Bridge thereby signaling the beginning of an end for Ohio City (Van Tassel, Grabowski, 1987).

While Ohio City's natural rival was Cleveland, consider the resolve of both cities while you participate (or "spectate") in the eighth annual [Ohio City Run & Crawl](#). Billed as a 5k night run/walk with a post-race pub crawl, there is no better way to get out and take a good look at one of the building blocks of Cleveland than running through its very streets. The race starts on June 15th. You better hurry!

If there is one thing that positively defines Ohio City, it is the [West Side Market](#). A gift from Joseph Barber and Richard Lord, the market began in 1840 and by 1912 was internationally known as the most beautiful and most modern market in the world. "The West Side Market is one of the more outstanding city-owned markets in the county with 185 stands offering an assortment of fruit, vegetables, meat, poultry, dairy products, baked goods, ethnic food and delicacies" (Van Tassel, Grabowski, p.1039).

Every Saturday, beginning in June and running all the way through the end of August, [Open Air in Market Square](#) is a "can't fail" family event. Celebrating 16 years, Open Air in Market Square promises food, live music, and the curiosities that make Ohio City, *Ohio City*.

