

# *Montevallo Historical Press*

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## **Press Release**

### **New Book Tells The Story Of The Lakeside & Marblehead Railroad**

**Includes the Complete History Of The Marblehead Quarry, Building of Railroads  
in Northern Ohio, and Settlement of the Eastern Marblehead Peninsula**

**Castalia, Ohio - May 22, 2000** - Montevallo Historical Press, Inc. announced today that it has released *The Lakeside and Marblehead Railroad*, an all-new, 176-page book by Marblehead, Ohio native Dean K. Fick.

The book's subject, the Lakeside & Marblehead Railroad, was a seven-mile-long steam railroad built in 1886 between Danbury and Marblehead, Ohio. Over its 76-year life, it served as the center of transportation for Marblehead's stone quarries, annually hauling millions of tons of limestone from Marblehead to the New York Central Railroad at Danbury, and to the docks of the Kelley Island Lime and Transport Company at Marblehead. Using steam trains and gasoline motor cars, the L&M also carried thousands of passengers across the Peninsula each year in a time before development and widespread ownership of the automobile.

The Lakeside and Marblehead Railroad begins with a look at the settling of the Marblehead Peninsula by its pioneers, Benajah Wolcott, the lighthouse keeper, and Alexander Clemons. "Father Clemons," as Alexander was known, established the first quarry on the Peninsula in 1835, setting in motion the events that created the village of Marblehead, and the subsequent founding of Lakeside, the Peninsula's Christian resort.

The book progresses onward to a discussion of railroad development in Northern Ohio during the 1850's, touching on early lines like the Mad River & Lake Erie Railroad, the Cleveland & Toledo Railroad, and the Junction Railroad, all of which were joined into the mighty network of rail lines that helped settle the western parts of the nation during the late 1800's. Interestingly, author Fick explains, there was a time during the Civil War when the village of Elmore was the fastest growing town in Ottawa County, while the town of Port Clinton was a much smaller settlement without railroad service.

In 1886, an itinerant civil engineer named Edgar H. Brennan promoted and built the Lakeside & Marblehead Railroad to serve the Marblehead Peninsula. A syndicate of Massachusetts investors financed the line. The L&M opened for business on January 17, 1887, but soon floundered due to questionable bookkeeping and lack of traffic. It was taken over on January 1, 1891 by the Kelley Island Lime and Transport Company, a well-

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financed quarrying company that purchased all of the limestone quarries operating at Marblehead and consolidated them into the largest producer of limestone products in the world. In the years around the turn of the century, the Lakeside & Marblehead Railroad, as the carrier of this tremendous volume of traffic, was one of the most profitable railroads in the country.

As the twentieth century got underway, the Lakeside & Marblehead was joined in its small operating territory by a brand new electric railroad, the Toledo, Port Clinton & Lakeside Railway, which carried passengers to and from Toledo through most of the towns in Ottawa County. In 1911 the Lakeside & Marblehead, as part of its long, harmonious relationship with the Toledo Port Clinton & Lakeside, built a several-mile-long track extension south from Marblehead to Bay Point, to allow the electric rail line to connect with Cedar Point and Sandusky by ferry boat.

As part of an expansion plan to connect directly with railroads in Sandusky, the Lakeside & Marblehead purchased a gigantic railroad car ferry named *Michigan Central* in June 1913, which it hoped to operate across Sandusky Bay. When this boat proved to be too large to operate in the Bay's shallow waters, the railroad planned to build a bridge across Sandusky Bay to compete with the New York Central's railroad bridge—however, this plan was cancelled because of unfavorable economic conditions during World War I.

As the years went by, the Lakeside & Marblehead switched from hauling passengers in steam trains to newfangled gasoline motor cars, which were much more cost-effective to operate. The line abandoned passenger service in 1930 after the first Sandusky Bay bridge for automobiles opened, but the line's freight business remained strong until the late 1950's. In 1964, after outliving its usefulness by a few years, the Lakeside & Marblehead Railroad was closed as a separate business. Its buildings, track, and railroad equipment were retained intact by the Standard Slag Company, the owner of the Marblehead quarry during the 1960's and 1970's. Trains last ran on the line in late 1978, but the track remained in place until 1997, when the L&M was at last scrapped, 111 years after opening.

Author Dean K. Fick, former Director of Theaters for the COSI Science Center in Columbus, Ohio, and current CineDome Operations Manager at the Children's Museum of Indianapolis, grew up along the Lakeside & Marblehead tracks in rural Danbury Township during the 1970's. He photographed the line during its last year of operation under Standard Slag control before graduating from Danbury High School in 1981. After stints at Bowling Green State University, the University of Central Florida, and the University of Alabama at Birmingham, Fick worked closely on the book for several years with diehard L&M fans Peter Carr in Maine, and George Danchisen in Marblehead. Fick supplemented their knowledge with two additional years of intensive research on the railroad line in Ohio, Massachusetts, and Washington, D.C. The resulting book, *The Lakeside and Marblehead Railroad*, is not only a book for railfans, but also a highly-readable and interesting account of life on the Marblehead Peninsula over the course of more than a hundred years..

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*The Lakeside and Marblehead Railroad* is a high-quality hardbound volume containing 176 pages with more than 50,000 words of text, 130 black-and-white photographs, 41 schedules and illustrations, 13 custom maps, 10 tables of fascinating statistics, two unique paintings, and a thorough index. Its suggested retail price is \$39.95.

The book is available now in Marblehead at the Danchisen Marathon fueling station and at the Schoolhouse Gallery. It is also available in Lakeside at the Heritage Hall Museum and at the Shade Tree store. Copies may be purchased directly from the publisher by calling 1-800-8080-8030 toll-free, or by visiting the Montevallo Historical Press, Inc. World Wide Web site at [www.mhpress.com](http://www.mhpress.com).

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