

DATABYTE: A SPOOKTACULAR TOUR OF OHIO'S GHOSTLIEST PLACES TO CALL HOME

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While we at OHFA work to ensure a decent, affordable place for the living to call home, this Halloween season we're taking a look at selected spots in Ohio where the spirits of the dead call home. This month's DataByte highlights Ohio's most fascinating and spookiest ghost towns. Once vibrant communities, these ghost towns were partially or entirely abandoned, often as a result of economic decline or—in many cases—a tragic event like a fire or flood. We encourage you to travel across Ohio to visit these places, learn their history, and understand why they became ghost towns. But beware, some of them may be haunted!

Providence was a canal town that was abandoned after a cholera epidemic and a catastrophic fire in the mid 19th century. An old mill and the historic locks are maintained as part of a Toledo Metropark.

Cicero was a 19th century sawmill town in a forested area near the Indiana border. When the timber around the town was depleted, the mill closed and the town was abandoned.

Hanford was a suburban community of single-family homes specifically for Black World War II veterans, including some of the Tuskegee Airmen. After construction of I-70 wiped out half the homes, the village was annexed to the city of Columbus.

Peckuwe was the principal town of the Shawnee people when the Continental Army attacked it in the 1780 Battle of Piqua. The village was destroyed and the Shawnee relocated to what is now the modern city of Piqua in Miami County.

New Burlington was once a stop on the Underground Railroad. In 1973 the small farming community was intentionally flooded to build a dam, and it is now at the bottom of Caesar Creek Lake.

Utopia was a 19th century utopian community on the Ohio River until 1847 when most of the inhabitants were killed in a flash flood and the village was abandoned.

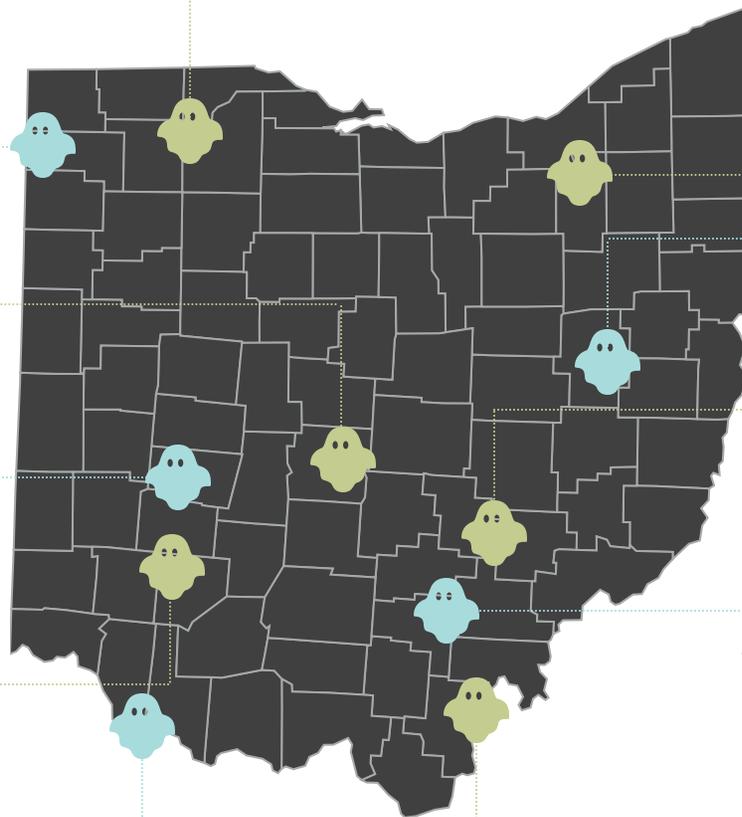
Boston Mills was a mill town nicknamed "Helltown" due to numerous accounts of it being haunted. The National Park Service acquired the land in 1974 and remaining residents were forced out. Many old structures remain.

Schoenbrunn was a Native American mission and the first Christian settlement in Ohio. In 1777 fear of war led the residents to destroy the town and relocate. A replica village is run by the Ohio History Connection.

San Toy was a prosperous coal mining town with a hospital, a theater, and a baseball team at its peak. After a fire and the closure of the mine in the 1920s, the town was abandoned. The foundations of many buildings remain.

Moonville was a mining town that was abandoned when the nearby coal mines shut down in 1947. All that remain are a few foundations, a cemetery, and a well-known abandoned railway tunnel that is believed to be haunted.

Cheshire was polluted by toxic gas and acid rain from a nearby coal plant until the plant's owner agreed to buy out most of the homeowners in 2002. Despite this, the village is still incorporated with a few residents remaining.



Sources: Ohio Ghost Town Exploration Co. website (accessed October 2022); George Rogers Clark Park, The Clark County Park District, 2022; "Ghost Neighborhoods of Columbus," *Ghost Neighborhoods*, Center for Urban and Regional Analysis at The Ohio State University, 2022; *Schoenbrunn Village*, Ohio History Connection, 2022

Questions? Contact the Office of Research and Analytics at research@ohiohome.org