

# HISTORICALLY SPEAKING

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## Barberton Landmarks

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Lake Anna Bathhouse (1934-1965)

Barberton has many landmarks that reflect the history of the city and the character of the citizens. Among these landmarks is Lake Anna Park; and in Lake Anna Park, the gazebo where people gather for entertainment, special events, and quiet reflection. Do you know the history of the gazebo and the Park?

In 1911, with the efforts of Mayor William Mitchell, and with the permission of M.J. Alexander, the first bandstand was built at Lake Anna Park at a cost of \$200. It was constructed on the southeast corner of the lake, near where the present day visitor's center is located.

During the Great Depression the federal government began programs to create jobs and boost the economy. These programs included the Works Progress Administration (WPA), the Federal Emergency Relief Act (FERA), and the Civil Works Administration (CWA). In 1934, federal funds were obtained to build a bathhouse and beach on Lake Anna using government

-subsidized workers from the WPA, FERA, and CWA. The work began with tearing down the original bandstand built in 1911. The new building was to be a combination bathhouse and bandstand. It was built out of the stone from the ruins of the Barberton Inn which had been demolished in 1915. By 1965, the Lake Anna Bathhouse was looking run down. Some citizens considered it to be an "odoriferous eyesore" while others thought it to be a valuable asset and landmark. Either way, the building was raised to make way for a newer, larger structure which was built in 1966.

In 1982, the current gazebo was built with the sponsorship of the Magic City Kiwanis. They were assisted by many enthusiastic organizations and individual citizens raising and donating money for the project. It is still a popular location for concerts, weddings, and many other activities. Another recent addition to the park was the Visitor's Center in 1991. It sits in the same location as the second bathhouse which had been torn down earlier that year.



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