



Mohican Gorge, Mohican State Forest.

## Ohio Development

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Photos courtesy Ohio Development and Publicity Commission

During the height of the tourist season last summer Tom Cuning, director of Idaho's travel promotion department, sent me a wire in which he said: *Our thanks to Ohio. Every other car on the road bears an Ohio tag. Keep 'em coming.*

This wire told the Ohio Development and Publicity Commission a fact it already knew, that most of the 7,650,000 citizens of the Buckeye State take vacations—the majority of them in other States and countries.

This fact led to the current program now under way by the ODPC to make Ohioans aware of Ohio.

Ohio newspapers, magazines, and radio stations are the cannons for our ammunition. We have announced that the weekly and daily papers doing the best job of promoting Ohio to Ohioans would receive proper recognition. When the Ohio Newspaper Association next meets the "Governor's Award" goes to the winning newspapers.

Plans are being formulated to also include "Oscars" to the best Ohio-promotion radio presentations, and civic activities on the part of individuals and firms.

The 96 daily newspapers in Ohio carried ads, "Stay in Your Own Backyard, See Beautiful Ohio This Year." This is no attempt to be clannish. Heretofore Ohio has been lax in promoting itself. The Ohio Development and Publicity Commission, the State's official promotion agency, was not organized until 1939. Our first appropriation was only \$10,000. Last year's was \$60,000.

Very few Ohioans have really seen their State. Not many have seen the ten beautiful man-made lakes in the Muskingum watershed conservancy district, Marblehead Peninsula area, beautiful rugged southeastern Ohio, or taken a boat ride on Lake Erie or the Ohio River.

True, Ohio has no outstanding resorts. We like to think of it as "the poor man's vacation land," with plenty to see at a minimum cost. Hundreds of hotels and motor courts offer reasonable accommodations.

A number of booklets have been prepared, or are in the process of preparation, to keep the idea alive. An outstanding example is called *Historic Ohio*. The booklet was prepared in cooperation with the Ohio Archaeological and Historical Society, and lists the hundreds of shrines and historic sites in Ohio.

This does not mean we are turning away visitors from other States. For them the welcome mat is always out; they will receive all of the courtesy and attention we can whip up. But we do feel that we have an excellent travel market in our own citizens and we want to cultivate it.