

# The Preble County News

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## Letters To The Editor:

### Hubbard Recalls People In Preble County Landing

To the Editor:

I was touched to be still known in Preble County. And, not strange at all, well remember Preble County, but for different reasons than were given in your very nice article on me in your issue of July 21, 1983. You recounted that my fellow pilot Browning landed low on fuel in George Swisher's field. And it is very true that Raymond Boomershine offered to buy us gas if we would take him for a ride and that we were promptly surrounded by people clamoring for rides that we obliged. And that Mr. and Mrs. Kiracofe did take us as guests for the night.

But there is more to the story — the people of Preble County.

Here were a couple of shipwrecked aviators and the folks took them in, owned them and would not take no for an answer.

There was no crop in the field but one might expect its owner to object to a strange craft from the sky. But not George Swisher. He said, "Anything I can do for you, boys?"

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## Hubbard Day Proclaimed in Gratis

Mayor Russell Wilson of Gratis at the August 17 meeting of the Gratis Village Council proclaimed Sept. 13 each year as L. Ron Hubbard day and made Hubbard an honorary citizen of the village.

Marlyse Brock of Switzerland and Pam Schwartz, members of the Hubbard organization, attended on behalf of the author who has not appeared in public for several years. Hubbard is author of "Battlefield Earth," and has also written science fiction and Church of Scientology books.

The setting aside of L. Ron Hubbard Day came after reading of a plaque from Hubbard. The plaque thanked Gratis and Preble County for helping him after he was forced to land his airplane near Gratis during a barnstorming tour 52 years ago.

The proclamation was made official by a unanimous vote of council.

We said, "We're out of fuel."

And Raymond Boomershine said, "You wait right there," and tore off to the local gas station.

Meanwhile an awful lot of people were arriving. They wanted to know if we needed any help. And we said the plane had to be turned around and although they were all in their Sunday best, they grabbed at the tail and turned her around.

Then Raymond Boomershine came back with the gas and he helped us fill the tank. We tried to pay him and he said, "Nope," and my pal said, "We don't know how to thank you." And Raymond said, "Well if you put it that way, I always wanted to ride in one of them things. How about a short hop?"

That started it. Everyone and his kids got a ride.

There are people probably around today who as kids, had a ride in that airplane.

Finally, Mr. Kiracofe came up and pointed at the sun and said, "It's going to be dark too soon for you boys to fly on. Me and the missus would be pleased to have you stay with us tonight."

And that was my first encounter with Ohio cooking. Mrs. Kiracofe really could cook! We had a dinner I never forgot and breakfast would have fed a threshing crew! Delicious! But Mrs. Kiracofe seemed surprised I could not eat another dozen fried eggs with the next foot high stack of hotcakes.

Finally we got ourselves to the plane and George Swisher was shoving cows off it (they loved to lick the banana oil paint used on the plane fabric). And a whole crowd was on hand to bid us goodbye and they cleared cows out of the field and we took off for an air meet in St. Louis amid waves and cheers.

And about 500 feet up I looked back at the waving hands and the lovely countryside spread below and with real regret to leave.

And I said to my pal, "They ought to change that song from "Beautiful Ohio" to 'Beautiful Ohio People'."

And those days in Ohio have lived on in fond memory.

So hello again!

May all go well with you and the people of Preble County and God bless. With such kindly people, who would want to live anywhere else?

L. Ron Hubbard