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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

REST STOP: A home at Wheelman's Rest is shown in this photo from the 1960s. The area was a well-known resting place for bicyclists from the 1880s to the early 20th century.

All those forgotten places

BY C.W. LATTIN

Wheelman's Rest, Honest Hill, Tin Pan Corners, Sheldon's Corners, Head of Stillwater, Sawyer they are all places in Orleans County that have now been mostly forgotten. Some of these spots were so small they never made the map, but in the 1890s people knew where they were.

Wheelman's Rest, in the 1880s, 1890s and early 20th century, was a well known resting place for bicyclists (wheelmen). Our photo from the 1960s shows the house at Wheelman's Rest, the northeast corner of Town Line Road and Oak Orchard River Road in Ridgeway.

When Wheelman's Rest got its name, this was the homestead of William and Lucinda Merrill. This home is directly across the road from Oak Orchard River with flats on the south bank often used years ago by picnickers. The stone porch of the Merrill

House contains a spring-fed well that bicyclists used to stop at to quench their thirst.

Nearby but across the road from the house was a gazebo perched high on the north bank of the river. This provided a cool resting place for those pedaling northward to the lake. The old hotel register for the Lakeside Hotel in the late 1880s has innumerable visitors who indicated they had pedaled there with a bicycle club.

Wheelman's Rest would have been midway between Medina and Lakeside, which was a very popular summer resort over 100 years ago. Even before the age of the horseless carriage, the bicycle was a fast and easy ride to destinations in fair weather. The Merrills were obviously welcoming people, as country folks were inclined to be, back in that era of gentility.

Special thanks to Carlton Town Historian Lysbeth Hoffman for information and the photo included here.