

From My Windows

I created the plans for my home, Terradise, with the help of my dad, Ray Hemmerly.

I wanted to view the Whetstone River meandering through the 18 acres along the south side of the house, and Whetstone River Road North along the north side. The view to the east included the lean-to shed built by former owners. Every morning as I arise I check the pond that I had dug later to the west. Now covered with duckweed, it has hosted ducks, Canada Geese, Great Blue Herons and a few turtles.

Through these windows I watched the passing parade of cars and trucks on the road. Bikers and runners use it. I waited for the mail to be delivered. For too many years it was the sales area for the Wood Valley motor-home park. Their lights spoiled the darkness and their visitors created dust.

I was able to purchase 2 acres of the sales area from LaDonna Murphy (whose family owned the trailer park) after they no longer sold units. Here I have planted a prairie, have a small vegetable garden, and have parking for guests attending events at Terradise. It is surveyed into three lots for the benefit of my heirs.



During a remodeling of Terradise I had a bay window installed at the east end of the kitchen. I planted a silky dogwood tree that has hosted hundreds of birds to feast on sunflower seeds and dabs of shortening. The regularly include Chickadees, Tufted Titmice, White-breasted Nut Hatches, Hairy, Downy, and Red-breasted Woodpeckers.



From the window I count twelve species of trees growing. The red and white oaks and the elm were huge even in 1954. I planted bud, saucer magnolia, sassafras, sweet gum, white pine, dogwood, and a spruce that was a Christmas tree. The foundation plantings are now gone.

David Haldeman built steps leading to the river and a landing dock. Here he launched the canoe that was under the shed when we bought the property and the grandchildren took many a canoe trip. He later used a kayak from the spot to navigate the river from Terradise to the Ohio River where he now lives in Cincinnati. He made it as far as Chillicothe before dams blocked the river.

Terradise has been named an Ohio Natural Landmark. I have donated the twelve acres across the river to the Marion County Park District. It is gratifying to glance out the picture window in my living room and see hikers and joggers using the path above the river.

Each morning I start the day seated at the computer in my office overlooking the river through a double window. The red bud just outside gives me glimpses of warblers and wrens.

And yes, all of these windows have double panes to conserve energy.