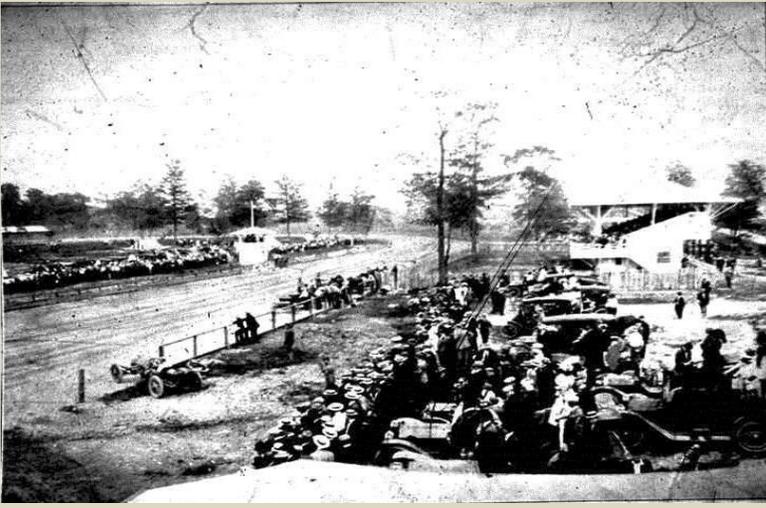


**THE HISTORY OF
SOUTHERN STABLES
AND
SOUTHERN PARK
RACETRACK
BY: JANIE S. JENKINS**



**Picture Above
1915- Southern Park Racetrack**



**Picture Above
1915 - The Arrel Stable**

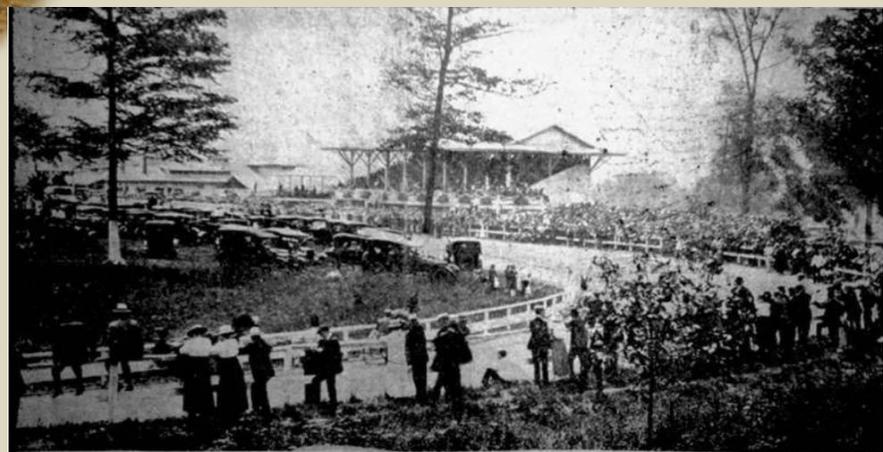


**Picture Above
1964 - Horse Ring
Located on the West Side of the Stables**



**Picture Above
1964 - East Pasture**

**Picture on Right
1915 - Southern Park
Racetrack**



**THE HISTORY OF SOUTHERN STABLES
AND
SOUTHERN PARK RACETRACK
BY: JANIE S. JENKINS**

According to an article headlined "Youngstown's New Racing Plant" in "The Horse Review" of Dec. 15, 1915, Southern Park Trotting Track at Southern Park in Boardman Township was "in the country where there is sunshine, trees and an alluring pastoral environment."

The inaugural meet at the track, which was the enterprise of two men whom the magazine dubbed "The Iron City Gentlemen," Sen. David Tod and H.H. Stambaugh, both prominent in city circles and worthy endeavors, was on July 15, 1915.

The magazine, published by The Horse Review Company of 918 Masonic Temple, Chicago, 111., further extolled the advantages of the location, its proximity to Youngstown, "a city of 125,880 people and accounted the richest, community of its size in the United States," and its accessibility via the Youngstown & Southern Railway streetcar whose tracks were parallel to Southern Blvd.

The streetcar made regular stops at the Washington Blvd. entrance to Southern Park, just a block north of the McClurg Road main entrance to the track, and also at McClurg Road. And for the increasing number of city folks coming to the park in automobiles, both Southern Blvd. and Boardman Road (Route 7) were good - for the times - hard surface roads. Indeed, two-lane Route 7 was brick, while other roads were either dirt or gravel.

Horse owners, particularly those from out of town and out of state, shipped their steeds in boxcars via the railroad, and at McClurg Road there was a ramp for unloading them.

The park itself and the nearby track were a mere 11 miles south of Youngstown and a mile and a half from Boardman Center, as the intersection of Routes 224 (then Ohio Avenue, now Boardman-Canfield Road) and 7 (now Market Street, then Boardman Road) was known.

Southern Park was a spacious area with tall trees and open fields. Within its confines were picnic tables, swings, pumps for sparkling well water, a baseball diamond, horseshoe courts, tennis courts and a dance hall.

It was a favorite spot for family gatherings and reunions, for company picnics and organization-sponsored outings for groups of inner-city children who otherwise would not have an opportunity to experience fresh air and sunshine in an alluring pastoral environment.

Picnickers or those headed for the races disembarked the streetcar at Washington Blvd. and walked a woodland trail to their destinations. The racetrack's rear entrance was on Raub Avenue off Washington, so it was easy to picnic first and then amble the short distance along Raub.

**THE HISTORY OF SOUTHERN STABLES
AND
SOUTHERN PARK RACETRACK
BY: JANIE S. JENKINS**

Today, Boardman Township is no longer country, with almost every available residential and commercial space filled. The Routes 7 and 224 intersections is one of the most congested and hazardous in the state.

Occupying 60 acres at the Center is sprawling Southern Park Mall and a number of other township businesses preceded their names with Southern Park. And yet, if a survey were to be taken in the township, indeed in Mahoning County and surrounding counties from where the throngs of shoppers and business-oriented persons come, it is doubtful that anyone has the foggiest notion from where the Southern Park prefix came.

Southern Park is, of course, long gone, its sunshine and fresh air and fields and trees replaced by apartments, commercial developments and light industry.

Long gone too is Youngstown's "new racing plant." Southern Park Trotting Track's 55 acres, with its half-mile track, numerous barns, grandstand, judges' stand, flower gardens and wrought iron entrance gates, had been "alive" from 1915 to 1925, but it eventually surrendered to progress and the Great Depression. Fires and neglect had already doomed them.

As late as 1946, the remains of Tod's barn still stood, its equine residents frequently injured when rotted floorboards gave way. The outline of the track was still visible and nearby horse owners enjoyed riding there.

But in 1949 the entire area was sold and in the decades since then numerous business concerns have been built on the property. On what was the backstretch, where once could be heard the clickety-click of trotters' and pacers' hooves, will soon be heard the clippety-clip of golf clubs hitting golf balls down an outdoor driving course. The woodland trail from Southern Blvd. to Washington Blvd. and Stadler Avenue was years ago cut through so that Washington runs between Southern and Market. The once ash-covered boulevard, designed as a quarter of a mile so trainers could jog their horses before heading for the track, is blacktopped and is a speedway for another kind of horse power.

It is still, however, a boulevard, with flowering crabapple trees down the grassy center which extends only to Raub Avenue. Traffic is heavy, as motorists seek to avoid the crush of cars on the main arteries by using it as a shortcut to both Route 7 and Southern Blvd.

But at 126 Washington Blvd. is the privately owned Southern Stables, the only remaining structure from those halcyon pre-Depression times.

Centering eight acres, perhaps half in fenced pasture and deliberately overgrown thickets to screen apartments on the east and west, it is well-tended, obviously loved, and still houses two retired pleasure horses.

**THE HISTORY OF SOUTHERN STABLES
AND
SOUTHERN PARK RACETRACK
BY: JANIE S. JENKINS**

A pasture pond lures ducks and little green herons. Deer, displaced by progress, browse in the thickets, and in the early spring the "bzeep" of courting woodcocks can be heard above the sounds of traffic on Market Street.

An oasis in the encroaching "civilization," the stable-residence and acreage stand as a tangible memory of the days when lathered horses returned to the barn after winning - or losing - their race, and at the entrance to the long driveway back to the barn are the wrought iron gates that once welcomed patrons to the racetrack's main entrance two blocks south of Washington Blvd. Years ago they were rescued from the weeds and weather and hung from white brick posts.

This is Southern Stables which David Arrel, a contemporary and friend of Tod and Stambaugh, built for his own string of standardbreds. He modeled it after Tod's - The Horse Review pictures both and they are identical - with a wide aisle, three stalls on one side and six on the other. Hinged window skylights allowed good air circulation in warm weather and could be closed for the winter.

Grooms' quarters, a bathroom, and Arrel's weekend office with its fieldstone fireplace occupied the west side, under the same slate roof as the stable, and a shower room in which carts were hosed down occupied the east side. There were fenced paddocks where horses could relax, and there were deep manure pits so no unsightly piles would offend visitors. Three wooden flagpoles with copper ball finials stretched from the roof, two in the rear and one at the front, and Old Glory flew daily.

In 1986, Southern Stables was placed on the National Register of Historic Places of the National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, through the efforts of its owner - the writer - but more on that later.

Across the boulevard, Myron H. and Blanche Davis and their children, Grace, Myron and Elaine, had easy access to the racetrack, the park and Arrel's stable. During the racing season, owners and trainers and sometimes their wives boarded in the big four bedroom house. The fact that there was only one bathroom didn't bother anyone. Blanche often fed 100 or more persons a day, and Myron's plumbing skills were frequently utilized at the track and in the barns.

Standardbreds weren't the only breed of horses to race at the track. Thoroughbreds had meets, too, and as automobiles became more numerous there were exciting auto races and "auto polo." At one time there were dog races, and an especially exciting event was the landing of an airplane in the infield after a flying exhibition. School track meets were also held at the track.

Grace Davis, who'll be 84 in June, and her brother, Myron better known as "Abe," 80, still live in the big house at 111 Washington Blvd. And they still remember vividly the horrendous night one of the racetrack barns caught fire from a carelessly tended oil stove, and nine flaming horses ran screaming through the darkness.

**THE HISTORY OF SOUTHERN STABLES
AND
SOUTHERN PARK RACETRACK
BY: JANIE S. JENKINS**

Harry never forgot reaching out his hand and touching something dreadful – the scorched hide of a dying horse.

The Youngstown Fire Department was offered \$75 to lend to assistance, and the department came, but the vehicles became mired and the trip was in vain. Boardman's volunteer fire department arrived and formed a bucket brigade, managing to keep the fire from spreading to other barns and buildings.

During the meets, more than one horse gave its all to the race, collapsing at the finish line, being destroyed and being buried in the infield. One of them was Tom Patchen, who did the mile in 2:10. Also, a few horses were destroyed as the result of falls they suffered during the races. They, too, were buried.

After Arrel's death, his establishment too began to disintegrate, although several other horse aficionados occupied it from time to time. Among the barn's more famous standardbred occupants was Victor Guy.

A Youngstown dentist, Dr. C.O. Brown, owned the stable for several years and raised and raced trotters. His father, "Old Man Brown," who lived on the city's north side, traveled every morning by bus and trolley to the "country." helped care for the horses and then returned home via trolley and bus.

Not until the late 1930s, after the stable had been empty and neglected for some time., did hope come for its rescue in the persons of brothers, R. Edwin, Joseph E. and Robert F. Jenkins, and their sister, Mary, originally from Uniontown, Ky., who had come to Youngstown to start a neon sign business.

Joseph E. was the first to arrive with the others following, although Robert, the youngest, served in World War II before joining the rest of his family. Another brother John, would also come later, although neither he nor Robert were among the "rescuers."

At the suggestion of a friend, C.R. Stambaugh, who knew the boys liked horses - what Kentuckian doesn't? - they decided to try to buy the stable which was to be sold at sheriff's sale at the courthouse door. The effort was successful, and with a great deal of labor and hardship, the barn began to live again. A large living room over a full basement was added to the west side, a double garage on the east side for balance, and smaller additions were made to the kitchen and a room to the north. The fieldstone fireplace in the front- room was, alas, sacrificed, and the room became a bedroom, as did the room to the north.

Little was changed in the barn, although the room where the carts had been hosed down became a paneled tack room. Another six stalls were built in a concrete block addition to the north, and a two-room apartment with a small lavatory was incorporated into what had been part of the haymow.

**THE HISTORY OF SOUTHERN STABLES
AND
SOUTHERN PARK RACETRACK
BY: JANIE S. JENKINS**

In the meantime, Joseph married and moved into the living quarters, as did his sister. Ed lived in the small apartment and when Robert came home from the Army, he too lived upstairs. All worked at the Jenkins Sign Co. in Youngstown. Pleasure and gaited show horses - boarders as well as family-owned - filled the stalls, more fences and a show ring were built, and Southern Stables began to resemble a horse farm in Kentucky.

Ed married in 1946 and before the wedding; his bride (the writer) rode her own horse, which had been stabled at George Bishop's barn in Poland, through woods and farmers' fields to their new home.

When Joseph and his wife, Mildred, had a daughter and a son, it was time to move into their own house, and for a short while Robert and his new wife, Jean, lived in the main living quarters while Ed and his wife remained upstairs.

Not much later, Ed and his wife bought the remainder of the family's interest in the property. In the following two decades they purchased additional vacant land to east. Show horses gave way to thoroughbreds, but that venture was not successful.

At about the same time, the marriage also failed, and the property was divided equally, with the writer choosing to keep the residence and 8 1/2 acres.

Unfortunately, the residence and stable had once again been allowed to deteriorate, as money which should have been used for maintenance and repairs had been invested in the thoroughbred business.

In the 24 years since then, the stable and residence have been completely restored, including new roof - except for a portion which retains the original slate - and painting inside and out.

The barn aisle way is hung with marvelous antique horse-oriented art, and the east side of the front porch has been screened for pleasant summer sitting. The original porch swing still hangs there, and the lanterns on either side of the front barn door are also original, as seen on the early photograph.

Two venerable horses have free access to the pasture during the day and are as much pets as the two dogs and one cat. As of April 2, 1995, there will be three dogs: a seven-week-old Dalmatian puppy - the owner's 11th Dalmatian over the years - by the name of Orion.

Unfortunately, the towering flagpole at the front of the barn had to be taken down a number of years ago. Entirely of wood, age and the elements had made it so dry and porous that the rain came through it and was creating a roof leak around it. It has been preserved, however.

**THE HISTORY OF SOUTHERN STABLES
AND
SOUTHERN PARK RACETRACK
BY: JANIE S. JENKINS**

The copper ball which topped it was preserved, cleaned and lacquered, and is part of the decor in the living room. The other two poles remain, one still with its copper ball finial, but it would be too risky to have anyone try to retrieve it.

A wondrous huge stone horse head carving - not original with the barn - attracts a great deal of attention as it looms in front of the east porch. It was acquired from a friend whose business was demolition in the Cleveland area, and although he could not recall from which estate it came, he couldn't bear to destroy it and it was given to the owner more than 30 years ago.

Also acquired about the same time were several antique iron hitching posts, a three-step stone mounting block and an immense hand-carved stone watering trough, all of which blend with the general ambience.

In the upper pasture is a fenced area to mark the grave of a beloved horse who achieved fame in haute ecole exhibitions, having been trained by the writer. He had been foaled in 1961 on the farm and died on the farm in 1977.

Also within that small cemetery are the ashes of the writer's beloved father, Barnard H. Steinfeld, who died at age 89 in 1984. The flowering crabapple tree centers the enclosure.

Two other beloved horses are buried on the property, and when the remaining ones, Pinky, 19, and Tags, 16, go to their Pasture in the Sky, they too will be buried here.

Only the writer remains of the original Jenkins family, although Joseph's daughter, Judith Ann, who was a three-year-old when her parents first lived on the farm, is still in the area, has her own stable, and spent countless hours in the barn and residence until she graduated from high school and went away to college.

The writer, who retired in 1987 after a 43-year career as a journalist, maintains the property herself.

As of June 11, 1993, the deed was transferred as a gift to Boardman Township Park, of which she was a commissioner, with a lifetime estate clause, also with the stipulation that it forever be preserved intact as an annex to the park, also with a restriction that all natural areas remain natural, neither can the property ever be developed, or the building removed.

"The Horse Review," the 1915 publication which was extremely helpful in getting the property on the National Historic Register, was given to the owner by Elizabeth Arrel Thompson, a relative of David Arrel who built the barn.

**THE HISTORY OF SOUTHERN STABLES
AND
SOUTHERN PARK RACETRACK
BY: JANIE S. JENKINS**

In recent years, commercial and residential development has taken over most of the land around the property, and in the summer of 1994 the once lovely vista from the back of the barn was spoiled with clearing of hundreds of hundreds of trees to make room for a parking lot and building for United Parcel Service.

To both the east and west of the barn, the owner has permitted Mother Nature to build her own natural barriers, hiding completely unsightly apartments, and deer bed down in those impenetrable jungles, coming out in the evening for corn put out for them. In the spring, peepers sing from the pond and over the years the "bzeep" of the courting woodcocks can be heard. Canada geese and mallard ducks and occasionally a pair of wood ducks fly in and out, and on sunny mornings and afternoons the pond's banks are lined with painted turtles.

It is all of this and much more that made the decision to forever preserve what could never be built again and to allow future generations a glimpse into what was a gracious past. And it is a great comfort to the writer to know the peepers and the woodcocks, the geese and the ducks and the deer will always have a place to call home.