

Litzenberg Memorial Woods AT A GLANCE

In 1985, the property was bequeathed to the Hancock Park District by the late Otta Litzenberg as a forest preserve. Later, the fields were acquired through a special trust agreement in Mr. Litzenberg's will and developed as a conservation area. A monument to Otta and Ruby Litzenberg is located near the flagpole. The "Litzenberg Legacy" interpretive panel can be viewed near the scenic overlook located along the Backwoods Trail.

The park area was originally settled by early Hancock County pioneers Charles and Mary McKinnis, who arrived in 1822 from Chillicothe, Ohio. The 1847 McKinnis House, period garden, and nearby structures form the historic homestead. Living history programs are conducted at the McKinnis House with costumed interpreters portraying McKinnis family members and neighbors.

The 19th century McKinnis Garden demonstrates what a kitchen garden on a rural property may have been like in the mid-1800s. It's open to the public daily and used for garden programs, tours, and as part of living history programs. The garden features raised beds that contain plantings typical of the time period. Raised, rectangular beds separated by straight paths reflect the ancient utilitarian arrangement of gardens brought to this country by its earliest settlers.

Litzenberg Memorial Woods has two rental facilities available for social gatherings. The Activity Barn is equipped with a catering kitchen, attached restrooms, and an outside drinking fountain with a campfire ring near the tree line. The picnic shelter is located near the trailhead, playground, and open play area.

An extensive trail system exists within the forest preserve and conservation area, including but not limited to the 1.21-mile Backwoods Trail and the 2.57-mile Southland Trail. The trail system provides opportunities for horseback riding (south unit only), hiking, cross-country skiing, birdwatching, photography, and nature appreciation.



The extensive trail system at Litzenberg Memorial Woods provides opportunities for hiking, exploration, and nature appreciation throughout the year.



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Costumed interpreters portraying the McKinnis family welcome visitors to the c.1847 McKinnis House at Litzenberg Memorial Woods.

Litzenberg Memorial Woods

6100 U.S. Route 224 West, Findlay

Litzenberg Memorial Woods contains 227.7 acres, including land on the north side and south side of U.S. Route 224 West. The land features rolling countryside, wooded ravines, and a grand expanse of wetlands, prairie, and sky. It blends the area's rich agricultural heritage with conservation and wildlife, education and history, hiking and exploration, picnicking and play, and social gatherings and special events to create a unique destination.

Indian Green-Worden Family Conservation Area is east of and adjacent to Litzenberg Memorial Woods. It was created to preserve the natural area along the Blanchard River, expand wildlife habitat, and improve access to the 20.13-mile Heritage Trail, which begins in the south unit of Litzenberg Memorial Woods.

Habitat is characterized as mature riparian woods that support mink, raccoon, opossum, deer, red fox, gray fox, and coyote. Indian Green-Worden Family Conservation Area, along with much of the Blanchard River riparian zone, is a valuable feeding and staging area for migratory birds.

The Heritage Trail connects parks, conservation areas, historic sites, Findlay reservoirs, and area landmarks over a variety of trail surfaces, including dirt, grass, and paved streets and trails. Popular hiking trips from Litzenberg Memorial Woods include Riverside Park at 10.07 miles and Riverbend Recreation Area at 13.73 miles.

