

# art connections

*a teacher resource guide*

## *Riverboxes*

### *Ripple Effect: Artistic Impact of the Scioto River*

This teacher resource guide provides information and ideas for classroom instruction in conjunction with DAC's public art project, *Riverboxes*.

**BACKGROUND:** Dublin Arts Council's *Riverboxes* project is modeled after the pastime known as *letterboxing* or *geocaching*. Letterboxing combines map-reading skills and artistic pursuit with delightful "treasure-hunts" in beautiful, scenic places. According to legend, the practice began when a Victorian hiker put his calling card in a bottle and stuck it into a bank at Cranmere Pool in Dartmoor, a remote part of southwestern England. In April 1998, *Smithsonian* magazine published an article on the Dartmoor letterboxes. Within a very short time, a loose alliance of adventurers pioneered the introduction of the hobby in the U.S. With the Internet as a primary means of communication, the idea soon spread around the country. Websites and a discussion group were established, and letterboxes began to be placed in inconspicuous but interesting locations throughout the U.S. ([www.letterboxing.com](http://www.letterboxing.com))

Geocaching began in 2000, when Global Positioning System (GPS) technology became available to the general population. Dave Ulmer, an Oregon computer consultant, wanted to test GPS accuracy by hiding a navigational target in the woods. He called the idea the "Great American GPS Stash Hunt" and posted it on an Internet GPS users' group. The idea was simple: hide a container out in the woods and note the coordinates with a GPS unit. Within three days, two different readers found the information about his stash on the Internet, used their own GPS receivers to find the container, and shared their experiences online. Throughout the next week, others, excited by this idea, began hiding their own containers and posting coordinates. Like many new and innovative ideas on the Internet, the concept quickly spread. ([www.geocaching.com](http://www.geocaching.com))

**DUBLIN ARTS COUNCIL'S RIVERBOXES PROJECT:** DAC's *Riverboxes*, modeled after letterboxing and geocaching, are six artist made public art works placed discreetly in Dublin parks with access to the Scioto River. The *Riverboxes* project encourages the community to explore and discover each *Riverbox* and the sites in which they are located, while learning a little bit about Dublin history and the environment.

Clues and information to the whereabouts of each artwork is provided on Dublin Arts Council's website ([www.dublinarts.org/ripple/riverboxes.html](http://www.dublinarts.org/ripple/riverboxes.html)). A journal is included within each *Riverbox*, providing historical and environmental information about each site. Each *Riverbox* also contains an artist-made ink stamp. Participants are encouraged to bring a personal journal and an ink stamp when searching for the *Riverbox* locations. Participants can mark their journals with the ink stamps discovered at each location, and in turn, imprint the site's journal with their own ink stamp, creating a visual record of each *Riverbox* discovered.

## **Riverbox Locations and Information:**

### **Scioto Park, 7377 Riverside Drive, Dublin, Ohio**

(<http://www.dublinarts.org/ripple/turtle.html>)

#### **HISTORICAL INFORMATION:**

The Scioto River was a natural travel route for the Native Americans between the Ohio River and Lake Erie. Riverside Drive and Dublin Road were once trails used by Native Americans and later by settlers. The Wyandot Indians camped, hunted and traveled along the river, using the trails to and from their primary village in what we now call Upper Sandusky. Approximately one mile north of Scioto Park was the location of the encampment of the great Wyandot Chief Leatherlips prior to his execution in 1810. A marker noting the execution site is located on Riverside Drive, about a mile north of the park. The ancient Indian culture, the Hopewell, built a ceremonial mound in the vicinity of Scioto Park.

In the late 1940s or early 1950s, the Butler family built a swimming pool on the property we know as Scioto Park. This was the first public swimming pool in Dublin. Before that, people swam in the river. The pool was fed by a natural spring and the water was unbelievably cold! The pool stood on the lower part of this park, between the amphitheater and the river. The spring is still here, though small, and flows into the Scioto River.

**(SOURCE: Dublin's Journey, pages 10-11; The Dublin Historical Society-see Bibliography & Resources for more information)**

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION:**

The Sycamore Tree, also known as the camouflage tree (in recognition of its blotched color) and the ghost tree (some say its white bark glows at night), grows close to water. Many Native Americans used the trees to find a water source. This tree is not only found within Scioto Park, but all along the Scioto River.

### **Donegal Cliffs Park, 4460 Donegal Cliffs Drive, Dublin, Ohio**

(<http://www.dublinarts.org/ripple/hidden.html>)

#### **HISTORICAL INFORMATION:**

Donegal Cliffs Park is the site of the last functioning limestone quarry in Dublin. This quarry was owned and operated by Dublin resident John Snouffer. The limestone industry began in Dublin in the mid-1800s and existed for more than 100 years. The limestone taken from the quarry provided stone which was shaped into blocks for homes, stone fences, and was crushed for roads and fertilizer. Limestone was an important natural resource for the Dublin community and its industry positively impacted the community's early economy. Other quarries in the Dublin community included the Artz Quarry at 100 North High Street near Indian Run Falls, and the Coffman Quarry.

Dublin has a rich history of stonemasons, including early Dublin residents Harold, Eli and Frank Pinney, Tickey (Forrest) Wing and the Eger Brothers (Pete, Eddie and Dan). Other stonemasons from Dublin included Bill Lamb, Bill Shepard, Jim Ramsey, Frank Smith and Rufus Snouffer.

**(SOURCE: Dublin's Journey, pages 42-45; The Dublin Historical Society-see Bibliography & Resources for more information)**

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION:**

The shade of large trees along waterways is very important. Shade provides places for animals to escape the sun and helps cool the water. Tree roots help stabilize the banks of waterways and keep silt from entering the water. Furthermore, the leaves that fall into the water in the fall provide nourishment for many aquatic invertebrates. This does not mean we should dump our leaves into streams and rivers. Too many leaves in an area can have adverse environmental effects. Visitors can also enjoy the shade of these larger trees by sitting on quarried stones overlooking the river.

### **Dublin Arts Center, 7125 Riverside Drive, Dublin, Ohio**

(<http://www.dublinarts.org/ripple/sun.html>)

#### **HISTORICAL INFORMATION:**

Throughout Dublin's early history, there were at least five mills along the Scioto River within a mile of the State Route 161 bridge. They did not all exist and operate at the same time. In 1855, the Corbin Brothers, Joseph and Norris, each built and operated a gristmill along the Scioto River. Joseph Corbin Sr. built a mill of stone on the west side of the river on the south end of Dublin. Norris Corbin built a frame mill one mile north of Dublin on the east side of the Scioto River and just south of Dublin Arts Center.

A gristmill is a building where grain is ground into flour. Dublin's gristmills contained rotating stone wheels that were powered by the Scioto River. Gristmills only ground clean grains - that is, grain from which the stalks and chaff have previously been removed - but some mills also housed equipment for threshing, sorting and cleaning prior to grinding. Gristmills also ground corn into meal.

**(SOURCE: Dublin's Journey, page 26; The Dublin Historical Society-see Bibliography & Resources for more information)**

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION:**

A *Riparian Zone* is the vegetative area between the land and flowing water. The riparian zone provides necessary habitat for many animals, including migrating birds, which depend on this habitat as they follow the Scioto River to the north and south. As the water rushes by, the roots of the plants in the riparian zone hold the soil in place. Plant roots also clean water as it flows through the ground to the river. Notice that the grass is not mowed to the river's edge, allowing this riparian zone to grow and providing this important habitat for wildlife.

## Dublin Kiwanis Riverway Park, 6245 Riverside Drive, Dublin, Ohio

(<http://www.dublinarts.org/ripple/vigilant.html>)

### **HISTORICAL INFORMATION:**

Before the first bridge was built over the Scioto, river crossings took place at a “ford” or shallow place in the river. Kiwanis Riverway was a ford site, and river crossings took place utilizing a horse or a buggy/wagon. Eventually, a ferry operated in this location.

The first bridge across the Scioto River was a “crib” bridge, made of logs and planks, built in the early 1800s. In the 1840s, a covered bridge was erected, with timbers resting on stone piers. In 1885, a steel bridge was erected, which served the Village of Dublin for 50 years. This bridge’s concrete foundation was overlaid by limestone mined from local quarries. The Dublin Stone Bridge was completed in 1935, replacing the steel bridge. Dublin stonemasons Frank “Hop” Pinney, Dan Eger, and Eli Pinney were employed to complete the stonework on the new two-lane bridge, using stone from local quarries, including a stone quarry located south of the bridge site. When the I-270 freeway linked to Dublin, traffic in the area increased and the stone bridge needed to be widened. In 1986, the bridge re-opened, supporting four lanes of traffic.

**(SOURCE: Dublin’s Journey, pages 50-53 & 166-167; The Dublin Historical Society-see Bibliography & Resources for more information)**

### **ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION:**

Kiwanis Riverway Park contains a natural wetland which cleans and purifies the water. More than 85 percent of Ohio’s wetlands have vanished, resulting in declining biodiversity. Wetlands help clean water before it runs to waterways, and also help prevent flash floods by holding run-off water so areas do not drain too quickly. This wetlands enhances the biodiversity of the area and provides a vital habitat for countless flora and fauna.

## Amberleigh Park, 8100 Carrigan Ridge Court, Dublin, Ohio

(<http://www.dublinarts.org/ripple/garden.html>)

### **HISTORICAL INFORMATION:**

Jon Dun built Dun House, located near Amberliegh Park at 8055 Dublin-Bellepoint Road, between 1855 and 1860. This historic brick home was named “Dunblane” and was the primary home of the Dun family until about 1904. John was married to Mary Davis, whose family had a homestead south of Dublin. Dun died at Dunblane in 1913 and is buried in the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.) Cemetery in Dublin.

Dublin, Ohio was originally part of the Virginia Military District. Although Virginia gave up most of its claim to western lands before passage of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, it retained an area of land in the Northwest Territory called the Virginia Military District. The territory borders were comprised of the Ohio River to the south, the Little Miami River to the west, and the Scioto River to the east and north. The State of Virginia used these lands, divided into plots, as payment to Virginia’s Revolutionary War veterans. Many Virginians settled in the region, and in some cases they gave up slaves in order to move to Ohio. The Northwest Ordinance forbade slavery in the territory.

**(SOURCE: Dublin Historical Society; Ohio Historical Society-see Bibliography & Resources for more information)**

### **ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION:**

A *Riffle Zone* is an area in a waterway where water flows over rocks and creates turbulence. This bubbling allows more oxygen to be absorbed into the water and many aquatic invertebrates thrive there, attracting fish and fishermen. A section of the Scioto at Amberleigh Park contains a large riffle zone.

## Dublin Spring, South Riverview @ Spring Hill, Historic Dublin, OH

(<http://www.dublinarts.org/ripple/ghost.html>)

### **HISTORICAL INFORMATION:**

South Riverview was the original main thoroughfare in Dublin, and many historic homes still stand proudly on this beautiful street. If you walk along South Riverview, you can view Dublin’s oldest stone home (83 South Riverview), oldest frame home (72 South Riverview), and oldest brick home (109 South Riverview). These homes were built between 1822 and 1824. Historically, South Riverview was linked to Native American travel along the Scioto River as well as to the Underground Railroad System.

Many residents knew the ol’ rock, located just south of the State Route 161 Bridge, as a favorite place for children and community members to go swimming and bathing from the 1800’s to the 1950’s. Kids who swam in the Scioto and other natural areas, such as Indian Run Falls, called themselves “river rats.” When the river is low, you can still see this rock, and perhaps imagine the fun people had at this community gathering spot along the Scioto River and on South Riverview.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION:**

The Dublin Spring was the main source of water for the early pioneers and travelers who traversed along the Scioto River. Located on the west bank of the Scioto and just south of the Bridge Street/State Route 161 Bridge, Dublin historian Emmett Karrer states, “Dublin wouldn’t be here today if it weren’t for the small spring.”

**(SOURCE: Dublin’s Journey, page 64; Dublin Historical Society-see Bibliography & Resources for more information)**

## classroom connections:

CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS ARE SUGGESTIONS FOR UTILIZING THE PUBLIC ART PROJECT *RIVERBOXES* IN CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION. THE SUGGESTED AREAS OF STUDY LINK TO THE ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS FOR BOTH DUBLIN CITY SCHOOLS AND THE STATE OF OHIO.

### Social Studies:

- Native American cultures that lived or traveled along the Scioto River, specifically the Hopewell and the Wyandot.
- Explore the similarities and differences between the Native American cultures including their practices, products and use of natural resources.
- *The Treaty of Greenville* and its importance to Wyandot Chief Leatherlips' personal story.
- The causes and effects of the frontier wars of the 1790s, including the *Battle of Fallen Timbers*, on American Indians in Ohio and the United States.
- The *Northwest Ordinance of 1787*, its importance in Ohio history and its effect on the Native Americans and early settlers.
- The *Virginia Military District* and its impact on land distribution in Ohio and in Dublin.

### Language Arts:

- Write a letter to the Mayor of Dublin, a member of Dublin City Council, or a family member (perhaps a grandparent) telling them one important thing about Dublin history and how it has influenced Dublin life and culture today.
- Read the *Riverbox of the Sun* story by Ron Hirschi (included). Read the creation myth used as inspiration for *Big Turtle Riverbox* (<http://www.firstpeople.us/FP-HTML-Legends/Huron-Creation-Myth-Wyandot.html>).
- Discuss folk tales, lore, fables and myths. Discuss the reasons why different cultures created folk tales or legends. Read folk tales and stories of other cultures. Ask the students to write a folk tale, myth or fable about the Scioto River.

• Each *Riverbox* is located on a river access site that represents a piece of Dublin history. Students can identify places of significance in their own school, and write about the location and its importance to the school or the students. Create a letterbox, journal and stamp for each significant place, then hide each letterbox. Students could write clues to help their classmates, teachers, parents or school community discover each letterbox.

### Science:

- Research and explore indigenous and invasive plant and animal life of the Scioto River.
  - Collect a few rocks found at the Scioto River for identification. Discuss why this type(s) of rock is found along the Scioto and/or in Ohio. Discuss land formation, land forms, erosion and rock formation.
  - Research the kinds of animals that live along or in the Scioto and the habitat the Scioto provides.
  - Discuss the ways habitats are affected by environmental and/or human impact. Think about issues that affect habitat, like erosion and litter.
  - Discuss and research the kinds of food a habitat provides to animal life. Think about the food chain. Trace a food chain that exists with the animal life on the Scioto.
  - Research the importance of a river in a community and how changes in the health of the river affect the habitat of other living things. Think about what other resources a river provide for its community.
- ### Technology:
- Use the DAC website ([www.dublinarts.org](http://www.dublinarts.org)) to learn more about *Riverboxes*. Ask your students to discover a *Riverbox*, then provide some comments in the DAC *Riverbox* Guestbook on the website.
  - Use the internet to discover facts about the Scioto River. Find five interesting facts about the Scioto River. Find the Scioto River on *Google Earth*. Try tracing the river through the State of Ohio.

• Make a podcast, PowerPoint slide show or *iMovie* about the Scioto River or a related subject, such as plant and animal life on the river or the history of Dublin.

### Math:

- Explore the Scioto River and keep track of the different species of plant or animal life discovered. Graph each species identified. Compare and contrast findings from different areas of the river or river watersheds.
- Use coordinate geometry and/or GPS technology to locate each *Riverbox*. When placing a school letterbox, provide GPS coordinates to help others find the school letterbox (see language arts).

### Visual Arts:

- When visiting a *Riverbox* or letterbox, participants take along a journal inkstamp, usually handmade. The design of the inkstamp should represent its owner - the stamp becomes the individual's personal signature.
- Ask your students to think about an image that represents them or their personality. Have them draw the image on a piece of tracing paper the size of the carving block (an eraser or linoleum block) and write a sentence or two about its meaning. Transfer the image onto the carving block, then carve out the image (see <http://www.letterboxing.org/kids/kidstamp.htm> for very basic stamp-making instruction).

### Music:

- Research different songs and dance from different eras of Dublin history, such as 1855, when the Corbin's gristmill was operating at the Dublin Arts Center location.
- Determine the kinds of instrumentation that would have been used to accompany the song and dance from the various eras.
- Research traditional Native American song. Compare and contrast the traditional songs of the Wyandot versus the songs of the Hopewell.
- Ask your students to write a rap with an environmental message about the Scioto River.