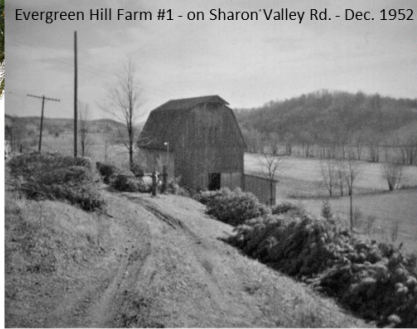




Before Fake Christmas Trees

By Deb Moreland, Granddaughter of Wade and Gladys Moreland



Evergreen Hill Farm #1 - on Sharon Valley Rd. - Dec. 1952

If you are a “boomer” and lived in central Licking County in the mid 1950s, your family may have purchased a live-cut or “balled” Christmas tree from the Evergreen Hills Farm and Nursery store on Sharon Valley Road in the Welsh Hills of Granville Township. The little airy cabin made of rough-hewn logs with a little woodburning stove was located just a tenth of a mile west of the Welsh Hills Road/Sharon Valley Road intersection and was for many years, the sales location of Wade and Gladys Moreland’s Christmas trees and holiday evergreen decorations business during post-Thanksgiving and pre-Christmas time.

Wade and Gladys were life-time residents of the Welsh Hills area. Wade had long dreamed of becoming a “Christmas tree farmer”, another title on his long list of life-time “jack of all trades” jobs. Gladys, who worked part-time as a bookkeeper for the Granville livestock auction, was home-grown-handy with every kind of craft that you could think of. (Oh, and she was a great cook of Pennsylvania Dutch fashion too!)

Wade’s tasks in the business were to plant trees, mow the fields,

prune the trees, de-beetle and cut them when they were ready to become a part of a family’s festive tradition at Christmas time (usually about 5-7 years after planting). Gladys’s job was as bookkeeper, of course, and to make beautiful holiday wreathes, pine boughs and decorations for sale at the little cabin.

Wade, Gladys and son Bob lived on “Farm #1” located at the SE corner of Sharon Valley and Jones roads when the Evergreen Hills Christmas tree farm had its birth. Wade purchased the hill property located on the north side of Sharon Valley Road and on the east side of Welsh Hills Road (now known as Evergreen Hills subdivision). My father, Bob, once told me that grandpa Wade paid him and a couple of his friends one cent each for every conifer tree sapling they planted on that hill, probably in 1947 or 1948.



Evergreen Hill Farm #2, now Snowden, 1954.

A year or so later, Wade purchased the old Williams farm (I think?) also located on Welsh Hills Road (now known as the Snowden subdivision) which also was planted with coniferous tree saplings. I remember as a little girl going to the “top of the hill” farm #2 at tree harvesting time, which started about mid-October. The wonderful smell of freshly cut pine trees, stacked and lined up ready for strapping and transporting, is still one of my favorite memories. My best recollection is that the Evergreen Hill Farm Christmas tree business lasted for about 8 to 10 years.

After that, Wade sold the farm properties for development and built he and Gladys’ retirement home at the bottom of Evergreen Hills on Sharon Valley Road.



Wade's tree

Out of this Christmas tree business, many folks may know and remember Wade for his “pine cone collection”. He and friends of his traveled far and wide across the United States and the world to add to his famed collection which was donated to the Dawes Arboretum in the early 1980s.

Oh, and Wade’s favorite tree to decorate at Christmas-time was a Norway Spruce.



From atop Evergreen Hill Farm #1, north of Sharon Valley looking to Newark - 1957.

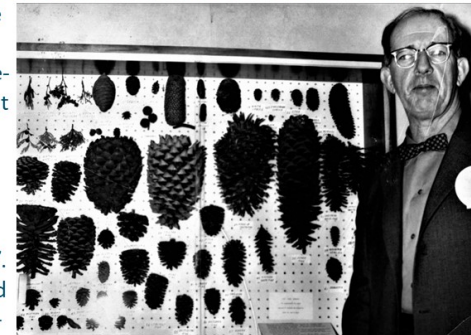


Evergreen Hills Farm Christmas Tree Sale Cabin.



Gladys Moreland making wreaths and decorations - 1957.

Evergreen Hill Farm, north of Sharon Valley - 1953 (price fruit farm in background).



Wade and partial pine cone collection.