

Chair Green, Vice-Chair Greenspan, Ranking Member Sheehy and members of the House Transportation Committee, today I rise and urge your support for House Bill 316, legislation that would name Henry Beatty Memorial Picnic Area within the Kelleys Island State Park. Henry (or “Henny”) was the first and founding Kelleys Island State Park Ranger and Administrator, serving from approximately 1964 to 1974. My name is Ellen Hoffman and I am the youngest granddaughter of Henry Beatty and daughter of Henny’s youngest daughter and fourth generation Kelly Islander, Mary Ellen Beatty Huntley.

Born in 1901, my grandfather was the son of a successful second-generation Kelleys Island fruit farmer, a farmer who ultimately lost his wealth due to a failed second marriage. A teenager, my grandfather went to live with one of his older brothers with “nothing more than a knapsack and hunting rifle.” Henny married Rosella Elfers Beatty and became a commercial fisherman in 1922. The decline in commercial fishing, combined with decreased quarrying and farming on Kelleys Island, pushed Kelleys Island population from a peak of 1200 to a mere several hundred. My grandfather had a wife and five children to feed. Other Islanders also worried about the future of the Island.

While most of what I tell you today is from memory and handed down family stories – the next two paragraphs I summarized from various newspaper articles: In the 1940s, Kelleys Island disagreed about whether or not tourism should become a leading industry of the Island. At the same time, Henny Beatty served as president of the Kelleys Island Chamber of Commerce which went on to develop the Kelleys Island Municipal Airport. The November 1949 mayoral election was seen as a referendum of the tourism debate. Henny Beatty won the election 112 votes to 98, based upon his pro-tourism platform. While serving as mayor and president of the local electric co-operative in 1954, Henny helped bring dependable electric power to Kelleys Island, allowing the Islanders to retire an “off again, on again” electric service from a diesel-powered generator (this is from the Sandusky Register, Dec. 29<sup>th</sup>, 1954). Reliable electricity enhanced Kelleys Island as a tourist destination.

Following his father, Henry C. Beatty, who was one of the first six Kelleys Island Village Council members elected in 1887, my grandfather continued in various political positions including Kelleys Island Village Council president and as charter member of the Kelleys Island Economic Development Commission in 1962. I believe Henny's final pro-tourism project was assisting in the development of the Kelleys Island State Park. My grandma told stories of Henny clearing the land with hand tools. While Henny served as Ranger, the park grew and flourished from 15 campsites to 125 campsites.

And after providing my testimony today, I ask you to help me in celebrating and honoring the work and life of Henry Beatty. I believe my grandfather, Henry Beatty, greatly influenced the Kelleys Island we know today. I thank you for the opportunity to advocate for this bill today and I urge support for House Bill 316.