



Frequently Asked Questions

Does the Dawes family still own The Arboretum?

No, The Arboretum is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and is owned and governed by a board of trustees.

Is the Dawes family still involved with The Arboretum?

Yes, four descendants of the founders serve on the board of trustees.

What was the amount of the original endowment?

In 1929, the total value of the Dawes' gifts to establish The Arboretum, including land, buildings, stock certificates and a sizeable U.S. Liberty Bond was approximately \$160,000; of that sum \$51,471.30 formed the original Endowment Fund.

How big is the property?

The original purchase of the farm consisted of 140 acres. Mr. Dawes continued to purchase neighboring property and when The Arboretum was established in 1929, the grounds had grown to 293 acres. Today, The Arboretum grounds comprise nearly 2,000 acres.

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The Dawes Arboretum
Trees ∞ History ∞ Nature

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The Dawes Arboretum

HISTORY



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The Dawes Arboretum was established in 1929 by Beman Dawes and his wife Bertie. The idea for an arboretum came to Beman during his youth in Marietta, Ohio, where his father's lumber business supported the family.

In 1917, the Dawes family moved to the 140-acre Brumback farm in Licking Township. The farm, known as "Woodland," offered gently rolling hills and several acres of mature trees native to central Ohio. Beman felt that the farm was well situated; it was located practically in the center of the state with diversified soils and good climate for hardy trees.

The family renamed the farm "Daweswood" and the brick, half-century-old farmhouse became their country home. By this time, Beman and Bertie Dawes had passed their love of nature on to their four sons and daughter.

Daweswood served as both a retreat from the family's East Broad Street residence in Columbus, as well as a place to pursue their horticultural interests.



Left: Daweswood Farm, c.1925; Right: Pure Oil Company Logo



It was Beman Dawes' aim to inspire people to plant trees by planting trees at Daweswood. He strove to obtain specimens from all over the world that would survive in central Ohio. The first planned tree planting began in 1917 with 50 sugar maples.

By the time The Dawes Arboretum was founded in 1929, over 50,000 trees had been planted and the grounds had doubled in size to 293 acres. Beman and Bertie Dawes created The Arboretum as a private foundation: "To encourage the planting of forest and ornamental trees ... to give pleasure to the public and education to the youth."

Today, The Dawes Arboretum Plant Records track nearly 17,000 living plants.

To ensure the continuation of The Arboretum, Beman and Bertie Dawes established an endowment fund that continues to be a major source of funds for The Dawes Arboretum which has grown from 293 acres in 1929 to nearly 2,000 acres. Today, Arboretum members, corporate partners and members of the community help support The Arboretum's continued growth and development.

Beman Gates *Dawes* (1870 – 1953)

Born and raised in Marietta, Ohio, Beman was the third of six children of Rufus R. Dawes and Mary Gates Dawes; he was named after his grandfather Beman Gates. Beman Dawes' father was a Civil War Brigadier General who served with the "Iron Brigade" and later operated a wholesale lumber business in Marietta.

Although Beman's business interests would lead him away from lumber, he studied trees throughout his life. Mr. Dawes was a leader in the gas and petroleum industry in central Ohio. In 1914, he was the founding president of The Ohio Cities Gas Company that later became The Pure Oil Company, known for its blue and white English style cottage gas stations.

Beman served two terms in Congress representing the 15th Congressional District of Ohio from 1905-1909. His oldest brother, Charles, was Vice President of the United States under Calvin Coolidge from 1925 – 1929.



Bertie Burr *Dawes* (1872 – 1958)

Born and raised in Lincoln, Nebraska, Bertie was the second of four children of Carlos C. Burr and Mary Smith Burr. Bertie's father was an attorney and served as Mayor of Lincoln and as State Senator.

At the age of 19, Bertie was awarded the Gold Lifesaving Medal for saving two women from drowning.

On October 3, 1894, Bertie Burr married Beman G. Dawes in Lincoln. Together the couple raised five children who later became founding Trustees of The Dawes Arboretum.

Bertie Dawes was a self-taught naturalist who enjoyed gardening, fishing, shell and butterfly collecting, bird watching and photography.



Dawes family, dedication ceremony, June 5, 1929. (Left to Right) Beman G. Dawes Jr., Dorothy Dawes Young, Beman G. Dawes, Bertie B. Dawes, Carlos B. Dawes, Ephraim C. Dawes, Henry Dawes