

Heritage Cove Resort

A Raystown Lake Retreat



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Photo courtesy Sandi Wright

**Top photo: Overview of Raystown Lake, PA.
Inset: Sandi and Dick Wright, owners of
Heritage Cove Resort.**

Retirement means different things to different people, but the first thing that comes to most people's minds is a well-earned life of blissful rest and relaxation, perhaps in a new setting. But Dick and Sandi Wright had a different sort of vision for their golden years: to create a recreational retreat, where people could escape the daily grind and enjoy a vacation in a secluded and beautiful natural setting.

As a teen growing up in Johnstown, Pa., Dick dreamed of creating a business that offered outdoor recreational and family activities. The idea resurfaced in the late 1990s when the couple began to plan for their retirement after spending most of their working years in California. They decided to move back East to establish and operate a seasonal business that would allow them to work six months and then relax for the rest of the year.

Dick began looking for property near the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers but found himself especially drawn to

the Raystown Lake area of Bedford County, Pa. During a visit to see his family in Johnstown, Dick and his sister Kathy decided to go fishing on the Raystown Branch of the Juniata River. As they made their way to the lake, Dick spotted some property with a path to Raystown Lake and told Kathy that this was the land he wanted. Assuming its owner wouldn't want to sell, Dick didn't pursue its purchase. When he returned for a family visit a couple of years later, he learned that this same property was for sale. He and Sandi purchased it a year later. Sandi suggested the name Heritage Cove to highlight the region's historic significance and Heritage Cove Resort became a reality.

Now the hard work of establishing their vacation retreat began. The list included making arrangements for financing, constructing and staffing a private sewage treatment facility primarily for RV hookups, clearing the property, building roads, planting grass, building ponds for drainage, and constructing several structures that included a lodge/welcome center, three rental cabins, bath house and boat launch. On July 4, 2002, Heritage Cove Resort opened for business.

Today, the Resort attracts visitors from all over. “We’ve developed a community here, like a little village,” says Sandi. “We greet our visitors like old friends.”

Accommodations include 195 RV sites with full hookups and five cozy vacation cottages for up to six adults. All RV sites feature electricity, water, sewage hookup and a fire ring, with restrooms and showers nearby. Those choosing to stay in a cottage will find a fully equipped kitchen, bed linens and towels, plus amenities that include ceiling fans, air conditioning, full bath with tub and shower and fireplace with gas logs. The reception center has a laundry room, store and library with a selection of board and lawn games.

The Resort’s marina offers a boat launch, secured boat trailer parking and a choice of outdoor or indoor boat storage. Guests can rent canoes, kayaks, pontoon boats and river float tubes. Half-day and full-day float trips on area rivers can be arranged.

Photos (top to bottom): Five fully equipped cottages are available for family vacations.

Biking trails throughout the resort.

All RV sites feature electricity, water, sewage hookup and a fire ring, with restrooms and showers nearby.

One of the ongoing events is a fishing contest for kids.

Lots of family fun and memories.





Bottom 3 photos courtesy Heritage Cove Resort

Top photo: Heritage Cove Resort features a dock on Raystown Lake as well as a marina that offers a boat launch, secured boat trailer parking and a choice of outdoor or indoor boat storage.

Bottom photos: Catching minnows by the dock; tubing on Raystown Lake; and a 4th of July hayride with fireworks at dark.

On-site attractions include a swimming pool, playground, outdoor games like horseshoes and volleyball, mountain biking trails, hay rides and bird watching hikes. The Resort offers a schedule of ongoing events for guests. Examples include a fishing contest for kids, 5K race, luau and pet parade, and fireworks on holidays. For those wishing to explore the area beyond the Resort, a wealth of attractions is available within easy driving distances. Popular options include several amusement parks, caves and caverns, museums, historic sites like Fort Bedford, railroad attractions and state parks with hiking and biking trails. Paddlers can enjoy trips along several branches of the Juniata River, plus waterways within area parks.

Over the years, Dick and Sandi have seen guests develop friendships with each other and often receive updates from former guests about family events like graduations and weddings.

“We feel like we are fulfilling our mission, to create a quiet retreat for people to get away from everyday stress,” Sandi says. “People come back because it’s so quiet. There is a spiritual feeling about this place. It feels very protected, with a sense of safety and security.”

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