

Interview with Todd Kirby about the Clark County Fair

**Wes Wells:** Testing 1 2 3

**WW:** This is my interview with Todd Kirby about Clark County Fair.

**WW:** What is your current position with the Clark County Fair?

Todd Kirby: President of the fair board.

**WW:** How long have you been associated with the fair?

TK: Uh, along about 15 years.

**WW:** How long has the Clark County Fair been in existence?

TK: Uh, we're coming up on our hundred and third anniversary this year.

**WW:** Through the years, what do you think have been some of the major changes in the fair?

TK: Uh, as far as events. The big change has been the people. Uh, there's a lot more community involvement. Where as twenty years ago there wasn't. It's getting back to the more family oriented, rather than commercialized, I hope. Big changes of course you have all the regular events such as the demolition derby and stuff like that they didn't have back fifty to a hundred years ago. But it's basically set up with livestock and different shows like that.

**WW:** What have been some of the most popular events at the fair?

TK: Uh, as I mentioned before the demolition derby. That's the most popular. Uh, the truck and tractor pulls. Uh, we got a lot of horse racing. It's a pretty good event out there through the week. All of our shows went to a night event, because during the day we didn't pull in enough people for the show. But, uh, other than that that's besides your carnival. The carnival brings in a lot of people.

**WW:** On the average, how many vendors are brought to the carnival at the Clark County Fair?

TK: Uh, I believe there is around twenty independent vendors and then of course the carnival people bring their vendors in which they probably bring fifteen to twenty more.

**WW: Has the fair always been held at Marshall?**

TK: No, it uh, bounced back and forth between Martinsville and Marshall for several years.

**WW: When was the charter for the Marshall Community Fair issued?**

TK: Uh, I believe it was issued on March 16, 1934.

**WW: When did horse racing first start at the Clark County Fair?**

TK: The first night of horse racing was uh, August 8, 1949.

**WW: Have there ever been any incidents at the fair?**

TK: Uh, yea I believe back in 1973 the photo finish and sound boxes in the grandstand were burnt by a fire. And they was rebuilt that same year. The west dairy barn, which is a beef barn now, was burnt down in October 22, 1974.

**WW: When did the Marshall Fair become the Clark County Fair?**

TK: (Pause) Good question. Oh, I wasn't supposed to say that. Stop it. (Pause) I believe that was uh, changed to the Clark County Fair on April 17, 1934.

**WW: I have heard that the grandstands used to be located in a different place from where they are today.**

TK: That would have been the old wooden grandstand. I don't have anything to tell me when that was built or anything else about it except it was moved to the present location of the grandstand in 1948.

**WW: What is the capacity of the current grandstand?**

TK: I believe it's uh, around about 2,500 to 3,000 people.

**WW: How much did it originally cost for admission into the fair?**

TK: Uh, back in 1931 it was uh, ten cent and twenty five cents.

**WW: What is your most memorable experience at the Clark County Fair?**

TK: That's going to be an easy one. I proposed to my wife there. In front of the grandstand on a demolition derby night. (Laughs)