THE OBERLIN HERALD OH!

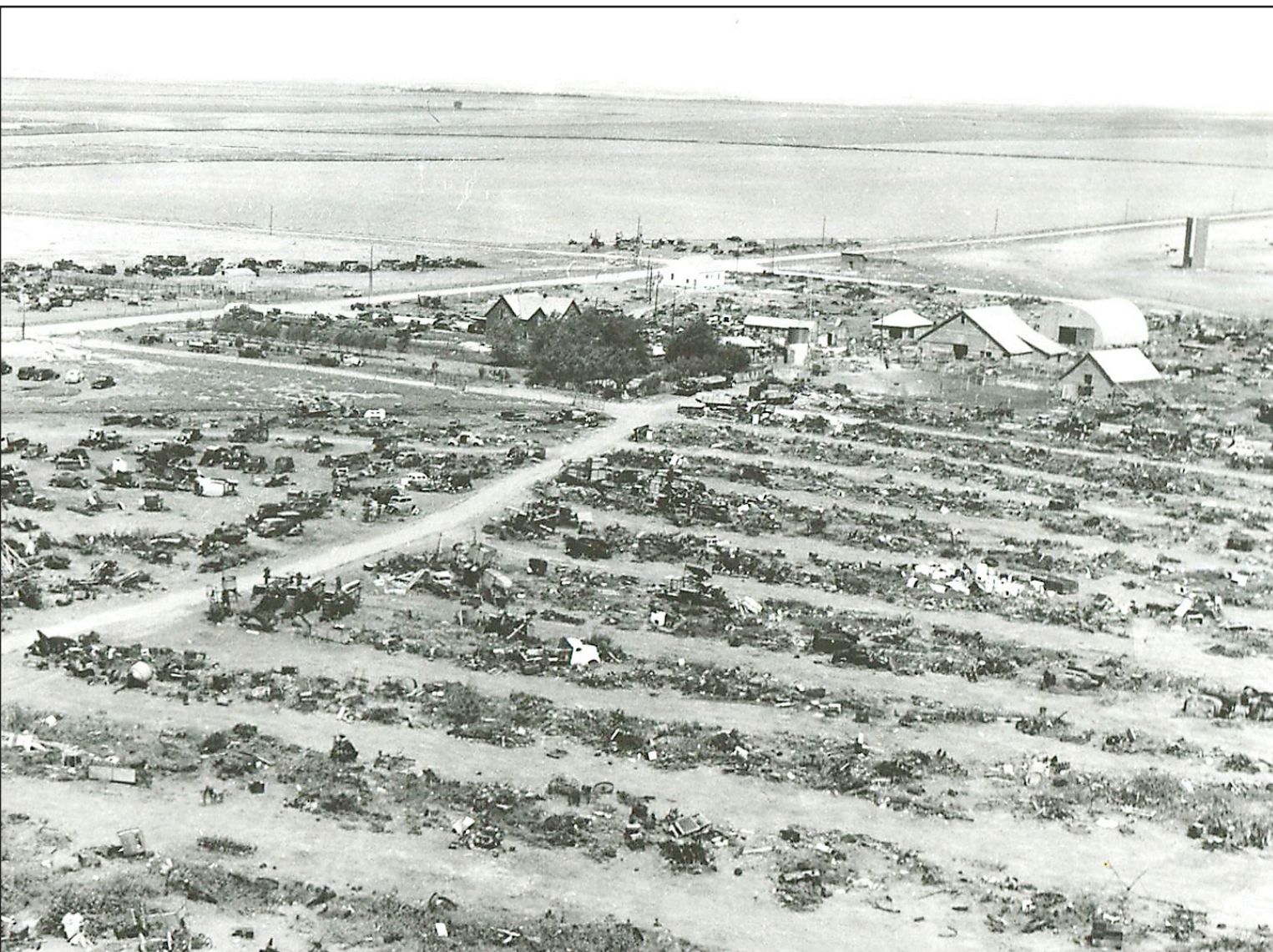**The feature page about interesting people, places and things to do**

FARMERS IN THE EARLY 1900s were known to have fancy cars (top) and machines, which sometimes were nicer than the houses they lived in. After the machines wore out, farmers would take them to the Hjalmer Alstrom junk yard (below) 12 miles southwest of Oberlin.

–Photos from the Last Indian Raid Museum

Oberlin man shares details of early farming

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People packed their lunches and brought them to the Old Bohemian Hall to participate in the Decatur County Museum's Brown Bag and Learn program.

Gail Marcuson gave a slide show on "Farming the Hard Way" that emphasized the struggles of farming in Decatur County in the early 1900s.

At age 90, Mr. Marcuson said, he believes the Last Indian Raid Museum asked him to speak on the topic because he is one of few in town who can remember the old-time farming practices.

"I enjoy the programs the museum puts on," he said. "I was honored that they asked me to speak, and I had fun."

Mr. Marcuson said farmers used horsepower for the threshers and corn shellers before the 1900s.

Steam powered engines came along in the early 1900s, which farmers found simpler than horsepower, he said.

Gasoline powered tractors became popular around 1920, Mr. Marcuson said. They weren't good for field work because they were so big and clumsy, but they worked well for belt power, he said.

Museum Director Sharleen Wurm said 64 people came out to the presentation.

Whitney Francis, activity director for the Good Samaritan Center, brought 11 residents down to enjoy the program.

"This is the second time bringing them to the program," Ms. Francis said. "They enjoy the opportunity to socialize with people they grew up

The old-fashoned binder (above) pulled by teams of horses and mules was used to put wheat in shocks to dry down before it was run through a threshing machine. Gail Marcuson (right) drove a grain truck, which was a lot easier than the older practices.