



# Bulletin of the Kenton County Historical Society

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Peaseburg - A Covington Neighborhood

# Peaselburg - A Covington Neighborhood

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Nestled within what is now the heart of Covington, Kentucky, the tiny village of Peaselburg once stood proudly alone. Today this area, centered at the intersection of 21<sup>st</sup> and Howell Streets, is just one of Covington's 24 recognized neighborhoods<sup>1</sup> such as MainStrasse, Botony Hills, and the Licking Riverside District. Its beginnings, however, date back to the early 1800s when a group of German immigrants found this beautiful gently-sloping valley to be the perfect location for their New World homesteads.

In the early 1800s, the city limits of Covington extended south from the Ohio River to only 6<sup>th</sup> Street or so, while farm land and other large estates were scattered from that point. Among the more prominent homesteads south of Covington were those of Daniel Holmes, Robert Wallace, and Eugene Levassor – each located on the eastern side of what is now Madison Avenue. Smaller villages also existed both south and west of Covington, including Lewisburg (centered at St. John's Church at Pike and I-75), Austinburg (present-day 18<sup>th</sup> and Eastern), and Milldale (what is now considered Northern Latonia).

On the western side of Madison Avenue, near present-day 19<sup>th</sup> and Euclid Streets, was the vast estate of A.P. Howell. Little is known about the elder Howell, however, his son George W. Howell ran a successful contract painting and paint supply company at Pike and Madison for many decades.<sup>2</sup> He was also the secretary and treasurer for the Kenton Water Company, and president of the Banklick Turnpike Company. A son, Harry, worked as a painter as well, and was often found on the town council.<sup>3</sup>

In the early to mid 1800s, the area around the Howell estate began growing and was soon considered a small village of its own – going by the name Silkyville – though it may never be known just exactly why. Silkyville grew, as did many towns at that time, more by necessity than for any other reason. Since a trip into Covington might be a full-day's affair, locals

soon had their own blacksmiths, grocery, bakery and dry-goods stores to keep from having to travel into the “big city” for their daily and weekly supplies.

Sometime before 1850, the name Silkyville was replaced with a new name for the quaint village: Peaselburg. It was also around this time in which the village began a steady growth in population. Almost exclusively, Peaselburg was comprised of German immigrants, mostly Catholics, with several Italian families mixed in for good measure. German family names in early Peaselburg included: Heidel, Brue, Uhlmann, Busse, Niemeyer, Trenkamp, Wolf, Mardis, Niehaus, Kampson, Eifert, Meiman, Meyers, Drees, Dedden, Henn, Dressman, and Shoemaker. Prominent Irish family names included: Ryan, Burns, McAmis, Mulcahy, McCarthy, Carr, Morris, Dugan, Sullivan, Kelsey, Finan, and Cottingham.<sup>4</sup>

By 1860, Peaselburg continued to grow, due in part to the Kentucky Central Railroad. Many Peaselburg men were employed with the railroad, or by the nearby stockyards just east of the railroad line. Many of the homes constructed after 1865 included backyard entrances to a web of alleyways in order for coal-soot-covered workers to come and go without treading through the homes' front doors. Also, a wooden pedestrian bridge was constructed at the east end of 21<sup>st</sup> Street to allow workers safe access across the tracks. This bridge stood for more than a century before being demolished in the late 1990s.

Another cause for Peaselburg's rapid growth began in 1870, when the Covington-Horse Branch Turnpike Association was formed to construct a better road from the east end of Willow (19<sup>th</sup> Street) to the Latonia Springs (a mineral spa and two-story hotel successfully operating from about 1829 at present-day Madison Pike and Highland Pike). Once completed all the way to Independence, this road became the Covington-Independence Turnpike, later the 3-L Highway, and now Madison Pike.



Above: Birdseye view of Peaselsburg taken from the Monte Cassino Winery (view is looking east). Note the original St. Augustine Church in the center top (at the east end of 20th Street). 21st Street is the wide street on the right. On the cover: Peaselsburg mosaic located at the corner of 19th and Jefferson Streets.

*Above photo courtesy the Kenton County Public Library Archives. Cover photo courtesy Bob Webster*

Before the Civil War, E. A. Thompson operated a very successful winery overlooking the village and all of Northern Kentucky.<sup>5</sup> Much of his property became Fort Henry, under General Lew Wallace. In 1877, the property was sold to the St. Vincent Benedictines of Pennsylvania, through collaboration with Covington's St. Joseph Church. The plan was to build a large monastery and move the Benedictine's failing winery from Pennsylvania to Covington. To fulfill the entire plan, the Benedictines would require the purchase of John Park's neighboring property to the east, which never transpired. Still, the monk's Monte Cassino winery was extremely successful, producing wine for public sale as well as supplying nearly every Catholic church in the region with pure altar wine.<sup>6</sup> After Prohibition, however, it never regained its success and eventually closed. Though listed as a monastery in various newspaper articles and on many maps, in reality, Monte Cassino never officially achieved that distinction. Rather, it was simply a working farm under St. Joseph's Priory, and in its final years St. Benedict Church.<sup>7</sup>

One of the most incredible features at Monte Cassino was a tiny chapel. Constructed of large fieldstone between 1895 and 1901, the structure, with an interior floor dimension of only 6'x8', became a quiet

place of meditation for the small group of monks. Once vacated, the property was sold a few times, eventually landing in the hands of Fred D. Riedinger, who sold the land in 1960 to local building contractors B.W. White and Frank J. Hanser, Sr.<sup>8</sup> While the remaining structures on the monks' property were razed for construction of the Hanser Homes subdivision, the tiny chapel remained. In fact, for many years it stood proudly in the backyard of 709 Francis Lane. Riedinger later donated the chapel to Thomas More College, Crestview Hills, where it overlooks a small lake at the front entrance to the campus.

In the mid to late 1800s, geese were everywhere in and around the village of Peaselsburg. Although no one knew to exactly whom each goose belonged, it was the common belief that the majority were owned by the Drees, Neihaus and Uhlmann families.<sup>9</sup> Often, the geese were said to completely control the small town, keeping both housewives and small children at bay for hours on end. "Each squadron had their own exclusive rights to certain garbage cans, gardens, ponds and creeks, and their itinerary was the same day after day, as they kept a constant babble of goose talk, accentuated periodically by a most gosh awful honk."<sup>10</sup> Goose eggs and feathers were said to be found behind nearly every bush in the

neighborhood. In fact, according to local history author Jack Wessling, “Geese were as symbolic to Peaselsburg as horses are of the state of Kentucky.”<sup>11</sup>

The enormous geese population provided a great deal of good for the locals however, including goose grease, which many residents used to tame their unruly hair; goose feathers to fill countless mattresses and pillows; and goose liver and goose eggs, which became a common staple in nearly every neighborhood kitchen and pantry.<sup>12</sup>

Since the entire neighborhood was filled with geese – all of the roadways, lawns, and sidewalks were also filled – with despicable goose droppings. In fact, the story has been told for more than 150 years that Peaselsburg, in German, actually translates as “town of goose droppings.” The problem is – there seems to be no evidence whatsoever to confirm that as fact! Several articles have been written about Peaselsburg over the years, but all by local writers. While each passes on the “folklore” of the word’s origin, none cite any credible source as to how they confirmed its truth. This author refuses to state that something is fact unless it can be confirmed. If Peaselsburg really means “town of goose droppings” it should be easy to prove.

According to Harald Hoebüsch, German Language professor at the University of Kentucky, “Peasel is a more likely a surname and does not have an English translation.”<sup>13</sup> In fact, the word peasel seems to have no connection to geese at all. The German translation for goose or geese – droppings or poop, is gans kaken or ganse kacka, neither of which sounds anything like peasel. Language experts at Indiana University were also contacted, and they, too, could find no “peasel” in their dictionaries. Alan Leidner, German language expert at the University of Louisville states “...peasel sounds slightly similar to the German slang pieseln, meaning ‘to pee,’ but also confirms the word has nothing to do with geese or fowl, and nothing to do with droppings, poop, crap or any other English slang word.”<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, Anna Grotnans, chair of the Department of Germanic Language and Literature at The Ohio State University reports, “The word pieseln is certainly a similar-sounding word to your peasel, but unfortunately, the word pie-

seln is not found in the German language until the early 1900s...,” long after peaselsburg was used in Northern Kentucky.”<sup>15</sup> Some locals have suggested that the word specifically came from the Low-German dialect. However, there is nothing found in the Low-German or Plattdeutsch language that resembles the word peasel.<sup>16</sup>

In a further attempt to find some bit of evidence to support this local folklore, experts at several European universities were also questioned with regard to the origin of the word peasel. One college in Belgium, three in Germany, two in Switzerland, one in Italy, and one in Luxemburg eventually responded. In fact, a total of 11 language and dialect experts replied and not one, not a single person could offer any proof to this folklore. The consensus of the Europeans, just as with the experts at the University of Kentucky and Ohio State University, is that Peasel is a surname. Besides, the idea that a group of German immigrants, extremely proud to have fresh roots in a New World they had struggled so greatly to embark upon, would give such a horrible identity to the very place they intended to call home for generations to come is utterly preposterous. Furthermore, other villages were springing up in the area around the same time and each of these were named for people: Austinburg, Lewisburg, Hellentown.

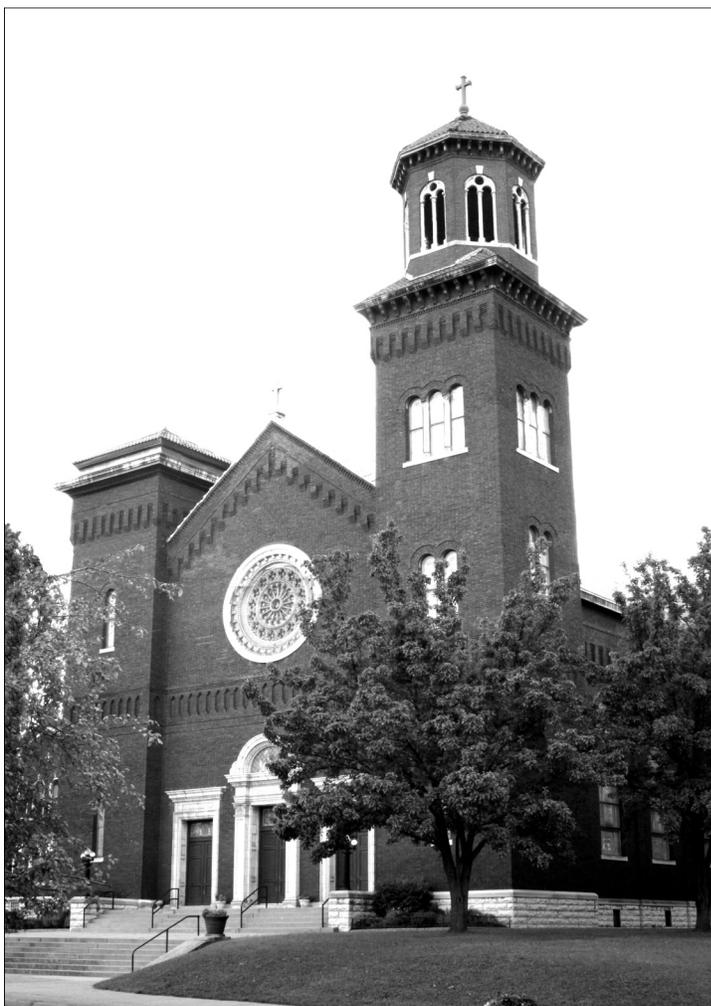
Two genealogists were then enlisted in search of Northern Kentucky’s Peasel family. Since it was very common for the spelling of many European surnames to change over time, it was extremely difficult to trace any Peasel, Pezel, Pizel, or Peasall residents. Also, because this village was not a part of Covington in the early 1800s, and was not even a part of Kenton County until 1840, Campbell County records also required review. Many of these early records were incomplete and unfortunately, no specific Peasel family was discovered. We may never know with certainty where the name Peaselsburg originated. However, it is the belief of this author that a continued search should be for a *whom* rather than a *what*.

At any rate, word spread quickly throughout the entire region that the true meaning of Peaselsburg was “town of goose droppings” and residents of the village called for a change. In June of 1876, locals

first asked the state legislature to incorporate their town. However, the name chosen was Wolfsburg,<sup>17</sup> clearly after John Wolf, a prominent land owner and frequent town trustee. Wolf owned much of what is now the area encompassed by Benton Road, Highland Avenue, Center, and 23<sup>rd</sup> Street<sup>18</sup> The motion fell through however, and Peaselsburg continued.

By the late 1860s, Covington already had four German parishes serving its many Catholic citizens: Mother of God (1841); St. Joseph (1853); St. John (1854); and St. Aloysius (1865).<sup>19</sup> By the late 1860s, the need for a fifth church was realized, to serve those Catholics living in all areas south of Covington. St. Augustine Parish was established on June 20, 1870, and the cornerstone for the combination church and school was dedicated on October 16, 1870.<sup>20</sup> The original church was located on the eastern side of what was then Holman Street, at its intersection with Howard Street. Since several streets in the area have changed names over the years, in present-day terms, the church was located on the eastern side of Russell Street at 20<sup>th</sup>. A new St. Augustine Church and school, located on the northern side of 19<sup>th</sup> Street between Euclid and Jefferson was completed in 1914 and remains there in 2011.

Education in Peaselsburg changed drastically in 1876, when many residents of the village realized the need for a “public” school. Meetings began in March of that year and by late April, construction had begun on a new frame building on land donated by John Wolf and William Eifert.<sup>21</sup> The Peaselsburg Free School was completed in June 1876.<sup>22</sup> The school’s opening, however, fueled what became the Peaselsburg School Wars. While the land was donated and the building was constructed out of donations, actual money was needed to hire a teacher and for a fund for the upkeep of the school. Just before the building’s completion, a tax levy was presented to the residents for a vote. The levy passed unanimously. However, when it became known the next morning that Rev. Father Goebbles, pastor at St. Augustine, had preached a sermon denouncing the whole election as “...fraud and the child of the Evil One,” and went so far as to state that persons who sent their children to free schools were simply “educating them for the brothels and penitentiaries



St Augustine Church, 19th and Euclid Streets

*Courtesy Bob Webster*

of the land,”<sup>23</sup> a near war broke out in the streets. Goebbles even scolded those in his own congregation who voted for the tax levy causing many to vow never to return to the Catholic church. The Peaselsburg Free School, and later the Franklin School, located on the eastern side of the 2100 block of Center, operated for over three decades.

In October 1879, residents once again asked the state legislature to incorporate their town. This time, according to the *Daily Commonwealth* of October 30<sup>th</sup>, the name chosen by the residents was Jessetown, though there was no reference as to who Jesse was. At any rate, the request was once again denied and Peaselsburg continued.

By the early 1880s, the city of Covington was rapidly growing, and industry was surrounding tiny Peaselsburg. Just to the north was the Cambridge Tile

Company, which would eventually take up much of the entire block of Woodburn between 17<sup>th</sup> & Linden.<sup>24</sup> By 1910 the company utilized more than 20 massive kilns, each several stories high and peering over the growing residential homes nearby. By the early 1930s, Cambridge was employing more than 200 people and they simply outgrew the space. The company moved to the northern side of the Ohio River and the structures were bulldozed to permit the construction of more homes on Woodburn, Boone, May, 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Streets. Still today, with just a small shovel, remnants of broken tile can be found scattered all over the neighborhood. Other businesses emerged along the eastern edge of Peaselsburg. These included Veith and Sweigart Lumber, located at 24<sup>th</sup> and Madison, and VanLeunen Hay and Grain, situated on the Old Banklick Pike at 24<sup>th</sup> Street. Each of these businesses also employed many of the Peaselsburg men.

While evidence suggests the men of Peaselsburg were extremely hard workers, there is also clear evidence of their choice of recreational activities. By late 1876, the village of Peaselsburg had within its small boundaries four 10-pin alleys.<sup>25</sup> In fact, it was said the best bowlers in the state hailed from Peaselsburg. Dance halls were also very popular in the late 1800s and Peaselsburg was home to at least five. Thomas' Highland Pike Hall, Schild's, Tobhamer's Hall, Heunehacke's, and Hermes Garden Theater were sites of various parties, dance competitions, and 10-pin tournaments over the years.<sup>26</sup>

A favorite for youngsters was Willow Run Creek, which began in the southern hills overlooking the small village, traveled east alongside the Highland Turnpike, veered south through what is now Glenn O. Swing's playfields, and then headed north. Before construction of Euclid Avenue and the many homes there, the major portion of this creek was in the basin between Jefferson and May Streets. The creek continued north through what is now Interstate 71-75 and entered the Ohio River at the very point where the Brent Spence Bridge stands today.

In 1880, the residents of Peaselsburg were finally successful in having their village incorporated and suddenly, Central Covington was born. Central

Covington extended far past the original Peaselsburg boundaries and roughly included the following as borders: the railroad tracks to the east, what is now Latonia to the south, 18<sup>th</sup> Street to the north, and the current city limits to the west. While some happily adopted the name of Central Covington, most local residents continued to refer to their town as Peaselsburg, even with its apparently negative meaning. Arguments continued over the origin of the town's name for decades. Many locals insisted the town was named for a *person* and not for the excrement of any bird or animal. The *Ticket* ran an article on September 28, 1876, requesting that anyone who knew of Mr. Peasel's whereabouts come forward, but there was no response. The Peaselsburg name continued.

In 1906, the city of Covington launched a plan to annex various unincorporated areas along its borders, including areas west of Linden Grove Cemetery and south of Wallace Woods. At the same time, the residents of Central Covington voted to accept annexation into the larger city. Though the vote was 140 "for" and 268 "against," only a 25% "yes" vote was required to pass.<sup>27</sup> The city of Central Covington was dissolved and old Peaselsburg became part of Covington. While a new, higher city tax was immediately collected, residents of Peaselsburg did not see an immediate change in services. In the beginning, there was no fire or police protection whatsoever. Covington Police foiled a near-disaster however, by appointing a Peaselsburg resident, Mr. Patsy Trenkamp, as the area's first patrolman. In short order, the old town hall was refurbished and became Covington Fire Company #7 (near 23<sup>rd</sup> and Howell), and the Green Line Bus Company extended its Holman Avenue route right into the heart of old Peaselsburg.

Covington's Fifth District School, originally located in a large private residence at Robbins and Scott Streets, relocated to a brand new structure on the northwest corner of 18<sup>th</sup> and Holman. The new school became the first in the entire state to have indoor bathrooms.<sup>28</sup> The student-aged population in the area soon grew to a point where another elementary school was needed. A new structure was built on the northeast corner of 23<sup>rd</sup> and Howell and the Seventh District School serviced students south of 19<sup>th</sup> Street and west of Madison until 1970. Fifth District

remained as an elementary school until 1972. Enrollment from those two schools was then combined into Glen O. Swing School, located at 19<sup>th</sup> and Jefferson Streets, which opened in 1970 and remains today.<sup>29</sup>

After Peaselburg became a part of Covington, many street names were changed. Willow became 19<sup>th</sup> Street; the section of Russell south of 19<sup>th</sup> became Augustine; the section of Holman Street south of 19<sup>th</sup> became Russell; Howard became 20<sup>th</sup>; Pleasant became 21<sup>st</sup>; Amelia became 22<sup>nd</sup>; Elizabeth became 24<sup>th</sup>; Prospect became 26<sup>th</sup>; and Quarry became Benton Road, named for Covington's first mayor Mortimer Benton.

In 1914, Newport's Donaldson Lithograph Company built a \$100,000 facility on Old Banklick Pike at 21<sup>st</sup> Street, on the eastern edge of Peaselburg. The company held somewhat of a monopoly on the circus poster business, supplying the likes of Buffalo Bill Cody, the Ringling Brothers, and Anne Oakley.<sup>30</sup> The Covington operation employed more than 200 men at peak business.<sup>31</sup> That stretch of road was changed to Donaldson Avenue and in 1917 the former stockyards just south of the plant were demolished to allow the business to expand. The company had great success, eventually closing in the 1980s. For safety reasons, the original structures were razed.

As the city grew so did traffic, especially that crossing over what was the Louisville and Nashville Railroad tracks to get to Madison Avenue and the eastern side of Covington. Though Banklick and Russell Streets were the original direct routes into Downtown Covington, Madison Avenue became the major north-south thoroughfare. To accommodate this increase in traffic, plans were discussed as early as 1910 for a viaduct over the tracks. Arguments between city leaders and the L&N stretched for nearly 20 years with regard to an exact location. While the L&N wanted the bridge at 19<sup>th</sup> Street, city directors had pushed for a crossing at 20<sup>th</sup>,<sup>32</sup> possibly due to the fact that most of the business district of old Peaselburg was located there. In the end, a new concrete viaduct was constructed at 19<sup>th</sup> Street, with laborers receiving a handsome 30-cent per hour wage. By the late 1980s, that bridge had become dilapidated and in 1997, a new concrete viaduct was completed.



5th District School, 18th and Holman Streets

*Courtesy Bob Webster*

This wider and longer span required the demolition of several homes.

In March 1924, the Shafer family announced plans for a new movie theater in the Peaselburg area. They already had two theaters nearby – the Victoria at 15<sup>th</sup> and Holman and the Delmar on Madison near 19<sup>th</sup>. Those two closed when the Shirley opened. The Shirley, named after their daughter, would be on the northwest corner of Holman and Hawthorne Streets and remained for many decades. In 2011, the original structure, with much of the original façade still intact, houses the Covington Baptist Temple. The Shafers also owned the Family Theater in the 600 block of Covington's Main Street.

Boxing matches became a huge draw in the 1930s and remained popular for a couple of decades, due in part to the tremendous success of two Peaselburg athletes. Art "the Flying Dutchman" Schultz and Frankie Palmo were regulars on local sports pages. In the 1950s it was softball. Several teams existed in and around town, mostly sponsored by local taverns. Klaene's, at 16<sup>th</sup> and Holman, and Wigglesworth Café, located on 21<sup>st</sup> Street, often boasted league winners. Also, the Covington Blues professional baseball team often played on the field between Euclid and Holman just north of 19<sup>th</sup> Street.

In early 1956, Reverend Morris H. Coers, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church at 20<sup>th</sup> and Greenup Streets, announced plans for the construction of a religious shrine. Soon after, a 2.5-acre plot of land

was purchased along Edgecliff Road on the western edge of old Peaselburg. Dedicated on Palm Sunday 1960, the Garden of Hope included a 45x22-foot replica of Jesus' tomb, a tall statue of Jesus replicating his Sermon of the Mount imported from Italy, a 30-foot cross and a carpenter's shop, all surrounded by beautiful gardens. For decades, local school children were given yearly tours and still today, visitors from all around the world enjoy the sacred oasis.

In the 1940s, Covington used federal funds to construct three housing projects for low-income families. Spearheading this endeavor was Newport native Brent Spence. A long-time politician who eventually served 16 consecutive terms in the U.S. House, rising to chairman of the banking committee, Spence was not only influential in public housing, but also helped bring to Northern Kentucky the Internal Revenue Service building at 4<sup>th</sup> and Russell Streets in Covington, what became the Northern Kentucky/ Greater Cincinnati International Airport in Boone County, and floodwalls in Covington, Newport, and Bellevue. Old Peaselburg became home to one of the three housing projects. A 366-unit complex with 1 to 4 bedroom apartments was constructed just east of the Hanser Homes subdivision overlooking Latonia. Originally named for Spence's wife Ida, the name of this complex was recently changed to City Heights.

By the mid 1950s, plans were underway for the construction of an interstate highway, to run north and south from Florida to Michigan. The proposed I-75 would run directly through Northern Kentucky and would cross the Ohio at Covington. Interchanges were built at 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Streets, 12<sup>th</sup>/Pike Streets, and in Peaselburg at Jefferson/Euclid Streets. This semi-cloverleaf became one of the most treacherous exits along the entire interstate route and by the mid 1980s, the roadway was redesigned and rerouted, and the Jefferson/Euclid Avenue interchange was removed. Part of the original plan for the Jefferson Avenue interchange was a two-level service station facility which would have filled the entire block north of 16<sup>th</sup> Street. With the Texaco Oil Company design, traffic coming off the interstate would flow onto a top tier of the service station and traffic entering from Euclid would be on a lower level. The plan made it past the city council and offers were made to home-

owners on 16<sup>th</sup>, Euclid and Jefferson. However, all residents were not on board and the proposal failed.<sup>33</sup>

Backed-up sewers and flooding were constant problems for the growing community from as early as the 1950s. Every spring, whenever more than an inch of rain fell over the city, many streets and basements were indulged with knee-deep water. Euclid, south from about 17<sup>th</sup> Street, as well as parts of 19<sup>th</sup> Street, took on the appearance of the old Willow Run Creek for hours until the inadequate sewers could successfully clear the water away. Discussions and plans came and went for more than 50 years before the sewer system throughout the area was refurbished.

By the early 1960s, Peaselburg had, for the most part, maxed out its space and there was little room left for new construction. However, in the early 1980s, plans were submitted and within the decade, new condominiums and housing was constructed on Benton Road, as well as on a redesigned Center Street and Benton Way. These luxury residences have wonderful views of Covington in the foreground with the Cincinnati skyline clearly visible in the distance.

In the early to mid 1900s, popular local businesses included Elizabeth Brue's grocery at 1924 Howell; George Rump's restaurant at 2001 Howell; Charles Nageleisen's restaurant at 2101 Howell; Fred Trenkamp's grocery at 2115 Howell; Bertha Rouse's confections, and later Carl Cunningham's deli at 2219 Howell; Herman Hoefker's meat market at 1634 Holman; Stein Hardware at 1738 Holman; Bernard Coby's drugstore at 1846 Holman; Meyers' restaurant at 213 West 19<sup>th</sup>; Wolfe's deli at 331 West 19<sup>th</sup>; Frank Gausepohl's restaurant at 335 West 19<sup>th</sup>; John Kampson's grocery at 2318 Warren; Tate Builders Supply at 19<sup>th</sup> and Russell; Brink's Hardware at 330 West 19<sup>th</sup>; Trenkamp's Dairy on Highland Avenue; Koenig Meats at 21<sup>st</sup> and Howell; Sun-Ray Dry Cleaners at 333 West 19<sup>th</sup>; Phillip Popp and Sons Florist at 1016 West 19<sup>th</sup>; and Behrens and Wachs Café on the northwest corner of 21<sup>st</sup> and Russell Streets.<sup>34</sup>

Even more successful businesses could be found in Peaselburg from the 1950s and later. In fact, just about any type of business could be

found without leaving Peaseburg. For groceries and general market items one could shop at Mullikin's Market at 24<sup>th</sup> and Warren; Frank's Grocery at 17<sup>th</sup> and May Streets (a shoe repair shop was located on the lower level of that building); Schulte's Market at 19<sup>th</sup> and Jefferson; Wagner's Market at 18<sup>th</sup> and Banklick; Burns Market (later Batchi's Carryout) at 18<sup>th</sup> and Jefferson; K Market at 16<sup>th</sup> and Holman; Henderson's Grocery at 16<sup>th</sup> and Woodburn; and Remke Market at 19<sup>th</sup> and Holman. This was the first location for Remke, who boasts a huge chain of stores named Remke-Biggs in 2011. Fine butchers included Schappert's on Woodburn; Remke; and Geiser's Meat Market at 16<sup>th</sup> and St. Clair. Geiser's also offered a fine variety of penny candy located in wooden bins against the wall. For lumber and hardware Peaseburgians had Stein's at 18<sup>th</sup> and Holman; Tate Building Supply at 19<sup>th</sup> and Russell; and Doppe Lumber on 22<sup>nd</sup> Street. Shoppers for medicines had their choice of Hartig's Drug Store at Linden and Holman Streets and Coby's Drug Store at 19<sup>th</sup> and Holman. Groger's Garage, in the 1500 block of May, could handle any car repairs, and Dr. Brueggeman, with offices at 19<sup>th</sup> and Jefferson, could easily handle any health emergencies. Other popular establishments included Jump's Variety Store at 21<sup>st</sup> and Howell; Clem Bush's Shoe Repair at 20<sup>th</sup> and Howell; Sillers Bakery; Deters Café at 21<sup>st</sup> and Howell; and Ralph Gunthers Store.

Peaseburg is home to the Schott-Unnewehr Boys and Girls Club, located on 26<sup>th</sup> Street just west of Madison Avenue. Formed in the early 1950s, the club had two earlier locations in Kenton County, but in 1972 moved into the newly constructed building in Peaseburg.

In the 1990s, Covington experienced a revised interest in its original neighborhoods. Walking tours were designed, brochures were printed, neighborhood organizations were formed, and in each district, a decorative work of art was erected as a tribute to those individual neighborhoods long forgotten. On October 28, 2000, the Peaseburg Mural was dedicated in a garden located within the traffic island at 19<sup>th</sup> and Jefferson Streets. The project was a collaboration of the Glen O. Swing Family Resource Center, the Friends of Peaseburg Neighborhood Association,

and the Covington Community Center. Dozens of volunteers worked on the project under the guidance of its artist, Pete Jacquish.<sup>35</sup>

In 2005, the old Fifth District School, which had sat vacant for nearly 30 years, reopened as luxury apartments. On July 4, 2006, immediately after the traditional Peaseburg 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade, a new park on the northeast corner of 16<sup>th</sup> and Euclid Streets was named for Lance Cpl. Justin Sims, a Peaseburg resident and Holmes graduate who had been killed while serving in Iraq just two months earlier.<sup>36</sup>

One can easily tell if a person is from Peaseburg if they refer to their hometown as simply "The Burg." Also, they know all about Cat Hill (the vacant land in between the homes on Euclid and Woodburn Streets, north of 18<sup>th</sup>). They would also be aware that the playfield in back of the homes on the east side of the 1600 block of Euclid is known as the Back Lot. Peaseburgians know that the Firefighter's Hall is not a long corridor firemen use to get to their fire trucks; that the quickest way to get home from Holmes High School is to hop the 3:40 north; that the "dungeon" refers to the area under the back stairs at Fifth District; that Twin Fair was not a festival for look-a-likes; and that you pronounce the church Saint Augustine (Ä gus 'tin) but the street name is (Au' gus teen)! A true citizen of "The Burg" would also know that if they needed emergency heating and cooling work they could call Doc Rusk - 431-forty-forty - night or day; that the hundreds of sewer lids all around Northern Kentucky with the name Klaene or Star Foundry on them refers to the Klaene Foundry on Russell Street; and that most of the black, wrought-iron fences that adorn the hundreds of front yards throughout the region came from Stewart Iron Works at 17<sup>th</sup> and Madison. Finally, people from "The Burg" know that "Pops" was not "your old man" but was the name of the hamburger joint next door to Fifth District School.

In 2011, Peaseburg is experiencing somewhat of a revitalization, due in part to the Friends of Peaseburg Neighborhood Organization. This group holds monthly meetings, open to the public, on the fourth Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Center for Great Neighborhoods, 1650 Russell

# A Look Back at The Headlines

An on-going feature reliving local headlines

This issue features:

The Covington Journal – November 20, 1875.

## Small Pox

“An item is going the rounds of our exchanges throughout the interior to the effect that the small-pox is prevailing to an alarming extent in Covington. The fact is, the disease does not prevail to an alarming extent by any means. The disease is currently confined nearly entirely to the Negroes and with the sanitary regulations now in place our people have no fear of its spread.”

## Unfounded Report

“In regard to the statement contained in one of the Cincinnati dailies two or three days since, to the effect that it was the intention of the owners of the Kentucky Central to remove the depot from Covington to Newport, we have the highest authority for saying the report has not the slightest foundation in fact.”

## Schedule for the Kentucky Central (going south)

	No. 1	No. 2	No. 7
Leaving Covington	7:00am	2:00pm	7:30pm
Arrive Canton	7:41am	2:40pm	8:40pm
Arrive Butler	8:19am	3:19pm	10:00pm
Arrive Falmouth	8:53am	3:50pm	11:00pm
Arrive Cynthiana	10:13am	5:10pm	1:20am
Arrive Paris	10:55am	5:55pm	2:45am
Arrive Lexington	11:45am	6:45pm	4:45am
Arrive Nicholasville	12:35pm	8:10pm	6:00am

## New Priests

At St. Mary’s Cathedral, this city, on Sunday morning last, Thomas S. Major and Adolphus Ennis were consecrated as priests in the Romas Catholic Church. Mr .Major is the son of Dr. Major, formerly of this city and now residing in Hamilton, Ohio.

Street. The neighborhood is now comprised of mostly hardworking middle-class residents and contains a variety of well-attended, older, brick, two-story homes, cottages, townhomes, and apartments.<sup>37</sup> Pride of ownership is evident and the neighborhood contains a wonderful mixture of cultural backgrounds, churches of many denominations, public and parochial schools, grocery stores, corner pubs, and industrial and commercial businesses.<sup>38</sup> Residents of old Peaselburg remain extremely proud of their heritage. In fact, many family names which were found in the region in the early 1800s remain in the neighborhood today.

1. 2011-2012 Resident Handbook, City of Covington, Kentucky, page 28
2. Various City Directories
3. Obituaries: George Howell, *Kentucky Post*, March 10, 1905, and Harry Howell, *Kentucky Post*, March 3, 1931
4. Geaslen, Chester, *Monks Toiled on Peaselburg Hills*, *Kentucky Post and Times-Star*, April 25, 1977, page 8a
5. Webster, Robert D., *Covington’s Monte Cassino*, *Northern Kentucky Heritage—Volume XIV, No. 1*, page 4
6. Ibid
7. Ibid
8. Ibid
9. Geaslen, Chester, *Monks Toiled on Peaselburg Hills*, *Kentucky Post and Times-Star*, April 25, 1977, page 8a
10. Ibid
11. Wessling, Jack, *Peaselburg*, *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky*, Tenkotte and Claypool, page 705
12. Ibid
13. Email interview with University of Kentucky Professor Harald Hoebusch, May 17, 2011
14. Email interview with Alan Leidner, University of Louisville, May 17, 2011
15. Email interview with Anna Grothaus, chair of the Department of German Language and Literature, The Ohio State University, May 18, 2011
16. On-line searches through two different translation websites found no similarly sounding or spelled words
17. *Talk of Incorporation*, *Ticket*, June 29, 1876, page 2
18. Central Covington, *Atlas of Boone, Kenton, and Campbell Counties, 1873*
19. Webster, Robert, *St. Augustine Church, Kenton County Historical Society Bulletin -- September/October 2008*
20. Ibid
21. *Education in Peaselburg*, *Ticket*, March 7, 1876, page 3, and *New Frame School*, *Ticket*, April 27, 1876, page 3
22. *School Completed*, *Ticket*, June 27, 1876, page 3
23. *Peaselburg*, *The Ticket*, July 6, 1876, page 3
24. Boh, John, *Cambridge Tile Manufacturing Company, Kenton County Historical Society Bulletin – Nov./Dec. 2009*
25. *Peaselburg*, *Ticket*, July 1, 1876, page 3
26. Information found in various *Ticket* articles including January 23, 1877, February 12, 1877, and January 25, 1883
27. Reis, Jim, *Kentucky Post*, July 9, 1984, page 9k
28. Schroeder, Cindy, *104-year-old school gets new life*, *Kentucky Enquirer*, October 6, 2005, pages 1a and 8a
29. Norheim, Betty Lee, *Echoes of the Past – A History of the Covington Public School System*, pages 127-133
30. Sweeney, Michael, *Donaldson Art Sign Company*, *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky*, Tenkotte and Claypool, page 278
31. *Donaldson Art Sign Company building in Peaselburg*, *Kentucky Times-Star*, August 9, 1914, page 1
32. Various articles from 1910 to 1931 mention the proposed viaduct at both 19<sup>th</sup> Street and 20<sup>th</sup> Street
33. Details from the memory of this author, who lived at 16<sup>th</sup> and Euclid Streets and sat in on these meetings
34. Various City Directories for Covington, Kentucky listing by street address.
35. *Peaselburg Mural Dedicated*, *Kentucky Enquirer*, October 27, 2000, page B1
36. Croyle, William, *Park named for Marine*, *Kentucky Enquirer*, July 5, 2006, page C1
37. 2011-2012 Resident Handbook, City of Covington, Kentucky, page 28
38. Ibid

## Then and Now



The railroad underpass at James Ave. near Lloyd's Skating Rink in Latonia. The left image shows that the original tunnel was strictly for streetcar passage, while the image on the right shows the current automobile roadway.

Left photo courtesy Kenton County Public Library. Right photo courtesy Karl Lietzenmayer.

## Mystery Photo

Can you identify the mystery photo below? The answer can be found at the bottom of the page.



**ANSWER:**

Replica of Jesus' tomb at Covington's Garden of Home on Edgecliff Road.

photo courtesy Bob Webster

# Kenton County Historical Society

January/February - 2012

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## I Bet You Didn't Know

*Tidbits from Kentucky's heritage  
for every day of the calendar year*

January 8, 1815: Gen. Andrew Jackson and 5,500 Kentuckians defeated the British at the Battle of New Orleans.

January 12, 1902: The St. Louis *Post Dispatch* announced that Kentuckian Nathan Stubblefield had invented a telephone that did not require any wires.

January 30, 1900: In Frankfort, Northern KY resident William Goebel was shot by an assassin while approaching the Capitol to learn he had been elected governor. He died on February 3rd. His Lt. Governor, J.C.W. Beckham, became the 4th person to hold the office of governor within a 2-month period. Beckham would serve over seven years.

*"On This Day In Kentucky" — Robert Powell*

## Programs and Notices

### Cincinnati Belle Riverboat Excursion

It's not too late to make reservations for our January 21st excursion marking the 75th anniversary of the 1937 Ohio River Flood. The boat, which can hold several hundred, will depart from Newport and travel to Rabbit Hash and back. Breakfast and dinner will be served onboard, with lunch at Rabbit Hash. Enjoy lectures, videos, oral histories, photographs, and river music. \$120 for adults; \$65.00 for children 4-12 years of age; children under 4 free. Contact John Boh for further information: 491-0490

### SAVE THE DATE — 2012 History Day Announced

Northern Kentucky University will once again host History Day, by far the major event of the year for those interested in local history. Save the date of Saturday March 17th. The opening speaker will be Dr. James Ramage, Civil War historian, who will present on Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati defenses in the Civil War. Session presenters include: Don Rightmyer, on Kentuckian Robert Anderson in the Civil War; Mike Williams, on Newport Vice; Robert Webster, on the Beverly Hills Supper Club; and many others. There will be over 25 display booths manned by various local history societies and other organizations from the entire region. As usual, we will also have breakfast pastries and drinks, as well as many wonderful door prizes. Please contact John Boh at (859) 491-0490 for further information and to be added to the mailing list.

### Ludlow Heritage Society

In 2010, a meeting was held in Ludlow to ascertain if there was significant interest in creating an historical society. Indeed there was — and now the society has opened its own museum. The society headquarters and the Ludlow Heritage Museum are located at 227 Elm Street, in the former city building. Decades of collecting by several generous donors have resulted in displays that both educate and fascinate. The railroad; the Ludlow Lagoon Amusement Park; organizations and businesses; churches and schools...all are documented in the collections. Other features include the "Wall of Fame" and memorabilia from the movie "Lost in Yonkers" which was filmed here in 1992. Another area houses our local history/genealogy room. Maps, family surname files, genealogy books and guides, scrapbooks, photographs, newspapers and much more are available here for research. We invite you to visit or join us. The museum hours are 12 to 4pm on Saturdays; adults \$3 and children \$1. Annual society memberships allow free access to the museum and are \$20 for an individual and \$40 for family. More information is available at the Ludlow Heritage Museum site on Facebook or at [www.historicludlow.org](http://www.historicludlow.org).