



Bulletin of the Kenton County Historical Society

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Never Before or Since;
Memories of the 1937 Flood

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John Boh

January 1937 saw a record of over 13 1/2 inches of rain. On "Black Sunday," January 24th, it rained 2 1/2 inches. The river crested at "79.99" feet by Tuesday. The 1937 Flood cut off electricity and water mains downtown - and this time also to hilltop suburbs! Rescue workers searching for victims trapped on upper floors struck yard fences and evaded utility wires and floating debris. In frigid rain, victims stepped, or were lifted out of windows into boats bobbing in filthy icy water. The 1937 Flood put the river towns of Silver Grove, Melbourne, Brent and Rabbit Hash completely under water. The "Thousand Year Flood" has highlighted many family histories and scrapbooks across generations ever since.

Before 1937, the worst flood years had been 1884, cresting at 71.1 feet; and 1913. In January 1913, the river reached 62.2 feet and again in March-April 1913, it crested at 69.9 feet (covering 90 city blocks in Newport).¹

While there for FDR's inauguration on January 20, 1937 some leaders from river communities made contacts in Washington. It was just days before "Black Sunday." FDR soon declared an emergency during the greatest natural disaster in the century.²

Conservation & Control after the Flood

Levees and dams were not enough! Long advocated were reservoirs up-river on tributaries and reforestation to suppress flooding.³ The 1937 Flood then reinforced sentiment for national funding to prevent destructive water runoff. However, major flood control projects were delayed by WWII.

The 1947 flood (69.2 feet) gave renewed purpose. 200 in Campbell and 500 in Kenton County were made homeless. The Corps of Engineers then went to work. Along the Licking and Ohio Rivers the Corps at Newport completed 1.5 miles of levee

and 1,500 feet of concrete wall and "2,500 feet of cellular steel sheet piling wall" (three pumping stations) in 1951. The Corps at Covington completed 1.8 miles of earthen levee and 1.1 miles of concrete wall, ten pumping stations, eight traffic openings in 1955. The new walls and earthen levees shielded main sections of Covington and Newport, but the 1964 flood (66.2 feet) still damaged 470 homes in Kenton County, 1,415 homes in Campbell and covered maybe 75 per cent of Falmouth (500-660 families evacuated). California, Kentucky was inundated. In Dayton, water reached up past 4th Street. Thereafter, the Corps finally built 8,170 feet of levee (with two pumping stations) finished in 1986 at Dayton.⁴ The Licking River flood of 1997 devastated Falmouth. It recalled earlier advocacy for upstream dam construction.⁵

Floodwalls and earthen levees unfortunately impose a physical barrier closing easy access to the river. They diminished the civic value of rivers in community planning. Rather than floodwalls, at the riverfront, Cincinnati cleared away blocks of buildings up the hill to 3rd Street. Architectural engineering will protect residential, commercial and sports arena structures. And Cincinnati still could count \$3.5 billion spent on reservoirs, levees, flood walls and dams since 1937.⁶

Extreme Weather Unforeseen

Sad, if not comical, were the river level predictions voiced from January 18th to the 25th by Cincinnati meteorologist W. D. Devereaux. According to David Welky (in his recent book) capabilities were quite backward. Striving for authenticity the daily predictions were still most often wrong with quick revisions to follow.⁷ At 52 feet on Monday, January 18, 1937, the *Kentucky Post* reported the weather station's prediction of 58-59 feet by Thursday; Tuesday, not above 60 feet; Wednesday a crest of 60-61 feet; on Thursday, it might pass 66 feet; at 70.6 feet and



Above: A view of the 1937 flood in Covington, on Third Street at Court Street looking north..
On the cover: Aerial view of Covington. (note the Suspension Bridge in the lower left corner.

Both photos courtesy the Kenton County Public Library Archives.

rising fast on Friday, 72 feet predicted maybe “tonight”; on Saturday (January 23), 73 ½ by Sunday. On “Back Sunday” workers had labored through a “Night of Terror”; Monday (January 25) it reached toward 80 feet. On Tuesday, finally the river was “stationary.”⁸

Toward Unbelievable

The river was seen dropping on Saturday, January 16, 1937, just after a flood alert. Then surprisingly on Monday, January 18 there was indeed a “flood” (52 feet), with streets under water. 54 feet would close the 4th Street Bridge; over 55 feet would close Crescent and 3rd Street blocking streetcars; commuters would be shuttled by bus from Pike and Main to Ludlow. Relocation in the West End of Newport was underway. Campbell County and Kenton County Red Cross and Disaster Committees were meeting with public officials. Covington’s Director of Public Works by Tuesday, January 19 had removed eleven families from the 3rd and Crescent area. “Early today” water reached into basements on Riverside Drive. The Tri-State Warehouse (Russell at Riv-

erfront) removed 20,000 pounds of tobacco to the Kenton Loose Leaf Warehouse.

In Newport about 40 city squares were under water. Residents moved to upper floors or evacuated. The 4th Street Bridge was cut off. The Newport Fire Chief had equipped the department with boats with extinguishers and other equipment. In Dayton, 50 or 60 families would be moving out. In Silver Grove, 5 more families evacuated. The Ft. Thomas Army Post, the volunteer fire department, the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars were cooperating. Relief agencies were working overtime.

On Wednesday, in Covington, the possibility of 60 feet threatened 3rd and Main. Four more West End families had evacuated. Nearby, the Montgomery Coal Company had relocated stockpiles to its 20th Street yard. The forecast now was 60 to 61 feet.

Newport suffered the most. By January 20th about 40 city blocks were flooded; about 600 had moved to upper floors and over 200 had evacuated.

The Red Cross, American Legion and Boy Scouts were in emergency mode. To prepare for flooding the Newport Rolling Mill laid off about 1,500 temporarily. Water covered several blocks of 3rd and 4th streets in Dayton; at California, Kentucky, 40 families would evacuate.

In Covington by Thursday, January 21st, 78 families had evacuated. More furniture storage was needed. The Red Cross, American Legion, Boy Scouts, WPA, police, and fire personnel did relief work. In Ludlow, 20 families evacuated. Bromley was isolated and one-third covered. Overflowing Banklick Creek cut off Route 17. Covered were the Visalia-Morning View road, and the Twin Oaks Country Club. High water closed off the Central Bridge, causing streetcars to pass through Covington.

On January 21st, in Newport, as waters rose, fire and police personnel, Red Cross volunteers, American Legion helpers and public works employees embarked on a night time search in pitch-black over the many city blocks, exposing themselves to drowning and other dangers, searching, finding and rescuing many persons trapped inside buildings.⁹

Though on higher ground, floodwaters finally reached into the city of Bellevue at the intersections of Washington and Eden and Patchen and Eden. It already covered 35 city squares in Dayton. Surrounding water isolated Silver Grove. By Friday January 22nd, all street car service was ended. Speers, Booth, and St Elizabeth hospitals had water in basements.

On early Saturday, February 23rd, the main boiler still worked for 250 patients at St. Elizabeth. In the Booth Hospital basement, despite pumping, the water was 15 inches high. A ferry from Ludlow supplied food and coal to Bromley. A flatboat from 5th and Philadelphia in Covington supplied isolated homes high above Western and Crescent Avenues. Basements were flooded up to 7th Street and Madison Avenue. Judge Goodenough sentenced some homeless men to jail in order to keep them off the streets. Persons who had not left forwarding addresses could pick up mail. Hotels, lodges and Booth Hospital provided temporary shelter. The CCC from Walton, riding in army trucks, relieved workers after very long

hours in Ludlow, before "Black Sunday." The C & O Railroad shuttled passengers between Cincinnati and Dayton, Kentucky. Electric service was still on. Piled sandbags bulwarked the ramp entrance on to the Suspension Bridge.

A Tremendous Relief Effort

On "Black Sunday," January 24th in Cincinnati, a mammoth fire from dislodged storage tank fuel in Camp Washington caused millions in damage. The day after, headlines for Northern Kentucky included: "Floating Homes Hamper Relief Workers"; businesses were ordered closed; church services cancelled; water mains were off and water rationed; coal supply and telephone service okay outside flooded areas; lighting and transportation limited. St. Elizabeth Hospital remained in operation as a public works steam road roller pumped heat into the maternity ward where three babies were delivered.

A heroic rescue in the dark occurred at a residence on Riverside Drive in Newport. In Covington, police were cruising in 20 boats each manned by an officer and a volunteer citizen. Officials warned of surface oil and gasoline catching fire. Seven truckloads of clothes were hauled to the city garage at 16th and Russell, and the Red Cross received \$500 in donations.

On Monday Newport Mayor Joseph G. Herrmann declared a state of emergency. Inundated were 105 city blocks and 2,532 homes. Dayton suffered a higher percentage of refugees than Newport, 7,000 out of 10,000.

On Tuesday, January 26th, the river was finally stationary, restoring calm. A front page photo depicted a barge nestled between the stack of the Covington incinerator and the Martin Foundry (4th Street and Main). There were few lights on except for public service work. The Dixie Highway route south was open. FDR promised help to Congressman Brent Spence. City employees, WPA workers, volunteers, CCC boys, the National Guard, Boy Scouts, Red Cross and Salvation Army plodded on. Martial law was considered for Covington if President Roosevelt would authorize sending troops. There was no outbreak of disease. Citizens were urged to conserve wa-

ter. City Solicitor Ralph Rich was policing Suspension Bridge traffic. The sandbag dykes protecting the ramp looked precarious.¹⁰

Public Health

Louisville claimed 130 deaths from the flood. Northern Kentucky had none recorded from drowning, but some from indirect causes (exposure, colds, pneumonia and extreme fatigue). For personal hygiene, Dr. Murray Rich ("committee of physicians") advised: Boil drinking water 10 minutes; throw away any once-submerged canned food; wash fruits and vegetables in boiled water or water conditioned with chloride of lime; all milk to be boiled; isolate soiled clothes and linen from sick people until washed; treat toilets with chloride of lime or cresol before flushing; workers should wash hands in contact with flood water.

For public hygiene: Vaccination for typhoid; for influenza protection avoid forming into groups; clean, dry out and heat before resettling at home; sweep away dirt and floodwater with a broom; remove loose wallpaper; scrub floors and walls with soap and water; fumigation and antiseptic cleansing is inadequate; and dissolve chloride of lime for sterilizing water. Locations, days and hours for inoculation were announced by County Health Officer H. Clay White: St. Benedict School, Lloyd High School, Elsmere School, Latonia Public School, Latonia Firehouse, Blessed Sacrament School, St. Aloysius School, Tenth District School (Latonia), 11th District School, (West Covington), Park Hills School, and St. John's Orphanage.

In Campbell County, Lambert Hehl and John B. Nichols coordinated Red Cross activities handling huge amounts of detail work along with about 800 volunteers. Nickels, a department manager for Wadsworth Watch Case Company, Dayton, guided relief work outside Newport.¹¹ Hehl, the chairman of the chapter's Disaster Committee, personified public service. He had survived a severe leg wound in WWI. In 1937, as the American Legion service officer, he opened the first soup kitchen and also a refugee shelter on Legion premises. Four years later, in 1941 after Pearl Harbor, Hehl served on a hastily organized Defense Council.¹¹

National-to-Local Relief

The Red Cross established a reputation for handling flood relief: The Johnstown Flood (1889), the 1913 Ohio River Valley flooding and the 1927 Mississippi River Flood. As warnings intensified in January 1937, the Red Cross from Washington headquarters directed hundreds of branches to prepare. Nurses packed their bags for duty. In Washington, Malinde Havey, director of public health nursing, oversaw 15,000 professionals. She gave orders, exacted discipline, but granted sufficient autonomy at the local level. By January 23rd, the Red Cross already sheltered 300,000 refugees before multiplying. In Cincinnati, it opened seven kitchens for tens of thousands of refugees. The Coast Guard had lent the Red Cross surf boats.

Black Sunday (January 24th) had turned a major flood into a nightmare. Emergency orders from Washington authorized WPA crews to break the rules. Not restricted to public facilities, they cleaned up private property given the urgency of public health. A couple thousand WPA workers soon grew, a few days later, to tens of thousands. WPA and 20,000 CCC workers reinforced levees, evacuated refugees, brought in potable water and other emergency supplies, safeguarded utility structures and repaired roads. WPA and CCC workers removed displaced buildings, disposed of mountains of debris, mud, dead animals and wreckage into nearby rivers, trucked garbage to new landfills, repaired sewers and roads, and dried out public and library archives.

On the other hand, funds from private donations more easily justified the Red Cross processing requests, then dispensing money and materials to meet the needs of individuals. On January 23rd, Red Cross Chairman Cary T. Grayson announced a fundraising goal of \$2 million; two days later, it was \$5 million; the next day \$10 million. Effective widespread publicity eased appeals to civic and business groups and leaders at the local level.

The Red Cross, as noted by Welky, handled the bulk of 1937 flood relief under the spotlight of media and local officials. The Red Cross provided food and shelter to one million Americans. Generally efficient and fluid, it handled an overwhelming disaster. The

Public Health Service shipped vaccines, serums and other items for Red Cross nurses and doctors to administer in refugee camps preventing epidemics of typhoid, influenza and pneumonia.

In Cincinnati, the relief officials worked in unison. The city manager secured rescue boats from Cleveland. A temporary Red Cross central headquarters in the Union Central Life Insurance Building (lent by the company president) became a warehouse, rescue workers retreat, a communications and financial center. Workers coordinated deliveries of food, clothing and bedding from the Federal Commodities Corporations to supply the city's 50,000 refugees. Half of the Red Cross's 1,500 refugee camps were in Kentucky; one-third of 300 field hospitals. A refugee camp might be a cathedral, Masonic temple, or any large space.¹³

Local Red Cross

In 1937, the Executive Secretary of the Kenton County Chapter, American Red Cross was Lucy Tranter Hume. The daughter of the late, former Vice President of the Mitchell-Tranter Steel Company (3rd and Philadelphia streets at the river), she had started there some five years before the Flood when the chapter had 1200 members; three years after the Flood while gearing up for WWII it had 6,789. Harry MacKoy, Chairman of the Red Cross Advisory Committee in Kenton County, was quoted in a newspaper editorial on Tuesday, February 2nd. The WPA works on public property; or in an emergency to prevent pestilence on private property.¹⁴

Heroism - Covington Pumping Station

Without water for four days, Elsmere, Erlanger, Florence, Crescent Springs, Arcadia [sic], Lakeside Park, and Ft. Mitchell were waiting for restoration of service (maybe eight days away). South on the Dixie Highway, far from the pumping station, Covington was attempting (January 30th) to pump water out of an artisan well on the property of Joseph Kuchle. Utilities service officials and workers suffered stressful days at power stations up and down the river. In Louisville, to forestall shutoff, Gas and Electric workers sandbagged the power station. A flooded pump station and hoarding limited the water supply there.¹⁵ On February 3rd, the *Kentucky Post* profiled

the situation at the Covington pump station as relayed by workers and an equipment engineer.

As flood waters had crept up ominously at the pumping station below Ft. Thomas, heroes Hobart and Earl Hale, and Stanley Groger, were pumping out the dry well. Trying to manipulate a gas pump in the boat they were dumped and weighted down by water-logged clothes and boots. One reached a wall ladder. John Kingsley threw a life line to help the men who climbed 30 feet up and out.

Around-the-clock for three days, waterworks superintendent John Kingsley had supervised two shifts of nine men. The well extended four feet below the rock bottom of the river. A tunnel housed an intake pipe from the river for pumping water to Ft. Thomas and into Covington's own reservoir. To keep the pumps going, workers had kept seeping water out. They erected a barrier wall at the entry door to window sill level. At 76.7 feet, water reaching a transformer shut down the pumping. Water rose to the window sill. A crane lifted a 1000 horsepower motor to the ceiling, but not high enough. The men abandoned the pump station. Water now would continue to be rationed until pumps started back up on February 8th. An estimated 1.9 million gallons of water had been used of an estimated 39.7 million gallons on hand the previous day. WPA and city workers were doing repairs. They were still pumping out the dry well. Electricians were installing ovens. It took 70 hours to bake six immense transformers dry.¹⁶

A Stationary, Then Receding River

The newspaper on January 27th printed this: HELP THE RED CROSS! Mail checks to the Kenton County Chapter, K of C. Hall, Covington; the Campbell County Chapter, American Legion Hall, Newport.

With the river stationary, 105 city blocks and 2,532 homes were affected in Newport. Bellevue requested \$300,000 through Brent Spence and Alben Barkley to replace 300 houses. Falmouth had 500 refugees. 2000 WPA men, 1000 for each county, were ready on January 28th for cleaning and rehabilitation work in support of the Red Cross and municipal officials.

The Knights of Columbus in Covington, on January 29th, were feeding hundreds of refugees meals cooked in the St. Joseph Parochial School basement (Bush and Scott Streets). In fact the Red Cross had taken over the K of C's own Hall, using candlelight. The Salvation Army and Booth Hospital were sheltering 100 and serving sandwiches and coffee to National Guardsmen, Federal Troops, Red Cross and others along the waterfront.

Ludlow was seeking \$50,000 in relief through Congressman Spence and Governor Chandler. Ft Thomas was providing shelter for refugees from nearby cities. The cleanup was beginning. On January 30th, Covington was predicting restoration of water service in a week.

On February 1st, Covington public works director Ben Vastine was overseeing 200 WPA and 150 city workers cleaning streets. The closing of the soup kitchen in the Sheriff's Office at City Hall was announced. The Fire Chief warned to have gas pipes inspected before striking matches. Electrical substations in Covington (Madison Avenue) and in Newport were expected to start up very soon. The newspaper reported on February 2nd that a rumble had frightened children away on Philadelphia Street between 8th and 9th. A section of street pavement had been undermined by the backwaters of Willow Run Creek and had dropped more than 25 feet. As recommended by City Manager Kluemper, eight families were evacuated by the Red Cross.

Scattered, Filthy, Wreckage, Debris

A landscape of horrors was seen by *Kentucky Post* reporters when touring the area over several days: Dwellings and other buildings upturned, overturned, jammed, uprooted, caved in and undermined by flood waters. Lapping water discarded strewn bottles, cans of food and boxes at the water's edge. In Covington green cottages from the nearby Rosedale Park and Y. M. C. A. camps were overturned; a golf caddy's shack displaced; a home afloat on its eaves in Banklick Creek not far from the Decoursey Pike bridge; a log cabin half submerged; a one story frame grasped by partially submerged trees at the east end of Southern Avenue. With the water level (February 2) receding, a porch roof had landed on two sheds on

East 16th; a mud-caked Ford Coupe auto nearby; a twin garage overturned; only the tip of a two story structure visible on Thomas Street between 16th and 17th; a floating small ice house from the Rice Packing Company on Eastern Avenue blocked by the 15th Street Bridge; two homes changed addresses east end of 16th; seven garages, three sheds displaced; a shed from a brickyard eight blocks away.

Two houses in the 400 block of 11th Street were uplifted from foundations; the greatest devastation seemingly near Willow Run Creek and the river, at Russell, Johnson, Main, Philadelphia and Crescent Streets; a two-story brick house northeast corner of 2nd and Johnson caved in; debris caught in webs of front fences, trees and telephone poles; a shed had rammed a porch knocking away support pillars at 312 Johnson; two houses floating, 600 block of West 3rd; a three stall garage blocking Pike Street near the Bavarian Brewery.

In Bromley, 15 to 20 homes were dislodged and at least seven carried away; houses removed from foundations and overturned and others dislodged near Pike and Main. In Ludlow a home resting in the street at Elm and Deverill as did one at the foot of Kemper; another jammed against the Trumbull Electric Manufacturing Company at 424 Hooper Street; many garages and small buildings dislodged, some floated elsewhere. The *Kentucky Post* reported on February 3rd that rationing in Covington would continue at least to next Monday when it was hoped that city water would be back running. A very big headline on February 4th concerned the expected arrival and tour of the devastation by Governor Chandler.¹⁷

The Green Line - Buses Help Out

A *Kentucky Post* editorial intoned on February 2nd that the Green Line now had buses. After the flood cleanup, passengers will be expecting speedier more convenient service. According to a history of the Green Line, it had operated buses the very first time in 1936, shuttling riders during construction of a railroad underpass on Monmouth Street. Now the flood had provided the Green Line system an opportunity to acquire buses from local independent bus companies at a good price for future expansion of motor bus service.



Covington's Fifth Street, looking west toward Russell

Courtesy Kenton County Public Library

For a time, the Green Line shuttled Northern Kentucky riders between 4th Street and Cincinnati over the Suspension Bridge. On January 23rd it was discontinued. The bridge was reserved for emergency vehicles, trucks hauling relief supplies, and trucks taking electrical generators to Louisville hospitals.

The river was receding to below flood stage. On February 4th, temporary bus shuttle service operated again and by February 9th most Covington streetcar service was restored over the Suspension Bridge except for the Greenup, Eastern and Ludlow routes. By early March, Ludlow had a connection; by April 26, reduced streetcar service was operating for the Greenup and Eastern Avenue routes.

In Newport, 68 streetcars had been stranded; the car barn and shops at the Licking River had been eight feet under water. By February 9th, most of the Newport Division's bus and streetcar lines were back operating. The Dayton and Bellevue lines had greater damage. In late February, some bus service was available on Fairfield Avenue in Bellevue into Dayton.¹⁸

Aftermath - Business and Politics

On February 1st, the river stood at a previous record level (around 70 feet). By February 5th it was below 52 feet. The *Kentucky Post* on February 6th proposed that after the recent ten day closing of stores (furlough) a trip downtown for needed supplies might rejuvenate spirits. An advertisement for the Covington Buick Company (620 Scott) announced reopening on Monday of sales lots with new 1937 Buicks on display. Most schools would reopen Monday.

Aid to the homeless was urgent. Governor Chandler expected to meet with President Roosevelt seeking financial assistance. Delegations from Covington, Newport and Dayton met with Chandler in Washington talking about a vast system of barracks for the homeless. Local officials speculated about abandoning the bottoms of Newport and Covington, covered with wrecked housing.¹⁹

The Covington Retail Merchants on February 11th were urged to lead in the cleanup process, to donate or discount supplies and to lend extra assistance.

Senator Alben Barkley cosponsored a bill to establish seven regional authorities to coordinate with the existing TVA for a comprehensive flood control program

Newspaper Counts

Since the 1937 Flood 75 years ago, only one death from drowning in Cincinnati had been the given number. Then a recent claim by the family of a second victim and a search of the three major newspapers, have since raised the total of drowning victims to at least six. Of four stranded black residents, two elderly persons drowned when a boat overturned during a rescue attempt by two volunteers from a Catholic Youth Organization. The newspapers had not kept a running count of drowning victims; that was certainly true for remote African American victims. The flood started January 18th and ended February 5th when the water level receded below the 52 foot flood stage.²⁰

1. See Jennifer Gregory, "Flood of 1937," *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky*, edited by Paul A. Tenkotte and James C. Claypool, The University Press of Kentucky, 2009, pp. 345-347; see "Flood of 1884," p. 345; Jim Reis, "High Points, Records Show Ohio River Threatened the Shorelines of Northern Kentucky Cities on More than One Occasion," *K P*, January 26, 1987, p. 4 K.

2. January-February 2012 marked the 75th anniversary of the 1937 Flood. On January 21, passengers cruised to Rabbit Hash and back on the *Belle of Cincinnati*; in 2012 public libraries and others are collecting more photos and documents and doing oral history interviews; the Behringer Crawford Museum is presenting an exhibit on "floods." A commemorative cruise in 1987 had immediately preceded the first Tall Stacks and Cincinnati Bicentennial celebration, recalled Don Clare of the Rabbit Hash Historical Society; the 50th anniversary inspired much more research according to Rick Bell, author of *The Great Flood of 1937: Rising Waters – Soaring Spirit*, Louisville Kentucky (2007)

3. See a recent, thorough retrospective by St. Louis native, and associate professor of history; David Welky, *The Thousand-Year Flood: The Ohio-Mississippi Disaster of 1937*, Chicago: the University of Chicago Press, 2011, pp 12-36

4. Charles E. Parrish, "Flood Control," *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky*, p. 345

5. Flood stage benchmarks: forty-five feet (1873-1898); fifty feet (1899-1922); and 52 feet (since April 1922); Jim Reis, "High Points, Records Show Ohio River Threatened the Shorelines of Northern Kentucky Cities On More Than One Occasion," *K P*, January 26, 1987, p. 4 K.; Jim Reis, "Flood of 1964 rivaled that of 1937," *KP*, January 9, 1989, p. 4K

6. Dan Hurley, a presentation on the 1937 Flood, January 21, 2012; Cameron McWhirter, "The Flood of 1937 60 Years Later-Winter of Misery," *Cincinnati Enquirer*, January 23, 1997, pp. A1, A4; Steve Kemme, "Cincinnati is Not Flood-Proof Despite Billion-Dollar projects," *Cincinnati Enquirer*, January 25, 1987, pp. A-1, A-4

7. David Welky, *The Thousand-Year Flood*, pp. 63-65

8. *K P*, January 18-23, 25

9. Thomas L. Purvis, editor, *Newport, Kentucky: A Bicentennial History*, Newport, Kentucky: 1996, p. 217

10. (*Kentucky Post* - no edition on Sundays); *KP*, January 16-23, 25, 1937; Thomas L. Purvis, editor, *Newport, Kentucky: A Bicentennial History*, p. 217; *KP*, January 26, 1937

11. Bill Hagedorn, "Flood Relief Leaders Were Taught Their Lesson During 1937 Disaster," *KP*, April 26, 1940, p. 9

12. *KP*, January 30, February 2; a Covington physician for 30 years. Dr. Murray Rich and City Solicitor Ralph Rich were brothers. Ralph later served as City Manager (1958, interim, and 1960-62, 1964-66; see city directories.

In 1928 Dr. White was appointed to head Kenton County's first full time health office for nursing and dental services to indigents and school children; from John Boh, "Kenton County's First Full Time Health Officer: Dr. H. Clay White (1873-1957), KCHS "Review," November 1993.

From 1942 Hehl (Sr.) was elected to six four-year terms as Campbell County tax commissioner; in WWII Lambert Jr. was a marine legal clerk in the Pacific and later elected County Judge and District Court Judge; see Purvis, *Newport, Kentucky: A Bicentennial History*, pp. 193-194, 211-216, 231, 233; Janice Mueller, "Lambert Hehl, Sr.," *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky*, pp. 439, 440

13. Welky, *The Thousand-Year Flood*, pp. 72-77, 88-93, 174-177

14. Margaret Annim, "Woman of the Week": "Forceful - in a Gentle Sort of Way Is Kenton County Red Cross Aid," *K P*, November 15, 1940, pp. 1, 17; "Lucy Tranter Hume, 90, member of DAR, worked with Red Cross," *KP*, March 26, 1986, p. 3B; by 1873 John Mitchell, James Tranter and others had purchased factory property at 3rd Street down to the river, to operate "one of the biggest rolling mills in the west"; from *Covington Journal* March 22, 1873; when he died in 1899 James Tranter had been negotiating a sale; his factory became Republic Steel in operation there for some seven years; from John Boh, "Notes on Covington's West End," KCHS "Review," March 1992. Harry B. MacKoy, grandson of John MacKoy, elected in 1834 to the first Covington city council after incorporation; Charles F. Goss, *Cincinnati, the Queen City*, vol. IV, 1912,

15. David Welky, *The Thousand-Year Flood*, p. 84

16. *KP*, January 30, February 3; John T. Kingsley and wife Cora, residence, Ft. Thomas, at the West End of Tower Place near Covington City Water Works Filtration Plant - Newport and vicinity street directory 1938-39

17. January 27-30, February 1

18. *KP*, February 2; Terry W. Lehmann and Earl W. Clark, Jr., *The Green Line – The Cincinnati, Newport & Covington Railway*, Chicago: Central Electric Railfans' Association, 2000, pp. 99, 100, 103-109

19. *KP*, February 6, 11.

H. A. Knollman, Mayor of Covington (1936 to 1940), elected state representative in 1917; long service on Covington Municipal Housing Commission before death; "Knollman Is Candidate," *KP*, June 7, 1919, p. 4; "Ex-Mayor Knollman dies at 92," *KP*, October 15, 1968, p. 1.

City Manager Theodore Kluemper (1866-1946); friend of Brent Spence; "Old Grey Eagle" appointed city manager in 1934 serving six years before losing it and retiring at age 73; see Jim Reis, "Man's Heroic moment: Public servant thwarted robbers," *KP*, July 29, 1995, p. 4K; Carol Elsener Rekow, "Kluemper, Theodore," *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky*, pp. 521, 522

Benjamin M. Vastine (Frances), Director, Department Public Works, residence 515 West 5th, 1936-37 city directory; partner & treasurer for construction companies (232 West 6th Street), Superintendent Covington & Cincinnati Cities Bridge Corporation, 1931-32 directory

20. Cliff Radel, "75 years later, Flood Toll Corrected," *Kentucky Enquirer*, February 3, 2012, pp. A1, A12

A Look Back at The Headlines

An on-going feature reliving local headlines

This issue features:

The Covington Journal – September 3, 1870.

Local News

The public schools of Covington will re-open Monday next, September 5th.

Madison Street, between 11th and 12th, is to be paved.

Some fifteen to twenty Sunday school teachers of this city left Tuesday for Bowling Green, for the purpose of attending the State Teachers Convention at that place.

Mayor Howard has appointed the Honorable John G. Carlisle, James Spilman, and James Casey to represent the city of Covington at the Southern Commercial Convention being held in Cincinnati on October 4th of this year.

Mr. McVeane, of Grant's Bend in this county, sowed this season, on half an acre, seven and a half pounds of Norway oats, which yielded twenty-four bushels and three pecks. The oats were cultivated in the ordinary way.

The base ball mania seems to have taken complete possession of the youth of our city. Hundreds of them repair to the commons on the south of the city each Sunday afternoon to indulge in their favorite pastime.

The attendance at the North Kentucky Agricultural Society, during the week just closing, has been fully up to that of any previous year. The show of horses on Wednesday was hardly up to the standard, but with that one exception, the exhibition has been equal to if not superior to any other year.

Letters to the Editor

Many letters and telephone calls were received from readers regarding the most recent Bulletin and the article on Peaselburg — each expressing great praise and congratulations. One from Paul Clark is a great example. We greatly appreciate everyone who took the time to comment.

Dear Robert,

My copy of the Kenton County Historical Society Bulletin arrived today with your wonderful article on Peaselburg. First of all, my sincere congratulations on a wonderful slice of micro-history. I haven't the slightest criticism of your work; it is a gem!

Having spent my 2nd through 5th grade years at 332 West 21st Street, and my high school years at 1725 Woodburn Avenue, I played on 'Cat hill' and worked at Hoefker's Meat Market (John Hoefker, the son of Herman was a fighter ace with 81.2 kills in WWII). I found your article hauntingly touching.

Karl Lietzenmayer and I are friends since college and my KCHS subscription is largely due to him and his work. A resident of California since 1973, your Bulletin is my principal connection to Northern Kentucky. I enjoy it always, but never expected an article on Peaselburg. Despite your debunking the goose dropping legend, I again congratulate and thank you.

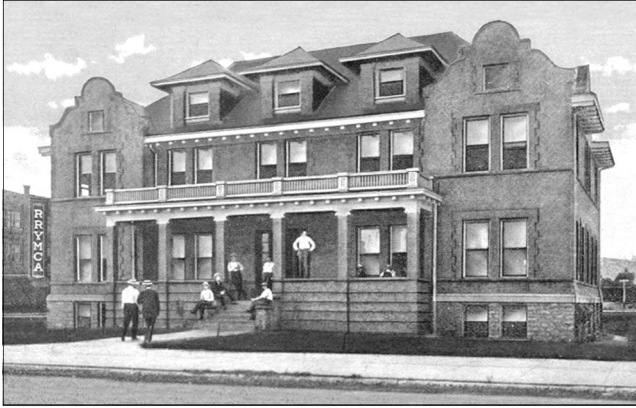
LOOKING TO BE PUBLISHED?

The Kenton County Historical Society is always looking for authors. Find a topic of local interest and write a short article.
Submit it and we will publish it.

Articles should be footnoted or should include at least three references. Photos are always a plus.

Submit articles to Bob Webster at the address and/or email listed on the cover of this Bulletin.

Then and Now



Views of the old Railroad YMCA building located on Madison Avenue near 16th Street.

Left photo courtesy Kenton County Public Library. Right photo courtesy Bob Webster.

Mystery Photo

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



ANSWER:

Entrance to Covington's Linden Grove Cemetery.

Photo courtesy Bob Webster

Kenton County Historical Society

March/April - 2012

ARTICLES FROM BACK ISSUES ARE INDEXED ON OUR WEBSITE!

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I Bet You Didn't Know

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

March 4, 1849: Atchinson is U.S. President for one day. True! Zachary Taylor refused to take office on a Sunday, so the president pro tem of the United States Senate, Kentuckian, David Rice Atchinson, stood in.

March 7, 1789: The "e" was dropped from Kentucke in favor of a "y" because the Virginia General Assembly determined the proper spelling of the word to be Kentucky.

March 27, 1798: Frontiersman Simon Kenton married Elizabeth Jarboe.

April 3, 1882: Kentucky-born Jesse James was shot in the back and killed in St. Joseph, Missouri. He and his brother Frank were head of the notorious James Gang.

"On This Day In Kentucky" — Robert Powell

Programs and Notices

History Day — March 17th

Northern Kentucky University (Student Union Building) will once again host History Day, by far the major event of the year for those interested in local history. To commemorate the anniversary of the Confederate "siege that did not occur" in 1862, this year's event will offer several Civil War-related topics. The opening presentation at 10:00 a.m. is titled, "Pontoon Bridges and Fortified Hills: The Defense of Northern Kentucky in the Civil War," and will be presented by James A. Ramage, Regents Professor of History, Northern Kentucky University.

In the first workshop session (11:15-12:00), the Civil War topic will be "The Battle of Augusta in 1862"; in the second session (12:15-1:00), it will be "Kentucky's Bookends to the Civil War: Major Robert Anderson and Fort Sumter" (about the commander of Fort Sumter, his Kentucky roots and importance in the war).

In the first session, other concurrent workshops will be: "Frontier Kentucky's Musical Roots"; "Northern Genealogical Resources"; "The Beverly Hills Supper Club: The untold story behind Kentucky's worst disaster"; "Doctor and Inventor: the Life of Dr. George Sperti"; "Kentucky in the War of 1812"; and "Going Global: Partnership with Senegal Secondary Students and Teachers" (a partnership of secondary students from Senegal and Beechwood High School students).

In the second session, others topics include: "Push, Pull, and Means: Irish Immigration to Northern Kentucky"; "Mystery of the River: The Worlds of Seckatary Hawkins" (a look at the stories, treasure trove of Northern Kentucky History); "Saving the Sherman Tavern" (Grant County, pioneer heritage); The George Ratterman Trials: Separating Fact from Fiction"; "Online Genealogy: Making the Most of Digital Resources"; and "Why Thinking Matters in History" (multimedia exploration of questions central to understating the nature of historical study, a Northern Kentucky Social Studies Advisory Council workshop).

As usual, we will have breakfast pastries and drinks, as well as wonderful door prizes. Anyone interested in local history should NOT miss this event. Registration: \$8:00 at the door; \$6:00 for pre-registration. Make checks to History Day, c/o Kenton County Historical Society, P. O. Box 641, Covington, KY 41012. Doors open at 8 a.m. See: <http://hisgeo.nku/projects/historyday/>