



# Bulletin of the Kenton County Historical Society

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July / August

2008

## I Bet You Didn't Know

*Tidbits of Northern Kentucky History*

I bet you didn't know Leonard Stephens and his father Benjamin built what is believed to be the first brick house in Kenton County in 1807.

Leonard was born in Virginia on March 10, 1791 and moved with his father to Kentucky around 1807. Leonard became Kenton County's first sheriff in 1840 and served in the state Senate from 1829 to 1833.

Known as Locust Grove, the home on Richardson Pike in Independence was even a resting place in 1825 for Marquis de Lafayette, the young French general of Revolutionary War fame.

Stephens died March 8, 1873.

*Jim Reis, Pieces of the Past, Vol. 1*

## Upcoming Programs

### No. KY History, Art, and Lecture Series

The Northern Kentucky History, Art, and Lecture Series, presented at Covington's Baker-Hunt, is silent for July and August. The remaining schedule for the series is as follows:

September 14th – African-American – Dr. Prince Brown, Jr.  
October 12th – Appalachian – Dr. Andrea Watkins  
November 9th – Latino – Sr. Juana Meddez

### Fireworks at the Drees Pavilion

The Behringer-Crawford Museum in Devou Park will once again host a fireworks party to help celebrate Labor Day and the end of summer. Everyone knows the Drees Pavilion is the best seat in the house for the annual Cincinnati Bell/WEBN fireworks. Contact the Museum at (859)431-2577 for details and pricing information for the day-long event which includes a catered dinner, drinks, games, etc. Hurry, though – this event sells out rather quickly!

### Behringer-Crawford Museum – “Tot Tuesdays”

“Tot Tuesdays” continues as a fun-filled program geared towards pre-school aged children. This special program will be held every 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. with storytelling and a craft or activity.

July 15–Bugs  
August 19–Fire Trucks  
September 16–Apples and Johnny Appleseed  
October 21–Halloween  
November 18–Music  
December 16–Trains

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# Remke Markets

## Past, Present, and Future

Matthew Bishop

*Editor's note: The following is a brief history of one of the many corner groceries, once common on nearly every street corner of every neighborhood. Though many closed over the years, this one not only survived – it prospered. In the days before the auto, these corner groceries were essential to every neighborhood. While Bernard Kroger began 14 years earlier, William Remke and Kroger were considered contemporaries.*

“Our service wears a smile” is not a corny motto for a giant fast food company. It is a statement of belief from Northern Kentucky’s Remke Markets. If anything is needed in groceries or other products, there is normally a conveniently placed “big box” store within ten miles. Yet, Remke Markets has not only been able to survive the past 109 years, it has recently begun to thrive.<sup>1</sup>

### Beginnings

Remke Markets began in 1897 when William Remke, “had the foresight and determination to start his own business”.<sup>2</sup> According to the Covington City Directory in 1897, it all started as a very small meat market opened on the northwest corner of 13<sup>th</sup> and Holman, one of many neighborhood markets of the time.<sup>3</sup> William moved his market to 1210 Russell Street by 1900.<sup>4</sup>

Continuously searching for a better location, Remke moved to the northeast corner of 17<sup>th</sup> and Holman in 1908.<sup>5</sup> On Labor Day 1922, he opened at what would be his longtime resting place at 19<sup>th</sup> and Holman.<sup>6</sup> This corner store served the Peasenburg community for nearly 70 years before eventually closing in 1991. Over the years it had developed into a full service grocery store which meant it offered not only meat products, but produce, dairy, frozen foods, deli meats, and general merchandise. Remke, in the early years, had competition from other local markets besides the growing chains of Kroger, Albers, and A & P.<sup>7</sup> In the beginning, groceries were delivered by horse and buggy to customers in the area.



*Early grocery delivery from Remke Markets  
(If anyone can identify the location, let us know)*

William Remke died in December 1932 and his three sons, Robert, William H., and Louis took over management of the market. In 1935, Remke Markets took a major step into becoming the chain that it is today. The three brothers opened a store at Requardt Lane and Dixie Highway, Fort Mitchell, to move Remke Markets from just a small corner store to a multi-store business.<sup>8</sup> This store was a 5,000 square-foot grocery, which at the time was considered gigantic. [There was a small Kroger outlet in the same shopping strip at the time – editor] This new store offered customers more than meat, adding produce, canned goods and bakery products.<sup>9</sup> The store was important historically because it was the very first store in Northern Kentucky to offer groceries in a self-service fashion.<sup>1</sup> Remke was concerned whether this brand new type of shopping would be successful. People were so used to having their groceries delivered, it was unknown whether the new store would even survive.<sup>11</sup>

In 1942, William Remke left the company and bought Jacob Schlacter and Sons Meat Packing Company in Cincinnati – and he in turn provided meat to Remke Markets. The Fort Mitchell store be-



Above: Remke's Market now located on the corner of Dixie Highway and Orphanage Road  
 Right: 1957 ad for Grand Opening of Remke's second store

came a major success and on January 24<sup>th</sup>, 1957, it moved to its current location at Orphanage Road and Dixie Highway – just one block south. The former Stevie's Road House was razed and a new 12,000 square foot store costing \$375,000 was erected. It was in this store that Bill Remke, at age twelve, got his start helping his father, Robert, by bagging produce and groceries.<sup>12</sup> Bill later entered the service, but returned to the business in 1969.

In 1970, Robert Remke passed away, leaving the company in his wife Frances' hands. Frances was able to maintain the company for four years, and with the help of her husband's tremendous crew, Remke Markets continued to grow. A few years later, Bill Remke bought out his mother and took over store operations.<sup>13</sup> Bill credits his ability to have learned the business in such a short time on the people his father had built the company around.<sup>14</sup>

Beginning in the latter part of the 1980s and into the 1990s, Remke Markets began to expand further in the area. In 1985, Remke opened its third store, located in Florence, Kentucky. This store would later shut down after the opening of the Turfway store. In 1991, the Taylor Mill location opened. In October 1993, Remke crossed the bridge into Ohio, opening a store in Amelia. This store would later close when the entire shopping center was empty. Remke furthered its expansion in April 1996 by opening a facility in Deer Park, Ohio. This store, the only one left in Ohio today, occupies a former Plowboys Grocery.

ANNOUNCING the Opening of  
**REMKE'S** FORT MITCHELL **SUPER MARKET**  
 DIXIE HIGHWAY AND REQUERT LANE

**Samples and Souvenirs for Everybody**  
 STOP IN AND SEE OUR STORE--SELF SERVICE

* MEATS *	* GROCERIES *
LAMB CHOPS . . . . lb. 30c	SUGAR, Jack Frost, 25 <sup>lbs</sup> \$1.27
Prime Rib Roast of Beef . lb. 28c	BISQUICK, large . . . . 30c
FRANKFURTERS, juicy, lb. 20c	MIRACLE WHIP, quart . 39c
LARD, open kettle . . . 2 lbs. 35c	Dill Pickles, sm., 2 1-qt. jars 29c
COTTAGE HAMS . . . lb. 33c	Sweet Pickles, sm., 1-qt. jar 25c
CALVES LIVER . . . lb. 35c	Palmolive Soap . . 6 bars 25c
SMOKED HAMS . . . lb. 23c	SUPER SUDS, large . . . 17c
Ground Beef, fresh, 2 lbs. 29c	Bo Peep Ammonia, qt. bottle 23c
BUTTER, creamery . . lb. 28c	Purple Plums, large can . . 15c
Leg of Lamb, gen. spring, lb. 25c	Maxwell House Coffee, lb. 29c

\* FRUITS AND VEGETABLES \*

**STRAWBERRIES** Home-Grown 2 Qts. 29c

PEAS, fresh . . . 2 lbs. 15c	TOMATOES, fancy . 2 lbs. 23c
HEAD LETTUCE . 2 heads 13c	CORN, large ears, doz. . 40c

In 1998, another Remke store opened in Hartwell, Ohio. Although well operated, it too was sold because sales never reached projection. The realization soon developed that Remke Markets' home was in Northern Kentucky. In 1999, Remke acquired three previous IGA markets, located in Newport, Crescent Springs, and on Turkeyfoot Road in Independence. The Turkeyfoot and Crescent Springs stores opened that same year, and the Newport store followed in October 2001. Remke acquired a Thriftway on Turfway Road in Florence, opening in 2004 and replacing the previous Florence store. In 2005, a Hebron Remke was opened, and in 2006, the Butter-milk Towne Center store opened, replacing the old Crescent Springs store. The Fort Mitchell Store's basement housed the corporate offices and was used as the warehouse for all products in the earlier years. This part of the business was relocated in 1990 to a 67,000 square-foot building on Russell Street in Covington, and was later moved in 2002 to its present location – an 83,000 square-foot building on Cox Road, Erlanger.

In this region, Remke must compete with the same suppliers that Wal-Mart and other supermarkets use, struggling to keep a level playing field from suppliers. Sometimes the Wal-Marts of the world get better deals and better marketing programs than the small independent markets.<sup>15</sup> This problem is somewhat offset by Remke's large warehouse which allows for some bulk purchases.

Kroger stores, which because of their size, are able to advertise on television and radio frequently but Remke stores are far more limited. In this marketplace, Kroger has between 65-70 stores compared to Remke's eight. Pat Iasillo, Remke manager, believes that, "we've come a long way, but there is that perception that we're more expensive because we're smaller...but once people shop us and get in the habit of shopping us, I believe that perception is no longer there."<sup>16</sup> One major way Remke advertises is by distributing over 130,000 circulars a week through the Door Store.<sup>17</sup>

The introduction of a pharmacy in some Remke stores has increased health and beauty care business about 20%. Remke finds them essential.<sup>18</sup> Currently, Remke has five pharmacies – located in Taylor Mill, Buttermilk Town Center, Newport, Turfway, and Hebron.

The key word now in Remke's success is to buy local. The Kentucky Proud campaign has been great. People feel good about buying local produce and local products, because they know it's fresher. They know it's helping their community.<sup>19</sup> All Remke stores have highlighted specific products made solely in the state of Kentucky, with examples such as Ale 8 soft drinks, bottled in Winchester, Pompilio's Marinara Sauce from Newport, and Remke's own Salsa made by Boone County farmers.

### Competition

Surprisingly, Remke Markets is number two in market share in the Northern Kentucky region. Kroger has roughly about 55%; Remke has around 18%. Wal-Mart, while remembering this is just food shares, is around 16%, Meijer around 12%, and Biggs around 6%.<sup>20</sup> The track record of market share shift when Wal-Marts move into an area has been that the

local independent stores lose around 20% of their business. This has not been the case with Remke Markets. Since the introduction of the Wal-Mart on 3L Highway in Fort Wright, the Fort Mitchell and Taylor Mill Remke stores have actually grown.

Acquiring McHale's Meats in the early 1990s helped with personnel. Purchase of a few Save-A-Lot stores in the late 1990s also helped Remke Markets and, most certainly, the buying of the IGAs in 1999 was a major stepping stone to where Remke is today.<sup>21</sup>

Remke Markets is hoping for five new stores within the next ten years. It would not be a surprise to present management if someday a Remke Market was located in Lexington and Louisville.<sup>22</sup>

1. <http://www.remkes.com/history.asp>
2. *Ibid*
3. *1897 Covington City Directory, page 170*
4. *1900 Covington City Directory, page 181*
5. *1980-1909 Covington City Directory, page 207*
6. *Personal interview with Bill Remke, 2007*
7. *Personal interview with Bill Remke, William Remke's grandson, 2007*
8. *City Directory 1936-1937, page 207*
9. <http://www.remkes.com/history.asp>
10. *Personal interview with Bill Remke, 2007*
11. *Ibid*
12. *Ibid*
13. <http://www.remkes.com/history.asp>
14. *Personal interviews with Remke employees, some with over fifty years of service — Ed Thiel, John Broghamer, Dan Heidrich, Bill Coyle, and Kenny Jasper.*
15. *Personal interview with Eric Rabe, 2007*
16. *Personal interview with Pat Iasillo, 2007*
17. *Personal interview with Eric Rabe, 2007*
18. *Ibid*
19. *Ibid*
20. *Ibid*
21. *Personal interview with Bill Remke, 2007*
22. *Personal interview with Eric Rabe, 2007*

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# Northern KY High School Basketball Champions

## It's Not Who You Think!

By: Robert D. Webster

It is common knowledge among Northern Kentucky high school sports fans, especially those whose expertise lies with boy's basketball, that only one team from this region has ever won the coveted state championship title. Unfortunately, that just isn't true! Not to take anything away from the incredible season the young men from Simon Kenton High School had in 1981, but this region had a state champion basketball team nearly seventy years prior to that talented bunch.

The State Tournament, as it is sanctioned today, dates back to 1918. The event is controlled by the Kentucky High School Athletic Association or KHSAA, which has divided the commonwealth into sixteen regions. Until recently, schools in Boone, Kenton, and Campbell counties comprised the state's Ninth Region. Today, while a few schools have been realigned into the Eighth and Tenth Regions, most area teams remain in the Ninth Region.

Each spring, District Tournaments are held to produce the participants in the sixteen Regional Tournaments, whose winners qualify for the state championship tourney, officially termed the "Sweet Sixteen." The event has been held at a variety of venues over the years, including Danville's Centre College in 1918.<sup>1</sup> The campuses of the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville have hosted most of the games and UK's Rupp Arena, home of the tourney since 1995, will host the Sweet Sixteen until at least 2012.<sup>2</sup>

Local sports writers and fans are quick to point out that the 1981 Simon Kenton Pioneers are the only team to ever take home the state championship trophy. However, the proper statement would be that they are the only area team to ever win the KHSAA State Basketball Championship. State championship tournaments were held in Kentucky well before 1918, in fact, evidence shows they were

held as early as 1902. Some might say those trophies don't count, since it was before the KHSAA took over. If the players on those winning teams – or the schools from which they participated – could be interviewed, they would all beg to differ.

The KHSAA, organized in Louisville in April 1917, brought a needed change in the organization of sports throughout the state of Kentucky. Success of the new organization was very slow at first, with only eighteen schools listed as charter members: Frankfort, Louisville Male, Owensboro, Carrollton, Lexington High School, Carlisle, Anderson County, Monticello, Somerset, Ashland, Stanford, Paris, LaGrange, Danville, Morganfield, Clark County, Cynthiana, and Covington High.<sup>3</sup> During the 1920s and 1930s, however, high school sports achieved much greater popularity, which in turn led to a more rapid growth for the KHSAA.

James C. Klotter summarized basketball in the early 1900s very well in his book, *Kentucky: Portrait in Paradox*: "Basketball, a sport that would later become dominant in the state, did not have such popularity early in the century. In fact, the sport was often viewed as only a brief wintertime activity, and more for young women than men. There were few perceived sexual differences regarding basketball (except that only females could watch the women's team play, attired as they were in bloomers)." At the high school level, the girl's teams were often organized before boy's teams. Most high schools and many colleges abandoned girl's teams by the early 1920s because it was thought to be too strenuous a sport for the girls.<sup>4</sup> The popularity of high school boy's basketball in Kentucky did not rise until the early 1920s.

So, how did high schools from Boone, Kenton, and Campbell counties fare from 1900 to 1918? There were certainly less teams involved in basketball statewide during that time period. And, the population of Northern Kentucky was far less than it is now ~ meaning ~ fewer high schools in the area for local teams to compete

against. The *Kentucky Post* featured scores and highlights for many games played during the early 1900s. Bellevue, Dayton, Newport and Covington all had high school basketball programs early in the century, many with “Second” or “Reserve” teams that played before the main event – similar to how Junior Varsity and Varsity games are played today. With few high school teams to compete against locally, each team’s schedule included a variety of other qualified groups of young men from throughout the region. Some teams were organized through YMCAs in Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati. Some were organized at other “individual” gyms in the area. The Peerless Club of Cincinnati was on local teams’ schedules for many years, as were teams sponsored by the Friar’s Athletic Club. Local church’s sported teams and more squads came to the area via Southeastern Indiana and other parts of Southwestern Ohio.<sup>5</sup>

While teams from Dayton, Bellevue, and Newport High Schools were mentioned with praise during many seasons, it is clear that the premiere boys basketball team of the early 1900s was that of Covington High School. [Note: Covington High School was located at 12<sup>th</sup> and Russell Streets and existed there from 1866 to 1918. In 1919, students attended class in a new building on the estate of Daniel Henry Holmes. The school was later named Holmes High School, but is now officially known as Covington Holmes High School]

On February 13, 1908, Covington High School “clashed with their old rivals, Madisonville High School, yesterday at the 7<sup>th</sup> Street Market House, Covington. The Madisonville team had defeated the C.H.S. boys in both games played last season, and this fact made the Covington boys play the game of their lives. From the time the ball was tossed up at the beginning of the first half until time up at the end of the second half, the Covington lads never let up on their taller opponents. When time was called the score was a tie and the two captains agreed to play it out, the team to score the first two points to be declared the winner. The ball was tossed up for the final struggle and both teams started in a whirlwind fashion, determined to make the first two points. So close did the guards stick to the forwards

that it was fully ten minutes before a goal was tossed, but it was a Covington boy who threw the winning goal, making the score 22-20. Although completely surrounded by men of the opposite team, and also in a very awkward position, Hood, Covington’s fast little guard, was declared the hero of the game for his winning goal. No sooner had the ball settled into the basket than a number of the C.H.S. boys ran on the court, hoisted the boy onto their shoulders and carried him up Madison Avenue, regardless of his protests and his somewhat abbreviated wardrobe.”<sup>6</sup>

In 1910, the “...boys of the red and white enjoyed their first undefeated season” and were dubbed, though most likely unofficially, “Champions of the Three Cities – Covington, Newport, and Bellevue.”<sup>7</sup> Covington High School opened the 1911-1912 season with a defeat of Bellevue High School at the Covington Market House by a score of 41-14. New players on the team were listed as Schwartz, Justice, Feuss, and Sheridan. Veteran players were Cobb, Macklin, Cople, Whaley, and the captain of the squad, Wilson. An early highlight of the season was a win over the men of Moore’s Hill College (Dearborn County, Indiana) by a score of 56-32. “Macklin sported eight baskets in eight trials for the Covington boys.”<sup>8</sup> The *Kentucky Post* remarked, “After the game the C.H.S. boys hosted the Moore’s Hill team for dinner at the home of Mrs. Charles Duke, Scott Street.” Scores and highlights about Covington wins continued in the *Kentucky Post* for the next two months. On February 7, 1912, headlines in the newspaper read:

**Lexington High In Covington Tuesday Night  
To Play At Market House Friday Eve  
Both Teams With Just One Loss Each During The Year  
Extra Seating To Be Out In Expectation Of Large Crowd  
Teams Will Play For The State Championship!**

On February 10, 1912, the following article was featured in the *Kentucky Post*:

“Before one of the largest crowds ever seen at the Covington Market House, the Covington High School basketball team defeated the boys from Lexington High School last evening by a score of 36 to 27. During the whole first half the C.H.S. boys played brilliantly and hung up a score of 20 to 7 in





Kenton County Public Library

1911-1912 State High School Basketball Champions from Covington High School. Top row (L-R): Stanley Wilson, Bob Copple, William Sanford; Middle row (L-R): Walter Horst, Stanley Warman, Bill Macklin; Front row: Carl Brandstettler

their favor. The energy expended in the first half, however, seemed to have tired the home team and when they came back in the second half the honors of the game all went to the visitors. Before Covington woke up, the down state boys had eaten up all but three of the points in the lead Covington had made. Then the home team got busy and for the last few minutes, got into the game well enough to end it with the score 36 to 27 in their favor.”

“Macklin and Horst worked together beautifully in the first half, out-passing and out-shooting their opponents and keeping the whole team on edge. Copple and Wilson guarded well and Cassidy out-jumped his man during the whole game. A crowd of

about 350 people saw the game, which was for the championship of Kentucky. This was the first time the two teams had ever met.”

Covington – Copple, g; Wilson, g; Cassidy, c; Horst, f; and Macklin, f. Lexington – Rhodes, g; Taylor, g; O’Neil, c; Deveraux, f; and Allender, f. Scorers: Covington – Macklin, 20; Horst, 8; Wilson, 8; Lexington – Allender, 13; Deveraux, 6; Taylor 4; Rhodes, 4. Referee – Popkin; Umpire – Ringo.

1. [www.Kentucky.Org/Basketball/Timeline](http://www.Kentucky.Org/Basketball/Timeline), 2008
2. *KHSAA Sweet Sixteen Program*, 2008
3. [www.Kentucky.Org/Basketball/Timeline](http://www.Kentucky.Org/Basketball/Timeline), 2008
4. *Kentucky: Portrait in Paradox*, James C. Klotter, page 101
5. *The Kentucky Post*, February 22, 1902, page 2
6. *The Kentucky Post*, February 14, 1908, page 2
7. *The Kentucky Post*, February 26, 1910, page 2
8. *The Kentucky Post*, February 3, 1912, page 2

# Duro Bag Manufacturing Company

Kenton County Public Library Archives

Ludlow's Duro Bag Manufacturing Company was established in 1953 by David S. Shor and is still privately owned by the Shor family today.<sup>1</sup> Charles Shor, who became President and Chief Executive Officer in 1987, now runs the company started by his father. Today, Duro is the largest supplier of paper bags in the world.<sup>2</sup>

Originally, the company produced only paper bags and sacks, but over the years, new product lines have been introduced. The company is now comprised of two divisions. The Standard Products Division produces grocery bags, grocery sacks, handle bags, merchandise bags, paper lawn and leaf bags, and various specialty bags including lunch bags, pharmacy bags, liquor bags, bread bags, food service bags, and more. The Designer Division produces the broadest range of machine-made paper shopping bags in the industry.<sup>3</sup>

Duro also has in-house Art Departments in both Kentucky and Florida. Both facilities have talented artists operating the latest electronic pre-press equipment. These artists assist in the development of customer artwork, print layouts, and marketing material. The Sales and Marketing offices are located in Kentucky, with regional salespeople and an extensive broker network throughout the country.

In the past fifty-five years of operation, Duro has purchased some of its larger competitors in order to expand its geographical reach and enhance the company's full-line capabilities.<sup>4</sup> Duro now has over 2,500 employees working at twelve manufacturing facilities across the country, with the corporate offices still located in Northern Kentucky.<sup>5</sup>

Early on, the main paper storage facility and plant was located on the south side of the alley be-

hind the two hundred block of Oak Street (Cedar Alley). This building had previously housed the Southern Railroad machine shops, Ludlow.

Although Duro has had a long and successful existence in Northern Kentucky, many local residents link the name Duro Bag with magnificent fires. The first major fire occurred on November 21, 1959. The facility at the intersection of Poplar and Kenner was completely destroyed.<sup>6</sup> Thankfully, there were no injuries reported. On March 1, 1964, a \$2.5 million dollar blaze became the worst fire in Ludlow's history. In a few short hours, the entire square block from Carneal to Linden and from Davies to Oak Streets was damaged, either by actual flames that shot over 200 feet into the air or by the thousands of gallons of water that had been poured onto the fire. Fed by 20-mile-per-hour winds, the flames quickly spread to sixteen nearby homes, seven of which were completely destroyed by daybreak. More than fifty Ludlow residents were made homeless in the enormous blaze. Over 200 firefighters responded from Ludlow, Covington, Bromley, Park Hills, South Fort Mitchell, Florence, Crescent Springs, Bellevue, Erlanger, and Elsmere.<sup>7</sup>

The main Ludlow plant was not rebuilt. Instead, a large plant was constructed in Covington.<sup>8</sup> The offices for the company, however, did remain in Ludlow. The company purchased the First Church of the Nazarene at the southeast corner of Oak and Linden Streets and remodeled the building for office use. Later, the old Ludlow School on Linden Street was acquired for additional office space.<sup>9</sup>

In February 1977, members of the United Paper Workers International Local 832 went on strike. However, that was not the major news item for the company that year. At about 11:00 p.m. on May 28, 1977, a fire broke out at the main Ludlow warehouse on Sandbank Road. Stored at the facility



was over 300 one-ton rolls of paper. This fire, though doing over \$300,000 in damages and requiring assistance from 10 area departments, including that of Cincinnati, did not make the headlines in the following morning's newspaper. Only a short article was included deep within the issue. The reason – this major blaze took place on the very same evening as the tragic fire at the Beverly hills Supper Club in Southgate, Kentucky. That horrific blaze would eventually kill 165 people.

At Duro, most of the structure was totally engulfed by the time the Ludlow Fire Department arrived. Before additional help responded, many volunteers, including several teenage boys, were recruited to assist in handling hose lines. Eventually, crews from Park Hills, Bromley, Fort Mitchell, Crescent Springs, Covington, Independence, Erlanger, and Point Pleasant had joined firefighters from Cincinnati at the scene. The Hebron Fire Department acted as Ludlow's backup, manning the fire house in case other fires were reported in the city.

Large pieces of burning paper began to rain down on Ludlow. Such embers drifted as far north as downtown Cincinnati. Many Ludlow residents near the warehouse doused their own roofs with lawn hoses in an attempt to stop the fire's spread. With many Kenton County cities, especially Covington and Fort Mitchell, sending fire crews to assist at both the Duro fire and the Beverly Hills incident, fire-fighting manpower remained sparse in the area well into the following morning.

During the last three decades, Duro Bag Manufacturing Company has experienced steady growth. In the 1970s, new plants were constructed in Brownsville, Texas; Mexico; Hudson, Wisconsin; and Tampa, Florida. The 1980s witnessed the completion of a large plant in Richwood, Kentucky. In 1995, the assets of the Union Company in Richmond, Virginia were acquired. Four years later, Duro purchased the Equitable Bag Company of Florence.

In today's somewhat unsure economy, it appears that Northern Kentucky's Duro Bag Manufacturing Company is continuing to thrive. And, with continued efforts to promote fire safety, hopefully the business will never experience another major fire.

## WE NEED YOUR HELP!

We are in great need of original photos or other memorabilia from the many gambling houses that existed in this region from the 1920s through the 1960s.

If you have anything from any of the clubs in the area, especially the Lookout House and Beverly Hills, we would appreciate the opportunity to scan your items for possible use in an upcoming publication.

Please contact us at once!

[nkyheritage.kchs@juno.com](mailto:nkyheritage.kchs@juno.com)

P.O. Box 641, Covington, KY 41012

(859) 431-2666

Feel free to contact the Bulletin Editor directly:

**Bob Webster**

(859) 801-4773

1. [www.durobag.com/thedurostory](http://www.durobag.com/thedurostory), 2005
2. Ibid
3. Ibid
4. Ibid
5. Ibid
6. *Northern Kentucky Fires, A Summary Of The Most Memorable Fires Of The Region*, Robert D. Webster, page 84
7. Ibid
8. Kenton County Public Library Archives, Ludlow, 2008
9. Ibid

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*News Enterprise*, March 5, 1964, p. 1, March 12, 1964, p. 1, June 2, 1977, p. 1; *Ludlow Centennial Souvenir Program, 1864-1964*, p. 63; *Promotional Literature of the Company*. [Www.Durobag.com/TheDuroStory](http://Www.Durobag.com/TheDuroStory), 2008

## A Look Back at The Headlines

An on-going feature reliving local headlines  
from the *Kentucky Post and Times-Star*.  
This issue features: October 6, 1960.

### Covington Prepares For Visit

Democratic presidential candidate Senator John F. Kennedy arrived at Lunken Airport last night, after visiting citizens of Louisville yesterday. Plans have been finalized for his visit here later today. A parade will pass along the following route: from the C&O bridge down Main Street, to 9th Street, to Holman Street, to 12th Street, to Madison, to 4th Street. Kennedy will speak at the public square near the old courthouse.

### Independence News

Fire Chief Tilford Mershon of the Independence and Community Volunteer Fire Department announced the purchase of a new pumper truck. The new truck has a 750-gallon-per-minute pump and cost \$18,000. It is the third fire apparatus in the city.

### High School Football Standings

Coach Ellis' boys top the current ranking of top ten area high school football squads.

- |              |                     |
|--------------|---------------------|
| 1. Holmes    | 6. Bellevue         |
| 2. Highlands | 7. Boone County     |
| 3. Ludlow    | 8. Dixie Heights    |
| 4. Newport   | 9. Newport Catholic |
| 5. Lloyd     | 10. Campbell County |

### Advertisements

The Car barn, located at 20th and Madison in Covington, announces men's long-sleeve sport shirts for \$1.58, leaf rakes for 88¢, and boy's thermal underwear for \$1.00/pair.

Ostrow's, at 717 Madison Avenue, continues their 34th Anniversary Sale with the following specials: SpeedQueen wringer washing machine, only \$98.00, and a Magic Chef gas range for only \$158.00.

## Oak Street Bridge Ludlow/Bromley

The establishment of the Ludlow Lagoon Amusement Park created a large lake between Ludlow and Bromley. The lake was created by damming the Pleasant Run Creek which emptied into the Ohio River. At about the same time, a bridge was built which spanned the creek at Oak Street. This bridge provided the only connection between the two communities.

In January 1907, the Ohio River crested at 65.2'. High water undermined the concrete supports of the bridge and officials banned use of the structure until repairs could be made. Repair work was finally completed and the bridge was reopened on October 28, 1907. Bromley had been without streetcar service for over seven months. The repair work proved only temporary as by 1909, the structure had again been weakened. Bromley city officials began soliciting funds from residents to help pay for the construction of a new bridge. This new steel bridge was completed in 1910. The streetcar company paid for part of the construction. Bromley residents donated \$1,320. In 1922, repair work was again necessary. This time, the Cities of Ludlow and Bromley paid one half of the cost and Kenton County paid the other half.

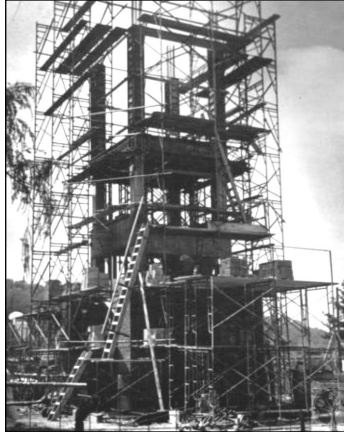
The Oak Street Bridge was rebuilt several times since 1922. The last major rebuild occurred in the 1970s. In 1974, high water had again undermined the stability of the bridge. Repairs were quickly made. In March 1978 high water again eroded the entire structure. A new concrete bridge was not completed until 1980.

*Kentucky Post*, March 10, 1910, June 27, 1910, p. 5, December 1, 1922, p. 1, May 24, 1999, p. 4k; *News Enterprise*, March 23, 1978, p. 1.

### Movies

The Dixie Gardens Drive-In features Tony Curtis in *Some Like It Hot* while the Liberty Theater is showing *Abbott and Costello Meet the Mummy*.

## Then and Now



Left is the construction phase and right is the completed Carroll Chimes Bell Tower located in Covington. Dedicated on September 8, 1979, the structure is named for former Governor Julian M. Carroll.

## Mystery Photo

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



### **ANSWER:**

Young George Schumacher pictured in front of a "Victory Garden" in Covington's Peaselburg district. Note the "V" in the fence gate.

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# KENTON HISTORICAL



## Feature Story:

**Rempke Markets**  
Past, Present, and Future  
Pictured: Robert and Lewis Rempke

## Other Stories Inside:

Northern Kentucky HS Basketball Champions  
It's Not Who You Think!

Duro Bag Manufacturing Company

Oak Street Bridge — Ludlow/Bromley

Dedicated to preserving

# COUNTY SOCIETY

July / August 2008