

# Bulletin of the Kenton County Historical Society

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*March/April*

**2005**

## PROGRAMS

**April 12, 2005 7:00 pm**

***Heirloom Appraisals.** Tim Dwight of the Motch Jewelry Company is scheduled to do appraisals. Another expert is slated to do appraisals on furniture and other odds-and-ends. Make sure you bring lots of items for these experts to view (photos of your larger items). This special event will be held at Trinity Church, 4th and Madison, in Covington.*

**May 2005 (To Be Announced)**

***Trip to Augusta, Kentucky.** Details are still pending on this wonderful trip to one of Northern Kentucky's most picturesque river towns.*

**June 2005 (To Be Announced)**

***Battery Hooper.** A guided tour and update on the progress of the restoration of one of the areas last remaining Civil War Batteries. The Hooper Battery is located in Ft. Wright.*

### **The Bulletin**

Published bi-monthly by

#### **The Kenton County Historical Society**

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email: [nkyheritage.kchs@Juno.com](mailto:nkyheritage.kchs@Juno.com)

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### **Free Public Presentation**

Dr. Paul Tenkotte will be giving a special presentation:

**"Push, Pull, and Means:  
German Immigration to Northern Kentucky"**

The program will be held:

Saturday, March 19th, at 7:00  
in Thomas More College's Science lecture hall.

It is sponsored by the college's Phi Alpha Theta History  
Honorary and the History Club.

# Retschulte's Five Mile House

By: Kevin Schneider  
Thomas More graduate and first-year Chase law student



*Front and rear views of the Five Mile House, circa 1920*

Barleycorn's Restaurant in Lakeside Park, Kentucky, was originally known as Retschulte's Five Mile House. In the 1800s, the building was used as a toll house and stop for stagecoaches on their way to and from Lexington. Currently, the building is in the same location as it was during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, on the Dixie Highway, then called the Lexington Pike.

In 1910, Carl Retschulte took over ownership and began serving food to people stopping to let their horses drink from a water trough placed in front of the building. The restaurant quickly gained a reputation for good food including steaks, chops, and fish trucked in daily. To improve his environment, Retschulte himself paid for street-lamps to be installed along Lexington Pike, extending north to the Greyhound Tavern, which was located at the end of the Ft. Mitchell streetcar line.

During April of 1925, Charles Retschulte was convicted of violating the Volstead Act. He was charged with "conspiracy to possess liquor" and "possession of liquor." These charges constituted a maximum sentence of two years in prison and a \$10,000 fine. James Wood and William Kinnaird, federal agents who testified against Retschulte, found eleven half barrels of beer in February, 1925, that were connected by a pipe to the bar. Judge Cochran sentenced Retschulte to eighteen

months in prison and fined him \$5,000. His attorneys, Edmonds and Burkamp offered a plea on behalf of Retschulte to give up the restaurant and never attempt to operate it again in order to avoid punishment. The judge denied this plea and wished to make an example of Retschulte. The restaurant was ordered to be either sold or divided into building lots.

Retschulte was well known and respected among Northern Kentuckians, as well as many Cincinnatians. The loss of the Five Mile House was resented by many who had enjoyed the place over its many years. Judge Cochran himself was known to have dined there, although in his own words, "the respectable man who gets in trouble over the [Volstead Act] is deserving of no more consideration than any other person. He should know better."<sup>1</sup> The restaurant was subsequently shut down with a sign on the building saying, "Closed By Orders of the United States Court." Judge Cochran placed a lien on the property in order to secure payment of fines imposed on Retschulte. After the closing, Retschulte was sent to Atlanta to serve out his sentence.

The restaurant was reopened in 1943 during the rise of casino-style gambling in the area. In 1955, the building was restored by Florence Cahill who ran the business as a restaurant with gambling



until 1962 when the gambling era in Northern Kentucky ended. The Cahill family lived upstairs, but were never part of organized crime. The mafia would sometimes assemble at the spot for special meetings and to gamble.<sup>2</sup> “Trigger Mike” Coppola, known for his violent temper, was once involved in a fight with his mistress at the restaurant.<sup>3</sup>

The year following the Cahill’s closing, Arthur List opened the restaurant and was met with successful business for the next twenty years. Today, the restaurant is owned and operated by Ken Heil, a local resident, who bought the building from Art List in 1984. Ret-schulte’s Five Mile House was the first Barleycorn’s in the area. The same good times and entertainment still remain at Barleycorn’s in the form of happy hour and live music instead of dice and tables.

1. *Kentucky Post* 15 April 1925.

2. Personal Interview with Mick Cahill, August 2002.

3. Hank Messick, “Syndicate Wife.”

## Covington Stars— A Worthy Opponent

From: *The Ticket*, 12 August, 1875

“The new Cincinnati Reds may be a very brilliant and beautiful club and worthy of occupying an immense amount of space in the Cincinnati papers, but it is strange that they should start out to win glory by beating such little clubs as the Milfords and the Louisville Setting Hens – Eagles – when they can get a game with the [Covington] Stars any day. The Stars challenged them two weeks since, and it looks a little as though the great club was alarmed.”

Those of our readers who know the history of the original Red Stockings, know they were virtually unbeatable in the first few seasons of their history. Begun in 1869 as the first professional base ball team (and the word was separated at the time), the story goes that they played any and all comers. However, according to this article they shied away from our own Covington Stars. The Stars established a field near 15<sup>th</sup> and Madison Avenue, and their field appears on the 1877 Covington Atlas. Their reputation was somewhat illustrious in that decade, but their story is somewhat incomplete. This one article seems to confirm their better-than-average abilities.

## Covington Book Project

The Covington Book Project is well underway! The book will be a complete history of the city and is scheduled to be printed in time for the city’s bicentennial in 2015. Though that sounds like a long time away, it will arrive sooner than you may think!

Currently, we are continuing to gather suggestions on topics of interest and importance. Soon, we will need volunteers to help write on each of those topics. You don’t have to be a professional writer, just someone interested in devoting time to such a wonderful project. We will have staff to edit all submissions.

If you are interested in being on the committee, writing on any topic(s), or just want to offer suggestions, please visit our website (listed below) or contact Bob Webster at: (859) 356-5088. With help from many, this can be a book of which the entire community will be very proud.

<http://www.kenton.lib.ky.us/~histsoc/>  
(click on Covington Book Project)

# Henry Wenzel Building

By: Karl J. Lietzenmayer



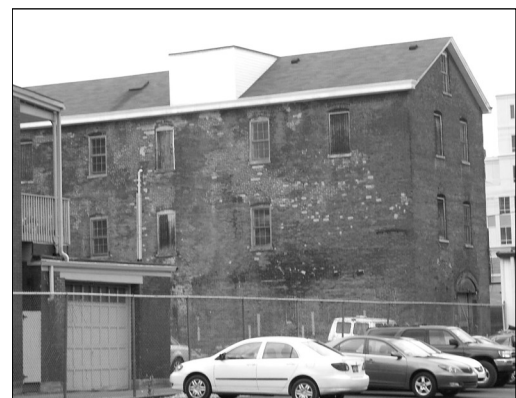
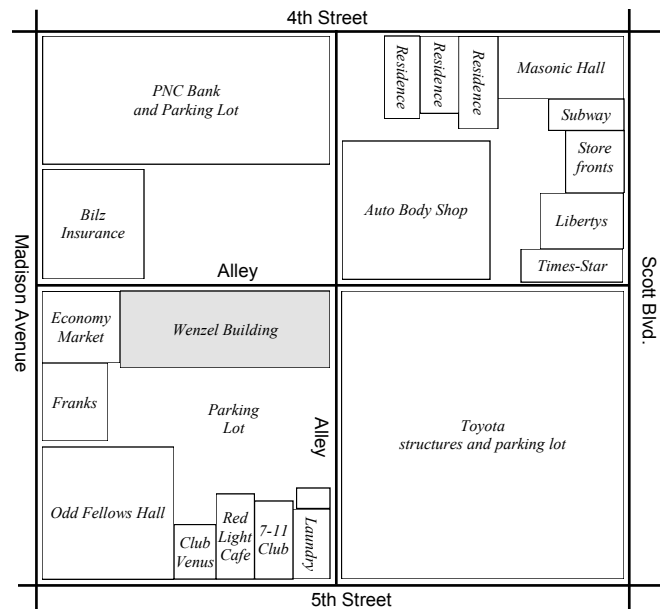
Looking south—note the Odd Fellows Hall at back right

The incomplete story of the Wenzel building and family and subsequent uses of the structure is convoluted, but it is gratifying to put at least some flesh and bones on the structure's history. The three-story factory still stands somewhat forlorn on an alley behind the store fronts of Madison Avenue between 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> – just north of the newly renovated Odd Fellows Hall. It stands today as a statement of just how close yet far the races existed in America in the 19th century (and into the 20th), for soon after his death, Wenzel's building was home for the African-American Odd Fellows.

Henry Wenzel first appears in the Covington city directories in 1866 as a manufacturer of mineral water – we would call this a soft drink factory. The family residence was nearby on the north side of Sixth Street between Washington and Russell Streets. By 1869, Henry's business must have been significant, because the entry that year was shown in bold. Curiously, it listed his establishment as also a wine and lager beer saloon as well as a manufacturer of mineral water. In 1874, Henry's establishment was called the Covington Bottling Works, and the building was known as Wenzel Hall.

Henry died in August of 1876, leaving a widow, Bertha, who was listed as residing in the Wenzel building. It seems the Wenzels had two daughters – Wilhemina and Bertha. Bertha was a saleslady at Coppin's (then still located at 607 Madison) called the California Dry Goods Store. Wilhemina "Minnie" taught music at home. Henry's assets were listed at \$25,000, which would have been typical for a middle class entrepreneur of the time.

Shortly after Henry's death, the family moved to 164 West 12<sup>th</sup> Street by 1880 and the business was sold to a J. H. Vos. Mr. Vos is unknown at this writing, for his name or enterprise does not appear in subsequent directories as continuing the Wenzel enterprise.



Looking to the north

Other enterprises occupied the building, and by 1886, the "Colored Odd Fellows Hall Lodge" was on the third floor while a pickle factory did business below. By 1894, the pickle factory was replaced by a steam dye company, with the second floor for apartments and the Odd Fellows still meeting above. The "Colored Odd Fellows" appear as late as 1909, with other companies on the lower floors.

More research is needed to fill in the many details of the building's uses, but this quiet, empty, and somewhat neglected structure had a colorful past.

## References

*The Ticket*, Covington, 12 Aug 1876; 15 Aug 1876; 5 Sept, 1876.  
*Covington Journal*, 12 Aug 1876  
 Covington City Directories, [Kenton Co. Public Library Archives]  
 Covington City Files, compiled by Walter Langsam, Jr.

# Erlanger's Forest Lawn Cemetery

From The *History of Erlanger* Book By Wayne Onkst



*Caleb S. Manly mansion—built in the 1850s, now serves as the office for the Forest Lawn Cemetery*

In 1831, Thomas Buckner purchased 550 acres from the original owners of the Virginia land grant. Buckner built a large home known as Beechwood on the rear of this property, which he operated as a plantation. After Thomas' death, his son, Hubbard, sold the property to Caleb Manly in 1851. The history of Forest Lawn actually begins with Dr. Manly.

Dr. Caleb Stone Manly moved to this area about 1850 from the deep south to be near his daughter who was attending school in Cincinnati. Manly liked the area so much, he purchased Buckner's farm. He chose a spot on the property near the Covington-Lexington Turnpike (Dixie Highway) on which to build a large Federal-style mansion. The bricks were made on site by slave labor; the stone foundation measures two-feet thick. A rear wing was added later of less quality. Other buildings, now razed, were added to the property for operation of a small plantation.

Dr. Manly had a strong interest in botany and introduced many new trees and plants to his farm. The cypress trees still growing around the lake in front of the property are reminders of his work. While Manly owned the property for only eight years, Erlanger residents will forever enjoy the improvements he made. He sold the property in 1858 and moved to Covington.

James P. Garvey of Cincinnati came into the property in 1864. Garvey made his fortune in tobacco and probably bought the property for a summer residence. After the Southern Railroad was built in 1877, Garvey opened a lumberyard nearby. He and a partner, Dr. Charles Judkins, organized the Erlanger Land Syndicate to develop the area. Much of Erlanger

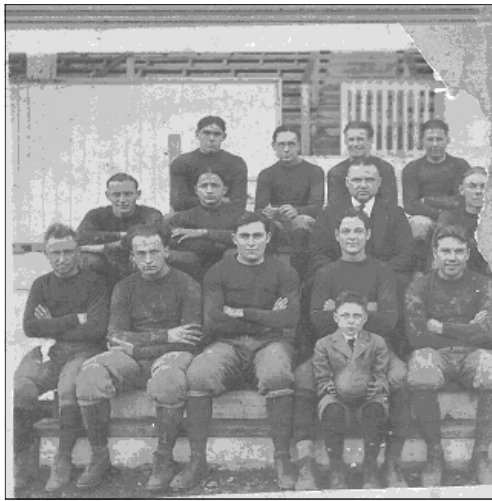
was developed by this firm. Garvey died in 1896, and the farm was acquired by Anna Bedinger until 1913.

In 1913, the farm was acquired by Thomas Cody of Covington. Cody was a well-known restaurant owner. He operated concessions at Latonia Race Track and the Cincinnati Zoo as well. He had many friends in high places, and his restaurants were noted for being elaborate, with fine china, furniture, and silverware. Cody used the mansion as a restaurant and the property for picnics and other public activities such as musical events, baseball games, horseshoe tournaments, and barbecues. Cody was locally famous for his mint juleps and Kentucky Burgoo recipe. He operated the restaurant into the mid-1930s.

When Cody advertised the property for sale, there were rumors that a nursery or a new racetrack would be constructed. Eventually, a group of investors led by Newport funeral director, George Stetter, acquired the property. Before the proposed cemetery could be established, much work on the property was required. The old slave houses were torn down and old roads replaced. Cemetery plots began to be sold in 1935.

Initially, the property near Dixie Highway could not be used for burials as an Erlanger ordinance prevented burials inside the city. As a result, the early burials were made on cemetery property outside the city limits – at the time bounded by Mary Street.

More than 10,000 burials have taken place in Forest Lawn on 43 acres of its property. An additional 27 acres are available which are located in Edgewood city limits.



## Can You Identify Anyone In This Photograph?

The Erlanger Historical Society  
P.O. Box 18062  
Erlanger, KY 41018

would sure like the names of these gentlemen.

Barbara Moloney Moore of Park Hills donated this Photograph to the society along with a 1916 *Pioneer* Year Book. She only knew #1 was her Father and #2 was Dr. Coe. We think there was another half to the photograph. We do not know the year this photograph was taken, and it was not in the 1916 *Pioneer*. We know Dr. Coe graduated in 1925 from Erlanger High School. Lloyd Memorial High School was dedicated in September of 1928.

Call Patricia A. Hahn with any info:

859-727-8959

#1 <u>Edward (Bubbs) Moloney</u>	#2 <u>Dr. George (Buddy) Coe</u>	#3 _____	#4 _____
#5 _____	#6 _____	#7 _____	#8 _____
#9 _____	#10 _____	#11 _____	#12 _____
		#13 _____	#14 _____

## NOTICES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Call Your Legislator:

After a very successful day of legislative visits, it is now time to begin a calling campaign for the Historic Preservation Tax Credit. For each constituent phone call to the message line, your legislators receive a "green slip" with the details of that call. We want to have 1000 green slips of support in Frankfort. Please call your legislators to support the Historic Preservation Tax Credit. You have two options:

To leave a message for your legislator: Call (800) 372-7181. Leave a message saying, "I support HB 272, specifically the Historic Preservation Tax Credit." That's it! To speak directly with your legislator: Call (502) 564-7005. This is an opportunity to detail specific impacts that the Tax Credit would have on your community. You are discussing HB 272, Sections 150 & 151.

Please pass this message to all of your friends and neighbors. With each call, the likelihood of passage increases. Call today! As always if you have questions regarding the legislation, feel free to contact me directly. Joanna Hinton, Ex. Director Preservation KY, PO Box 262 Hodgenville, KY 42748. (270)358-9069 [www.preservationkentucky.org](http://www.preservationkentucky.org)

### New Genealogy Site:

Genealogybuff.com is a completely free site aimed toward new researchers with hopes to encourage more people to begin researching their family tree. A unique surname tool is on the main page which, when used, will give the user a plethora of database links to many online popular and obscure databases. A growing library of data files also exists in the library section of the website.

### Ninth Street United Methodist Church

You may be interested to know that the Ninth Street United Methodist Church, which is located at 16 East Ninth Street in Covington, was nominated by Bob Yoder, president of the Board of Preservation of Kentucky, to be recognized by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as one of the country's 11 most endangered historic sites.

Efforts are underway to save the structure, as well as the two houses (13 and 15 East Ninth Street) across the street from it. If you would like more information or are interested in sharing in the effort, please let me know. Communication is critical. Without communication, "we" perish.

### Old Time Radio 19<sup>th</sup> Cincinnati Convention

The 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Cincinnati Old-time Radio & Nostalgia Convention will again meet this spring at the Ramada Plaza Hotel, 11911 Sheraton Lane (Rte. 4 & I-275), Springdale, Ohio 45246 (513) 671-6600 Several former radio stars will be in attendance and performing their roles during the golden age of radio. Display tables of radio and early TV memorabilia will be featured, as well as radio re-enactments. For more information: Bob Burchett (888) 477-9112 or Robert Newman (513) 825-3662

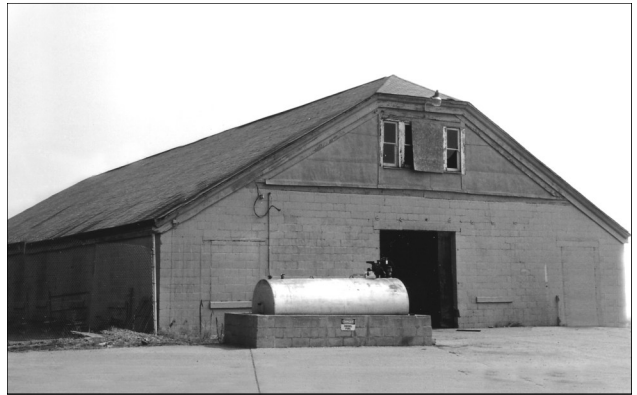
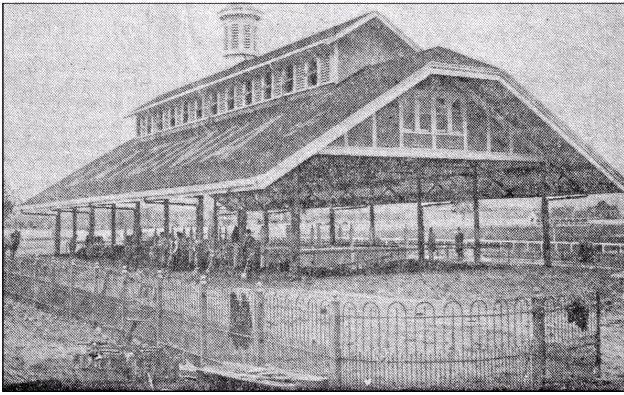
Dates and times are as follows: Friday, April 15th, 9 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Saturday, April 16th, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Dinner: Saturday 6 p.m. [reservation required]



## Then and Now



Horse-racing enthusiasts might recognize the structure above left. A “paddock” is where horses are gathered, saddled and paraded before each race. The paddock shown here was at the old Latonia Race Track. The track held its first race on July 9, 1883. Though the original track is long gone, the paddock, though renovated many times over the past 120 years, is the last of the original structures still standing on the property today. The photo on the left is circa 1900, the photo on the right was taken in 2003.

## *Monthly Mystery Photo*

*March*



*April*



To find out where they are, go to:

[www.roneinhaus.com/KCHSmysteryphoto.html](http://www.roneinhaus.com/KCHSmysteryphoto.html)

January was: 1554 Madison Avenue, Covington

February was: 324 Highway Avenue, Covington

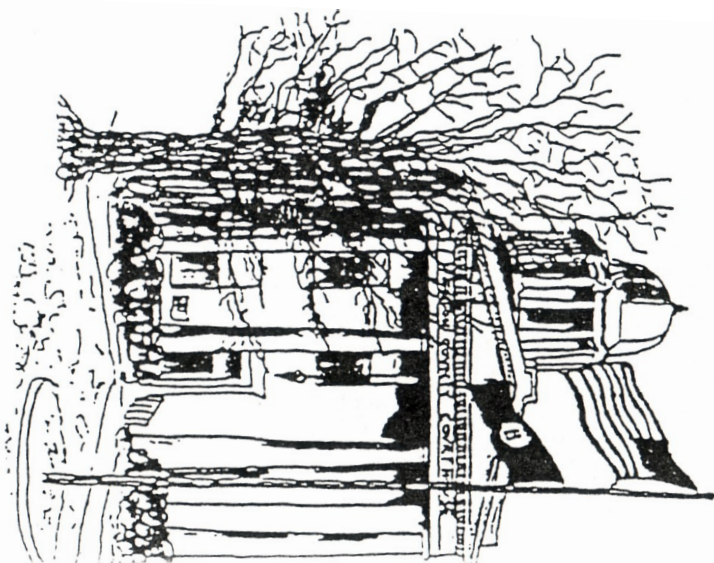
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Dedicated to preserving our heritage as the "Gateway to the South"

# KENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

March/April 2005



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