



# Bulletin of the Kenton County Historical Society

Website: [www.kentonlibrary.org/~histsoc](http://www.kentonlibrary.org/~histsoc) Email: [nkyhist@zoomtown.com](mailto:nkyhist@zoomtown.com)  
P.O. Box 641, Covington, Kentucky 41012-0641 (859) 491-4003

May / June

2013



Wolf Fletcher and Philip Goldsmith:  
Pioneers in Doll and Baseball Manufacturing  
in 19th Century Covington

Independence:  
A Kentucky County Seat

The Steinhauser Farm:  
Life in Southern Kenton County

# **Wolf Fletcher and Philip Goldsmith: Pioneers in Doll and Baseball Manufacturing in 19th Century Covington**

Vanessa Van Zant

Many doll and antique sports memorabilia collectors have heard of Goldsmith dolls and baseballs. Few know the story of Phillip Goldsmith and his partner, Wolf Fletcher, toy makers, of Covington, Kentucky. Their story is one of mid-nineteenth century Jewish immigrants who came together in a business partnership that unfortunately broke apart in the tough economy of the 1870s, leaving one man in a small family shop and liberating the other to found a toy manufacturing giant.

## **The Wolf Fletcher Story**

It is currently unknown what year Wolf Fletcher immigrated to the United States, but census records indicate that he was born in Poland around 1832. Though the early part of his life is still a mystery, much has been discovered about his life starting in the late 1850s through the end of his life in 1905.<sup>1</sup>

In 1856, Wolf Fletcher married Esther Goldstone in Hamilton County, Ohio. By 1860, he and Esther had moved to Natchitoches, Louisiana, where he was employed as a jeweler. At this time they had two children, the older, a girl named Harriett, age three, and Daniel, age one. Both children were born in Ohio and it seems, since Daniel was only one, that they had just arrived in Louisiana in 1860. However, Louisiana wasn't their permanent home and by 1870, Wolf and Esther had moved their family to Covington Kentucky.

Information given by the Fletchers on the 1870 census regarding the birthplace of their children indicates that they moved frequently. Their third child, Samuel, was born in Ohio around 1861; Isabelle, their fourth child, was born in Indiana around 1863; by about 1865, they were back in Kentucky where Esther gave birth to their fifth child, Lillie, only to have moved to Pennsylvania by 1867 where their sixth child Leon was born. By late 1869 or early

1870, they had arrived back to Kentucky, where they had their seventh child, Abraham, who was only four months old when the 1870 census was taken.<sup>2</sup>

Wolf Fletcher was living in Indiana in 1863, because he was found in a U.S. Tax Assessment List as well as an 1863 U.S. Civil War Draft Registration for Campbell, Montgomery, Indiana, though the details of his Civil War service have yet to be discovered.<sup>3</sup>

## **First Doll Factory in the United States Covington, Kentucky**

By 1872-1873, Wolf Fletcher had started making dolls in Covington, Kentucky. His first business was located at 714 Madison Avenue, a magnificent three-story building still standing today. There, Fletcher ran a retail shop and made and repaired dolls on the second floor. In an article "*Doll Making in America*" published in the December 1908 publication of *Playthings*, Fletcher's doll manufactory is noted as the first doll factory in the United States.<sup>4</sup>

Fletcher's store did very well, clearly evident through sales to the Goldsmith family, who operated a retail store in Cincinnati, Ohio. Philip Goldsmith purchased doll bodies from Fletcher from around 1870-1872. Goldsmith and his wife, Sophia, had moved to Cincinnati in 1869 to open a 25-cent store with Philip's brother, Henry Goldsmith. In Sophia Goldsmith's memoir, written not just for, but also to her children, she observed, "During that time, Mr. Fletcher, a manufacturer of doll bodies which were much purchased for doll heads. Later, the man manufactured base balls. We bought from this man for years, I think all he could manufacture."<sup>5</sup>

## **Partnership**

Eventually, according to Sophia, "The manufacturer Fletcher from Covington tried to induce



Above: 714 Madison Avenue, once home to the nation's first doll factory, now an office building.

On the cover: Goldsmith China doll head, circa 1890

*courtesy: Bob Webster*

*Cover image courtesy: Indiana State Museum*

papa to become a partner in manufacturing of doll bodies and baseballs, which he finally did.” This offer seems to have happened around 1874, with Goldsmith finally entering into partnership with Fletcher around 1875. The partners continued to conduct business at 714 Madison Ave. Sophia’s memoir explains that the decline in business in Philip’s retail store made Fletcher’s offer to go into business together an enticing offer, to which Goldsmith agreed sometime in 1875.<sup>6</sup>

The partnership started off well, and Fletcher and Goldsmith exhibited at the 1875 Cincinnati Exhibition. Fletcher was issued a patent early in 1876 for the manufacture of baseballs. The patent lan-

guage identified Fletcher as the inventor of the machine, and that he signed over half his rights to Philip Goldsmith.<sup>7</sup>

### Partnership Dissolved

The Goldsmith-Fletcher partnership only lasted for about three years, from 1875-1878, dissolving so that each partner could go his own separate way. Sophia Goldsmith’s memoir says that in January of 1878, Philip asked her to move to Covington, because they had no money, as the “\$5000 which he had put in the doll factory was lost,” and he had incurred another “\$800 debt besides”. Philip told his wife that “he had the knowledge to carry on the business, but he had paid dearly for it.” Sophia continued to say Philip told her that Fletcher swindled him while he was on the road. This claim of swindling has not been confirmed or denied, but from looking at city directories, it can be verified that the partnership had clearly ended by 1878. Some sources say that Fletcher sold his half of the business to Goldsmith, but that, too, is unconfirmed. At any rate, by 1878, both men had left 714 Madison Avenue and had opened up manufacturing facilities close by. In the 1878-79 *Covington City Directory*, Wolf Fletcher was listed as a toy and baseball manufacturer located at 716 Madison Ave, along with his sons Samuel and Daniel (Daniel was book keeper) and relative Simon Fletcher. Philip Goldsmith is listed at 701 Madison Ave, and is listed only as a baseball manufacturer.<sup>8</sup>

Both Fletcher and Goldsmith each moved their residences and business to Cincinnati Ohio; however, by 1898-1899, Fletcher was back in Covington, Kentucky, working with family members. At various times, several of Fletcher’s sons, Samuel, Abraham, Leon, and Rueben, were associated with either baseball or doll manufacturing, with Samuel being involved the longest. Wolf Fletcher’s toy making lasted from 1872 to 1895, for roughly 23 years with two patents issued: one in 1876 for a baseball manufacturing machine, and one in 1887 for a machine that stuffed doll bodies.<sup>9</sup>

In 1905, Mr. Fletcher passed away in Jewish Hospital, and is buried in the Walnut Hills United Jewish Cemetery. His wife, Esther, joined him when



Goldsmith's patented  
corset body for dolls

*Collector's Encyclopedia of Dolls*

she passed away in 1922. There are other Fletchers buried close by, a Joseph Fletcher and Simon Fletcher, but their connection to Wolf is unknown. Some of Wolf's children are buried alongside Simon and his wife Sophie, and Wolf, himself, is buried next to Joseph, which seems to indicate that there is some familial connection.<sup>10</sup>

### The Philip Goldsmith Story

Goldsmith's story begins in Chicago, with his wife Sophia. They struggled with expenses. While in Chicago, he ran an auction business. However, business was marginal and expenses increased, so the couple decided to leave Chicago. Philip left with his brother Henry for Cincinnati in 1869, where they opened a 25-cent retail store. Sophia followed with their children later in the year. Though they made enough to pay off debts and send money back to Sophia's family in Chicago, personal tragedy struck the Goldsmiths with the loss of three of their sons to scarlet fever between 1871 and 1873.<sup>11</sup>

After the partnership with Fletcher dissolved, Philip Goldsmith borrowed \$1000 from a Mr. Austerlitz in order to get his new business going. Sophia's memoir states that he "had saved a few sewing machines which was all he had left to start the new business with. He had to scheme in order to get the machines away from Fletcher." Between 1878 and 1880, the Goldsmiths continued to struggle economically. Sophia helped in the factory by sewing doll clothes and covers for baseballs, and also sewed much clothing for her own children from things like flour sacks.<sup>12</sup>

In 1880, Goldsmith opened a large factory in Covington at the corner of Russell and Harvey Streets that he named the American Toy Co. In 1885, the

business had become successful enough that he purchased a new home, furnished with a governess to help with the children. Unfortunately, the Russell and Harvey Street location burned down in 1890. Goldsmith relocated the company and continued to grow his successful toy making industry.

Philip Goldsmith drowned in 1894 while on vacation, leaving his sons to manage the family business. At this time, the company ceased making doll heads and doll bodies, and manufactured only baseballs under the name of P. Goldsmith and Sons. When the Goldsmith sons later purchased MacGregor Golf Company of Dayton, Ohio, the business name was changed to MacGregor-Goldsmith. By the 1940s, the Goldsmith name was dropped and the business was referred to solely as MacGregor. Ultimately, the baseball business was sold to the Brunswick Company.<sup>13</sup>

Though Goldsmith and Fletcher only worked together for three years in the late 1870s, the creation of their business is an unusual part of our region's history. Northern Kentucky was one of the earliest, if not the first area to manufacture dolls and baseballs in America. Both men were creative, innovative, and contributed to the development of dolls and sporting goods manufacturing. One operated a large successful company; the other, a small family business. Hopefully more will be discovered which will shed more light on what life was like for these Jewish immigrants of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### About the Author

Vanessa D. Van Zant earned a Bachelor of Arts in anthropology from Northern Kentucky University and attended the University of Cincinnati's Museum Studies program. She has been employed by the Cincinnati Museum Center since February 2005, where she holds the title of Director of the Cincinnati History Museum at Union Terminal. Vanessa currently resides in Cincinnati, but is a native of Berea, Kentucky. She is married to David Schumann and mother of two lovely daughters, Katherine and Gwendolyn Schumann.

*Endnotes on page 10*

# Independence: A Kentucky County Seat

John Boh

*In 2012 Kenton County celebrated the centennial of the second courthouse building in Independence - with food and drink, music and presentations, art and crafts, and library and county heritage displays.*

100 years ago county officials decided to replace the first Independence courthouse with the current one on the same site. The county had considered merely reducing court business there, or relocating it all to Covington. On October 21, 1912, this second courthouse and the new Independence School were dedicated with a crowd of possibly "5,000" enjoying burgoo. Way back in October 1840, the nearby post office (dating to 1837) and new town were named "Independence." The very first courthouse with bell tower was open for county business as early as February 1842.

## Roads to Independence

After Kentucky became a state in 1792, the legislature authorized a wagon road from Frankfort to Cincinnati. Campbell County justices of the peace soon ordered a road from the Licking River along the Banklick Creek watershed to the Dry Ridge. In 1839 the legislature chartered the Banklick Road Company to improve the route that would facilitate the new Independence county seat.

In January 1840 Kentucky's 19th county was created from a portion of Campbell County west of the Licking River. Around 7,000 whites and 700 slaves occupied the new county. The *Western Globe* in Covington reported the legislative act, but also political opposition to a provision that the county seat be located at the "center." Protestors organized a delegation which lobbied for an amendment. Opposition came mainly from the urban and commercial corridor near the Ohio River. Protestors included Covington mayor Moses V. Grant, merchants and lawyers, and landowners like Bartlett Graves and Thornton Timberlake. Timberlake and Graves resided on the route (now the Dixie Highway) from Covington through present day Florence to Lexington.

Political support for a county seat in the middle of the rural area came from two of the 11 justices of the peace nominated, from Major Elijah Williams and other landowners. Williams was a prosperous veteran of the War of 1812. These advocates to the south successfully defended the site required by the legislation.

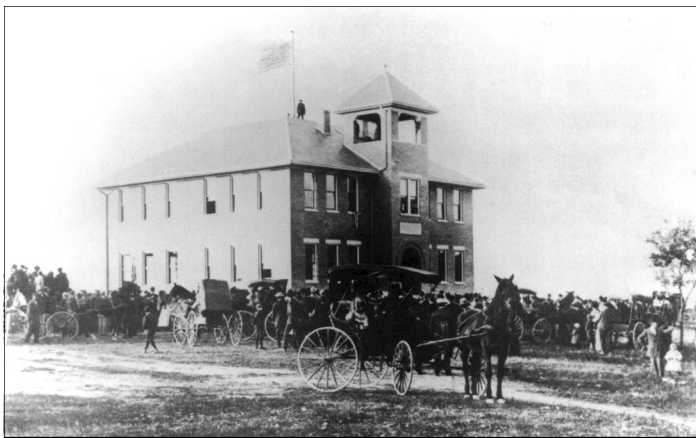
John McCollum, a settler from Maryland, donated five acres for the new courthouse. Justices of the Peace (appointed) oversaw county business until new law replaced them with the elected county judge. The first sheriff was Leonard Stephens (1791-1873).

A Confederate force of 1,500 in September 1862 occupied the town taking food and supplies. Guerillas later harassed Union troops guarding Independence. After the War political party conventions at Independence nominated John G. Carlisle and John White Stevenson for statewide offices. The Independence Cemetery opened in 1886.

Lawyers and other prosperous citizens often resided in Covington, but kept a family farm, a rural retreat, or investment land, to the south. The new county seat of Independence was convenient for farm families in horse and buggy doing civic business, shopping and trading livestock. It was a stopover when driving or hauling livestock to Covington and Cincinnati.

Like other county seats, Independence hosted monthly "court days" presided over by the county judge. Residents came to buy and sell animals, replenish farm and household supplies. Merchants enjoyed it. Politicians addressed onlookers, lambasting opponents, and taking stands on hot issues with oratorical displays. But transportation and other changes led to discontinuation of "court days" in Kentucky.

In 1867 and 1905 voters declined to close the county offices permanently in Independence. A newspaper described the vote in 1905 as proof that



Dedication of Independence Graded and High School

*courtesy: Kenton County Public Library*

the county would not accept the corrupt Republican Party political machine then dominating the city of Covington.

Schools also made Independence a civic center. To fulfill a new state law requiring one public high school in each county, the Kenton County School Board in 1911 opened Independence High School. It took over a two-room private high school but then also built a new six room school costing \$10,000 where both high school students and local grade school students attended. In 1938 Simon Kenton High School replaced the one in Independence.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, Covington was the real population and commercial center. The influx of German and Irish immigrants, the new residents from Ohio, and commercial expansion made a second courthouse and records system inevitable. In 1851 the legislature authorized certain county courthouse business in Covington. In April 1858 the county judge presided over the first county court session. County deed records in Covington begin in 1860. Thus Kenton County (like Campbell) has dual county seats.<sup>2</sup>

The Louisville, Cincinnati & Lexington Railroad opened in 1869 along the Banklick Creek valley. But on Independence Station Road it was 1.5 miles to the railroad depot. Better access to more modern alternatives also drew residents away from the narrow downtown reached on winding, hilly two lane roads.

## Independence – now a center of suburbia

During a residential fire in 1937, Covington firefighters could find no adequate water supply and two deaths occurred. Soon Independence acquired a fire engine and dug cisterns. The population in the 1950s was about 300. In 1960, Independence still conducted city business from the county courthouse. There was a town marshal and part time patrolman. A lack of water and sewage service prevented growth.

In 1961 the first public water lines and fire hydrants were installed. The county built Fire Station “2” on Cox Road in 1974 and Fire Station “3” on Richardson road in 1976 for the 80-member volunteer department. Only a system of “pledges” funded the fire department until establishment of a tax district in 1979.<sup>3</sup> Development accelerated in the 1960s with annexation of the Cherokee Shopping Plaza on Taylor Mill Road. Independence acquired a building for city business in the 1970s, and expanded the police department. The city grew to five square miles with a population of 2,000. Independence merged with Ridgeview Heights in the 1980s. New subdivisions sprung up on old farmland surrounding the city. Independence felt compelled to annex to prevent encroachment by Covington. It also desired more access to nearby sewer and water lines. The 2000 census counted 14,982. By 2009 Independence occupied about 23 square miles across about the “middle third” of the county, the largest city in square mileage. In 1995 a new branch of the Kenton County Public Library opened at Independence.<sup>4</sup> It was replaced later by the Durr Library branch at Nicholson.<sup>5</sup> Pleasure Isle Swim Club, a popular playground and landmark north of Independence at Banklick Creek, was bulldozed in the late 1990s when Highway 17 was straightened and widened from two lanes and also re-routed around the Independence Courthouse and town square.<sup>6</sup> Between 2000 and 2005 Independence was the fastest growing Northern Kentucky city.<sup>7</sup>

## Recollections, Ben Rivard, age 90 (1988)

Ben Rivard (Independence High School, 1916) listed tollgates he remembered from about 1908: At Chisel Bridge on old 17 (the remnant still

visible in 1988); Atwood beyond Independence; at the top of hill from Covington; in Erlanger near the Dusing Ice House; the town of Devon (then called Dixon's station); at Walton near the railroad tracks; but none at Independence.

As elsewhere horse and buggy travel faded from the scene. Omnibuses and soon regular bus service provided transportation. Residents saw Model Ts, Internationals, and Sears mail order cars. The real influx of automobiles came around World War I. In 1919 the county located a rock crusher at the top of "Fleming's Hill." Workers loaded rocks on a steam driven tram pulling them from the Banklick Creek up a steep bank to the road bed.

Rivard said that telephone service started in 1903, electrical service in 1925 and a tiny post office operated in a grocery store. Businesses once included "the town's tobacco warehouse," two saloons, a grocery and dry goods store. Farmers ordered new machinery at the Independence hardware store. Independence seemed to always lack a feed store, but farmers regularly weighed their hay, grain and live-stock on a large scale opposite the courthouse. Albert Stephens owned one of the saloons, across from the Courthouse (dilapidated but still standing in 1988). The courthouse still hosts some fiscal court meetings. It keeps the real estate, probate, marriage and voters records from south of Banklick Creek. Covington has the civil and criminal trials.

The Christian Church parking lot in 1988 had been the site of a public elementary school operated before 1911. Two doors away C. V. Lucy and his mother owned and operated a private school. Lucy taught high school level; his mother taught elementary level. In 1911 John Hogrefe was the first ever and only high school graduate from this private school. In 1912 the daughter of Atwood Bird became the second high school graduate in Independence.

The new Independence Graded and High School building at Independence Station Road and Madison Pike took students from the surrounding district, from the southern part of the county, as far as Visalia. Probably about "100" elementary students occupied four rooms on the first floor of the new



Madison Pike, across from the courthouse  
*courtesy: Kenton County Public Library*

building in 1912. "Thirty-five" high school students used two second floor rooms adjoining an auditorium. Six teachers worked in the six classrooms.

For years the same teacher gave the High School entrance exam which serious students took as if applying for college or medical school. Tests were tough. Rivard said that he benefited from the high standards. High school students took two years of Algebra and geometry, ancient, U. S. history and English history, four years of Latin, two of German, physics, and American and English literature.

Later several rural districts were merged and county one-room county schools were closed. High school students began attending the new Simon Kenton in 1938. In 1951 Kenton Elementary opened. Rivard said that students still used outhouses when the elementary school closed in 1953. In 1916 Marie Binder, Augustus Adams and Benjamin Rivard graduated from Independence High School.<sup>8</sup>

### **Independence: A Constant Presence**

The population of Independence was "153" in 1912; "300" in 1950; and 24,752 in 2010. The 1883 atlas shows roads, railroads, topography, waterways, locations of land owners, and towns and town squares, including Independence, on sectional maps. The 1914 map shows farm boundaries, owners' names and acreage. The "Images of America" booklet "Independence" is loaded with photos and images of a rural town and countryside.<sup>9</sup>

*Endnotes on page 10*

# The Steinhauser Farm: Life in Southern Kenton County

Kaitlin Mullikin

*Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund Board (KHLCFB) funds are generated through the sale of nature license plates in Kentucky, the state portion of the un-mined minerals tax, and environmental fines. Land is acquired only from willing sellers. The board's mission is to award funding for the purchase and preservation of selected natural areas in the Commonwealth to protect rare and endangered species and migratory birds, to save threatened areas of natural importance, and to provide areas for public use, outdoor recreation and education.*

Visitors to the newly acquired heritage land in Morning View, Kenton County, Kentucky, quickly grasp why German immigrants settled the area and left a long agricultural tradition that will now be honored through preservation by the Kenton County Conservation District.<sup>1</sup> The village, named by railroaders as "where they have the beautiful morning view," possesses a rolling green scenery that is breathtaking at any time of day.<sup>2</sup> Once on the heritage acreage, besides the sound of an occasional passing car, one hears almost no sounds of civilization. Looking around at the physical remnants of farm life, it is not hard to travel back in time to the area's agricultural past.

## An American Family

The heritage property at Morning View sits on what was once the Steinhauser family farm. True to what most Americans identify as the American spirit, the Steinhausers emigrated from Germany to start a new life in the United States and clearly made the most of their surroundings. Their use of the property is evidenced by the old barn, complete with home fashioned agricultural equipment; a garage, likely used to repair the village's automobiles; and a root cellar hidden just yards away from where catalpa trees outline the long-gone frame of the once-bustling store.

The Steinhauser patriarch, John was born in Germany in May 1829. He immigrated to the United States in 1853 at 23 years of age and by 1858, had set-

tled in Kenton County. In 1858, 16 year-old Matilda Feier immigrated from Germany and married John Steinhauser the same year. They had at least two children: a boy, Dennis, and another child who disappears from records.<sup>3</sup>

The Steinhauser family farm was home to John and Matilda and six generations of descendants, including son Dennis and his wife Mary, and three children Norma, Lea and Frederick.<sup>4</sup> John and Matilda's grandchildren, J.J. and J.W., began living with them as well. By 1920, J.J. was married and living on the property with his wife Adah.<sup>5</sup> J.J. and Adah had two children, Margaret and Wilmer. J.J. passed away in 1966. Wilmer also lived on the property with his wife Beatrice until his death in the '80s. Beatrice died in 2007, leaving the property to Aldin, who at the time was living in Atlanta, Georgia. It was from Alvin that the Kenton County Conservation District bought the land.<sup>6</sup>

Still fresh in the community's mind are the memories of Beatrice and Wilmer. Beatrice was the principal of Piner Elementary, and a beloved educator in the community. Wilmer ran the garage, specializing in John Deere tractors. After Wilmer had passed, one family joked to their son who had just began work on a John Deere, "You'd better not start that thing up, or old Wilmer's gonna rise up from the grave." Wilmer and Beatrice's son Aldin was a traveling photographer. A celebrity in the town, many of the children at the time believed him to be a celebrity known all over the world.<sup>7</sup>

In the 154 years that the Steinhausers were living on the Morning View property in Kenton County, they made many contributions to the local community. They ran a dairy farm as well as a store on their property.<sup>8</sup> There was a garage on the property as well. The Steinhauser family, along with another local family, the Jennings, donated the land

for the establishment of St. Mary of the Assumption Catholic Parish.<sup>9</sup> For over a century and a half, the Steinhauser family played an important role in the development of Morning View.

### Village with a View

Morning View still retains its small town charm, a tiny river town that is close to Pendleton County, and is often lumped in with Demossville. Actually in Kenton County, Morning View's elevation is 541 feet and was once known as Mullins' Station. The Post Office was established in 1855 with George H. Mullins postmaster.<sup>10</sup> Morning View's accommodation train made its first trip on May 7, 1877. This train left from Morning View at 6 a.m. and arrived in Covington at 7:15 a.m. In the evening, it left Covington at 6:15 p.m. and arrived in Morning View at 7:30. This train afforded, "business men in Covington and Cincinnati excellent opportunities to reside in the county."<sup>11</sup>

### Agriculture in Kenton County

The Steinhauser farm is exemplary of the strong agricultural heritage of Morning View, Kentucky. Remnants of this heritage still exists on the property. On the Southeast edge of the farm, a stone root cellar exists near where the old store used to be. Further north, the old barn still exists with a small milking parlor, complete with metal harnesses to hold cattle in place while milking. Like many Kentucky farmers during this time period, the Steinhausers made the most of what they had on hand. Their troughs are made from hollowed out logs. A map from above shows the strategic placing of canals and ponds so that cattle could have easy access to water from any location on the property.

The Steinhausers' 154-year legacy is not only relatable for citizens of Morning View, but for those of us with a familial heritage in Kentucky. There is without a doubt, something a little different in the attitudes of farmers and children of farmers that make for a fearless handling of obstacles, and a knack for making the best of what is offered. The Kenton County Conservation district plans to honor that heritage by preserving the land that was farmed and traded on by immigrants who started their new lives in the United States in beautiful Morning View, KY.

### About the Author

Kaitlin Mullikin developed this story for a class in the Public History program at NKU where she recently graduated with her masters. She is the Local History Public Service Associate for the Boone County Public Library, and recently developed QR codes for historical sites and buildings in the county. This resource links the library catalog which enables patrons to access information on their smartphones or computers to enhance historical topics by downloading the Microsoft Tag app at <http://gettag.mobi>. She has also attached these codes to historic highway markers enabling drivers to stop and access additional information about the subject on each marker.

1. "Morning View Land New Link in Licking River Corridor"
2. Rennick, Robert M., "Morning View"
3. 1900 United States Census
4. 1910 United States Census
5. 1920 United States Census
6. Deed of Sale from Aldin Steinhauser
7. Mr. and Mrs. Bill Schneider, interview by author
8. 1883 Atlas of Boone, Kenton, and Campbell Counties, Kentucky
9. Mills, Betty Bergman, and Neuspickle, Mary Roth, A History of St. Mary of the Assumption, page 3
10. Covington Journal, November 24, 1855
11. The Ticket, May 8, 1877

## Letters to the Editor

In the *March/April 2013 Bulletin*, I was pleased to find the letter from our dear friend, the talented Clarice "Bea Hyve" Gordon. Her challenge is a worthwhile one so we are sending our \$50 to help you. I do so admire Karl Lietzenmayer's research and writing and my wife and I find the *Bulletin* a quiet treasure which creeps into our lives when least expected, but needed. *Michael Shinkle. Ph.D Melbourne, Florida*

Thank you for sending my new member packet for the. I'm writing to tell you about the "wow" moment I got. You enclosed a copy of the *January/February 2013 Bulletin*, in which there was a story about baseball player Joe Sommer. The story indicated that, according to the 1900 City Directory, Sommer and his brothers owned the Central Hotel. A picture of the former Central Hotel, at the northeast corner of Pike and Washington Streets was printed on page 9. The coincidence is that my great-great grandfather, Joseph Geiser, is listed in the 1890 Directory as the proprietor of the Central Hotel. According to the directories, my great-great grandfather also owned the C&O and KCRR Restaurant and Sample Room at Pike and Russell (1894). *Lisa Beringhaus Cincinnati, Ohio*

# A Look Back at The Headlines

An on-going feature reliving local headlines.

This issue features:

The Covington Journal – January 8, 1870.

## Madison Street Baptist Church

“The Madison Street Baptist Church of this city has just completed, at the corner of Madison and Robins, a handsome house of worship, capable of comfortably seating four- or five-hundred persons. The house is of gothic style, with a tower 60 feet tall on the south corner. The doorways are of gothic formation, each having a vestibule of eight by ten feet, through which the main auditorium is entered. The ceiling and sides are done in the highest style of frescoing, and reflect great credit on the artist. The house is 40x65 feet in the main audience room, with rooms on each side of the pulpit 12x14 feet, which are designed for the pastor’s study, Bible class, and infant room, with a perfect gem of a library room immediately in the rear of the pulpit. The pews have fine walnut ends and back rails, and once cushioned, will be all that could be desired. The two front doors are on Madison street, the principle thoroughfare of our growing city, and on which the street cars pass every few minutes.

The congregation of this church is comprised of some 35 or 40 members, but few of whom have been able to do much for the purchase of the lot or the building the house. Yet a noble spirit of devotion to the cause of Christ, and sincere desire to promote the Baptist interest in our city, have been the prevailing spirit of the little band of brethren. For the last 12 years, this little church has been urging its way, amid the most unfavorable circumstances; yet at no time have they despaired, but looking up at the Great Source of success, have now their long-delayed hopes more than gratified in the thought that tomorrow morning, at eleven o’clock, their beautiful house of worship will be dedicated to God, by Rev. Dr. Jeffrey, Ninth Street Baptist Church, Cincinnati. The citizens of Covington are cordially invited.”

## Fletcher/Goldschmidt - Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>United States Federal Census 1860. <http://ancestry.com> (accessed on September 23, 2011); United States Federal Census 1870. <http://ancestry.com> (accessed on September 23, 2011); United States Federal Census 1880. <http://ancestry.com> (accessed on September 23, 2011)

<sup>2</sup>1856 Hamilton County Marriage License; 1860 United States Federal Census; 1870 United States Federal Census.

<sup>3</sup>1863 U.S. IRS Tax Assessment List. 1863 U.S. Civil War Draft Registration for Campbell, Montgomery Indiana. Both accessed on ancestry.com on November 5, 2011.

<sup>4</sup>Covington City Directories 1872-1875. Kenton County Library; Playthings, *Doll Making in America*, December 1908, p. 118. Cincinnati Historical Society Library.

<sup>5</sup>Sophia Goldsmith to her children. Letter called “In Remembrance of my past life.” p. 34 and 35. Cincinnati Historical Society Library.

<sup>6</sup>Sophia Goldsmith to her children. Letter called “In Remembrance of my past life.” Page 42 and 46. Cincinnati Historical Society Library;

<sup>7</sup>Coleman A. Elisabeth. *Dolls: Makers and Marks*. Washington, D.C. 1966. P. 23. Cincinnati Historical Society Library.

<sup>8</sup>Sophia Goldsmith to her children. Letter called “In Remembrance of my past life.” P. 54. Cincinnati Historical Society Library; Covington City Directory 1878-1879 page 103 & 403. Kenton County Public Library; Playthings, *Doll Making in America*, December 1908. p.118. Cincinnati Historical Society.

<sup>9</sup>1872-1899 Covington City Directories. Kenton County Public Library; United States Patent and Trademark Office website <http://patimg2.uspto.gov/>; 1872-1899 Covington City Directories. Kenton County Public Library.

<sup>10</sup>United Jewish Cemetery Website <http://www.jcemcin.org/>; University of Cincinnati Digital Resource Commons <http://drc2.libraries.uc.edu/handle/123456789/302853?show=full>.

<sup>11</sup>Sophia Goldsmith, Glimpses of my immigrant life, p. 8 and 10. Cincinnati Historical Society.

<sup>12</sup>Sophia Goldsmith to her children. Letter called “In Remembrance of my past life.” p. 51. Cincinnati Historical Society Library; Sophia Goldsmith, Glimpses of my immigrant life, p. 15. Cincinnati Historical Society Library.

<sup>13</sup>Coleman A. Elisabeth. *Dolls: Makers and Marks*. Washington, D.C. 1966. p.24; Sophia Goldsmith, Glimpses of my immigrant life, p. 18. Cincinnati Historical Society Library.; Coleman A. Elisabeth. *Dolls: Makers and Marks*. Washington, D.C. 1966. p.24; Phyllis Levison’s notes for her June 21, 1991 Speech, p.6. Cincinnati Historical Society Library.

## Independence - Endnotes

1. Greg Perkins, *Independence High School, The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky*, edited by Paul A. Tenkotte and James C. Claypool, Lexington, KY, University of KY Press, 2009, page 477

2. Gailen and Debra Bridges, *Images of America: Independence*, Charleston, SC, Arcadia Publishing, 2011; Greg Perkins, *Independence High School, The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky*, edited by Paul A. Tenkotte and James C. Claypool, Lexington, KY, University of KY Press, 2009, pages 475-477

3. Jim Reis, *Independence Firemen Note 50 Years*, *Kentucky Post*, 14 September, 1987, page 4K

4. Dedication Program, Independence Branch, Kenton County Public Library, May 21, 1995

5. Wayne Onkst, *Kenton County Public Library, The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky*, edited by Paul A. Tenkotte and James C. Claypool, Lexington, KY, University of KY Press, 2009, pages 508-509

6. Chris Meiman, *Pleasure Isle Swim Club, The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky*, edited by Paul A. Tenkotte and James C. Claypool, Lexington, KY, University of KY Press, 2009, pages 718-719

7. Perkins, pages 475-477

8. Interview with Ben Rivard, December 20, 1988, by John Boh

9. An Atlas of Boone, Kenton, and Campbell Counties, Kentucky, Philadelphia, PA, Lake and Company, 1883’ Map of Kenton County, Kentucky, Fiscal Court, 114; Bridges, *Images of America, Independence*

## Then and Now



Left: Frisch's located along Dixie Highway in Ft. Mitchell circa 1960. Right: same view showing small shopping center which replaced the restaurant in the 1990s. Note Greyhound Tavern in at the left.

Left photo courtesy Kenton County Public Library. Right photo courtesy Dr. Richard Cardosi.

## Mystery Photo

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



ANSWER:

Floor mosaic at the entrance to Woolworths Department Store, once located on the southeast corner of 7th and Madison, Covington.

photo courtesy Dr. Richard Cardosi

# Kenton County Historical Society

May/June 2013

ARTICLES FROM BACK ISSUES ARE INDEXED ON OUR WEBSITE!

Published bi-monthly by  
**The Kenton County Historical Society**  
Membership, which includes the *Bulletin*,  
\$20.00 per year

President..... Donald Fowler  
Vice-President..... Robert Webster  
Treasurer..... W. Terry Averbeck  
Secretary..... John H. Boh

#### Board Members:

Dr. Richard Cardosi, George Gressle,  
Dennis Harrell, Mike Holliday, Richard  
Johanneman, Mary Elise Regan,  
Joseph Hinds (Ex Officio), and  
Karl Lietzenmayer (Ex Officio)

## I Bet You Didn't Know

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

May 3, 1986: Karen Easerday, music educator at the University of Louisville, became the first female to sound the bugle to start the Kentucky Derby.

May 4, 1961: The \$50,000 Floral Clock was dedicated behind the capitol building in Frankfort by Gov. Bert T. Combs.

May 15, 1780: A petition was presented to the Continental Congress asking that Kaintucke County be made a separate state.

May 17, 1982: Jeannie Walker, the first woman to be elected sheriff in the nation, died in Barbourville at the age of 93.

May 23, 1928: Rosemary Clooney, first female vocalist to be featured on the cover of TIME, was born in Maysville.

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

## Programs and Notices

### Roebblingfest

Saturday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, Park and Court streets, Covington; music and other performances; food and drink booths as well as displays by regional, county, city offices and displays by arts, crafts and other cultural/heritage organizations. Fun for the entire family!

### Behringer-Crawford 2013 Summer Music Series

Thursday evening concerts; \$5.00 for adults; \$3 for children (3 – 12 years); one free drink ticket with admission for BCM members; doors open at 6:00; music 7:00 - 9:00. Coffee from Reality Tuesday Café, beverages from Trauth Dairy, food sold by sponsors of local youth and community organizations coordinated by Colonial Cottage; adult drinks at cash bar Behringer-Crawford Museum, 1600 Montague Rd, Devou Park, Covington, KY 41011

May 16th: **Bluegrass in the Bluegrass**: lets the *Comet Bluegrass All-stars* throw the music season into overdrive!

June 6th: **Got the Spirit!...** *The Brotherhood* does and you will too.

June 13th: **Beer and Brass** with the *Brass Fellowship* is as much a part of summer as dandelions, lightning bugs and the old fishing hole.

June 20th: **Club Behringer** turns up the heat as *Mike Wade & Davita* return with their band and a night of red hot jazz.

June 27th: **Takin' Care of Business** was how the King described it. *Paul Halverstadt as Elvis* and his band will leave no doubt.

July 11th: **Tulu Redux 2013**. Back in the day these guys would be playing at Bobby Harper's Club TULU. Now these Kentucky music legends are playing for BCM and you.

July 18th: **Bourbon and Blues** and *The Bluebirds* back together again...and this time with reinforcements!

July 25th: **Let the Good Times Roll!** with beads, rub boards concertinas and the bayou energy of *Robin Lacy & DeZydeco*.

August 1st: **Cruisin'** to the drive-in, around the burger stand or down the road, the top is down and *The Avenues* are better than any mix tape.

Visit [www.bcmuseum.org](http://www.bcmuseum.org) or call (859) 491-4003 for further information.

### Behringer-Crawford Exhibits

"Harlan Hubbard: The Complexity of Simplicity" – to May 5<sup>th</sup>. Exhibit programs: **Wednesday April 24, 12:00 noon** – celebrate KY Writers Day with a Brown Bag Book Discussion; BCM staff will lead a discussion about *Shantyboat* by Harlan Hubbard; **Saturday April 27** – Harlan Hubbard symposium; BCM will host several presentations about Harlan and Anna Hubbard, focusing on his writings, art and life with Anna; **April 28** - Writers Workshop, Contemplative Creativity, led by Kelly Moffett, Assistant Professor of English at NKU. Explore how to be attentive to the world and how to describe it in the manner of Harlan Hubbard.

"Northern Kentucky Music Legends" - June 2 to September 1. Almost 100 persons have been nominated as "legends" for musical achievements and contributions to local musical heritage. Articles about the exhibit have appeared in the Enquirer and Community Recorder. Music legends organizers have contacted WNKU about additional promotion. Included in the exhibit will be recorded interviews of several music legends.

### Seckatary Hawkins?

Who is Seckatary Hawkins? Learn more or share your experiences at the **2013 National Meeting, June 15th, at the Behringer-Crawford Museum**. All interested may attend, including you! For more information, contact Diane at 859-360-0529, or go to [www.seckatary.com](http://www.seckatary.com)