

MONTGOMERY MEMORIES



August 2022

Photo courtesy of CDPL

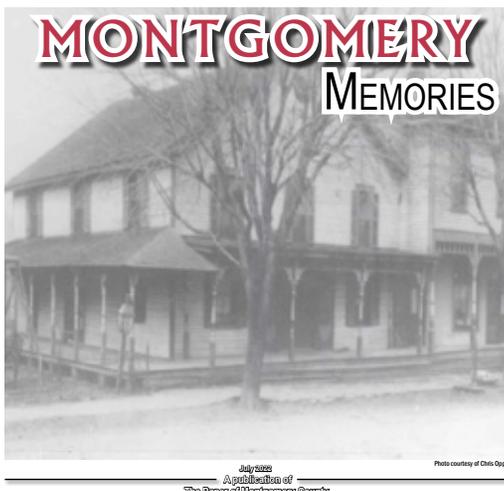
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Page Listing

Contributors & Such	2
August Feature - Karen Zach.....	3
Odds & Ends - Karen Zach.....	4
Nifty - Joy Willett.....	5
Hunt & Son Funeral Home	5
Backstage Stars - Chuck Clore.....	6
Poetry and Puzzles - Joy Willett	7
Burkhart Funeral Home	7
Karen's Kitchen	8
County Connection - Karen Zach	9
Museums	10
Grandcestors - Karen Zach	11
Nucor	12

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Contributing Writers



KAREN BAZZANI ZACH has been a contributor of local historical articles for 40 years. A native Montgomery Countian, she grew up in Waveland, married Jim Zach, and received her grad degree from IU while working at CDPL as Children's Librarian. Karen authored one of the newer county histories, *Crawfordsville: Athens of Indiana*. After teaching English at Turkey Run HS for 21 years, she retired and is now enjoying visiting with her two children (Jay and Suzie), writing, reading, doing genealogy, and grandkidding!



CHUCK CLORE After a lifelong career in visual communications, Eureka! Chuck discovered that noodling the nuances of the written word can be just as much fun as tweaking a font into an iconic logo. Montgomery Memories is the perfect venue to explore his treasured C-ville's east-end recollections. An Athenian boomer from the class of 65, he delights in graphic design, cartooning, and story telling. Chuck's articles reveal how a CHS senior corduroy artist eventually evolved into an award winning designer and aspiring writer.



JOY WILLETT was born in Crawfordsville and spent much of her childhood in southern Montgomery County. She has lived her adult life in Indiana, Arizona, and California. She currently lives with her husband, David, in Monterey County California. As an amateur genealogist, she has done extensive research and has written her paternal and maternal family histories. In addition to genealogy, Joy enjoys writing poetry, painting, and traveling.



KELSEY CURRAN is one of the paginators for the Paper of Montgomery County. She edits and helps complete the daily news as well as the Montgomery Memories and Sports Report every month for viewers to enjoy. She was born in a small town in Illinois and moved to Crawfordsville in 2016. She has three children. She enjoys spending time with her husband and kids, reading and baking.





August Feature: Line 'em Up

Karen Bazzani Zach, Montgomery Memories

Line 'em up, move 'em out – bankers! Yep, Montgomery County has had many, some super well-known like Mark Caress, Joe Timmons, Herb Morrison, Isaac Elston and others less readily recognized – well, the list goes on! In this article, you will read about some of our many MoCo bankers! (in no particular order, fame, age, nor money-oriented, but just because I enjoyed reading about them and thought I'd share!)

First up is Albert J. Armantrout who for more than 50 years was with the Farmers State Bank at New Market. He began a few days before Christmas in 1913 as an assistant cashier but a bit more than a year later he was made full time cashier. Fourteen years thereafter he worked up to his long-time job, president of the bank (Jan 1929) and remained such until January 1965. That is an amazing career. He was active in New Market, as well, serving as town clerk for quite a time, treasurer of the NM Methodist Church (over 60 years); director of the NM Telephone Company as well - probably a lot more but those are the ones I know! He was a MoCo native born ten days after Valentine's in 1879, son of James and Sara Childers Armantrout and married Mary Ethel Armstrong in May 1902. A son, Leroy, survived him with three grandsons and eight great grandchildren. Buried Masonic Cemetery (Oak Hill Grant Avenue).

David Arthur Groves was cashier and vice president of the First National Bank for many years but began his career at the Waynetown State Bank and employed in Hillsboro, Wingate and Attica. In 1912, he began his work with FNB and continued there until he retired the very last day of 1952. He was active in the First Christian Church, Kiwanis, F&AM and various other activities. Buried Greenlawn Cemetery, Wingate, passing in Nov 1965, just about a month before his 90th birthday.

It was the Waynetown State Bank that prompted Verne Livengood's career in 1892 (see photo furnished by Jan Fay, my Waynetown guru, courtesy of Marianne Dazey which shows DC Moore – see below who was bank president and Ernest Livengood, board member – bank pic provided by Jan, as well – thanks so much). In 1922, he went to Crawfordsville cashiering and serving as the Citizens National Bank president, then VP at Elston Bank & Trust when it merged (and highly remodeled) with Citizens National in 1972. He



much of that time. Several lodges were tallied in his repertoire: Masons, OES, K of P, as well as Kiwanis. A Waynetown HS graduate, and Indianapolis Business College, he was born Aug 7, 1872 and passed in March of 1954, having married Mary Groves (sister to David Arthur above) in 1900. They were parents of a son, Harry Santford. Mary and Verne are buried at Waynetown Masonic Cemetery.

Both William Rider, and his son by the same name were cashiers at the Waynetown State Bank which the senior helped establish in 1892 and served until his death. Love that in 1930 when they celebrated the 38th anniversary of the bank that Mary Cowan and Helen Groves, two women worked as tellers and bookkeepers at the bank. Sr. was born Sept 12, 1837 and served in the Civil War for three years as a sgt in Co D Indiana 6th Cavalry. Shortly after the war he married Margaret Fields. She died young and he married Emma Epperson. Two children were born to each of the wives, one passing young in each case, thus he left two children and four grandchildren at his passing. Sr was born a poor boy but with labor and business sense amassed quite a fortune, beginning in the hardware business then involved with the bank. Son William Epperson Rider served in WWI, worked in the Waynetown Bank, then served as President of the Ben Hur Life Association as well as being the State Bank Examiner. Twice married, I don't believe he had children.

One of the niftiest sources on the GenWeb page came from Dave Friend and is a booklet of the Browns Valley Bank which was established in 1905. Inside it lists the directors (John W. Todd, president; Jacob Woolver-



ton, Vice, Leslie McLoed, cashier and Thomas F. Patton; John H. Rusk; Israel Wilkinson and James Clements). Those mentioned were stockholders along with likely a dozen others. Todd was said to have lead an honest existence and by such to have obtained the confidence and great respect of all who knew him. He was born here Nov 11, 1841, son of Johnson and Ruth Vancleave Todd who had settled in MoCo about ten years prior, Johnson Todd having gained quite a reputation raising shorthorn cattle. His son began in that line as well but once the bank began he put his love, energy and expertise to work there.

Let's not forget the ladies! Emma Catherine Vancleave Moore, daughter of Ralph and Catherine (Coons) Vancleave, wife of Dennis Carlton Moore, was president of the Waynetown State Bank. Born Dec 13, 1871, she was the last survivor (dying just at her 89th birthday) of seven children. At the time Emma became president of WSB, she was only one of seven women bank presidents in the whole United States. Her husband, Dennis Carlton Moore was president when he died at age 82 in June of 1945. He taught for 15 years, served as Waynetown Trustee, was VP of the bank from 1900-1921 then served as president until his death. A wow business man he owned elevators at Waynetown and Veedersburg plus several farms. He and Emma were very involved with Culver Hospital and gifted it at one time with \$20,000. He was generous with local churches as well, Emma continuing their yearly \$100 gift to each in Waynetown. He wasn't just involved in Waynetown's bank but also was a director of both Crawfordsville Trust and Citizen's National Bank. Emma followed in his footsteps as president of the bank until 1952, stepping down to VP and finally served as one of the directors, along with a director of the CNB as Dennis had done. No children of their own, she was close to her seven nieces and nephews. The Moores have a nice but not pretentious tombstone in the Waynetown Masonic Cemetery.

Rest In Peace you two bankers, as well as all of the above!

Odds & Ends – Collected & Commented on by Karen Bazzani Zach

Usually, I have some rhyme and/or reason to the Odds and Ends but this month, the banking theme proved a bit harder than I had anticipated, so here ya' go – and keep in mind, this article is truly “Odd!”

To begin with, the Image Database at the Crawfordsville District Public Library has several pictures of banks (newer and older ones) not only in C'ville but other places as well (Linnsburg, New Ross, Ladoga, Wingate and even Kirkpatrick). Just an FYI. I so appreciate the CDPL database of photos when we put together almost every MM.

The Sept 30, 1898 Crawfordsville Weekly Journal explained a new possibility to money saving – similar to the Post Office Savings Bank of Canada – where the government was responsible for the citizen's money. America's new Money Order Law “now made it possible to issue Money Orders and each post office in the US could issue money orders to use to pay bills, buy groceries or purchase” just about anything! Reflecting Canada's idea the PO Money Order could be made-out to the individual and renew it again the next year as a money saving plan.

When the Farmer's Bank of Wingate filed articles of incorporation (CWJ 23 Aug 1901) with the state, Wingate's namesake did not appear as one of the stockholders. Quite a teasing went on and finally with John Wingate's usual finesse (he had spent most of his energy and money bringing the railroad to town) he told the tax commissioner, “Well, a man shouldn't be chastised if he hasn't the money to buy bank stock!” End of conversation and the teasing.

In 1852, Indiana established the First and Second Bank of Indiana, allowing individuals to own and finance private banking institutions (Athens of Indiana p 49). Major Isaac C. Elston and Henry S. Lane way back in May of 1853 as partners began the firm Elston & Lane which was the prelim to the more infamous Elston Bank (according to a brief history Isaac Elston Jr wrote in 1875) with Bennett W. Engle as their cashier. When Lane ran for Governor (1860) he retired from the banking business and Isaac Jr took his place. The firm of Elston & Lane was then changed to Elston & Son but when the Major passed away in the Fall of 1867, all the heirs of Elston became the stockholders. This of course included Lane as having married Joanna Elston. The \$13,000 capital later increased to \$120,000 and in 1875 when Isaac Jr wrote the piece, the individual deposits amounted to \$300,000. Impressive! Although the bank moved a few times, the one pictured here is the one many of us remember (thanks to CDPL for the image)! Elston seldom had an advertisement or information but it was constantly used as a reference (CWJ 4 June 1897) – “no lady should neglect the sale of



straw hats at the Columbia Saturday – first stairway east of Elston Bank” as an example. In 1900, the Elston group changed their name to Elston National Bank and 25 years later, acquired two other banks (Farmer's Merchant and Clements Trust). Still later, Elston Bank & Trust Company was established. There were several of these: C'ville Trust Company, Union Trust Company as well as other banks. One of the more impressive I believe was Montgomery Savings Association that went well over 110 years. Some of the early movers and shakers for MSA were RE Bryant; IA Detchon; Sol Tannenbaum; JE Evans; WW Morgan and AE Reynolds.

In December, 1893, an interesting happening took place regarding several of the local banks. A nice looking, smooth faced young fellow came to town under the name of L. Furber, taking a room at one of the local hotels with everyone thinking him quite a wonderful fella. He wrote a lot of letters, and checked-out the newspaper men, prosecutor, sheriff and businessmen. When he was gone for two

days, came back and registered as F. Forber of Lafayette, the suspicion began. When Landlord Am Jones noticed the fellow writing checks on all the local banks, he notified DH Jackson (Elston Bank) who immediately recognized the described young man as L. Scholler who had a deposit of \$200 in the bank. A day or so after he made this deposit, he inquired as to whether the bank took notes. Answer was yes and so Scholler left a note of \$375 on a Mr. Beckwith of Ladoga. It was soon discovered there was no Mr. Beckwith in Ladoga. As the story unfolded, and the man was captured by local police, Forbes-Furber-Scholler-Pfrefinger-Gerlock was really Louis Paquet of 737 Davis Street in Chicago with a wife, and two children. It was his purpose to deposit early some morning “in each bank several checks signed by the names he was known in that bank then that afternoon go to each bank and draw the money out then leave for parts unknown, leaving the banks in the pottage up to their necks.” Prosecutor Moffett wasn't quite sure how to deal with the case, and Paquet broke down the afternoon of his arrest, “crying piteously begging to be released!” (CDJ 18 Dec 1893 p4). Evidently, he wasn't very good at his gig. The early 90s presented many bank failures and schemes similar to the above.

That October, a rumor spread that long-time First National Bank president, William H. Durham resigned because of financial troubles within the bank. Rumor, yes indeed. He was simply retiring (to take time to become more involved in a couple of his own businesses) as did one of the board members, Joseph Milligan, due to age. First National went on for years so those rumors at least were squelched.

When I began this article, thought it would be hard, and I'd never find anything; now I'm finished and could write five more this length. Enjoy!

This is our county!

Why not help preserve its history by contributing to Montgomery Memories?

Email Karen Zach: karen.zach@sbcglobal.net Subject: Montgomery Memories



Nifty at Ninety - And Beyond

Joy Willett, Montgomery Memories

For this edition of Nifty at Ninety... we meet James Arthur Peterson. James was born on January 10, 1872 near Shannondale, Montgomery County, Indiana. His parents were John and Hannah (Dains) Peterson. John, born on July 29, 1829, was a native of Greene County, Ohio. Hannah was born on November 1, 1833 in Meigs County, Ohio. As young children they migrated with their families to Montgomery County, Indiana. This is where John and Hannah married November 14, 1855 (Marriage Book 4). In addition to James, their children were Harriet Wilhelmina (1857-1936), Albert Kasson (1860-1948), Lew Wallace (1863-1929), and Charles Barrymore (1868-1899).

While Hannah kept house, John was a successful farmer. In 1870, their real estate and personal property totaled \$800K in modern day value. The 1900 Census listed John's occupation as "Capitalist." He died on January 30, 1907.

James' paternal third great grandfather, Hans Jacob Biedert (b. 1706) came to the colonies from Baren-Veil County, Switzerland in 1736 (Passenger and Immigration Lists Index, 1500s-1900s). The surname, originally Biedert, was changed to Peterson when Hans arrived. The family stayed in Pennsylvania for a number of years before moving to Augusta County, Virginia and then to Hardy County, West Virginia. During their early years on what was then the western frontier, the Peterson's had frequent interactions with the Shawnee. In 1758, James' second great grandfather, John Martin Peterson (1730-1820), was kidnapped and taken west of the Ohio River – said to be the first white man to travel through the area that would become part of the State of Ohio. He escaped after being held prisoner for six months. (North America, Family Histories, 1500-2000). John Martin went on to serve as a Virginia Colonial Soldier (Virginia's Colonial Soldiers) and as a Private during the Revolutionary War.

James' paternal great grandfather, also named John Martin, was born in Hardy County, West Virginia in 1769. He was married two times, first to Mary Harper (James' great grandmother). It is reported that John Martin and Mary had six children who lived to adulthood. Their son Solomon (b. November 11, 1790) was James' grandfather. John Martin moved his family to Ross County, Ohio where Mary died 1811. John Martin remarried in 1813 and had eight more children. His second wife Elizabeth



Photo courtesy of Nancy Pickel, Find A Grave

Wells died in 1836. On January 3, 1839, John Martin died in Montgomery County, Indiana. Other of his children were also in Montgomery County – Delilah, Jessie, Abram, John, and Solomon.

Solomon married at least four times and had 8 children.

James' father John was the son of Solomon and his first wife, Wilhelmina Ana Wallernut (1781-1831). Wilhelmina, who was born in Germany, was buried in the Peterson Cemetery near Kirkpatrick in north central Montgomery County. Solomon's son Silas (1825-1905) was an Indiana State Senator. Solomon died on October 30, 1851 and was buried next to Wilhelmina.

On June 8, 1892, James married Eleanor Hunt. They made their home in Darlington and had five children - Hubert, John, Charles, Henry, and Mary. Eleanor died in 1914 at the age of 41. James' mother, Hannah, also died that year. In 1916, James married Jessie Cunningham. Although the couple had no children, Jessie helped raise her stepchildren.

Jessie was very involved in the Darlington community. She served as president and treasurer of the Book Lovers Club (Journal and Courier, Lafayette, Mar 7, 1932), of which she was a member for over 25 years. She was a long-time member of The Darlington Garden Club and was an award-winning florist (ibid, Aug 5, 1929). She was a member of The Montgomery County Presbyterian Missionary society (ibid Oct 1, 1935) and she participated in the annual Darlington Christmas Lighting contest (ibid, Dec 13, 1938). Jessie enjoyed travelling, which included trips to New Orleans, Atlanta, and the Smokey Mountains (The Republic, Columbus, Indiana, Jun 03, 1940). On April 24, 1958, the Journal and Courier reported that James and Jessie had returned home after wintering in Florida, a place they would visit again.

James worked in banking for 58 years, beginning in 1891 when he was a bookkeeper in the People's Banking Company, which he and his father organized. In 1902, James founded the Darlington's Farmer's and Merchant's Bank. In addition to banking, he founded the town's waterworks and telephone company, both of which he operated for 60 years. For civic pursuits, he had leadership roles with the Darlington Carnegie Library, Armory Club, Darlington Presbyterian Church, and Crawfordsville Country Club (Lafayette Journal and Courier Fri 11 July 1969 p 5, Darlington). On November 16, 1966, James and Jessie celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. James passed on July 10, 1969 at the age of 97. Jessie, also at the age of 97, died on November 24, 1981. James and Jessie were interred in Darlington's Greenlawn Cemetery (thanks to FindAGrave for the photo). May James and Jessie, a most enterprising couple, rest in peace.



THREE GENERATIONS AT
HUNT & SON FUNERAL HOME,
THE PRE-ARRANGEMENT SPECIALISTS,
HAVE BEEN MAKING SPECIAL
REMEMBRANCES FOR FAMILIES
IN THIS AREA FOR OVER 100 YEARS.

107 N GRANT AVE., CRAWFORDSVILLE • 362-0440



Photo courtesy of Chuck Clore

“You can take that to the bank!” is a boast of certainty you hear a lot during an election year. Of course when you reach the bank, who knows if that promise will bounce? Big buck promises often have insufficient funds. There is no gold standard for security in politics.

An after-the-war surprise, I appeared on the scene in 1947. Born at 1114 Danville Avenue, the folks had yet to settle on a name. Dad wanted to call me Caleb Cash Clore. He said, “I always wanted to have a little extra cash around the house.” My older sister, Delta, convinced Punster Pappy to think again. I would have preferred that moniker to Charles Homer. Dad had already given the coolest name to my big brother, James Austin Clore.

Small Change might have been a more appropriate label. Born on a scorching July day, I was so small that my sisters, Beverly and Decky nicknamed me “Little Bit.” All through school I was the runt of my class. By the time I stepped onto the platform to receive my degree, I still only weighed 136 pounds.

Don’t worry. Thanks to my desire to over-achieve and Judy, my beautiful Minnesota bride’s outstanding culinary skills, I am twice the man I used to be.

Well, I digress. This story is supposed to be about banks.

My first recollection of banking was when Mom escorted me to the Elston Bank at the corner of Main and Green Street. I was seven or eight years old. It felt like we were entering a

cathedral. Sounds echoed through the cavernous room. Well, it wasn’t like we were going to meet God there, but it was clearly a place for serious business. It was kind of like being ushered into the principal’s office.

“Chuck and I are here to sign him up to the Christmas Savings Club.” I heard Mom say to a very official-looking lady. She could have been an assistant principal. Not sure why the lady needed part of my allowance, but Mom insisted. I left the cathedral to currency two bucks lighter with a stamped passbook in my shirt pocket. So began my education on how consistent small-change can add up to big money when you need it.

My next memorable money moment must have been in fifth or sixth grade. Our class was transported, again, to the Elston Bank. This time we got a tour of the entire bank, even the most secured enter-sanctum, the vault. Most of us kids thought Andrew Jackson was big money. But Elston Bank had Ulysses S. Grants and Benjamin Franklins out the wazoo. Holy Moly! Grover Cleveland is on the thousand-dollar bill. Lock the vault door! The guard even let us touch a Salmon P. Chase Ten Thousand Dollars—Federal Reserve Note. Even though, it was encased in a plastic sleeve, I think that many kids around that much money made the vault guard a tad nervous.

Yeah, visiting the original Elston Bank in the 1950s, left a kid a little awe-struck. It was not like today’s drive-thru fast-food windows with an

Small Change

Story & Graphics by Chuck Clore



Photo courtesy of Elston Bank envelope to Delta Clore 1944

ATM.

Back to my appreciation for small-change—every payday at McDaniels Freight Lines, Georgia Clore, my mom would take a good portion of her pay in coins. With weekend chores finished, the entire family would grab rolls of pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters to sort and search.

Magnifying glass in hand, we expected to find a 1914 Mercury-Head dime with a Denver mint-

mark or maybe an Indian-Head. Any moment we might discover a double-stamped buffalo nickel. The grand prize would be the rare 1909-S Lincoln penny with VBS designer’s initials stamped on the back. The small-change made for big times around the kitchen table on a Sunday night.

Check out the U.S. Currency Education Program

<https://www.uscurrency.gov/denominations>

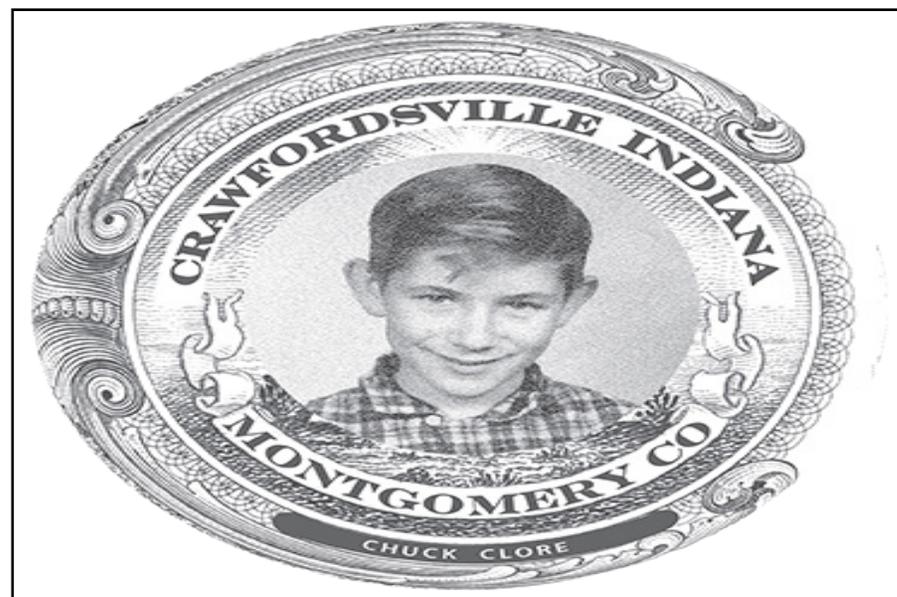


Photo courtesy of Chuck Clore

Save for Tomorrow

By Joy Willett

A place to keep your keepsakes safe.

A place to earn an interest rate.
A place to get a first home loan.

A place to buy

1

a savings bond.
A place to sign a cashier's check.

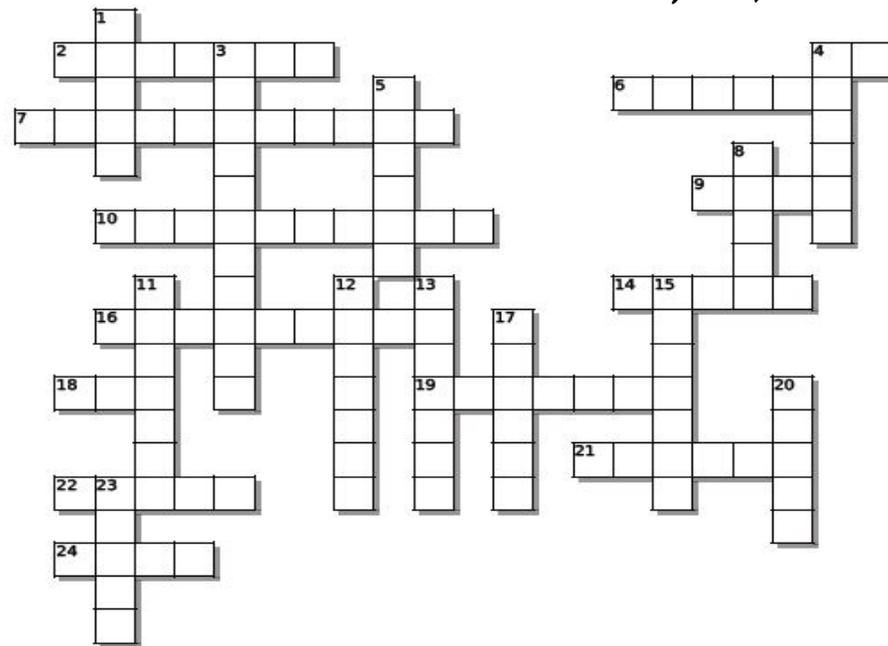
A place to put hard earned greenbacks.

A place to make a withdrawal.

A place to save for tomorrow.

2

A Penny Saved



ACROSS

- 2 Franklin Theodore _____
- 4 Acronym for Boilermaker's school
- 6 H. Lane's Elston wife
- 7 Town in NE Madison Twnshp
- 9 Henry who ran for gov in 1860
- 10 Early New Market banker
- 14 Waveland _____ Bank
- 16 "Recipe" from Elston Bank
- 18 _____ days of summer
- 19 L. Patton's _____ dumplings
- 21 Founded bank with Wasson
- 22 Can be poured, whipped & eaten
- 24 Acronym for C'ville library

DOWN

- 1 Emma Vancleave _____
- 3 Town between C'ville & Dover
- 4 Swindled MoCo banks in Dec 1893
- 5 Kids are headed back to _____
- 8 Safe place for customer's \$\$
- 11 Farmers Bank of _____
- 12 John who brought RR to Wingate
- 13 Garry Bazzani's favorite cat
- 15 They process bank transactions
- 17 A penny saved is a penny _____
- 20 Hunt who founded Darlington bank
- 23 Father/son Bills - bank cashiers

Check out page 10 for the solution

Poetry and Puzzles

Montgomery Memories

Burkhart Funeral Home

Charles, Carl & Craig Burkhart
201 W. Wabash Ave., Crawfordsville

765-362-5510

www.BurkhartFH.com





Karen's Kitchen

Karen Bazzani Zach, Montgomery Memories

ELSTON BANK & TRUST CO.'S FINANCIAL RECIPES

"GRANDMA'S FAVORITE"

(THIS ONE USUALLY WAS LEARNED BY TRIAL AND ERROR METHOD)

IF THE THING I WANT TO DO CONCERNS THE USE OF MONEY, I ASK MY BANKER TO HELP ME.

"TO SAVE MONEY"

(A PROGRAM FOR EVERYONE)

- 1. PUT AWAY A PART, HOWEVER SMALL, OF EVERY PAY, IN A SAVINGS ACCOUNT AT YOUR BANK.**
- 2. IF YOU ACCUMULATE A SURPLUS OF SAVINGS, BEYOND YOUR KNOWN REQUIREMENTS FOR IMMEDIATE USE, BUY SOME SAVINGS CERTIFICATES FROM YOUR BANK. THESE WILL PROVIDE A GOOD EMERGENCY FUND.**
- 3. IF YOU ACCUMULATE STILL MORE SAVINGS, ASK YOUR BANKER ABOUT INVESTING IT.**

"TO BORROW MONEY"

(SEEMS LIKE THERE ARE TIMES WHEN MOST OF US DO)

- 1. TO BUY A HOME
(MOST FAMILIES DO THIS AT LEAST ONCE)**

ASK YOUR BANKER TO HELP YOU SELECT THE BEST WAY TO FINANCE IT. HE'S DOING THIS EVERY DAY AND HE MAY HAVE SOME GOOD IDEAS ABOUT HOW BEST TO DO IT.

- 2. TO HELP WITH EDUCATIONAL EXPENSES
(ADVANTAGES OF COLLEGE ARE MORE IMPORTANT EVERY YEAR)**

THERE ARE LOTS OF WAYS YOUR BANKER CAN HELP YOU WITH THIS IMPORTANT PLANNING.

From the Recipe book of Athens No 97 Order of Eastern Star (I would guess 1960 or so as there are still EM numbers), page 29 has Financial Recipes via Elston Bank and Trust Company – even though several decades old, I'd say they hold true yet today. Kind of a fun twist in a cook book – love it!



County Connections: Ben Wasson

Karen Bazzani Zach, Montgomery Memories

Bourbon County, Kentucky was the place of birth for our featured fella this month in the County Connection. He passed away (21 August 1901) one day shy of his 78th birthday. Benjamin Noah Wasson came to Indiana as a small one with his parents, Samuel and Susanna (McLeod) Wasson. His brothers were George Joseph, James McLeod and John Bourbon, couple of creative names there. The family moved to the Russellville area, likely because Susanna's relatives had settled near there.

Before Ben Wasson became involved in the banking business, he very early on ran a dry goods business, did farm work, engaged in a grain business when he first arrived in Crawfordsville and then in 1864, he and a family friend, William H. Durham organized the First National Bank, Durham president and Ben cashier. Sixteen years he served in this position, resigned and with some other "citizens" of the county organized the Citizens National Bank (1881) where he again was the head cashier which he continued as until he retired eleven years later.

Ben was the perfect candidate for a cashier, one of sterling character, along with that trustworthy and exceedingly gentle (obit) personality. He was always ready to aid the underdog, boosting many young men in the community to a better life.

In Russellville, on July 20th in 1849, Charlotte Jane Harris became his wife. Her parents were Simeon Harris and Mary Elizabeth Beard, Simeon being one of the very first people in our area I was hired to research over 50 years ago. He was a hard worker but died at age 44 leaving Charlotte as his oldest child at age 16 (born 4 March 1822) followed by a sister Elizabeth and then brothers, William C (who became a well-known area doctor); John; and Allen who was not yet three years old. She helped her mother raise the boys and then as you may have noticed was a full 27 years old when she and Ben married and they would have celebrated 52 years together (although he was not in good health at that time) before Ben passed the next month. They had one daughter Minnie who married Charles Goltra who with his father-in-law, plus A.F. Ramsey and Mahlon D. Manson began the Citizens National Bank (mentioned above, along with 27 others), Goltra as first assistant until Ben retired and then Charles became head cashier. At the time of Bowen's 1913 MoCo History, the CNB capital was \$100,000 with a surplus of half that. Impressive for the time.

Minnie Wasson Goltra was well loved, and a wonderful, educated, cultured wife for a banker. She was an only child and the Goltras had but two, William Wasson Goltra and Mary who wed Luke Wood and moved to California. WW was the bookkeeper for the Ben Hur insurance for several years. Married to Mary Clay Moore, they had two sons, Albert Wasson (also associated with BH insurance) and William Moore (died young after being bedfast for seven years). Minnie was active in the



Photo courtesy of CDPL

community, instrumental bringing Culver Hospital to C'ville, Order of Eastern Star, and the Presbyterian Church, deeply involved with those and other social affairs, being well admired in the city. She went to live with her daughter in California 17 years before her death which was due to head injuries from a fall. (Nov 1930).

In 1891, the CNB moved from the original headquarters on South Washington Street to its "eloquent new room on Crawford's Block, Main Street" (shown east of

the courthouse in the Crawfordsville District Public Library photo).

Always one to take charge, in 1870, John Ewing had purchased and raised some Jersey cows and brought them into the city at the request of Col. Heath. It was at the ridicule of the population who had before had "mammoth cattle" (CWJ 25 Oct 1895 p 5) and were all making fun of the "dwarfed and scrubbed cattle." In fact, Ewing was almost mobbed over the deal. Then a lady took some of the Jersey milk home and made a large amount of butter, brought it in the next day and passed it around. Dear Ben Wasson was one of the first to try it, then immediately purchased one of the Jerseys. Following in his footsteps, the delicious butter was devoured and the little Jerseys were all bought! Ben often set an example in the community such as in March 1869, he got gravel from Sugar Creek and added a sidewalk in front of his residence, hoping his neighbors would join in.

A bit of humor in regards to Ben was after his retirement, when his safe was literally being used as a nesting place for mice. Well, County Clerk Dumont Kennedy drastically needed a safe for important Montgomery papers. So, he purchased the safe, cleaned it well and moved it to the courthouse for use in the clerk's office, quite happy to have a fire safe place to keep his county records. Who'd have thought?

Not sure if the fellows went, but Charlotte and Minnie enjoyed going to the spa in French Lick. Ben himself was quite a homebody. In late May of 1892 he actually made a trip to Lafayette, (C'ville Review 28 May p 5) "first time out of the city for many years," but he was only gone for three hours. However, the next year he did go to Chicago.

Both Ben Wasson and Charles Goltra were extremely active in all of the Masonic sections, all four sending beautiful flowers highlighting each group when Ben passed away. A huge basket from the bank and many cut flowers kept the five flower bearers quite busy. At the cemetery (Oak Hill) the full Templar service was given, sending good 'ol Banker Ben to his great rewards.

2022 Montgomery County Museum Scene



MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

As with the Lew Wallace Museum, the best way to visit is to schedule a tour with tour hours beginning Wed-Fri 1-4 p.m.; 2nd and 4th Saturdays from 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. and the last tour begins at 3:15.



ROTARY JAIL MUSEUM OF CRAWFORDSVILLE, IN

The Tannenbaum Center is a wonderful place to have a wedding reception, a graduation party, any open-house type get-together – Use the e-mail contactus@rotaryjailmuseum.org to reserve it. Covid seems to be winding down so hopefully the museum will be open from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Wed-Sat \$5 for adults \$3 for children 6-11 and under, free. Neat to learn so much about one of the only 3 rotating jails out of 18 built still intact and ours is I believe the only one that works. Watch for their extra programs on the Facebook



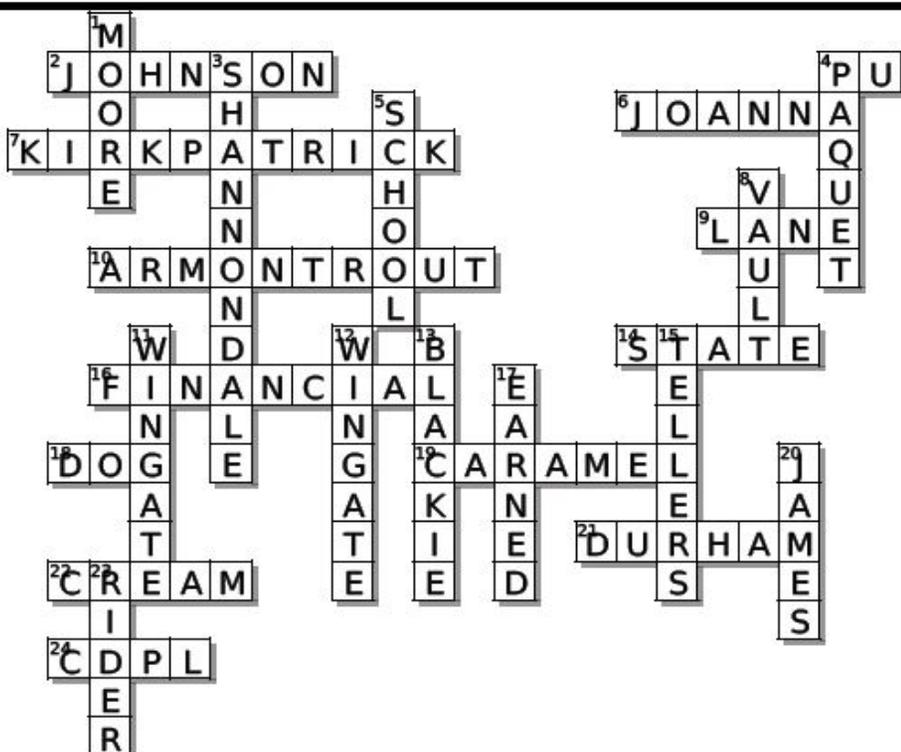
CARNEGIE MUSEUM

Open: Wed-Sat 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Note: As we have our 200th year of Montgomery County, the Carnegie is celebrating its 120th birthday, being the very first Carnegie Library opened in Indiana. Pretty nifty.



GENERAL LEW WALLACE STUDY

You can book tours online Home - General Lew Wallace Study & Museum (ben-hur.com) Open Tues-Sat 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. When you tour, you will have a staff member take you on a guided tour, wearing a mask and hand sanitizer provided if you need it. Appreciate masks and sanitized hands from the visitors. Book on line or call to book a time. The obvious items are expected (please don't come if you have a fever, cough, cold, headache, shortness of breath ... or exposed to Covid within the last 14 days). The tour takes about 40 minutes and the staff "knows the general!" Keep an eye on their facebook page or sign up for their newsletter via e-mail so you'll know what is up next.



LINDEN DEPOT MUSEUM, LINDEN, IN

(The) Linden Depot Museum's mission: is to preserve and protect the historic 1909-built Linden Depot and its railroad memorabilia as well as to promote its related railroad history. The mission includes the acquisition, restoration, preservation and display of railroad equipment, artifacts and mementos related to railways past and present.

A wonderful place to tour – go see a unique piece of our county's railroad history - \$6 adults - \$1 children 12 and under. Fri, Sat & Sunday through October from noon to 5 p.m. The railroad display is delightful – don't miss it!



Grandcestors

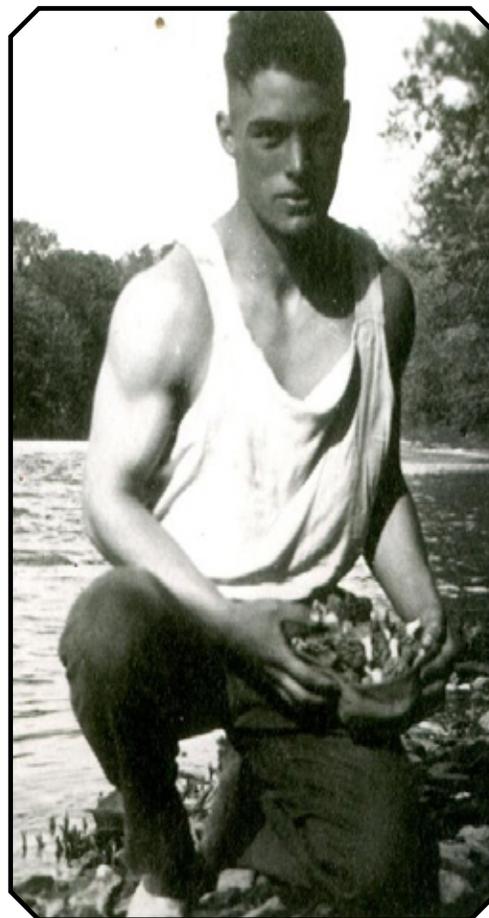
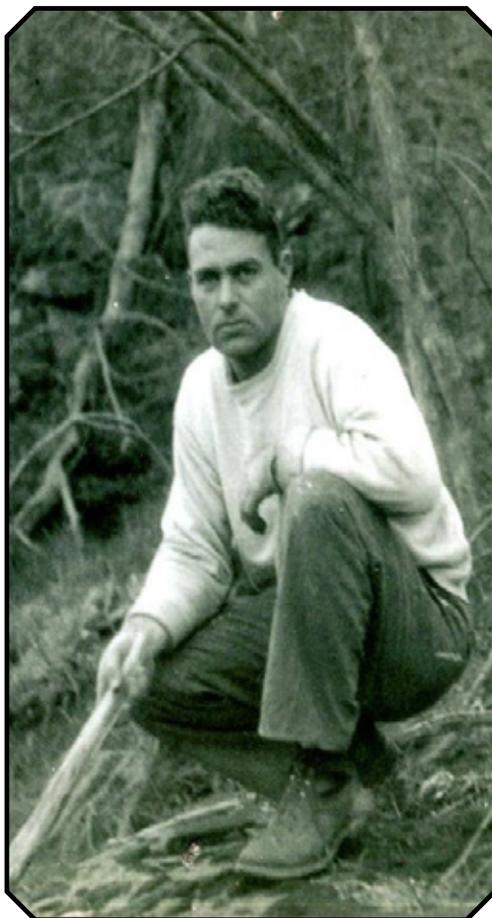
Karen Bazzani Zach, Montgomery Memories

The only banker I knew fairly well, personally, was my neighbor, Franklin Theodore Johnson, who was obviously a Waveland banker and thus so for many years. Born in Crawfordsville the day after Independence Day in 1906, Franklin was the son of Theodore North and Bettie Titus Johnson. He married Helen Hinton and they were parents of three children, Jerry, Roger and June. Always been close to two of them, Roger and Mary June, but she so sadly passed away recently. Roger seems a lot like his dad, almost always smiling, helpful, encouraging, astute at making me laugh and Mary June and I enjoyed the love of writing together. We'd write plays and perform them for our folks when we were little. Many years later, we'd meet for lunch and share what we'd written and critique our work. So much fun! She was one lovely gal and so talented, even becoming a minister in her later life.

Franklin seemed to me anyway to be a gentle man with a dry sense of humor. Attending Waveland grade school, he graduated from CHS in 1924, attended PU in engineering and taught at Crawfordsville for a bit. Then he became cashier at the State Bank of Waveland for ten years, serving as its president until its merge with Elston Bank. At his retirement in 1969, he was Elston's Waveland branch manager.

Franklin was involved in various aspects of our little town, including treasurer of the Masonic Lodge, elder and trustee of the Christian Church and a director of the Maple Ridge Cemetery. However, he is buried (died Nov 22, 1988) at Oak Hill.

Couple quick personal stories here: Our 10-year-old cat jumped down a cistern of another neighbor (it had a cement top with a hole not all that large – how and why the cat did that, no clue) and my brother somehow grabbed her (Blackie, his favorite of our three or four) and was holding on for dear life.



Mom and I couldn't lift that thing and Franklin came over and did it (you can see by his build in the photos it wasn't too hard for him – thanks to Roger and his daughter, Janee for the great pic). We were all so grateful and Franklin was amazed that Garry held on to the cat as his arm was a mass of bites and scratches just dripping blood when he let Blackie go as Franklin held the large cement top away from the water. At a funeral of the same neighbor with the cistern a few years later, the daughter of the neighbor was reading a bunch of poems. Dad and Franklin were pallbearers but the poems were too much for Dad and he fell asleep. Franklin thought it was funny, especially when dad started snoring. Several people just smiled but the daughter read on, then her daughter turned on a tape that had her grandmother reading poems that Gma' had written. When dad heard the voice of our passed neighbor, he jumped up and was astounded. Franklin started the laughing, although low but every-

one else joined in then and dad went down as the bad guy to the neighbor's daughter's family. Of course, dad had taken care of the neighbor (because her daughter lived in Chicago and not down much) fixing anything at her home, cleaning the outside of the house, mowing her yard, and mom fed her especially those last couple of years before she moved to Chicago with her family – all for free, so everyone knew he deserved the rest and perhaps the laugh too?

Franklin kept a nice yard and their house was not fancy but always well groomed. Always kind of thought Dad and Franklin had a friendly competition going – one would mow their yard and the other jump to it. One would paint the house then the other was done. It was kind of funny but they enjoyed each other and of course, we banked at Franklin's bank. Gosh, I miss that bank (it was just recently closed) and Franklin, Mary June and Dad, too!



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