

# the Archives



Louisville Historical League INC

founded 1972

Dedicated to promoting the appreciation and preservation of our cultural heritage and historic environment in the Louisville metropolitan area.

WINTER  
FEBRUARY  
2012

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## A TRIBUTE TO ROBERT B. FRENCH

Gary Falk



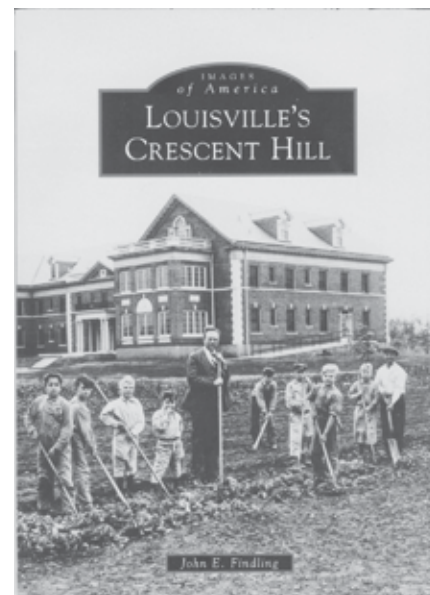
Louisville lost an icon of music history with the death of Robert French on October 27, 2011. Bob was born in Springfield, KY in 1924 and moved to Louisville where he graduated from Male High School in 1942. During World War II he served in France as a chaplain's assistant.

After the war he entered the University of Louisville receiving a bachelor's degree in organ performance in 1950. He then attended Peabody College for Teachers in Nashville where he received a master's degree in composition.

When Bob returned to Louisville, he and Don Murray, another leading figure in Louisville music education started the Louisville Academy of Music in 1954. In 1958 Mr. French co-founded the Louisville Youth Orchestra. He and his wife Ruth operated the Academy on Frankfort Avenue until his death. Ruth continues to direct the music school.

So much can be said about the contributions of Robert French. He was an avid historian, writing for many local publications including 21 articles for the Encyclopedia of Louisville, the Encyclopedia of Kentucky and "Our Kentucky". He had amassed hundreds of articles and concert programs on Louisville music, covering all facets of the local scene and had an extensive collection of biographies on local musicians. In February 1979 Joan Kay, a columnist for the Louisville Courier-Journal authored an excellent article on the many activities of Robert French.

Bob received many awards over the years including the Distinguished Alumni Award from the University of Louisville and the Milner award presented by Governor Paul Patton in 1999 for service in the arts. He was also an avid traveler and photographer. To those of us with a passion for history and the arts, we will never forget the many contributions of our friend Robert B. French.



Standard Arcadia format, with 200 images of Crescent Hill—most never before published—and accompanying witty and insightful text. Available from John Finding or from the standard retail and online bookstores. To tout the book, John was on WHAS-TV on Feb. 2, had book signings at B & N on Feb. 5, will be at Carmichael's Feb. 12, and will have a program at the CH branch of the library on March 13.

# LOOKING BACK . . .

Gary Falk

## Musings on 621 South Fourth Street



The 600 block of South Fourth Street has been important to commerce in the city for well over 100 years. At the turn of the last century it began to change from residential into commercial. The centerpiece of the block was the old St. Joseph Infirmary with the street being mostly residential otherwise.

After John Atherton built his office building in the early 1900s on the Southwest Corner of Fourth and Chestnut, things began to change quickly. The decade of 1910-20 brought dramatic changes. In 1921 the William Kaye mansion (1854) had been replaced by the new Rialto Theatre. In 1928 The Loew's Theatre replaced the infirmary. Market Street, long the commercial corridor of the city, was gradually being overshadowed by Fourth Street. The 600 block was becoming known as "Theatre Row", although most of those proud theatres have vanished from the landscape.

One address of interest in this block is 621 the block on the east side. This address is a duplex and was recently known as Stage the home of Shackleton Piano Company. in 1948 from their previous store at 307 known for their pianos, music instruction, Fourth Street location for around 30 years. of knowledge of Mr. Lloyd Hillenbrand record department at the store. Mr. Hillenbrand had nearly memorized the fadex of thousands of records. Chances were good that the disc that you were



Shackleton Piano Company wanted no ultramodern architecture for its new store.

South Fourth Street, about center in now part of the Palace Theatre com-Door Johnnies, but prior to that, it was Shackleton's moved to this location West Broadway. Shackleton's was and sheet music and remained at the Music lovers cannot forget the pillar who for many years operated the re-brand had nearly memorized the fadex of thousands of records. Chances looking for would be in his inventory.

This same location was the home of two Canary Cottage restaurants which were built there in 1928 as a replica of an old English Inn and fully renovated in 1937.

The Canary Cottage and the French Village, located in the Heyburn building were opened by partners W.H Renaker and R. Menter Wheeler. They would endure through the Second World War but, by 1947 or so, it all came to an end - or did it? The building at 621 South Fourth Street is now part of the haunted downtown portion of Louisville's ghost walking tour! Stay tuned for the history of other great locations in and around Louisville.



Sources: Louisville Times, Feb. 10, 1936, July 13, 1936; Louisville Courier-Journal, March 21, 1937, March 25, 1928, April 11, 1948; Louisville Herald-Post, Jan. 19, 1930.

## 2012 LHL Programs

The League has scheduled another great year of programs for the membership. Provided below is a brief summary of what we have in store for this coming year:

**February 19:** The authors of the new book “Two Centuries of Black Louisville” will talk about this book at the Broadway Temple AME Zion, which is located on Broadway at Thirteenth Street. After their presentation, the authors will sign copies of the book for those who wish to purchase it. Of note: Broadway temple AMEZ was designed by the distinguished African American Architect Samuel Plato.

**March 10:** “Discover Louisville History” is a half day seminar with two panel discussions of archivist and researchers who will discuss how to research local histories for houses, people, events, etc. It will be held at the Peterson Dumesnil House, 301 S. Peterson Avenue. The event is free but a small \$5 donation is suggested to help offset refreshments, supplies, etc.

**March 18:** David Inman, noted television historian, will talk about local television history of Louisville. It will be held at WAVE 3 television studios at Floyd Street and Jacob Street, just south of Broadway.

**April 15:** This program is yet to be announced, but we have our fingers crossed that it will be a ‘history’ making event.

**May 20:** A Preservation-oriented event will be held that has yet to be determined. We have several possibilities which will be finalized as this date approaches.

**June 24:** this will be our annual Ice Cream Social as well as the 40th anniversary of the League. This celebration will be held at Iroquois Park, where a historic marker will be dedicated as well.

**July:** No meeting

**August 19:** This event is still pending and will be announced as the date approaches.

**September 16:** A walking tour of a local cemetery will be held. We are currently considering several possible locations for this tour.

**October 21:** Bryan Bush will talk on the 150th anniversary of the Civil War in Kentucky at the Bashford Manor Bed and Breakfast (Bashford manor Lane – where we had our ice cream social in 2011.)

**November 18:** Our annual Fenwick Lecture. The speaker and location will be announced as the date approaches.

**December 2:** And, as always, we close out the year with our annual Holiday Party. It will again be held on Sunday.

We hope you will be able to attend many of these fun, informative events. Watch for the post card announcement for any changes or check with the website. If you need any further info, please email us at LouHist@Hotmail.com

# “Historic Preservation” License Plate

Preservation Kentucky (PK) is taking applications for Kentucky’s first and only Historic Preservation License Plate. PK is sponsoring this special plate to raise awareness of historic preservation and historic and prehistoric places in Kentucky as well as to create a grant fund dedicated to helping communities preserve important historic and prehistoric places.

According to state law, 900 applications, including the \$25 registration fee, must be collected by PK within two years before production of the plate can proceed. The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet will then produce it and distribute it to applicants and make the plate available to the general public for purchase. Ten dollars from the sale of each plate will be earmarked for Preservation Kentucky and placed into a grant fund for historic preservation projects. “Currently, there are no grant funds in Kentucky that can be used solely for this purpose. Specialty license plate funds could help fill this void and create skilled preservation jobs in a time of high unemployment,” says PK Director Rachel Kennedy. Kennedy continues, “We are also hoping the plate will create interest in learning about Kentucky’s treasure trove of historic places.”

Grant funds will be open to nonprofits and city / county governments within the state for the purpose of preserving historic buildings or hiring qualified preservation consultants to identify and / or nominate properties to the National Register of Historic Places. Grants will require a 50 percent local match and will be available on an emergency basis, as well as in a competitive application process once a year. For more information, please visit: [www.kypreservationlicenseplate.org](http://www.kypreservationlicenseplate.org)

## ANNUAL MEETING AND AWARDS PROGRAM

Steve Wiser

On Sunday, January 22nd, the League held its annual meeting at the Water Tower on River Road at Zorn Avenue. Awards were presented for local history achievements for 2011. We want to thank the Louisville Water Company for allowing us to use their remarkable facility for this event. Over 130 people were in attendance. The award plaques were beautifully created by Wadia Newman, who is a well known artist of historical renderings in the region.



Award recipients included the following:



**Walter Hutchins:** recently ‘retiring’ from the LHL Board after serving several years, Walter has presented numerous programs for the League and was an admirable ambassador for the League. He is an ardent advocate for African America history.



**Bryan Bush:** a dedicated historian on civil war history, Bryan gives numerous lectures, tours, and writes many books. He routinely gives League programs on local civil war history.

**Sons of the American Revolution:** known nationally for their history educational efforts, the SAR has a low profile locally. They recently relocated some of their functions down on West Main Street across from the Slugger Museum. And, they provide a color guard of Revolutionary soldier re-enactors for 1770s-era events around the city.

**Mervin Aubespain, J. Blaine Hudson, and Kenneth Clay:** authors of the new book “Two Centuries of Black Louisville” captures local cultural history that has not been prominently recorded till now. These three authors will talk at the League’s February 19th event.



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**Steve Porter:** receiving the ‘Founders Award’, which is the League’s highest accolade, Steve Porter has spent over three decades in history and preservation-related efforts. From saving historic schools like George Rogers Clark School and protecting the Tyler Homestead / Blackacre area from harmful development, Steve has always been a champion for the causes that the League values most. He also participated in the recent Whiskey Row effort as well as the Funk House controversy a few years back.

**West Main Street Revitalization LLC:** This group of investors (Laura Lee Brown, Steve Wilson, Craig Greenberg, Valle Jones, etc.) stepped up and saved the historic Whiskey Row (North 100 block of West Main Street) from demolition in one of the most highly publicized preservation struggles in the city in over a decade.



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 1757 Frankfort Ave. - Phone BE. 2821 <b>JUNE PROGRAM</b>		<b>SWEEPSTAKES</b> <b>Every Sunday &amp; Wednesday Night</b>		Thursday 1 PRESTON FOSTER - PHYLLIS BROOKS <b>"Up The River"</b> CHARLES RUGGLES <b>"His Exciting Night"</b> <small>Sat. - \$10.00 Cash Prizes</small> <small>Sat. - Jackie Cooper SCOUTS TO THE RESCUE No. 4</small>
Sunday 4 LORETTA YOUNG RICHARD GREENE <b>"Kentucky"</b> <small>(In Technicolor)</small>	Monday 5 TUESDAY 6 JOHN BARRYMORE <b>"The Great Man Votes"</b> BOB BAKER <b>"Black Bandit"</b>	Wednesday 7 THURSDAY 8 MICHAEL WHALEN - JEAN ROGERS <b>"While New York Sleeps"</b> KEN MURRAY - JOHNNY DOWNS <b>"Swing Sister Swing"</b> <small>Sat. - \$10.00 Cash Prizes</small> <small>Sat. - Jackie Cooper SCOUTS TO THE RESCUE No. 5</small>	Friday 9 SATURDAY 10 JACK BENNY - JOAN BENNETT <b>"Artists And Models Abroad"</b> SALLY BLAINE <b>"Stolen Sweets"</b> <small>Sat. - \$10.00 Cash Prizes</small> <small>Sat. - Jackie Cooper SCOUTS TO THE RESCUE No. 6</small>	
Sunday 11 CARY GRANT VICTOR McLAGLEN DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS JR. <b>"Gunga Din"</b>	Tuesday 13 JOHN CARROLL KAY LINAKER <b>"I Am A Criminal"</b>	Wednesday 14 THURSDAY 15 JUDY GARLAND - FREDDIE BARTHOLOMEW <b>"Listen Darling"</b> FRANKIE DARRO <b>"Black Gold"</b> <small>Sat. - \$10.00 Cash Prizes</small> <small>Sat. - Jackie Cooper SCOUTS TO THE RESCUE No. 7</small>	Friday 16 SATURDAY 17 GENE AUTRY - SMILEY BURNETTE <b>"Prairie Moon"</b> ROCHELLE HUDSON - PATRIC KNOWLES <b>"Storm Over Bengal"</b>	
Sunday 18 PRISCILLA LANE JEFFREY LYNN <b>"Yes, My Darling Daughter"</b>	Tuesday 20 ANN NAGEL - ROBERT KENT <b>"Convict's Code"</b> BILL ELLIOT <b>"Lone Star Pioneers"</b>	Wednesday 21 THURSDAY 22 JOAN CRAWFORD MARGARET SULLAVAN ROBERT YOUNG MELVYN DOUGLAS <b>"Shining Hour"</b> <small>Sat. - \$10.00 Cash Prizes</small> <small>Sat. - Jackie Cooper SCOUTS TO THE RESCUE No. 8</small>	Friday 23 SATURDAY 24 SIDNEY TOLER PHYLLIS BROOKS <b>"Charlie Chan In Honolulu"</b>	
Sunday 25 GENE AUTRY - SMILEY BURNETTE <b>"Prairie Moon"</b> ROCHELLE HUDSON - PATRIC KNOWLES <b>"Storm Over Bengal"</b>	Tuesday 27 SIDNEY TOLER PHYLLIS BROOKS <b>"Charlie Chan In Honolulu"</b>	Thursday 29 JOAN CRAWFORD MARGARET SULLAVAN ROBERT YOUNG MELVYN DOUGLAS <b>"Shining Hour"</b> <small>Sat. - \$10.00 Cash Prizes</small> <small>Sat. - Jackie Cooper SCOUTS TO THE RESCUE No. 8</small>	Friday 30 SAT. JULY 1 SIDNEY TOLER PHYLLIS BROOKS <b>"Charlie Chan In Honolulu"</b>	
<b>BARGAIN NIGHTS EVERY MONDAY, TUESDAY, THURSDAY &amp; FRIDAY [except holidays] - ADULTS 16c</b>				

A good example of an ebay download is this June 1939 program guide for films at the Hill-Top Theatre located at that time at 1757 Frankfort Avenue.

TO JOIN, RENEW, OR GIVE A GIFT ...

Mail this form to: Louisville Historical League, Inc.  
 In residence at the Peterson-Dumesnil House  
 P.O. Box 6061 • Louisville, KY 40206



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Membership status is from January 1 to December 31. If you join after July 1, please pay half of the current year's dues plus the full amount for next year. Your membership dues are tax deductible. The League thanks you for your support and interest!

Stay up-to-date with the latest League news and events at [www.LouisvilleHistoricalLeague.org](http://www.LouisvilleHistoricalLeague.org)

# MINING EBAY FOR HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

Charles W. Arrington

More than likely if you have surfed the internet, you have looked at ebay.com. There is also a good chance that you have bought or sold on eBay. It is easy. Just register with eBay and open a PayPal account and you are ready. Ebay.com is an internet auction site that offers for bid millions of items daily covering nearly every subject that you can think of from A-Z. For a historian, ebay offers a gold mine of historical material and memorabilia to satisfy anyone's interest.

**The Search:** The search may be the most challenging part of an eBay experience because the sky is the limit when it comes to determining what to type into the search box. Thinking "outside of the box" is a must. Considering that sellers on eBay may be from anywhere in the United States or even the world, you have to try to think like them. Since I live in St. Matthews, I search for st matthews kentucky, st matthews ky, saint matthews kentucky, and saint matthews ky. Note that no punctuation or capitalization is needed in the search. The more variations in your search bring more chances of finding something that you are looking for.

**The Bid:** Auctions on ebay run different lengths of time with most lasting a week. Once you find an item that you would like to bid on, decide how much money that you want to spend and place a bid. Ebay has a proxy bid feature that allows you to bid a certain amount for an item and at the end of the auction if you are the highest bidder – you win. If it is an item that you must have, place the highest amount that that you want to spend and hope that you are not outbid. They will notify you by email if someone outbids you before the auction ends. You can also ride out the auction dueling to the last moment with anyone trying to outbid you.

**The Download:** If you do not win an auction or there is an item that you want but don't want to bid on it, there is another option – the download. Often a download of a document or photo is all that you need for your research or collection. Ebay sellers can make this easy or difficult. Most sellers provide an image of what they are selling. Some even allow you to enlarge the image by clicking on it. If the image is large enough for you to read and worth saving, download it by placing your cursor on the image and then right clicking on it. Using a Windows Computer a menu will open. If you see "Save As" on the menu, click on this and save it as a JPEG image to a file of your choice. If the menu says "Save Page As," click on this and save it as an HTML file. Later you can open the HTML file and extract the JPEG image. As you might expect, some ebay sellers have become wise over the years and block downloads. Don't let this stop you. Newer Windows computers have a "snipping tool" feature that allows you to expand a box around the image and then easily download it to a file. The biggest obstacle to downloading ebay images is that sellers sometime post images that are too small to make it worthwhile saving, post fuzzy images – especially photos, or put words across photos, such as "EBAY PHOTO." Sometimes this can be overcome if you have an advanced photo program on your computer and you know how to use the "clone tool" to remove the words. In some cases a photo program like those installed with printers is needed to size a download before it can be printed.

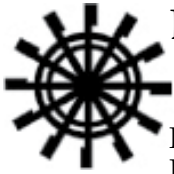
For someone interested in history, ebay.com is a wonderful source for photos, documents, and items that can be accessed in your own home. Sellers are worldwide and offerings change daily. Check ebay often. You will be amazed at what you find. Good luck and happy hunting!

## DISCOVER LOUISVILLE HISTORY

The Louisville Historical League is presenting a half-day forum entitled "Discover Louisville History" on Saturday, March 10th, 2012. It will be held at the Peterson Dumesnil House, 301 S. Peterson Avenue (in the Crescent Hill neighborhood). Registration begins at 8:30 am with the program starting at 9 am. Free but suggested \$5 donation. Refreshments served. Seating is limited; RSVP by emailing LouHist@Hotmail.com. There will be two panel discussions:

**9 AM: Discover where to research:** Panelists include: Filson Historical Society (Jim Holmberg); U of L Archives (Tom Owen); Library (Joe Hardesty)

**10:30 PM: Discover how to research** local history for a house, genealogy, and publications (books, articles). Panelists include: For houses: Joanne Weeter, Stefanie Buzan, and Rosemary McCandless; for genealogy: local genealogy representative; for publications / books: Gary Falk and Rick Bell.



# Louisville Historical League INC

Founded 1972

In residence at the Peterson-Dumesnil House  
P.O. Box 6061 • Louisville, Kentucky 40206  
[www.LouisvilleHistoricalLeague.org](http://www.LouisvilleHistoricalLeague.org)

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## 2012 LHL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The 2012 LHL Board of Directors are as follows: Norma Adams; Rick Bell; Bryan Bush; Stefanie Buzan; Cynthia Cooke; Gary Falk; John Findling; Mary Garry; Ken Machtolff; Jeff McCaffery; Rosemary McCandless; Barb McGee; Nick Morris ; Wadia Newman; Chuck Parrish; Steve Wisner; Mike Zanone; Marianne Zickuhr. Rotating off the Board are Mike Mahoney and Walter Hutchins. New to the Board are John Findling and Rosemary McCandless.



### The Peterson-Dumesnil House

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