

## Remembering the History of Christopher

Among the early settlers in and around Franklin County were L. S. Harrison, H. W. Harrison, Christopher Harrison, James Swofford, Sam Williams, Martin Williams, James Burkkitt, William Burkkitt and William Hodges.

According to the undated Christopher Progress article, "*Where Rend Lake was Conceived, Then Supported,*" the early merchants in Christopher were Pharis, Sam and Will Walker, Bill Hollowell, Allen Jones, Horace Shepherd, Harrison and Davis, Browning and Jones, Henry Heinzman and Sons and Gilbert Harrison.

The Harrison family played an important role in the history of this county. Isham Harrison came to Franklin County around 1814 and settled southeast of what is now known as the city of Christopher and his two sons settled nearby.

Illinois became a state and Franklin County was recognized as a county in 1818.

1818

- Isham Harrison was named a delegate to Illinois' Constitutional Convention

1879

- November 15 – The first railroad depot was built in Christopher in 1879 and the first railroad engine arrived November 15<sup>th</sup> (dates of November 15 and 16 have been found in Bob Hoey's histories)  
A town meeting was held in the general store of James B. Pharis and the name of Christopher was chosen, naming the town after Christopher Harrison, the grandson of Isham Harrison and the father of F. O. and Sidney Harrison (Bob Hoey)

1880

- January 19 – the first post office was inaugurated. It was located in the general store of James B. Pharis, the first Post Master from 1880-1882. (Bob Hoey)
- February 6 – the original Plat of Christopher was surveyed (Bob Hoey)

1891

- August 5 - First Baptist Church in Christopher organized (WFHD 1997 calendar)

1903

- September 28 - Christopher votes to become a village -- 30 Yes and 16 No votes. The election was held in the butcher shop of Charles Heinzman, located at the corner of East Market and South Victor Streets. (BH)
- October 20 – an election was held to elect village officers (BH –1998 June 15)

#### 1905

- July 21 – Emma Dye’s addition to Christopher surveyed. Gilbert Harrison’s hardware store on West Market was the first building build in this block. (Christopher Centennial 1903-2003 calendar)
- August 1 and 2 – Horn and Diamond first addition to Christopher surveyed. The city directory in 1916 shows 106 N. Thomas as the Grocery and Meat Market of John Sekardi. The building would later become the home of The Egyptian Supply Company and The Hoe Supply Company. (calendar)
- In 1905, the Stotlar Herrin Lumber Company purchased the J. C. Snyder-Klotzer Lumber Yard in Christopher. It was destroyed by fire in the 1930’s and was rebuilt at the same location. (calendar)

#### 1906

- January – the sinking of Christopher’s one and only coal mine began. (BH)
- Northside School (Franklin School) was built in 1906 at a cost of \$10,000 (calendar)
- March 9 – Christopher’s first newspaper, the “Christopher News” published its first edition (C.P. article – no date – article “Where Rend Lake was Conceived, Then Supported”) (C.P. 1961 August 31)
- June – First National Bank of Christopher organized. Nelson Browning, President of the bank, was instrumental in organizing this first bank in Christopher. (C.P. article – no date – article “Where Rend Lake was Conceived, Then Supported”)
- 115-117 West Market Street – This building was constructed in 1906 at a cost of \$22,000. The First National Bank and Browning-Jones Mercantile Company occupied this building. Noah Goldstein (The Family Outfitters) purchased the east part of the building October 8, 1922 and The Family Outfitters purchased all of the building in 1936. CIPS, General Telephone Company, Cury’s Clothing and Flowers Fashions have all occupied this building. (BH)
- The Steckenrider Block, located on the south side of East Market Street (across from the Globe Theatre), was built by J. W. Washam about 1906 and later sold to Lewis and John Steckenrider. The building was destroyed by fire in 1916. After the fire, Lucas Filling Station was located in this block. (calendar – note on Prospects (image 2343)

#### 1907

- The Rose Hill Hotel was constructed by Louis Dell Era from Herrin (calendar)

#### 1908

- May 10 - First Baptist Church Building on North Maple Street was dedicated (calendar)

- 1908 – George Antonelli Grocery opened; son took over the business in 1938 (C.P. Ad – 1976 July 1)

#### 1910

- January 11 - Christopher votes to become a City -- 72 Yes, 36 No, 1 Spoiled Ballot (BH)
- April 19 - Christopher elects first Mayor and Aldermen with their terms beginning May 1, 1910 (BH)

#### 1911

- The Gilbert Funeral Home was established in 1911 by S. R. Gilbert. (C.P. 1961 August 30)

#### 1912

- April 11 – A second bank, The State Bank of Christopher, was organized with T. P. Harrison serving as President of the bank. (C.P. article – no date – article “Where Rend Lake was Conceived, Then Supported”)
- Christopher Opera House opened (C.P. article – no date – article “Where Rend Lake was Conceived, Then Supported”)

- 1912-1913 – It was during this period that the three-story Commercial Hotel was constructed at the corner of Market and Emma Streets. From the time of completion until 1974, the 202 West Market Street address was a drug store.

The first druggist was J. F. Hayes who operated Hayes Drug Store from 1913 until his death in 1918. Troy Hampton operated Hampton Drug Company until 1927 when it was sold to Henry R. McCann who operated McCann Drug Company. In 1930 Earl Lavender purchased 50% of the McCann drug store (C.P. 1930 May 29) and later purchased the remainder of the business and operated Lavender Drug Store until it was sold to Duane Tackitt January 1, 1964. Duane operated Lavender’s Drug Store until he sold it to Glen Dreppard in 1969. Mr. Dreppard operated the drug store until his death in 1974. Since that time, there was no other business at that location. (BH)

The building was torn down in October 1993 (per BH pictures)

#### 1917

- October 8 - First application for Post Office in Coello and it opened in 1918 (calendar)
- 1917/1918 – The Globe Theatre was built and opened in 1918. Prior to the building of the theatre, the home of James B. Pharis stood on the lot. Just east of his home on the corner of East Market and North Maple Streets, Mr. Pharis had a general store which also served as the first post office with Mr. Pharis as the first Post Master from 1880-1882. In 1917, John Trogolo bought the home and moved it to East Cherry Street. (calendar)

#### 1918

- Union Funeral Home was established by four local unions of the United Mine Workers of America. Forrest and Mary Russell purchased the business from two local mining unions

on May 1, 1956 and changed the name at that time to Russell Funeral Home. (C.P. 1961 August 30)

- In 1918, the Christopher High School was placed on the accredited lists with a four-year course. (Early History of Christopher from the 1812 Franklin County War History book, page 359)

## 1920

- February 27 – Harrison Hardware Co., located at 104 East Market St., sold the entire contents of their store to Appino Hardware Co. Owners of Harrison Hardware were Gilbert Harrison and L. J. Vincent; Owners of Appino Hardware were Bart Appino, Sr., Pete Appino and Kent Stotlar (B.H.)
- March 15 - Christopher American Legion receives charter and elects first officers (C.P. 1984 May 30 and calendar)

## 1921

- Mrs. Lydia Overturf, appointed Chief of Police in Buckner and second woman in history to be appointed Chief of Police of a community. She arrested two armed bandits who held up a "craps" game in Buckner, organized a posse and pursued another two men, disarmed, arrested and brought them into town. (The New York Times, 1921 February 17; report by Dorothy M. Schultz, PhD, John Jay College of Criminal Justice)
- The C. B. Burkitt and Company Furniture Store, located at 203 East Washington Street, was established by C. B. and Guy Burkitt in 1921 and later owned and managed by Ross Burkitt and Edgar Quick. (C.P. 1961 August 30)

## 1922

- January 4 – Gibson-Moss Clothing at 105 West Market Street was founded by A. C. Gibson and Fred Edelman and sold only men's wearing apparel. Three years later, H. E. Moss purchased Edelman's interest in the firm. (C.P. 1961 August 30)
- February – The Family Outfitters was founded by Noah S. Goldstein in February 1922. (C.P. 1961 August 30)
- The Chevrolet Garage Building was built in 1922 by Ray Dodge with the help of the entire community. (B.H. Photos). It was used as a skating rink and the High School Gym for Basketball games. (C.P. 1983 September 14). Bill Lemen rented the building from Ray Dodge November 1, 1930 (C.P. 1930 November 6) and purchased it in 1946, later selling the building to Bill Hays Chevrolet, Herrin, IL in October 1973. (B.H. Photos).
- The Shoe Center, located at the corner of Market and North Victor Streets, was first established by Jacob F. Schwind in 1922 and after his death was owned and managed by his son, Howard J. Schwind. (C.P. 1961 August 30)
- October 30 – First anniversary of the opening of the Fashion Shop, managed by Henry Koplowitz. (C.N. 1922 October 30)

- November – Café Bon Ton purchased by E. Spickard. Café Bon Ton was located on Emma and Cherry Streets (across from the present Post Office.) (C.N. 1922 November 22)

## 1923

- February 19 – Carp & Co. began enlarging their floor space. A room formerly occupied by Earl's Café together with their present room will double their floor space. (C.N. 1923 February 28)
- February 28 - Learn how to "cook with electricity!" According to the Christopher News, residents were invited to a free demonstration of biscuit baking from 2 to 5 pm every afternoon for two weeks at the Central Illinois Public Service building on West Market Street. (C.N. 1923 February 28)
- Spring 1923 – Rofisto (R. A.) Tomei purchased 60 feet of property at the intersection of Routes 148 and 14 and erected the city's first gas station called the "Egyptian" service station and began selling gas for the Diamond Petroleum Co., with later became the Sunray D-X Oil Company and then Sunoco. (C.P. 1973 February 14)
- April 10 - The Limerick Cash Grocery Store, located on Market Street, was a victim of arson. Manager J. R. Mick had found a letter shoved under the store door about a month before the fire threatening action if the store didn't cease "underselling other merchants." The letter was signed by the KKK. (C.N. 1923 April 14)
- **April 15** - Police raided a house in Urbain and confiscated 15 gallons of White Mule and 400 gallons of mash. The man paid a \$100 fine.
- April 25 - Two men robbed the CB&Q Station Manager on Washington Street, across from the Catholic Church, at gunpoint. The armed assault netted the robbers a few free train passes in the man's stolen "pocketbook," but in their haste, the robbers overlooked the \$140 in the man's wallet. (C.N. 1923 April 30)
- May 15 - According to the Christopher News, an explosion at a mine house used to store powder at Old Ben #14 at Buckner was heard for miles around. (C.N. 1923 May 30)
- A new building, Finazzo Mercantile & Barber Shop, was being erected on the corner of West Market and North Thomas (across from the S&S). The Finazo family would use the 2nd floor as a residence. Opening date was September 1st. (C.N. 1923 May 30)
- June – The Savoy Hotel changed hands; Mrs. Winnie Limerick purchased all furnishings and fixtures from Guido Bione and took a lease on the building. She was assisted by her son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Mick. (C.N. 1923 June 15)
- June 8 – Eleven graduated from Christopher Community High School. Graduation services were held at the Central Christian Church. (C.N. 1923 June 15)

## 1924

- March 10 - Christopher Lions Club received Charter (calendar)
- June 6 – Commencement Exercises for the Christopher High School were held at the Opera House at 8:00 PM (The Christopher News, 1924 June 4)
- September 15 - Christopher High School opens in new building. Herman Bear, the new coach, was already holding informal football practices. Bear coached at the Monmouth High School prior to coming to Christopher. He was a recent graduate of Monmouth

College, where he excelled in all sports. \$300 was spent on new football uniforms. (CN 1924 September 10)

- October 15 – The Hub Clothing Company held their grand opening on Wednesday, October 15, one door west of the Fashion Shop on Market Street. Owners of the business were Harry and Henry Koplowitz of Valier and Christopher and Barnett Trieman of St. Louis. The Hub carried a line of men and boys clothing, shoes, hats and furnishings. (CN 1924 October 8)
- October 15 – The City Meat Market at 202 North Emma Street, one block North of the First National Bank, was selling T-Bone steaks for \$0.25 per pound according to an ad in the Christopher News. (C. N. 1924 October 15)
- October – Louis Steinman of Centralia rented the room east of the Shoemarket and will open up The Vogue Ladies Shop. (C.N. 1924 October 29)
- November – Wilson and Hanifan garage and repair shop relocating to the I. H. Harrison property at 902 North Victor Street, at the junction of the Valier and Benton “hard roads,” and will be erecting a new building. They previously had been operating the Mitchell Garage on East Washington Street and had given up their lease to H. & B. Garage. (C.N. 1924 November 5)

1927

- Jefferson School was built in 1927 with classes starting in October; the building was destroyed by fire (arson) in April 1929 and rebuilt as a brick structure in 1930-1931. After the grade school closed, it became Miner’s Hospital. (calendar)

1928

- July 16 – Matt and Dalton Automotive Service with partners Matt Bugaieski and Dalton Bradley was established at 508 Sylvania Avenue by Mr. Bugaieski. (C.P. 1961 August 30)

1929

- March 28 – The Bass Style Shop held a grand opening in the Shoemarket building on the corner of Market and Victor Streets. (C.P. 1929 March 28)
- **April 2** – Jefferson School in Christopher, which was built in 1927, was destroyed by fire (arson)
- July 11 - Ollie Jones Store and Post Office in Mulkeytown destroyed by fire (C.P. 1929 July 11)
- July 14 - Christopher's first talking movie was shown at the Globe Theater (C.P. 1929 July 11)
- The Illinois Brokerage at Christopher was the first store of the chain founded by Greenberg Mercantile Corporation of St. Louis, headed by Nathan Greenberg. The store was opened in 1929. (C.P. 1961 August 30)

1930

- May – June – Workmen began breaking ground for the new Standard Oil filling station on the site of the old Pflanz property at the intersection of Victor and Sylvia Streets. (C.P. 1930 May – June)
- June 3 – Commencement exercises for the largest class in the history of Christopher Community High School, 64, were held at the auditorium. (C. P. 1930 June 5)
- June 24 – Miniature Golf Course opens at 312 North State Street (C.P. 1930 June 26)
- July – Bill Stotlar purchased and reopened the old stand of Stotlar Motors at 209 West Market Street handling Dodge Brothers and Plymouth vehicles. (C.P. 1930 July 3)
- July 30 - First meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Christopher Public Library (calendar)
- August – Board of Trustees of the Christopher Free Public Library leased the building next door to the Christopher Plumbing Company on North Victor Street (formerly occupied as a residence by E. P. Anthony) and is remodeling and redecorating to suit library requirements. (C.P. 1930 August 28)
- October 29 – Bowling Alley opens in the Walker Building between The Fashion Shop and Ward Barber Shop (C.P. 1930 October 30)
- November – Lemen Chevrolet replaces Dodge – Dodge Motor Co. (C.P. 1930 November 6)
- November – Christopher Free Public Library opened in November 1930. (1931 January 22)
- December 5 - Christopher State Bank failed to open for business (C.P. 1930 December 11 – calendar says 1903 – I believe a typo)

### 1931

- January – Fire destroyed the Bacon Motor Company located on North Victor Street. (C.P. 1931 January article donated by Mattie Webb)
- March 20 – A new feed store, Dawson Bros., opened in a room of the building occupied by the H. L. Brown Furniture Co. at 114 North Victor Street. (Mr. Brown recently vacated this room and moved his stock to the south room). (C.P. 19 March 1931)
- June 11 – The eight grade class of St. Andrews parochial school held its commencement exercises for six (6) students at the Fox-Globe Theater. (1931 June 4)
- June 17 – Formal opening of Huie Motor Company at 206 North Thomas Street (C.P. 1931 June 4)

### 1933

- January – Bombs, meant to bomb the home of E. L. Berger, Superintendent of Bell and Zoller Mines due to a mine union controversy, were found hidden near the Catholic Cemetery, south of Christopher. According to authorities, four bombs, a machine gun and a thousand rounds of ammunition was brought into Franklin County by Roy Tombozzi of Taylorville. (C. P. 1933 January 19)
- February 1 - J W. Walker & Sons closes their store in Christopher (C.P. 1933 January 26)
- July 1 – E. H. Lavender, a partner of H. R. McCann, took over the store July 1<sup>st</sup> (C.P. 1964 January 1)

- July 12 - Greyhound Bus Service enters Christopher (C.P. 1933 July 13)
- July 16 - Christopher Night Policeman, James Pyles, was shot and killed (C.P. 1933 July 20)
- **August 4** - The Christopher Businessmen's Association was organized (calendar)
- September 12 – Christopher Athletic Club opened fall boxing season with 30 rounds of boxing at the Valentino Ballroom. (C.P. 1933 September 7)
- Arondelli & Company was first established by (the late) Bob and Dom Arondelli and Bert Venegoni in 1933 (C.P. 1961 August 30)

#### 1935

- August 31 – The Christopher Brokerage Company opened in the Hindman Drug Store location. (C.P. 1935 August 29)
- October – Stotler Herrin Lumber Company's buildings were destroyed by fire. Reconstruction of their buildings began immediately. Temporary offices were located in the Christopher Building and Loan office in the Rose Hill Hotel building. (C.P. 1935 October 31)

#### 1936

- January 26 - The First Baptist Church was destroyed by fire (calendar)
- **February 22** - Christopher Recreation Center opens
- March – Dave Benson, announced the opening of his store, Benson's Style Shop, which will handle high class ladies ready-to-wear clothing, in the old Hindman Drug Store location. (C.P. 1936 March 26)
- August 24 - Christopher Grade School Band organized (calendar)

#### 1937

- March 7 - Mulkeytown Library sponsored by the Garden Club opens (calendar)

#### 1938

- June 9 - Central Illinois Public Service Company opens new office in Christopher (calendar)

#### 1939

- January 18 - The First Christian Church was destroyed by fire (calendar)
- November 25 – The American Brokerage Company opened in the old Durham Store building between Lavender Drug Store and Valli Tavern, managed by Clarence Burkitt. (C.P. 1939 November 23)

#### 1943

- April 28 – Formal opening of the Bank of Christopher (Bank of Christopher Booklet)

#### 1945

- Gene's Used Cars and body and paint shop, owned by Gene Smith, was established in 1945 at 106 North Victor Street. (C.P. 1961 August 30)

- December 1 – The Guy Burkitt and Son Furniture Store was established by Guy Burkitt (C.P. 1961 August 30) Note: The January 12, 1956 Christopher Progress states Guy Burkitt and Son Furniture Store was started on December 10, 1945.

#### 1946

- January 7 – Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Mann opened their appliance store and launderette at 104 N. Emma in partnership with Leo Holt of West Frankfort with the firm being named “Leo Holt’s Trading Post.” In April of 1946 the Mann’s bought out Mr. Holt’s interest and the name of the business was subsequently changed to Mann’s Appliance. (C.P. 1956 January 12)
- March 23 – The Sanitary Market opened at 109 East Market Street (Georgiades Building) by Steve Rowland and Pete Saineghi. In 1951, they moved into the newly constructed Silkwood Building next to the Globe Theater and purchased the building in 1960. The store was sold to Bob and Carolyn Dyel in November of 1974. (C.P. 1961 August 30, 1974 November 6)

#### 1947

- October 1 – Lee Browning of Browning’s Market at 608 North Victor Street, recalls his first sale of a bushel of apples to Goldie Payne of Valier. Not long after beginning in business, Lee took on a new partner, his wife, Jane McNeill of Carterville. They later added Joy Delynn to their family after her adoption. (C.P. 1970 February 4)

#### 1948

- May 8 – E. L. “Toots” Douglas, along with his wife, Shirley, opened Douglas Jewelry at 116A West Market St. (C.P. 1961 August 30)
- May 8 – Dr. W. A. Weintz opened his first office upstairs over the bank building. In 1959, he built a new optometrist office near his home at 202 North Victor Street, just east of the Christopher Clinic. (C.P. 1961 August 30)

#### 1950

- January 1 – Royall Cleaners, 108 West Market Street, was first established by Roy Kirkpatrick and Lyndol Stone (C.P. 1961 August 30)
- August 27 - Christopher High School destroyed by fire (C.P. August 31)

#### 1951

- October – Don Campbell purchased the Marathon Service Station at the corner of Mulkey and Market Streets from Joe Rosenberger and Maurice Miller. (C.P. 1951 October 4)

#### 1952

- February 8 - Coello Grade School Gym dedicated (calendar)
- First Annual Homecoming set for July 3, 4 and 5. (C.P. 1952 May 29)

1953

- May 8 - Kirk's Pharmacy was established by Jim Kirkpatrick in the former Heinzman Grocery Store building at 114 West Market Street. (C.P. 1961 August 30)
- August – The large barn, a familiar landmark on South Snider Street, which once housed a feed and farm machinery business, was torn down after serving three generations of the Snider family. (C.P. 1953 August 27)

1954

- March 25 – Christopher Nursing Home, located in the former Hotel Rosehill, had nine (9) staff and twenty (20) residents. (C.P. 1954 March 25)
- September 10 – Grand opening of Bracy Food Store on Emma Street in the first floor of the Masonic Building. (C.P. 1954 September 9)
- March 26 – Meeting called to form an organization (The Rend Lake Association) to promote the construction of a 13,000 acre lake in Franklin and Jefferson counties. (C.P. 1954 March 25; 1955 July 7)

1955

- February – 23-year-old Joe Davison became the new owner of The Christopher Progress, with Sybil Jane Harrison as the new editor and Bill Allen, the printer. (C.P. 1955 February 3)
- April – Moore Tile and Paint was opened by owners John and Julia Moore. (C.P. 1973 September 5)

1956

- May 1 – Forrest and Mary Russell purchased the former Union Funeral Home from two local mining unions and renamed it Russell Funeral Home. (C.P. 1961 August 30)
- May 15 – CABA (Christopher Area Betterment Association) was incorporated as a non-profit corporation. Organization established in March of 1956. (C.P. 1961 August 30)
- **June 1** – Christopher Area Businessmen Association organized (calendar)
- June – Dog 'N Suds Drive-In opened on Rt. 14, west of Christopher, by co-owners David P. Richerson and Don Sheffer (CP 1956 June 28)
- September 25 – H. L. Brown Furniture Company, established in 1919, closed after 37 years in business. (C.P. 1956 September 27)

1957

- February 18 – Hazel's Café, opened for business in the Silkwood Building at 108 E. Market. (C.P. 1961 August 30)

1959

- November 29 - Built in 1907, the Rose Hill Hotel and Joe Dillon's Drug Store in Christopher destroyed by fire. (C.P. 1959 December 3)

1960

- April 1 – The Steak House, owned and operated by Pete Shapkoff and his wife, Joyce, opened at 105 North Thomas Street in the old Shapkoff bakery building where the family owned and operated the Tyrone Baking Co. for 45 years. (C.P. 1961 August 30)

1961

- The Egyptian Combo was originally formed in 1961 by Lloyd Rainey, a 14-year-old guitarist from Johnston City; William Nevious, 13-year-old drummer from Christopher; Rick Linton, 17-year-old bass guitarist from Herrin; and Charles Williams, 17-year-old guitarist from Marion. (C.P. 1985 July)
- Construction of new education unit at the First Christian Church is scheduled to be completed by December 1<sup>st</sup> at a cost of \$40,000. (C.P. 1961 August 30)

1964

- January 1 – E. H. Lavender, owner and manager of Lavender's Drug Store, announced the sale of the drug store to Duane Tackitt of Christopher. Duane assumed management of the store Thursday, January 2, 1964. (C.P. 1964 January 1)

1965

- April 1 – Chuck and Lynn Prather opened Chuck's Steakhouse at 105 N. Thomas Street. (C.P. 1985 March 13)

1966

- Bowlin's Foodland was opened by Bud Bowlin of Benton. Bill and Bob Furlow assumed ownership in 1974. (C.P. 1981 June 17)

1967

- December 1 – Ronald D. Huie purchased the former Silkwood-Bacon Insurance Agency from Thomas P. Hart, Jr. renaming the agency Ronald D. Huie Insurance Agency. (C.P. 1982 September 1)

1968

- January – Lemen Chevrolet took delivery of a 1968 Biscayne 4-door Chevrolet sedan which will serve as Christopher's new Police car after being equipped for police duty. The city paid \$1535 plus the trade-in value of the old police car, a 1965 Ford. (C.P. 1968 January 17)
- January – The First Christian Church announced the purchase of the old Swofford Hotel building and lot directly across from the church with plans to dismantle the building and clear the lot for parking facilities for the church. The old Swofford Hotel was constructed in 1905. (C.P. 1968 January 17)

- February – Located in the Bione Building, The Coffee Shop on North Victor Street is under the new ownership and management of Mr. and Mrs. Ohmann and Florence Dick. (C.P. 1968 February 14)
- March – Christopher Concrete Works, purchased by Donald (Duck) Simion in October (1967) from the Earl Thompson estate, added a new line of products, i.e. septic tanks, cisterns, steps, as well as bricks, stone and paints. (C.P. 1968 March 13)
- March 20 – Clem Brock from West Frankfort opened Christopher's new ice cream business, The Dairy Queen. Grand opening was set for May 9 and 10. (C.P. 1968 May 8)
- May 20 – Office facilities and personnel will be moved into Christopher's newly constructed CIPS Building on East Marke Street. (C.P. 1968 May 15)
- July – Wilma's Fine Foods, a restaurant owned by Wilma Jenkins, opened the week of July 21<sup>st</sup> at 210 North Victor Street. (C.P. 1968 July 31)
- November – Dr. Jack Cox, chiropractor, announced the opening of his office at 210 West Market Street. (C.P. 1968 November 13)

#### 1969

- September - Chuck and Ron Huie purchased the J and J Car Wash facility located on South Victor Street about the first of September. (C.P. 1969 September 3 and 24)
- December 22 – The Marathon Service Station at the corner of Market and Mulkey Streets reopened under the management of Bill Davis. (C.P. 1970 January 21)

#### 1972

- April 13 – Grand Opening of Vic Kretz Ford, formerly Huie Motor Company (C.P. 1972 April 12)
- May 27 - Dedication of Rend Lake (calendar)

#### 1973

- September – Don and Nancy Snider and Ramon and Diane Bione purchased Moore's Tile and Paint from John and Julia Moore. The Moore's opened the business in April 1955. (C.P. 1973 September 5)

#### 1974

- January – Debbie (Kirkpatrick) Kretz opened "The Debbinaire Beauty Salon" at 503 West Ray. (C.P. 1974 January 9)
- Bill and Bob Furlow assumed ownership of Bowlin's Foodland in 1974. (C.P. 1981 June 17)
- November – The Sanitary Market opened under ownership ending the more than 20-year partnership of Pete Saineghi and Steve Rowland when they retired. New owners are Bob and Carolyn Dyel. (C.P. 1974 November 6)

#### 1979

- January 1 - The First Christian Church was destroyed by fire (calendar)

1981

- June – Bowlin's Foodland's owners Bob and Bill Furlow increased the size of their store in Christopher by 50% with a new addition. (C.P. 1981 June 17)
- June – Old Ben 14 mine smokestack, east of Buckner, topples under the force of a well-placed explosion taking with it the end of a coal mining era. The mine opened in 1904. (C.P. 1981 July 1)

1983

- July 1 – Tom and Barbara Bush bought the Russell Funeral Home from Mary Russell. They officially take over the business July 1. The funeral home was established in 1918 and moved to 306 N. State Street in 1949. (C.P. 1983 8 June and 29 June)

1984

- January 6 – Banterra Corporation purchased the common stock of the Bank of Christopher. (C.P. 1984)

1985

- March 25 – Vic Kretz Ford destroyed by fire (C.P. 1985 March 27)
- September – Larry's Pit BBQ, 608 North Victor Street, opened for business by owners Larry and Brenda Webb. (C.P. 1986 February 12)

1987

- January (19<sup>th</sup> or 26<sup>th</sup>) – Sally and Gary Caesar became the new owners of Chuck's Steakhouse on North Thomas Street, renaming the restaurant Little Caesar's. (C.P. 1987 January 28)
- June-July – Demolition of Miner's Hospital (C.P. 1987 July 1)

1989

- January 30 – February 4 – Grand Opening for Jerry's Steakhouse (formerly Chuck's Steakhouse/Little Caesar's) on North Thomas Street has been announced by new owners Jerry and Ledora Parrilli. (C.P. 1989 January 25)

2019

- May 5 – Kody VanFossen, a 24-year-old Christopher Firefighter, lost his life in a two-story vacant commercial structure fire at 118 West Market Street. Various businesses previously occupied the building: Moore Tile and Paint, B&S Sales and NAPA Auto Parts, among others. (Various news outlets, social media, Gilbert Funeral Home)

2021

- December 21 (approx.) - Tomei's Crown Rebuilders building located at the intersection of Rt. 14 and 148 (901 N. Victor St.) was demolished in late 2021. **It was built??** (info from Google and FB – more research needed)

2025

- February 23 – Car Wash (across from Huck's on Rt. 14) destroyed by fire (personal knowledge)
- November 15 – Mr. Car Wash reopens for business after fire in February. (Christopher Talk on Facebook)
- December 26 – Kirk's Pharmacy closed after being in business on Market Street for 72 years. (personal knowledge)

NOTE: BH – Bob Hoey

C.N. – Christopher News

C.P. – Christopher Progress

Calendar – 1997 West Franklin Historical District Calendar or 1903-2003 Christopher Centennial Calendar

Name change – I have a (digital/computer copy of) Christopher News dated 1924 December 24; next paper (I have a copy of) is 1925 February 5 and it is shown as Christopher Progress so the name change probably happened at the beginning of the year of 1925.