

VILLAGE OF BOTKINS, OHIO

FOUNDER'S DAY CELEBRATION
1858 - 2008



This booklet celebrates the memories and
milestones upon which the history of the
Botkins community rests.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Michael Gehrlich	Dave Hemmert
Gerald Kempfer	Elizabeth “Betty” Mouk
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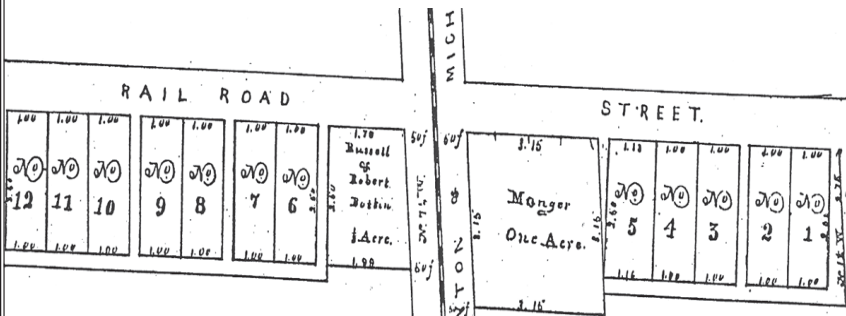
The early history of Botkins, as told in history books and related by Botkins residents both current and no longer with us, paints a colorful portrait. Within this small booklet we have covered only the highlights, as we know them, describing the role of religion, school, business, community and services. Due to limited space, any omissions or oversights remain unintentional, and we welcome comments and suggestions for future publications, especially written, pictorial or copied from an original source to be used as a future reference of the history of our village.

October 11, 2008

August 14, 1858, Botkinsville

The original plat contained twelve numbered lots along the south side of Rail Road Street, which is now known as State Street and on the east and west side of the railroad tracks . These lots were 4 rods by 10 rods, or 66 ft by 165 feet. The plat also included a one acre Monger lot and a half acre Botkin lot. The list below shows the owners:

Lot	1 Demas Swim	7 James C. Dill
	2 Shepard Shaw	8 Joseph Fight
	3 Robert Blakely	9 Anthony Cregar
	4 John Blakely	10 Richard Lind
	5 Daniel Snider	11 R.W. Botkin
	6 Richard Lind	12 R.W. Botkin



Our Founder

The Village of Botkins traces its beginnings back to the namesake and founder of the community, Richard Botkin. Mr. Botkin was born in Hamilton County, Ohio, on September 25, 1803 and moved to Shelby County with his family in 1832. He promptly secured a land grant, and after making the necessary improvements, lived and conducted his farming operation and stock dealing business upon the land until the time of his death on April 29, 1858.

Richard Botkin was an energetic farmer, township Justice of the Peace, land appraiser, stock dealer and father of ten children. Through determination and business insight, Mr. Botkin was able to successfully make additional land purchases, and before long he had acquired several hundred acres in the immediate vicinity of the original land grant. He struck a deal with the Dayton and Michigan Railroad to donate a mile-long right of way through his property in exchange for a rail station that would best accommodate himself and his neighbors.

A short time before his death, Mr. Botkin stated in his will that a town be platted out, and in July 1858 Russell Botkin directed the initial surveying and chartering of "Botkinsville" in honor and memory of Richard, his father. Formal incorporation followed in August of 1881, and from that day forward the Village of Botkins evolved, driven by the same spirit and sense of purpose that led young Richard to Shelby County forty-nine years earlier.



Our Story

Ohio was established as the Northwest Territory in 1787 and became a state in 1803. Thomas Jefferson created the square survey concept that divided Dinsmore Township into 36 square miles of saleable land. Dinsmore Township independently organized in 1832 the year Richard Botkin purchased a land grant beginning our future.

1858 - 1881

In 1858 as gold miners rushed to the Rocky Mountains and the Lincoln-Douglas debates drew crowds; Richard's son, Russell, platted Botkinsville as specified in Richard's will.



New businesses in Botkins are starting to develop during this period: Gray & Ailes's steam sawmill is built near the Dayton and Michigan Railroad, the Botkins tile yards is opened by Hemmert & Stelzer, Jacob W. Zaenglein runs a blacksmith business. Andrew Gutmann starts a merchandise business and the Botkins Steam Grist Mill. J. H. Miller and his cousin, under the firm name of J.H. and P. Miller start a merchandise business with stock consisting of dry goods, hats, caps, boots, shoes, and groceries. Philip Sheets, Sr. is in the hotel keeping and saloon business in 1861 (at the present location of the Botkins Historical Society Building) and Philip Sheets, Jr. returns to Botkins in 1879, dealing in general merchandise. He also purchased the People's Elevator, dealing in grain & seeds.

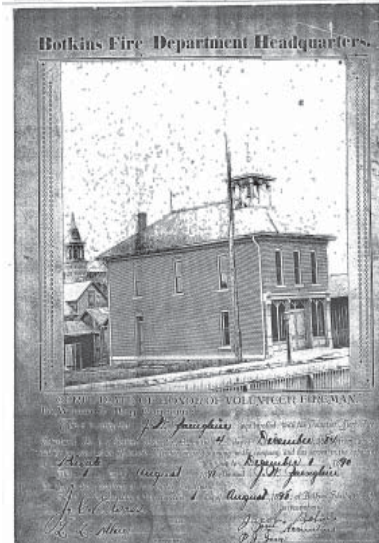
Immaculate Conception builds it first church building in 1867 at a cost of \$8,000.

Population in 1875 is 150.

1881 - 1908

In 1881 guns were blazing at the OK Corral in Tombstone, Arizona, and Barnum and Bailey opened their circus. Botkinsville is growing, adding three additions to the twelve original lots, making forty lots in total. "Botkinsville" is incorporated as Botkins on August 22, 1881. The first mayor was P.W. Speker, with an elected council made up of Dr. G.M. Tate, Dr. P.K. Clinehens, Alexander Botkin and J.B. Hemmert.

An engine house for the fire department is built in 1886 using 90,000 bricks, total cost for material is \$491.46. Botkins has a "calaboose" which was moved and placed on a slab at the rear of the new engine house. The fire department purchases a hook and ladder truck in 1895 for \$350. Further improvements are made to the village when open ditches and seven bridges, made of stone, are eliminated in 1896 by the installation of drain tile.



St. Paul Lutheran Church formally organizes in 1896 after purchasing a small frame church building at the corner of Main and South Streets in 1895. A new school building is constructed in 1897 at a cost of \$4,000.

Banking services are offered in the village when Phil Sheets, Sr. opens the Shelby County Bank in 1897.

The village pond is purchased in 1898, and more fire cisterns are added to the village for the purpose of providing additional water for the fire fighters to use. Town council made these decisions after the complete loss of the Botkins Stave Company by fire that year. The town pond was primarily for fire protection, but long time citizens recall that the town pond was where most kids learned to swim and fish in the summer and ice skate in the winter. Before refrigerators, ice was cut from the pond and stored for iceboxes.



John B. Stolle opens his butcher shop on Railroad Street (present day State Street) in 1888 and W. C. Zaenglein establishes his dry goods and department store in 1890. Oil and gas exploration in the area begins in 1898 as the Botkins Oil and Gas Company plans to erect a derrick near Loramie Creek. The oil and gas company, never fully develops, and sells their tools to S. Munger for \$525. Mr. Munger also intended to drill wells near the community.

Farming is an important business around the community. In 1899 the Botkins Creamery is paying 80 cents per pound for sweet milk, equal to 20 cents per pound for butter and the farmers are pleased with their corn production in 1900 as they report that corn will average 50 bushels to the acre at 30 cents a bushel.

The community has its own newspaper as The Botkins Herald starts publishing in 1901, and streets are becoming more

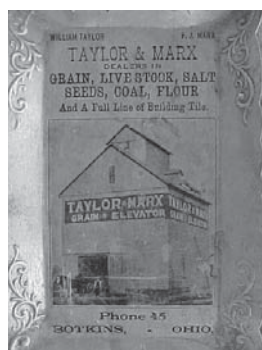
important in Botkins, leading to the creation of the office of Street Commissioner. A new form of transportation will soon be available to the citizens of Botkins when grading starts for the Western Ohio Railway (Electric Trolley Line) in 1901. The Western Ohio Railway, also called the Interurban, ran from Dayton to Toledo. Its tracks went through Botkins on Main Street with a “turn around” located east of the present day Botkins Lumber Company.

The Ohio General Assembly determines in 1902 that the township schools should be brought together as a special school district under the name of Botkins Public Schools. Botkins students attend school at Township No. 2 school house located at Railroad (State) and Sycamore Streets.



The population is 420 in 1902.

The Botkins Telephone Company incorporates in 1904 with stock of \$20,000, and the Botkins Hardware Company is started by John Koenig. This is the same year that Taylor and Marx build a new elevator that later is the site of Botkins Grain and Feed Company, and then named Provico, one of the largest employers in Botkins for many years.



Bernard A. Steinke opens his blacksmith shop in 1905, which develops into the Steinke Marathon station many years later.

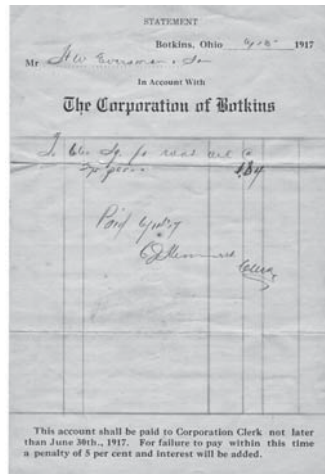
Other businesses and industries during this period: J.B. Greve & P. Hunt, lumber and agricultural equipment business; Sheets Grain Company; Christian Schurr, undertaker and furniture dealer, who later passed the business to his son, J.H.M. Schurr; W. H. Brideweiser, dealer in harness; Thomas Kennedy Implement Company, hardware, stoves, wire fencing, fence posts, implements, cement, lime, plaster, etc.



1908 - 1933

The first Mother’s Day is observed and Henry Ford introduces the Model T Ford. During this same era, this is what is happening in Botkins:

Businesses continue to flourish during this period when the Botkins Product Company is organized in 1911 to distribute parched corn on the cob called “Kob Korn Krisp.” The Botkins Lumber Company is formed in 1921 with capitalization of \$15,000. Botkins Grain & Feed starts manufacturing “Kitchen Queen” and “Sunshine” flour brands in 1926. H.



W. Weigert & Company is in business in 1911, offering clothing, dry goods, shoes, groceries and general merchandise. As early as 1913, Wm. Opperman operates a livery stable.

The community sees continued improvements when a light and power plant is installed by the Western Ohio Railroad Company in 1912. The plant will furnish electricity for lights in homes and also power for various factories and industries. Streets are being improved during this period by a 1911 purchase of gravel from John Limbert's gravel pit at \$1.90 per yard and a half, delivered on the street, and the "Dixie Highway" (Main Street) is paved through Botkins in 1922. Cement sidewalks were first laid in the village in 1914. The Fire Department purchases a new fire engine in 1910 at a cost of \$1,597 and adds another vehicle in 1929. The 1929 model is still owned by the department today and is used frequently in parades.

Payable on Presentation			
Invoice No. 38		BOTKINS, OHIO	
a. <i>Everman & Son</i>		<i>Sept 1917</i>	
To The Botkins Telephone Company Dr.			
for Rent and Toll Services During the Month of <i>Aug</i> 1917			
Date	To Whom	Due	Amount
<i>Aug 1</i>		<i>Knox</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>6</i>		<i>"</i>	<i>10</i>
		<i>"</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>7</i>		<i>"</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>11</i>		<i>"</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>16</i>		<i>"</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>20</i>		<i>"</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>23</i>	<i>Geo. Krigger</i>	<i>Wap</i>	<i>10</i>
	<i>Dayton Wade</i>	<i>Dayton</i>	<i>35</i>
	<i>852</i>	<i>Knox</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>14</i>			<i>10</i>
<i>17</i>			<i>10</i>
<i>18</i>			<i>10</i>
<i>20</i>		<i>2</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>22</i>			<i>10</i>
<i>23</i>			<i>10</i>
<i>27</i>			<i>10</i>
<i>28</i>			<i>10</i>
<i>29</i>	<i>Janet Meehstrol</i>		<i>10</i>
<i>31</i>	<i>852</i>		<i>10</i>
	<i>Knox</i>		<i>10</i>
			<i>855</i>

There is a considerable amount of unrest among the citizens when, in 1925, the telephone subscribers of the Botkins Home Telephone Company are angry over rate increases, and have all their telephones removed except for six. The New Bremen men who own the plant sell it to several Botkins men, who in turn sell to the Sidney Telephone Company. Service was returned with the agreement that telephone services to Sidney is free as part of the agreement.

Two rooms are added to the Botkins School in 1909 to accommodate a growing population. The cost of the addition is \$3,911. A second grade charter (3 year high school) is granted to the school in 1910 and a second addition to the school is approved by the voters at a cost of \$35,000.

Religion continues to be important to, and is supported by the community, when the new Lutheran Church on Railroad Street (State Street) is built in 1915, at a cost of \$15,247.24 along with a considerable amount of donated labor by the congregation. This church building replaces the original Lutheran church that was located at the southwest corner of what is now Main and South Streets. The Methodists build a new church in 1920

on the corner of Sycamore and Railroad (now State) Streets replacing the church that previously was located at what is now 109 Mill Street. The Immaculate Conception church builds a new school building in 1921 adjacent to their church and the school's playground is on the lot where the Methodists had their church building from 1860 until 1881.

Population is 700 and growing.



1933 - 1958

The game of Monopoly is invented, and the first major league all-star game is played at Comiskey Park as part of the Chicago World's Fair. This is what is happening in Botkins:

1935 – Warren E. Botkin starts a dairy business, delivering milk around town.

Research does not reveal much information about Botkins businesses and industries during the 1930's, probably because of the depression and the difficult times for the citizens. However, during the 1930's and 40's there were free movies and square dances during the summer in Botkins. Earlier citizens remember that the stores would be crowded on Saturday nights.

Business startups flourish during the 1940's after the end of World War II. Examples of these during the 1940s are: 1946 - L.C. Opperman of Kenton purchases the Schurr furniture store; 1947

- A frozen food locker plant is built by Lloyd Gerber. The plant has 500 lockers; 1948 - A new night club opens by the name of Platfoot Café. Owner and manager is Stanley Platfoot; 1949 - Hemmert's service station opens. Owners are Clarence Hemmert and sons Paul T. and Richard.

The business environment continues to be good through the 1950's as reflected by:

1950 - Ernest Gerber and sons open Gerber Implement selling Allis Chalmers farm equipment; 1951 - Emerson Engelhaupt is the new owner and operator of the former Monger Tavern which is now known as Omy's Bar; Platfoot Café is sold to Virgil Becher; Kennedy Oil Company owned by Don and Robert Kennedy opens under the management of Walter Maurer which later becomes Maurer Oil Company and Botkins Electric starts in business. 1952 - Lloyd Gerber opens a new real estate development and builds a new hall to accommodate weddings, reunions, and private parties, 1953 - Schnippel Construction

		Balance	Balance
		32 23	32 23
Dec 22	by cash	1.00	31 23
Jan 1	1935 by cash	1.50	29 75
" 11	" "	1.00	28 75
" 22	" "	1.25	27 50
Feb 1	" "	1.00	26 50
" 12	" "	1.00	25 50
" 27	" "	2.25	23 25
Mar 5	" "	1.00	22 25
" 26	" "	1.00	21 25
" 7	" "	2.00	19 25
" 15	" "	2.00	17 25
" 26	" "	1.00	16 25
May 7	" "	1.00	15 25

is founded and The Shelby County Bank purchases the Paul Zaenglein Grocery and General Store building. The bank and also the City Drug Store, owned and operated by Phil Koehlinger will move to this building; 1954 - Jim and Betty Kinninger open the Tastee-Freez, Lotridge Rubber Company is formed, Jake Paul buys Omy's Bar from Emerson Engelhaupt and names it Jake's Bar. 1956 - The Kennedy Potato Chip Company of Wapakoneta is purchased by Gerber Food Center, and will manufacture Kennedy Potato Chips in Botkins and Ed Counts opens Counts Barber Shop; 1957 - Botkins Grain and Feed Company purchases the Provico Feeds Division of Kentucky Chemicals and will add 27 persons, bringing the total employment in Botkins to 62.

The official population of Botkins is 608 according to the 1950 census.

School activities during this period: in 1951 a vocational agricultural department is added to Botkins schools, Herschel Wical is the instructor; and in 1955 Botkins voters approve a \$340,000 bond issue to build a new school building which opened Sep 4, 1957.

1958- 1983

1958 is a memorable year nationally, as first class postage rises to four cents, after having been three cents for twenty six years. Elvis Presley joins the army and "Purple People Eater" becomes America's number one song. Botkins continues to be a busy community as:

Telephone service is modernized in 1958 and dialing service begins for the 500 Botkins telephone subscribers. 1970 sees the Botkins residents being charged rates on metered water for the first time and in 1973 the population is 1,138 compared to 1,054 in the 1970 census



In 1972 a village landmark is lost when the Sheets elevator, located south of State Street on the west side of 25A, is torn down and will not be replaced. The elevator was built in the 1890's and is currently owned by the Botkins Grain & Feed Company.

Several businesses are listed as being created during this period: 1958 - Botkins Fertilizer Co. Inc. is started by a group of Botkins and Sidney men, and in 1975 John R. Frische, DDS opens his dental office on the lot where Jake's bar previously stood.

Continuing community growth and approval by the voters allows the school system to add five classrooms and a music room to the existing school facility in 1964.

The Botkins Fire Department improves its equipment by purchasing a new \$28,000 fire truck in 1968. Other vehicles on hand are a 1961 tanker and a 1928 pumper.

Steve Maurer, former Mayor of Botkins, is elected senator for the 12th District of Ohio in 1980.

Immaculate Conception Church builds a new church in 1961 replacing the previous building built in 1867. Only Believe Ministries Christian Center is organized in 1982 by Pastors Peter and Phyllis Doseck. Initially located on State Street the church moved to Lynn Street and eventually built a new church at their present location on Botkins Road.

Kids and adults enjoy a new recreational facility in the village in 1970 when the swimming pool, located on the site of the old high school, is opened.



1983 – 2008

Nolan Ryan becomes the strike out king with 3,509 strike outs and IBM releases their PC DOS Version 2.1. Botkins continues to be active:

Botkins voters again approve an addition to the local school, which is completed in 1985. This addition includes a new elementary wing, which eliminates the need for the school to use the Catholic School “Ward Building”. Completion in 1991 of another addition includes a new gymnasium, locker rooms, training room and classrooms. The last addition was completed in 1996 and included a new kitchen area, expanded cafeteria, and new vocational agriculture shop, industrial technology shop, science lab and classrooms.

During this era, the entrepreneurial spirit of the citizens of Botkins continues. A listing of the existing businesses in Botkins, not mentioned elsewhere in this history, is impressive. The following

includes a few that were started prior to 1983, but the majority are enterprises that are start up businesses, or purchases of existing businesses that occurred during the past twenty five year period. In no particular order those are: Cynthias's Beauty Shop, Botkins Paint Company, Harrod Memorials, Tri-County Veterinary Service Inc, Fertilizer Dealers Supply Inc, The Hairitage House, The Inn Between, Greve Electrical and Plumbing LLC, Meyer Tavern, Jenny's Designs Flowers & Gifts, Ed Brown Insurance Agency, Schneider Tool Sales, Kennedy's Garage Inc, Provico Farm & Show Supply LLC, T & K Laser Works Inc, Subway of Botkins, Finishing Touches Flowers & More, Botkins Party Mart, Bubba's Pizza LLC, Pro-Health Feeds, HT Concepts Inc, Argania Fruit US Inc, Advanced Agri-Solutions CoOp, Hubbard, Cowboys, Beem Construction Inc, Village Salon, US Bank, First National Bank of New Breman, Larry's Barber Shop, Progreen Landscaping and Garden Center, Hi-Style Beauty Salon, Botkins Community Insurance, Greve Drywall & Painting.

~ 100 Years and More - ~ *Long Time, Family Business Operations*

It is appropriate to note that there are two businesses in Botkins that have been in operation for over 100 years and remain under the same family ownership.

ABOUT KOENIG EQUIPMENT, INC. ● ○ ● ● ●

In 1904, John C. Koenig founded a hardware and farm equipment dealership to serve his friends and neighbors. Committed to the long-term, he handled only quality products; he offered them at a fair price; he maintained convenient hours; and he supported his merchandise with application information, a good parts stock, and responsive repair and maintenance. He always greeted his customers as friends and made sure transactions were of mutual advantage.



Botkins Hardware Company was started in 1904 by John C. Koenig and is now known as Koenig's Equipment, Inc. Botkins Hardware originally was in a building located on Main Street by the Sheet's Elevator, between what is now Bubba's Pizza and Kennedy's Garage. The merchandise of Botkins Hardware included hardware, stoves,



roofing, fence, pumps, buggies and implements. Koenig's Equipment, Inc. is a dealer in agricultural equipment and has locations at 306 N. Main Street and 16240 CR 25A. John Koenig's sons John, Bill and Emerson continued the business and it is managed today by the third generation of the Koenig family.

Steinke's Inc. started in 1905 by Bernard A. Steinke who was a blacksmith by trade. His business was in the building on Main Street (now State Street) which was the former Steinke Insurance Agency. "B. A.'s" son Clem purchased the business after his father's death and added a car repair business, dropping the blacksmith business. In the 1940's Clem's son Bob bought the repair business and moved the



garage to the corner of South and Main Street where the new village park is now located. He later purchased the land at the corner of State and Main Street and constructed a new building where the business is currently operating. Bob's sons Ron and Dave purchased the business in 1978, and Ron bought out his brother Dave in 1991, becoming the sole owner. Steinke's Marathon is now under the ownership and management of Steve and Andy Steinke, the fifth generation.

❧ *Fraternal and Civic Organizations* ❧

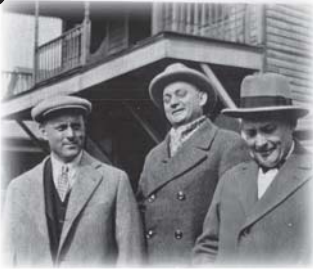
During the late 1800s and early 1900s there were several fraternal orders with lodges in Botkins. Botkins Lodge No. 903, I.O.O.F., The Rebecca Lodge, I.O.O.F., held their meetings in the Odd Fellows hall. Summit Camp No. 131, Woodmen of the World; The Knights of St. John, a Catholic order, also had their own halls. The Catholic Knights of America, a Catholic insurance order, flourished under the auspices of the Catholic Church and the members met at the Knights of St. John hall which was located west of the present day swimming pool.

A brief history of two clubs formed by the men and women of the community was obtained from the minutes of those organizations and is told as follows:

Women's Community Club of Botkins

The women of Botkins and the surrounding area belonged to a very active organization that started over 70 years ago. Records show that the Women's Community Club of Botkins was organized in 1937 with a starting membership of 45 women. They were eager supporters of the community and our country. Their records show that they raised money to sponsor the first Boys Scout Troop in Botkins at a cost of \$10.00 in 1939, and continued to support the troop for many years. They purchased and donated the first traffic light in Botkins for \$120.00, bought five coats for the school patrol at a cost of \$4.00 each, donated lights at the town pond for the skaters and many more civic activities. While those prices seem very reasonable today, remember that the country was recently recovering from the great depression and money was still very scarce during this period of time. They also supported the troops by making a "beautiful service flag". The flag was described as being made of satin with a red bordered white field and blue stars arranged in two large Vs. Each blue star represented a person from the area that was serving our country during World War II. Unfortunately, their records show that at least five gold stars were added to the flag to represent area soldiers killed or missing in action. The flag was dedicated during a formal presentation and all mothers of the area who had sons represented on the flag were invited to the presentation. The club also knitted and sewed for the Red Cross and made donations to the USO. A memorial day program was prepared for the community by the women in 1944 and 133 individuals were recognized as either still serving or honorably discharged. They also made a pamphlet listing the addresses of all service men and women, in turn sending those to the service people to let them know "where their pals were".

The Women's Community Club disbanded in 1974. During their existence they were very supportive of the Botkins community and a very patriotic group.



Botkins Business Men's Club Also Known as the Botkins Commercial Club

Looking through the minutes of this club, it appears that the men's club was the social provider for the community. During the years of 1938 through 1941 this club was responsible for providing "picture shows", carnivals, children's Christmas parties, and various other social events. The picture shows were held on the school grounds and evidently enjoyed by a large number of attendees. Committees were appointed to act as "police" for the shows and to prevent parking on the school grounds. The town council also decreed that the traffic light at the Dixie Highway and Railroad Street (now Main and State Streets) operate until 11 P.M. on the night of the picture shows. Bleachers were set up for the shows, and anyone over 8 years old was charged the nominal sum of 5 cents each to see the shows.

A carnival held in October 1938 lasted for three full days, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. A dare devil act, "The Great Engine", was contracted for the sum of \$100 to perform at 2:30 in the afternoon and 10:00 in the evening. Three other individual entertainers were contracted to perform, at the lesser sum of \$8 each. A "pulling contest" for amateurs was held Thursday afternoon and a colt and pet parade on Saturday afternoon. Cash prizes were awarded for each of these events. The men decided to keep for their own profit, the concessions of bingo, chuck luck, paddle wheels, beer, lunch, and ice cream. Other concessions were contracted out. The men must have realized that they could not effectively handle all the concessions themselves, so they asked the Women's Club to "take care of the bingo and lunch stand for the benefit of the Men's Club".

The men must have enjoyed the club as entertainment committees were appointed for each monthly meeting to provide beer and food. They were also very strict on seeing that members attended the meetings, because a member not attending was charged 50 cents for each meeting that he missed.

KIWANIS

The Botkins Kiwanis Club held meetings for many years, and evolved into the present Town and Country Service Club.

Botkins Area Community Club

The Botkins Area Community Club began on January 17, 1963. This club was formed as a non-profit organization for the purposes of “rendering constructive civic services for the promotion of the welfare of the community and the citizens of the Village of Botkins and its surrounding area...” and “to inculcate civic consciousness by means of active participation in the constructive projects which will improve the community, state and nation”. W.O. Loy, Norman Elsass, Emerson Koenig and Frank Thaman were the signers for the incorporation and the first officers and trustees were: Robert Sherman, President, Warren Loy, Vice President, Robert Henschen, Secretary & Treasurer with Frederick Gehrlisch Paul Wilt, Charles Freeman, Emory Koenig, Robert Raberding and Robert Steinke serving as trustees.

Many of the members were originally part of a group of civic leaders who financed and constructed a doctor's office at 105 Roth Street. The office building was eventually sold in 1970 when the last doctor moved from Botkins and a replacement doctor could not be obtained.

One of the Botkins Area Community Club's first fund raising projects was a community festival held in 1965 and became known as the Botkins Carousel. The name “Carousel” was chosen by holding a contest among Botkins High School students to decide upon a name for the event. The Immaculate Conception Church sponsored a Harvest Festival for many years prior, and ended that event a year or two before the start of the Carousel. A desire to continue a community festival led to the formation of the Botkins Carousel, which continues as a well attended event to the present day. The proceeds are used to support various recreation and charitable needs in the community.

The club has also sponsored social events within the community with an annual Sweetheart's Ball and later a Harvest Ball from 1972 to

1993. A golf outing known as the Botkins Open was sponsored from 1987 to 1996.



For a number of years, the club and the community discussed the creation of a public park in the village. The club purchased 10 acres and the school purchased 25 adjacent acres in 1985 for the purpose of establishing a community park. After a number of years of planning and fund raising, the land was donated to the village and development began. Through the contributions of many, both financially and physically, the park came into being, and in 2004 the club purchased an additional 12 acres to complement the growing facility. The park is now a 47 acre recreational facility.

Through the years the club has consistently supported efforts to enhance the welfare of the community. From 1981 to 2007 the club has contributed over \$390,000 in assets and monies to benefit the school, fire department, swimming pool, library, and other activities within the community.



THE BOTKINS HERALD
FRIDAY, APRIL 11, 1913
BASEBALL

As the season advances, the accruing need of a good baseball team for Botkins becomes more evident. The great American game has a number of ardent exponents here who are willing to aid in the

movement and Mgr. Cole has notified those on the line-up who have signed for the coming year to report for the first practice game next Sunday afternoon.

Other near by towns are coming to the front with good teams and not since the establishment of the great national game, in the year 1845, has as much interest been displayed for the fans generally as is being done here this year.

This insures success. The people want a good ball team and the talent has been secured. The game is not only exhilarating but instructive. It requires a good quick eye, good catching, throwing and running powers, combines with and immediate perception of what to do at the right time in the field.

Botkins' reputation in the baseball world stands as a magnet that attracts the eye of other towns when they desire to test metal with a fast bunch and no effort has been spared to make the team this year better and stronger than ever.

Botkins will open the season at Sidney, Sunday afternoon, April 20th. On Sunday April 27th the Reds will open the season at Troy. May 4th is the date of the opening game here, Sidney versus Botkins.

(Advertisements April 11, 1913)

SPECIAL AGENCY FOR THE FAMOUS 'STAR BRAND' SHOES

The largest selling Brand of shoes in the World
H.W. WEIGERT & CO. BOTKINS, O.

FREAKS, FADS AND FANCIES have no place in our stock as we cater exclusively to sensible women who want to dress well and look well at minimum of expense. You can do no better than at our store.

BLAKELEY & LOOKER MILLINERY

THE BOTKINS HERALD

October 11, 1918

BUSINESS DIRECTORY - WHERE TO TRADE

J.H.M. SCHURR

Old hickory porch chairs and porch swings, just the thing for out door use. Rain or sun will not injure them. Old rustic styles. "Ask him who has one"

SHEETS & BUSH

We carry the best line of cigars and tobacco in town. Call at our place when in need of tobacco. Sheets & Bush Café

SHEETS GRAIN COMPANY

We pay the highest market price for wheat, corn, oats, rye, barley and seeds. A share of your patronage solicited.

THE HOME BAKERY

For the best bread, cakes and pies, go to the Home Bakery. A share of your patronage is solicited.

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We deal in farm tractors, implements, hardware, fencing, automobiles, stoves and buggies. Call on us when in need of the above articles.

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“An Interview with Esta Opperman”

105 Roth Street

The site of the present day Community Insurance Group at 105 Roth Street has been the location of a variety of activities. As we are told, the site was first used as a carbide factory that was a two story building and contained large tanks to mix the carbide (see related story following). Following the carbide factory, Dr. Schroer built a barn to use in his profession as a veterinarian and was sold to Dr. Lingerich, also a veterinarian. The barn was bought by Wm. Opperman in 1917 and moved west of town. Later, Dr. Raymond Paul had a medical practice in the present building and then Elsass Insurance bought the building for its insurance building.

Street Lights

In 1911, as related by Esta Opperman, the street lights in Botkins were individually lit by a “light man” at 5:00 PM in the winter and at 4:00AM he would turn the lights off. The lights were located at: Schaub’s Grocery, Veterinary Supply, Catholic Church, Corner of Main and State Street, and several others. The lamps were fueled by carbide gas. Carbide was bought by the sack, mixed with water in the large tanks in the carbide factory, and it would form gas. The gas was fed through ½ inch pipes all over Botkins to each light. The light man was Chris Bonnoront who was on the town payroll.

Village Water Tank

There was a pump and water tank located in front of the drug store by the railroad provided by the village. People from all over town would bring their cows and horses and water them, then take them back home.

Our Future

The Botkins community members proved early in our history that this is a village of energetic and forward looking individuals. Industry, medical and dental professionals, insurance agencies, furniture stores, groceries, general merchandise, misc. retail establishments, contractors, barber and beauty shops, sawmills, lumber yard, repair businesses for trucks, automobiles and farm equipment, churches, schools, and many more too numerous to mention, have been a part of our history. Many of these businesses and professions continue to this day even though the citizens of smaller communities today are looking to the larger cities for their personal shopping and employment needs.

We are looking forward to the further development of Botkins during the next 150 years and are confident that our citizens a century and a half from now will be as proud of the Botkins community as we are today.



LOOK PLEASANT PLEASE

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All photographs in this annual were made by

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NINETEEN TWENTY-SIX ANNUAL

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