

REMEMBER WHEN

4,000 people attend opening



This photo appeared in the Eagle-Gazette on Dec. 20, 1955, announcing that the building on the southeast corner of Sixth and Harrison would be the new home of the West Branch Library. It was to officially open on Jan. 3, 1956.

JOYCE HARVEY
CORRESPONDENT

What would it take today to attract 4,000 people to the opening of a new business?

It soon will be 83 years since the new building of the P & M Bakery opened on the southeast corner of Harrison and West Sixth avenues (Daily Eagle, July 22, 1933). Between 6:30 and 10:30 p.m. on a Friday night, it was reported 4,000 toured the bakery.

The invitation read: "It's going to be a delightful occasion! All plans are now completed to insure you one of the best times you've ever had when you attend the Open House Festival at P & M Bakery ... delicious refreshments, lots of

people and lots of fun. ... The modern machines, mixers, moulders and cutters, ovens, wrappers, slicers, etc., will enthrall you. And you will be both surprised and delighted to see how immaculate and sanitary is everything in this plant. ... Every step of the process of baking will be made clear to you by the attendants. And there's something else — a Big Surprise feature. Be sure to get a card at the door as you come in so you can participate."

Benjamin Potts (born 1890) and Frederick Mast (born 1882) each worked for Peerless mixer in 1929 appeared in the P-G May 28, 2012.



The building at 534 Harrison Ave. was built in 1933 to house P&M Bakery. Today, it is the home of Wee Care Pet Service.

short article about a repairman from Sidney, Ohio, visiting this location to repair their Peerless mixer in 1929 appeared in the P-G May 28, 2012.

Their business grew rapidly. Ben Potts announced in the Daily Eagle on Dec. 6, 1932 that they were beginning construction of a new bakery building at the corner of Harrison and Sixth. It was to be a 36-by-80-foot brick building of one story with a basement. It was to be "fireproof and modern in every detail with the latest type of bakery construction. ... The most up-to-date ovens will be installed, wherein the bread travels as it bakes."

Curious about that "Big Surprise" featured at the open house? It was a raffle of cakes, groceries and glassware that were awarded to 13 guests.

Benjamin Potts had married, and he and his wife, Elizabeth, had four children: Richard, Marcella, Marilyn and Frederick. The family lived at 427 Harrison. After an illness of three years, Benjamin died at 47 in 1937.

The city directory listed for only about a year the Quality Pastry & Bread Shop operated by Carl Bellman at the former P & M Bakery location. Next were listed a Nohi Bottling Co. with William Kane, manager; the West Branch Library (1956-1974); A&M Auction; and several others. James Stevenson purchased the building in 1995. The current occupant, Wee Care Pet Service, operated by Sharon and Jim Slater, moved into the building in 1996.

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World War II history connects Ohio, France

JOYCE HARVEY
CORRESPONDENT

The story of Alfred L. Bowland and his World War II service still is being shared these many years later.

Alfred was born in Hocking County in 1914 to Howard and Elizabeth Bowland. He was the youngest of 10 children. When the 1940 census was taken, Alfred was 25, living with his mother and father in Lancaster on Garfield Avenue, and working at a glass factory. He enlisted Dec. 9, 1941, two days after Pearl Harbor.

In 1947, Alfred married Viola Lenart, who was from the Chauncey area. They had three children: Linda, the oldest; Eileen, who passed away Oct. 31, 2014; and son Roger. Alfred retired from Anchor Hocking after 37 years as a machine operator. Viola died in 1971, and Alfred died at 80 in 1995.

Seventy years after the war, and 20 years after his death, Alfred's surviving children, Roger and Linda, recently have learned how much his service means yet today to a French citizen. A newly discovered chapter in Alfred's story will be passed on to his grandchildren, Derek, Scott, Andrew, Joseph and Maribeth, and to his great-grandchildren, Matthew, Aaron, Natalie and Devin.

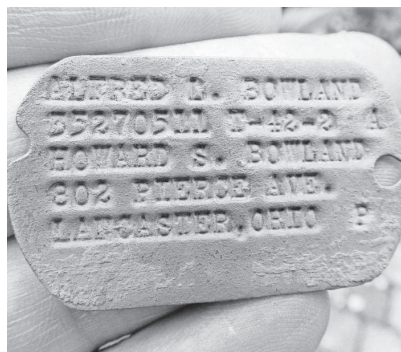
Stephane [redacted] recently found the

"dog tag" or "plate" of Alfred Bowland while he was using a metal detector in the forest of Lesussy sur Seine, about 45 kilometers northwest of Paris. Not content just to keep the tag, he emailed Lancaster Mayor Brian Kuhn and The Ohio State University Archives and asked for help to find a living relative of Alfred Bowland. I did some research for Kuhn and located Alfred's son, Roger. Meanwhile, an OSU archivist also had contacted Roger.

Roger Bowland emailed Stephane [redacted] and received this wonderful reply in broken English: "I am very happy to have the family of this brave soldier, who participated in the liberation of France ... you can be proud of your dad. I discovered the plate with my metal detector in a forest near my home, so I had to find his family to give it to you, that's the least of it." Stephane is 47, and married with two daughters.

Stephane sent Roger a package containing the "plate," as well as a few things found near it including a remnant of a purse and coins. All Stephane asked in return was a photo of Alfred Bowland. Today, the photo of Alfred Bowland is displayed proudly in Stephane's home.

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This dog tag was found in France this year, and thanks to an appreciative Frenchman, it now is in the hands of the deceased soldier's family.

Almost 100 years of Krogering in Lancaster

JOYCE HARVEY
CORRESPONDENT

With the news that Lancaster soon will be getting a new Kroger store at 1627 N. Memorial Drive, some readers have asked when Lancaster's first Kroger store opened. The very first Kroger store opened in Cincinnati in 1883 (133 years ago). When do you think Lancaster's first Kroger opened?

"Kroger Grocery Company Leases Room in Kull Building — Will Open Four Groceries Here," was the headline on page one of the Lancaster Daily Eagle, Nov. 22, 1921 (95 years ago). The article stated, "The famous Kroger Grocery Co." had taken over a five-year lease in the George Kull Building at 537 N. Columbus St. Kroger also intended to lease locations in the east, west and southern parts of the city as soon as possible.

This store at 537 N. Columbus (southwest corner of North Columbus and Sixth) opened Thursday, Dec. 15, 1921. Their first ad promised customers would receive the benefit of their ability to buy tremendous quantities. They sold for cash only, and had eliminated "unnecessary expenses" such as free deliveries and telephones.

Stores then were opened at 310 Washington Ave., 857 E. Main St. and 128 S. Broad St.

The Main Street store was located in the Martens building that stood on the northwest corner of Main and Cherry, now a Walgreens location. The South Broad Street store was in another Martens building that stood on South Broad behind city hall, now the site of the police department.

By 1928, three more stores were added. One was at 119 N. Columbus on the west side of the street, where there is



Merritt H. Brown (far left), manager of an early Kroger store, is shown in his store at 504 N. Maple St. in 1934. The banner says they are celebrating the Kroger Company's 51st anniversary.

now a parking lot. Another store opened in the Kauffman building on the northwest corner of Main and Maple (441-443 E. Main), now Risch Drug Store. The third store opened at 504 N. Maple St. on the northeast corner of Maple and Fifth, now the East Lancaster Church of God.

Merritt H. Brown was manager of the North Maple Street store for 13 years and then moved to manage the new Kroger that opened at 124 W. Wheeling St. It opened Friday, Dec. 13, 1940. It stood on the south side of West Wheeling behind (or west of) the Sherman Armory that stood where Shaw's parking lot is today. It was described as a "new modern food center," where "in the new self-service system customers may enter the

store, shop at their own pleasure, selecting the foods and articles they wish." (E-G, Dec. 12, 1940). When this store opened, the store at 128 S. Broad closed. Brown remained with Kroger until 1948, when he resigned to manage the Lancaster Poultry Co.

Kroger moved on west on Wheeling Street and built a "supermarket" at 342 W. Wheeling that opened Tuesday, May 3, 1955. Joe Bennett was the new store's manager. The store offered eight check-out lanes and parking for 200 cars. It stood where the Fairfield County Minimum Security Jail is located today. A photo appeared in the Aug. 21, 1957, Eagle-Gazette showing the Kroger store at 124 W. Wheeling being demolished for a

parking lot for Anchor-Hocking Glass Corp. employees.

Next, a new store at 1145 E. Main opened Jan. 6, 1960, offering 18,000 square feet. It was followed 18 years later by the new Kroger Sav-On built at 1735 N. Memorial Drive. This 56,000-square-foot store opened its doors Nov. 1, 1978. Now about 39 years later, another new Kroger is about to open and offer Lancaster 105,000 square feet. We've come a long way from Lancaster's first four one-room Kroger stores that opened almost 100 years ago.

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