



ANCESTORS

Bartholomew County Genealogical Society

Oct - Dec Q4 2023

ISSN: 1933-5164

Vol 33 Issue 4

2023 Calendar

Sat, oct 28: S.K.I.L.L.S. - Yellow Trail Research Center @10am

For Members Only ! Join up and Join us ! Kim Ray shares what's in the Research Center

Located NW corner of the Hope Town Square (4th set of doors south of Main Entrance)

Sat, nov 18: tour of bakalar air museum @10am

Annual Meeting and Touring of Bakalar Air Museum, Bakalar Airport

No meeting in December - have a wonderful holiday !

Sharing
Knowledge
In
Light
Learning
Sessions

S.K.I.L.L.S. Programs are designed for our members to help build your knowledge, add tools to your toolbox, or learn some tips and tricks from our own members. They are very informal and we love it when our membership participates in the discussions to share their experiences as well ! Please join us ! Not a member ? No problem, you can join on the day of the program.

REMEMBER -

Your 2024 Membership

Dues are due now !

(see back page for prices)

THANKS SO MUCH !!

Inside This Issue

2023 Calendar	1
Highlights	2-
- by Marcus Speer	3
BCPL Cemetery Tour	4
-by Barth. Co. Library	
Yellow Trail Research Center Tour	5
-by Kim Ray	
The Ancestry of a House	6-
Part 3 - by Bob Hobbs	10

Editor's Note: Many thanks to all BCGS Board Members for their time and articles to make Ancestors the "Voice of BCGS" ! As a courtesy, and to insure the personal communication with each of you, their columns are not edited. Hope you enjoy !

Highlights - by Marcus Speer

Program Minutes July 15, 2023

Another annual fieldtrip with a lunch outing was enjoyed by 10 members and 2 guests at the Genealogy Area of the Jennings County Public Library in North Vernon. Presenters included both the former and current director of the Genealogy Area. Ed Kellar, Assistant Director, Local History/Genealogy welcomed us and introduced us to his predecessor, Sheila Kell, who continues to serve as the County Coordinator for Jennings County INGenWeb. Before we left for lunch, we joined in a retirement party for Shelia who actually retired in 2020 but was unable to have a retirement celebration.

Ed shared with us about his own background and reasons why he was placed in charge of genealogy at the library. Many different genealogical resources are available for viewing. As noted online: "The Jennings County Public library ... is a very good place to begin your research. They hold indexes to many of the early county records. The library also houses a set of binders containing reading of the cemetery stones for a very large portion of Jennings County. Most of these reading were done in the early 1970s. The library also have a very large obituary card file, that is being added to frequently." Many of the original documents are still held in the Courthouse or at the annex. Before leaving North Vernon, we headed over to Crimson Oak restaurant to enjoy lunch together with nine of our BCGS members.

Our fieldtrip continued after lunch for 6 of us as we journeyed south to the little county seat of Vernon. Lou Malcomb led us on a tour through the Jennings County Historical Society Museum. From their website: "The North American House Museum serves as the Headquarters of the Jennings County Historical Society. It houses thousands of Jennings County artifacts, photos, documents, and art pieces. In the parlor you can see Sarah Bolton's (Indiana poet who wrote "Paddle your own canoe") piano and other treasures. In the Military room we have examples of uniforms, Civil War ammunition, certificates of service, and maps. In the Gallery we are proud of our local artists such as Dalton Bolser, Jo Strobe, and many others. We emphasize traditional arts including quilts, photography, and woodcrafts. The Railroad Wagon room houses the wagon but also showcasing Native American artifacts and railroad memorabilia. The upstairs showcases "Skyline Bill" Willman and the Russell Farms horse industry. It also displays spinning wheels, bedrooms in the 1800's, and many household items like coffee grinders, washing machines, and bicycles. Images of Jennings County appear throughout the museum with our large collection of Otto White Photographs."

There is so much to see and learn in Jennings County. For additional information about both locations, please check out the following links: <https://www.jenningslib.org/genealogy> & <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064565508960>. <http://jenningscounty.org/> & [Log into Facebook](#)

Program Minutes Sept 16, 2023

For our September 16th Program, BCGS returned to Atterbury-Bakalar Air Museum in the William "BRUCE" Dalton Media Center. Thirteen BCGS Members and three guests were present to hear from Erin Doyle. The Program was entitled: "Genealogy and the Plague: How epidemics and pandemics affect your family research and what to do about it." Erin has been studying epidemiology for a long time. So, she has come to recognize how epidemics have changed the course of family history through migration, early death and the exchange of property.

She shared the following definitions:

- Plague: a virulent, contagious febrile disease that is caused by *Yersinia pestis* that occur in bubonic, pneumonic, septicemic forms.
- Epidemic: an outbreak of disease that spreads quickly and affects many individuals at the same time in a given location.
- Pandemic: an outbreak of disease that occurs over a wide geographic area and affects an exceptionally high proportion of the population.
- Endemic: a disease regularly found among a certain population or geographic area.

The "Heavy Hitters" include Cholera (dysentery, summer complaint), Malaria (swamp fever, Wabash fever), Plague (black death, great plague), Smallpox (red plague), Typhoid (Typhoid Mary, small sickness), Typhus (camp diarrhea, jail fever), Yellow Fever (yellow jack, American plague).

How does an epidemic or pandemic affect your research? People die ... record interruption, mass graves, mass migration, death beyond the diseases.

What can you do? Find out what epidemics happened in the areas where your families lives. Record the event in your family history. Look for information that isn't a vital record. Trace mass migration for clues where families may have moved. Find information on mass graves and if anyone tried to document them. Look for blended families after an outbreak.

If you would like to view the interesting presentation, please go to our BCGS Facebook page to find the video. Here is the link: [Bartholomew County Genealogical Society was live. | By Bartholomew County Genealogical Society | Facebook](#)





Jennings Co. Genealogy Library & Luncheon





Second Annual Guided Tours of Local Cemeteries

You are invited to the second annual BCPL guided tour of local cemeteries in honor of National Family History Month!



City Cemetery at Donner Park

Monday, October 16, 6:00 - 7:00 pm
City Cemetery, 739 22nd St

City Cemetery is the final resting place to hundreds of Columbus' earliest residents, and they all have unique and interesting stories. On this self-paced walking tour, library staff positioned around the cemetery will share the stories of ten families buried there. These families will be different than those featured last year. This program is suitable for all ages, and a cemetery scavenger hunt will be available for children as they complete the tour. Apple Cider will be served at the north entrance to the cemetery. The rain date for this event is Wednesday, October 18, 6:00-7:00 pm.

Hope Moravian Cemetery

Monday, October 23, 6:00 - 7:00 pm
Hope Moravian Cemetery, 202 Main St, Hope

Hope Moravian Cemetery is distinctive among Indiana cemeteries due to the unique Choir System of burial in the God's Acre section of the cemetery. On this self-paced walking tour, library staff positioned around the cemetery will share the stories of families buried there. All ages are invited to enjoy this beautiful space, learn about Hope history, and enjoy a cup of Apple Cider. Some of the stops on this tour require walking on uneven ground. Parking is available on the Hope Town Square or at the Hope Moravian Church parking lot. The rain date for this event is Wednesday October 25, 6:00-7:00 pm.

Welcome to the
YELLOW TRAIL RESEARCH CENTER

-by Kim Ray Sep 2023



The Yellow Trail Research Center, under the umbrella of the Yellow Trail Museum, was created after the museum acquired the adjacent building in 2016. Boxes of stored material was organized and the Research Center, located in the back room of the newly acquired building, opened to the public almost a year later, June 2017. Researchers interested in history or genealogy at a local level could now view material that had been stored for years due to the lack of space in a museum that had a collection spanning over 40 years. The Research Center, embraced by the public with an abundance of wonderful donations, quickly outgrew its room, resulting once again in material being stored in boxes. In June 2019, with Barb Johnson's lead, the museum purchased the two adjacent buildings, one for the Indiana Rural Letter Carriers Museum and the other for the Yellow Trail Research Center. Both buildings were totally remodeled, and the Research Center, which remained open in the back room until the Covid Shutdown, reopened in its new building, April 2022.

The design for the new Research Center reflects our three priorities: One third of the building is for public space; one third is for staff space; and one third is for storage space. The public space allows researchers room to access our collection of books, scrapbooks, newspaper files, and our digital collection of documents and photographs. The public is encouraged to bring their laptops for research, and a thumb drive if they would like copies of any of our digital collection, which is available for free. The staff space allows room for our ongoing accessioning, documenting, and digitizing of the museum's collection. We use a museum software package called Past Perfect that allows us to use the database for documenting the collection, then use the search functions to locate material by title, author, subject, description, keywords, names, local places, tags, and even by donor and more. The storage space allows us to properly store artifacts and original digitized materials for future generations, preserving our historical heritage.

The Research Center operates on different days and hours than the museum, although it closes in the winter and opens in the spring on the museum's timing. We are open Mon & Wed from 10-2, or by appointment. The Yellow Trail Museum is located on the NW corner of the Hope Town Square. The Research Center is the 4th set of doors south of the Main entrance. We invite you to visit the Yellow Trail Research Center soon !

Tripping Over My Roots

-by Bob Hobbs

THE ANCESTRY OF A HOUSE Part III

In the last quarterly edition of ANCESTORS, I wrote about the earlier years of the Williams family citing the birth of Harry Allison Williams, born in 1898 in Jeffersonville, Indiana and who became a successful businessman in Columbus where he met his future wife Cleo Vivian Heartwell born in 1908 in Greenfield, Indiana to the birth of their son John Lee in 1935 and their daughter Janet Sue in 1942. My interest in this family stems from the fact that in 1941, they had built the house located at 2004 21st Street that I have called home for the past year.

Twelve years later, in 1953, they out-grew the two-bedroom, one bath Cape Cod and moved to a three-bedroom, 2 bath stone ranch located at 2555 Washington Street. Not unlike the country itself, the family spent the next decade in relative peace and prosperity. Unfortunately, in 1963 and 1964, the family was met with tragedy. Here is where their story resumes.

Reported on the front page of *The Evening Republican*, Monday, August 26, 1963, the following article has been slightly abridged, and a photo included in the obituary has not been added.

“HARRY WILLIAMS, 64, DIES IN INDIANAPOLIS. Harry A. Williams, 64, who owned the H.A. Williams television wholesale parts company at 1003 Washington Street, died early today at Community Hospital in Indianapolis. He had been a patient there since August 3. He had suffered a cerebral hemorrhage 23 days earlier. Mr. Williams was a member of the First United Presbyterian Church and the Radio Old Timers club. Active in Masonic orders, he was a member of the St. John’s lodge here and the Scottish Rite and Murat Shrine of Indianapolis. Burial will be at City Cemetery with Masonic rites at graveside. Surviving are his mother, Mrs. Stella Williams; his wife, Mrs. Cleo V. Hartwell Williams; a son, John L. Williams, at home; a daughter, Mrs. Paul Mendenhall, and a granddaughter.”

Accompanied with the article was the photo of a rather pleasant looking gray-haired man wearing glasses and dressed in what appears to be a tuxedo coat and a bow tie. Due to the darkness of the photo, I am unable to reproduce it here.



The Williams family monument and Harry’s marker located in the John S. Crump Addition, Lot 2 of the Columbus City Cemetery



Photo in newspaper article of John Lee Williams

Then a year later is an article recreated here in full from the front page of the *Columbus Herald* on Friday, December 18th, 1964: **“SEEK CAUSE OF DEATH OF MAN FOUND ON ROAD: Body of John L Williams is discovered in ditch.** A 29-year-old Columbus businessman, John Lee Williams, 2555 Washington St. was found dead in a ditch 6 ½ miles southwest of Columbus Thursday afternoon and authorities today still were seeking the cause of his death. Sheriff Charles Nolting said investigating officers do not know how Mr. Williams got to where his body was found on County Road about ½ mile West of the Interstate 65 interchange at Walesboro. Except for slight cuts about the mouth and a bump on the head, there were no external wounds visible the sheriff said. Coroner Robert Krueger said that chemical and toxicological tests were still being conducted today in an effort to find the cause. Dr. Krueger said death from exposure to cold weather was a possibility. It has not been determined if Mr. Williams was dead when placed in the ditch or whether he died later. Time of death it is believed to have been early Thursday morning. He was last seen after midnight early Thursday morning in the bar at the Holiday Inn at the Columbus interchange of Interstate 65. The body was discovered in the ditch on the east side of County Road 300 W about 100 yards off South Airport Road about 2:00 PM by Phillip Fultz, Clifford, a Shell Oil company truck driver. Mr. Fultz went to the home of Mrs. Anna Lee Lawless at the corner of road 300 West and South Airport Road and called the Sheriff’s Office. Deputy Jay Heath, the first officer to reach the body, found Mr. Williams face down in the ditch with his head

Tripping Over My Roots

-by Bob Hobbs



THE ANCESTRY OF A HOUSE (CONT)

cradled on his right arm.

"CHECK IDENTITY. He was dressed in a blue gray business suit and black Italian-style loafer shoes. One of the loafers was off and was found under him. He was wearing a wristwatch when found, but investigation showed that his wallet and a

diamond ring were missing. Identification of Mr. Williams was accomplished when sheriff's officers checked the registration of a post office box key found on the key ring in his pocket. Investigation revealed that the key was registered to the H. A. Williams Company, a Columbus wholesale electrical supply firm of which he is partner and general manager. Bartholomew County prosecutor Robert Wilson at the hospital then made positive identification of Mr. Williams. According to Sheriff Nolting, his 1964 Pontiac was found in the motel's parking lot Thursday afternoon and taken to the Law Enforcement Building for investigation. Mr. Williams, a bachelor, lived with his mother Mrs. Cleo Williams at 2555 Washington St. The two had been partners in the electronics firm since the death last year of his father Harry A. Williams who had founded the firm. Just how Williams was transported to where his body was found has not been determined. According to Chief Nolting, 'He just couldn't have gotten there very well himself. He wasn't dressed for the cold weather and, of course, there was no car nearby.' A nylon raincoat was found draped over the body with a small blood stain on the left front and inside of the coat. The car keys were found in the pocket of the raincoat. State police also were investigating the case.

"Funeral services for Mr. Williams will be at 3:00 PM Saturday at the Hathaway Funeral Home with Doctor William R Laws, junior minister of the First United Presbyterian Church conducting the rights. Burial will be at City Cemetery. Persons may call at the Funeral Home after 4:00 PM Friday. He belonged to the First United Presbyterian Church. Born in Columbus on September 4th 1935, he was the son of Harry A. and Cleo V. Hartwell Williams. His father died August 26th 1963. After graduation from Columbus High School in May of 1953, he attended Indiana and Butler Universities in 1954. From October 1961 to March he served in the Indiana National Guard. Surviving in addition to his mother are his sister Mrs. Paul Mendenhall of 2233 Pennsylvania St. And two grandmothers, Mrs. Stella Williams of 428 10th St. and Mrs. Mary A. Hartwell of 2117 Washington St."

MY TAKE: *The reporting in the article seems quite impressive considering it appeared in the paper one day after the body was discovered.*



Grave of John L Williams

The following are excerpts from various newspapers updating the public on the investigations regarding the mysterious death of John Lee Williams: From the *Muncie Star*, Saturday, December 19, 1964: **"WALLET, RING MISSING IN DEATH CASE.** Columbus, Ind. (UPI) Authorities here said Friday indications were that a local businessman whose body was found in a ditch was slain, but they were waiting an autopsy report. Williams' wallet and a diamond ring were missing, although he still wore a wristwatch. Police learned Williams often carried as much as \$200 in cash with him. He was last seen in the Holiday Inn bar early Thursday and the body was found about 13 hours later in a ditch near Interstate 65."

From *The Evening Republican*, Saturday, December 19, 1964: **"THREE QUESTIONED IN WILLIAMS DEATH.** Sheriff Nolting said the two men to be questioned were picked up about 3 a.m. today at one's apartment in Bloomington and were held in the Monroe County jail until local deputies called for them late this morning. The woman, a Spencer resident, was picked up at her home about 2:30 a.m. today and was returned here to jail. The sheriff declined to reveal the identity of the woman, believed to have been once a girlfriend of Adler and later Williams. The two men and a woman were seen with Williams leaving the Holiday Inn shortly after midnight Wednesday. A witness said a scuffling ensued, resulting in an exchange of blows and words, but not an extensive fight near the inn. Police said Williams, who was partnered with his mother in the H.A. Williams Co., often carried large sums of money and was expecting delivery of a new car."

From the *Palladium-Item* of Richmond, Indiana, Sunday, December 20, 1964: **"THREE PERSONS ARRESTED IN MAN'S DEATH.** Columbus, Ind. (AP) Two young men, one in Indiana University senior, and a woman were held here Saturday night in connection with the death of a Columbus businessman. John Lee Williams, 29, a bachelor, was found in a ditch southeast of Columbus Thursday. His body was covered with a raincoat and his wallet, believed to have been filled with a large sum of money, and identifica-

Tripping MY ROOTS Over

-by Bob Hobbs

THE ANCESTRY OF A HOUSE (CONT)

tion papers were missing. Charged with assault and battery and held under bonds of \$10,000 each were David Adler, 23, student at I.U. and son of the Columbus pathologist who conducted the autopsy on Williams' body, and Robert Bragg, 24, Rt. 7, Columbus. Tests are still being made to find cause of death."

The following articles are from Columbus' *The Evening Republican*, which continued the most complete coverage of the case: Monday December 21, 1964: "**WILLIAMS' DEATH FROM SUFFOCATION?** With cause of death still not proven by medical experts, sheriffs' authorities were exploring the possibility that John Williams was suffocated.



*The mugshots of suspects
Adler and Bragg*

"David Adler an IU senior and son of a prominent local physician, and Robert Bragg, who lists his occupation as 'gambler,' were charged with assault and battery. Mrs. Beverly Sizemore, 26, of Seymour, the third person involved and who reported the fight, is being held in jail for questioning. Her estranged husband, George, of Waynesburg KY, appears to have no connection in the Williams case. The suffocation possibility is being explored due to the position of the body in the ditch. Early blood tests showed Williams could have been 'tight, but not blind drunk.' Sheriff Nolting said he wondered how Williams could have died from exposure since he was sheltered from the wind by the ditch and the temperature did not start to drop until late Thursday morning. The position of Mr. Williams's face and left arm caused speculation because his face was pressed--'in fact mashed against the ground'-- and the left arm was bent out as if held in a 'hammerlock,' a wrestling pressure grip when the arm was twisted behind the back. Even a reflex action would have brought his head to one side and turned his arm back to a more normal position,' Sheriff Nolting said. Two pathologists could not find immediate cause of death."

My question: So was an additional pathologist brought into the case to confirm the opinion of Dr. Adler, the pathologist father of suspect David Adler?

Tuesday, December 22, 1964: "**WOMAN IMPLICATES TWO MEN IN WILLIAMS DEATH: Evidence May Result in Murder Charges** According to authorities, any death resulting from commission of felony is murder. "A two-hour search failed to turn up William's billfold, which allegedly was thrown out of the car after Williams was abandoned. Search for the billfold was begun after Mrs. Sizemore gave authorities a signed statement as to what she said occurred that night. She was later released without charge. "Meanwhile death by exposure has been ruled out due to alcohol content of the body and weather conditions."

One month later.... Wednesday, January 20, 1965: "**FACING MURDER CHARGES.** Robert Bragg and David Adler of Columbus were indicted today by a Bartholomew grand jury on charges of first-degree murder, kidnapping, and robbery in the December 17 death of John Lee Williams. Both have been in jail here since being implicated by Mrs. Beverly Sizemore of Spencer. The grand jury was called January 11 after the term of an earlier jury had expired at the end of the year before evidence had been received. Laboratory tests did not reveal the cause of the death. No date for trials have been set."

MY TAKE: *I have reviewed the death certificate and while I have not seen many of them, I have never seen one quite this filled out, yet says so little.* Stamped in Upper Left-Hand Corner: "Belated Certificate, March 8, 1965." *He died December 17, 1964.* Box 18: Cause of Death: In large script taking up the whole box is written: "**CAUSE OF DEATH UNDETERMINED**". Box 20a: Accident? Suicide? Homicide? Answer: "NOT KNOWN". Box 20b: Describe How Injury Occurred. Answer: "Was found in ditch along 300W and 450S about 2 PM 12/17/64. Box 21: I hereby certify that I took charge of the remains described above, held an inquest, autopsy, inquiry (then wrote: grand jury + 2 autopsies + toxicology studies) and therein and from evidence obtained/find that said deceased came to (his) death from causes stated at (approx. 1 AM). Signed: Robert B. Krueger, Head Coroner. Columbus, Ind. 1-19-65"

This was one month to the day after John Lee Williams was buried. The Belated Certificate almost two months later must have been the final filing date and indicated in all that time, no new information was discovered.

Tripping MY ROOTS Over

-by Bob Hobbs

THE ANCESTRY OF A HOUSE (CONT)

THE TRIALS

The following is my attempt to explain the trials based on various sources. Please note I am not a lawyer and do not play one on TV: The first official trial in this case took place in the Johnson County Circuit Court in the county courthouse in Franklin, Indiana. The final judgement of the jury found the defendants David Adler and Robert Bragg guilty of the offense of robbery in two counts. The evidence in this trial was largely based on the testimony of Mrs. Sizemore.

Filed on April 20, 1967 in the Supreme Court of Indiana in Indianapolis was *Adler, Bragg v. State of Indiana*. Tom G. Jones, of Franklin, was for the appellants (Adler and Bragg) and John J. Dillion, Attorney General, and Charles J. Deiter, Deputy Attorney General was for the appellee (the party who seeks to persuade the appeals court to affirm the district court's decision).

Justification: "The main contention of the appellants is that they did not have a fair trial because Mrs. Sizemore was coerced, threatened, and illegally detained and was also offered immunity to testify against the appellants. The further contention is that the prosecuting attorney was guilty of misconduct and improprieties in threatening Mrs. Sizemore and in making improper statements in their closing argument primarily using the theme that the appellants were guilty of homicide although the charge was merely robbery.



A photo of the first trial in Franklin, Indiana

"There was no charge of homicide against the appellants. Nevertheless, the prosecutor throughout the case and in the closing argument, seemed to want to make a homicide case out of the prosecution." Evidence was cited supporting this claim. For example: "...John Williams wasn't given the opportunity to live...taken in the very flower of his manhood." Also it was noted that "the prosecuting attorney thumbtacked a picture of the deceased's body to a board, leaving it in the jury's sight." The judge replied that "it is established by all evidence he's dead, and also established by all the evidence that the cause of death is unknown, and it should not be attributed to these defendants."

To be clear, the jury in the first trial found the defendants guilty of robbery....not kidnapping and not murder. However, the jury in the appeal trial before the Indiana Supreme Court felt that stressing that the victim of the robbery ended up dead, that the robbery charge was based on the perceived coerced testimony of Mrs. Sizemore, lawful or not. In addition, the fact that the estimated amount of \$100.00 in cash and the diamond ring valued at \$1,000 was never recovered, the jury ruled: "With the prejudicial conduct referred to during the argument to the jury, we have a situation created which in sum total makes the trial unfair. Judgement reversed and a new trial ordered."

As of this writing, I have found no evidence that after this court appearance that either David Adler or Robert Bragg were ultimately convicted of any crime that resulted in serving any additional time behind bars.

WHAT BECAME OF THE WOMEN IN THE WILLIAMS FAMILY?

Their obituaries say it all. From *The Indianapolis Star*: "**CLEO V. WILLIAMS**. Services for Cleo V. Williams, 79, Columbus, will be at 10:00 AM Wednesday in Hathaway-Myers Funeral Chapel, Columbus, with calling from 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM Tuesday. She died Saturday, September 5, 1987 in Four Seasons. Born in Bartholomew County, she had lived in Indianapolis for five years. She was the owner of H.A. Williams Company in Columbus, an electric supply company with offices in Bloomington and Richmond. She was the widow of Harry A. Williams and was a member of First Presbyterian Church in Columbus. Memorial contributions may be made to the American Heart Association. Survivors are her daughter Janet Mendenhall, her sister Dorothy Mason, and two grandchildren."

NOTE: There is an error. Mrs. Williams was not born in Bartholomew County, but in Hancock County.

Tripping MY ROOTS Over

-by Bob Hobbs

THE ANCESTRY OF A HOUSE (CONT)

JANET SUE WILLIAMS MENDENHALL

“Janet Sue Williams Mendenhall passed away peacefully on September 14, 2020 at home and joined the Lord and her loved ones in Heaven. Janet battled advanced stages of dementia for several years and is now finally free of its effects.

“Born on October 9th, 1942 in Columbus, Indiana, she was the daughter of Harry A. and Cleo Hartwell Williams. She was united in marriage to Paul “Butch” W. Mendenhall on September 29, 1961 at First Presbyterian Church in Columbus. They were married for 59 years and were members of First Christian Church throughout their marriage.

“In 1960 Janet graduated from Columbus High School, now known as Columbus North, where she met many of her lifelong friends known as the ‘Scuttlebutt Group.’ She went on to study fashion merchandising at a college affiliated with Northwestern University in Chicago IL until she married her husband Paul. In 1975 Janet received an LPN degree in Logan UT. After returning from Utah, she worked as a bookkeeper and an office administrator for her father's family business H.A. Williams Company. She, along with her best friend Kathy Clark, opened two decorating and gift shops: The Phoenix, located in Nashville, IN and Cottage Reflections, located in Columbus, IN. In 2011 Janet ended her career and retired as a licensed real estate agent for Breeden Realty.

“She was preceded in death by her parents and her brother, John Williams. Left to cherish her memory is her beloved husband Paul and her adoring daughters: Beverly, Kirstin, and Judy. Also left to cherish her memory are her six grandchildren, whom she enjoyed very much. She is further cherished by her great-granddaughter Olivia, and her beloved dog Toby.

“Janet was a loving and devoted caretaker for her family and will be deeply missed by those who loved her. The family would like to send their thanks and appreciation to Our Hospice of South-Central Indiana. Special thanks to caregivers Debbie, Jennifer, Courtney, and Sandy as well as her assigned nurse Elisha. Their help and compassion will not be forgotten.

“A funeral service will be held at 12:00 PM noon Thursday at Barkes, Weaver, and Glick Funeral Home on Washington Street with Tyler Tolbert officiating. Family and friends may call from 10 AM to time of service.

“We do ask that visitors follow the social distancing guidelines once inside the Funeral Home and masks are required. Burial will be at Garland Brook Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be made to Our Hospice of South-Central Indiana. Online condolences and special memories may be shared with the Mendenhall family and a video tribute may be viewed at barkesweaverglick.com.



Photo of young Janet when she was living in the house at 2004 21st Street

*“Do not ask me to remember. Don't try to make me understand.
Let me rest and know you're with me. Kiss my cheek and hold my hand.
I'm confused beyond your concept. I am sad and sick and lost.
All I know is that I need you. To be with me at all costs.
Do not lose your patience with me. Do not scold or curse or cry.
I can't help the way I'm acting. Can't be different though I try.
Just remember that I need you, that the best of me is gone.
Please don't fail to stand beside me, love me till my life is done.*

-Unknown author”



Janet Williams Mendenhall later in her life

Janet is in the back row with white hair. My friend Barb Fravel is in the back row, far right.



The 2011 Reunion of “The Scuttlebutt Group”

In the next issue of ANCESTORS, I will tell the story of the second family of four to inhabit the house at 2004 21st Street and reveal their connection with the Williams family!



Cleo V. Williams was laid to rest between her husband and son

Bartholomew County Genealogical Society

Membership year extends from Jan – Dec (includes 4 issues of ANCESTORS)

1 year Membership: Individual (\$10) Couple (\$15)

Contact us ! Like us on facebook !

PO Box 2455 Columbus, Indiana 47202-2455

email: bcgs47202@yahoo.com

website: barthgen.org



Thanks for your Support

Board Members and Directors

President: Becky Speaker

Vice President: Linda Glick

Secretary: Marcus Speer

Treasurer: Toni Whiteside

Membership: Robert Hobbs

Genealogist: Donna Kuhlman

Genealogist: Karen Loy

Newsletter Editor: Kim Ray

Library Liaison: Annette Blount