

...name, a feminine version of the male name could be created by adding an -a to the end of the name. Since the godparents actually took the child to the church for baptism and the parents did not attend the baptism, sometimes the parents would not even know the name of their child until the godparents returned with the child after the baptism.

...for church events, which begins in September, rather than the Roman Calendar used in the West. This calendar contains some different feast days for some saints, and recognizes Slavic and Ukrainian saints, who are known in Eastern Europe, but not the West.

For a list of Byzantine names and their corresponding feast days,

REFERENCE

...have another grave site in Mississippi County, Ark., and we are somewhat sure that he is buried there. According to the death certificate, he died in 1943. So far, I have not seen evidence that there was a Dunn family living in Vigo County about 1880. Please contact me with any information. Nancy L. Metcalf, 300 Central Ave., No. 23, Searcy, AR, 72143, e-

...according to census records. Names of their children were John, Thomas Enochs, Sarah, Mary Elizabeth, George McManhan, David, Daniel Jr., Miranda, Nancy and Sarah. Would appreciate any help. My address is Mary Davidson Pielemeier, 12895 Tuscan Blvd., Carmel, IN 46032, e-mail MaryPielemeier@msn.com.

DO NOT CIRCULATE

Businessman carved colorful niche in Valley

Oil speculator, automobile dealer, racecar owner and driver and horse breeder Frank P. Fox carved a colorful niche in Vigo County history.

If a venture was risky or required a "cool head," Fox usually was interested in the challenge.

A native of Monroeville, Pa., Fox began working in the eastern Pennsylvania oil fields in 1891 at age 13 as an oil machine apprentice. Later, he tested his luck in Pittsburgh, Kansas City, Mo., and Kiefer, Okla., before locating in Bridgeport, Ill., during 1905 to manage an oil company.

Though he was successful in the oil business, automobiles became his primary passion. So, in 1908, when he had the opportunity to acquire a Pope-Hartford auto franchise in Terre Haute, he seized it. The business was located at 811-815 Ohio St.

When Fox arrived in Terre Haute, Terre Haute's Four-Cornered track at the Vigo County Fairgrounds at Brown and Wabash avenues no longer was a stop on the Grand Circuit and the track was sometimes used for auto racing exhibitions.

The fairgrounds extended all the way to Fruitridge Avenue though land east of North 34th Street and south of Locust Street was leased to the county agricultural society by William Riley McKeen. Fox purchased the land from McKeen for \$1,000 an acre.

Fox's passion for automobiles nearly got him in serious trouble. When private detective William J. Burns, later director of the U.S. Justice Department's Bureau of Investigation, suspected that John and James McNamara of Indianapolis were responsible for dynamiting the Los Angeles Times building on Oct. 1, 1910, he asked Fox to help transport the two McNamaras and associate Ortie McMani-

gal to the west coast.

The request, made in April 1911, sounded innocent enough but it required Fox to become an unwitting accomplice to a crime.

James McNamara was national secretary-treasurer of the International Association of Bridge & Structural Iron Workers. Certain that no Indiana judge would allow extradition of such an important union leader based upon the mere discovery of dynamite on the McNamaras' farm in



HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

MIKE McCORMICK

Indiana, Burns kidnaped the three suspects.

Fox was interrogated but never seemed in danger of being charged with a crime. And, on Memorial Day 1911, he finished 22nd in the first Indianapolis 500 Mile Race.

Represented by attorney Clarence Darrow, the McNamaras subsequently pled guilty to bombing the newspaper building, which killed 21 and maimed 17 others.

The pleas were extracted after a dictograph, invented by Terre Haute scientist Monroe Turner, was placed in the defendants' cells, allowing police to overhear their incriminating conversations with visitors. Detective Burns became a hero.

Fox failed to qualify for the 1912 Indianapolis 500 and spent much of the ensuing year building a new racecar. Appropriately named "The Gray Fox," the car finished sixth in the 1913 Indianapolis 500. Howdy Wilcox was the principal driver, but Fox turned a few relief laps during the race.

Crippled by an auto accident on the highway, Fox began investing in cattle and standardbred horses and acquired a 640-acre farm near Oaklandon on the outskirts of Indianapolis. Soon, he had 400 head of Hereford cattle and a full-time veterinarian residing on the premises.

He also had several racehorses. Perhaps his most famous harness horse was the pacer LaPaloma, a mare foaled in 1919. Clair Wolverton was Fox's trainer.

Fox endeared himself to the people of Oaklandon following a fire in early 1920 which destroyed the community's Redman's Hall and the Unitarian Universalist Church. Though not a member of the congregation, Fox donated considerable money and materials and used his influence to finance rebuilding church.

When the Vigo County Agricultural Association abandoned the acreage Fox owned in 1921, he relocated to Terre Haute and platted Edgewood Place subdivision, the product of a vision he had at the time he acquired the property from McKeen many years before.

"I knew that the city could not grow into the Wabash River," Fox chuckled to a newspaper reporter, "so I just sat tight and waited."

He promptly erected a fully-equipped saw mill and planing mill on property and began making moldings, joists, frames and boards.

"According to its current population," Fox proclaimed, "Terre Haute is about 1,000 homes short. It will take five or six years to catch up with the demand."

As Edgewood Grove and Deming Place - two subdivisions south of Wabash Avenue on the city's east side - thrived, Fox devised a plan to blitz the market with new homes in Edgewood Place, his new eastside subdivision north of

Wabash and south of Locust St.

No two residences in Edgewood Place were exactly alike, though most were built with standard nine-foot ceilings.

In 1922, 91 homes were built in the subdivision, 16 by Fox himself, who provided financing to prospective buyers at favorable rates.

His willingness to purchase hardwood in huge quantities allowed him to save. As 22 truckloads of lumber were being unloaded, Fox boasted that, until all lots were occupied by homes, "Edgewood Place subdivision will look like a miniature lumberyard."

Though Fox continued to own racecars, horse racing became a passion.

Angered that there were few chances for juvenile pacers to win money, he established the lucrative "Fox Stake for Two-Year-Old Pacers" in 1927. The first purse totaled \$14,887.63 and was won by Red Pluto, driven by Sep Palin in world-record time.

After sustaining injuries in another auto accident, Fox sold the race. Fox Stake at the Indiana State Fair is now the oldest, most prestigious harness race of its kind in the U.S.

Fox failed to recover from injuries incurred in the second accident and died, at age 53, on April 19, 1931. Harry Hedges, Will Kivits and Malcolm Steele, three of his best Terre Haute friends, were pallbearers.

Fox was among the initial class of "immortals" enshrined in the Indiana Standardbred Hall of Fame in 1986. Acquired by trainer-driver Wolverton after Fox's death, LaPaloma - dam of the world champion pacer Her Ladyship - was enshrined in 1989.

Edgewood Place subdivision is the sole monument to Fox's memory in Terre Haute.

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