



Southwest Pioneer

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Images In 1906 Hotel Photo Identified

A daughter of Joe Enders recently posted on Facebook an identification and a clarification of the images in the photo taken around 1906, according to notations on the back of the photograph.

For years, the two women on the balcony of the hotel have been referred to as “saloon girls” a fact disputed by Karen Enders Terry.

She identified the woman in the picture standing on the elevated porch as her great grandmother, Florence Enders.

The other woman is not identified.

“It was never a brothel,” she said. Our family history and the bar are beyond interesting to hear. Hopefully this helps clarify all the questions.”

Ms. Terry said the Enders family lived on the second floor of the business

which was then known as Enders and Son. Today the business it is known around town as Planks on Broadway.

“My great grandfather Joe is in the white shirt on the lower porch. His children Helen, Donald and my grandfather, Charles, are the three kids on the left side. Harry Story who was the bartender and helper was a life- long renter who also lived upstairs.”

Visitors coming in and out of town could rent a room for the night if needed as a place to

rest, she explained. The hotel was originally known as the Voelkel Hotel and in the late 1800s concerts were held on Saturday. It was built in 1854 and is one of the oldest buildings in the city. According to research by Earl Nicholson, the hotel was probably built for William F. Breck, the founding father of Grove City. It was sold to Alexander Frankenburg in 1856. There were six other



owners before it was purchased by William Voelkel Sr. Mrs. Voelkel had a large flower garden behind the hotel.

Seven Operated Hotel Before Enders Family

Research by historian and one of the founding members of the Southwest Franklin County Historical Society reveals other interesting facts about the business known today as Planks.

William Foster Breck sold the hotel to Alesander Frankenburg in 1856. The building had been built on the south end lots 38-41. At the time, all lots in Grove City ran north and south facing either Church Street (Columbus Street) or School Street (Park Street.)

Over the years, the hotel had seven owners, according to research by Earl Nicholson. Those men included John Douglas, T. E. Booth, Jack Goldsmith, John Corzilius, Dude Strife, a man only identified as Jones and William Voelkel Sr., before the Enders family entered the business.

Voelkel, later entered the hotel business, after operating a grocery in 1869 in a building owned by Breck. That building was located at Jackson Alley and Broadway.

Mrs. Voelkel's flower garden, where the Grove City Welcome Center and Museum is located today, was popular attraction. A large livery barn and feed store, located behind the hotel, housed buggies and wagons for the patrons. There was also space to house horses. William White operated the hotel barn for many years before it burned in 1926.

The hotel was also a popular destination for entertainment. According to an article in *The Grove City Blade* dated Sept. 22, 1896, the Grove City Band frequently serenaded the residents of the town. On at least one occasion, J. Oatley furnished 40 watermelons for those attending to enjoy.

Cell Phones Provided Access To Our Website

The vast majority, 58% of people connected with our website last year using a mobile telephone and most used Google as the search engine. The 2022 Society Annual Report shows some interesting data that requires attention. The website had 11,800 users last year and recorded 14,500 sessions.

Of the top five pages visited, Prairie Township was the most searched. The township wasn't even rated in the top five in 2021 but in 2022, it saw a 236.9% increase in page views. This possibly could indicate we should do a better job recruiting members in that area.

The number two on the top five pages

was Haunted Places with 57.8%

compared to only 8.8% in 2021. A 13% drop in views might indicate more work in updating and refreshing the website should be considered.

This effort is currently underway and ideas are

One thing all members should be proud of is the volunteer hours last year. That number increased by almost 2,000 hours when compared to 2021. Society members and other volunteers recorded 6,194 hours of free labor for various Society projects.

solicited from members.

Facebook continues to do well but we are nowhere near our potential. Currently we have 2090 followers. Just one Facebook post last year had a reach of over 7,000 people who saw it in their feed.

Members are urged to follow the Society's Facebook page and when appropriate LIKE and SHARE. This is one way we are trying to reach out in the community and also create interest in the Society's efforts.

Interested In History? Society Needs People

The Southwest Franklin County Historical Society needs you. There are two important parts of historic preservation, one is financial support and the other is people who can volunteer time.

There are numerous jobs available where people can become involved. People are needed to help with tours, planning events, photography and video, writing, research and scores of other areas. For more information contact us at grovecityohhistory@gmail.com.