



LEGACY LEDGER

THE OFFICIAL MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER OF LEGACY NAFC



*A Message from the NAFC Education Foundation
Alumni Coordinator, Sherri McKeen*

With just over a week until the 2023 Education Celebration!, things are busy at the Education Foundation with coordinating more than 250 auction donations, finalizing sponsorships, confirming details for our after party with the Louisville Crushers, and other last minute details. We are celebrating something very special this year – the Education Foundation has distributed more than \$1,000,000 to our NAFC schools through Great Classroom Grants since 2009. We are so grateful for each of our Floyd Central and New Albany graduates who have donated to the foundation because you have helped make this possible!!

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Here's one goal of this column: always try to bring a new twist to the profiles presented here. This is the first issue ever to introduce two alumni, whose "claim to fame" is a hobby, not really linked to their careers. Dave Barksdale and Matt Uhl are both "history buffs". We've certainly had many great history teachers in our NAFC schools, such as the dearly departed Hall of Famer Ruth Braeutigam (NAHS '32) and the very active Vic Megenity, whose 43-year career began in 1960 when they opened the doors at Scribner Junior High.

Both Dave and Matt say they can't really trace their love of history to any specific teacher. It emerged at least a decade after high school. But the choice... that drive to never stop learning... that's a core value we hope to see instilled in all students, in all grades.

Introduction and profiles contributed by Rex Bickers, FCHS '70

DAVE BARKSDALE, NAHS '71

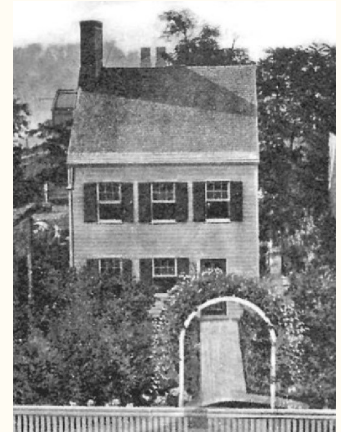


Dave traces his interest in history back to Green Valley Elementary in 1963 when New Albany was marking its 150th anniversary. That year, fourth graders were allowed to keep their Indiana history books as a souvenir of the city's sesquicentennial. Did that foreshadow his career as a teacher in elementary and middle school? Maybe it did. For most of his career, he taught fourth grade, retracing familiar steps through Indiana history at times.

He had considered a career in architecture, but changed those plans and earned a degree in education at IUS in 1975. Six years into teaching, he went on to earn a master's degree in education (also IUS) in 1981. He can't say exactly *when* he "got the bug" for history but he does know *where*: at the Floyd County Historical Society. There he first met John Cody and his wife Elizabeth "Bebe" (Barth) Cody, (NAHS '26) in the 1980s. He saw them as "Mr. and Mrs. New Albany History"; he vividly recalls that Bebe knew "nearly everything" about local buildings from the 1800s and early 1900s. It rekindled his interest in architecture from his school days, and ever since, his main passion has been on the "built environment" of his hometown. If he owed the Society a debt of gratitude, he repaid it long ago. He joined the board of directors in 1989 and became president in 1994. He dug into the Indiana State Historical Marker Program at a time when the county had been awarded literally just one. Through Dave's tireless determination and by encouraging others, there are now *twenty-three*. For 25 of the past 29 years, he has continued to serve as president. He was named Floyd County historian by Governor Frank O'Bannon in 2002.

Between 2003 and 2005, he was part of a local group that prevented the demolition of a treasured historical property, built in 1837, located on West Market Street. It was named for its original owner, steamboat captain William Young. The Historical Society christened the building as the Padgett Museum, recognizing the generous gift from Jim (NAHS '53) and his wife Beverly Thurman Padgett (NAHS '57). The loss of these revered civic leaders in 2020 (Jim) and 2021 (Beverly) was felt deeply across New Albany and Floyd County.

In addition to hundreds of public presentations on historic houses, Dave has collaborated to co-author several books on local buildings and builders. The engraving shown here is from a 1913 Centennial Celebration postcard, depicting the Joel Scribner house as it appeared in 1850. This image and a detailed description appear in Chapter One of Historic Homes of New Albany, Indiana (2015) by David Barksdale and Gregory Sekula.



Dave and Debbie, his wife of 46 years... are always busy, with two adult children and five grandkids. After he retired from teaching in 2011, he was elected to City Council in 2015. He provided historical expertise to the city on a proposal to renovate an East Main Street landmark, built between 1848 and 1852 as a harness shop and flour mill. For roughly 30 years, from the 1940s to the mid-1970s, the building was a furniture warehouse. As a result of the project and with Dave's affirmative vote, it is now newly reborn as the New Albany City Hall.

Dave was inducted into the NAHS Hall of Fame in 2022.

MATT UHL, FCHS '97



Matt's career story has been fairly similar to that of other FC grads his age. With an IU degree in sports marketing, he began on one path and he was successful enough to try a second one: finance and accounting. He started with IU Sports Properties, then gained the experience needed in finance and bank auditing to "come home" and extend his banking career. His first job back in this area was as a regional manager for WesBanco; he also pursued an MBA from the University of Southern Indiana, completing that in 2019. Since 2020, he has been a compliance manager in consumer lending for Farm Credit Mid America. But it's not his "day job" achievements that are the real reasons for introducing him here. In less than ten years, Matt has garnered a lot of attention and admiration for his work in local history.

He's figured out one thing for sure: there's a learning curve... doing what it takes to attain an Indiana State Historical Marker. Take the case of Norman Colman, a cabinet member in the White House under Grover Cleveland, twenty years after the Civil War. Colman was the first (and so far, *the only*) person with "local roots" to ever achieve that. Decades earlier, he had been hired in Greenville, the first principal at "the Floyd County Seminary" at age 23.

As a boy, Colman attended a “*public seminary*”, a sort of “college”, quite common in the early 1800s. They preceded public high schools. At age 19, he moved south from New York to Kentucky, hoping to teach. By 1849, having earned a law degree in Louisville, he was still seeking a teaching job. Greenville recruited him and opened their school in 1850. Just two years later, Indiana passed laws that created public high schools (New Albany was the first, in 1853). The seminaries were “urged” to close with few other choices.

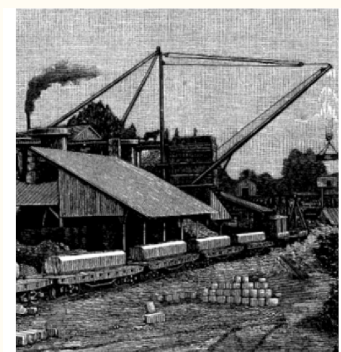
Colman went west and took up journalism in Missouri, focused on rural America. It set him up to become State Agriculture Commissioner, and then on to Washington. He was named Secretary of the Department of Agriculture in 1885. The Indiana Historical Bureau ruled against a state historic marker. His cabinet position had almost no impact here, decades after he left Indiana. Still, his local relevance as a pioneer educator was unquestioned. That's the reason that there is now a *Town of Greenville* historic marker honoring Norman Colman. His story is still a mission accomplished, in awareness and community pride.

In some cases, getting greater local recognition was easier. Here are two examples: Greenville native John B. Ford, the first person to create a successful company producing plate glass... or Hall of Famer (and Supreme Court Justice) Sherman Minton (NAHS class of 1910). They're easily found in history books... yet their significance had never been commemorated in their own “home towns”. Matt is quick to say... he hasn't done these things alone. He serves as chair of the Greenville Historic Commission and his main focus is there. But he also chronicles life from the past 250 years... hidden among the other small town communities of Floyd County.

Matt can name lots of *people*, *locations* and *events* with tales worth re-telling. Here's one of those *people*: MLB (Detroit Tigers) pitcher Roscoe Miller, from Greenville, who set an American League record in 1911 for games completed (35) as a rookie. It still stands today! There are little known locations, like Freedomland, the final resting places of local black residents for over a century. It's been the center of many years of work by fellow FC grad Tim Allen '83 (recipient of the 2021 Distinguished Highlander Award). Add to these events, like the construction of the Duncan (or Edwardsville) tunnel. Matt was certainly not the first, by any account, to circulate these stories. But he has helped to drive their overall awareness and much, much more.

“The tunnel that changed the Midwest”, which Matt wrote in 2019, includes this 1887 photo and a useful review of the evolving early rail lines in our state. Rail was vital to growing commerce, headed north and south... from many parts of Indiana. The Duncan Tunnel (longest in Indiana at 4285 ft), greatly increased the practicality of shipping coal, limestone and more, when it opened in 1881.

They're almost innumerable...these insights that Matt has shared... and that he'll continue to share with many FC alumni families. Before the year is over, you'll likely hear about more projects and his plans to bring them into the public eye.



RAIL CARS, LOADED WITH STONE
FOR THE GEORGIA STATE CAPITOL
FROM SALEM (INDIANA)

When he's not busy helping to nurture all the things that make Greenville a great place to live, you might find Matt, his wife Erin and their two children showing rabbits, out in the community, volunteering for 4H events or at Northside Christian Church.

Online Bidding Begins Monday



Everyone can join the action beginning Monday, February 20th when the online auction for the *Education Celebration!* opens for bidding. From food and wine to sporting event tickets and get-a-way adventures, there is something for everyone. Register now through the event website to preview the full list of auction items.

For complete details, visit www.bidpal.net/educationcelebration.

LEGACY NAFC

When alumni donate to the New Albany Floyd County Education Foundation, you are investing in the success of all NAFCS students and educators. Alumni donors become Legacy NAFC members through an annual donation.

Each donation directly impacts NAFC teachers and students by funding:

- Great Classroom Projects: grants to NAFC educators for classroom resources
- Blessings in a Backpack: feeds children in need with ready-to-eat weekend meals
- Imagination Library: provides a monthly, free book to children under the age of 5 in Floyd County
- First Year Teacher Funding: supports new teachers joining NAFCS with funding for classroom resources

Make your impact today and become a Legacy NAFC Alumni Member:
<https://www.nafcedfoundation.org/alumni>.

New Albany-Floyd County
Education Foundation

LEGACY
NAFC

The New Albany Floyd County Education Foundation is a not-for-profit organization that works in conjunction with NAFC Schools to provide privately funded supplemental resources and programs to students, teachers, and schools. Legacy NAFC is the official alumni support group of the NAFC Education Foundation and New Albany Floyd County Schools.

www.NAFCEdFoundation.org/alumni

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