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The Time Traveler

Portsmouth Past and Present

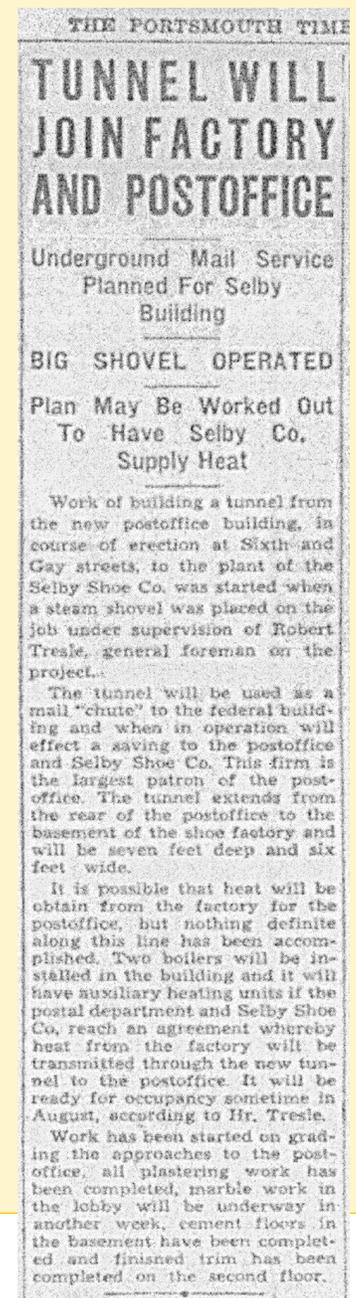
BY TARYN MIRABELLO AND KAITLIN SETTY

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *The Time Traveler: Portsmouth Past and Present!* Our goal is to bring Scioto County, Ohio's past to life through engaging articles, archives and images that residents can be proud to share today.

FORGOTTEN HISTORY: THE SUBTERRANEAN TUNNEL BENEATH SELBY SHOE FACTORY

To many area residents, the Selby Shoe Factory has a familiar ring to it—an industrial gem in the heart of Portsmouth during the city's reign as Shoe Capital of the World, it was founded around the turn of the century and located at 7th and Findlay Streets, and reached a peak employment of about 5,500 before closing in 1957. However, what may come as a surprise to some is the fact that a subterranean passageway was created in 1936 to connect Selby Shoes with the newly built post office located at 6th and Gay Streets. According to a Portsmouth Daily Times

Story continued on page 3



FROM THE VAULT: THIS ISSUE'S TIMELESS TREASURE



Our Jan./Feb./Mar. issue's Timeless Treasure comes from our online digital collection. It is a key pin knife advertising Marvin Jones' Lincoln-Mercury Dealership. Talk about a *sharp* business advertisement!

The name and city is printed on both sides of the item—Lincoln on one side, Mercury on other. The top of the key reads "Your Key to Good Service."

According to the 1941 Portsmouth City Directory, Marvin Jones Lincoln-Mercury was located at

800 Offnere Street. The key pin knife dates between the 1930's and 1950's.

Access this and thousands of other timeless treasures via our Local History Online Digital Collection, available for the public to view 24/7 at <https://www.yourppl.org/history/>.

Have a Timeless Treasure of your own you would like to share? Contribute images of your regional historical interest items at <https://www.yourppl.org/history/contribution>.

WHO AM I?

Clue #1: I was born in Portsmouth, Ohio in 1948, and was the youngest of seven children.

Clue #2: My father was a steelworker, and my mother was an active participant in the gospel music of my family's African Methodist Episcopal church.

Clue #3: The image on the right is my senior class photo from Portsmouth High School, Class of 1966.

Clue #4: In 1971, I began teaching music at a Cincinnati inner-city public school.

Clue #5: In 1972, I was discovered at a Cincinnati singing audition by the famous conductor Thomas Schippers.

Clue #6: I went on to become a world-famous opera singer, winning five Grammys, one Emmy, and earning six honorary doctorates from American universities. —KS & TM



If you like this, then come see the rest of the yearbooks we have from Scioto County schools.

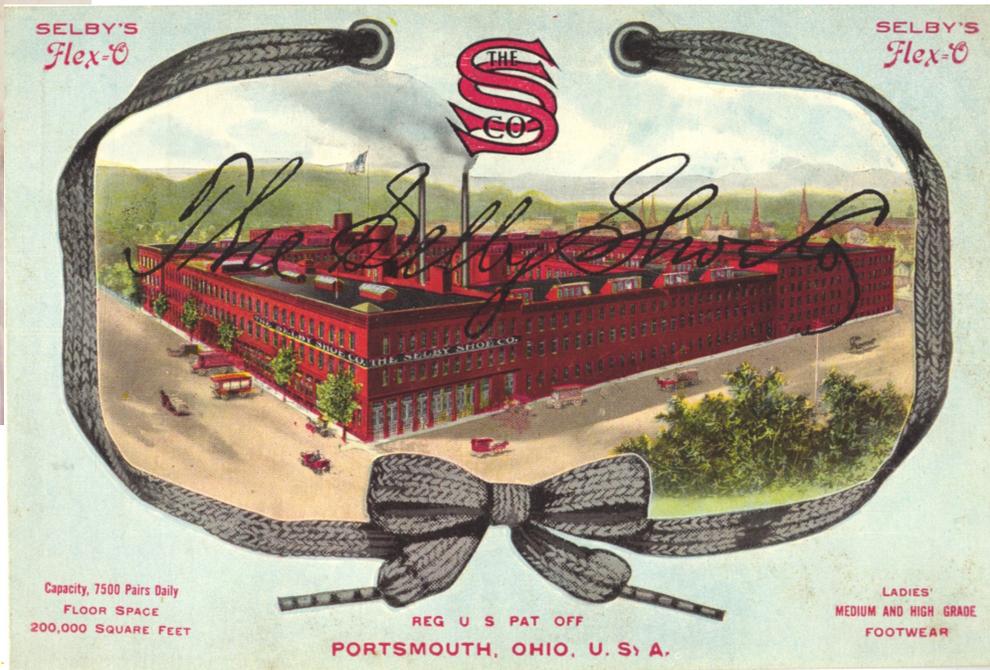
Hold your copy of The Time Traveler up to a mirror and the answer will magically appear below!

Take a step into the past each month with the Local History Department's display highlighting some of Scioto County's local history. We change the display monthly so come see what we have to show you!

—KS



Right: Selby Shoe Co., circa 1920's: "200,000 square feet, capacity 7500 pairs daily." Above: Selby Shoe Factory Demolition, 1999—Possibly a photo of the underground tunnel. Source: Local History Digital Collection

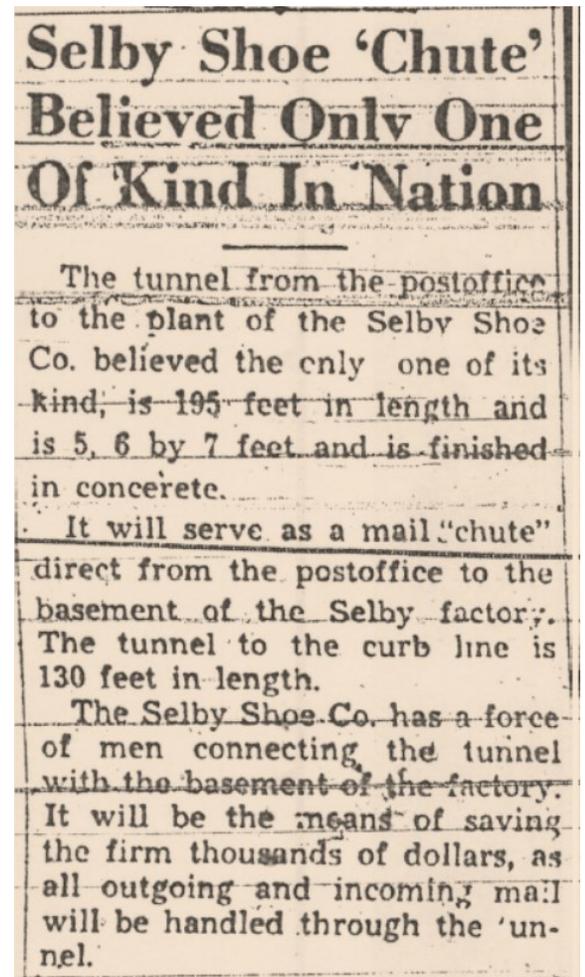


***“Selby Shoe ‘Chute” Believed Only One of Kind in Nation”—
Portsmouth Daily Times, Friday, September 4, 1936***

FORGOTTEN HISTORY: THE SUBTERRANEAN TUNNEL BENEATH SELBY SHOE FACTORY (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

article dated Thursday, May 28, 1936, “[t]he tunnel will be used as a mail ‘chute’ to the federal building and when in operation will effect a saving to the post office and Selby Shoe Co. This firm is the largest patron of the post office. The tunnel extends from the rear of the post office to the basement of the shoe factory and will be seven feet deep and six feet wide. It is possible that heat will be obtain[ed] from the factory for the post office, but nothing definite along this line has been accomplished.” Additionally, an article from the Times dated Friday, September 4, 1936 boasts: “The tunnel from the post office to the

plant of the Selby Shoe Co., believed the only one of its kind, is 195 feet in length and is 5’ 6” by 7 feet and is finished in concrete. The Selby Shoe Co. has a force of men connecting the tunnel with the basement of the factory. It will be the means of saving the firm thousands of dollars, as all outgoing and incoming mail will be handled through the tunnel.” Next time you drive down Findlay Street to mail a letter, take a moment to reflect on the hundreds of thousands of shoes that were once transported to the post office via a one-of-a-kind subterranean passageway! —TM



INTERESTED IN LOCAL MYSTERIES?

Think you can solve these crimes?

In each edition of *The Time Traveler*, we'll have articles showing how these unsolved cases played out, but if you can't wait that long...

Come see us in Local History to browse through old newspapers on Microfilm and on our database <https://access.newspaperarchive.com/> to find out how these cases ended. —KS

At right: March 4, 1933 Advertisement, *Portsmouth Times*

\$75 In Prizes WHO KILLED--

Willie Wright, Powellsville Road?
William Burton, Lucasville?
Doris White and Muriel Howard, Portsmouth?
Have you an idea who killed these people or how they were killed?

Write your ideas or the information that you have that you think will solve any of these crimes. Then mail it to

X, Inc., Portsmouth, Ohio

If your idea or information leads to solving any one of these crimes, you will receive \$25 in cash. Your name will not be published if you do not wish.

True stories of other local crimes may be worth money to you.

All communications will be strictly confidential.

GETS 500 POUNDS OF RATTLESNAKES

Large Shipment Has Been Received by Westerner—Horned Toads and Gila Monsters Attract Much Attention

Deadly Specimens Handled With Apparent Ease By Mr. Worner

The largest shipment of deadly, poisonous snakes ever received in this locality was the shipment of over five hundred pounds received by F. M. Worner, 835 Gallia St. The shipment consisted of diamond back rattlesnakes measuring from six to eight feet in length. Three large, deadly Gila Monsters and the harmless Horned Toads. The cases were opened before an appreciative audience and attracted much attention.

In taking them out of the shipping case one of the reptiles made an attempt to strike Mr. Worner, the more timid spectators made a hasty retreat. Mr. Worner, the recipient, handles the reptiles with apparent ease, even though they have all their deadly faculties.

Mr. Worner is the proprietor of Worner's Famous Rattler Oil, which is attracting so much attention in the city the past two months.

The snakes are raised on the largest snake farm in the country, near Phoenix, Ariz. Every afternoon and evening Mr. Worner handles these deadly monsters, giving lectures on their habits, traits and methods of handling the various species, milking

them of their deadly venom, as well as what to do in case of poisonous snake bite.

Large appreciative audiences are greeting Mr. Worner daily and the handling of the monster rattlesnakes, the buzzing of two rattles and the sight of the deadly fangs, as well as the extraction of the venom, is well worth seeing and a sight not soon forgotten. These lectures are valuable to students of natural history or those interested in reptile life.

Stewart's Drug Store has the exclusive sale of Worner's Famous Rattler Oil, where a \$1.00 bottle can be procured for 50c or the \$2.50 bottle for \$1.00 on Mr. Worner's personal guarantee.

Cacto, the Marvelous Medicine, is creating quite a sensation. This preparation is a cactus, herb, root and plant juice compound. It is a positive uric acid solvent and reconstructs wasted and weakened tissues. Acting directly on the stomach, liver and kidneys, it purifies the blood and creates nerve force and energy. It is acknowledged to be the most valuable spring tonic and cleanser.

Mr. Worner has adopted a very liberal plan in advertising this Marvelous Medicine. Each purchaser of a \$1.00 bottle of Cacto will be given free an extra full size dollar bottle on trial, both at Stewart's Drug Store, as well as at his lecture room, 835 Gallia St. This offer will expire in a short time after which the regular price will prevail. This paper will soon announce the last day of this liberal offer.

STRANGER THAN FICTION: ARTICLES THAT APPEARED IN THE PORTSMOUTH DAILY TIMES

Tuesday, April 10, 1928—Over 500-lb. shipment of deadly rattlesnakes received by F. M. Worner of 835 Gallia St. Mr. Worner extracts the poisonous venom for use in Worner's Famous Rattlesnake Oil, sold at Stewart's Drug Store for \$0.50 to \$1.00 a bottle. Mr. Worner also handles the snakes and gives daily lectures in which he demonstrates how to extract their deadly venom. —TM

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