



PROF. FRED H. NULL AND HIS MOUNT PULASKI CONCERT BAND. The picture was taken at a band picnic held in Rentschler's Grove, 4 miles north of Mount Pulaski, more than a half century ago. Several musicians came over from Lincoln and accompanied the band to Benton Harbor, Mich., Prof. Null's home city before he came to Mount Pulaski, and later to Lincoln. It is difficult to figure out all of the band men, as some are from Lincoln, but the following attempt will be made: Front Row—First three from Lincoln, then

Henry J. Mayer, Floyd Holler, Walter A. Schafer, Prof. Null (standing), Virgil Fenton, Julius Myers, George Zimmermann, Thomas Noonan (Lincoln), and John Bender. Back Row—First two from Lincoln, then Ernest Holst, Edward J. Anderson, Tony Romer, Louis Yarcho and Charles Dehner, these two from Lincoln; Albert F. Lipp, Page Waddell, Sr., Fred A. Schafer (musician from Lincoln), George C. Beidler, and William B. Jenner. Prof. Null celebrated his 83rd birthday at his Benton Harbor, Mich. home in 1959.

Memorial Plates On Light Poles

Sixteen bronze nameplates now adorn 16 granite light posts surrounding the square, each plate bearing the name of a donor or donors who purchased one of these modern lighting standards.

The funds for purchasing these ornamental light standards were secured by popular contribution in sums varying from \$10 up to \$100. Those making the maximum contribution were given a memorial plate to be placed on one of the poles. A number of the contributors placed the name or names of loved ones who had passed on and had played an important part in the upbuilding of the community.

The standards bear the following names: R. S. Hershey, Frederick W. Meister, S. Linn Beidler, R. D. Clark, William Dittus, C. F. Schafer, Mrs. Mary E. Lucas, Mr. and Mrs. R. Bertoni, Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Rothwell, I.O.O.F. and Rebekahs, City Council, Phoenix Fire Department, Farmer's Bank, First National Bank, Mt. Pulaski Township and Mt. Pulaski Telephone Co.

Former Mount Pulaski Band Director Honored On 83rd Anniversary

Benton Harbor, Mich. Pays Tribute To Fine Musician

Tuesday, May 26, 1959, a lengthy newspaper article appeared in a paper in Benton Harbor, Mich., which had to do with Fred Null, a band director in Mt. Pulaski many years ago, who had returned to his old home city of Benton Harbor.

If you read a story in a paper or magazine it might prove interesting, but not as much so as what you are about to read of a musician who has a large number of friends in the Mount Pulaski area. Not only was he popular as a band director, but also as furnishing music for dances in the old Knights of Pythias Hall.

Now in the year 1959, Fred Null played at a testimonial dinner in Benton Harbor in honor of his 83d birthday anniversary, and drew a standing ovation when he played the piano at the event. He played his own composition, "Elks of the U.S.A." The words were sung by his two sons, Ray and John.

Following is the story as it appeared in the Benton Harbor News-Palladium:

Fred Null, Popular Musician

"You're not a man of great wealth, but your ability to bring happiness to thousands and thousands of people will make your name go down in history."

This statement, made by master-of-ceremonies Pete Lovell, echoed the feeling of over 150 men who gathered at the Elks lodge hall Monday night, May 25, to pay tribute to the twin cities, Benton Harbor and St. Joseph, and "Mr. Music," 83-year-old Fred Null.

The tremendous lift Null got out of his testimonial dinner was shown when he spryly marched down the aisleway at the head of the Elks' honor guard at the start of the program, and when he humbly addressed his fellow Elks and friends at the close.

Null received standing ovations when he played the piano and when Elks' Chaplain Robert Turner presented him with a \$400 check on behalf of Elks Lodge No. 544. Words of praise rang out for Null from the several Elks' dignitaries that were present at the banquet.

Also, ringing praise for his "buddy of 65 years", was Jim Dwan, who is being honored at a testimonial dinner this Tuesday night, sponsored by the Benton Harbor American Legion. Dwan is observing his 85th birthday anniversary this May 25th.

Among those sitting at the head table with the guest of honor were his two sons, John, a Benton Harbor city commissioner, and Ray, Athletic Director at Aquinas College in Grand

Rapids, Mich., and Null's 68-year-old brother, Lester, of Gowen, Mich.

Lovell read the fabulous history of Null that was prepared by his son John, and is as follows:

"Born in Berrien Center, Mich. in 1876, the son of a band director, Null played his first cornet solo when he was eight years old, at the local Baptist church.

Null directed and organized his first band at the old Central School in 1890. While a young man, he directed orchestras and traveled in 20 states and British Columbia with the Katie Putnam Theatrical Show.

Null played and directed orchestras at Silver Beach for four seasons, and was playing in the old Yore Opera House on the night it burned.

Null moved his family to central Illinois in 1908, where he directed concert bands in Mount Pulaski, Lincoln and Assumption, and played the piano for dances and silent movie theaters. Null returned to Benton Harbor in 1917, and directed orchestras for the Caldwell Theater in St. Joseph, then managed by Dwan.

He opened the Liberty Theater in 1921 with a 10-piece orchestra, and played there for several years. In the 1920's Null directed the St. Joseph city band on Lake Michigan Bluff, for eight years.

Null directed the St. Joseph high school band for four years, and the Stevensville and St. Joseph Catholic high school bands.

He played the piano for the Benton Harbor Lions Club for many years and was honored by this organization on "Fred Null Day" in the year 1950. He still plays at their weekly meetings.

A member of the local musicians' union and life member, Null was honored at a testimonial dinner by this group in 1956.

Null was initiated into the Elks in 1903, and was organist for the Benton Harbor lodge for 35 years. He is presently organist for the St. Joseph Elks Lodge, a job he has held for the past 10 years. His two sons are past exalted rulers of the Benton Harbor Elks. Null was Michigan State Elks organist in 1954-56.

Null's orchestra played for dances all over southwestern Michigan and northern Indiana. He has given individual music lessons on any instrument from piano and cornet to violin and saxophone to thousands of youngsters and adults all his life.

His musical compositions include "Michigan Triumphant," played by Paul Lavelle and his Band of America, over NBC radio in 1952. He also composed "Elks of the U.S.O.," which he played at the banquet, while his sons sang the words.



MOUNT PULASKI BAND back in the late 1890's. Back Row: Byron Tilbury, George Kreig, George Beidler, Ed Anderson, John Binder. Middle Row:

Jay Webster, Albert Mayer, Fred A. Schafer, August Brookmyer. Front Row: Julius Myers, Henry, Walter and Ed Mayer, Billy Connolley.

Many words of praise were bestowed upon Null. Among them were remarks by Stanley Banyon, editor and publisher of the Benton Harbor News-Palladium, who said: "60 years ago when I was a hungry urchin selling papers at one cent each on the

streets of Benton Harbor, I remember one of the first fellows to buy a paper from me was Fred Null. I have been a stalwart supporter of his ever since. It's a privilege to say, Fred Null, "God bless you through all your remaining years."

Editor's Note: Mr. Null was planning on being a Sil-Tennial visitor but death claimed him Sept. 11, 1960. One of his compositions "Michigan Triumphant", sent to the high school band will be played during the Sil-Tennial in their concert.

YOUR LAND... OUR LAND..

Our future is our land. Let's keep the land in our future productive. Soil conservation is an all-year, every-year job. Keep the greedy hand of erosion from robbing your land of its valuable top soil. Terrace and contour-plow to provide adequate drainage and prevent torrents of water from gouging sterile valleys in your acreage.

Our patrol equipment is now available for soil conservation work, building waterways, terracing, etc. We also do: Tiling, Bulldozing, Open Ditch Work, Clearing Farm Ponds and Concrete Structure.

As our city pauses to Celebrate its 125th Birthday, we'd like to say a big "thank you" to all our friends and extend our best wishes for a fine celebration.

FRED HOLMES