

West Third Street Dayton - Ohio











Through family diaries, stories and photos plus library research, four Stratis cousins have pieced together the history of their Grandfather's two restaurants in Dayton, Ohio.

The following features **John Stratis**' first restaurant, **The Ark** located in the historic Wright-Dunbar Neighborhood.

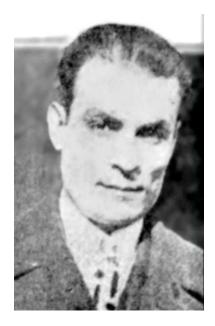
History compiled by:

Sue Stratis Montesano Dave Stratis Stacey Stratis Greg Stratis

Special Thanks to: Karen D. Brame – Dayton Metro Library Information Services Librarian – Africana Archives Emphasis Special Collections

Two Greek immigrants met in Dayton, Ohio They became business partners to pursue the American Dream

Johnny Hornis opened The Ark Restaurant at 1026 West Third Street in 1926. John Stratis worked with Hornis and later purchased The Ark at the end of 1928. Following the end of Prohibition in 1933, the partners took over the 2nd floor of the Enterprise Building, spent \$10,000 and opened the *Rendezvous*, a nightclub complete with house orchestra and a staff of 45.



John Anthony Hornis

Born April 6, 1896 Crete, Greece Married - Olive Naomi Young May 29, 1924 Dayton, Ohio Died October 14, 1978 Dayton, Ohio

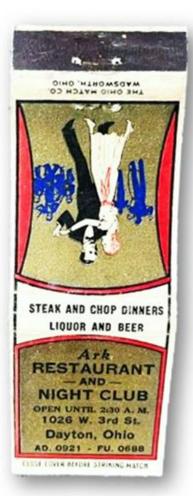


John Andrew Stratis

Born July 26, 1896 Andros, Greece Married – Edith Ummel December 28, 1922 Dayton, Ohio Died April 20, 1963 Aboard T.S.S. Olympia Buried Clearwater, Florida

CLUES





In 2023, Greg Stratis found a matchbook for sale on EBay. The cousins had heard about **The Ark**, but never knew where it was located. They knew there was a ballroom on the 2nd floor with animals painted on the walls. The matchbook with the address provided the missing link.



LOCATION



1024 West Third – Booth Building





1036-1038 West Third – Enterprise Building



Sue Montesano set out to find the exact location of 1026 West Third. Using current maps plus a walk of the neighborhood didn't provide the exact location. After speaking with a realtor at HER located at 1024, Sue decided it must have been part of 1024 at one time. OR could it have been located at what is now an empty lot? After lots of visits to the **Downtown Dayton Library** plus online searches it was discovered that the address had changed in 1939 to 1038 Currently there isn't a street address of 1038 but through recent historic references it has been determined that 1038 was in the **ENTERPRISE BUILDING.**

TIMELINE

JOHN STRATIS - THE ARK RESTAURANT

1026 (later 1038) West Third Street, Dayton Ohio ENTERPRISE BUILDING

1896	John Stratis - born 7/26/1896 Andros, Greece]	ENTERPRISE BLDG Built 1890	
1912		80	PEKIN THEATRE	and the second s
1917		WORLD WAR I	1912 - 1917	
1918		1917 - 1918	Silent Movies	
1920		PROHIBITION	Live Shows	
1922	Stratis moved NYC to Dayton 12/2/1922	1920 - 1933	1918 - 1927 Event Space &	
	Married Edith Ummel 12/28/1922		African-American	
1923	Moved to 727 W. Third St. 1/20/1923		Masonic Lodge	
1924	Leon Stratis - born (son) 4/22/1924			
1925				West Side Plumbing - 1925
1525				John M. Williams Cigars - 1925
1926	ARK Restaurant - John Hornis Young & Hornis 9/22-1926			AC Moore Billiards - 1926
1928	Robert Stratis - born (son) 6/28/1928			
	The Ark - Stratis purchased 12/30/1928		THE ARK RESTAURANT	
1929	The Ark Restaurant Re-Opens (news article) 1/26/1929 1026 W Third St	DEPRESSION 10/28/2029 Stocks crash	1926 - <mark>1</mark> 934	
1933		March 1933 FDR Closes Banks; Ends Prohibition		
<u>1934</u>	The Ark Rendezvous - opens (news article) 12/12/1934		THE ARK	
	Ark closes for the summer		RENDEZVOUS	
1936	Stratis opened Circle Grill 43 W Third St		2nd Floor Opens 1934	
1939	The Ark - address change John Hornis - 1038 W Third St	WORLD WAR II		Winfield McKinley Barber Ruth Leiber Beauty Shop
1945	-	1939-1945		1939 - 1945
1946	Stratis closed Circle Grill			Ruth Leiber Beauty Shop 1946
	The Ark - Joseph Ternarvan	^		Alice Woodward
1947	1946-1947	8		Fine Pasteries
1948	The Ark - Joseph A. Vacchiani			
1955	The Ark Bar & Grille			
	Haines Directory			

BBB BAA



TUESDAY, DEC. 11, 1934 D-12



FORMAL OPENING TOMORROW NIGHT WEDNESDAY. DECEMBER 12

A new "nite spot" for Dayton will be opened to the public Wednesday evening when the Ark Rendezvous makes its "bow."

The scheme of arrangements for the Rendezvous is so differ t from the average that it is bound to attract quite a bit of at ntion from those who like to enjoy themselves.

Located at 1026 West Third street, the Ark Rendezvous will be ned formally Wednesday evening with a full floor show, dancing

The Rendezvous is the outgrowth of the Ark restaurant, at 1026 West Third street, operated by Johnny Hornis and John Stratis. The restaurant, which will continue in operation night and day, occupies the first floor. The Rendezvous is located on the second floor.

The large main room of the Rendezvous will be one of the show places of the city.

Here patrons will enjoy themselves in dancing or in food and drink while being entertained with music and the "Rendezvous Revue." The main room will seat approximately 175 persons.

Adjoining the main room is one of those "homey spots." th Old English cocktail room. Delightfully finished in oak furnish ings and fixtures, this room vill seat about 50 persons. The ba also is located here and three bartenders, all experienced in mixin drinks, will be on duty. The bar

Overlooking the main room is a mezzanine where, when the main room is crowded, patrons may go and look down upon the merry-makers below. For their accommodation, a small dance floor has been installed in the event they would not care to go down to the main dancing floor

Adjoining the mezzanine is a private room for bridge parties and club meetings, which will seat approximately 60 persons. Here clubs and other organizations can hold their meetings in private and yet be served with their favorite drinks and foods.

HIRD **S**T

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With the opening of the Ark Rendezvous on Wednesday eve-ning, Hornis and Stratis are offering the special Ark Rendezvous steak (club style) and Ark Rendezvous cocktail.

The orchestra and revue are planning many specialties for the opening night. Dancing will be featured from 8 p. m. to 12 mid-night nightly, while the Rendezvous will be open for parties and meetings from 11:30 a. m. to 1 a. m. daily.

Among special offerings in the foods line will be chop suey, chow mein, spaghetti and sea foods, steak and chicken dinners.

There will be no cover charge at the Rendezvous, but there will nominal minimum charge per person.

Hornis and Stratis have expended approximately \$10,000 in renovations and decorations for the Ark Rendezvous. Where they formerly employed to persons in the restaurant, they now employ about 45 persons.

Hornis founded the Ark restaurant about eight years ago. Coming to Dayton 22 years ago, he has been successfully engaged in the restaurant business here ever since.

Stratis joined Hornis in the operation of the restaurant five years ago. He has been a Dayton resident for 14 years.

"In opening the Rendezvous and in continuing the restaurant," Hornis and Stratis state, "we have in mind only of giving satisfac-tory service and entertainment to our patrons. We will be satis-fied only when they are satisfied."

16.23





Pictures Shown Above

Table arrangement in Banquit Bown which can be used to many advantage. The printe Constall Bown, where one may be settered his fawitte drink. The graduits (bown opics and wating arrangement and dates Boor, John Status, partner, of the Ark Renderous and Restaurant. Weldenbay Contention: Incide service. Boil and Bordess on each end of yhoto, and Connie Weldenbay Contention: aurant which has been established at the same location for over 8 years

10

Atlantic Fisheries Co. Fish-Oysters-Sea Foods 1032 W. Third St. AD 0753

Dayton Fun House & Device Co. Electric Dumb Waiter Installed for Quick Service AD 3149

133 Hatfield Falls City Distributing Co.

ow Available in High Content KE 4588 Falls City Beer N O. P. KLEE, Dist.

The Liberty Electric Co. "Complete Electrical Service 1015 W. Third St. Used Here Exclusively Himes Bros. Dairy Co. Home of Meadow Gold Dairy Products AD 8188 Germantown St.

JOHN STRATIS

PARTNER

G. E. Kent Store Fixture Co. Restaurant and Bar Equipment 123 N. Patterson Bivd. AD 7812

Heinz "57" Products

JOHN HORNIS

Potato Chips—Pretzels 142 S. Williams St. B. McKenney Wholesale-Cigars 1024 W. Third St. -Candies FU 2632

CONNIE WELCELEAN'S ORCHESTRA WITH EV. BARNES DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Food will be our main standby . . . thousands of Daytonians know of the Food will be our main standby ... thousands of Daytomains know of the fine culinary service rendered by the Ark restaurant in the past eight years. You may order a sandwich—lunch—or a full course dinner of Chops ... Steaks ... Chinese dishes or Sea Foods ... everything is cooked

to perfection by expert chefs . . . at the most reasonable of prices.

D. W. Mikesell The Olt Bros. Brewing Co. Ask for Olts Strong Beer-It's Godi E 1104 20-32 N. McGee St. FU 5911 KE 4104

FU 3786

Joe Spatz Bakery Quality Baked Goods 1337 W. Second St.

National Cash Registers

Protect Our Daily Receipts E. H. SCHMIEDING, Sales Agent First and Main FU 2185

FREE ROSES TO EVERYONE



GENERAL GROCERY CO.

DISTRIBUTORS 77 WYANDOTTE-FUlton \$168



DINE-DRINK-DANCE AND BE MERRY Words cannot describe the beauty of the Pay us a call tomorrow night . . . and you will make this your Rendezvous . . . Ark Rendezvous, a visit is more convincing.

You may Dine-Drink-Dance to your con-tent in an atmosphere of refinement ...

The Bar and Private Cocktail room/ will serve guests with only the

The bar and that of the total total and the set of the

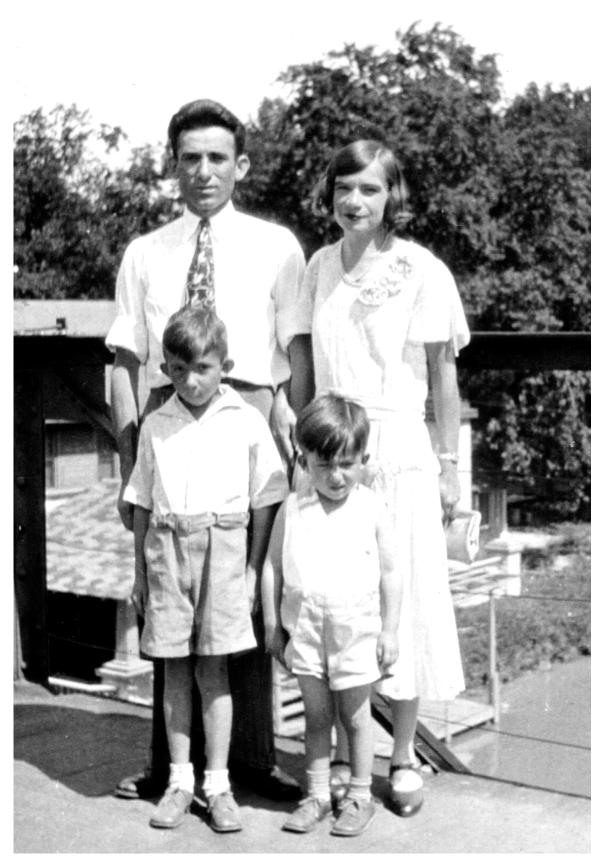
OPEN ALL DAY FOR SERVICE — DANCE MUSIC FROM 8 P. M. TO MIDNIGHT NO RESERVATIONS NEEDED — NO COVER CHARGE NOMINAL MINIMUM CHARGE At the Ark Rendezvous a special Banquet Room is available for Parties, Afternoon Bridge and Socials . . . ask us about this appointment. There will be no charge for the room.

We extend a most hearty and cordial invitation to everyone to visit Dayton's newest and most modern Rendezvous to Dine \dots Drink \dots Dance. Get up a party and attend.

The Waddell Co., Inc.

All Ba Bar Fixtures, Tables, Chairs Manufa and Installed by Us at the Ark GREENFIELD (Since 1889) OHIO





John & Edith Stratis with their young sons Leon & Bob during the early years of The Ark. The family lived in the Westwood Neighborhood of Dayton, not far from the restaurant.

History of West Third Street Buildings in Wright-Dunbar APRIL 8, 2019 BY <u>ANDREW WALSH</u>

The Pekin Theater (1890) was part of the Enterprise Block, "a long (130 feet), narrow (45 feet) building with three stories and a basement, totaling about 20,000 square feet. The theater, which was built around 1890, began as a nickelodeon and also presented vaudeville acts." It was a part of the Colored Consolidated Time vaudeville circuit and hosted performances by Bert Whitman and the Sunbeams, Sam Davis, and comedians Price and Jones in 1914-15.

It too would close soon after, however. According to the National Park Service, "with the decline of the west Dayton community, the theater fell into disrepair, eventually including the collapse of its roof and floors. By 2002, the building consisted only of the front and side walls held up by buttresses." Despite this, the structure has survived, and has been mentioned in various redevelopment proposals, although nothing concrete has materialized.

MARCH 24, 2019 BY ANDREW WALSH

The present commercial structures on West Third Street were built between 1885 and 1924. The corridor, however, "was never an affluent area." Instead, it was a working class enclave and it has been described as a "tight, cramped urban neighborhood." In fact by 1912, it was already being said that "the old neighborhood was changing for the worse" (Crouch–The Bishop's Boys).

After World War I, the community became predominantly African-American.

Pekin Theatre

1026-8 W. 3rd Street, Dayton, OH 45402



A 1907 look at the Enterprise Building (Enterprise, later Pekin, Theater on the second floor) and a 2020s look at the building with very few modifications in 100 plus years.



This Romanesque Revival style building was built in 1890 with the typical storefront below and commercial space in the upper stories. This structure also has a hall on the third floor. Notice the symmetrical window arrangement with three rectangular windows below and three arched windows above on each side. The upper façade shows a fine balance of horizontal and vertical elements. It utilizes raised areas between windows to unite the second and third stories while off-setting the horizontal rows of

windows. The inset and advancement of the brick detailing adds additional symmetry to the façade. The cornice with brackets is original.

A matchbook purchased on Etsy from England indicates that Alice Woodward, operated her bakery at this location. Woodward was one of Dayton's most dedicated preservationists and an early inductee in the Walk of Fame. Her Walk of Fame honor reads:

Alice G. Woodward, 1915-2000 As Dayton's most enthusiastic and successful



historic preservationist, she saved over 40 buildings and advised and aided other preservationists. She received many awards for her successes and helped revitalize and revive many of Dayton's historic neighborhoods. In an article that appeared in 1998 in the *Dayton Daily News*, she said, "I just like old houses and I like to be busy. And it keeps me out of the bars."

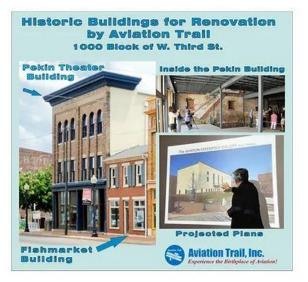
After ending her marriage, banks wouldn't loan Woodward money as a single mother and divorced woman. She continued to operate the bakery and also sold wholesale flour to other bakeries. She later received her nursing degree, ran an antique store, and began investing in the renovation of historic properties. Two of her most remarkable accomplishments were the grass roots efforts to preserve the Dayton Mental Health Hospital which is now 10 Wilmington Place, and her renovation of the Steamboat House as her residence in the St. Anne's Hill Historic District.

HISTORY



Pekin Theatre 2nd Floor Enterprise Building Live Shows & Silent Movies in 1916





The ATI HANGAR

(Fish Market) 1042 West Third St.

The AVIATION EXPERIENCE GALLERY

(Pekin Theater) 1036-1038 West Third St.



New Building Plans

Aviation Trail Announces Proposed Plans for Newly Acquired Buildings

The ATI HANGAR and the Aviation Experience Gallery

Dayton, OH - In 2016 Aviation Trail, Inc. announced the acquistion of the historic Pekin Theater Building and Fish Market Building on West Third Street. These buildings are directly east of the current Aviation Heritage Building in the Hoover Block of West Third. The purpose of the acquisition is to develop the facility into an aviation educational site, and expand the area of the current museum. (See the photo below).





The Pekin Theatre is the building on the far left, and the Fish Market is the smaller building to its right.

Some of the objectives of the development will be to:

- · provide additional facilities needed by the National Park Service
- expand ATI's footprint to the community
- promote other local public aviation activities
- · enhance historically related and little known aviation facts
- · create new educational experiences for students
- · ATI partner sites promotional exhibit and display areas
- · add hospitality space for both public and private events
- · additional display area for Parachute Museum collections
- · and other features to enhance the Wright-Dunbar community

At the 2017 Annual Meeting on November 8, at Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park, ATI spokesperson Steve Brown (above) presented an initial proposal for the future development of the buildings. The The historic buildings will be repurposed as the **ATI HANGAR** (Fish Market) 1042 West Third St. and the **AVIATION EXPERIENCE GALLERY** (Pekin Theater) 1036–1038 West Third St.



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