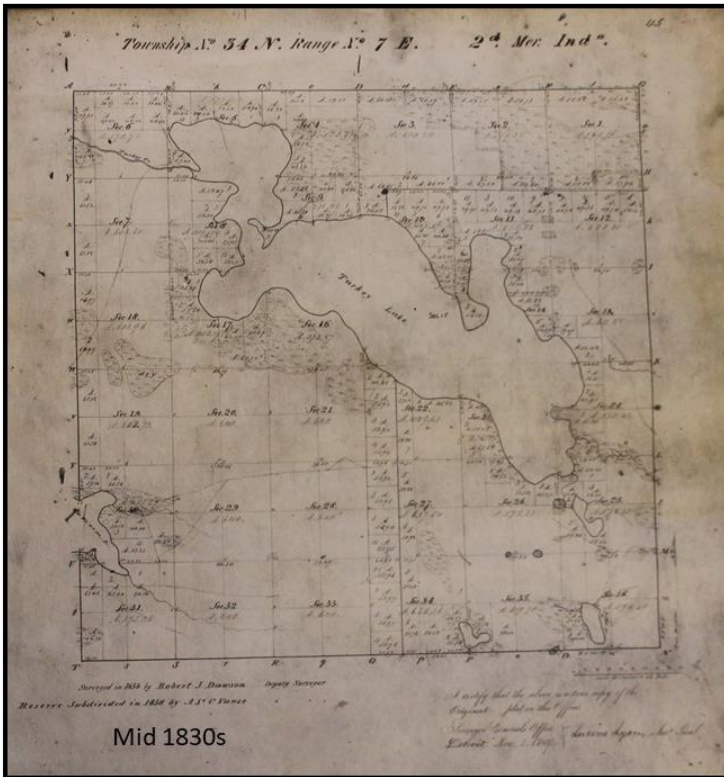


## Nathaniel Crow (1823 – 1912)

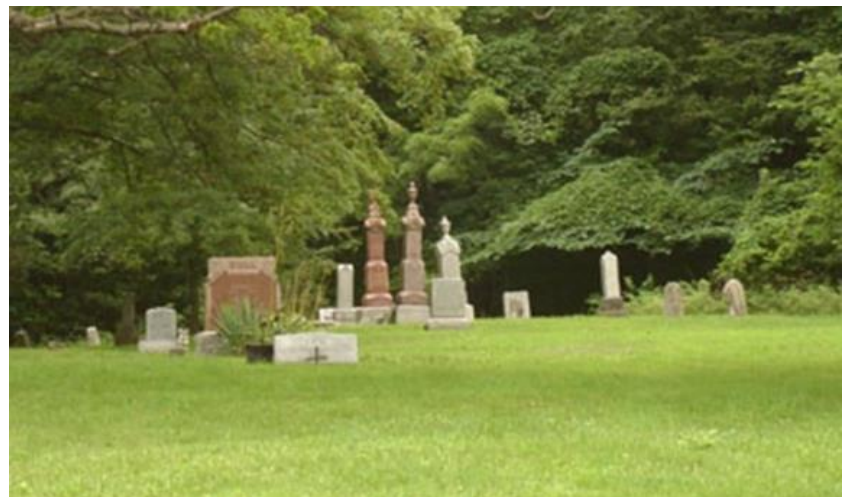


In 1845, at the age of 21, Nathaniel traveled alone on horseback from his childhood home in Champagne Co., Ohio, to the wilderness of Indiana where his uncle had settled near Indian Village. It was only about 12 years after the Indians were moved west. After first buying land in Van Buren Township and teaching at the Strieby School, he moved to Turkey Creek Township and boarded with a neighbor, Joseph Moore and his wife Mary, just east of his newly purchased land on the northeast side of Lake Wawasee, as we know it now. Mrs. Moore's younger sister, Miss Louisa Eliza Airgood, would occasionally come for a visit. Eliza had been born in Germany on Sept. 13, 1832.

Along with her parents and 2 sisters, she sailed to America when she was 3 months old. She learned to walk on the ship's rolling deck. When they reached Lower Manhattan, she was nine months old! Nathaniel and Eliza were married in October of 1852.

Together, Nathaniel & Eliza acquired a wealth of over 560 acres around Lake Wawasee, practically all of it within the former Flat Belly Reserve. They were one of the largest real estate owners in the county.

Of the 8 children born to Nathaniel & Eliza, four died in infancy or at a very young age, and 3 died as young parents. Nathaniel and his wife, Eliza, are buried in the center of the Lake Bethel cemetery along with many of their relatives. High on the very tall spire of their headstone is an inscription, "Earth to earth, dust to dust, in God we trust."



Descendants of  
Martha Marie “Mattie Crow  
1875-1956  
& Albert Edward Fick



James Albert & Bea Fick

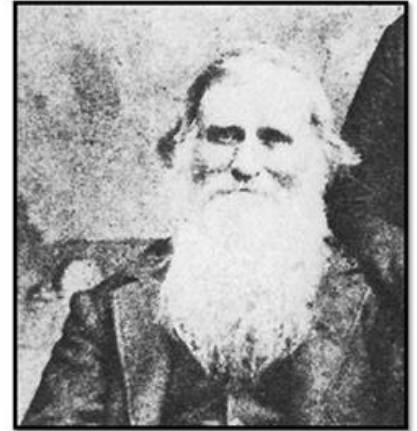
- James Michael “Jamie” Fick
- Sheryl Ann Fick
- Sandra Lee “Sandi” Ulery
- Brian Wayne Fick

Nathaniel Crow “Than”  
& Margaret Fick

- Margaret Ann “Peg” Edmonds
- Barbara Yates
- Nathaniel Crow “Niel” Fick, Jr.
- Susan F. Madagan
- Nanci Louise Roberts
- Marilou F. Moore



**Martha Marie “Mattie” Crow’s** destiny would prove to be a life of tremendous extremes. She experienced both financial privilege due to her place in the family birth order (the youngest), as well as struggle (living through the Depression years). Her life was filled with the joys of family; yet, one-by-one Mattie’s loved ones were snatched away by death. As a widow, Mattie learned to face her many life responsibilities projecting a “hard as nails” business savvy image. Yet, inconspicuously behind her business façade, Mattie’s true nature was more like the “sweet little girl in the chair” ...kind, clever, loving and giving.



As Mattie Crow was coming of age, she chose to remain at the Crow's Nest with her father and be a nurturing Aunt to her nieces & nephews. Mattie attended the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. She studied the harp in Chicago in 1899 and also played other stringed instruments (Mattie on right). To pay for another music term in Chicago, Mattie first took 20 boarders – most of them musicians – for a week at Crow's Nest in August, 1901. Her artistic ability in drawing & painting were also encouraged by professional instruction. She and her father were able to do some traveling during the winters of 1905 & '06 out West & down South – once noting a visit with Col. John Vawter. She wrote lively accounts of their travels for the Cromwell News.





In the summer of 1911, 36-year-old Mattie Crow married Albert Edward Fick on the east lawn of Crow's Nest attended by 300 guests, including her father (notice lake in background). Shortly after, Nathaniel stumbled and fell down the cellar steps which was sadly a factor in his decline and death in 1912. Mattie and Albert seemed to have an ideal life in the family homestead aptly named Crow's Nest. Two sons were born, Nathaniel Crow "Than" Fick and James Albert "Jim" Fick; then a baby girl named Eloise who was sadly taken by pneumonia before she had learned to walk. Tragedy struck again when Albert passed away in 1922 after only 11 years of marriage.

## CROW'S NEST

not a hotel, but an ideal country home. House, with long wide verandas in the middle of a large cool shaded lawn; situated on the east shore—the breezy side of Wawasee lake.

Nearest point on Wawasee (only four miles due south from Richville church) to the Lincoln Highway. Close to best fishing grounds of Wawasee, 1-2 mile from State Fish Hatchery.

We own 76 acres of land, a fine bathing beach, our own cows, poultry, vegetables, fruit, home cured meats.

House is built on high well drained elevation, with sanitary and healthful surroundings, and supplied with water pumped by hydraulic from a cold bubbling spring which has been analyzed and found to be pure.

Rooms, light and well screened. Hot and cold running water baths and toilets in the house. Fire-places for open wood fires in cool days or evenings.

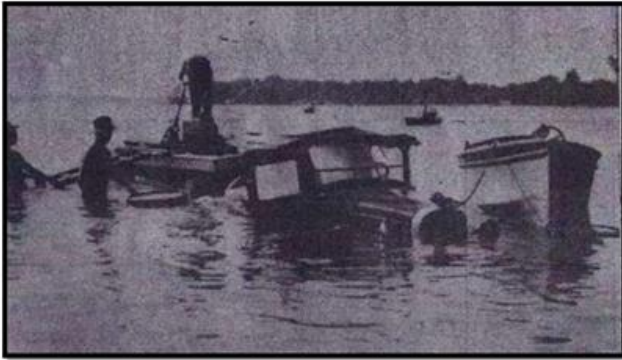
A home-like restful place, for persons desiring to recuperate tired nerves, mind and body; yet in easy access to amusement parks, churches, etc.

You are welcome at any time and will find the rates reasonable.

*Mrs. Martha Crow-Fick.*  
Crow's Nest, Wawasee, Indiana

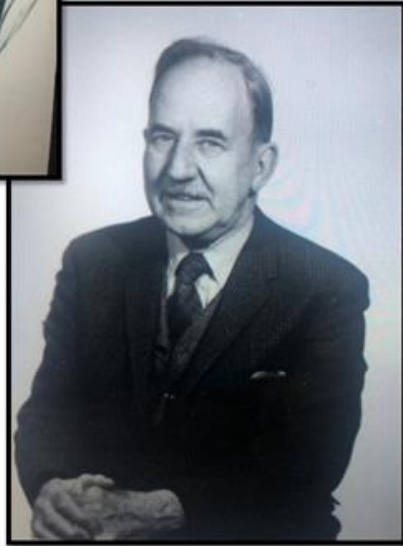
Phone No. 905 Cromwell

Mattie had 2 young sons to raise alone, and the Great Depression years were setting in. The burden of running a chicken & fruit farm became too great, so Mattie chose to lease the family homestead to an Inn Keeper while she tried her hand at nursing. Crow's Nest became a summer resort Inn where guests could come for relaxation in a country atmosphere. Once both sons had completed their college years, "Than" at Purdue and Jim at Butler, Jim returned home to Crow's Nest. He and his mother continued the Inn Resort, catering to organizations, clubs and sorority or fraternity groups. The barn was remodeled and a dance floor added to hold parties for the guests.



Fun activities have always been part of living at the lake! Cousin Theries Doll & Than looking out at the lake; Than & Jim would land the plane in Theries' fields – Enchanted Hills today; Jim had the adventure of raising the car that had gone through the ice the winter before; and Than's family sailed a Lightning – son Niel still sails today

Jim Fick and his college roommate put together a color film of the Lake Wawasee sites and activities in 1936. Jim's mission was to show it to as many groups as possible throughout his life. That's being carried on today with the Syracuse Public Library and the museum partnering within the last 10 years to make digital copies available to the public.



**Nathaniel Crow “Than” Fick** was born in 1916 to Mattie Crow and Albert Fick. After graduating in Engineering from Purdue in the late 1930s, he worked at Ohio’s Batelle Institute, a major force in science and technology discovery. He was “called to Washington” in 1948, retiring in 1980 as a metallurgical engineer with the U.S. Government.

My contact, Than’s son, Nathaniel Crow “Niel” Fick, Jr., shared his earliest memories of Crow’s Nest: driving from Arlington, VA to the Lake in the family station wagon in the 1950s, with Mom and Dad in the front seat, one child in between, a mattress in the back, and the other FIVE of us children laying about in the back during the 600 mile drive. Oh, were we all happy to finally arrive! Niel loved catching turtles just to hold and look at, and then release to watch them scoot away. The girls remembered canning rhubarb with Babo, and a theater costume accepted as rent payment which Margaret Ann wore to a dance! His sister Marilou told me she has a newel post from the Lake Bethel Church that she uses as a plant stand.



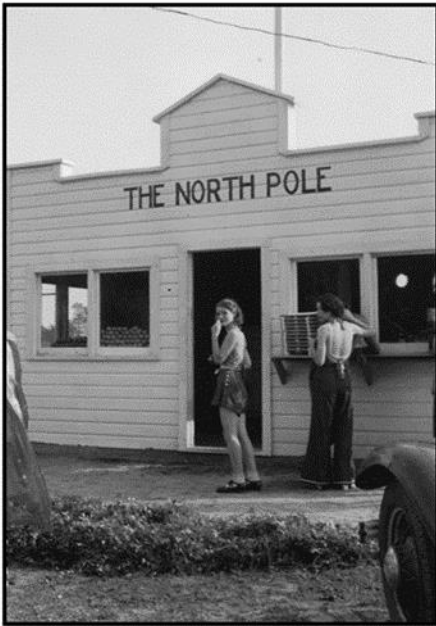


**INSTRUMENTAL IN ENDEAVOR** — Six members of the Nathaniel Crow Fick family are shown in the photo with their mother, Margaret Fick, wife of deceased Nathaniel Crow Fick. These individuals, along with a number of others, worked with WACF for the permanent protection of these wetlands. These individuals also made a special donation toward the memorial sign.  
 Shown in front, from left, are Margaret Ann (Peg) Edmonds, seated, and Marilou Moore. Standing in back are Nathaniel (Niel) Crow Fick Jr., Nanci Roberts, Susan Madagan, Margaret Fick and Barbara Barton. A nephew, Andrew Colyer, who was not available for the picture, was also very instrumental in making this possible. (Photo provided)

The family donated land which Dillon Creek flows thru to the WACF. Also, just this week, WACF purchased the Turkey Creek inlet to the lake which is on land originally owned by Nathaniel Crow and given to his grandchildren Charles and Cora Crow.



The family today. On right, Niel's son Nathaniel Crow "Nate" Fick has written a book about leading a platoon in Afghanistan just after 9/11 and advancing to a Recon unit two years later, on the eve of war with Iraq. Pretty exciting reading that you can check out at the Syracuse Public Library.



Beatrice Catherine “Bea” McHenry answered Jim Fick’s ad in the Indianapolis Star newspaper for a car hop who could relocate to Lake Wawasee for the summer months to work at the North Pole drive-in restaurant located at the northeastern corner of the Crow’s Nest property. Bea & Jim Fick were married in Indianapolis.



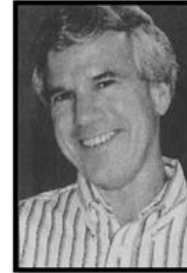
Mattie’s younger son **James Albert “Jim” Fick** returned from overseas after serving in the Army on the island of Saipan. He joined Bea and their children, James, Sheryl Ann and “Sandi,” and the young family spent the summers in a very tiny cottage beside the barn so Crow’s Nest could be leased. The cottage had been the summer kitchen for Crow’s Nest. The “Castle,” as it was called, had a 2 seater out-house surrounded by fragrant lilac bushes! Eventually a small room was added...and an inside bathroom with a stool and shower stall! Babo enjoyed the children. Baby brother Brian was added to Jim and Bea’s family.



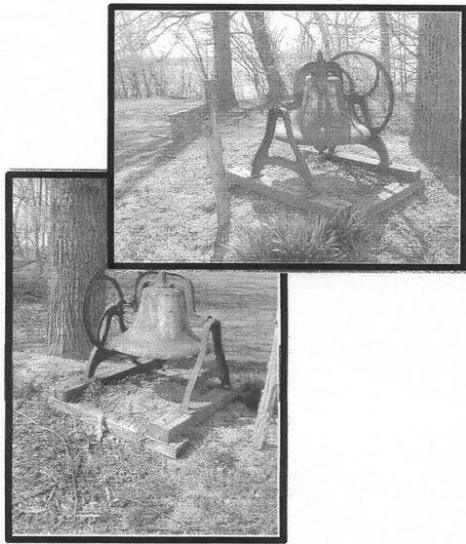
Fick Reunion, 1979



Brian, Sandi, Sheryl, Jamie



Their permanent home was in Indianapolis, but every summer they headed to Lake Wawasee as soon as school let out. They had long out-grown the tiny 1 bedroom “Castle” cottage. “Welkum” was a 2 story brick 4 bedroom lakefront cottage with 2 bathrooms which was much more suited for their family of five. Bea and Jim enjoyed the cottage for the rest of their lives. Brian lives in Williamsport, IN and has worked in architectural conservation for thirty years. Among his projects are Lew Wallace Study in Crawfordsville; Library of Congress, Jefferson Library; Federal Courthouse in Indianapolis. Sandi lives in Florida – she’s the genealogist of the family. Sheryl lives in Arizona; I understand her son, Jerry Littleton, is moving back to this area, and Jamie’s passion was the Crow’s Nest itself which we honor today.



Sandi Fick Ulery is working on a project to return the 1860 Lake Bethel Church Bell to its original location. Her great grandparents, Nathaniel and Eliza Crow, provided the land and helped friends and neighbors build the church, one room schoolhouse and cemetery at the intersection of the road to Cromwell (1050 N.) & Turkey Creek Road very near their home. The cemetery property was donated to the county, and the church bell was moved to the high lake bank near Crow's Nest. Sandi, with your help, wants to spread the word to descendants of Nathaniel & Eliza, descendants of the original church and school families and any other persons interested in preserving history.....then hold a dedication ceremony hopefully next summer, 2022.