

saturday, june 7, 2008

## Byrnesville Woodworker



Made by Edward J. Byrnes

Edward R. Byrnes was a wood worker and one of my earliest memories ever is tied to this fact. In the summer of 1950 while I was working on completing my first year of life I remember two huge black barns behind my grandparents house, the house being on James Street next to the Byrnesville Hotel.

Directly behind the house and a bit over to the east was my grandfather's woodworking shop affectionately known as the shanty. Behind that were two big old black barns. The back of the barns faced our backyard and a huge sliding door opened on the side into a section of the barn which held a lathe and bundles and bundles of wooden dowels. I remember the doors opened at least three or four feet off the ground and I was allowed to sit in an open door in some of the sawdust.

Hey, it was cool I was young, like really young, less than a year old.

I remember wanting to run around in there, grab some of those dowels and look around but I was too small. My grandfather would use these dowels to build nativity crèches. He would saw dowels in half and use them on the roof. I don't have one of the crèches made by Edward R. Byrnes but I do have one made by my dad, Edward J. Byrnes (the crèche he built is pictured above).

A bit more about that barn. My dad said they had horses, cows, and chickens over the years. He said he would find eggs. I will have to ask if he milked cows. There was another large barn across the alley which had been torn down before my time.

The picture right is of a watch holder Edward R. Byrnes built for his father Thomas J. Byrne(s). As you can see, he made it look like a grandfather clock. It is quite nice work with details including a split pediment, brass chain, brass pendulum bob, and brass weights.

Edward R. Byrnes also built whirly-gigs, advent wreaths, candlesticks, toyboxes, and wagons for his grandchildren. I was told he would split the bolts and bend them toward the nuts used to make toys for me so I could not take the toys apart. My family had a large toy box, 4 feet by 2 feet by 2 feet high which lasted till I was married and I made use of it for my boys.



Pocket watch in holder.

Posted by Edward Byrnes at 11:32 | [Comments \(0\)](#) | [Trackbacks \(0\)](#)

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## Fossil Fern on Slate



Fossil on slate.

In the 1910 US Census, Edward R. Byrnes is listed as having the occupation of a drayman. A dray, as listed in a wiki is 'a low horse-drawn cart, often without sides, and used especially for heavy loads'.

From the census too we learn that his father Thomas J. Byrne(s) is a hotel bartender, while Edward's older sister Emma was a hotel table waiter, another sister, Margaret was a milliner.

There was a shirt factory in Barnesboro but it didn't open until 1930 and a milliner is someone who manufactures hats, perhaps there was a hattery in Ebensburg?

Along with being a drayman, Edward R. Byrnes was also a survey man for one of the coal companies, his job was to mark (by drilling holes in the mine roof and inserting pegs) where the coal was to be mined.

He also surveyed above ground and during one of these surveys he found the fossil fern shown here. The fossil is about 5 inches long on the slate which is about 1.5 inches thick.

Edward R. painted one edge of the slate with gold paint and kept it in his living room behind the couch on the radiator. The radiator was in front of an east facing window, the window had shear curtains on it. It is a heavy keepsake.

The radiator was painted silver. There was carpeting and a dark shiny wooden desk in the corner of the room to the left if you were facing out the window.

You can see a picture of family members, the couch, window, and the living room of the Edward R. Byrnes household in the family photograph from 1961.

Posted by Edward Byrnes at 11:08 | [Comments \(0\)](#) | [Trackbacks \(0\)](#)

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thursday, june 5, 2008

## Byrnesville and Lusterware



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**Ed Byrnes**  
412 Taylor Street  
Rochester, MI  
48307-1848

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[edwardbyrnes@comcast.net](mailto:edwardbyrnes@comcast.net)

calendar

February '09						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Tue February 24 2009						

to do list

- create entry on Annabelle Byrnes
- write more entries based on info from Edna Byrnes Lantzy
- organize genealogical materials
- make reunion sign-up form



Edward A. Byrnes

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related websites

[Life of a Small Town Photographer](#)  
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cousin connections



DANE CASTLE

Collections of Arms and Armor

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Lusterware creamer set.

This lusterware belonged to Pauline Schrot Byrnes. According to a wiki entry, lusterware is a porcelain glazed with metal compounds to give the work an iridescent quality. You should be able to see this in the large picture. On the bottom of the sugar bowl and creamer it is stamped 22K Warranted. Before she died, my grandmother Byrnes put names of individual family members on a number of her household possessions and my name was on these two pieces.

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I've only used them at a couple of very special gatherings, okay maybe one, and maybe it was a Thanksgiving. Pauline grew up on a big farm in Curwensville, one of the youngest of 14 children. Her parents Joseph Schrot(h) and Anna Baum were both German, Joseph from Ober Lindewieze and Anna from NiederLindweise. This information came from the Schrot (h) sisters although I haven't located the cities on a map yet.



Salt & Pepper shakers.

The farm and huge farm house in Curwensville really impressed me. There was an antique wagon in one of the barns. By the time I came around, the fields were rented out and planted by neighboring farmers. The Schrot's I knew from my visits to the Schrot homestead farm in Curwensville were Pauline's sisters Anna, Ruth, and Mary, the latter being a Catholic nun. I also knew one of the brothers, my great Uncle Rudy and his family. A son of Rudy, Rudy Joe always impressed me, he had degrees in the biological fields and had insect collections. On one of my visits they gave me a keepsake.

The keepsake was set of bright blue porcelain salt and pepper shakers from Japan. If there was a story surrounding the salt and pepper shakers I don't know it. My grandma Byrnes was a great shot with a rifle and put my buddies and I to shame one day. We had been out shooting a pellet gun all day. I shot a bird off some electrical wires up on the hill and I still fill a little bad about shooting that bird. My grandmother asked if she could take a shot and I thought it was kind of funny and didn't think she would hit anything. She aimed for the center back of one of the Adirondack chairs in the backyard and hit it dead center. I think my friends and I were lucky to hit the center piece of wood at all.

I remember my grandmother going down into the cellar and stoking up the coal in and adding coal to the furnace early every morning in the cold weather. She would also make the best beef and vegetable soup. After long afternoons of picking berries up on the hill, Grandma Byrnes would fix them up for us with sugar and milk. She would always make me kneel and say my prayers before bed.

After my grandfather died, my dad and my uncles got together and bought my grandmother a new color TV which was a big deal and also had a new oil furnace installed to replace the coal stove. There was a concrete shower in the cellar across from the furnace and I thought I was pretty tough to be able to take a shower down in that scary place. At the other end of the cellar was a door which came up under the porch. My grandparents stored canned goods and cases of soda under the porch. It was kind of cool down there in the semi-dark when the sunlight came through the lattice which skirted the front porch of the house.

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