

Wyandotte's Got Old Bones  
By Wallace Hayden

Wyandotte's got old bones.

We've got the ancient river that cozies up to our snaggletooth shoreline flashing ever-changing hues of silver slate, serene blue and turbulent green. For three centuries the river has borne the rippling wakes of canoes, sailing ships, side-wheelers, excursion boats and gasoline runabouts.

We've got 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> generation families who pass distant cousins along Biddle Avenue oblivious to their familial connection.

We've got grand homes shouldering wrap-around porches like dowagers dressed in around-the-neck mink scarves. Parlors and pantries, widow walks and carriage houses adorn these old homesteads.

We've got civil war era buildings of brick and blown glass with creaking pine floorboards that echo a century and a half of continuous commerce testifying to our prominent place in Downriver's mercantile landscape.

We've got an ingrained respect for those elemental 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century dynamos—the railroad, the freighters and the factories that stamped out and delivered the hard iron that built bridges and won wars.

We've got the residual grit and grease of industrial graveyards. Long after their superstructures were pulverized by wrecking balls and replaced by parks and playgrounds, their toxic remains lie ominously beneath the soil like Poe's Tell-Tale Heart lies beneath the floorboards.

We've got the cozy corner taverns that for generations invited the working man to slide onto a stool and brush aside the daily grind with gulps of golden beer.

We've got murky, sepia toned memories, both repressed and slyly celebrated, of rum runners, bootleggers and fedora adorned gangsters.

We've got the religious, academic, literary, athletic, medical, musical, artistic, civic, charitable and service organizations that strive to encourage our better efforts and instincts.

We've got entrepreneurs, professionals, merchants, city workers, labors and homemakers who maintain the fabric of the community that connects and supports all else.

And finally, we've got ourselves, appreciating the past, engaging in the present and in ways that can't be fully foreseen, impacting the future.