

O - Amr Pres

6-7-99

Dear Brian,

I have enjoyed, very much, your Presidential Series thus far. I never try to phone in because I would imagine it is difficult to get through and I do not like to speak on the phone. Too, there is so much I would like to say concerning Benjamin Harrison that you would probably cut me off before I had finished. Following are a few items as pertain to B. Harrison that you may be interested in.

1. In the day of Harrison, Delaware Street from North Street to 16th Street was lined with mansions. When I was discharged from the army in 1946 I attended the Arthur Jordan Conservatory of Music. At that time it was rated as one of the top "10" music schools in the country as colleges are ranked on their faculty instead of facilities. Offices and classes were situated in two "old" mansions. One was at 1111 N. Delaware Street (as I remember the home of 'L.S. Ayres' Department Store owners and 1204 N. Delaware St. These two, old buildings set

next to the Harrison Home. Many of the lady students were housed on the upper floor of the Harrison Home. You may well receive phone calls from, now older ladies, telling of this experience. I attended college there for four years, received my B.A., and would you believe it never visited the inside of the Harrison House. By 1946 most of the old mansions on Delaware had either been torn down or used for other uses. One was a funeral home, one a K. of C. Lodge, and many broken up into small apartments and sleeping rooms. Although they were greatly changed, the two buildings that were used by the Conservatory still showed the elegance that went along with the age. The stairways, woodwork, doors, lights were splendid! We even had classrooms in the Carriage Houses. Alas! They are now both gone to make room for I-65 that almost passes over the III building. The Conservatory is now in the Music Building at Butler University where I received my M.A. The neighborhood

now is pretty well run down, but the Harrison Home is preserved perfectly. Someday I shall visit it with my grandchildren.

Just south of 16th street on Delaware, at Fremder, is the home of Meredith Nicholson. It is a step back into the past when I remember these buildings.

2. Crown Hill Cemetery is indeed a beautiful place. Rolling hills, beautiful trees, elegant stones and mausoleums, Gothic Gatehouse (now closed), many graves of Confederate Soldiers (Indianapolis had a Civil War Prison) and a few notables.

Harrison's grave and stone is not particularly distinctive. If you have a cameraman at his gravesite I hope you will have them take a "shot" at the James Whitcomb Riley monument above Harrison, the highest point in Indianapolis. I took my children there when they were young. Coins are deposited on the monument, then gathered up and donated to the Riley Children's Hospital.

3. In Crown Hill are also buried three vice-presidents Thomas Marshall, Thomas Hendricks and Charles Fairbanks.

Also, in Crown Hill are Fred
Duesenberg (auto maker) and can we
forget John Dillinger. People chip
away at his stone - as I remember
hearing - perhaps they are on perhaps
a 4th or 5th marker. Would to say the
least.

4. Finally, and maybe your researchers
discovered. The private club "Columbia
Club" located on the circle, downtown
was founded to help Harrison be
elected to President of the U.S.

In the lobby is a huge dining
table with marble inlay that
Harrison used in the White House.
They also have an eagle that topped
Lincoln's funeral tent (or whatever
it is called).

You can see why I hesitated to
phone. Use these facts if you so desire.

Sincerely,

[Redacted signature]

Rensselaer, IN 47978

Thanks again for the
programs!