

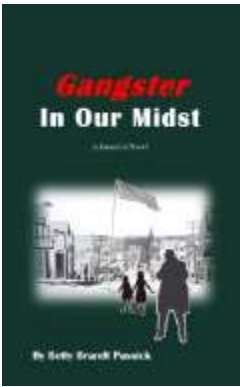
# Two Iowa Daughters

Betty and Karla grew up in small towns in Buchanan County, Iowa. After raising families, retiring from their careers and uncovering hometown and family stories, both wrote books of historical fiction. In 2017 their paths crossed and they became friends. Now they share their writing and publishing journeys, love of history – and neglected Iowa stories. Please join them on:

## ***MONTH/DAY -- TIME -- PLACE***

### **Gangster in Our Midst (August 2017)**

By Betty Brandt Passick



The setting for **Gangster in Our Midst** is the late 1920s in Oxbow, Iowa (similar to Fairbank), a small bustling railroad village, populated with Germans, Scandinavians and Irish. Where Roman Catholics and Protestants lived clustered lives, separated by the Wapsipinicon River. A hamlet known for its Island Park, the

site of baptisms, picnics and amateur boxing matches. Prohibition overnight threw the whole nation into a tailspin. Chicago—260 miles southeast of Oxbow—quickly gained the reputation for its underworld jungle, but Oxbow grew its own crop of bootleggers. One day a ‘mystery man’ showed up on Oxbow’s Main Street, and clinging to his arm was an area girl, Josephine. The town soon suspected him of being a gangster for Al Capone.

The idea for **Gangster in Our Midst** came from interviews with former school teachers, town council members, and other resident octogenarians as part of research for a previous book. Most mentioned stories of the town’s alleged gangster... though ninety years later, they still didn’t know if he was really one of Al Capone’s gangsters—or the story was merely folklore. This neglected Iowa story is told through FBI and police reports, newspaper accounts, and in the words of locals who knew the gangster best.



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### **Iowa’s Devoted Daughter – the Story of Miss Harriet Louise Ankeny and Her American Family (July 2016)**

By Karla Rigdon Wright

When you open the cover of **Iowa’s Devoted Daughter**, you will become best friends with Miss



Harriet Louise Ankeny. She was a precocious child born in 1844 who grew into a woman with unique ambitions for her time. She never married. “Hattie” traveled throughout America and the world by horse and carriage, stage coach, train, steam ship and eventually motor car. She loved traveling but loved homecomings even

more.

The lives of Harriet's parents, brothers and sisters, and their families are also chronicled and woven within interpretive storytelling to create an entertaining and educational memorial to their legacy. The Ankenys were prominent and influential early Iowans. They lived adventurous, interesting and successful lives as settlers, gold miners, civil war officers, entrepreneurs, elected officials, suffragettes, city founders and much more. Hundreds of Ankeny family artifacts (letters from Civil War battlefields, family bibles, rifles and swords, framed oil portraits, documents and more) stored within the State of Iowa Historical Archives were uncovered and used to tell their story. The book is a combination of storytelling, genealogy, and American history.



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