

Nov. 12, 2018



**Gangster In Our Midst**—available at local bookstores, [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com/dp/1613134444) & Barnes & Noble  
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## Gangster Blog

### Thank you, John Busbee...

*Passick delves into her small Iowa town's history to write her compelling historical fiction novel, "Gangster in our Midst." What happens when a curious mind, such as Betty possesses, decides to dig deeper into the town's rumored history of having one of Al Capone's chief gang members living in their small Iowa community? Betty spins a fun story.*

Listen to the [interview](#) with John Busbee, The Culture Buzz on KFMG 98.9 FM, from his Nov. 7, 2018 (11:16 am) podcast.

### 2 Town Stalwarts

Bob Maricle (pictured) made it into *Gangster In Our Midst* — twice. First, as a character (owner of a body shop on Main Street); then, he was listed under **Acknowledgments** as one of the Fairbank historians who helped review book chapters for historical accuracy; plus he shared some pretty neat gangster stories! Background: He and his wife, Lois, moved to Fairbank after his discharge from military service at the end of WWII, and both became stalwarts of the community.

I try to visit a few of the town's historians whenever I'm in the area. During my Iowa book tour November 2-4, I learned Bob had just celebrated his 95th birthday—**happy birthday, Bob!**

Also, I found out that Arnola Siggelkow (my fourth grade teacher) is staying with a daughter while recovering from back surgery. She's another stalwart, whose help with the book was invaluable. **Sending prayers for a quick recovery, Arnola!**



### Three Fingers

**July 1, 1928—Frank Yale was found slumped over the wheel of his new Lincoln near his New York home, gunned down by four men in a black Nash sedan dispensing one hundred .45 caliber bullets into his car. The police...**

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**New Book Cover (coming!)**





Detective Michael Hughes (pictured) was appointed Chicago Police Chief, following the gang murder of Chicago mobster Deon O'Banion in 1924.



## ***Chicago Police Commissioner Michael Hughes' Career Ended in Political Controversy***

There's an interesting story behind the fictional character Michael Hughes in *Gangster In Our Midst*. I based his character on Chicago's police chief who served during much of the reign of the "Kingpin" Al Capone years.

Capone was part of the ruthless Johnny Torrio gang vying for control of Chicago. As the November 1924 election approached, bodies were dropping all over Cook County. But nothing compared to the sleepy little suburb of Cicero.

The drama played out in the Chicago Police Department, too, particularly after the assassination of mobster Deon O'Banion, who controlled Chicago's north side, allegedly by Capone cronies only days after the election.

That's when Michael Hughes, a rising star in the police ranks since 1896, got the job of his dreams.

Hughes was an excellent cop. He made detective in 1918, and found himself at the notoriously corrupt 22nd street station, and played a prominent role in the most notorious cases. He won an award in 1920 for being the city's top crime-fighter, and in 1921, was named Chief of Detectives. Finally, in 1924 he was transferred to Irving Park and named Chicago's new police chief.

Then the Chicago Tribune noted in an article that Hughes had attended a political banquet for O'Banion prior to the election. Mayor William Emmett Dever wanted to know what Hughes was doing at that banquet. The strained relationship between Dever and Hughes played out in the newspapers; Hughes finally resigned, finishing his career as police commissioner in 1928.

The story of the real Michael Hughes will be part of my book talk at the **Cicero Public Library** in the spring of 2019. Plan to come by if you'll be in the area—and, like me, take in a gangster tour, too.

## **Author Events**

-- **Saturday, Dec. 1**, 10 am-4 pm, Summit Avenue Artisan Festival, St. Paul's UCC, 900 Summit Ave., At. Paul, (651) 224-5809

— **Dec.** Date/Time: **TBD** — River Lights Bookstore, 1098 Main St, Dubuque, IA 563-556-4391

— **Spring 2019** — Cicero Public Library, 5225 West Cermak Rd., Cicero, Ill, (708) 652-8084

— **Spring 2019** — West Des Moines Library, 4000 Mills Civic Pkwy., West Des Moines, IA, (515) 222-3400

— **April 2019**, Date/Time: **TBD** — Sawyer Co. Historical Society & Museum, County Highway B, Hayward, WI, (715) 634-8053

— **Fri., May 3, 2019**, 10 am — Burlington Public Library, 210 Court St., Burlington, IA (319) 753-1647

— **Sat, May 4, 2019**, 11 am-3 pm — Burlington By The Book, 301 Jefferson St, Burlington, IA, (319) 753-9981

**Pending...**

— Date/Time: **TBD** — Next Page Books, 1105 3rd St SE Cedar Rapids, IA, (319) 247-2665

— Date/Time: **TBD** — Wild Carrot (gift shop and restaurant), 215 E Bremer Ave, Waverly, IA, (319) 352-2215

— Date/Time: **TBD** — Winnebago County Historical Society, 211 Winnebago St, Decorah, IA 52101, (563) 382-4166

— Date/Time: **TBD** — Templeton Rye Distillery, 209 E 3rd Ave, Templeton, IA (712) 669-8793

— Date/Time: **TBD** — Johnson Co. Historical Society, 860 Quarry Rd, Coralville, IA, (319) 351-5738

— Date/Time: **TBD** — Cedar Valley Historical Society & Grout Museum, 503 South St., Waterloo, IA, (319) 234-6357

— Date/Time: **TBD** — Majors & Quinn, 3038 Hennepin Ave, Minneapolis, MN, (612) 822-4611