**James A. “Jazz” Johnson**

****

James A. “Jazz” Johnson was born in 1881. He had to have both or his legs amputated because of a childhood accident and had wooden legs**.** He established a shoe repair shop on Xenia Avenue in Yellow Springs in 1912. The shop was known for a wooden boot in front of it bearing the words “Try me on Jas. Johnson.” The message is credited as the source of Johnson’s nickname “Jazz.” He was very popular and known for his hearty laugh. He died of a heart attack in August of 1945. In a Yellow Springs News profile in the issue containing Johnson’s obituary, Ernest Morgan observed that Johnson’s habitual presence at a Yellow Springs restaurant, where Antioch student engaged him in friendly conversation, led the business owner to post a sign noting “We Cater to the Caucasians Race” in the window, formally acknowledging racial segregation policies that Morgan noted were soon observed by other eating places in the Village. James A. “Jazz” Johnsonwas survived by two brothers, Frank, of Dayton, Clifford of Xenia, and one nephew.

Source: Adapted from *Yellow Springs News* obituary, and Ernest Morgan profile, August 30, 1945