

## **Heartland Bank & Trust**

**Est. 1858**

Asa H. Danforth came to Peoria from Norton, Massachusetts while it was still known as Fort Clark. Along with his brother, they established the first bank in Tazewell County. They chose the name Prairie State Bank in honor of the expansive prairie around Washington. By 1875, the bank was operated by the founder's heir, A.G. Danforth, as A.G. Danforth & Company, until A.G.'s death in 1927. His son, A.H. Danforth, ran the bank until 1932, when Paul W. Busse assumed control of the bank. Busse, a Washington High School graduate, had worked for the bank for 39 years before assuming the presidency.

After several leadership changes, the bank was chartered as a national bank in 1961 and its name was changed to Danforth First National Bank. Another name change occurred in 1968, when it became the First National Bank of Washington. Shortly thereafter, the bank moved to its present location in Washington on Main Street. In 1993, the bank changed names when Heartland Bancorp purchased the bank stock and it became the First Bank of Washington, once again becoming a state bank. In 1997, Heartland Bank and Trust Company became the bank's last and current name. An active part of the community, bank employees are involved in many activities, including the well-known Washington Cherry Festival each year.

Congratulations to Heartland Bank and Trust on becoming a Peoria Historical Society Centenarian organization.