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HENDRICKS COUNTY

HISTORY BULLETIN



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FEBRUARY 1986
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THE HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
DANVILLE, INDIANA

HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

ORGANIZED 1967

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Greetings from the President:

It's not every day that Hollywood comes to Hendricks County. The cast and crew of the movie "Hoosiers" became a part of our county's history in 1985. During the filming of the corn harvest scene near Danville, one of the crew surveyed the autumn scenery and said, "This film is going to make everyone fall in love with Indiana".

Our county's history is as varied as our scenery. Those of us in the Historical Society have seen a view of our past--the people and places who built our county--and have fallen in love with it.

This issue of the Bulletin contains a bonus--a membership directory. It is hoped this list will serve a twofold purpose: first, to give our members a chance to get acquainted--for those who attend the meetings, it will be an opportunity to "meet" those who cannot; for our out-of-county members, it will be a chance to "meet" all of our resident members.

The second purpose of this directory is to acquaint our members with those people who are not listed, i.e., candidates for membership. Each of us know a friend, a relative, or a neighbor who would enjoy the benefits of membership in the Hendricks County Historical Society. We are all familiar with the entertaining and informative meetings, and the interesting articles in the Bulletin. We should make a point in this new year to spread the word about HCHS! As names of new members are received, they will be published in the Bulletin. Let's all try to add to that list in 1986.

Betty Bartley

NEXT MEETING FEBRUARY 2

"Hendricks County Historical Books, Papers, and Postcards" is the topic for the next meeting of the Hendricks County Historical Society, Sunday, February 2, 1986, 2 P.M., at the Security Savings building, 1500 East Main, Danville.

The speaker for this meeting is Jay H. Small, of Indianapolis. Mr. Small has been a dealer in rare books and papers for 15 years, and a collector of rare books for nearly 50 years. He will discuss important books published in and about Hendricks County, and what kind of papers are of historic value. There will be a question and answer session following his talk.

The public is invited to attend this informative meeting.

NOVEMBER 3, 1985 MEETING

Our November meeting was held in the Fellowship Hall of the North Salem Christian Church with approximately 45 in attendance. Robert Carter, president, called for the report of the Nominating Committee which was as follows: Betty Bartley, pres., Libbe Hughes, vice-pres., Jewell Bell, sec., and Blanche Wean, treas.

The slate was enthusiastically accepted. In other business, it was announced that the PRAIRIE FARMER DIRECTORY of circa 1920 was being reprinted and orders were being taken. Robert Carter presented Dorothy Kelley with a certificate of appreciation for her work as curator of the museum. Mary Ann Moore, who has worked closely with Dorothy, told of the many hours of tireless work Dorothy has given to the museum. She has spearheaded the drive for a museum from the very start and much of her work has involved manual labor, elbow grease and sweat. Truly it has been a labor of love, and we love and thank her for being instrumental in making our museum one to be proud of.

Libbe Hughes was the speaker and she told us of Col. Able D. Strefight and the Indiana 51st Regiment in the Civil War. She read excerpts from letters describing life in the battle zones. It was most interesting and well researched. The Union and Center Township ladies served refreshments during the social hour.

THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE HAS PLANNED THESE INTERESTING PROGRAMS FOR THE YEAR. CHECK THESE DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR SO YOU CAN PLAN AHEAD.

HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
1986 Programs

February 2, 1986 - Danville

Hendricks County Historical Books, Papers, and Postcards
by Jay Small
Security Savings 1500 E. Main, Danville

May 4, 1986 - Avon

Avon: A Community Study
by Lorie Bohlen and the third grade Avon Community Schools
Avon United Methodist Church East Highway 36, Avon

August 3, 1986 - Brownsburg

Hoosiers: The Movie
by Jody Whicker and Debbie Burns
Brownsburg Public Library 450 S. Jefferson, Brownsburg

November 2, 1986 - Plainfield

Plainfield and Cartersburg Gravel Road Company
by Ida Mae Good Miller
Plainfield Public Library 1120 Stafford Road, Plainfield

NEWS FROM THE INDIANA ROOM
DANVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY

We have recently received three genealogies as gifts: Leichleiter & Variants, a gift from Ida Modglin, THE HOVERMALES OF MORGAN CO. W. VA., BATH CO., KY, & WASHINGTON CO., MD., a gift of the author, Charles W. Roach, Jr., and MY KINFOLK, by Lois Shirley Crayton (more about this in another section of the Bulletin).

For the Civil War enthusiasts, the Library will be receiving materials from the Civil War Round Table of West Central Indiana. The organization is dedicated to the study of all aspects of the American Civil War and to promote the interchange of knowledge concerning it. It meets the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:30 P.M. in Rm. 120, Julian Science & Math Center, on the DePauw campus, at Greencastle. Information on individual membership is available at the Library.

The Indiana Room has had some new shelves added, and with some re-arranging, has more space in the genealogy and local history section. We hope to be filling up the space with more books for our researchers.

THE PEOPLE'S GUIDE OF HENDRICKS COUNTY - 1874

Directories are one of the tools often used by genealogists, handy for looking up an ancestor, then moving on to the next source. They seldom glance at unrelated names. But sometimes a closer look reveals a most interesting picture.

1874 was a busy year for William Cline, Jr. and O. F. McHaffie, both residents of Hendricks County. That was the year they compiled and published The People's Guide of Hendricks County. It was also the year they published People's Guides for Bartholomew, Boone, Hamilton, Henry, Johnson, Marion, Montgomery, Morgan, and Vermillion counties.

The format of these directories was simple: a brief history of each township, then a listing of residents. The information on each resident is sparse: name, occupation, post office or location of residence, place of birth, year of birth, year that they settled in the county, political and church affiliations.

The people in the Hendricks County People's Guide included the expected Republicans and Democrats. Other types of politics represented included Independent, Neutral, Liberal, Granger, Reform., Mixed, Secessionist, Temperance, Torpid, and even one Old Whig.

The religions practiced by county residents were even more varied. Protestants, Presbyterians, Methodists, Christians, Baptists (Regular, Missionary, and German), and Friends were included, along with many lesser known sects, such as Seceder, Christadelphian, Universalist, Lutheran, Episcopal, Gentile, Panthaist, Electionist, Christian Union, Adventist, and United Brethren.

Some listings call for further investigation. There was one practitioner of the "Faith of Dow". One resident listed his religion as "Slim", another as "Thin", and one as "Very thin Christian". Some declared "No religious views", others listed themselves as "Free Thinkers", "Independent", or in one case, "Infidel".

The occupations given are even more varied. Addison Coffin of Clay township, an out-spoken Friend, gave his as "underground RR". D.O. Garrison ran a hackline from Stilesville to Amo. J.C.L. Martin of Amo was an off-hand flourisher and penman. James Mason, of Clay township, was a dealer in veneering knots. J. M. Lacy ran a curiosity shop in Plainfield. James Wilson of Eel River township had an occupation unheard of today, but common before the days of inner spring mattresses: that of feather renovator.

Like today, many people need two jobs to make ends meet. Some unlikely combinations were: fur trader & postmaster, wagon maker & undertaker, dentist & trader, carpenter & pettifogger (a lawyer dealing in petty cases), and minister & sewing machine agent. By the way, sewing machines must have been a popular item: there were five agents selling them in Danville.

The Pittsboro stove factory employed several men in a variety of positions: worker, foreman, engineer, stove cutter, equalizer, and night watchman.

Some entries were notable for other reasons. John H. Craig, of Danville, gave his occupation as "showman", which was understandable, since he gave his weight as 525 lbs. His wife, Mary J. Craig, was listed as "the largest woman in the State, weight 782 lbs."

S. A. Verbrike, also of Danville, wanted it known by all that he "has lived on the same block 42 years".

But perhaps the most interesting story is that of Isaac Carman of Eel River township. He was a "carpenter & inventory of wings, but did not get the flop good". Who knows, if he had succeeded, Hendricks County could have become the birthplace of modern aviation.

CHRISTMAS AT THE MUSEUM

"Christmas at the Museum" Open House was held the weekends of December 7 and 8, and December 14 and 15. Approximately 85 attended including 19 young people from the Indiana United Methodist Children's Home in Lebanon, IN. The house decorations were furnished by Jim Lakin of Danville Florist. The weather was cold but at least there was neither rain nor snow. The hot spiced cider and assorted cookies made a tasty finish for a tour. Christmas at the Museum wasn't really confined to two week-ends. The week before Christmas vacation, three Danville South Elementary classes visited the museum and a club held its Christmas meeting there too.

We received some fancy petticoats all done up with lace and embroidery. These were not permanent press either. We have more artifacts showing how life was lived before the "fast lane" came...a kerosene lamp, a hand-operated sheep shears, a child's metal tea set to name a few. We also received an electric radio and record player. This will come in handy to play our collection of records as we were the recipient of a very large record collection. We have many albums as well as single records, some of which were recorded on only one side. The classics include Brahms "Concerto No. 2 in B-flat Major" for piano and orchestra by Vladimir Horowitz with Arturo Toscanini and the N.B.C. Orchestra. Operettas include music by Rudolf Firml with selections from "Rose Marie", as well as many others of his works. We also have dance music including rhumbas by Xavier Cugat.

AUTOGRAPH BOOKS

It is interesting to go through autograph books, especially those of an other era. Covered in velveteen, shades of red were popular colors. As one leafs through the books, it is evident that years have taken their toll for most of the pages are faded, yellow with age. Some pages contain masterpieces of beautiful Spencerian script while others are decorated with pen and ink drawings. Much emphasis was placed on handwriting in those days (and it is a shame that has been discontinued) yet the writing on some pages was cramped and labored but usually readable.

The sentiments were varied. Some were serious with religious overtones but most were lighthearted and good for a chuckle, recalling happy occasions. "Remember Christmas night at Mary's?" "We'll never forget the picnic at Tharp's Grove!" etc.

But the ones that amuse us most were little gems like

"Fall from the top of a burning deck,
Fall from a tree and break your neck,
Fall from the beautiful heavens above,
But never, never fall in love."

or

"Onward Christian bed bugs
Marching down the sheet,
When you get to the bottom
Just tickle Susie's feet."

or

"Kisses have jerns
So it is stated,
Kiss me Baby
I'm vaccinated."

Wouldn't it be fun to collect these tidbits of yesteryear? Send your in and we will continue this series.

Jewell

MY KINFOLK...by Lois Crayton

Lois Crayton has done what many of our members should have done--compiled and published her family history.

Her book is entitled, MY KINFOLK. In her foreword she states that she has put together this family history for her relatives: "Even to my grandchildren, it may seem unimportant or irrelevant, at least for many years. Eventually, though, they may begin to wonder about their roots...when it's too late to ask me. So I have recorded what I personally know or have been able to find out through others."

The book deals with the following families: The Shirleys, the Phillipses, the Hadleys, the Bringles, and the Craytons. Each section of "names and dates" is followed by a text, giving details of the people and places, the events and stories that make up the history of the families.

The following is taken from the chapter on the Sherman and Lois Crayton Home. It tells about the young couple's arrival in New York, where Sherman Crayton was enrolled in the Teacher's College, Columbia University.

By 10:00 P.M. on the third day we arrived in New York and stopped at a hotel at about 90th Street. We knew that semi-furnished apartments were available in buildings owned by the University, and we secured one of these on the next day. It had three cots, one of which I covered with a fabric that suggested a sofa. There were a few chairs, a gas cooking stove, and a small refrigerator. There was a wash tub in the kitchen, in which I did our laundry by hand, drying it on clotheslines on the roof in good weather. I didn't realize that we were living in a "tenement" until a young cousin visiting us from California referred to it that way. We had brought some area rugs and a few other furnishings, and, of course, a basket

containing a baby, and a bathinette. All this was tied onto or placed inside a Chevrolet bearing a Kentucky license plate. This attracted the attention of people leaving the hotel for a night on the town. They promptly surrounded the car, acting as if we were visitors from outer space. "Just imagine," one said, "from Kentucky and entering Columbia University." A lady in the elevator peered into Nancy's basket and asked, "Is she real?"

Our New York apartment was by no means luxurious, but it was ok for us at that stage. After all, our neighbors had apartments just like ours. They were better neighbors than those of most New York City dwellers because all were away from their permanent homes and needed to find most of their social life there. There were five children under five years of age in the building; Nancy (seven weeks old when we arrived) was the youngest. One of the fathers was a photography buff and took some very good pictures of Nancy and the other children. Since we were all connected with the University, we were fairly homogeneous. The one person in New York City whom we already knew (Doris English, Dean Taylor's former secretary from Lexington) lived with her husband immediately behind us on the same floor. However, we didn't know this until one day when I was putting my garbage on the dumbwaiter. There she was on the other side of the dumbwaiter doing the same thing!!

Other friends from the building came through when we especially needed their help. We'd had word from Plainfield that Florence and Ret, Sherman's sisters, and Marie and Margaret, his nieces, plus their children, Jack and Bob, who were about two at the time, were coming to visit us. At the last minute they decided that they needed a man to accompany them. They recruited Marie's brother-in-law, Wilbur Moon. They arrived about 2:00 A.M. (We hadn't expected them that night, and Sherman was gone on a school survey up the Hudson.) The building was locked for the night. Margaret shouted to me to come and let them in but I never heard her. Eventually one of the tenants, arriving home after a late movie, produced a key and let them in.

How to put them to bed? Five adults and two toddlers and only three cots for me and them. I really don't remember how we made it for the rest of the night. However, the next day, a Friday, our plight became known to the neighbors. One brought a folding cot that she had brought from home for such emergencies, and a couple from Pennsylvania, who were leaving for the weekend, lent us their whole apartment. Sherman got home the next day and somehow we stretched the two apartments to accommodate the crowd...but not comfortably. The borrowed apartment had to be surrendered on Sunday, and somehow we made it through the night. The company left for Plainfield and their own good beds on Monday.

QUERY

Robert Hendricks, R. 2, Scio, OH 43988, is interested in corresponding with anyone with information on the Hendricks family of Hendricks County.

IN MEMORIUM

One of the dearest and most loved member of our society left us, December 28th when Will Templin died at the age of 100. He had recently celebrated that milestone and the throngs of friends and relatives who surrounded him that day was evidence of

how much he was loved and revered.

He was a dedicated member of our society and the beautiful and interesting artifacts that he used to fill our display table with added so much to our meetings and the bouquets of his own home grown flowers which he brought was a beautiful reflection of his long life.

He can never be replaced and we grieve with Harold and Dorothy and their family for their loss is ours.

GOODBY TO THE OLD DANVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH BUILDING

The old Baptist Church building on North Wayne street in Danville has passed from the scene. Like many old, historic buildings it had fallen into disrepair, and had sat empty for so long, that any attempt to rescue it from the wrecking ball would have taken more time, effort and money than any individual or group could muster.

Still, the old church was a silent reminder of our past, and despite the toll that time, the elements, and vandalism had taken, it still retained a quiet dignity. Nestled in tall shade trees (also victims of "progress"), it reminded us of a time when a House of God was a simple structure, not an exercise in architectural eccentricities.

If the old Baptist Church could not be saved, it should at least be remembered. Anyone having information on its history, or photographs of the building when it was still in use, please contact Betty Bartley at the Danville Library. The information will be used to write a proper obituary for the building, to be published in the next issue of the Bulletin.

PRAIRIE FARMER DIRECTORY STILL AVAILABLE

There are still some copies left of the reprint of the 1920 Prairie Farmer's Directory. The member's price is \$14.00 plus tax. They can be ordered from:

1920 Prairie Farmer's Guide
c/o L. K. Hughes
85 Cartersburg Rd.
Danville, IN 46122

Make checks payable to: Hendricks County Historical Society. Add \$1.00 for postage and handling if you wish the book mailed to you, or include your phone number along with your name and address, and you can arrange to pick the book up at the Danville or Plainfield Library. (NOTE: We will have some of the books available for sale at the February meeting.)

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

-- The following membership list is published as a service to our members. If there are any additions or corrections, please let us know, and they will be published in the next issue.

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