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THE HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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H C H S

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H C H S

THE ART OF EDUCATION

The art of education is to continue to grow as long as you live. Every moment brings its lesson. Every person is a teacher. Grow in all directions. Develop a desire for goodness, an eagerness for knowledge, a capacity for friendship, an appreciation of beauty, a concern for others. Grow! Man is never finished. Man never arrives. Education never stops.

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H C H S

February 12, 1978

With "Education" as the theme of our year's programs, we started off with a "bang" when we met February 12th at the Danville Presbyterian Church. Mary Jeanette (who is so familiar and so loved by all of us that we don't even bother with her last name) gave greetings and presented the Rev. Dale Sauer, pastor, who gave us some interesting history of the church and told of the gutting of the interior a year ago Christmas eve. As we looked at the beautifully restored sanctuary, we marvelled at the spirit of the small congregation. He spoke of Lent which actually means "springtime" ... springtime of our faith, rebirth and rekindling of our spirit. He told us the age-old tradition of Spring house-cleaning dates back before Christ when the women of the household, at the Passover season, would clean their cupboards to be sure there was no unleavened bread in them.

Carolyn Kellum, chairman of the program committee, introduced Betty Jerard and Judy Sobbe of Connor Prairie Farm near Noblesville. Dressed in authentic costumes of the early 1800's, with hand knit stockings and several petticoats, they presented themselves as Patience Perrywinkle and Miss Birdwhistle. Miss Perrywinkle played the dulcimer and taught us several old songs which we sang along with her. Miss Birdwhistle, the school marm, told us school cost 3¢ a day starting November 1 and ending January 31st. She conducted a "Blab school" and the afternoon was, at times, hilarious, and most delightful and entertaining. We were sorry to be dismissed with an old school bell.

The ladies of Marion and Center Township acted as hostesses with chairman Gloria Higgins. The cake was a masterpiece, featuring "the little red school house", and your Editor will have to confess that the two first "customers" at the refreshment table were her grand-daughters, age 10 and 12, who enjoyed every minute of the afternoon. (Ed.'s note: I'm in trouble with their father, who, just recovering from buying a piano, and band instruments plus orthodontist-bills, is now being pressured to buy a dulcimer!)

It is impossible to say enough for those who plan our programs. Our organization is fairly young, yet our programs have been outstanding, our attendance, at times, incredible. In February, for instance, some of the ice and snow had melted, yet it seemed we were jeopardizing our life and limb to venture out, for the sidewalks were slick and the streets not too safe. Yet we had 42 members present from throughout the county ... and at our age yet!

H C H S

And so, after that rousing kick-off, Carolyn is undaunted, for she is sure she has another program, as good, if not better, than our February program. We will meet Sunday, May 21st. We hope you will all notice that date, for we usually meet the second Sunday, but this turns out to be Mother's Day. So our meeting date is May 21st, at the Fairfield Friends Meeting, south of Plainfield.

This is how to get there: take S.R. #267 (the new one at the east edge of Plainfield) south. Cross over Road #70, the turn left (east) at the first road. Follow this road, approximately 2 miles and you will find the Fairfield Church located on the S.W. Corner of the cross roads. There is plenty of parking space and it will be a delight to gather in this historical spot.

The program will consist of a variety of last-day-of school activities. The Joseph sisters will remind us of readings, speeches etc. of these occasions, Margery Clay will come up with some appropriate music, and an old fashioned spelling bee will be conducted, but please don't stay away for fear you might be asked to participate, for it will be the young county contestants taking part. You will not be humiliated if you can't spell charivari which has always been pronounced "chivari"! It will be fun, fun, fun, and the ladies of Guilford, Liberty and Clay townships will take charge of the social hour. If you aren't there, it will be your loss.

H C H S

MUSEUM MUSINGS

The museum is trying to get the basement rooms ready to display the small tools that have been received. As of now, they're tucked around here and there. Girl Scout troops have been working toward merit badges by cleaning these tools and getting them ready for display. All that work is very much appreciated.

We have enough equipment to set up a nice laundry room but the scaly walls don't lend to a very cheerful atmosphere. It's going to take a lot of elbow grease to get the walls to where visitors don't get a chill when they go down stairs.

We've had two chairs refinished. Mr. Abran Peacock of Plainfield did one, and Mrs. Jennis Shuler of Clayton refinished the roseback chair used at the piolian. Mrs. Helen Hadley of Clayton made a needlepoint for the roseback chair too, so it is in fine condition. Playing the piolian is hard on needlepoint!

The museum went dormant during the energy crisis but we're open now on Tuesday and Saturday. Several clubs scheduled, rescheduled, and scheduled again and just lately had the meetings that were intended to be held last fall when winter closed in.

The Hendricks County Garden Club planted a tulip bed last fall, and they are blooming beautifully now.

The Wa-Pe-Ke-Way Chapter of D.A.R. planted a shingle oak on the lawn of the museum which will add to the beauty of the surroundings.

Jewell Bell

H C H S

Our Society has been stunned this quarter by the deaths of two of our former presidents and an outstanding former member. In March we lost Mr. Harmon Hathaway, age 80, of Coatesville, who was considered one of our "Voices of the past" and a most articulate one he was. He had a most eventful career as editor of the Coatesville Herald from 1916 to 1961 and published the Advertiser for the last 13 years of his career. He was also known as "the walking encyclopedia" and had a wealth of information on the tip of his tongue.

Also in March, we lost Miss Dessie Huddleston of Lizton, who served as president of our Society when the Hendricks County Jail was transferred to the H C H S for use as a museum.

Indiana Collection
PLAINFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY
PLAINFIELD, INDIANA

Dr. Sherman G. Crayton, Danville R.R. #6, passed away at the Hendricks County Hospital April 22. A distinguished educator, he had also served as president of the H C H S, he gave the welcoming address at the kick-off meeting of the Hendrick County Sesquicentennial Celebration, and last fall delivered the dedicatory address at the Open House Ceremonies for the museum. These dear people will be sorely missed by us all. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to their families and to them we would like to give this comforting thought: God promised to be with us always. So if He is with them, and we are with Him, we can't be too far apart.

H C H S

The following story makes our own Joe Davidson of Coatesville even more famous than before. We all know he has been our teller-of-tales of yester-year and folk tales and singer of folk songs, but now it is all official.

It seems that a lady from Kokomo was working on her thesis at Indiana University, her subject "Folksongs". She had hunted far and near for the words of "The Crossing Down at Wan". When she heard that Mr. Davidson knew the words she came with her equipment and made a recording of Joe singing his version. The recording is on file at I.U. and the delighted lady told Joe that he had to be the only person in the United States who knew the words.

Joe told us, "Father was rail-roader and learned the song on the old Big 4 before I was born. He told me that after the accident, a telegraph operator at "Wan" wrote the story and another wrote the music. The Kokomo lady tried for months to locate the village, community or crossing known as "Wan" in 1888, but had no luck".

THE CROSSING DOWN AT WAN

'Twas on the evening of the 12th, and the hour was half past seven,
The sun's bright rays had scarcely lost their brightness in the heavens,
When the New York Express came down the track at a lightning rate of speed,
While a husband and his loving wife, unconscious, drove their steed.

Chorus:

Listen to the engine bell as the whistle pierced the air,
A danger signal came too late those precious lives to spare.

They drove along, no thought of fear nor yet occurred to them,
When alas, too late, they saw their fate, they were struck by Number 10.
The engine stopped and the train backed up, and all came from their seats,
To gaze upon that sad, sad sight that caused stout hearts to weep.

An angel face looked down to them through the moonbeams, cold and pale,
A smashed up buggy and a horse, and an engine told the tale.
'Twas loving hands that raised those forms after the train was gone,
And tender words were spoken at the Crossing down at Wan.

The thoughts of that May evening in the year of '88,
Must oft occur to memory as one meets their sad fate.

H C H S

IMPORTANT NOTICE

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HAVE YOU PURCHASED AN INDEX?

A complete index containing some 27,000 names is on sale now, and if you

are the lucky owner of the History of Hendricks County 1914 - 1976 (and if you are not, you are going to be sorry when the supply is gone) an index is a must. At the unbelievable low price of \$2.00, it can be purchased at our meetings, at most banks in Hendricks County, or by ordering at Box 128, Danville, Indiana 46122. The cover and back are exact replicas of those on the History. It is beautiful and complete and should be in every library. It is especially valuable to genealogists.

H C H S

DANVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH SESQUICENTENNIAL

The Danville United Methodist Church is all a-buzz with plans for a great 150th birthday party the week of October 22 - 29. One of the oldest churches in the county, it has a rich heritage. It dates from October 25, 1828, when the Rev. Joseph Tarkington organized it. The Rev. Tarkington was the great grandfather of the famous Hoosier author, Booth Tarkington, and great and famous people have played an important part in the history of the church. We have been assured that Bishop Alton and District Superintendent Dr. Charles W. Ballard will take part in this historic occasion. Many distinguished guests are expected to come, and a special invitation is hereby extended to all members of the Hendricks County Historical Society. This is partly because it is an occasion of historical significance and partly because a number of our members are deeply involved in planning the festivities. Especially Grace Cox, who already has spent hours gathering material for a history of the church which we hope will be published by that time. The date of publication, however, is not definite, since Grace already has enough material to fill a book about the size of the History of Hendricks County, and it took hundreds of us two years to boil that down to size! Any way, Ya' all come! More details later.

H C H S

The following is one of the many delightful contributions to our Hendricks County History that could not be used for lack of space:

EARLY RECOLLECTIONS

BY

MARY SWAIN CANGANELLI

Well do I remember the Sunday I spent with my Grandfather and Grandmother Fisher when I was a child. After a bountiful dinner of chicken and dumplings, vegetables, comb honey and other favorite foods, we would go to the spare bedroom to look at a drawer full of family pictures. We loved to hear Grandfather play records on the organetta.

Grandmother told us of walking two and one half miles to Lizton to sell eggs at three cents per dozen. She bought calico for twenty five cents a yard, but that wasn't cheap since it required ten yards to make a dress. She made \$2 per week working for a family.

My Grandparents were always special people to me. They enjoyed growing everything on their farm. They had a five acre apple orchard besides peach, plum, pears, cherry and apricot trees, to say nothing of grapes and berries in abundance. They also had fifty stands of bees. Trips to the grocery store were infrequent since they raised almost all their food.

My grandfather, Jasper Fisher was a very individual person. He was an ardent Democrat and during campaign years, always led a parade from Maplewood to Pittsboro playing his wooden flute. The Fishers were among the first to have a telephone, an automobile and a phonograph. As many as thirty friends, young and old, would gather at their home on Sunday afternoons to pop corn, make snow ice cream, or pull taffy while listening to records on the phonograph. Grandfather was able to cut records and had several of the Maplewood band and solos by neighborhood musicians. Today, the phonograph is in my possession and until a few years ago would still play records of some voices long since silent.

Jasper and Mary (Polly) Fisher are grandparents of Charles, and Alvin Swain and Roy Fisher. Several of their great grandchildren still live in the Pittsboro and Maplewood community.

H C H S

GRADUATION ADDRESS

We think the contributor of the following should remain anonymous, yet we will have to admit we did not consult with the author to get permission to publish the following masterpiece. Still, somehow, we think that Red Joyce, better known to us as Marian Joyce Worrell, will be amused to see this in print. If not, and she decides to take her case to the Civil Liberty's Gang, let us assure her that we ain't got a cent and she can't get blood out of a turnip! This was published in the Clayton Libertonian in 1927.

(With Apologies to Our Martyred President)

Eight months and three years ago our fathers and mothers sent us, twenty-six little green freshmen to Clayton High School. This school was conceived in Liberty (township) and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal, barring the teachers who seemed to be a little above our equal. We will soon be engaged in the war of life, testing whether Russell or any other of the ten graduates of this school can long endure.

We are met on the battlefield of that war. We are come to dedicate a portion of school spirit as a final gift of those who here gave all they had that the school might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But in a larger sense, we cannot give up, we cannot forget, we cannot dishonor our school.

The brave students who studied here have accomplished that from which it is beyond our power to detract.

The school will little note nor long remember what we did in class but it can never forget our spirit of loyalty. It is for us, the Seniors, rather to be here dedicated to the finished work which we have striven for and have so nobly achieved. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great life remaining before us—that from this honored school we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last measure of devotion; that

enemies became bosom friends again.

One of our favorite sports was running, sometimes singles, sometimes pairs and even teams. To win, established one's prestige throughout the school. The late Arthur Lambert and I established a record that went unchallenged for several years. Next to running, skating on a frozen pond in the school yard proved a very attractive past time at noon until my young aunt fell and suffered a concussion which almost caused her death. Games were always popular, Blackman, Duck on Davy, King Willian, Three Deep, Cat and Mouse, and later Pig in the Parlor. To us in the grades, basketball was an unheard of sport. In fact there were few competitive sports.

Grades 6, 7 and 8 were the most exciting, for contests began. Local, county, district, and state spelling contests occupied most of our time and interests. Besides being able to spell all the words in the spelling books, we had an unheard of list of really hard words: diphtheria, neuralgia, hemophilia, hemaorrhage, pneumonia, & other words that could really vie with "antidis establishmentarianism" because there were so many silent letters. Three of us made it through the county and one girl, Carol Kennedy Parker, went to district and state, stood eighth on the floor only to go down on the word "requiem". She said she never could remember whether it was "em" or "um".

In our meager science department, there was a skeleton used by both 8th grade and high school. From it we learned the names and uses of the bones of the body. Some of the girls in the class were squeamish about handling the skull and bones, but a brilliant and ingenious teacher, Oscar Reynolds, devised a game resembling playing store. One pupil was store keeper who handed out the proper bone when students acting as customers called for them. Was that the forerunner of present "visual aids"?

We were drilled in the art of diagramming, parsing, and analyzing words and sentences, and parts of speech became living words, not just terms without meaning. In arithmetic, the supreme test was working problems in Ray's Higher Arithmetic. It was a wonderful honor to be able to work every problem.

The climax came when we took the final examination to graduate from the eighth grade. Our teacher told us if we learned the entire Declaration of Independence he would give us 100% for the course. Many of us burned the midnight oil in our efforts and a few succeeded.

And then the last day of school to which we looked forward all year! Parents came with well filled baskets to see their children perform whether it be in singing, ciphering, spelling, or reciting a poem or a reading learned during the year. The end of the year was the end of an era, for next year would perhaps bring a new teacher with whom we would have to get acquainted and new subjects would supplant those we had completed. We had a strange feeling that our education was like a structure to which we added new levels of knowledge each year. Yes, school was a door which opened up a view of the riches of the mind. It was a meeting of a group of very different individuals who learned many things from each other. It was a place to grow into an age where knowledge fit together to give a real meaning to our lives.

H C H S

I think your Bulletin is due for a new editor some day, for I find it difficult to remain serious too long. I know that a laugh is good at church, for if God gave us a sense of humor, surely He expected us to use it and enjoy it. It has been said that you can prove anything by the Bible, so I will quote Proverbs 17:22... "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine..." So, with my Bible here on my desk, I offer the following, contributed by Maxine Cox, who was a fashion expert in her time. It comes from

The Hendricks County Republican, Oct. 26, 1881. ... Clara Bell, in a recent fashion letter says, "At least one autumn bridegroom is going to be astonished. I have had a view of his affianced wife's trousseau at the manufacturer's stores, and the underwear is such that, if I should feel it my duty to prepare him beforehand for the blow ... But, I don't even know the girl and can only judge of her physique by the size of the garments, which show that she is tall and remarkably slender. Of her mental make up, however, I am prepared to say that she is a reform crank. No other sort of girl would devise for her wedding outfit a night-dress with legs to it, now would she? This is hanging in the workshop, an object of merry derision by half a hundred sewing girls, a nondescript combination of shirt and trousers, whether the idea was to serve the purpose of modesty or warmth could only be conjectured. It was handsome in its workmanship, being made of palest blue surah, shirred over the shoulders and down the fronts, and adorned with a pointed hood, which I suppose, is to be drawn over her queer head for a night cap. The drawers are long enough to reach down to her ankles, and are cut as Turkish trousers and trimmed with lace. The forewoman had one of her girls put it on; but this girl was a pretty creature, with rosy eyes and a merry laugh, and so the effect, though grotesque, was not unpleasant. If the bride should be scrogy and ugly, as is more likely, the spectacle will be almost worth marrying her to see.

H C H S

The following story was "snitched" from the Indianapolis Sunday Star Magazine March 19, 1978, but we offer no apologies to The Star for the author was ours before she was theirs ... we knew her "when".

By Mary Ann Moore
The mobile home park of today began as the trailer camp during World War II. It was the home away from home during a time of upheaval - people sharing a common lot, often around defense plants.

Such were the camps near the end of West Michigan Street in Indianapolis, just past the end of the bus line and convenient to Allison's Plant No. 3 in Speedway. We moved to Park's Camp as a newly married couple in 1943 and stayed until the spring of 1946.

Those early trailers were about the size of campers today - about 8 feet wide and 27 feet long. The doors were very short. Inside, a man more than 6 feet tall could never stand up straight. There was no bedroom, no bathroom. There were two tiny closets, a couch, some drawers and cupboards, a table with pull-down seats, an ice box and a threeburner gasoline stove.

Who shared this experience - the bath house, laundry room, the one mail box, and one pay telephone? Who maneuvered around the circular drive to find a specific parking place - that narrow slot called home?

Typical was a couple who left a permanent home in a Southern Indiana county to be close to available jobs while their only son served in the Army overseas.

Most of the men worked in the Indianapolis factories. A few women did, too. But many of the young women struggled to raise babies in the crowded homes on wheels. There was gas rationing, sugar stamps, meat stamps - everything limited going and eating.

A recipe for yeast biscuits was shared with a neighbor who reciprocated next time. Often chili, soup or stew was carried next door. Babysitting was a friendly exchange chore. Lack of air conditioning caused windows to be opened to let in fresh air-plus the noise of crying kids, fighting couples, late nighters and early risers. Car doors slammed and motorcycles roared. The ice man, oil man and milk man made their rounds.

The old wringer-washer in the laundry room ran night and day according to the posted schedule. Imagine the clothing of some 25 families all dried on lines- and occasionally missorted into the wrong baskets.

The phone on the laundry room wall was flanked by a chart showing who lived where. What fun to run out in all kinds of weather to summon a wanted one. Or even to be a wanted one. We sure got acquainted that way.

The back corner lot was large, as was the family residing there. It was the only trailer with an enclosed porch built on and it was more than living quarters. Much coming and going was inevitable because the trailer was headquarters for some sort of lottery tickets.

A retired circus couple parked near the center of the camp. Their special act had been boxing cats and two of these, too old for show biz, shared the trailer.

The cats were loved and pampered, their tiny boxing gloves proudly displayed. "These cats made a living for us. We'll take good care of them as long as they live," their owners declared.

It was the Cat Woman who told me the news that President Franklin D. Roosevelt had died. Then she hid behind the drapes at an open window and burst into tears.

Who could forget Peaches, mother of two? She often paraded to the restrooms in a frothy negligée.

In another trailer lived a newly divorced man with an unusual way to while away the days. He worked nights. And to make the time pass, he would roller skate to Riverside Park, some miles away.

It was an era of its own. Old-fashioned ways mingled with new trends required because of the times and close community living. Those years were an education, a vivid experience and, for some, a real beginning.

Copies of the following official program of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway have been presented to the Museum by Ruth Pritchard. Not only do they reflect changes in our race cars, but, more importantly, changes in our life styles. These are available for race fans who devour all such statistics, but to any one else who wants to win a bet. Our thanks to Ruth, again. We will never cease to marvel at her ability, her exuberance, her vitality, her sparkle, her vast knowledge, her persistent curiosity and search for information. She is very special in our Society, and we want her and Roy to know that we are thankful they made it through their traumatic and critical experience during the Great Blizzard. Roy has completely recovered, for which we are grateful, and Ruth is once again her same old bubbly self.

OFFICIAL PROGRAMS OF
INDIANAPOLIS MOTOR SPEEDWAY COMPANY

1922	1937	1957
1923	1938	1958
1924	1939	1959
1925	1940	1961
1926	1941	1962
1927	1946	1963
1928	1947	1965
1929	1948	1966
1930	1949	1967
1931	1950	1968
1932	1951	1969
1933	1952	1970
1934	1953	1971
1935	1954	1972
1936	1955	1973
	1956	

Ruth M. Pritchard
Belleville, IN 46118

H C H S
"CENTURY OLD CLIPPINGS"
BY
GRACE COX

UNION--May 15, 1879

Brownsburg--Fletcher Lowe has laid out a town on the new railroad near John Corliss's. If it is true as reported, that Fletcher intends to open out a whiskey shop, he had better have a mill stone tied about his neck and have it thrown into Peterson's Pond before he begins business.

Local Matters--The Court House tower is becoming a popular loafing place for the boys.

The best way to keep flees off a dog, says the Enquirer, is to shoot the dog.

The old building on the east side of the square, now owned by Robert Russel, which is under-going repairs is one of the oldest landmarks of Danville and was the first brick house erected in the town. It was built about fifty years ago and was for 30 years occupied by the P.O. On the west side of the building is an aperture that might be called a window, if it was necessary, although it certainly has very little resemblance to the spacious bay window of the residences of today and here the head and shoulders of the postmaster, Mr. Crawford, would emerge, after distributing the mail, and call the names of those among the waiting crowd outside who were fortunate enough to have received any mail. The postage on a letter which came from outside the State was 25 cents at that time and not infrequently the person to whom it was sent would be unable to take it out of the office for weeks such was the scarcity of money. There are many recollections clustered about the old building that early settlers call to mind as they see the walk being torn away, and like those who made our country what it is, it will soon become among the things that were.

H C H S

[The text in this section is extremely faint and illegible due to the quality of the scan. It appears to be a multi-paragraph document.]