

H
972253
H498

Library of Congress
123456789
Mainfield, IN 46002
15171 H30-6502

HENDRICKS COUNTY

HISTORY BULLETIN



VOLUME

XX

NUMBER

II

MAY 1989

PUBLISHED BY

THE HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DANVILLE, INDIANA

HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

ORGANIZED 1967

OFFICERS 1989

PRESIDENT

Judge Jeffrey V. Boles
407 E. Mill St.
Danville, IN 46122
Tel. 745-6100

VICE PRESIDENT

Mrs. Judy Pingel
R. R. 1, Box 153
Pittsboro, IN 46167
Tel. 745-4127

SECRETARY

Miss Jewell Bell
212 E. Road 200 N.
Danville, IN 46122
Tel. 745-4055

TREASURER

Mrs. Blanche Wean
249 S. Wayne St.
Danville, IN 46122

HISTORIAN

Marie Hopkins
1634 Forest Drive
Plainfield, IN 46168

PUBLICITY

Miss Jewell Bell
212 E. Road 200 N.
Danville, IN 46122

GENEALOGISTS

Miss Grace Cox
494 W. Clinton St.
Danville, IN 46122
Tel. 745-2552

Mrs. H. Harold Templin
20 Clinton Court
Danville, IN 46122
Tel. 745-5322

Mrs. Roy Fisher
Pittsboro, IN 46167
Tel. 892-4780

HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS

Danville Public Library
101 S. Indiana
Danville, IN 46122
Attention: Lori Wynn
Tel. 745-2604

Plainfield Public Library
Guilford Twp. Hist. Col.
1120 Stafford Rd.
Plainfield, IN 46168
Attn: Susan Miller Carter
Tel. 839-6602

Hendricks County Hist. Museum
Danville, IN 46122
Open Tues & Sat 1 - 4 P.M.
For further information call
(317) 745-4055 or 852-2810

ANNUAL DUES \$3.00 PAYABLE IN NOVEMBER

The Hendricks County Historical Bulletin is published quarterly in February, May, August and November. It is distributed without charge to members of the Society and to Hendricks County School Libraries. Individual copies of \$2.00. Communications concerning back copies or individual copies should be addressed to our secretary. Contributions or suggestions to The Bulletin should be mailed to the editor.

Libbe K. Hughes, Editor
85 Cartersburg Road
Danville, IN 46122
Tel. 745-4833

"The object of education is to prepare the young
to educate themselves throughout their lives."

- Robert Maynard Hutchins

President's Message

It seems like we had no Winter at all and Spring is already here. I know the flowers around our house are really in bloom. This Spring brings us some exciting projects. In the bulletin here, you have a letter for Harold Hiser, President of the Mid-State Bank, pledging his help for us in the Indiana Historic Site and Structures Inventory that we will be sponsoring for Hendricks County.

We will need the assistance of members from every community so that the surveyors can have accurate information about the various areas of our County. Anybody who wants to be involved in that, please, let us know at the May meeting.

Our Flag Contest is coming along. We already have several entries. If you know of anybody who wants to enter the Contest, please, have them get their entries in by May 1st.

Our May meeting will be a good one. Gary Varvel, Artist, and Wendell Trogdon, Historian, for the Indianapolis News, will be our guests. They are an excellent duo. I have seen Gary Varvel give art political cartoon shows and he is tremendous. We all know Wendell Trogdon as an excellent author and chronicler of Indiana History. These are super people. Please make plans to be in Pittsboro on May 7th, 1989, at 2:00 p.m. at the Pittsboro Christian Church.

If you have not paid your 1989 Dues, please do so, so we can continue the work of the Historical Society.

If you know someone who might be interested in summer employment who has a background in Architecture as a student or vocation, please let me know. The Historic Site Inventory will need some people to help. Marsh Davis has promised to consider Hendricks County residents first. It would be a super job for the Summer for someone who is in the family of a Historical Society member and is looking to a career in Architecture.

I hope this message finds you all doing well. It won't be long at all until all the fields are plowed. The plants are growing, the Race is over, and Summer is upon us. Enjoy the days! See you in May.

J. V. Boles, President

Mr. Jeff Boles, President
Hendricks County Historical Society

Dear Jeff:

Thank you for the inquiry into possible assistance with the work of the Historical Society.

Mid State Bank of Hendricks County is happy to be able to help with the work of your organization. The necessary research involved with the compilation of Hendricks County history will require a lot of time and some financial support.

Please do not hesitate to call on our Bank when we can fill a need with your endeavors.

MID STATE BANK
Harold E. Hiser, President

FEBRUARY MEETING

The Hendricks County Historical Society met on Sunday, February 5, 1989 in the Circuit Court Room of the Hendricks County Court House. In spite of the bad weather, approximately 40 persons attended.

The meeting was opened by our vice-president, Judy Pingel. The secretary's report was read and approved. The treasurer's report was read and accepted. The museum report was given. There was no old business.

New business: The Historical Society plans a flag for Hendricks County. A contest will be held for those wishing to submit a design. The contest is open to all who wish to participate. Margaret Baker was honored for her efforts on the Bulletin down through the years. Margaret is retiring from the post as editor of the Bulletin. Libbe Hughes, who succeeds her, spoke briefly. Judy Pingel presented Margaret with a plaque and a bouquet of flowers. Margaret recognized Blanche Wean and told of her many contributions to the society. Margaret then led the group in singing "Happy Birthday" to Blanche in honor of her recent birthday.

The meeting was turned over to president Judge Jeffrey Boles who announced that Mid State Bank represented by Harold Hiser will underwrite our preservation project. President Boles then introduced William J. Dory, Jr. Greencastle, and Marsh Davis, Indianapolis of the Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana. They told about how the Foundation works. Quoting from the leaflet, Locating Hoosier Landmarks: "The primary purpose is to identify districts, buildings, structures, sites and objects that will eventually be included in a statewide preservation plan." The funding for the project comes by a grant from the Historic Landmarks Foundation and matching funds raised locally. Slides were shown on some of the Foundation's work. We were told that the project would take approximately 4 months to do.

Meeting adjourned and the group retired to the Circuit Jury Room for delicious refreshments.

Judge Jeffrey Boles, Pres.
Jewell Bell, sec'y.

MAY MEETING

Our next meeting will be Sunday, May 7, 1989, at 2:00 pm at the Pittsboro Christian Church. Gary Varvel and Wendell Trogon of the Indianapolis News will be our guest speakers. It's sure to be better weather than in February, so make plans to join us at the Pittsboro Christian Church, 216 N. Maple, Pittsboro. It promises to be an entertaining program and we hope to see a large crowd, so bring a friend!

MUSINGS AT THE MUSEUM

Spring is right around the corner! The museum is thinking about spring too. The models are coming out of their winter wraps and before long, we'll be opening

doors to let in more fresh air. The flower bed is coming to life as we noticed some blossoms recently. Before long, tulips will be bursting forth. School groups come to visit. They enjoy seeing how people used to live before push buttons.

The museum has received several things throughout the winter. Among items received was a landscape painting by the donor; attachments for an 1885 treadle sewing machine, (Attachments looked different then from those today); a W.W.I helmet; an all wool army issue blanket; a shovel used during the ground-breaking for the First National Bank in Danville in the early 1970's; framed photos of ten past presidents of the forementioned bank; two hats, and a service command book.

We have two volunteer ladies from Brownsburg that come every couple of weeks and they really work up a storm. And is their help ever appreciated!

We need docents! Don't you want to be a docent? A gift of gab isn't required but it does come in handy. Two or three persons make a nice group. That way one person can stay near the door to greet visitors and show the main floor while others can show the other floors and be available to answer any questions the visitor might ask.

Jewell

THE FARM TOOLS ROOM (Basement)

This time we will see two rooms in the basement that house the farm tools. Watch the stairs as we don't want anyone to fall!

On our left as we come through the door we see an open cabinet containing quite an assortment of hand tools. On the wall we notice a collection of barbed wire from down through the years. To name most of the kinds, there is the Brinkerhoff-1885; Glidden-1876; Crandall-1879; Allis-1881; Kelly-1868; and another one dated 1878. Each is a different shape. On the top shelf we see a blood cup. Blood pudding was a delicacy in an earlier day. Here is a horse taken from a barn weather-vane. Next is a booklet of pointers on taking care of livestock. Here's a very old screw-driver and a sharpening hone for knives. Next is a calf-weaner. No cow would ever put up with that! A plane, one of the many planes we'll see, on the second shelf. Each is capable of making an ornamental molding. Here are a few time honored knuckle-skinner wrenches. The shelf next to the bottom has a very old screw-driver. It appears to be older than the one we mentioned earlier. Here is a straw hook, or some might call it a meat hook. A door knob set where one knob is black and one is white. Some used the white knob outside and the black knob inside. We notice a large iron skillet (would hold a lot of meat), and a couple of wrought iron nails. The bottom shelf has an axe-handle--no axe! Also there are tongs, and a couple of machetes. We always referred to them as corn knives. They were used in cutting corn stalk for the fodder shredder or ensilage cutter, or even to leave in the shock. Next is a wooden vise that is quite a bit different from the metal vises although then perform the same task. Before the modern saws came along, logs were smoother with a tool called an adz. This one looks more like a tomahawk. We see two long handled sickles, various sizes of mauls; another adz with an even shorter handle than the first one. Oh oh, here's a scythe! Now that one takes practice to get a nice mowing job. Here are a pair of house jacks. Those andirons came out of the Seminary Building of the former Central Normal College. Here's another item that is used more for decoration than what it was formerly used for, and that is an eight-gallon size

milk can. The lid was shaped to keep rain and dust out of the can during transit which in the earlier days was a flat-bed truck.

Here in this corner is a safe minus doors. There is a small drawer near the top with wood knobs. The next shelf has a bee smoker, and a railroad lantern. The next shelf down is a plane, another tool that helped put lumber into a usable state. On top is the favorite of boys of all ages--automobile horns. One looks like a two-tone horn and the other is a Model T. It sounds frequently when a group is down here. Also here is an oil bottle from the days of the Handy Oiler Co. here in Danville. It was located in the vicinity of the Fabric Shop. This is a magnet from a Model T Ford. Next is a tire pump and a Delco light battery (or what is left of one). Over head we see a hand saw and a fire shovel, and over the door is a cross-cut saw.

On around the room we find a buck-saw, another pie safe. Among the items on top of the safe is a picture of a threshing scene that will certainly bring back memories. This pie safe has the perforated metal doors and sides just like when it was used in the donor's home. There is a little drawer on the bottom. We see wooden-wheeled roller skates. Here's an assortment of shucking pegs and hooks, a must in the days before the corn picker and combine. Oh look at this nice covered basket! In the corner is a set of scales, a well used coal bucket, and a kerosene lantern with a red globe. Now don't get excited at the mention of a corn dryer! This one isn't that big. This one is the kind that could be hung on a nail almost anywhere. There is a track from an old barn as well as several types of hay forks and a pulley and a gourd. None are used much now. These three items go back a piece in time too, we speak of three ox-yokes and a stage coach horn. Stories have been told that the horn could be heard from a long distance. Well, there wasn't so much noise competition. We see some mauls, a giant spinning wheel, a wooden bucket and a wooden trough. Over here is a child's wagon from long ago and loaded in it is another child's wagon of not so long ago.

On the island on the floor is another display of tools. Carpenter tools, and field tile that dates way way back. One piece couldn't be over two inches in diameter. Here's a sausage mill mounted on its own trestle. Couldn't you imagine that this little one gallon jug has been used many years in harvest time. Filled with cold water and wrapped in a gunny sack, it made the rounds a lot of times. The last of our tour in this room is this "What's it for" board. It is a peg-board framed and equipped with an assortment of small tools, for example, a lemon squeezer (not the stainless kind either), a wooden potato masher, and an old time bottle opener.

Now, we'll go into this other room for more tools. These are larger than the other tools we saw before. Over in the corner on our left as we enter the room is one of the first power-washers. Good-by wash board, what a relief! Here's a bushel basket made of wood, not plastic. Next are bellows from a blacksmith's shop, a tool that draws children like a magnet--a corn sheller. It is hand operated and provides more fun! Here's the bottom half of a wooden cheese box. It's been a long time since we've seen one of those. Here is another wooden bucket as well as the stocks that were used during Hendricks County Sesquicentennial. Relax, we don't use the stocks for what they were originally intended. We have a single furrow horse drawn walking plow, and a horse drawn seeder. Over in the corner is a wooden chest, one side for flour and the other side for corn meal. A portable corn-stalk shredder stands along the east wall. The shredder is handoperated and would be o.k. for the fellow who didn't need to cut much fodder at a time.

That does it for these two rooms. Another time we'll look at some more rooms here in the basement. Watch the stairs as you go up.

IN MEMORIAM

With sorrow, we record the passing of long-time member, Maxine Cox and extend our sympathies to her family. Mrs. Cox's work with the Danville Public Library, where she worked for many years, will long stand as a tribute to her dedication to the county.

RENEW YOUR DUES!! RENEW YOUR DUES!!

Elsewhere in this issue, BULLETIN readers will find a full-page plea for members complete with a membership blank. Long-time members of the HCHS know how important their dues are but newer members may not realize that the money generated from memberships pays for the production and mailing of the BULLETIN and covers the cost of most other society expenses.

If you enjoy receiving the BULLETIN, consider that for \$3.00 a year you receive four BULLETINS . . . that's only 75¢ an issue! What a bargain!! With the application and return envelope in this issue, we've tried to make the renewal process as simple as possible, but it's up to you. We depend on your support and now is the time to show that support. We will be updating the membership records in time for the August meeting, so beware! Nonpaying members will be dropped from the list before the August mailing. Therefore, it is vital that you renew your dues today.

A sincere thank you to members who have already renewed their dues. Your commitment to the society is greatly appreciated. Since the society is always eager to gain new members as well, how about posting the application on a public bulletin board in your area or passing it along to a friend. That little extra effort on your part will help to keep the HCHS strong!

RENEW YOUR DUES!! RENEW YOUR DUES!!

MARGARET BAKER DAY

The Hendricks County Commissioners proclaimed February 17, 1989, Margaret Baker Day in Hendricks County. In a brief ceremony at the courthouse rotunda, County Commissioner Richard Myers presented our very own Margaret Baker with a copy of the proclamation recognizing her work in the HCHS. Margaret has devoted an enormous amount of time and effort editing the BULLETIN and assisting in countless other society projects. We are indeed fortunate to have her amidst our ranks. Congratulations, Margaret!

IN THE WORKS

The BULLETIN has received a request from Ms. Alexandra Lapierre, 124 West 60th

Street, Apt. 33D, New York, New York, 10023, for information on Fanny Vandegrift Osbourne Stevenson, wife of author Robert Louis Stevenson. Fanny Vandegrift was born in Indianapolis March 10, 1840, and the Vandegrift family later moved to Hendricks County.

Ms. Lapierre is researching the Vandegrift family and its ties to Hendricks County for development into an article or book. She is interested in any details on the Vandegrift family, their property in Hendricks County, Fanny's sisters, and any existing correspondence or family papers. HCHS members are urged to write Ms. Lapierre immediately at the above address with any available information. Ms. Lapierre also indicated in her letter that she is searching for Mrs. Dan Centers of Indianapolis who is one of the last surviving relatives of Fanny Vandegrift Osbourne Stevenson. Any information on Mrs. Centers whereabouts would be greatly appreciated.

QUERIES

Wish to correspond with descendants of SAMUEL GWYNN (ca. 1789-1850) and wife MARGARET (ca. 1786-1855), who are buried in Spring Hill Cemetery, Liberty Township, Hendricks County, Indiana.

Doris Anderson
R 1, Box 93
Wyaconda, MO 63474

SOUTH ELEMENTARY SOFTWARE

This school year the fourth graders at the Danville South Elementary have had first hand experience researching Hendricks County history. The school was awarded a one year grant from the state Department of Public Instruction which provided Apple computers and the funds to develop a computer program designed to teach Indiana and Hendricks County history.

The students in six classrooms did all necessary research through the local library and with special guest speakers and wrote stories on various aspects of Hendricks County history including folklore, agriculture, business, transportation, and ghost towns. Art teacher Mrs. Marti McCoy designed the on-screen graphics and did the computer programming. The system includes an introductory program, question and answer sections, and a word processor used to present the students' stories. A teacher's manual will be completed in the near future.

South Elementary principal Robert Boyd is especially pleased with the project since the fourth graders are learning about Hendricks County history and developing computer skills at the same time. The completed project will be used to teach future classes about our county but congratulations are due to this year's students. They have produced a history of Hendricks County written by fourth graders that will be used to teach future classes for a long time to come.

What follows is a sampling of their efforts.

Pathway of Interurban

The Indianapolis Interurban railroad was the railroad that ran from Indianapolis to Danville. The first car that ran the route was August 30, 1906. They quit using the railroad in 1931.

A route started in Indianapolis and went to Danville along State Road 36. In front of the Hendricks County Hospital the railroad made a turn and headed straight for Ellis park. On its way it passed through private property which is now the Conservation Club. At the Conservation Club there are parts of a bridge. There used to be a mound of dirt piled even with the top of the bridge and the park hill top. The train ran across the top of this mound like an elevated railroad.

Where the top of the park hill and this mound met was a milk station. The milk from this area went into making Ballard Ice Cream.

When the railroad was abandoned, people came in and took the dirt and cinders as fill. Ellis park used a good part of the cinders to cinder all the park roads and to widen the running track.

The Interurban tracks paralleled Columbia Street until it came to Indiana Street. It crossed 36 and started to make a loop around the depot on Broadway and stopped at the opposite side of the depot at Hackelman's Body Shop which is built onto what is left of the depot.

Mary Ann Moore of Brownsburg contributed this 1917 obituary, noting that it shows how families cared for their own in a different age than we live in. It also provides a wealth of family history, and Flossie Bryant and Victor Carpenter are names recognized throughout the county.

PAST AND PRESENT

A trip through local cemeteries shows us quickly that many babies and young children died in those days gone by. Young mothers often passed away leaving children to be raised by relatives. The obituary of James M. Leathers, written in 1917 by Flossie Bryant, tells how he lost two young wives.

Obituary

"James M. Leathers, son of Thomas Jefferson and Nancy Leathers, was born in Morgan Co., Indiana, September 16, 1832 and died at the home of his son, Lewis (Montclair, just south of Lizton), September 25, 1917 aged 85 years and seven days."

"He was married to Nancy Jane Carpenter on March 10, 1861. To this union were born two sons, Lewis and Thomas Jefferson. On June 20, 1867 the wife and mother died leaving to him the care of the two young children."

"He was again married, September 15, 1872 to Erie Evans, who departed this life July 30, 1878 again leaving to his care two children, Lizzie (Clark) and Omer Leathers."

"On September 13, 1891 occurred the death of his son, Thomas, a noble young man consecrated to the best and highest service of Christian life. In the passing of this loved one, the sadness of separation remained always with the father."

"James M. Leathers lived a quiet unobtrusive life, honest and upright in all his dealings, a good neighbor, a strong advocate of temperance. A few days before his death he expressed a desire that he might live to see prohibition prevail throughout the land."

"Early in life he united with the Christian Church and remained a consistent member, attending service as long as he was able. The hope and service of a Christian life were his and this should be an influence of great helpfulness to his children, grandchildren, and friends."

"In his declining years and last days of his illness, his life was made comfortable by the loving care, patience and devotion of his son, Lewis and wife, who looked after his every need and cheered his loneliness. Thus a quiet life has passed from among us and may his memory be a blessing to others and his Christian fortitude and resignation an example to his family."

(Onarga Leathers Cole gave me this obituary. It certainly provides family history. James M. Leathers was a farmer who owned 210 acres. He was a member of the Montclair Christian Church. It is said he played the violin. He died just about the time his grandson, Paul Clark (son of Lizzie) left for service overseas in World War I.

Victor Carpenter, local auctioneer for many years, used to laugh and tell my family we were 'kissing cousins'. I am the daughter of Paul Clark and I enjoy knowing all the Leathers children of my generation. Mary Ann Moore)

STATEHOUSE RENOVATION

The Indiana Statehouse is not located in Hendricks County, of course, but readers of the BULLETIN may be interested in the following 'facts and figures'. The recent renovation of the Statehouse, considered one of the more noteworthy preservation efforts, should be of great interest to Hendricks County residents.

The Statehouse in Indianapolis celebrated its 100th birthday back in September, but visitors to the Capitol are still enjoying its renovated splendor.

The most recent Statehouse renovation, undertaken in 1986, is said to be one of the more noteworthy historic preservation efforts in America.

Several detailed rehabilitation projects were undertaken including:

- * Approximately 4 acres of plaster walls and ceilings stripped, painted, and decorated with the original 1886 designs, equivalent to 3.6 football fields.
- * Approximately 1,500 gallons of paint to recreate the original 1886 designs and refinish the area above the rotunda.
- * 125,000 leaves (6"x6") of Dutch metal "composite gold" leaf used for gliding the skylight, ballustrades, and plaster details, equivalent to approximately .75 acre.

- * Approximately 45,000 board feet of white oak used in wood work and rehabilitation of doors, equivalent to 85 average trees.
- * Restoration and replication of monumental entrance door hardware.
- * Approximately 124,500 feet interior marble and limestone cleaned, equivalent to 3.4 acres.
- * Approximately 4.25 acres of Indiana limestone cleaned on the exterior of the building, equivalent to 4 football fields.

Our present Statehouse is Indiana's fourth Capitol building, and was the largest, most ambitiously planned state house built in America up to that time. The public's first glimpse of the grandeur came on January 6, 1887, when the General Assembly held its premier session in the building. The completed Statehouse cost \$2 million to construct.

After the Bicentennial in 1976, the public experienced a renewed interest in America's heritage. This new awareness was reflected in the preservation and restoration of historic buildings. In 1986, plans to restore the Statehouse to its former Victorian elegance were begun. Two years and \$10 million later, the work was completed.

JOIN US!!

THE HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Hendricks County Historical Society wants you for a member! For over two decades, the Hendricks County Historical Society has been actively preserving local history on the county level. The society sponsors the Hendricks County Historical Museum in Danville which houses a large collection of 19th and 20th century artifacts and is open to the public free of charge. The Hendricks County Historical Society publications list includes the History of Hendricks County 1914-1976, which was compiled by society members. Current projects include the Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Survey being done in cooperation with the Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana.

The Hendricks County Historical Society holds meetings four times a year, the first Sunday in February, May, August, and November; at locations throughout the county. All meetings include a guest speaker and a program of interest to society members. Society dues of \$3.00 per family per year entitle members, at any level of personal involvement, to receive the Hendricks County History Bulletin free of charge. The BULLETIN is published quarterly prior to each society meeting and is filled with articles on all aspects of Hendricks County history.

If you have not yet renewed your membership, please take the opportunity to do so now. If you are not currently a member, please join now. Your support is vital to the Hendricks County Historical Society and its ongoing attempts to preserve the heritage of Hendricks County.



HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

TOWNSHIP _____ TELEPHONE NUMBER _____

Please mail this form and \$3.00 per family to the Hendricks County Historical Society, PO Box 128, Danville, Indiana, 46122. Make check or money order payable to the HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

