

The Quarterly Bulletin of the RIPLEY COUNTY, INDIANA, HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

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* The Spring meeting of RCHS will be Sunday, April 13, at 2:00 at the Archives Library on the west side of the Courthouse Square. The program will be presented by Gene White, center for the Milan Indians 1954 State Championship basketball team. He will share insight on the thrill of winning and the impact on Milan, a well known little town. Everyone is invited to attend.

* At the January meeting, Roselyn McKittrick told about the development of the Milan Basketball Museum. She stated they have had requests for pictures and information on the 1954 Champs from as far away as Japan. One of the recent contacts was from a nationwide sports museum in New York. Roselyn donated some *Milan Sesquicentennial – 1854 – 2004* books to RCHS to sell for \$16 plus \$2 S&H. This is a beautiful soft bound book of 93 pages with history and stories of Milan and contains many pictures. The book is also on sale at the Milan Museum.

* Numberless volunteers are collecting information and pictures of the WWII Veterans for the upcoming book *Remembering & Honoring – Ripley County's, Indiana WWII Veterans*. This is a huge project and the help of everyone is needed to make this a complete as possible record of our veterans that served during 1939 – 1946. The response is tremendous. The deadline for submitting information is July 31, 2008. Don't wait, send (or take) your veteran's information to RCHS, P.O. Box 525, Versailles, IN 47042 or Norris Krall, 4499 N. Old Michigan Rd., Osgood, IN 47037.

* The Jackson Township Cemetery book is completed. It is 110 pages, soft cover, comb bound collection of the following cemeteries: Napoleon Baptist, Booher, Republican United Brethren (Glass), St. John's Lutheran, St. Maurice Catholic, and Union Flatrock. Book includes a map with location of cemeteries, short history of the old burial sites and pictures of the cemeteries. A great book put together by the committee of Helen Einhaus, Delbert and Dorothy Abplanalp, Don Hughes, Patricia Lawrence, William Wagner and Norris Krall. It sells for \$13 at the Archives (mailing \$2).

THE FOLLOWING BOOKS ARE AVAILABLE:

<i>Ripley County History, Volume I</i>	\$65	<i>Vintage Postcards</i> by Alan Smith	\$20
<i>Brown Twp. Tales</i> by Alan Smith	20	<i>Brown Township Cemetery Index</i>	10
<i>Tales of Versailles</i> by Alan Smith	16	<i>Johnson Township Cemetery Index</i>	10
<i>Versailles, IN School Life 1818–1966</i>	20	<i>Osgood, IN Sesquicentennial 1856-2006</i>	17
<i>Come Visit</i> by Jean McClellan	25	shipping charges may be added for all books	

Check your label to make certain your dues are paid up-to-date. If not, mail your renewal to RCHS or to Beatrice Boyd, Treasurer, P.O. Box 83, Holton, IN 47023

Dues: Annual Memberships are \$10.00.
Life memberships are \$100

MINUTES OF THE RIPLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

January 13, 2008

The January 13, 2008 meeting was held at the Archives Building at 2:00 pm with 25 members and guests present. Meeting opened with introductions by each person. Minutes were read by Henry Walker and accepted as read. The financial report was given by Bea Boyd and each person was given a copy. It was accepted as presented.

The monument for the Civil Conservation Camp has been ordered and a down payment made. The Park will hold it until a headquarters building at the park entry is finished, and then it will be placed in front. Bea showed a picture of the CCC camp and all the members.

Books of Versailles School History written by Alan Smith, Jr. and are on sale for \$20.

A report of an article about a Choctaw Indian legend was published in Cricket magazine. This was written by Josephine Keenan, wife of our Brown Township Director, Frank Keenan.

Norris was thanked for the installation of vanity and plumbing in the men's restroom.

A committee was appointed to recruit directors for Laughery, Otter Creek, Shelby, and Washington Townships. Appointed to serve on the committee were Frank Keenan, Mary Nealis and Jerry Walker. They will report at the next meeting.

There will be a program on PBS, February 4th at 10:00 pm on slavery. This program was produced with the help of David Dreyer, a Batesville native and RCHS member. David and family now live in Mississippi.

A report on the Milan Basketball Museum was given by Roselyn McKittrick. The museum is now in the old Nichols Barber shop. The hope is that it will eventually be in the Old Bank Building.

Esther Edmondson gave the program on her trip to Alaska. She had pictures and told of places of interest, Mendenhall and Hubbard glaciers, totem poles, and the beautiful scenery. It was a very interesting and informative program

The next meeting will be April 13, 2008. Refreshments will be by Adams Township.

President, Cheryl Welch,

Secretary, Henry Walker



THE OHIO RIVER FROZEN IN 1940

This picture, taken on ice in the center of the Ohio River at Vevay, IN shows an automobile of older vintage on the ice as proof of its thickness. The shoreline on the Kentucky side appears in the distance.

Norris Krall remembers walking on the river at Markland, IN in 1940. An old hen was frozen in the ice approximately 30 feet from the Indiana shoreline. He was 6 years old.



Bea's Buzzin' - What a Winter!! – by Bea Boyd

Why are we amazed at the weather? After last week's snow ran off, the ground was saturated, and with more rain, the water had to go somewhere. A lot of it went into people's basements. In 1997, our biggest news item was flooding, but in 10 years we forget what happened. This is why history is so important ... we need to remember. So I'm repeating the story that was in Bea's Buzzin' in 1997. Repetition is Good!

With 10 or 11 inches of rainfall non-stop, the town of Falmouth, KY seemed to be the worst hit. Falmouth is located on the Licking River.

I grew up living near Otter Creek and we were always warned about a cloudburst up creek. I had visions of being washed down to the Mississippi River if this would happen, especially after I saw our neighbor lady washed down the creek. It was on a Saturday and the Lewis family, who lived west of the Covered Bridge, had been to Holton to get groceries. Holton is east of the Covered Bridge. In 1937, people just went to the store on Saturday. There was no water on the road when they went to town but coming home the banks of the Otter Creek had filled and water was running over the road east to the Covered Bridge. Well – they drove into the water and the car stalled. Mr. Lewis and their daughter left the car and headed for higher ground by the bridge, but Mrs. Lewis decided to stay in the car until the water went down. She got in the back seat and piled the groceries on the seat so they would stay dry. Instead of going down, the water came up. When it got up near the windows she decided it was time to leave.

Now the back seat windows only rolled down ½ way in the car and she squeezed through this small slot (this was a miracle) just in time for the car turned over and she bounced up and down in the rushing water. She could not swim but made a grab for a tree limb and held on. Help came from Holton (1 ½ mile) and one man, Harry McClure swam out to get her, luckily they had tied a rope around him for she grabbed him by the neck and they both would have been goners without the rope.

I went to see her Sunday (the water was down) and she was laughing about the whole episode. It could have been tragic. This is a lesson for people who drive in water. That field was covered with groceries, I can see it yet. There were white beans all over the field. I remember when it was a field of alfalfa.

The car ended up in the field. It was pulled out. I don't know much about that but her son, who was a Senior at Holton High School later drove it and took his date to the Banquet. Today it is called a Prom Date, then it was called a Banquet, which was a sit down dinner affair served by the Junior Class. The food being cooked by the Mothers or a local church group.

On Easter Sunday, March 23, in the evening,
we had one of the prettiest snows of the year.
But now, we are all anxious for Spring weather!!!!





LETTER FROM WORLD WAR II VETERAN

We received the following letter describing the war from one of our veterans. Although we will not have sufficient room to include this in our book, we feel it deserves to be published and include it here:

"I was 21 when I was inducted, 22 the next day. This is the way it was. In April 1941, I got a notice to report to Brookville, Indiana to register for the draft. A few weeks later I received a notice from Uncle Sam. (I want you!), so on April 14, 1941, I went to Indianapolis and was inducted into the Army at Camp Atterbury. I took an IQ test and got 110 out of 120 questions. I chose to join the Medics. So began my Army life for the next 4 years +. I was sent to Camp Shelby, Mississippi and assigned to the 135th Medical Regiment, 38th Division. There I received Basic Training, etc. I spent 9 months in the 135th. When war broke out December 7, 1941, our Company, which was C Company was assigned to C Company in the 37th Division to fill the Co. which was short of personnel. After a few weeks there we went to Indian Town Gap, Pennsylvania spent a couple of weeks and then we left the U.S.A. We boarded a banana ship which was converted into a troop ship. We left for parts unknown. After a week on the ocean they decided we would go to Australia. The first part of April we landed and went ashore at a place called Gatton College in Australia. While at Gatton, I turned 23 years old. While in Australia we were stationed in different towns: Brisbane, Townsville and Cook town. While at Cook town they thought the Japs were going to take the tin mines in the Black Hills but they didn't even try. So after staying there a short time we disembarked to where the War really was. Our first stop was Port Moresby where I witnessed my first bombing. I was scared _____, you know what. While there we built a Red Cross hospital. During 1943 and 1944 we were in quite a few campaigns, some not so bad and some damn bad. I'll name some of the places I had been, my memory isn't the best, but I'll do my best. We left Moresby and the next stop was Lae. After that, to Finschhafen. We were on a little island called Kirawina. From there we went to Hollandia, it was bad, bad, bad. After leaving Hollandia we went to Wakde Islands. The last campaign was on New Britain Talahasse, I think it was called. Exactly where I was when I received medals, ribbons and citations, I do not remember. Our last stop was the Philippines where Douglas MacArthur returned to. I had a chance to go to Japan with the Occupational Forces, but I thought I had been lucky so far and I had had enough. I had over 3 years overseas. So in 1945, I returned to the U.S.A. I was also in the Battle of Cape Gloucester in New Britain. WAR IS HELL. Although we were Medics, we still carried 25 caliber rifles."

Herman J. Suttman; 135th Med. Regiment; 38th Division, also 37th Div.

We are continuing to solicit your help with our project to remember and honor Ripley County's World War II veterans. If you have a relative who served in this war, we encourage you to send us the information so that they will not be overlooked. You will find further information in last quarter's bulletin or on the RCHS website.

MINUTE HIGHLIGHTS OF MILAN HISTORY

1820 The first settlers arrived, the Indians were already here. The original settlement was about one mile north of the present Milan. Stephen Harding opened a shop and soon the whole settlement was known as Harding's Store.

1842 The little town became known as Milan, possibly named by settlers who grew grapes and planned to become the wine-making center of the new country such as the region of Milan, Italy, in the old country.

1848 The Ohio & Mississippi (O&M) Railroad was chartered to run between Cincinnati and St. Louis. The company chose to put the track south of the Milan settlement. Gradually settlers drifted towards the railroad track.

1854 On July 4th many local people gathered along the tracks to watch the first train go through. This was an excursion train that originated in Cincinnati, Ohio going west to Seymour, Indiana. It wasn't until 1857 the track was completed to St. Louis, Missouri.

1854 The settlement along the track was platted and called South Milan. Soon an addition on the south was called Town of Brooklyn. Later Toph's addition was added to the northwest. Due to the business the railroad brought to the region the town grew into a commercial center, including furniture manufacturing with sawmills and other related businesses. The area had rich farmland. South was dropped from the name and the town called Milan. The older settlement to the north was called Old Milan.

1863 The Civil War Gen. John Hunt Morgan and his Confederate cavalry came to Milan on their famous raid through Indiana and Ohio.

1920 Milan became a vacation/health resort area. The Miwogco Springs Hotel (named after Milan, Indiana, Water, Oil and Gas Co.) attracted guest from all over the country, and even foreign visitors, who came to regenerate by soaking in the restorative powers of the mineral water. It was said to rival the spa hotel in French Lick, Indiana. The Miwogco Hotel burned down in 1928, thus ending a short, glamorous period in Milan's history.

1954 Milan became famous when the Milan High School Basketball team, called Indians, won the Indiana State Championship. Never before and never since has such a small town defeated the large schools of the state in the championship battle. It was this historic event that inspired the 1984 movie "Hoosiers."

2008 Milan remains an attractive little Indiana town. A great place to visit, a great place to live.

MILAN INDIANS – 1954 STATE BASKETBALL CHAMPS



After the game at Butler Fieldhouse, Indianapolis. Front: Bobby Plump & Coach Marvin Wood. Middle: Bob Engel, Glen Butte, Roger Schroder, Gene White, Ray Craft, Kenny Wendelman, Assistant Coach Mark Combs. Back Rollin Cutter, Ronnie Truitt, Bill Jordan

We are fortunate to have Gene White as guest speaker at our meeting, April 13. Join us!!



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- | | |
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