

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

Library – 125 Washington Street  
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Versailles, Indiana 47042

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**VOLUME XXVI**

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◆The fall meeting of the Ripley County Society will be Sunday afternoon, October 9, starting at 2:00, in the RCHS Library on the west side of the courthouse square in Versailles, Indiana. The program will be given by Harold McReynolds of Bedford, Indiana. Mr. McReynolds lived in Milan, when he started his career with the State of Indiana by working out of the Versailles State Park. His first assignment for the Department of Fishery involved work on the Muscatatuck River. During his career he has worked in twenty different states and is now retired and living in Bedford. Mr. McReynolds' program topic will be a new board game he has developed called "Verbal Smoke Screen" which is about clues of person, places and things. This sounds like a program all will enjoy. All members and general public are invited to attend.

◆We extend our sympathy to one of our precious volunteers, Ruth Pickett, on the death of her husband, Victor. They lived on their farm near Correct and Mr. Pickett had also been employed as a milk truck driver and was retired from Cummins at Columbus. They were members of the New Marion Baptist Church and parents of three children. Ruth has volunteered at RCHS for several years and we hope she will soon be able to return.

◆Diane Coon has established an Underground Railroad Tour and Media Center in the RCHS Archives Library lobby. It contains the books: "Ripley County's Anti Slavery Movement" - \$5, Underground Railroad Routes and Operations in Southeastern Indiana - \$7; DVD, "Ripley Co, Underground Railroad" - \$10; CDs guides of the Underground tour routes with local RCHS members reading the parts and narrated by Diane - \$5, also maps and brochures to go with the CDs - \$5. A copy of "Stephen S. Harding's Courthouse Speech" - free. These materials are also available at the Tourism Bureau on Main Street, Versailles.

◆We were very fortunate to be the recipient of a grant to purchase a new air conditioner for our big old building. (See inside Thank you note to Tyson Fund)

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**THE FOLLOWING BOOKS ARE AVAILABLE:**

Ripley County History, Volume I	\$65	Vintage Postcards by Alan Smith	\$20
Ripley County History, Volume II	55	Brown Township Cemetery Index	10
Brown Twp. Tales by Alan Smith	20	Johnson Township Cemetery Index	10
Tales of Versailles by Alan Smith	16	Mailing fees added for all books shipped.	

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Check 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:** New memberships are \$10.00 for the first year.

Renewals are \$5.00 per year thereafter.

Life memberships are \$100

## MINUTES OF THE RIPLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY- JULY 10, 2005

The Regular meeting of the Ripley County Historical Society was held in the Archives Library building with sixteen members and guests present. Betty Roepke opened the meeting and everyone introduced his or her self. Henry Walker read the minutes; they were accepted as read. Bea Boyd gave the treasurer's report; it was moved by Phil Decker and seconded by Jerry Walker to accept the report.

The County Clerk has informed us that many of the county's records now stored in the basement will be moved to the Hunter Building. We will find at a later date what records will stay and what will be moved to the new location.

Andy Scholle has surveyed the Arnold Cemetery, south of Napoleon on US 421. No stones are visible at this time. The Trustee of Jackson Township will list it with the State. Don Nealis has restored the Smith or Universalist Cemetery and it was noted that it was now in very good shape. This cemetery had been vandalized and the guilty party paid the restoration costs. A statement was made about the poor condition of the Old Milan Cemetery.

Upon a motion by Helen Einhaus and seconded by Bea Boyd and carried the business meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be October 9, with refreshments being provided by Adams Township.

Diane Perrine Coon gave a report on the Underground Railroad Project. Many of the tour posts are in and the rest will be installed soon. Tour maps are finished and available. Some of the CD's are ready and any defective ones bought last year can be replaced free of charge. She showed clips from the Ripley County DVD which is very well done.

Mrs. Taul thanked Helen Einhaus and Diane Coon for the work done on this project which was applauded by all.

Betty Roepke gave a short program on Aprons. She demonstrated with help from Joan Krall. There were many different types and materials, from lace to feed sacks, all had pockets. Also aprons for men mostly for toolmakers, cobblers, carpenters, blacksmiths and chefs. It was a very interesting program.

Washington Township served refreshments.

President, Betty Roepke

Secretary, Henry Walker

## GRANTS RECEIVED BY RCHS

In August, the Society received \$5,000 from the Rising Sun Regional Foundation to complete the restoration work on the Culver Cemetery. RCHS started the project of restoring Pioneer cemeteries containing burials of Revolutionary War Soldiers with grants provided by the Rising Sun Regional Foundation. To date the following cemeteries: Weakman Cemetery in Brown Twp., Ditch Cemetery in Shelby Twp., Prattsburg Cemetery in Franklin Twp., and one-half of the Culver Cemetery in Delaware Twp. With this additional \$5,000 grant, we will be able to complete the work on the Culver Cemetery. All of this work would have been impossible to accomplish without the assistance received from the Rising Sun Regional Foundation. The Society is very grateful for their support of this ongoing project.

On September 14, 2005, RCHS was the recipient of a \$16,000 grant from the Tyson Fund. This is for a new air conditioning unit for our historic bank building, the RCHS Library. The Tyson Fund has been very generous to us through the years and we are indeed grateful.



## LORE OF THE LAUGHERY

On August 27 and 28 the National Muzzle Loading Rifle Association (NMLRA) hosted the first Lore of the Laughery living history exhibit. Laughery Creek originates in the northern reaches of Ripley County and meanders through Ripley County and then forms the dividing line between Ohio and Dearborn Counties on its way to the Ohio River. From the earliest European explorations through the Revolutionary War the Laughery Valley was witness to much political maneuvering, intrigue and turmoil amongst foreign powers, Native tribes, and early settlers, leading to the birth of a new nation and to Indiana statehood.



The campground of the NMLRA, located on Laughery Creek near Friendship, Indiana, became similar to a late 1700's tent village displaying lifestyles, trades and crafts of that era. The trades and crafts included blacksmithing, tanning and leather making, leather crafts, pottery, clothing of the time, kids toys, food preparation, etc. The air was filled with the scents of cooking, campfires and music from the fife and drum corps and other musical groups. The highlight of the day was the re-enactment of Colonel Lochry's defeat, which (after some evolution of the spelling of Lochry's name) gave rise to the name of Laughery Creek. Lochry's defeat marked the only Revolutionary War battle fought on Indiana soil.

The year was 1781. Colonel Archibald Lochry was the county lieutenant for Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. He had been requested to join Colonel George Rogers Clark to raise a detachment of men and accompany Colonel Clark down the Ohio River to the Illinois territory and then launch an attack on Detroit where the British were headquartered and were arming the Indians and encouraging their attacks on the settlers in Pennsylvania and Ohio.

Lochry gathered his 83-man force at Colonel Carnahan's Blockhouse 11 miles west of Hannastown, Pennsylvania. On August 3<sup>rd</sup>, they left for Fort Henry (Wheeling, West Virginia). Along the way others joined him until the force numbered 107 men. When they arrived at Fort Henry, they found that Clark had gone on 12 miles downriver leaving them some provisions and a traveling boat with directions to follow him. Lochry prepared some temporary boats to carry men and horses and proceeded down river to the rendezvous point as ordered by Clark. When they arrived they found that Clark had changed his mind again and had left the day before going on down the river.

Clark was having problems with his men and some were deserting and returning home. Clark reasoned that if he proceeded farther away from home it would discourage his men from deserting. Clark left some men and a boat but no provisions or ammunition for Lochry. Clark promised to wait for him at the mouth of the Kanawha River. When Lochry arrived he found that Clark had again left ahead of him leaving only a letter fixed to a pole directing him to follow him to the mouth of the Great Miami River, near Cincinnati, Ohio, where they would finally join forces. This meeting place was later changed to be the falls of the Ohio near Louisville, Kentucky.

Lochry's force was low on provisions and did not know the river channels to reach Clark. He wrote a letter to Clark requesting supplies and ammunition be sent back to his force. Lochry dispatched Captain Shannon and 4 men in a small boat to speed on ahead and deliver it to Clark. Captain Shannon and the 4 men were soon captured by the Indians. They soon discovered 19 men that had deserted Clark's force and took them captive.

As Lochry proceeded down the river, the horse boat was heavy and had to remain some distance from shore to avoid sandbars. The men worked hard to keep the boats afloat and headed down river. Provisions were few. The men and horses were hungry. The men saw buffalo on shore but Lochry refused them permission to go ashore, knowing that any shots would draw the Indians.

The Indians were well aware of both Clark's and Lochry's force and were following them on the shore. They did not attack Clark because of the powerful cannon that he carried on his boat. Finally when Lochry came upon the mouth of a large stream (now known as Laughery Creek) about 10 miles below the mouth of the Great Miami River he directed that the horses be put ashore to graze. One of his men disobeyed the no shooting order and shot a Buffalo for food. This shot attracted the nearby Indians and they immediately attacked Lochry's force. The Indians demanded to know who the leader was and Lochry was singled out. He was attacked from the rear, tomahawked and scalped. Joseph Brant, an Indian who had been educated by white men was the leader of the Indians. He did not want Lochry's men killed but taken as prisoners. All of Lochry's men were either killed or captured. Those captured were marched away toward Detroit. Some escaped during the march and returned to their homes in Pennsylvania. The prisoners were not released until the next year when the Revolutionary War came to a close.

Several of Lochry's men later returned and settled in this land. Among them were Valentine Lawrence and George Mason who came back to the same area where they were captured because they saw the rich and fertile land of the valley.

Clark's plan of attacking Detroit was never to be. When he arrived at his base at the Falls of the Ohio he found the militia of Kentucky did not agree with him. They had crops to harvest and families to protect. They felt that the defeat of Lochry would appease the Indians for a while. A few scattered bands of Indians still roamed the area. Two weeks after the attack on Lochry, Brandt's smaller force attacked Squire Boone's Painted Stone Station in Kentucky. Brandt's force began to break up and they headed North across the Ohio to prepare for winter.

Photographs of the Lore of the Laughery re-enactment and other area events can be found at [www.graphicenterprises.net](http://www.graphicenterprises.net).

#### Sources

The Best Men of Westmoreland by Chris McHenry

Joseph Brant 1743-1807 Man of Two Worlds by Isabel Thompson Kelsay

Virginia's Western War 1775-1786 By Richard Taylor and Neal O. Hammon

Graphic Enterprises - Home of The Pioneer Times a Web News site about Re-enacting and Living History ([www.graphicenterprises.net](http://www.graphicenterprises.net))



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 Historical Society, Inc.  
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