

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

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► The annual business meeting of the Ripley Co. Historical Society will be held on Sunday, April 15th at 2:00 at the RCHS Archives Library on the westside of the Versailles Courthouse Square. George Ammerman, a well-known businessman from Sunman will share some of his experiences of working with the railroad and serving as County Commissioner. Mr. Ammerman is a recipient of the Sagamore of the Wabash award. Everyone is invited.

► A statue honoring the Civilian Conservation Corps workers was placed at Roosevelt Park in Pine Mountain, Georgia in 1999. Since then, many more have been placed at State Parks and historical sites. The object is to have statues in every State. One of our local ladies, Ruth Ann Swinney of Jackson Township, is working to help secure a CCC Worker's Statue to be placed at the entrance of the Versailles State Park. RCHS is enthusiastically helping with this project. The CCC was established in 1933 during the depression by President Roosevelt to provide jobs for young men, who would work in the parks and communities all over the nation. The local CCC workers camped at what is now the Versailles State Park and built many beautiful stone buildings in the park. RCHS would like to collect information about the CCC and WPA workers and projects. If anyone has any knowledge or recollections concerning the local activities of the CCC men RCHS would appreciate having your remembrances for our files.



Picture of CCC Statue

Send by e-mail or snail mail, see letterhead for addresses.
Thanks for your help.

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
(sold out)		Johnson Township Cemetery Index	10
Brown Twp. Tales by Alan Smith	20	Mailing fees added for all books shipped.	
Tales of Versailles by Alan Smith	16		

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

MINUTES OF THE RIPLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Ripley County Historical Society met at 2:00pm on January 14, 2007 with 40 members and guests present. The meeting was opened with each on giving their name and place of residence.

The minutes were read by Cheryl Welch in the absence of Henry Walker the secretary and accepted as read. The treasurer's report was given by Bea Boyd and accepted as presented.

Norris Krall reported on the cabin and it took more logs than we first thought and more money than we had asked for from Tyson. Some additional had to be taken from the treasury..

Bill Gloyd asked a question about the house at the Museum and what was going to happen to it. Andy Scholle is looking into getting some estimates as what we can do. It may be removed. We need more space at both buildings.

JoAn Krall will help train volunteers to help at the Archives we need more help for research.

Next meeting will be April 15th at 2:00 this is the 3rd Sunday because of Easter.

A nominating committee was appointed of Helen Caplinger, Don Nealis & Wilbur Myers to get three township and one at large directors to be presented to the April meeting.

The meeting was then turned over to the guest speaker, Delbert Abplanalp who gave a very good talk on the "Plank Roads" and the toll road, and the Corduroy road. How they built the Quarry's close to the roads and could get the stone easily. A lot of the roads followed a stream and then they needed bridges, we still have some of the stone arch bridges in the County.

The meeting was adjourned at 3pm and the refreshments were served. Laughery Twp. Will be in charge of refreshments at next meeting.

Betty Roepke, President

Cheryl Welch, acting Secretary



With regret RCHS acknowledges the retirement of Helen Einhaus as Ripley County Historian. Helen was nominated by local RCHS membership for County Historian, in 2001, and appointed jointly by the Indiana Historical Society and the Indiana Historical Bureau. We greatly appreciate Helen's service and express our undying gratitude for the many hours she has devoted to Ripley County History. Helen's interest in genealogy began in the early 1960's when she helped her brother, Ken, with a school project. Since then she has become very proficient in locating genealogy facts and has traced her and her husband's ancestry back for many generations. Helen was instrumental in the publication of both volumes of the Ripley County History books; has worked to update the cemetery records; helped to document the county's Underground Railroad history and place historical markers. Helen has been an ardent researcher and historian for the local DAR chapter for many years and was involved in compiling and printing the Napoleon history for their Sesquicentennial celebration in 1970. She has served as volunteer at the RCHS

Archives Library for many years and has been in contact with researchers from all over the United States and several foreign countries. Thank you, Helen, for all the hours and hours and hours of time and work you have so generously given to Ripley County history.

The first Ripley County Historian was RCHS member, Beatrice Boyd. Bea faithfully and proficiently held this appointment for twenty years. Ripley County has indeed benefited from these two excellent genealogists.



Z Buzzing' Around your Family Tree Z
Z by Bea Z

May 25 1893 Versailles Republican

Pierceville: A number of our young folks attended the Milk-Maids convention at Milan Friday evening.

The Yater Bros have shipped five carloads of piling from here in the last week.

No. 20 takes the milk of a morning and over One hundred gallons are shipped every morning and Eighty at night.

William Kaiser has returned home from Germany where he spent two months of pleasure with his aged parents and his many friends. Golden Corner: Messrs Lou Small and John Swengel are erecting a woodhouse for Mrs Sue B Myers.

Moritz Lomatach, Sen and Herman Lomatach were in Osgood last Tuesday to get their new Deering binder.

Lizzie A. Myers is at Chicago attending the Worlds Fair this week. Bethel: F Overturf is building a new house.

There are some young men in this vicinity that must stop using their revolvers on Sunday quite freely. Boys, it is a fine to carry them and also for desecrating the sabbath.

Protracted meeting began at Bethel May 22, by Rev. J. M. Swarthout

E. H. Burton is running a huskster wagon.

Delaware: J. L. Hinners shipped several carloads of charcoal this week.

Osgood: B. F. Mulford moved a large building for S. M. Smith last week. Mr. Smith will erect a fine residence on the lot from which the building was moved. Frank Harding started for Oregon last Sat. to superintend a ranch.

Smith's Hill: There was a bald eagle found in the neighborhood.

Miss Maggie Smith lost one of her ducks by the bald eagle.

I have had all the winter I want! People are realizing how wonderful electricity is. Being raised in a rural area I know what it is to not have electricity. We did not receive electric until after WWII. This was one of Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" programs.

I just finished reading "BENTO BOX in the HEARTLAND" "My Japanese Girlhood in Whitebread America" by Linda Furiya. Linda attended school at South Ripley. Her parents James and Teruka Furiya live in Versailles. The book was published January 2007. My copy was ordered from <http://www.amazon.com>. I started to read it, read until midnight and finished it the following morning. I do not know when I have enjoyed a book so much.

REVIEW OF JANUARY'S PROGRAM

A very interesting program was given by Delbert Abplanalp of Napoleon at RCHS January meeting. His topic was the starting of the trails and roads around Versailles, Osgood and Napoleon. Delbert explained that in the early 1800's a few settlers had moved into this area and all they found were trees and Indian trails. They marked their trails by chopping a notch in the trees, but it was very easy to get lost. As more settlers moved in, they needed wider roads instead of trails to move from one place to another with wagons instead of horses. They cut trees along the trail and laid them across the path, so the horses and wagons could go over them and stay out of the mud. These were known as the Corduroy Roads.

The first State Capital was established at Corydon, but it was so difficult to travel there, in just a few years it was decided to move the capital to Indianapolis, the center of the state. In 1824, four wagons loaded with the records and important documents left Corydon headed toward Indianapolis. It took 10 days for them to reach Indianapolis.

The state decided to make a road from the southern tip of the state in Madison on the Ohio River to the northern end of the state at Michigan City on Lake Michigan. The land was obtained by a treaty with the Potawatomi Indian Tribe. This right-of-way, called Michigan Road, was 100 feet wide and 265 miles long. The road crossed into Ripley County south of New Marion (near Resville) and continued north through Dabney (Poston) and Napoleon. Today, the road is basically still intact, except it occasionally combines with other roads and is now called "Old" Michigan Road. About the same time a road from Madison to Versailles and on to Osgood was established. It soon became continuous mud holes from one end to the other. The state was looking for an economic way to travel and they tried to open some canals, however they were expensive to build and in the early 1900 a big flood ended the canal projects. Around 1858 some people in Decatur and Ripley Counties decided to build a road and in order to pay the cost, they decided to make it a toll road. John Glass was the gentleman in charge. He had the road from Osgood to Napoleon laid with huge sawed plank. A toll house was established near the southeast corner of the Lutheran Cemetery at Napoleon and one at Osgood (on what is now County Road 450N). The planks were replaced when worn out. One of the original edge planks is on display at the Osgood Historical Museum. This plank road was used for 30 years before becoming a piked (crushed stone) road. To obtain enough stone to cover the road, several quarries were dug along the road and stone taken from them by the local men working on the road. In 1929 the road was paved and became Indiana State Road 29 and now is U.S. Highway 421.



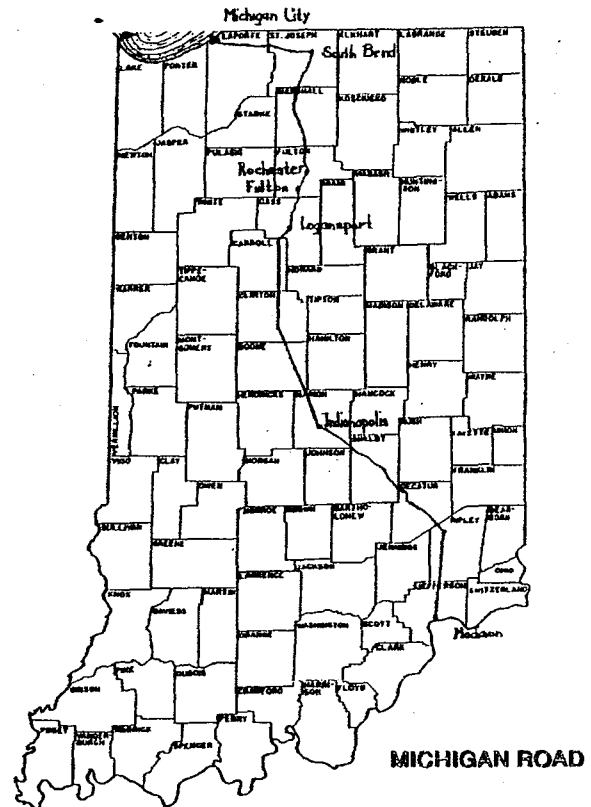
◀ Plank from
Plank Road

Napoleon Toll
House ▶



HISTORY OF MICHIGAN ROAD FROM THE DABNEY HISTORY BOOK

Early 1800 traveling was limited to horse back or walking. Trails led from one settlement to another and were marked by an ax cut on the trees, called blazing, which could only be followed during daylight. The forest of huge trees made the trails very difficult to follow, many travelers went right by their designation without knowing it and became lost. Trade routes went from the settlements to the river at Madison, where pioneers would trade animal skins, produce, etc. for needed supplies. The main Indian trail going north from Madison was developed into the first major road of this area. It was called the Michigan Road. The land for this road was obtained through a treaty with the Potawatomi Indian Tribe in 1826. The goal was to connect the Ohio River at Madison to Lake Michigan on the north. Surveyed in 1829, it had a 100 feet wide right-of-way with a 30 feet wide road in the middle. The trees and stumps had to be cleared and the road graded. Many of the early settlers worked on the road for credit on their taxes, using their own horses and tools. The road was usually very muddy or very dusty, depending on the season. Some of it was impassable for months at a time. Often the worse spots were covered with logs laid crosswise and filled in between with sand or dirt. When the log planks were laid across the road it was called a corduroy road. The road was 265 miles in length and although it was often one continuous mud hole an enormous amount of traffic passed over it. The following is a description from Toph's Peoples History of Ripley County, referring to traveling over the corded logs: "Thank goodness none of us wore false teeth for they would certainly have been shaken out of our heads. We had a stiff tongued wagon and a team of mules. Often a wheel of the wagon would drop into a hole and would actually throw the mules up into the air."



Soon after the building of the Michigan Road, a stagecoach line was started but travel was limited due to the road condition. Migrants traveled with canvas-topped wagons, to which were harnessed horses, oxen or mules and often a cow or two with perhaps extra horses tied behind. Since this road was the main thoroughfare, many settlements were established along the route. At this time, common labor received 31 cents per day's work. Corn sold for 20 cents a bushel, wheat 40 cents, and pork 2 cents per pound. A good milk cow was sold for \$6 to \$10. Meadows were raked with a hand rake and grain was cut with a scythe or sickle. Ground was tilled with a chip or mold board plow. Horse collars were made from braided corn husks. Oxen were often used instead of horses.

"Promoting the Natural Marriage Between Antiques and Ancestry" Launched in January, 2007, JustaJoy.com was the concept of Joy Shivar, owner of an antique business that specializes in items from the American Wars, black history and other American history. After working with the artifacts that passed through her business Joy realized the need for an avenue to return the items back to the people for whom the artifacts would mean the most. All items are guaranteed authentic and original with a 100% money back guarantee. The site offers members the opportunity of recovering their family's items. For a limited time membership to the site is free. Insured shipping on purchased items is also free. Genealogists can glean information from the descriptions in the listings. Visit, Justajoy.com, to find "fallen leaves from the family tree" and turn simple antiques back into the heirlooms they were meant to be.



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