

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

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- The April meeting of the Ripley County Historical Society will be on the 3rd Sunday afternoon, because Easter is on our usual time. The meeting will be April 19th at 2:00 in the Archive Library Building on the west side of the Courthouse Square in Versailles. The program will have a Patriotic Theme and be given by Wilbur Myers of Holton. Everyone is invited to attend. The Cherry Trees around the Square should be in full bloom. If they are as beautiful as they were last year, you won't want to miss seeing them.
- Our President, Cheryl Welch and her helpers have been very busy cleaning the Archives and making needed repairs. The shelving and storage for the books and papers upstairs have been completed. RCHS is very grateful to the Rising Sun Regional Foundation for the grant to purchase the needed shelves.
- **We extend excited congratulations to our Jac-Cen-Del High School boys basketball team in their capture of the Indiana State Class 1A High School Basketball Championship.**
- Our dear, faithful, Treasurer, Bea Boyd, has resigned. Bea has been our dedicated Treasurer for many many years and we all know that she has accounted for every penny that ever went through the treasury. Bea's Buzzin' page will continue be a feature in our newsletter. Johnson Township Director, Owen Menchhofer, has agreed to become our new Treasurer. Thank you Bea for all your work and dedication for so many years.
- ● ● The Batesville Area Historical Society has published a book, *The Batesville Area*. It is a soft cover, 128 page, picture and captions book. It is a beautiful, interesting and well-done book about Batesville. It is a "Must-Have" book. It can be purchased for \$21.99 at Batesville in the Book Shelf at 101 N. Walnut Street or at the Fifth-Third Bank, Main Source Bank or the FCN Bank. The book can be ordered by mail for \$25.80. Make check payable to B.A.H.S. and send to Jean Struewing, 23 Gallery Pear Dr., Batesville, IN 47006 or inquire by e-mail at jhstruewing@nalu.net.
- RCHS is thankful to Sandy Meisberger for her donation of several archival storage boxes for our historical papers

THE FOLLOWING BOOKS ARE AVAILABLE:

<i>Ripley County History, Volume 1</i>	\$65	<i>Versailles, IN School Life 1818-1966</i>	\$ 20
<i>Brown Twp.. Tales by Alan Smith</i>	20	<i>Osgood, IN Sesquicentennial 1856-2006</i>	17
<i>Tales of Versailles by Alan Smith</i>	16	<i>Come Visit by Jean McClellan</i>	25
<i>Vintage Postcards by Alan Smith</i>	20	<i>Jackson Township Cemetery Index</i>	13
<i>Brown Township Cemetery Index</i>	10	<i>Johnson Township Cemetery Index</i>	10
<i>Milan, Indiana. A Storied Past</i>	16	Shipping Charges added for all books	3

The RCHS Archives Library is open for public research weekdays 1 – 4 pm, except holidays, Pumpkin Show week (Sept.) and the week between Christmas and New Years. The Library will also be closed during inclement weather. Questions call 812-689-3031

Check your label to make certain your dues are paid up-to-date thru 2009. If not, mail your
renewal to RCHS at P.O. Box 525, Versailles, IN 47042
Annual \$10; Life \$100.

RIPLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MINUTES -- JANUARY 11, 2009

The winter quarterly meeting of the Society was called to order by President Cheryl Welch at 2:00 p.m., January 11, 2009, who led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance. The attendees identified themselves and their township of residence. Secretary Frank Keenan read the minutes of the fall quarterly meeting of October 13, 2008. These minutes were approved as read. Treasurer Bea Boyd's financial report updating the state of the Society's finances as of January 1, 2009 was provided and approved.

President Welch reported that the Society's grant request to the Ripley County Community Foundation for a grant to cover estimated expenses for shelving, file cabinets, etc., for storing the Society's growing archives was, with the exception of the request for a new copier, awarded to the Society in the amount of \$17,285.00.

President Welch also reported that the Rising Sun Community Fund also awarded a grant to the Society for \$5,300.00 toward the cost of the Society's World War II County Veterans project.

A Nominating Committee, comprised of RCHS Director Helen Decker, RCHS member Jerry Walker, and Marilyn Browning was appointed by President Welch to formulate a slate for the election of Officers and certain Directors at the spring meeting. The Nominating Committee will report the slate to President Welch by April.

President Welch noted that Ripley County Historian Helen Einhaus had resigned said position and Cheryl solicited a volunteer to fill the now vacant Historian position.

Concerning progress on the World War II Ripley County Veterans book project, Norris Krall reported that some 1400 stories had been written as of the date of the winter meeting and that 40% of the book's text would hopefully be ready by late spring. Norris also reported that he had been in touch with two publishers exploring publication and costs for the book. Since it is estimated that the book will likely exceed 400 pages, Norris noted that perhaps two volumes would need to be provided.

President Welch, on behalf of the Society, extended our sincerest sympathies to JoAn Krall for the recent death of her sister.

There being no further business to come before the membership, the business meeting was closed.

Following the business meeting the program was given by Cheryl and Dannie Welch, who, in slides and narration, brought us along on their wonderful and recent trip to Italy. While in Italy they visited and photographed such fascinating sites as the ancient ruins of Pompeii, and the incomparable art, sculptures, and architecture of Vatican City. Italy's great natural beauty was also highlighted by Dannie and Cheryl's slides of small villages clinging to the face of steep cliffs overlooking the Mediterranean along the Amalfie coast, and tales of the harrowing experience on the roadways into these villages. The hustle and bustle of modern-day Italy, and Rome in particular, was captured and shared with all in the Welch's accounts of the incredible traffic jams in Rome. As Dannie and Cheryl put it, if you had a wreck, there was literally no place left where you could pull off the road. They also related the unique experience of dining in restaurants where the waiters entertained the diners by singing excerpts from the vast repertoire of Italian opera. In short, the program was greatly enjoyed by all.

Following the program, refreshments were served by Delaware Township. Visiting time was enjoyed by all. Franklin Township will be responsible for refreshments for the spring meeting.

Respectfully submitted: _____
Frank A. Keenan, Secretary

The Ripley County Basketball Hall of Fame has a large display case in position in the RCHS Archives Building lobby. As of now it is empty but soon they will have many interesting memorabilia items and information about Ripley County Basketball history on display.

For a list of the Ripley County Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame inductees see:

http://www.geocities.com/ripleycounty/Hall_of_Fame.html



BEA'S Buzzin'

Bea Boyd Remembers Osgood Editor's note. Followers of Buzzin' know that Bea often tells about happenings on the farm near the historic Otter Creek Covered Bridge west of Holton, where her parents moved around 1930. Before the Holton farm, the Beach Family lived in a house on what is now Cardinal Lane in Osgood. Bea was born there and spent the first ten years of her life exploring the bustling little town of Osgood. Bea wants to share some of her precious memory with you. Pretend with her that she is a little girl making her rounds in good ole Osgood. Start the tour from Jefferson Street and what is now known as Cardinal Lane where Bea was born and her neighbors there.

 In our neighborhood were the Miles, who had a shoe repair shop up on the Brick Street (Ripley) and the only radio in the neighborhood and they invited my sister, Mary, and me to listen with them at 6:00 to the Amos & Andy Show. Other folks in the area were Mr. Bomball, Jim and Emm Corson & family (Jim grew gladiolas in his garden), the Shells, Ed & Stell Cruzan and Dutch Row (Dr. Row's father) who would run his bird dogs in the evenings. The Miles moved and Walter Eckert family moved in their house. Walter was a State Policeman and would cut quite a figure on his motorcycle.

 From the South on Jefferson the Vayhingers had bought the Thomas Willson Home next door. Vernon Vayhinger was an attorney and they had some kids, which meant more playmates in the neighborhood. There was a place called the "Commons" where we would get together to play. And on North toward town were the Kempers, he was the telegrapher at the Osgood Depot; next to them were the Vawters. Mr. Vawters was cashier at the bank; the next house is the stucco that belonged to Gilmore and Golda Reynolds; on toward downtown was an old lady who had a beautiful bleeding Heart plant by her house. Next was the Wagner's meat market where you could get a soup bone for 5¢ and ask for a piece of suet with your bone.

 Bea remembers 1926 Osgood had a street-light installed at the intersection of Brick Street (Ripley Street) and Buckeye at the Ripley County Bank corner. The main road through Osgood was not called 421 as yet. The streets in Osgood were mostly named for trees. Osgood was built in a forest of all kinds of trees. The light was there for several years then it was taken down (it must have been a State Thing). Much, much later they put a light where it is now at State Road 350 and U.S. 421.

 If from the Ripley Co. Bank Corner you looked east you might see Mr. Damm in a black jacket, sitting on his front porch smoking a big pipe. Crossing Ripley Street going north, on the corner was the Henry Humphery Chevrolet Dealer; (there was a bowling alley on the second floor of that building), then Mrs. Thomas who sold fresh vegetables and she also had chickens. Going north on the east side of Buckeye street, Moreback & Hackman had a Hat Shoppe, you had to step down from the sidewalk to get into it. Next in line was the Damm Theater Billboard, Vernon Vayhinger Law Office, Osgood Journal Office and the best of all the Damm Bakery. Such goodies and the penny candy, Oh!! For a penny Evergreen!! The Damm Apartments were next. Rose Damm was married to a Dr. Fagan, a chiropractor. Sometimes I would go in with Dad when he stopped in for an adjustment.

 Crossing Buckeye Street the Ripley House Hotel was a big building on the west side, next Baylors who lived overhead and had cleaners. Then the Damm Theater where we saw silent movies, I couldn't read but whenever the words flashed on the screen, everyone read aloud so we didn't miss anything. Next in line was the drug store owned by Gordon and Jessie Triplett. Mrs. T. would make lollipops of sugar dipped in chocolate. On south was the Ben Schneider shoe store. Mrs. Schneider would sit on the porch like step. And on the corner was the Vollmer's Store.

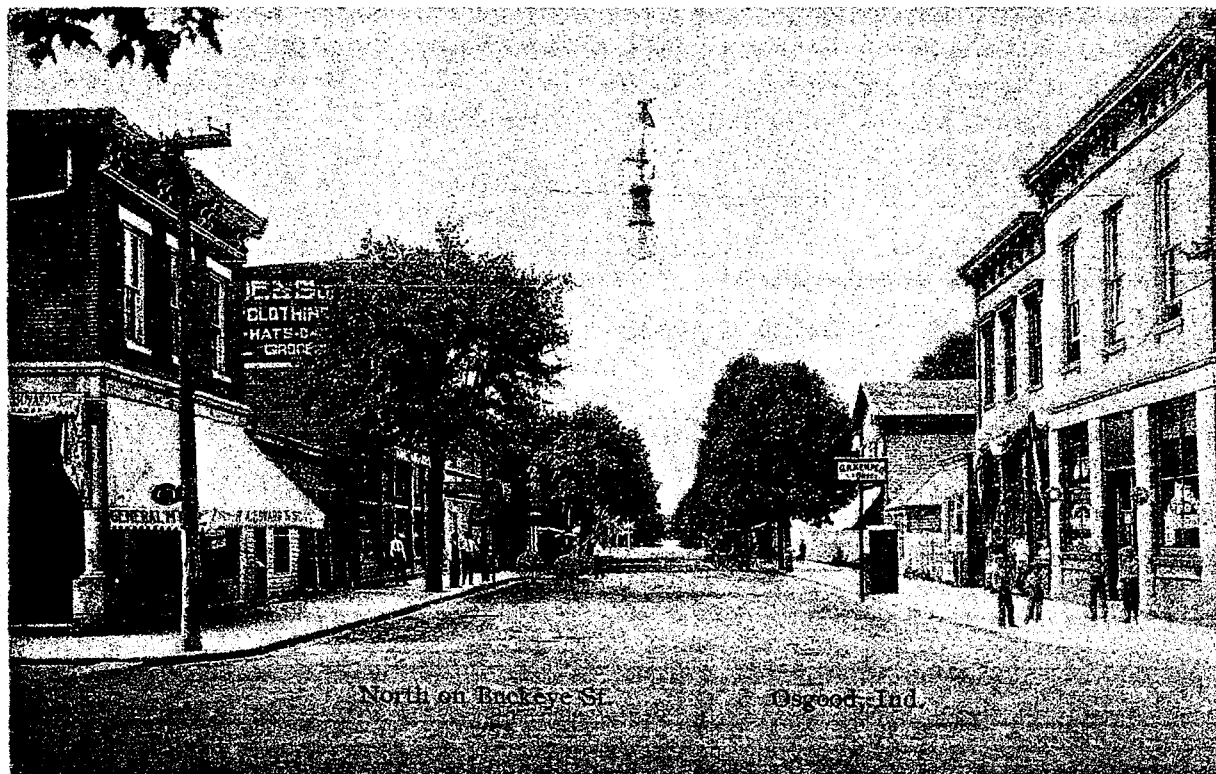
 Over the Red Brick Road going on south was the Freeman Hotel with the tables set and people eating and the chandeliers shinning. On south were the Ford Agency, Turner & Neal, and the home of Mary Turner Neal on the corner.

 Time to head for home. Osgood had a miniature golf course it was between Fritz Ebel and the Eckert House. It has since been filled in and is now the site of Neal's Car Sales. The two story house where we lived has been torn down and the bricks used for fireplaces. I have always had a soft

spot in my heart for Osgood and the ones who I started to school with. The neighborhood has changed except for Helen Vayhinger Caplinger. She raised her family in the Thomas Willson house and still lives there. You'll find her busy with volunteer work at the Osgood Museum, the Library, her Methodist Church and other activities around town.



Could not find a picture with stop-go-caution light hanging from middle of street as Bea remembers. Others have affirmed that such a light as Bea remembers was once hanging in this intersection. Top picture looking south shows a caution light on concrete post in middle of intersection by bank building. Bottom picture looking north on Buckeye St. shows a street light hanging at same intersection.



Lest We Forget
A Tribute to the World War II Veterans of Ripley County, Indiana

Our Veterans book "Lest We Forget" is progressing but it will be a few more months before it will be printed. Most of the text is written but setting the pictures, proofing and other layout work will take awhile. While working on information about our Veterans, we came across some interesting information about "cryptography". So decided to use that as a topic for our newsletter article. Ripley County men were all over the world in all kinds of operations during the war. Here are a couple of our specialized cryptographers:

William Groves McNeelan, Jr. the son of W.G. McNeelan, Sr. of Holton served four years in the Navy as a radioman 1/c. He trained in Washington to learn to type the Japanese code using the Japanese alphabetic characters and monitored the messages from their ships and submarines. He was stationed in remote areas in the South Pacific and spent eighteen months in Guam. He was called back into service during the Korean Conflict to copy Russian Code. Bill married Mary Jane Clerkin of North Vernon. He completed his education and became a Mortician and operated a funeral home in Holton. Bill is now associated with the Stratton-Karsteter Funeral Home in Versailles.

Estol J. Neahousmeyer was son of John and Anna Neahousmeyer of Cross Plains. He served in the China-Burma-India Theater with the 245th Signal Corps as a code clerk with the 348th Regiment Liaison Team. While under heavy enemy artillery and small arms fire, T/5 Neahousmeyer was able to decipher the enemy messages and maintained a continuous flow of information to front lines with such clarity that the decisions could be made without hesitation. He received several awards including the Bronze Star Medal for his meritorious service. He was discharged in 1945 after flying "over the Hump" (the Himalayas) twice and traveling around the world. Estol returned home to the farm in Ripley County. Estol died in Ripley County on March 24, 1981.

The Code Talkers. During WWII the U.S. developed a unique kind of code machine that the enemy could not decipher. It was called Navajo. The idea to use the Navajo language for secure communications came from Philip Johnston, the son of a missionary to the Navajos. He knew that Native American languages, notably Choctaw, had been used in WWI to encode messages. Early in 1942 Johnston contacted the Marine Corps and gave tests demonstrating the Navajo messages. The messages could not be read. So the Marines recruited 200 Navajos and trained them at Camp Pendleton, California, this first group created the "Navajo code". They developed a dictionary of Navajo words representing the English alphabet and also Navajo words representing frequently used military terms (e.g. the Navajo words for *iron fish* meant submarine). The dictionary and all code words had to be memorized during training. The code was never written. The Navajos were sent to the Pacific Theater and worked on transmitting information on tactics and troop movements, orders and other vital battlefield communications over telephones and radios. They also acted as messengers and performed general Marine duties. The Japanese, who were skilled code breakers, were baffled by the Navajo language. By 1945 about 540 Navajos served as Code Talkers for the Marines and the Japanese later admitted they were never able to break the Marines' messages. It has been said that if not for the Navajo Code Talkers, the Marines would have never taken Iwo Jima.



William G. McNeelan, Jr.



Estol J. Neahousmeyer





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