

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

Library – 125 Washington Street  
Museum – Corner of Main and Water Streets  
Versailles, Indiana 47042

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**VOLUME XXIV**

**JANUARY 2003**

**NUMBER 1**

The January 12, 2003 meeting will be at 2:00 pm at RCHS Library Building on the square in Versailles. The Program for this meeting will feature Alma Price of Versailles who will “show and tell” about her collection of antiques. Alma has been collecting antiques for many years and has some beautiful pieces. Everyone is encouraged to attend this first meeting of the new year and become involved in our many activities.

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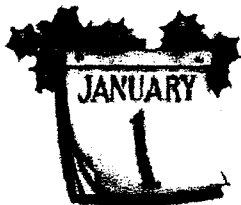
**THE FOLLOWING BOOKS ARE AVAILABLE:**

Ripley County History, Volume I	\$65
Ripley County History, Volume II	55
Brown Township Tales	20
Tales of Versailles by Alan F. Smith	16
Vintage Postcards of Ripley County by Alan Smith	20
Brown Township Cemetery Index	10
Johnson Township Cemetery Index	10
Flat Rock Cemetery Index	5

Mailing fees added for all books shipped.

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Your membership expires on December 31 of the year shown on your mailing label. 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



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**Dues:**

New memberships are \$10.00 for the first year.  
Renewals are \$5.00 per year thereafter.  
Life memberships are \$100

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**GOD BLESS AMERICA IN 2003!**

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**

Ripley County Historical Society

October 13, 2002

The October meeting was held at the Archives Building with 30 members present. We missed having Mary Gilmer with us, she passed away soon after becoming ill at the Museum during the Pumpkin Show. She will be missed.

A cedar tree fell at the annex, it was cleaned up by Hughes tree trimming service at no charge.

Minutes were read by Henry Walker and were approved as read. Treasurers report read by Bea Boyd and accepted as read. A grant request was entered for more money for cemetery repair.

A report on bridge 76 over Otter Creek was given by David Denman from Historic Landmark Preservation. The bridge has been scheduled for replacement by the Commissioners. Many historic bridges in Indiana have been destroyed. The Ripley County Historical Society would like to see this one saved but will be up to the Society to save it.

Also the destruction of cemeteries was discussed. We will be watching to see how the Court proceeds ~n the cases on the Pleasant Hill and also the Smith Universalist Cemeteries. Suggested that we voice an opinion on these cases.

The first deadline on the Underground Railroad has been met but are still looking for more information and will have new deadlines to meet.

There are a few copies of the Dabney History book left but are nearly sold out.

Margaret Walker was recognized for things she has done. We will find out more on this as she consented to give a program at a later date.

The State has offered to buy paint for some of the signs that are looking bad, we would have to get someone to do the painting.

Don Nealis gave a report on work he has been doing on cemeteries. He passed pictures of work he has done on several of them. These are mostly old Cemeteries that have been restored. He gave a very interesting talk on the subject.

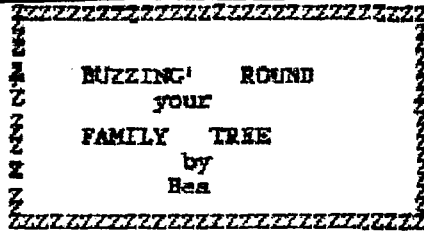
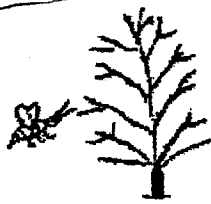
Next meeting will be in the Archives Building on the second Sunday in January.

President, Alice McCoy

Secretary, Henry Walker

## **Activities Around The Archives**

- ❖ **For several years RCHS has been working to preserve and repair the cemeteries in our county. So it was very distressing to us when, for some unfathomable reasons, some local vandals started destroying the stones in our cemeteries. Last fall after a lengthy investigation by the Ripley County Sheriff's department, a couple of men were arrested for vandalizing the Pleasant Hill and Smith Universalist Cemeteries. Judge Morris found a Milan man guilty and ordered him to pay restitution of approximately \$28,000 and do community services for his part in the crime. A jury trial is set for February for his under aged, alleged partner. We hope this stiff penalty will discourage other destruction.**
- ❖ **The Underground Railroad Project is advancing at a steady pace under the leadership of Diane Coon, Project Director and Helen Einhaus, Ripley County Historian. Plans for the tour route which include sites in Olean, Napoleon, Flat Rock, Laughery Switch, Old Milan and Versailles, and possibly a few other local sites, are in the final stages with completion expected in early 2003. The Career Center has agreed to help with this project.**
- ❖ **Alan Smith has made his vintage postcard collection available to RCHS for digitizing. Also his extensive historical picture and information collections are being preserved. Alan started compiling local history over 35 years ago. RCHS wishes to Thank Alan for all his diligent work and for sharing his information.**



Are you hungry for good fried chicken? Bonapart's Retreat at Napoleon, Indiana won this years title "Southeastern Indiana's Best Fried Chicken contest. Owners of the restaurant are Ron and Debbie Powers.

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Ripley County has its own "Red Hat Society".The last count I heard the membership was 50. If you are over 50 you can wear a Red Hat to the meetings,under 50 wears pink hats. The Red Hat is a national Society. My niece in Alabama started a society there. They got their idea from a poem by Jenny Joseph"Warning" "When I am an old woman, I shall wear purple, with a red hat which doesn't go and doesn't suit me."

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I read Carol Laymans new book"Isaac McCoy and the American Indians" She has had some book signings at North Vernon in December. You should put it on your list to read. Marvelous book written from Isaac's memoirs. You can read excerpts at [www.isaacmccoy.com](http://www.isaacmccoy.com).

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The town of Rabbit Hash, Ky,consisting of 3 acres and 7 buildings has been sold.It was purchased by the Rabbit Hash ,Ky Historical Society. They will preserve the buildings among which is a Store over 160 years old. Rabbit Hash is across the river (Ohio) from Rising Sun, In.

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All of this news about Small Pox vaccine brings back memories: in 1933 at the Holton School they gave small pox vaccinations. The girl sitting next to me-came back to her seat((chairs with arms on one side)and all of a sudden,she stiffened out and was lying between her seat and mine. Right then I decided this was not a very good idea! She's very much alive in Florida.

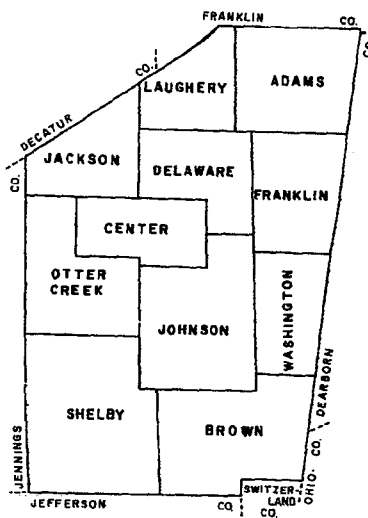
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Didn't have space to tell you that the O'Brien cemetery has been restored. What a relief to drive by it and see the stones standing upright,bushes and weeds trimmed, a fence, the old cedars trimmed and the yucca plants add to its beauty. There is also a pull-off from Highway 50.

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In the last bulletin, I made mention of Dr. Jeremiah Roberts, Holton doctor. I will start listing the accouches starting in 1876. They are listed in name of father. After 1882 the births are listed with the County .Prior to that it was only as a Dr. saw fit to keep records.

Jan 9,1876	William Davis	Apr 9 ,1876	Vit Moore
Feb. 3, 1876	Normal Perry	May 15, "	John Reynolds
Feb 10	" Sam Fleming	May 23, "	Tom Montgomery
Feb 13	" Mart Akins	June30	Dick Downey
Mar 9	" S. M. Hutson	July18	" Tom Reynolds
Mar 30	" Amos Waters	July 20	" J.T.Gibbons
		July 24	" Jonathan Lambert



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Gleaned by JOANN

**Articles from Old Newspapers and Histories**

Code of Abbreviations: Townships - first two letters of its name, except Otter Creek is OC, \* indicates the community is extinct or called by another name, ♦ indicates the start of another news item from the same location.

**Correct** - Jo 1883. People who fool around somebody else's barn had better be careful or they might pay too dear for what they get. ♦ Met Gookins and sisters spent Christmas at Washington Holman's. ♦ Mr. William Whitaker has leased the farm of Mrs. Young of Poston, for the following year, where he will move soon. May success go with him. ♦ Married at bride's parent's home were Mr. Alonzo B. Wooley and Miss Prudi Craig. May their future life be crowded with gems of contentment and happiness, is our wish.

**Versailles** - Jo 1883. A wise judge has recently ruled that the word "dam" is a violent adjective. ♦ The mild weather of the holidays was commented upon by everyone. ♦ It takes some people a long while to get over the New Year's festivities. ♦ The Shah of Persia pays his barber \$4,000 a year. Local barber, Charlie Allen, decided he will apply for the position. ♦ The day is not far distant when the telephone will connect the cities of Osgood and Versailles. A subscription for this purpose should be started at once. ♦ Obit (in part) Friends of Mrs. Hannah Rice received word by telegraphic intelligence from Iowa, that she passed away on Dec. 28. Mrs. Rice was born in Versailles, March 27, 1827, she died of consumption while visiting near Ocean, Iowa. She leaves two sons. Rev. P.J. Collop conducted the service, burial in Cliff Hill Cemetery. ♦ **Marriage:** The jingle of marriage bells on Monday, January 1, 1883 when Florence Robinson was united in marriage to Will D. Hubbard. Miss Florence was one of our highly intelligent and lovely Versailles maidens and the daughter of Dr. J.M. Robinson. Mr. Hubbard is an accomplished gentleman of Edinburg. Both are

teachers. Mrs. Hubbard has resigned her teaching position in Center Township to move to their home in Edinburg.

**Local Comments** - 1883 It is said there are over 1200 cases of smallpox in Baltimore. ♦ It is rumored that Cincinnati will have a new three cent morning paper, to be called The Republican. ♦ 1882 was noted for its great storms. ♦ 10,821 miles of main line railway were laid in the United States, 529 of them in Indiana.

**Osgood** - Ce 1883. The propriety of starting a bank here has been talked for some time, but lately the matter has been receiving serious and favorable consideration, steps will probably soon be taken toward putting it underway.

**\*Lincolville** - (now Benham) Br 1883. Charade parties are the latest with us, the one given by Mr. John Benham and S.S. McCoy were immensely enjoyed by both old and young. ♦ J.N. Benham and Will A. Creath attended the teachers association at Versailles before returning to their respective schools at Caesar Creek and Holman. ♦ Our city organist, Dr. Benham, has disposed of his instrument and will now devote his whole time to plasters and pills.

**Ballstown** - La 1883. Dr. Jerman was called to the death bed of a sister in Iowa. The lady, Miss Mary M. Jerman, was well known in this county. ♦ Henry Busch has returned from Illinois where he has been working for a year past. Henry is a handsome fellow and none appreciate this fact more than girls of his native state.

**Versailles** - May 18, 1932 The annual Ripley County "get-to-gather" was held in Sacramento, California at McClatchy Park on May 8. At noon 41 had arrived. A delicious dinner with plenty of fried chicken (Hoosier style) was enjoyed. After dinner all gathered under the beautiful shade trees to visit and talk of the days spent in Ripley County. Some interesting games of horseshoe and ring were played. It was decided to hold the 1933 meeting on the third Sunday in May in Sacramento at Wm. Land Park. Any Ripley County people will be welcome to come and enjoy this gathering. The following were present this year: Mrs. Etta Hyatt Guthrie and Mrs. Carrie Hyatt Cole of Stockton, Mr. and Mrs. W.H. Benefiel of Oakland and granddaughter Auth Dean of Sacramento, Estella Dermitt Rappolee of Hawthorne, Nevada, Grace Pryor, Roy V. Harding and wife, Nell Kenan Harding, Horace H. Harding and wife, Luella Fink Harding, Mrs. Elizabeth Ellinghouse Fink, Mr. and Mrs. Horace C. Harding and daughter Betty Ann of Sacramento, Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Swift, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Motie Tucker, Wm. Brackett Carter, Marion Ruby, Mr. and Mrs. T. Irving Harding and son Tom, of Fresno, Mr. and Mrs. Merle C. Smith, Mrs. Mary P. Smith, Edwin Glasgow of San Francisco, Roland Deener and wife Catherine Harding Deener, of Oakland, G.M. Deathe and wife, Lucille Harding Deathe, of Richmond, Dr. Fred Jackson and wife Hallie Butler Jackson, Mr. and Mrs. Dallas Carter, Wm. Butler and wife, Marguerite McCoy

Butler and daughters, Hallie May, Billie and Margaret Frances of Yuba City.

**\*Sligo** - Jo 1880. Misses Bell and Della Purcell are spending a few days with their sister Mrs. Lizzie Gray and their brother Thomas Purcell at Perseverance (Center twp.). ♦ The dancing party held at James Vanvolkenburgh's was a great success.

**Tanglewood** - Jo 1883. The wood chopping at Rev. Gorbert's last Thursday was a success.

**Delaware** - De 1883. John H. Hamilton and Josh Duncan started this week for the south, the former for his health and the latter on business. ♦ T.S. Roseberry has rebuilt his brick house which was destroyed last year by fire. The new residence is an ornament to the town.

**Bethel** - Jo 1883. David Hand has moved on the John Eads farm. ♦ Miss Agnes Dalen's school is progressing nicely. ♦ David Perkins has moved into his new house and John Massing, of St. Magdalene, will move into the one vacated.

**Holton** - OC 1902. Mrs. J.B. Royce left to join her husband, who is teaching Indians in Mexico. She was accompanied to N. Vernon by her brother Dallas Yater.

**New Marion** - Sh 1883. Uncle Elijah Brown is very low and his friends are fearful that he will not be spared to them much longer. ♦ Richard Brown, while riding home from his father's, received a severe injury, caused by his horse falling on the ice.

**Cross Plains** - Br 1883. Mrs. Nancy Dyer is very sick with typhoid fever at this time and is in a very precarious condition. ♦ Wm. Robinson renewed his subscription to the Republican. He appreciates a good paper, as it has not got a lottery attached to it. ♦ A free fight took place in Paultown (now called Friendship) one day last week between some Jefferson County and Paultown roughs. That village is getting a reputation which far exceeds Napoleon's of former days. The law abiding citizens are to be pitied but then they cannot expect anything better as long as a village of that size will support three whiskey shops.

**Napoleon** - Ja 1883. A boy at John Becraft's. ♦ John Wagner, Jr. has purchased a fine sleigh. ♦ Joseph Schlicht, Andrew Meyers and Fred Earhard harvested about fifty tons of ice last Friday. ♦ Wm. Barnard, who has been engineer at Meyers' mill for the last ten months is visiting relatives in Pennsylvania. He intends to be absent about two months. ♦ The Napoleon Debating Club visited the debating club at the Newman School on January 9th. The Chinese question was settled for all future time. Some believe this decision will allow the Chinese to introduce the custom of opium smoking into this country. ♦ Resolved "That capital punishment shall be abolished" will be discussed by our debating society next Saturday evening. ♦ C.B. Johnson makes a nice appearance in his wooden shoes. ♦ Nick Letzler will start west in about a week to select a location

of his future home. ♦ Dood Morris is able to be on the street again after a severe attack of hemorrhage of the lungs. ♦ The Society for the protection of horses and mules against thieves" held their quarterly meeting at the school house last Saturday. Messrs. J.J. Eaton and Ignatious Enderlein were received into the membership of the society.

**Versailles Personals** 1883. Mr. Ellis Merrell of New Marion has been visiting his brother-in-law, Sheriff Hughes ♦ Perry Row, the daisy clerk in Row's Osgood store, was in town last week. Perry made an impression on several Versailles girls. ♦ Marion Thompson of the law firm Rebeck and Thompson is teaching the unexpired term at Wilson's school house, about three miles east of town. ♦ Mr. T.F. Spencer who lives near Oak Grove in this county, met with a narrow escape from death while felling a tree last week. A limb three or four inches thick fell from above, barely missing his head and striking him on the shoulder, inflicting a flesh wound and so stunning him that he has not been able to work since. We congratulate Mr. Spencer upon his narrow escape from death.

**Osgood** - Ce 1883. H.P. King has been running his foundry day and night for the last two weeks. ♦ Our friend, Dave Carrington, handles the violin and bow with ease and skill. ♦ Willson's stove factory did not go into operation on Monday as was expected on account of the extreme cold. ♦ McClain & Havey are doing a fine business at their hotel. It is neat, convenient, commodious and they do a guest up in the most modern and elegant style. ♦ We wish to insert for the special notice of our youthful night meanderers. We will enforce the law, to the full extent, if there is any more such actions on the street when honest people ought to be home in bed. ♦ Our genial postmaster, Mr. Samuel M. Smith is one of Osgood's most enterprising citizens. Last week he made a wonderful improvement in his post office. He removed the old boxes and now has an elegant case containing 277 boxes with easy access and locks. It is an admirable piece of workmanship and speaks volumes for Mr. Smith's progressive spirit and for Mr. E.W. Gould's skillful carpentry. A neat railing protects the post office department in Mr. Smith's Drug Store from inquisitive persons. ♦ Osgood has four physicians

#### **A NEW YEARS PRAYER**

**DEAR LORD, PLEASE GIVE ME,**

**A FEW FRIENDS WHO UNDERSTAND ME...**

**A WORK TO DO WHICH HAS REAL VALUE....**

**A MIND UNAFRAID...**

**AN UNDERSTANDING HEART...**

**A SENSE OF HUMOR...**

**A FEELING OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD...**

**PATIENCE TO WAIT FOR THE COMING OF THESE THINGS,  
WITH THE WISDOM TO KNOW THEM WHEN THEY COME.**

**AND PEACE FOR ALL MANKIND IN 2003. AMEN**

County Historical



Versailles, IN 47042

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- Lori Hoffman Web Master
- Alice McCoy, Bea Boyd, Henry & Jerry Walker, and Norris & JoAn Krall Newsletter Committee

The Ripley County, Indiana,  
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P.O. Box 525  
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