

**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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**NUMBER 1**

▲ The Ripley Co. Historical Society will meet Sunday Jan. 9, at 2:00 at the Archive Library on the west side of Versailles Courthouse Square. The program for our next meeting is by Betty Roepke speaking on The History of Eastern Ripley County. Refreshments will be provided by Center Township, Bill and Sandra Gloyd.

▲ Membership Dues will raise as of January 1, 2011. Yearly Membership dues are \$15.00 and Lifetime Membership dues are \$150.00.

▲ Research \$5.00 for non-members, and \$.50 per page copied.

▲ The WWII War Veterans book, titled **LEST WE FORGET**, is still available. It can be obtained for \$35 at (1) Batesville Historical Society which is located on George Street next to the Post Office (during its open hours), (2) the Osgood Museum on South Buckeye Street (on Friday or Saturday afternoons) or in Versailles at the Ripley County Historical Society Library on the west side of the Courthouse Square (open every weekday afternoon from 1 to 4). Also, **LEST WE FORGET** can be ordered for shipment by mail for \$40. Checks should be made payable to Ripley County Historical Society. We give our heartfelt thanks to Joan and Norris Krall.

▲ Members that are willing to receive the newsletter via email instead of postal mailing can do so by emailing RCHS with your request along with your email address. The email for sending your request is printed above.

▲ Windows have been replaced in the RCHS Library. If you wish to donate \$250.00 for a window in your name, a memorial, or in honor of a loved one, send your donation and request to RCHS on the address below. A plaque will be made with the honored names inscribed. The windows will arrive August 29<sup>th</sup>. This will save in the utilities cost. There is still time for donations.

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

**Mail your renewal for 2011 to RCHS at P.O. Box 525, Versailles, IN 47042**

Dues: Annual \$15; Life \$150.

**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</i> by Alan Smith	20	<i>Osgood, IN Sesquicentennial 1856-2006</i>	17
<i>Tales of Versailles</i> by Alan Smith	16	<i>Come Visit</i> by Jean McClellan	25
<i>Vintage Postcards</i> by Alan Smith	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	<i>Lest We Forget WWII</i>	35
<i>Broken Wings</i> , By Robert Kelly	20		
Shipping Charges added for all books	5		

RIPLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MINUTES  
October 3, 2010

The fall quarterly business meeting of the Society was called to order by President Cheryl Welch at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 3, 2010. Cheryl led all in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance. At President Welch's request, all in attendance, some 20 folks, identified themselves by name and township of residence.

Secretary Frank Keenan read the minutes of the summer quarterly meeting of July 11, 2010, which minutes were approved as read. Treasurer Owen Menchhofer passed out copies of his Financial Report concerning the Society's current finances. Owen spoke briefly, that the replacement windows cost \$4000.00, plus \$3100.00 for installation. President Welch reminded everyone of the Society's fund raising program whereby all donations of \$250.00 per window would be memorialized on a permanent plaque at the Archives.

President Welch welcomed Tom Krumm as the Society's newest member and noted that he was already volunteering at the Archives Building. Cheryl also noted that additional volunteers are still needed at the Archives Building. President Welch advised that the "Lest We Forget" book was still selling, albeit understandably at a slower pace.

President Welch also reported that a work committee of herself, Dannie Welch, Owen Menchhofer, and Henry Walker cleaned the Smith-Engel cabin for viewing during the Pumpkin Festival. Some thirty people ducked into the cabin for a glimpse of the living conditions of the County's early pioneers. Special thanks to the work committee and to Cheryl, Delbert Abplanalp, and Judy Jordan for serving as attendants at the cabin and the museum during the Pumpkin Show. Cheryl Welch noted that Center Township would be responsible for refreshments at the winter meeting, January 9, 2011.

Following the meeting the program was delivered by John Wolford, a grandson of Leah Jackson, whose photo and brief biological sketch was featured in the summer newsletter. John shared with us several additional biographical details concerning his grandmother and her many accomplishments during her tragically short life. John noted that Leah grew up in Versailles, where her father ran a general store and maintained a tobacco farm in Ripley County. Her best-selling book, "The Play-Party In Indiana", one of five Indiana centennial publications in 1916, was based on her interviews of "old folks" in the County, archival research, and her own experiences. Leah Jackson's 1916 book relates the songs, dances, and games Hoosiers engaged in to have fun over the century since statehood in 1816 up to the centennial celebration. Her book, reprinted many times, has stood the test of time and is regarded to date as a "classic" in the English language of folkways and folklore.

Following the program the meeting was adjourned and refreshments were served by Otter Creek Township.

Respectfully submitted,  
Frank Keenan, Secretary



GENERAL JOHN HUNT MORGAN



GENERAL JOHN HUNT MORGAN  
LAST PICTURE TAKEN

## **THE NUMBER ONE GENERAL OF RIPLEY COUNTY INDIANA OF ALL TIME**

**By Tom Krumm**

There were over 950 generals in The Civil War. One of the most unorthodox generals of all times was Brigadier General John Hunt Morgan. He spent 24 hours in Ripley County. On the morning of July 12, 1863, Morgan entered Ripley County Indiana coming north on what is now U.S. 421 and Michigan Road with 2,460 mounted troops. He was hoping to add Confederate sympathizers as he came through Kentucky and Indiana but no one had enough courage to break away from their neighbors. He had no food or extra horses, and it was necessary for his troops to steal replacement horses and food from the people in Ripley County. The troops spread out both North and East and stopped at nearly every farm.

The troops were on horses and formations were not part of their strategy. Their strongest asset was surprise. Many of the men in the county had previously joined the armies and were fighting down South. In total there were 1,562 men from Ripley County in The Civil War; that number exceeded 10% of the population. A few hundred local militia tried to form defensive companies before Morgan arrived. When they saw the size of Morgan's army, they dropped their arms and surrendered. The vast majority were old or very young and had not been trained.

Versailles was the county seat and it had a courthouse in its final stages of completion. Versailles had been warned in advance that Morgan was coming, so the county money had been buried before he arrived. Morgan lowered one of his artillery cannons and aimed it at the new courthouse. He told them to give him the county money (approximately \$5,000) or he would destroy the courthouse. They had spent a little over \$16,000 to build the courthouse so they gave him the money.

The troops had stolen nearly 1,000 hams just before they entered the county, but they still needed bread, vegetables, water, and whisky to fill their appetites. The women in the homes were required to bake and give them bread. The troops took fresh horses and left their worn out mounts in their place. Empty homes were searched for food, shoes, and valuables which were taken without permission. Bridges were burnt to slow down the Union troops under General Hopkins. The Union troops were about 24 hours behind Morgan's troops. Total damages and cost of stolen property in the county exceeded \$46,000. The State of Indiana reimbursed slightly more than \$40,000 of these claims.

Some of Morgan's men went into the Masonic Lodge in Versailles and stole all of the silver medals. When Morgan found out about this, he made his men give them back because he was a member of the Masons in Lexington, Kentucky. Morgan's men left Versailles about 4 p.m. and slept overnight just South of Sunman in the Northeastern part of Ripley County. The next morning they went into Dearborn County, and crossed into Ohio at Harrison. There was only one casualty in Ripley County. A deaf minister was shot for not stopping when ordered to do so.

Morgan has remained famous because he was the only Confederate General to attack inside the states of Indiana and Ohio. He was a rebel who did what he thought was best even though it directly violated his orders from General Bragg to attack Louisville and stay south of the Ohio River.

He was a natural born leader. His four younger brothers and his brother in law transferred to his outfit. His only formal schooling was two years at Transylvania College in Lexington. He was expelled from college after he participated in a dual with a fraternity brother (neither one was seriously injured). Both the North and South press considered him to be a dynamic leader. As a result, well over 50,000 Union troops were stationed in Kentucky and Ohio because they did not know where or when he would attack.

Morgan joined the Union Army in 1846 and served during the Mexican War. Many of his troops were recruited by Morgan, and they wanted him to be their leader. At the end of his raid in Ohio, he surrendered and was sent to The Ohio State Penitentiary in Columbus, Ohio. Four months later he and several of his officers escaped by digging a tunnel. He was able to return South through Cincinnati by pretending to be a Northern businessman.

The troops assigned to Morgan after he returned home were not those from the Lexington, Kentucky area. For the most part they were the least desirable men in the remaining Kentucky and Tennessee Regiments. Morgan died on September 4, 1864. Three years later his body was brought back to Lexington, Kentucky. You can visit his monument, tomb and historical museum there today.

Several areas have performed reenactments of parts of his Raid, including Harrison, Ohio in 2006. It will be 150 years in 2013 since Morgan came through Ripley County. We should consider a re-enactment by then. If you are interested, please contact Tom Krumm at 812.667.4736, [tbkrumm@hotmail.com](mailto:tbkrumm@hotmail.com), or send a note to him at 4585 East County Road 650S, Versailles 47042.

# County, Indiana, Historical

Ripley



Society

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