

The Quarterly Bulletin of the  
Ripley County, Indiana, Historical Society, Inc.

Museum -- Corner of Main and Water Streets  
Versailles, Indiana 47042

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VOLUME XX

July 2001

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Summer Meeting

July 8, 2001 2:00 P.M.

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Holton town park in Holton

Special music will be part of our program

The Society has been busy the past months trying to get our neglected cemeteries restored. We have applied for grants or any monies to help with this project. At present, the Rising Sun Regional Foundation Inc. has been our only favorable reply with \$20,000.<sup>00</sup>.

The Weakman or Mt. Pleasant Cemetery on State Road 129 in Brown Township is nearly completed. Next we will start work on the Prattsburg Cemetery in Franklin Township.

Did you know there were 51 Revolutionary Soldiers in Ripley County? Can you name any? There is a plaque in the Court House with their names.

Another big project that we didn't expect is part of the roof on the Archives (Bank Building) is in the need of a new roof. At present, the roof is being checked and bids will be taken.

Kathleen and helpers are having the Museum open on weekends.

Several members have been generous and donated family history for our records. All family history is welcome.

RIPLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1 APRIL 2001

The April meeting of Ripley County Historical Society was held at the Archives building on 1 April 2001 with seventy eight members and guests present. The meeting opened with out of area guests introducing themselves. We were honored to have Boy and Girl scouts and Leaders. from Sunman, Indiana.

Everyone was saddened to hear that Bea Boyd had fallen on the way to Church and was taken to Madison to the hospital. A card as sent with signatures of all present to wish her a speedy recovery.

~~A motion was made and seconded that minutes be accepted as printed in the Bulletin.~~

The names of Directors for three townships were presented by Chairperson Henry Walker. From Franklin Twp, Jaqueline Rohlring; from Jackson Twp, Kathryn Manship; from Johnson Twp, Alan Smith. There were no nominations from the floor and candidates were accepted as presented.

Helen Einhaus was recognized as the new Historian for the Society. Bea Boyd had resigned after 20 years on the job.

Jeff French completed a map of Cliff Hill cemetery and a copy of map, a book, and data base for the computer were presented to the Society.

An afghan donated by Mrs Manship was given to the society. Tickets will be available and it will be given away at Versailles Pumpkin Show. We also have Alan Smith's postcard book, his "Tales of Versailles" book; Ripley County History books I and II on sale at the Society Library.

A grant has been received from the River Boat Fund, to be used to fix some cemeteries - Amt not known today.

We now have reels of old Osgood Journals and Versailles Republicans up to 1938. They were purchased with money from the Tyson Fund.

Next meeting will be at the Holton City Park. It is in Holton on the south side of Versailles Street. Helen Einhaus introduced Dian Persine Coon, a specialist in history on the Ohio Valley, who gave our program. She was assisted by Helen Einhaus and Helen Caplinger, and also some courthouse employees in research for some of the work.

The program was on the Underground Railroad. Ms. Coon presented this very well with charts and pictures of many of the Stations and to the risks that anti-slavery people took to help the escapees through to freedom. There were many routes to the North and several of them were through Ripley County. This was one of the most interesting and informative programs that we have had. I'm sure we will hear much more about it. Probably much to do with preserving the history.

Thanks to everyone who had a part in getting this together and to Franklin Township for serving refreshments.

Secretary,  
Henry Walker

President,  
Alice McCoy

BUZZING 'ROUND YOUR FAMILY TREE by Bea

I received an article from Fred Crum--on Dr. Cornett. This was in an envelope with a 3¢ stamp and had been sent to his mother, Alta Winsor, in 1945. The facts in the article were from the daughter of Dr. Cornett. Dr. Cornett owned what is known to us as Hassmer Hill Camp, part of Versailles State Park. When Dr. Cornett began practicing in 1844, conditions were hard. There were few roads. He rode horseback. Sometimes when the nights were dark and stormy and the woods so dense that even his horse would fail to find the way out, the only thing to do was to hitch his horse to a tree, remove the saddle for a pillow, and lie on the ground until daylight.

Dr. Cornett took a deep interest in horticulture and floriculture. He had a garden, doing all the work himself, and also a 12-acre orchard. Through his interest in agriculture, he became one of the promoters of the first County Fair in Ripley County. This was held at the Bob Bovard Farm on what is now the John Paul Homes. (I remember when this was a pasture, and at one Pumpkin Show it was used as a plane landing field. The pilot would fly over Versailles and back for a fee.)

Dr. Cornett was appointed as one of the trustees of Indiana University, served in the Indiana State Senate, and was the first president of Indiana State Medical Assn. He served Ripley County as a doctor for more than 40 years, spending the remainder of his life at Madison, where he died at age 92 on May 6, 1897.

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It was good to hear from Life Member Mr. Henry Abplanalp, LaJolla, California. We hadn't heard from him since his letter regarding the report of his death that had been in the bulletin! Alice Glover, then editor, had confused him with another Abplanalp, who had died. Alice was very upset, but Mr. A. took it very well, quoting Mark Twain, "That his death had been very much exaggerated."

Mr. Abplanalp has made many contributions to the RCHS since joining in 1976. After the mention of Isaac Levi's government stone in the April, 2001, bulletin, he wrote calling to my attention the notation made by a census-taker in the 1850 census. Isaac died in September after the census was taken. Isaac was listed in Delaware Township. (This was before Center Township was formed from Otter Creek, Delaware, and Jackson.) Application was made to the Reynolds Foundation, since the grave is in the Osgood area, to set the stone, and also for a sign for the Levi Family Cemetery, where the stones had been destroyed. Until the stone is set, it is on my front porch and is quite a conversation piece.

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We received \$20,000 from the Rising Sun Riverboat funds, for which we are grateful. This will give us a start on the cemeteries we had listed on the Grant Application. Work is now in progress on the restoration of Weakman, or Pleasant Hill, near Olean in Brown Township. There are two Revolutionary soldiers buried there.

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"The year 1762 there was no rain from the 1st of May to the 1st of September--123 days without rain; many of the inhabitants sent to England for hay." This was written on the back of a photo owned by John E. Montgomery, Kingwood, Ind., now a part of Jefferson Proving Ground. Some of the men are young, some old, in the photo of a group of men with a U.S. flag and flowers. Some have mustaches or long beards, and some have canes. Possibly it was Decoration Day. Oh, yes--The name Rosa Abplanalp was written on the front.

I was sorry to hear of the death of RCHS member Don Rice (Apr. 19, 1948-June 19, 2001.) He was Director of the Osgood Library District for the past four years, where he had made many changes and processes that were still in advancing stages. He will be missed very much.

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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