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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The summer meeting of the Ripley County Historical Society will be Sunday afternoon, July 10th, starting at 2:00, in the RCHS Library on the west side of the courthouse square in Versailles, Indiana. Diane Perrine Coon will give an update on the Underground Railroad Task Force Project activities and the establishment of the interpretative center. program will be, "Parade of Aprons for Gents and Ladies" by Betty Roepke. All are invited.

Activities at the Archives:

- New Directors elected are Michael Auterson, a local teacher, for Johnson Twp. and Helen Decker, a retired nurse who worked in Oldenburg, for Laughery Twp.
- ▶ During our April meeting one of the ladies had symptoms of a heart attack, the ambulance was called and transported her to the hospital where she spent three days. Thankfully, she seems to be doing fine now and has resumed her normal activities.
- ▶There was a note in the last newsletter thanking everyone that helped with the Jackson Twp. Cemetery book, sadly Bill Wagner was not mentioned. His help with the St. Maurice Cemetery was extensive and greatly appreciated. We apologize for the oversight. The book has been put on hold because of surgery, moving, and spring crops, but the finishing touches will soon be completed and a valuable book will be printed.
- ▶ After years of problems with our microfilm viewer-printer, it was loaded in the Krall truck and transported to Madison, Wisconsin to be reconditioned. The trip was successful and we now have a machine that produces great copies.
- ▶The RCHS log cabin located on Water Street next to the Museum has a new wood shingle roof. Other repairs to the cabin are being planned.
- ▶ We wish to thank Mr. Owen Heaton, Jr. of the Ripley County Highway Department and his staff for sharing their information about the roads and bridges in the county.

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4th of July

Ripley County History, Volume I	\$ 65	Vintage Postcards by Alan Smith	\$20	
Ripley County History, Volume II	5 5	Brown Township Cemetery Index	10	
Brown Twp. Tales by Alan Smith	20	Johnson Township Cemetery Index	10	
Tales of Versailles by Alan Smith 16		Mailing fees added for all books shipped.		

Check to make certain your dues are paid up-to-date. If not, mail your renewal to RCHS or to AN RIVE Beatrice Boyd, Treasurer, P.O. Box 83, Holton, IN 47023

Dues: New memberships are \$10.00 for the first year.

Renewals are \$5.00 per year thereafter.

Life memberships are \$100

MINUTES OF THE RIPLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY- APRIL 10, 2005

The regular meeting of the Ripley County Historical Society was held at the Archives Library with 29 members and guests present. Everyone introducing his or her self opened the meeting.

Henry Walker read the minutes; Bea Boyd gave the Treasurers report and both were accepted as read. Two new directors were elected: Helen Decker for Laughery and Michael Auterson for Johnson. The present directors for Otter Creek, Shelby, and Washington Townships were reelected.

Helen asked that we pursue grants for historical markers and Underground Railroad markers. It was also suggested that maybe the setting of the Levi Civil War stone could be included, but the owners of the property the cemetery is on have not given pennission. A motion was made by Judy and seconded by Joan. Motion passed.

Norris gave a report on the arch bridges of the County, He also had made pictures of them including a couple that no longer exist or have been bypassed. Bea stated that Mr. Virgil Stegner of Holton had put the keystone in many of the bridges. Commissioners have promised to review with RCHS any future action on historic bridges. He also had maps which are available for \$2 from Ripley County Tourism that contained pictures of historical importance.

On June 23rd a tour of the points of interest will be held. Call the extension office for information. _Museum will open Sundays from 2:00 to 4:00 PM from Memorial Day

A THANK YOU to Bill (William G. Wagner) for his work in compiling the records of the St. Maurice Cemetery in Napoleon. Wilbur Myers stated that due to damage from the tornado one of the historic houses in Holton was being taken down and materials from it were available to anyone willing to pick them up. He also noted that there were two graves on property owned by Tad Lainhart of Holton.

The meeting was adjourned with refreshments being served by Shelby Township. Refreshments next meeting by Washington Township. Next meeting date the 10th of July.

Dan Matiatos presented our program; He is a graduate of North Dakota University with a degree in Wildlife Biology. He started as Refuge Operations Specialist at Big Oaks NWR in October. There are refuges in every State in the Union. Big Oaks is leased from the Army, containing 50,000 acres of very diverse habitat. Some Species which are on decline and are in good numbers in Big Oaks are; Henslow Sparrow, which need the grassland, also in the streams; Beaver, River Otter, fish. Birds and Bats; Indiana bats, Bald Eagle, Hawks and great Blue Heron. There are streams and lakes for fishing, areas where deer hunting and turkey hunting is open with permission. Big Oaks Preservation Society sponsors youth training for deer and turkey hunting. Big Oaks Refuge is special and a big plus for this area.

President, Betty Roepke

Secretary, Henry Walker





FINAL TAPS FOR RIPLEY COUNTY'S MOST DECORATED VETERAN

As we in Ripley County prepared for the commemoration of Memorial day, 2005, we were called upon to lay to rest our most decorated World War II veteran, Mr. Herman W. Jahnigen. Mr. Jahnigen passed away on May 23, 2005, at the age of 87. Mr. Jahnigen entered the service in 1941 and received his training as a paratrooper with the 502nd Parachute Infantry. When the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment was activated in 1942, he was assigned there as a paratrooper trainer. After basic training that unit was moved to Camp Mackall, NC for advanced training and

maneuvers. In December 1943, they moved on to New York briefly and then to Northern Ireland. After two months training in Ireland, the unit moved to England in March 1944. On 6 June 1944 the unit was dropped over the Normandy countryside as the invasion of Europe known as Operation Overlord began. Mr Jahnigen was wounded on 9 June 1944 in a battle to secure a beachhead between the sea and the Merderet River. On 7 July 1944 the unit was relieved and returned to England on 13 July. Of the 2056 members of his unit, there were 1061 casualties with 307 having been killed in action.

On 17 September 1944, the 508th again dropped over Holland in Operation Market Garden where they maintained constant contact with the German Army until relieved on 6 October. Again on 18 December 1944, the unit was moved to the Ardennes region in Belgium and participated in the Battle of the Bulge and the liberation of Bastonne.

Mr. Jahnigen received a battlefield commission on 27 June 1945. During his service for the 508th, Lt. Jahnigen was awarded the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star, Silver Star, European Campaign Medal, Victory Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Distinguished Unit Citation, French Fourragere, Netherlands Citation, and the Normandy, Belgium, French, and American Defense Medals. His brother, Clem, also served as a paratrooper in WWII and preceded him in death. His younger brother Jerald served in the Korean War.

After returning to civilian life, Mr Jahnigen lived a quiet life in Versailles, where he married Thelma Koons, and raised a daughter, Jeanne (Ison). He and his wife operated the Jahnigen Dry Cleaners and later he worked for Berkel Electronics in Versailles. He was a member of the VFW, American Legion and served as the vice-commander of the ninth district of the American Legion. He was laid to rest in the Cliff Hill Cemetery in Versailles on 26 May 2005.

Written 6 June 2005, the 61st anniversary of Mr. Jahnigen's first combat jump.

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The National Muzzle Loading Rifle Assn is in their Spring Shoot at Friendship. June 11-19. If you cannot make this one mark your calendar for the Fall Shoot September 10-18 2005. This sleepy little town of 100 or so comes alive. This event has been going since 1930 and gets bigger every year. The Rand House is now a The Tippecanoe Ancient Fife and Drum Corps offically help open the Spring Shoot by performing at the Flag Raising ceremony on June 11th . Jerry Wilson, elementary school teacher at South Ripley School will share his Lewis and Clark Presentation on June 11 12. He gave this presentation at our April, 2005 meeting which was very enjoyable. Friendship was first called Hartsmill. It was settled by Harts. When the town was petitioned for a Post Office it was under the Name of Hartsville and Hart was the first postmaster. At the RChs Museum there is painting of Mr. and Mrs. Hart. This painting is recorded in the catalog of American Portraits.

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Such a thrill! to see the article on Common School Days in Ripley and Jefferson County 1893-1902 and 1907-1909 in Voi 44/04 in the HOOSIER GENEALOGIST. Transcribed and compiled by Julie (Myers) Thornburg. the grandaughter of Lennie May Custer Myers, teacher 1907-1952. Also in the same issue was "Uncle Clarence's Birthday Nov 15, 1898" from the memoirs of Linnie May Custer Myers. I remember when Linnie lived in Osgood. I knew her as Mrs. Chas Myers and Melvins's Mother. She was a neighbor to my sister. I do hope to see more articles from her memoirs in future Hoosier Genealogist. This is a magazine received by members of Indiana Historical Society. (There is a copy in RCHS Library)

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In August 1986 a Ripley County Interim Report of Historic Sites and Structures Inventory was published. Initial work on this survey began December 1985. Ann Davis, field Surveyor spent six months in winter and spring, driving Ripley County roads to spot potential survey entries and taking pictures. Local citizens were encouraged to use the report to help restore structures and use them to enhance the local area. There were 750 books, priced at \$5.00 each divided between 3 county groups to be sold: (2) Napoleon Community Recreation and Restoration committee (3) Osgood Beautification League. All of the books from RCHs were sold with the exception of 2 which were kept for their library also RCHS received a copy from Herbert Thompson Estate. Does anyone know where the rest of the books are? Sometimes books are stored and are forgotten.

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The Smith-Engel cabin (c.1833) on Museum Lot #21 which houses the Museum and Archives , is sporting a new Roof. It was moved from Laughery Twp in 1979. The contractor for the roof was Kamman Brothers from Friendship and the material was purchased locally at Halcomb Home Center.

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The Strawberries have come and gone. This was a good year for Indiana Strawberries are the best!

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A large crowd gathered at Holton to ask questions about the Homeland Security Facilities being established near Butlerville, In onwhat was Muscatatuck State Developmental Center.

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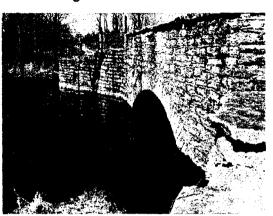
The Tulip Poplar (our state tree) was a beautiful sight with the blooms. The onethat is located in front of the Museum and also the one in my front yard and to you farmers out west. Indiana corn will be knee high on the 4th of youy farmers out west.

MORE RIPLEY COUNTY HISTORIC BRIDGES

We recently had the opportunity to tour the Big Oaks Wildlife Refuge and visit several historic areas including Old Timbers Lodge and Lake, site of Marble Corner and the St. Magdalene Church site. During this tour we were afforded the opportunity to visit and photograph the two Ripley County stone arch bridges located within Jefferson Proving Ground, now Big Oaks. These stone bridges have carried military traffic since 1941 when the area was taken over by the U.S. Government and became the Jefferson Proving Ground. We were told that these bridges were routinely traversed by 60-ton tanks at high speed with no significant deterioration of the structures. When our forefathers built these bridges, they could not have imagined the duty they would be called upon to perform for the good of our nation.



Collins-Ford Bridge from the West. Located 1 mile west of New Marion, on the east perimeter road and used by visitor traffic.



Marble Corner Bridge from Roadway.
Located ½ mile west of site of Old Marble
Corner near Ripley – Jennings County
Line. Located in the restricted area and
not accessible by visitors.

Ripley County's Laughery Valley

As we traveled Ripley County on March 24, 2005, photographing the many stone arch and other historic bridges in our county, we were struck by the beauty of the Laughery Valley. Laughery Creek begins in Laughery Township near Batesville and meanders south through Jackson, Delaware, Center, Johnson (in and out of the Lake at the State Park) and Brown Townships. The big creek exits the county southeast of Friendship and becomes the boundary line between Ohio and Dearborn Counties, and continues into the Ohio River three miles south of Aurora. Mr. John Vanosdol, Equipment Operator for the Ripley County Highway Department, says he has traveled Laughery Creek from near its source in Laughery Township to its mouth on the Ohio River in a canoe. He says when the water is high, there are only a few portages where one must carry his canoe around the rocks. He says that even though the distance from its source to the mouth as the crow flies is about 40 to 50 miles, the creek itself is almost 100 miles long due to its frequent meandering.

South of Highway 50 near Versailles, Laughery Creek flows through a beautiful valley about 10 miles to Friendship. The valley has high ridges on both sides with Cave Hill Road on the east and Olean Road and State Road 129 on the west. In that valley is Ripley County's only iron bridge and also a large concrete arch bridge. There are also two places in Johnson Township south of Versailles where the creek can be forded on its gravel bottom. One of these is on County Road 200S and the other on Signor Hill Road.



Iron Bridge #14 over Laughery Creek in Brown Township,



Iron Bridge #14 over Laughery Creek
Viewed from the eastern approach

LAUGHERY VALLEY "Continued"



Bridge #9 Concrete double arch bridge over Laughery Creek on Cave Hill road in Johnson Township near Brown

Jackson Falls

Picture taken from a Post Card posted in 1942 showing Jackson Falls near Versailles, Indiana, indicated to be 70 feet high. This falls is located on a tributary to and near Laughery Creek. It still exists today in the beautiful Laughery Valley however it is on private property and not accessible to the public.



FRIENDSHIP is a beautiful little town that turns into a pioneer village at least twice a year when the National Muzzle Loading Rifle Association hold their semi-annual shoots, flee markets and other events. This year on August 27 and 28 the NMLRA will debut a new event called "Lore of the Laughery". This event will draw its inspiration from the time period of 1750 to 1812. "Lore of the Laughery" will be an educational living history event as the stories of the period are told and reenacted.

One of the few Revolutionary War engagements to take place in Indiana occurred on Laughery Creek. There will be stories of Colonel Archibold Lochry and his 107 militiamen who were attacked by Indians near the mouth of the Creek that now bears his name (with some different spelling that has evolved over time since the 1781 engagement). Ticket and event information can be located at the



Bridge #191 over Laughery Creek on County Road 610E near Friendship.



following website: http://www.nmlra.org/LoreofLaughery2.pdf (Adobe Acrobat Reader required; available free at: http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2_allversions.html).

BUSCHING COVERED BRIDGE over Laughery Creek at the entrance of the Versailles State Park is now undergoing major repair and renovation. All the support rods, floor joists, floor, roof and siding are in the process of being replaced. The stone guard wall on the east-end is also being rebuilt on a new foundation.









OFFICERS and DIRECTORS

Adams Twp. - Mrs Betty Roepke; 9644 E Co Rd 1300 N, Sunman, IN 47041

President

Brown Twp. - Vacant

Center Twp. - Mr. Norris Krall; 4499 N Old Michigan Rd, Osgood, IN 47037 Delaware Twp. - Mrs. Lois Workman; 4823 N Co Rd 350 E, Osgood, IN 47037 Franklin Twp. - Mrs. Esther Edmondson 7653 E Co Rd 800 N, Sunman, IN 47041 Jackson Twp. - Mr. Andrew Scholle; 5448 W Co Rd 800 N, Osgood, IN 47037 Johnson Twp. - Mr. Michael Auterson; 549 W. Tanglewood Rd, Versailles, IN 47042 Laughery Twp. - Mrs. Helen Decker; 314 Crestview Lane, Batesville, IN 47006 Otter Creek Twp. - Mrs. Beatrice Boyd; P.O.Box 83 Holton, IN 47023

Shelby Twp. - Mrs. Cheryl Welch; 6453 S Co Rd 225 W, Versailles, IN 47042

Washington Twp. - Mr. Henry Walker, 1721 N Co Rd 575 E, Milan, IN 47031

Treasurer
Museum Curator
Secretary

Mrs. Helen Einhaus; 643 Columbia Avenue, Osgood, IN 47037 Lori Hoffman; 5565 E. Lower Dry Fork Rd. Madison, IN 47250 Bea Boyd, Henry & Jerry Walker, and Norris & JoAn Krall County Historian
Web Master
Newsletter Committee

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