

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

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

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<b>January     2019</b>	<b>MERRY CHRISTMAS &amp; HAPPY NEW YEAR</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>1</b>		

▲ **Quarterly Meeting**

The Ripley Co. Historical Society will meet **Sunday, January 13th, at 2:00 pm** at the Archive Library on the West side of Versailles Courthouse Square. The program will be written by Rheadawn Metz and given by Cheryl Welch on The Box items & Stephen Harding Home.

▲ **Library Hours**

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 Year. The Library will also be closed during inclement weather. **NOTICE:** The Museum will be open on Sunday Afternoons 2-4 p.m. Memorial Day through Labor Day & on Pumpkin Show Saturday Sep. 29<sup>th</sup>. Questions call 812-689-3031.

**NOTICE:** 2018 Yearly Dues are due in January 2018. Mail your renewal for 2018 to RCHS at P.O. Box 525, Versailles, IN 47042 Dues: Annual \$15; Life \$150.

▲ **Research**

Research is free to all members and \$7.00 for non-members. Copies/scans are \$1.00 per page for everyone and can be sent via email or in paper form. To take pictures of copies a \$2.00 charge will be taken. Please make your research requests via email or regular mail.

▲ **Volunteers Needed**

We are in need of volunteers to donate 3 hours of their time one day a week, Monday – Friday from 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm. If you live in Delaware or Franklin Township, please consider volunteering to be a director from your county. Contact Cheryl Welch if you are interested in filling any of these positions.

▲ **Books**

The WWII War Veterans Book, titled LEST WE FORGET, is still available. It can be obtained for \$25 at (1) Batesville Historical Society which is located on George Street next to the Post Office, (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 \$30. Checks should be made payable to Ripley County Historical Society. We give our heartfelt thanks to Joan and Norris Krall. We are now printing the Ripley County History Book Vol. II

▲ **Ripley County – 200 Years**

A book is being put together for the Ripley County Bi-Centennial covering 1818 – 2018. We are looking for information from each township such as: old communities no longer in existence, schools, churches, cemeteries, etc. Interesting old stories or historical events that occurred would be great as

well as more recent information. Please send your stories to the Ripley County Historical Society Archives by email, [staff@rchslib.org](mailto:staff@rchslib.org), or mail, P O Box 525, Versailles, IN.

## **RIPLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MINUTES**

October 14, 2018

The autumn quarterly meeting, held at the Society's Archives Building on October 14, 2018, was called to order by President Cheryl Welch at 2:00 pm. Cheryl led the Pledge of Allegiance. The minutes of the summer quarterly meeting were read and approved. There were 19 members and guests in attendance. Treasurer Owen Menchhofer presented the Treasurer's report and it was approved by those in attendance.

### **Business:**

- Help is always needed to keep the archives open from 1-4pm Monday thru Friday
- Current project is making new family history folders. This project was funded by the OPERATION ROUNDUP grant of \$436. Penny Brinson is working on this project.
- County Fair. People were interested in seeing how the OCR software is used to research the archived newspapers. A big "Thank you" to Dannie Welch for his many hours scanning newspapers.
- Museum was open for the Taste of Versailles event, Versailles Pumpkin Show and Versailles Bicentennial Celebration
- Tyson Fund grant of \$344 is being used to purchase new notebooks for the Toph papers
- Hopewell Baptist Church was given permission to use our parking lot while they operated their food stand for the Versailles Pumpkin Show. They were very appreciative as it saved them many steps!!
- Duane Drockelman & Warren Bruns are continuing the 45 second WRBI radio spots about Ripley County historical facts for the Ripley County Bicentennial. They are broadcast at 6:20 am, 10:20 am and 4:20 pm
- Mike Stratton/SK Funeral Home is also sponsoring the Ripley County history facts for the Herald Tribune & Ripley Publishing each week until the end of the year
- Mike Stratton discussed the Historical Signs in the county that RCHS sponsored/erected a number of years ago. Originally 42 were erected and 40 are still present. A few of them are in need of repairs. Green Signs has worked with Mike and proved a good deal on repair costs. Owen Menchhofer made motion, Barb Eads seconded, for the Society to pay these repair costs. Motion Approved. Barb suggested each of the township directors check on the signs in their respective areas by taking a cell phone photo, and report back to Mike/Cheryl on condition of the sign, etc. by email to RCHS email address
- Victor Sarringhaus suggested the meeting dates, museum open dates, etc be sent to Terri Trowbridge for inclusion in the 2019 Ripley County Tourism booklet.
- Hitching post at the Museum needs to be repaired

The meeting speaker, Ken Hylton, was introduced by Cheryl Welch and Owen Menchhofer. Ken is the Veterans Service Officer in Ripley County and has served in that capacity since January 2007. Initially the office was open 3 days a week and now is open 5 days each week. Ben Layton also assists him with the office. Ken said "Serving the Veterans" is a rewarding position. The Veteran Services Office can provide a Governor's certificate and Presidential certificate to the family after a veteran has passed. They also have 2 vans and 7 or 8 volunteers

available to take Veterans to medical appointments. Currently Hylton stated there are 2,200-2,300 veterans living in Ripley County. His main remarks were concerning the Korean War. The end of the conflict was 65 years this summer, and it started 68 years ago. When the Korean conflict began with the US involvement in June 1950 the United States had been in a reduction in force scenario since the end of WW2, and many WW2 soldiers were reactivated to military service. There were 5 phases with the Korean Conflict and VSO Hylton had posters showing details of each phase. He stated there was no number of how many folks from Ripley County served in the Korean Conflict. The Indiana War Museum on Meridian Street in Indianapolis may have records for each county and Indiana participants in the Korean War are listed on a monument at the museum.

Owen Menchhofer concluded the program discussing the long range plans of volume 2 of "Lest We Forget" which will go from the end of WW2 and include Korean War and Viet Nam War veterans. Volume 3 will be Desert Storm to current. He mentioned to the need to have a Ripley County History Volume 3 in the future. The current project, Ripley County Bicentennial History, by Winters Publishing, will have its printing date delayed to Spring 2019.

The meeting ended at 3pm with refreshments provided by Otter Creek Township. President Cheryl announced the DAR would be at the Courthouse Annex on Thursday November 15 with a program honoring the Viet Nam veterans.

Next meeting of the Society will be Sunday, January 13, 2pm at the archives with Rheadawn Metz providing a program about the Harding House. Shelby Township will be having the refreshments.

Respectfully Submitted

Owen Menchhofer, secretary pro-tem

### Dried Apple Cake

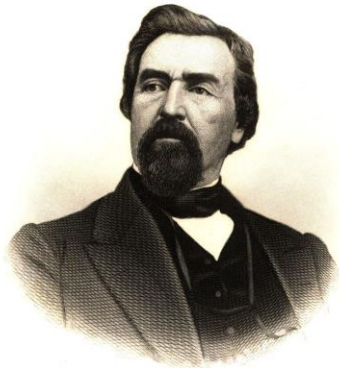
The Dallas Morning News

Dallas, Texas

March 22, 1914

One cup dried apples. Soak overnight and then chop fine. Simmer slowly two hours in a cup of molasses. Cream one-third cup butter with one cup sugar; add one egg one teaspoon cinnamon, one teaspoon cloves, one-half teaspoon nutmeg, a few grains of salt, and two cups of flour. Beat this mixture and then add the apples and molasses.

## STEPHEN SELWYN HARDING



*I am Yours Truly*  
*S. Selwyn Harding*

Stephen Selwyn Harding was born on February 24, 1808, in Ontario County, New York. He was one of 15 children including 4 step children of his dad, David Harding. According to family trees submitted to Ancestors.com, he was a third cousin thrice removed of President Warren G. Harding.

His father, David participated in the war of 1812, and he was captured by the Indians who were helping the British. David lost his land due to resulting financial problems. After the war concluded David felt he would be better off moving to the Indiana wilderness in order to hunt and grow enough food to support his large family.

The family built crude rafts and came down the Ohio River to Aurora arriving in 1820. Stephen Selwyn was 12 years old, and he was only able to go to school for a total of nine months. When he was 16, Stephen was hired as a teacher in Old Milan for \$7.00 a month plus board.

When he was 17 years old Stephen gave his first public speech in Old Milan on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. He knew he wanted to be more than a teacher so he started to go to Law school in Brookville, Indiana. He would walk home on weekends. In September, 1827, he passed the bar exam and opened up a law office in Richmond. He didn't have many clients so he had plenty of time to expand his knowledge base by reading many of the classics.

In 1828, Stephen decided to try establishing a law office in New Orleans. He gained first-hand knowledge of slavery and how it abused the concept of freedom. He witnessed several slave sales first-hand and developed an intense hatred of slavery. The blacks were treated like livestock at a farmer's auction. In less than six months, he decided he didn't want to practice law in New Orleans.

Stephen became a clerk on a boat going up the Mississippi and went back to his birth place in Ontario County, New York. He became acquainted with a Mormon founder, John Smith. He also met his wife Avoline Sprout. He decided to come back to Ripley County, Indiana to practice law. In July, 1830, Stephen was appointed the Ripley County Attorney, and had his office on the second floor of the Court House. He represented Ripley county in all legal matters during this period of time.

His oldest son Selwyn Stephen was born in 1831 in Old Milan, the first of nine children. On November 22, 1883, he purchased 80 acres on Old Milan Road near route 101. He built his beautiful two story home, which is standing (but the windows have been changed and the pillars on the front porch removed). In 1835, he opened the first Franklin Township post office inside his general store behind his house. In 1837, his father David died and he was buried in the Old Milan Cemetery.

Between 1837 and 1840, Stephen acquired over 500 additional acres in Franklin Township, and started a wheat mill and a saw mill. He continued practicing law in Versailles.

In the 1840's Stephen ran for Lt. Governor and Governor but was soundly defeated. The residents of Ripley County were pretty well split between for and against slavery. He gave several speeches on anti-slavery. His house in Old Milan became station number 7 on the underground railroad.

Stephen was an active member of the new Republican party in the 1850's and was well known to members at the state level. Over 20 of them wrote Lincoln and encouraged him to nominate Stephen to a responsible position.

Lincoln was worried that some of the western territories would become pro slavery. He appointed Stephen as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Governor of the Utah territory in 1862. The Mormons hated him because they wanted to be in control of Utah. Brigham Young felt he should be the governor of Utah. His backers got Lincoln to discharge Stephen Harding as governor.

Lincoln knew he owed Stephen for all of his work with the Republican Party so he appointed him Chief Justice of the territories of Utah and Colorado for most of two years.

In 1865, Stephen's term ended and he decided to come back to 4180 Old Milan Road to practice law as well as manage over 500 acres. He did this until his sight failed him in 1881. Stephen S. died on February 12, 1891, and is buried in the Greendale Cemetery in Dearborn County. He was willing to stand up for what he believed to be right.

Written by Tom Krumm 3/5/2104

## BOOKS FOR SALE

A Century of Schools	by Alan Smith	\$20.00
Adams Township Cemetery Directory		\$10.00
Broken Wings	by Robert Kelly	\$20.00
Brown Township Cemetery Records		\$10.00
Brown Township Tales	by Alan Smith	\$20.00
Historic Travel Guide to Ripley County	by Paul R Wanning	\$23.00
History of Adams Township 1950	by Harold Freeland	\$20.00
Jackson Township Cemetery Records		\$13.00
Johnson Township Cemetery Records		\$10.00
Lest We Forget WWII	by RCHS	\$25.00
Milan, Indiana: A Storied Past 1854-2004		\$16.00
Napoleon & Vicinity Sesquicentennial 1820-1970		\$12.00
Old Timbers	by Chilton Thompson	\$23.00
Osgood Indiana Sesquicentennial 1856-2006		\$17.00
Passing Point	by Don Morrison	\$8.00
Revolutionary War Soldiers and Patriots with Ties to Ripley County Indiana		
	by Marlene Jan McDermert	\$34.00
Ripley Country, In Vintage Post Cards	by Alan Smith	\$20.00
Ripley County History, Volume I		\$65.00
Ripley County History, Volume II	(Paperback)	\$25.00
Passing Point	by Don Morrison	\$8.00
Story of the Bradt Fund, the F. Hale Bradt Family and their Versailles, Indiana Farm 1906-2001		n/c
Sugar Branch	by Don Morrison	\$16.00
Take The River	DVD PBS Presentation	\$25.00
Tales of Versailles	by Alan Smith	\$16.00
The Dark Line	by Don Morrison	\$20.00
Those First Bright Days of Elvis	by Josephine Rascoe Keenan	\$14.00
In Those Dazzling Days of Elvis	by Josephine Rascoe Keenan	\$14.00
Versailles, Indiana School Life 1818-1966	by Alan Smith	\$20.00
Wilbur's War (Abridged)	by Hale Bradt	\$15.00

## *Ripley County, Indiana, Historical*



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