

**The Quarterly Bulletin**  
**Ripley County, Indiana, Historical Society, Inc.**  
**Library – 125 Washington Street**  
**Museum – Corner of Main and Water Streets**  
**Versailles, Indiana 47042**

**www.rchslib.org**

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**VOLUME XXXIV**

**January 2013**

**Number 1**

▲ The Ripley Co. Historical Society will meet Sunday, January 13, at 2:00 at the Archive Library on the west side of Versailles Courthouse Square. The program for our next meeting will be given by Rosalind McKittrick on Buttons. Refreshments will be provided by Johnson Twp. members.

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

▲ 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, (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 week-day 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.

▲ The Tyson Library is putting on a program starting March 11, 2013, on the Civilian Conservation Corps also known as CCC Camp during the WWII. CCC Camp members worked building roads, erecting telephone poles, helping farmers, planting trees, and building state parks. They spent a lot of time in Ripley County during the war helping our citizens. Keep an eye out for further information.

The RCHS Archives Library is open for public research weekdays 1 – 4 pm, except holidays, Pumpkin Show Week; Closed this year Dec 24<sup>th</sup>, reopen on Jan 7<sup>th</sup> for Christmas and New Year. The Library will also be closed during inclement weather. **NOTICE:** The Museum is closed for the winter months. Questions call 812-689-3031.

**NOTICE:** 2012 Yearly Dues are due in January 2012.

Mail your renewal for 2012 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>Vintage Postcards</i> by Alan Smith	20
<i>Jackson Township Cemetery Index</i>	13	<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	<i>Assorted Jefferson Proving Ground Books</i>	
Shipping Charges added for all books	5		

RIPLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

RIPLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MINUTES  
OCTOBER 14, 2012

The Fall Quarterly meeting, held at the Society's Archives Building, 125 Washington Street, Versailles, on October 14, 2012 was called to order by President Cheryl Welch at 2:00 p.m. Cheryl led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

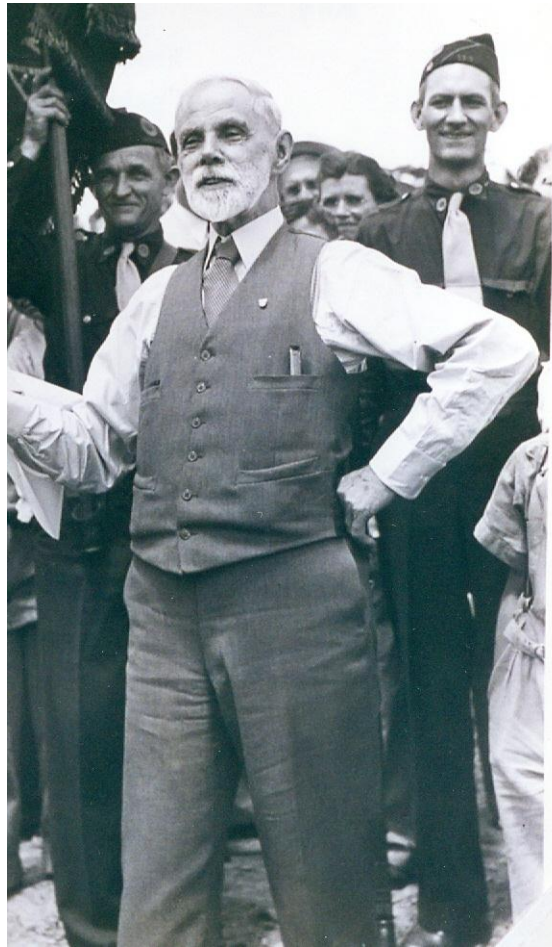
The minutes of the summer quarterly meeting were read by Secretary Frank Keenan and approved as read. Treasurer Owen Menchhofer distributed and read highlights from his Income & Expenses Report which was approved as written.

President Welch reported that the replacement siding for the Society's Museum has been completed at a cost of \$883.00. Cheryl also reported that the Society had received \$100.00 rebate for the new Archive Building dehumidifier. President Welch also noted that the Society has purchased and received the memorial plaque for those donating a replacement window in the archives Building. Cheryl further reported that the Society has received old photographs of all of the County's public buildings from Conner Prairie in Fishers, Indiana. They will be hung in the Archives Building. Cheryl also noted that RCHS has been gifted by Opal Wyman with a grandfather clock, formerly in use at the Jefferson Proving Ground, which likely will be placed in the front room of the Archives Building.

Following the business meeting Tom Krumm reviewed several highlights from his report in his excellent account of the history of the Underground Railroad in Ripley County, set forth in the October 2012 Quarterly Bulletin, and elaborated upon them. Some of Tom's accounts included such interesting items as the fact that President William Henry Harrison owned seven (7) slaves during his service as acting governor of Indiana. And General and later President Ulysses S. Grant did not free the slaves he owned until 1859, only a few years before becoming the Union's premier General in the field during the Civil War. Tom also noted that one of the seventeen known safe houses in Ripley County was the Hunter House in Versailles. A particularly interesting fact reported by Tom was that some 393 "free blacks" had settled in the Northwest Territory as of 1810, some six years before Indiana Statehood, under land grants for their service during the Revolutionary War. Tom graciously acknowledged the great work done and historic archives available in the Archives Building, and assembled by various Society members, and in particular Society Member and former County Historian, Helen Einhaus.

Johnson Township will be responsible for refreshments following the winter meeting on January 13, 2013, at the Archives Building.

Respectfully submitted,  
Frank Keenan, Secretary



**JAMES H. TYSON**

## **UNCLE JIM TYSON OF VERSAILLES, INDIANA**

### **By Tom Krumm**

September 14<sup>th</sup> may be the most important day of the year in Versailles, Indiana. James H. Tyson was born in Versailles on September 14, 1856. His Dad, William H. Tyson, was born near Cross Plains in 1819. He married his wife, Ella Ann Adams, in Friendship, Indiana on October 1, 1846. Ella was related to President John Adams and President John Quincy Adams. William's ancestors came to Philadelphia on the same boat as William Penn who founded Philadelphia.

William and Ella moved to Versailles in 1854. William was a teacher and he actually wrote 20 local history articles which were published in the Versailles Republican in 1881. William and Ella had seven children. Jim was number five and was born in a house on the East side of the Ripley County Courthouse.

Jim enjoyed playing marbles as a kid with other children in the neighborhood, and frequently did so when he was supposed to get another bucket of water from the well located on the block, now occupied by the courthouse. He was the best player in the center of Versailles.

Jim went to the available grade schools until April 3, 1871, when he was fourteen years old and had gone as far as he could go in the local public schools at that time. A public high school did not exist in 1871. Being one of seven children, he decided to get a job at the local newspaper (now the Versailles Republican). He started out by cleaning floors and taking out the trash. The staff was very small and he soon learned the most interesting employees were the type setters. This group was fond of traveling from one newspaper to another.

Uncle Jim spent many hours learning how to set type so he could follow this interesting career path. In the next fourteen years, he set type in fourteen different locations: Osgood, Aurora, Indianapolis, Covington, KY., Georgetown, KY., Kansas City, MO., Harrisonville, MO., Gerard, MO., Boulder, CO., Red Mountain, CO., and Denver, CO. While in Denver, he published a business directory. (If you look at the size of the Tyson home, you will appreciate why Jim didn't mind moving out.)

Jim then decided to switch to the advertising field. He got involved with an advertising project in Baltimore, Maryland. This experience was part of the foundation he was able to use later in his career at Walgreens. He returned to Chicago in 1890 and bought a print shop. He would exchange printing services to a hotel for meals.

In 1895, Jim met a new tenant in his rooming house, Charles Walgreen. They both loved to read classical books, and frequently took turns reading to each other for entertainment. Jim never owned or drove a car. He saved his money and was able to invest in a second drug store managed by Charles Walgreen in 1909.

The drug store chain had expanded to 13 stores by 1913. Walgreen invited Jim to work for him as an administrator. Jim became secretary and was in charge of insurance for the chain. It was Jim's idea to name the stores "Walgreens". Jim walked to work most days which meant he continued exercising. He supported the system of letting each store manager operate it autonomously. All managers were paid performance bonuses, and they were encouraged to reinvest most of their bonus in company stock.

The State of Illinois made a law in 1926 that required all officers of drug companies to be pharmacists. Jim had to resign his secretarial position but he continued as an employee morale booster. Once a year on his birthday, he would invite the women employees to lunch. One year he paid for 4500 lunches.

In 1930, Jim opened up a trust fund account for the benefit of the citizens of Versailles. In 1937, the Tyson Methodist Church was completed. The design was unique because not one nail was used on the building. The church was built in honor of his mother, Ella.

Jim had accumulated a personal library of over 6,000 books. His foundation built the Tyson Library where these books are kept. He also funded the waterworks and paid for a large part of Tyson School, which is now used as an apartment building.

Additional funds were used to fund the Tyson Gymnasium. Each year, Tyson funds are used to benefit the community. This year, \$100,000.00 was used to buy the Spencer building for the Lions Club; \$2000.00 was donated to the Ripley County Historical Records so they can put more documents on microfilm. Ripley County and its citizens have been very blessed by Uncle Jim Tyson's generosity.

## County, Indiana, Historical

Ripley



Society

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