

The Quarterly Bulletin

Ripley County, Indiana, Historical Society, Inc.

Library – 125 Washington Street
Museum – Corner of Main and Water Streets
Versailles, Indiana 47042
812-689-3031

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June 2025

HAPPY SUMMER

Number 3

▲ Quarterly Meeting

Our next meeting will be held **July 13, 2025**. The meeting will be held at the Archives at 2:00 pm. This meeting will be by our ice cream social with refreshments will be served by The Historical Society Directors. Our program on the Civil War will be presented by Dan Goris.

▲ Library Hours



NOTICE: The library is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday 1 pm-4 pm. For those not able to visit us in person, email your requests for information to rchslib@gmail.com or regular mail to P O Box 525 Versailles, IN 47042. We look forward to serving your research needs.

NOTICE: The Museum is open by appointment only. To schedule an appointment call Cheryl Welch, President 812-621-0418, Duane Drockelman, Vice President 812-852-1313 or Barbara Eades, Secretary 812-701-9238.



▲ Annual Dues

Remember to renew your membership for another year. **2025** Yearly Dues are due in January. Mail your renewal for **2025** to RCHS at P.O. Box 525, Versailles, IN 47042 Dues: Annual \$20; Life \$150.

▲ Research

Research is free to all members and \$10.00 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. Research is free to all members.

▲ Volunteers Needed

We are looking for volunteers to donate 3 hours of their time one day a week, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday or Friday from 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm. Contact Cheryl Welch if you are interested in volunteering.

▲ Books

See our list of books available listed on page three of this newsletter. The WWII War Veterans Book, titled *LEST WE FORGET* by Joan and Norris Krall 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), (3) in Versailles at the Ripley County Historical Society Library on the west side of the Courthouse Square (open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday afternoon from 1 to 4), or (4) NOVEL HeARTs Bookstore, 133 Tyson Street Versailles, IN. Checks should be made payable to Ripley County Historical Society. Books may be shipped for a \$7.50 shipping and handling fee.

RIPLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MINUTES

The Ripley County Historical Society held their quarterly meeting March 31, 2025 at the Central House in Napoleon. Fifteen members and one guest were present.

President Cheryl Welch called the meeting to order and led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

The minutes from the last meeting were read by Secretary Barbara Eades. Owen Menchhofer presented the treasurer's reports with year end and first quarter reports. The minutes and treasurers' reports were approved.

Old Business:

- Ripley County History Book: Tracy Winters sent a book to Central House; however it was the same book as previously sent with no corrections or updates made. Still waiting for Tracy at Winters Publishing to complete the book.
- Funds from the Tyson Grant were used to repair the floor joist and add new shelves in the basement. All work is completed.
- Reminder to pay dues.

New Business:

- Election of Directors - There are vacancies for Jackson Township and Delaware Township. Pat Hicks will serve as director for Jackson Township.
- Officers for 2025-2026 will remain the same.
- The heat is not working at the Archives, so we are temporarily closed. The part has arrived and we awaiting installation. A notice was posted on Facebook.
- DAR has requested to plant a Liberty tree next to the Museum. Owen Menchoffer moved to have the tree planted. Victor Sarringhouse seconded the motion. All approved.
- DAR has donated a flag to the Historical Society.
- Discussion was held about continuing to meet in January due to inclement weather. We will continue to schedule the January meetings.
- Owen Menchoffer is searching local newspapers for obituaries to add names to Wreaths Across Ripley County. He has found many interesting stories!
- Women in Local History: Kay Koppel told about Barbara Fox (1842-1925), who invented the fire escape. The story will be in the new history book. She is buried in St. John's Cemetery, Napoleon.

The meeting was adjourned to the program.

Victor presented the program with many interesting facts about the Central House. It is a federal style house with a stepped gable roof. The building has served as a drover's inn, a stop on the stagecoach line, a butcher shop, family dwelling, and a boarding house. The building was abandoned during the 1950's -1960's. It was purchased by Frank Stark and Bob Dean. When purchased, the building had no windows or plaster, although the house was solid, built with bricks 3-4 wide. The floor is of redwood beams and red oak flooring. In the attic you can see the wood still has its bark.

In 1970 the Recreation & Restoration Corporation was formed. In the 1980's & 1990's concerts and plays were held to raise money for restoration. For a while it served as a restaurant. A murder mystery and dinner is being planned for October.

Following the presentation everyone was welcome to tour Central House and view the doll collection of Patty Carson. She has been collecting dolls since 1980's. Her doll collection includes wooden – early to mid 1800's, China dolls, Mache heads w/kid body and wood legs, cloth – 1800's – 1940's, and celluloid – 1880's – 1940's.

For more information about Central House contact Victor Sarringhaus, 812-621-7826.

Refreshments were served by members of Central House.

The next meeting will be held at the RCHS Archives July 13, at 2:00 p.m. The program, about the Civil War, will be presented by Dan Goris. This meeting will also be our ice cream social with refreshments served by the directors.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Eades, Secretary



Central House



Patty Carson's Doll Collection

Civil War Remembrance

The Civil War was fought between the Northern and the Southern states from 1861-1865. 2025 marks 160 years since its end. Approximately 620,000 people died, (combined union and confederate armies). Infectious disease was by far the leading cause of death during the Civil War. Diarrhea, dysentery, malaria, and chicken pox were among the most common diseases of the Civil War, which were caused by close, poor living conditions, a lack of sufficient nutrition, and constant troop movement with inadequate rest.

The Ripley County Historical Society remembers one of its own, Thomas G. Day, who was a charter member, and one of its most active leaders. Mr. Day was always at the front of all historical activities since its organization in 1921.



Thomas was the son of Thomas and Harriet Tanner Day and born in Larkfield, near Maidstone, Kent County, England, August 3, 1841. He came to this country with his parents when he was only four years of age, The family landed in New York where they all became sick. Mr. Day's mother, a brother and his grandmother all died in New York within six weeks.

Mr. Day attended school in New York and Brooklyn for a while, and came to Indiana while still a young boy, locating in Madison with his father and step-mother.

As a young man, he went to Lincoln, IL in 1859 where he first tried to enlist. He returned to Madison and in June 1861 he enlisted in Captain Abe Hendrick's company, 1st Ind Mounted Volunteers, later known as the 3rd Ind Cavalry, and was mustered in August 12, 1861. He was taken to Washington,

DC and the war in the east. He was attached to Sickel's brigade and fought at Fredericksburg and Antietam.

He was captured by Col, John S. Mosby, Stewart's chief spy, within the Union lines, taken before Gen. Lee and questioned on December 4, 1863. He was then taken to Libby Prison and to Belle Isle December 5.

On March 22, 2864, he was moved farther within the confederate lines to Andersonville, GA prison. He escaped and was paroled and returned home January 21, 1865. He was married as a result of a romance that began during the war, to Rebecca Spendiff, on February 16, 1865. He was appointed at the Madison General Hospital.

In September, Mr. Day purchased a farm in Correct, IN, where he and his wife spent the remainder of their days. He began raising good cattle and hogs and to farm scientifically. Soon Purdue University sent students to see his model farm. Mr. Day was one of the pioneers for good roads in this section of Ripley County.

Mr. Day mustered into the C.C. Wheeler Post No 98 G.A.R. in 1881. Other comrades of the G.A.R. who were also valued members of the Historical Society were D.K. Marsh, a charter member; Alfred M. Wooley; Robert Hoover; Smith Harrell; Fred April; and Philip Seelinger. These men made possible the establishment of the War Memorial Museum at Versailles (Later donated to the Ripley County Historical Society) where it is hoped that the records of our country's history will be forever guarded in security with relics and memorials of the stirring struggles of our country's entire history.

Thomas G. Day passed away November 15, 1934 at his home in Correct, at the age of 93 years, 3 months, and 12 days. He was buried in Cliff Hill Cemetery, Versailles, with full military honors. His wife, Rebecca, preceded him in death in 1908. They had eleven children, 3 dying in infancy, Hattie R. Day Livingston, Thomas Edward Day, Franklin G. Day, Walter R. Day, Estella M. Day Bovard, Lena Day Strubbe, Cora S. Day, and Bertha Prudence Day Gookins.

~ Information for this article taken from records at the Ripely County Historical Society and, Versailles Republican, November 22, 1934.



BOOKS FOR SALE

| | | |
|--|----------------------------|---------|
| A Century of Schools | by Alan Smith | \$20.00 |
| A Wishful Eye | by D. L. McIntyre | \$15.00 |
| Adams Township Cemetery Directory | | \$15.00 |
| Broken Wings | by Robert Kelly | \$20.00 |
| Brown Township Cemetery Records | | \$15.00 |
| Brown Township Tales | by Alan Smith | \$20.00 |
| Center Township Cemetery Records | | \$15.00 |
| Delaware Township Cemetery Records | | \$15.00 |
| Franklin Township Cemetery Records | | \$15.00 |
| History of Adams Township | by Harold Freeland | \$20.00 |
| Historic Travel Guide to Ripley County | by Paul R Wunning | \$20.00 |
| In These First Bright Days of Elvis Book I | by Josephine Rascoe Keenan | \$16.00 |
| In Those Dazzling Days of Elvis Book II | by Josephine Rascoe Keenan | \$16.00 |
| In Those Glory Days of Elvis Book III | by Josephine Rascoe Keenan | \$16.00 |
| Indiana's Fascination Museums | by Paul R Wunning | \$10.00 |
| Jackson Township Cemetery Records | | \$15.00 |
| Johnson Township Cemetery Records | | \$15.00 |
| Laughery Township Cemetery Records | | \$15.00 |
| Lest We Forget a Tribute to the World War II Veterans of Ripley County | by Norris & Joan Krall | \$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 McDerment | \$34.00 |
| Ripley County, IN Vintage Post Cards | by Alan Smith | \$25.00 |
| Ripley County History Volume I | | \$65.00 |
| Ripley County History Volume II | (Paperback) | \$25.00 |
| Shelby Township Cemetery Records | | \$15.00 |
| Story of the Bradt Fund, the F. Hale Bradt Family and their Versailles, Indiana Farm 1906 – 2001 | | n/c |
| Sugar Branch #1 | by Don Morrison | \$16.00 |
| The Dark Line #2 | by Don Morrison | \$20.00 |
| Come Safe Home #3 | by Don Morrison | \$20.00 |
| Tales of Versailles | by Alan Smith | \$16.00 |
| Versailles, Indiana School Life 1818 -1966 | by Alan Smith | \$20.00 |
| Wilbur's War (Abridged) | by Hale Bradt | \$15.00 |

Check out our Facebook page: *Ripley County Historical Society & Museum*
<https://www.facebook.com/people/Ripley-County-Historical-Society-Museum/61558493116775/>

RIPLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUMS

Ripley County Historical Society: Archives – P. O. Box 525, 125 N Washington Street, Versailles, IN 47042. 812-689-3031 Open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday 1 pm-4 pm. **Museum** – Open by appointment only. Website: <https://rchslib.org> email: rchslib@gmail.com

Osgood Historical Museum: 128 South Buckeye Osgood, IN 47037. 812-689-1876 Open by appointment only. Face Book: Osgood Historical Museum

Batesville Area Historical Society: 15 W George Street Batesville, IN 47006, 812-932-0999 Open Thursday & Friday 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Saturday 9 a.m.-noon. Closed January & February. Website: <https://batesvillehistoricalcenter.org>

The Sunman History Museum: Located in the Town Hall on the north side of Sunman, opposite the fire station. Open Monday – Friday 9:00 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Milan 54 Museum: Located 201 W Carr St. P O Box 54, Milan, IN 47031. Open Wednesday-Saturday, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Outside of these hours, an appointment can be made by contacting us via email or phone: milan54@frontier.com 812-654-2772.

OFFICERS and DIRECTORS

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| Adams Twp. - Mr. Duane Drockelman, 10238 N. Adams Church Rd. Batesville, IN 47006 | Vice President |
| Brown Twp. - Mrs. Barbara Eades, 3953 E. Olean Rd. Versailles, Indiana 47042 | Secretary |
| Center Twp. - Mr. Roger Abplanalp, 2738 W. Co Rd 450 N. Osgood, IN 47037 | |
| Delaware Twp. – | |
| Franklin Twp. – Mr. Fred Glover, 5611 E Co. Rd. 300 N, Milan, IN 47031 | |
| Jackson Twp. - Mrs. Pat Hicks, 3496 W Napoleon Wilson St., Batesville, IN 47006 | |
| Johnson Twp. - Mr. Owen Menchhofer, 1970 N Co. Rd. 300 W, Holton, IN 47023 | Treasurer |
| Laughery Twp. – Mrs. Diane Arnold, 601 Washington St. Batesville, In 47006 | |
| Otter Creek Twp. – Mr. Michael Stratton, 4300 W. U.S. 50, Holton, IN 47023 | |
| Shelby Twp. - Mrs. Cheryl Welch, 6453 S Co. Rd. 225 W. Versailles, IN 47042 | President |
| Washington Twp. – Mr. Gary Johnson, 1723 S Friendship Rd. Milan IN 47031 | |
| Director at Large – Mrs. Kay Koppel, 333 Columbus Ave. Batesville, IN 47006 | |
| Zack Menchhofer - zachary@menchhofer.com | Web Master |
| Barbara Eades & Cheryl Welch | Newsletter Committee |