

**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](http://www.rchslib.org)

e-mail: [staff@rchslib.org](mailto:staff@rchslib.org)

**October 2020**

**Number 4**

▲ **October Quarterly Meeting Canceled**

The Historical Society meeting for October 11, 2020 has been canceled. Our next meeting will be held January 10, 2021. Our program for the meeting "Until All Know" will be presented by Della Menchhofer.

▲ **Library Hours Have Changed Until Further Notice**

New hours for the RCHS Archives Library are Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 1 – 4 pm, except holidays, and the week before and between Christmas and New Year December 23, 2019-January 3, 2020. The Library will also be closed during inclement weather. We will be CLOSED December 21, 2020 thru January 1, 2021. We will open for the New Year on January 4, 2021.



**NOTICE:** The Museum will be open by appointment only. To schedule an appointment call the Ripley County Historical Society 812-689-3031, Cheryl Welch, President 812-621-0418, Duane Drockelman, Vice President 812-852-1313 or Barbara Eades, Director at Large 812-701-9238.

▲ **Annual Dues**

Remember to renew your membership for another year. 2021 Yearly Dues will be due in January. Mail your renewal for 2021 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 need volunteers to donate 3 hours of their time one day a week, Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm. If you live in Delaware Township, please consider volunteering to be a director from your township. Contact Cheryl Welch if you are interested in filling any of these positions.

▲ **Books**

See our list of books available listed on the last page 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) or (3) 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). Checks should be made payable to Ripley County Historical Society. Books may be shipped for a \$7.50 shipping and handling fee.

## THANK YOU

Thank you to **The Lanny and Mica Copeland Charitable Fund** for the grant to be used for general operating expenses. We appreciate your generosity.

Thank you to the **Tyson Fund** for the grant to purchase a spiral book binder and supplies.



## NEW ITEMS

Thank you to Greg Hertenstein for the copy of the **Archer-Flick Family History** by Robert Williams.

The Ripley County Historical Society has been gifted the diaries and copies of the poems by **Roxanna Roberts Harrington** of Milan. The diaries date from 1927-1981.



Roxanna Roberts Harrington, only child of Samuel and Minnie Taylor Roberts was born in the Pleasant Hill neighborhood in Ripley County, September 10, 1882 and departed this life December 2, 1981. Her early years were spent in Ripley County. She graduated from Aurora High School with the class of 1912. She married William Harrington of Kansas October 10, 1912. The first seven years of her married life were spent in St. Louis, Missouri where her husband Bill was a member of the police force. In 1919 they returned to Ripley County to be near her family and the rest of their lives were spent in Ripley and Dearborn Counties. In September 1945, Roxanna started a dress shop in Milan and for the next 20 years conducted a very successful business. She was a former member on the DAR, a charter member of the New Harmony Federated Club, Internationally Yours World Wide Friendship Club and the Hillforest Foundation. Roxanna was a talented writer of poetry and in 1966 she published her own book of poetry *Lamp at Evening*. The following poem from her book was dedicated to her husband Bill.

### *Lamp at Evening*

Across the hills from here I see  
A gray old house, once home to me,  
And often when the day is fine,  
White garments flutter on the line.  
Before I think, surprised I say,  
"Just look, why Mother's washed today".  
When evening dews fall cool and damp,  
Someone who lives there, lights a lamp,  
Then I forget how years have flown,  
Forget the sorrow I have known.  
Across the Hills shines Mother's light,  
Still bidding me a fond "Good Night".

## *Ripley County is Rich in History*

The area known now as Ripley County has a multi-national history. After the ancient mound builders mysteriously disappeared, the Miami, Delaware, Potawatomi, and Shawnee natives hunted the area. The Shawnee named the nearby Ohio River "Spay Laweetheppie," or "beautiful river." The first Europeans in the area were French explorers traveling south from Montreal under the direction of Rene Robert Cavelier Sieur de La Salle. That was around 1673. In 1763, Col. Archibald Lochry and his one hundred eighty troops were captured at the mouth of the creek now bearing his name. One of his troops, William Ross, was in the creek when he was discovered by the natives. To make his escape, he ran up a little stream, east of Versailles, which is how that area got the name Ross's Run.

In 1798-99, Benjamin Chambers and Stephen Ludlow made surveys as far north as Olean for Ross Township, Switzerland County, following an old native trail. In 1816, the State of Indiana began proposing new organizations for counties. Ripley County was born from these plans, and was originally divided into three townships: Graham, Laughery, and Perry. It was divided into five townships a year later, with the additions of Ripley and Hogan townships. In 1823, another division created eight townships: Jackson, Shelby, Delaware, Franklin, Johnson, Brown, Henry, and Washington. In 1858, another division created the townships we know today: Jackson, Otter Creek, Shelby, Center, Laughery, Delaware, Johnson, Brown, Adams, Franklin, and Washington.

As a whole, Ripley County covers 450 square miles, or 288,000 acres. It is 27 miles north to south, 19 miles east to west, with an elevation ranging from six hundred feet to one hundred feet above sea level. Numerous creeks drain the county, notable among them: Laughery, Otter, Cedar, Graham, and Ross's Run. It is common for these creeks to run dry in sections throughout the year. The timber growing is mainly oak, hickory, beech, sugar maple, poplar, and walnut. The geological formation of the county is limestone of the Lower Silurian.

The population of Ripley County, 28,818 as of the 2010 census, sees about 40% living within incorporated towns. The ancestry is predominately German in the northern portion of the county, along with English and Scotch-Irish ancestry throughout. The religious history of the county follows those lines, with denominations in Christianity organizing Catholic, Lutheran, Evangelical, Baptist, and Methodist churches. Major commerce in the area broadly includes furniture, agriculture commodities, and lumber. The railroads were once the backbone of the county's economy, and many communities were located alongside them. However, the highway systems are now the main transportation vessels, with those towns located near them experiencing continued growth.

### Current Townships

**Adams Township:** Population 5,119 (2010) *Incorporated Towns* Batesville (part), Sunman. *Unincorporated towns past and present* Morris, Penntown, Spades.

**Brown Township:** Population 1,597 (2010) *Unincorporated towns past and present* Benham, Cross Plains, Dewberry, Friendship, Olean, Buchanan's Station.

**Center Township:** Population 2,657 (2010) *Incorporated towns* Osgood. *Unincorporated towns past and present* Laughery Switch, Otter Village.

**Delaware Township:** Population 1,437 (2010) *Unincorporated towns past and present* Delaware, Lookout, Prattsburg, Old Delaware (Melissaville), Jericho.

**Franklin Township:** Population 3,773 (2010) *Incorporated towns* Milan (part) *Unincorporated towns past and present* Behlmer's Corner, Clinton, Negangard's Corner, Old Milan, Pierceville, Stumpke's Corner

**Jackson Township:** Population 965 (2010) *Incorporated towns* Napoleon *Unincorporated towns past and present* Swedenburg.

**Johnson Township:** Population 3,685 (2010) *Incorporated towns* Versailles *Unincorporated towns past and present* Correct, Waterford.

**Laughery Township:** Population 4,736 (2010) *Incorporated towns* Batesville (part) *Unincorporated towns past and present* Ballstown, Cross Roads, Laugheryville, Mangs, Steamboat Landing

**Otter Creek Township :** Population 1,410 (2010) *Incorporated towns* Holton *Unincorporated towns past and present* Allen Crossing, Dabney, Jackson, Locksprings.

**Shelby Township:** *Unincorporated towns past and present* Haney's Corner, Jolleyville, New Carrollton, New Marion, Rexville, St. Magdalene, Marble Corner, Benville, Millersburg

**Washington Township:** Population 2,440 (2010) *Incorporated towns* Milan (part) *Unincorporated towns past and present* Elrod, Stringtown

## 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
History of Adams Township	by Harold Freeland	\$20.00
Historic Travel Guide to Ripley County	by Paul R Wanning	\$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
Jackson Township Cemetery Records		\$13.00
Johnson Township Cemetery Records		\$10.00
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	\$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 Bra 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

### OFFICERS and DIRECTORS

Adams Twp. - Mr. Duane Drockelman, 10238 N. Adams Church Rd, Batesville, IN 47006	Vice President
Brown Twp. - Mr. Frank Keenan, 3241 E State Rd 62, Cross Plains, IN 47017	Secretary
Center Twp. - Mr. Charles Hughes, P.O. Box 195, Osgood, IN 47037	
Delaware Twp. -	
Franklin Twp. - Mr. Fred Glover, 5611 E Co Rd 300 N, Milan, IN 47031	
Jackson Twp. - Mr. Delbert Abplanalp, 4543 W Co Rd 800 N, Osgood, IN 47037	
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. - Mrs. Jeri Walker, 1721 N. Co. Rd. 575 E Milan, Indiana 47042	
Director at Large - Mrs. Barbara Eades 3953 E. Olean Rd. Versailles, Indiana 47042	
Honorary Director - Mrs. Sandra Meisberger 4662 W. Co. Rd. 450 S. Versailles, Indiana 47042	
Lori Hoffman, 5565 E. Lower Dry Fork Rd. Madison, IN 47250	Web Master
Barbara Eades & Cheryl Welch	Newsletter Committee