

THE QUARTERLY BULLETIN OF THE
Ripley County, Indiana, Historical Society, Inc.

Museum--Corner Main and Water Streets

Versailles, Indiana 47042

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PROGRAM FOR THE SPRING MEETING:

Our program for the quarterly meeting on April 13, will be about Genealogical Research on the World Wide Web. The program will be presented by Lori Hoffman, well known genealogist on the information superhighway. Her Personal Home Page, "My Neck of the Woods" was selected as the ***Genealogical Journeys in Time*** Home Page of the Month in January, 1997. She has also received other awards for her work on the Internet and is well known throughout the WEB World among Internet Genealogists. In addition to her personal WEB Site, she also maintains the Ripley County GenWeb page as a part of the U. S. GenWeb Project. She has also consented to maintain the Ripley County Historical Society Home Page in harmony with the Ripley County GenWeb Page. These pages will concentrate on local Ripley County, Indiana, history and genealogy and will be available to history enthusiasts and genealogists throughout the world.

If you have interests in computer genealogy or data accessible through the internet, you will want to be present for this program. You will learn about the volume of information already available, the rapid growth in ancestral research and you will also have an opportunity to preview the Ripley County Historical Society home page.

If you have suggestions about future programs that would interest you, either content, subject or presenters, make your suggestions known to any of the directors.

NOTES FROM THE WINTER MEETING

The R.C.H.S. met in the bank building on the square January 12 with a nice turnout. An update on the progress of the building work was given by Norris Krall. Among the things to be addressed are roof and gutter repair, a window replacement, ceiling tile repair and the addition of interior lights.

The society members also discussed placing signs at the sites where the Hanging Tree and Gordon's Leap once stood. The cost of the signs was noted, as well as the need to obtain the permission of the current property owners for the signs. The group voted to look into the matter further.

In other business, the Secretary's and treasurer's reports were read and approved, and it was reported that \$2,500 had been moved into the club's checking account to cover insurance costs on society property. Also a committee was formed (consisting of Alice Glover, Henry Walker and Helen Caplinger) to secure society directors from Adams, Brown, Center and Delaware townships.

Before the meeting was adjourned, a directors' meeting was scheduled for the second Sunday in March at 2 PM in the bank building. The next meeting of the RCHS will be in April with Center township as host.

THIS CLIPPING FROM THE PAST: is from Marjorie Nighbert, Pittsfield, IL (July 1994). 10-22-96 article donated by Judy Newman (Nighbert descendent), 60825 Sharp Road, Swartz Creek, MI

A FORTY YEAR MYSTERY

Andrew Paul in the Role of Rip Van Winkle -- A strange case.

Farmers Retreat, a little village twenty miles back of Lawrenceburg, Ind., is excited over the solution of a forty-year mystery. A few days ago there arrived a patriarchal-looking man, eighty three years old. He was recognized as Andrew Paul, who strangely disappeared nearly half a century ago. His story is a romance, a veritable Rip Van Winkle in real life. In 1850 Paul, who tilled a farm where the village of Friendship now flourishes, was attracted to the gold fields of California.

He left his wife and five small children behind, while he went to accumulate a fortune. For several years afterwards a correspondence was kept up with the abandoned family and then all communication ceased. For over twenty years the wife mourned the missing husband as dead, and cherished his memory by remaining a widow. Then came the surprising intelligence that he was not dead but still lived, following the ignis fatuus of deceiving fortune in the gold mining regions of his first allurements.

Deserted and lonely, the patient but ignored wife applied for and obtained a divorce in the circuit court of Ripley County, Ind., and soon after married Thomas Neighbert. A few years later he, like the husband preceding, Mr. Paul, died and for the second time she was left alone, her children having all married and gone from home.

~~Notwithstanding her unfortunate marital ventures, she still~~ believed that marriage was not a failure, and for the third time enlisted in that line by marrying B.F. Davis. This last partnership proved no more lasting than the others, for this third husband (xxxxx three words unreadable where it was folded) her by (another blank) death, leaving her desolate in her aged widowhood. Having inherited a large fortune from the estate of her deceased father, Thomas Wilson, and being the possessor of nearly \$100,000 the kind-hearted old lady became more generous in her charities and benevolence, and the poor and needy absorbed her daily care and attention. About a month ago she was stricken down with disease and lay sick in the very room where, some ten years ago, her brother, James Wilson, struggled for weeks with grim death while recovering from the wounds made by thirteen bullets fired into his body by a brother-in-law.

Being told by her physicians that she could not live much longer she directed that her children be summoned to her bedside as she desired to see them before she died. With the coming of the children the love of fifty years before came also, and she asked that the long-absent and divorced Andrew Paul be telegraphed for. The message reached him and a response from California told of his starting to meet the woman he had not seen since he bade her good-bye as his wife forty years before. The news of his coming cheered the old lady, and she began to improve in health. Children and grand-children were around her, but the lover and husband of other days was still absent, and her aged eyes kept looking longingly out the window down the old lane leading to the house.

A few mornings since, as she sat propped up in bed her face suddenly brightened with a smile as she exclaimed, "He is coming"

and soon a pair of horses dashed up to the door drawing a carriage, from which alighted Andrew Paul, not the vigorous man who walked away from the same residence forty years before, buoyant with hope and glowing with bright anticipations, but a white-haired old man, broken down with the weight of more than four-score years, who gazed with a sort of Rip Van Winkle air on the scene of long ago. The meeting of the old couple was a most affectionate one, and the joy of the occasion propelled the old lady far on the road to recovery, and the culmination of this Indiana romance promises to be attained in a few weeks when the long-separated pair are again made husband and wife never again to part this side of the grave.

I wish I could have enlarged the clipping and printed it as it was but it was so dim and fuzzy it was difficult and in some places impossible to read. --- editor.

POSTMASTER APPOINTMENTS FROM NEW MARION

In the January 1982 bulletin, Ann Gibbs provided a list of appointments of postmaster of various postoffices in Ripley County starting with the 1st in 1819 at Versailles and continuing through year 1850. Source "Postal History of Indiana." There were 5 listed from New Marion. I thought perhaps it may be of interest to list the ones up to 1900. Thanks to the Holton Postmistress, Carol Lovins. bb

John B. Sands	23 March	1855
William Will	15 July	186-
Cary A. Wooley	16 Jan	1862
John P. Koaremer	12 May	1862
Jonathan Hill	7 Nov	1863
Sam'l T. McGee	10 July	1866
Mrs. Eliz. Westover	7 Dec	1866
Abraham Bush	20 Dec	1880
Milton W. Grimes	10 Oct	1880
John N. Hess	19 Aug	1885
James Bridges	22 June	1890
Theodore Brown	19 June	1890
Wm. Chandler	16 Oct	1893

The first 5 were Moses Edwards, 1833. Evan Miles, 1843, James Mitchell, 1835, Robert B. Mitchell 1835, Calvin Westover, 1848.

SOCIETY MEMBERS GIVE PROGRAMS

On February 18, Kathryn Manship, Center Township Director, gave a program on the Hanging of 1897 to the Fifth Grade class of South Ripley School.

Alan Smith had a slide presentation of Lawrenceburg, Aurora and Dearborn County historic sites at the December meeting of the Dearborn County Historical Society. Alan has written a History of Dillsboro and Farmers Retreat and recently completed the listing of the Dillsboro Cemetery. His book is called "A Tale of Two Townships." History of Clay and Caesar Creek in Dearborn County.

Norris Krall recently presented a program to the Versailles Lions Club in which he informed the Lions of what the Society has accomplished and explanation of the purchase of the Bank Building. At the close of the program Lion President, Wayne Asche presented him with a check for \$1000. from the Versailles Lions for the Building Fund.

INDIANA TAX CREDITS STILL AVAILABLE:

This is the last chance to receive an Indiana tax credits against 1997 Indiana Gross Income taxes by making a contribution to the Building Fund of the Ripley County Historical Society. Tax Credits will be available until June 30, 1997. If you wish to take advantage of this benefit to reduce the out-of-pocket effect of your contribution to the RCHS program to restore, repair and equip the Versailles Bank Building as the headquarters and library of your Historical Society contact Norris E. Krall before June 15, 1997. He can be reached at 812-689-4358 or by e-mail at nekrall@seidata.com. Remember, if your contribution is \$100 or more you will receive credit against your 1997 Indiana Gross Income taxes of 50% of your contribution. Also, if you itemize on your Federal Income Tax return, you will also receive a tax benefit equivalent to your effective Federal Tax rate.

If your contribution is \$1,000 or more, you will be recognized on the carved plaque to be placed in the lobby of our building. If you made a contribution in 1996 of less than \$1,000 and now wish to increase your total contribution to \$1,000, your name or the name of a loved one may still be included on our plaque. Be sure to notify Norris of your wishes.

All contributors will be recognized in a future edition of the newsletter and a list of all contributors will be retained in the permanent files of the Society.

We still need your help. There are several repairs to our building which need to be made and we are still in need of additional equipment to facilitate the research of our members and guests.

Additional volunteers are needed to staff the library and the museum this summer and to assist in organizing, filing, and indexing our records and data. If you wish to volunteer see Julie Underwood for the library or Kathleen Lane for the museum or any of the directors.

HELP NEEDED TO OPERATE HISTORICAL MUSEUM

The Historical Museum located on Water and Main will be open during the summer months from 2:30-4:30 PM on Saturday and Sunday starting May 31. Members willing to share in this work of the Society are asked to contact Mrs. Howard(Kathleen)Lane in person or call 689-5317 and select a date.

Services and Fees:

All RCHS members may research without charge. Members also receive the quarterly newsletter and all local members are urged to attend the meetings held each quarter. The charge is \$10 for new members and \$5 annually to renew a membership. Membership is for a calendar year.

Lifetime memberships are available at \$100.

Non-member visitors are requested to pay a \$3 daily use fee while they research in our library. Requests for information may be mailed to us, there is a \$2 fee for each name researched. Please include a self addressed, stamped envelope.

Everyone is charged 25 cents a page for copies:

**SUMMER HOURS: Museum Sat and Sun. 2:30 to 4:30 May through Sept.
RESEARCH AND ARCHIVES: Week days 1:00 to 4:00 all year.**

RIPLEY COUNTY, INDIANA, HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.
Box 525
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OFFICERS and DIRECTORS

Officers elected to serve until after the April 1997 meeting.

ADAMS Twp.; Mrs. Charles Roepke, 9644 E Co Rd 1300 N, Sunman, IN 47041
BROWN Twp.; Mrs. Alice McCoy, 5616 S St Rd 129, Versailles, IN 47042 SEC.
CENTER Twp.; Mr. Norris Krall, 4499 N Old Michigan Rd, Osgood, IN 47037
DELAWARE Twp.; Mr. Scott Smith, P.O. Box 274, Batesville IN 47006 PRES.
FRANKLIN Twp.; Dr. William Glover, 5611 E Co Rd 300 N, Milan, IN 47031
JACKSON Twp.; Mrs. Kathryn Manship, 3378 W Co Rd 600 N, Osgood, IN 47037
JOHNSON Twp.; Mrs. Julie Underwood, 998 W Co Rd 450 S, Versailles, IN 47042 V.PRES.
LAUGHERY Twp.; Mrs. Carolyn Hahn, 13403 N Delaware Rd, Batesville, IN 47006
OTTER CREEK Twp.; Mrs. Donald Boyd, P.O. Box 83, Holton, IN 47023 TREAS.
SHELBY Twp.; Mrs. Howard Lane, 7192 S Co Rd 400 W, Versailles, IN 47042 MUSEUM CUR.
WASHINGTON Twp.; Mr. Myron Kelly, 1028 S St Rd 101, Dillsboro, IN 47018
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Mrs. Alice Glover, 5611 E Co Rd 300 N, Milan, IN 47031 BULLETIN EDITOR

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