

The Quarterly Bulletin of the
Ripley County, Indiana, Historical Society, Inc.
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Versailles, Indiana 47042

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▲ The Ripley Co. Historical Society will meet Sunday October 11, at 2:00 at the Archive Library on the west side of Versailles Courthouse Square. The program for our next meeting is "The Legend of Prince of Madoc and the White Indians", by Mr. Dana Olson. He will have his book for sale if anyone is interested.

▲ **RCHS Director Changes:** Michael Stratton, our Ripley County Historian, current Director-at-Large has resigned his position to accept the Otter Creek Twp. position. Sandra Meisberger has been named Director-at-Large.

▲ The WWII Veterans book Update. After working on the WWII Veterans Book for over 2½ years, it is finally finished and has been sent to the printers. It will be a hard-bound book with 367 pages of pictures and information on over 3200 Ripley County Veterans. It will sell for \$35 plus \$5 if mailed. The title of the book is **LEST WE FORGET**. It was written to honor and pay special tribute to our WWII Veterans. The book should be here in time for Christmas and can be obtained at the Ripley County Historical Society Archives on the Versailles Courthouse Square. Call RCHS to reserve your copy.

▲ RCHS received a request from Harry S. Graves for photos from our area to be included in a photo history of Indiana train wrecks. If anyone is interested please contact: Book Project, PO Box 272, Salem, IN 47167 or capt_graves@peoplepc.com

▲ President Cheryl Welch presented Norris and Joan Krall with flowers and a certificate for their many years of service with RCHS. They worked very hard especially on the WWII Book. Thank you, Norris and Joan. Bea Boyd was taken flowers to her home for her many years of service. She was one of the founders of RCHS. All three have been awesome supporters and hard workers.

The RCHS Archives Library is open for public research weekdays 1 – 4 pm, except holidays, Pumpkin Show week (Sept.) and the week between Christmas and New Years. The Library will also be closed during inclement weather. Questions call 812-689-3031

Check your label to make certain your dues are paid up-to-date thru 2009. **If not, mail your renewal to RCHS at P.O. Box 525, Versailles, IN 47042**
Dues: Annual \$10; Life \$100.

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>Come Visit</i> by Jean McClellan	25
<i>Vintage Postcards</i> by Alan Smith	20	<i>Jackson Township Cemetery Index</i>	13
<i>Brown Township Cemetery Index</i>	10	<i>Johnson Township Cemetery Index</i>	10
<i>Milan, Indiana, A Storied Past</i>	16	Shipping Charges added for all books	3
<i>Broken Wings, By Robert Kelly</i>	20		

RIPLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MINUTES

July 12, 2009

The summer quarterly meeting of the Society was called to order by President Cheryl Welch on July 12, 2009. Cheryl led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance. Each of the attendees (some 23 in number), identified themselves, as requested, by name and township of residence.

Secretary Frank Keenan read the minutes of the spring quarterly meeting of April 19, 2009. Wilber Myers noted that the 1897 coin portraying Kaiser Wilhelm which he purchased in Germany during his service there in the 1950's cost him \$1.25, not \$11.25, and the minutes were so amended. The minutes were approved as amended.

Owen Menchhofer, Treasurer, gave the report of the Society's current finances, which report was approved as read.

President Cheryl Welch reported that the front door repairs have been done; new folding chairs from grant movers have been purchased (old chairs are available for church groups, charities, etc.); a door bell has been installed announcing one's entry into the archives Building; new phones were purchased, including a new phone for the back room; and a new laser printer with scanner and fax has been purchased.

Personnel changes at the Society reported by Cheryl were as follows: Bill Gloyd has replaced Norris Krall as Director for Center Township; Sandra Meisberger has replaced Norris and Jo Ann Krall on the Newsletter Committee; Mike Stratton has replaced Bill Gloyd as Director at Large; Mike Stratton has assumed the duties of County Historian.

President Cheryl Welch presented Norris and Jo Ann Krall with a formal Certificate of Appreciation from the Society for all the work they have put in for the Society and for most recently taking on and so successfully executing the gargantuan task of the Society's "Lest We Forget" book commemorating the service to the country of the county's residents in World War II. With respect to the latter, Norris reported that they are in the process of setting up the pages of the book for publication and have already completed their task for surnames A through G.

Cheryl further reported that Ken Knouf and Norma Lou Herman expressed an interest in joining forces with the Society to preserve the Jefferson Proving Grounds Committee organization, commemorating the contribution to the WWII effort of the proving ground and the sacrifice of the lands of the families whose farms were appropriated for the Proving Ground.

There being no further business to come before the membership, the business meeting was closed.

Following the business meeting the Program was presented by Susan Walters, Director of the Jennings County Tourism Board. Dressed as a matron of the Civil War era, Susan shared with us a treasure trove of knowledge of the customs of women in dress and in decorum in that turbulent era.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank A. Keenan, Recording Secretary



Beatrice Boyd

Beatrice Boyd, age 87 years, of Holton, Indiana, was one of the first members that organized the Ripley County Historical Society. She has been a long time director and held the position of Treasurer for many years. Bea served as Ripley County Historian for period of time. She was one of the most knowledgeable historians in the community. That knowledge will also be sadly missed by the Ripley County Historical Society and everyone that knew her.

Bea passed away on Thursday, August 13, 2009 losing her battle with cancer. Bea was born at Osgood on August 22, 1921, the daughter of Everett and Louise (Stegmann) Beach. She married Donald Boyd on September 19, 1953 and he preceded her in death on August 27, 1976.

Bea is survived by her son, Donald Nealis and his wife Mary, and granddaughter Rae Jean (Nealis) Auterson. She was preceded in death by her parents, grandson Randy Nealis, brothers: Jesse, Woodrow, Wilbur, and George Beach, sisters: Mildred Cziek and Mary Adams.

Bea graduated from Holton High School and Central Beauty School in Indianapolis. She was employed by Seagrams, Muscatatuck, Neal's Ford in Osgood, and the Ripley County Welfare Office.

Bea served as president of the Holton Cemetery Association. She will rest in peace at the Holton Cemetery. Bea will be sadly missed by everyone that knew her.

Ethel Kohlerman Mathias
An Amazing Woman
104 years old
Resides in Versailles, Indiana
By Sandra Meisberger

Ethel Mathias is one of the sweetest ladies that I know. She lives in one of Versailles Senior Citizen apartments and takes care of herself. She grew up in Ripley County close to the Dearborn County line. She went to school in one room school houses near Milan, Indiana. She is a graduate of Hanover College and she is one of their oldest alumni. She taught school for many years. Can you imagine how many women went to college in the 1920's? Most people didn't get past the 8th grade.

Ethel is a member and is still active in different organizations. Farm Bureau, Internationally Yours, and Daughters of the American Revolution, among others. She goes to church every Sunday.

Ethel parked her car for good when she turned 100 years old. On her birthday, January 26, 2005, she asked for a computer. Her grandchildren bought her a laptop. She asked the DAR ladies if they would help her learn how to use it. A couple of the ladies went to her home and gave her a few instructions. That is all she needed.

She started writing her life's story. Ethel has written a book, named it "The Life of a Centenarian", and it is being published. It is at the printers now. She writes about her family, how it was to go to a one room school house, what it was like to live on a farm back when horse and buggy were the only transportation, and how they prepared food back then and other things. She traveled a lot back in those days too, and she tells about her many trips. Ethel's formula for a long life...Keep on Dancing.

Ethel's book will be on sale soon. She is planning on having a book signing at the Versailles Library, which will be announced in the local newspaper. Her book can be ordered via internet, at www.ethelmathias.com, may be found in some local stores, or by sending a written request along with \$40.00 payment to Sandra Meisberger, 4662 W. County Rd. 450 S., Versailles, IN 47042. The book will be mailed to you immediately upon receipt of request and payment.



**First Ripley County Circuit Court
Benjamin Brown Home
New Marion, Shelby Twp., Indiana**

Ripley County was one of three counties organized in 1818 by the State Legislature. Ripley County was organized on January 28, 1818, and the county court was held in Marion (now New Marion) for the first year because the County Seat was not selected until April 27, 1818, when Versailles was chosen. Provisions for holding court in Versailles were made in the spring of 1819. Versailles County Court House was not built until 1821. There were three townships formed soon after Ripley County began, with Shelby Township being one of the three. Rumor has it that Marion became New Marion after Ripley County was told that there was already another Marion, Indiana.

Judge John Teste convened the first day of court at the home of Benjamin Brown, located at the North end of New Marion on Michigan Road. Judge Teste called for the presentation of commissions to the court. Governor Jonathan Jennings signed the commissions.

The offices were: Clerk of Ripley County Circuit Court, Conrad Overturf; Judge, John Richey; and Sheriff, Benjamin Kirby. The sheriff immediately selected a grand jury: James Wooley, Henry Bente, Jeremiah Salyer, Charles Talbott, David Talbott, Jeremiah Talbott, Joel Kirby, Bartlet Brown, Sam Overturf, James Whitham, Jacob Roberts, Matthew Patton, John McDonel, Carny Goodridge, Wilson Buchanon, William Buchanon, Henry O'Neil, Daniel Oaley, Joseph Clark, and James Steele. The grand jury was asked to consider what offences had been done to Ripley County.

Attorneys selected were Nathaniel French and William Hendricks. Nathaniel French was appointed to be prosecutor. The grand jury then reported no offenses. The first day of court was then ended. The grand jurors were paid 75 cents for the day and Judge Richey was paid 2 dollars.

One of the first acts of the commissioners was to levy a tax on land at 37 1/2 cents for each 100 acres.

The Ripley County, Indiana
Historical Society, Inc.
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Versailles, Indiana 47042

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