Membership Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership Level</th>
<th>Method of Payment</th>
<th>Payment Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student/Teacher</td>
<td>Credit Card</td>
<td>Visa, MasterCard, Check</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustaining</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patron</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Credit Card
- Visa
- MasterCard
- Check

Expiration Date
- CVV Number
- Signature

Print Name
- Address
- Phone
- E-mail

Check if you are interested in:
- Volunteering
- Genealogy
- Civil War History
- Planned Giving

Send to: Monroe County History Center
202 East Sixth Street
Bloomington, IN 47408
Karsell and Collins were also associated in the stone business. “The National Stone Company ... had Mr. Karsell for their president until his death. Mr. Karsell and Mr. Collins bought the land of over 120 acres on which the stone quarry was opened, and assisted in the formation of the stone company.” The National Stone Company built two mills in 1903 and 1904. In 1926, two years after Karsell’s death, it merged with the Indiana Lime Company.16

An active participant in community affairs, Karsell was a member of the Bates School of Philosophy, headed by Henry S. Bates, a former registrar of Indiana University who owned a shoe repair shop where the club met. Other members included David Jordan and William Lowe Bryan, each of whom served as president of Indiana University, and Dr. Joseph Swain. Karsell was a member of the First Presbyterian Church and the Bloomington Kiwanis Club. “Mr. Karsell was always active in affairs for the betterment of our city. He served as one of the earliest presidents of the commercial club.”17 (See article on Bloomington’s Commercial Club on pages 8–9.)

Of the eight children born to James and Martha Karsell, four lived to adulthood.18 Two of their offspring presumably died before the Karsells moved to Bloomington; they don’t appear in Monroe County records that mention other family members. In 1885, a sad notice appeared in a local newspaper: “The infant child of Mr. and Mrs. James Karsell died on last Friday. This was the second death in the family within a month, and they have the heartfelt sympathy of the community.”19 The infant—perhaps their youngest child, Walter—passed away on 13 March 1885, less than a year old. Their oldest child, Lora (18), had died of consumption on 21 February 1884.10 Of the surviving children, Elizabeth married James M. Yardley and remained in Bloomington. Nellie married John E. White and moved to Tucson, Arizona.20 Thomas and William joined their father in the family business.17

James and Martha Karsell celebrated fifty years together in 1914. Friends were invited to join them in “quietly celebrating their golden anniversary at their beautiful new home on north Walnut street.” In honor of the occasion, the house was decorated with yellow chrysanthemums and roses. “Refreshments of yellow punch, cake and yellow and white ice cream were served, and favors of pretty gold roses were presented to each caller.” Those who attended included the four surviving children, seven grandchildren, and Karsell’s former partner, Walter Collins.17

Martha Karsell died on 27 February 1923, and James Karsell died on 14 January 1924. After his death, family members continued to run Bloomington Milling Company. His son William died in 1931, age 54. William’s wife, Carolyn, and son Horace remained active in the business. In the city directory for 1934, the firm’s name changed to “The Karsell Company, wholesale grocers, flour and feed,” with Thomas as president, Carolyn as vice president, Horace as secretary, and William Jr. (another son of William and Carolyn) as helper. In 1939, the directory lists “Karsell Super Market & Grocers” at the same address as the mill and wholesale operation. Thomas died in 1939, age 64. The Karsell Company and Karsell’s Super Market are listed in the 1940 city directory, but in 1945 (no directories seem to have been issued during World War II), no Karsell business enterprises appear.17 The name of a prominent member of the Bloomington business community had vanished from the scene.

Notes


22 “James A. Karsell, Prominent Citizen.”

23 Clay Stucky, Geographer of Limestone Mills to 1930 (By the author, 1989), pp. 33 and 112.

24 James A. Karsell, Prominent Citizen.”

25 “Deaths Comes to Mrs. Karsell.”

26 “Infant Dies,” Bloomington Saturday Courier, 21 March 1885.

27 “Deaths notice for Lyra Karsell, Bloomington Saturday Courier, 28 February 1885; Monroe County Death Index, 1882–1920, p. 75.

28 Monroe County Marriage Records, 1882–1920, p. 60. “Celebrate 50th Wedding Day.”


James Karsell and the Bloomington Milling Company

By Penelope Mathiesen

James A. Karsell was born in Jamestown, Ohio, on 27 January 1842. He and his wife, Martha C. Galloway, were raised in Greene County, Ohio, and were married at the Galloway place in 1864. They moved the following spring to Carroll County, Indiana. In 1873, when Karsell was 31 years old, they moved to Bloomington.1

Karsell’s boyhood friend, Walter Collins, also left Ohio for Indiana and became his Bloomington business partner. “Their first venture in Bloomington was a combined bakery and restaurant on south College avenue.” They continued the business as a grocery firm at several locations on or near the public square for 25 years, until “Mr. Karsell severed his connection with it, and devoted all his time to the Bloomington Milling company … Mr. Collins, who had been a member of the milling company’s board, took the store, and Mr. Karsell the mill.”2

Collins and Karsell may have acquired the milling operation from previous owners. On the Sanborn Fire Insurance map for Bloomington, Indiana (1907), the Bloomington Milling Company’s location next to a railroad siding on the Sanborn map is marked “built in 1872,”3 which fits with Bloomington Milling Company’s location next to a railroad siding on the Sanborn map.

In 1889, a special issue of the Bloomington Telephone highlighted local businesses. It mentioned Collins & Karsell’s “large and complete grocery house, which is one of the oldest grocery firms in the city,” going on to state that the store made “a specialty of always supplying its customers with all the earliest to latest delicacies of the market, and [made] it a special point to handle only fresh and healthy and palatable goods. Persons who deal here can implicitly rely upon getting the best and purest the market affords.”4

The Bloomington Milling Company, located at Seventh and Railroad, as shown on the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for Bloomington, Indiana (1897).5

The 1889 special issue of the Telephone also included an article on the flour mill known variously as Collins & Karsell, Karsell & Collins, Bloomington Roller Mills, Bloomington Milling Company, and Karsell Mills. It was located “on the corner of Seventh and Railroad” and was “supplied with a railroad switch which greatly facilitates business”6 (as shown on the Sanborn map). “This is the largest and most complete mill of its kind in Monroe Co.,” the article states. It mentions the firm’s “general exchange business with our farmers” and notes that “the prices paid for grain by this firm is [sic] always the very highest known to the market.”7 The firm also sold the fertilizer that farmers needed to grow the wheat. An advertisement for Collins & Karsell in the special issue announces that it is “now taking orders for St. Louis Pure Bone Meal and Crop Multiplier,” which seems “perfectly adapted” to local soil. “We want to buy [wheat] from Monroe County farmers,” but “WE can’t make good flour out of bad wheat and YOU can’t raise good wheat without FERTILIZING.”8

From the President’s Desk

Dear Members,

Spring is finally here and I hope the improved weather will encourage you to come to the Monroe County History Center for upcoming events and exhibits. There is a new exhibit in the downstairs hallway about the corner of Sixth and Washington, exploring the history of the “Colored School,” the Carnegie Library, and the efforts to save the library from demolition, which ultimately led to the creation of the Monroe County History Center. You also are invited to attend our Annual Meeting on April 16th at 5:00 PM where we will elect officers and board members and approve the budget for 2015-16.

 Afterwards, stay and enjoy a reception where we will be celebrating 35 years since our history museum opened.

I hope those of you who attended our Annual Gala on February 27th enjoyed the evening. Dr. Charles Becker’s presentation was fascinating. We had record attendance of around 300 guests, and from preliminary estimates, we will have set a record for funds raised for our interactive exhibits fund. Special thanks to Linda Stines and all of her committee members for their hard work in planning this amazing event. We also need to recognize the many event sponsors and underwriters for their generous support. We had a record number of table sponsors too!

Lastly, I want to remind everyone that we are now in the first year of our Strategic Plan and if you haven’t already volunteered to serve on a committee, please do. We have some exciting goals to meet. Also, as we seek to build our membership, I ask that you invite a friend, relative, or colleague to become a member of the History Center, too.

Thanks to all of you for all that you do to support the History Center!

Sincerely,

Dave Musgrave

ANNUAL MEETING, APRIL 16, 2015, 5:00 PM—MONROE COUNTY HISTORY CENTER

MONROE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY SLATE OF OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

President Dave Musgrave Nominated for first 3-year board term, starting April 2015 Jennifer Moore, Cook Medical
Vice President Linda Stines Christopher Williams, Tri-North Middle School
Treasurer Glenda Murray Linda Williamson, Linda Williamson Consulting, Inc.
Secretary Lee Dodge
Associate Secretary Bob Dodd Nominated for second 3-year board term, starting April 2015 Bob Hammel

Board Terms ending March 31, 2015

Becky Boyle, Kevin Leftel, Dennis Maloy, Joyce Poling

JOIN US FOR A RECEPTION IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE MEETING TO CELEBRATE THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OPENING OF OUR MUSEUM!
Collections’ Corner
Compiled by Rebecca Vaughan
mchecollection@gmail.com

Featured artifact
A recent addition to the Permanent Collection includes a framed Victorian-era hair wreath made of human hair. Dating to the 1880s, the wreath was made by Mary Eliza Humphrey (maiden name Sylvester) of Smithville. Mary was born on November 24, 1862 and died January 8, 1929. Her husband was John Wesley Curtis Humphrey who framed the wreath in a shadow box before his death on September 1, 1886. According to donor Robin Humphrey, the wreath was passed down through the family traveling from Smithville to St. Petersburg, Florida before returning to Bloomington, Indiana in 1988.

There are many types of hair artworks from the Victorian era including jewelry, wreaths, and albums. Wreaths in particular were most commonly used for mourning purposes and would incorporate the hair of deceased family members. Composed of human hair, wire, string, and multicolored fabric, this wreath made by Mary Humphrey features intricate floral designs with varying shades.

Hair Wreath, c. 1880’s (#2014.073.0001)

New Items in the Collection
Compiled by Rebecca Vaughn

An English language dictionary souvenir from Breeden and Company Dry Goods of Bloomington, date unknown.
Gift of Alice M. Pruitt.


2 Time magazines relating to the moon landing and Edward Kennedy, 1969; 6 coverlets woven by Sarah LaTourette, of the LaTourette family from Covington, Indiana, 1820s-1850s. Gift of W. H. Hegarty.

Thank you to Polly (Bruce) Tilford for sharing research pertaining to the Bruce Family and Monroe history.

****NEEDED FOR COLLECTION: 1919 Bloomington High School Gothic ****

NEW EXHIBIT ON THE OLD LIBRARY
Sixth and Washington: One Corner, Many Stories
This new exhibit, located in the hallway of the History Center’s main floor, explores the fascinating history of this corner in downtown Bloomington. It begins with the city’s “Cozy School,” which occupied the lot from the 1870s to c. 1915. The exhibit then tells the story of how the community secured funding from the Carnegie Corporation to construct a new library in 1918. For over 50 years, the public library served the community before moving to its current location. The exhibit then examines the several year battle over the building — whether to save it or demolish it for a parking lot — and addresses the emergence of the local historic preservation movement and how the Monroe County History Center came to be.

Do you remember the Old Library? Then come and record your memories in our Memory Book. Do you have any photographs or objects pertaining to the building's history? Let us know so that we can continue to preserve and tell the story about this incredible corner.

SOUVENIR OF
BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA
West of Indiana University and Center of Oolitic Stone Belt
Prepared to the Members of
THE COMMERCIAL CLUB
Cover of promotional book produced by Bloomington’s Commercial Club in 1912.

(Coyle's Bakery and Restaurant), Edward Neeld (Need & Co., hardware merchants), Charles B. Waldron (attorney), Allan Wylie (salesman), W.T. Breeden (Breeden & Co., dry goods and house furnishings), Mayor John Harris (attorney), and City Treasurer Jesse A. Howe (confectioner). A "By June, 1910, over 100 citizens had signed up as stockholders." Permanent organization of the Bloomington Commercial Club took place on June 9, 1910. Chairman James Karsell presided, and was nominated and unanimously elected Club president. "Thus began Bloomington’s first united effort to organize the City’s business and professional men as a companionable adjunct of good citizenry and as a booster of local interests." As a demonstration of the Commercial Club’s goals, the members produced an attractive illustrated book in 1912: Souvenir of Bloomington, Indiana: Seat of Indiana University and Center of Oolitic Stone Belt.

The United States Chamber of Commerce was organized in 1912, and the formation of local groups followed. In 1915, the Bloomington Chamber of Commerce was established, "using the ramparts of the Bloomington Commercial Club as a foundation." Several men were involved in setting up both groups, including James Karsell, Mort Whitaker, and Gus Davis of Davis Hardware. Karsell in particular seems to have been a main force behind each organization. More information on him and his primary business, Bloomington Milling Company, can be found in the next article.

Notes
4 Bloomington, Ind. Directory and Monroe County Gazetteer, 1907-8, p. 29.
5 Reed, “First Chamber.”
7 Reed, “Chib.”
8 Reed, “Chib.”
10 Reed, “Club.”
11 The Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce.
12 Reed, “Chib.”
The Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce celebrates its 100th year in support of the local business community in 2015. The organization was formed in March 1915 by the owners of businesses that included the Bloomington Milling Company, Whitaker Grocery Company, and Davis Hardware. Earlier attempts to form an organization supportive of business interests occurred as early as the 1880s, when a Grocer's Association represented that segment of Bloomington's commercial activity. “This particular association flourished for quite awhile” and grew to the point where it sought and received the use of meeting space in “the City Building, situated in the Northeast portion of the Court House yard.” Another organization, the Bloomington Retail Merchants Association, is listed in the 1907 city directory,4 but no further information has been found.

On 29 March 1910, “talk of organizing a Commercial Club for Bloomington had reached a productive stage,” and an organizational meeting of business and professional men was called to order by James Karsell of Bloomington Milling Company. The club was to “be exclusively devoted to the business interests of Bloomington and also to the advancement of present industries and the securing of new factories.” City Councilman E. F. Fletcher suggested that “for lack of a Club, some of our industries had moved away.” Mort Whitaker of the Whitaker Grocery Company stated that there was “plenty of money in Bloomington to start new industries.” Local merchant Otto Rott agreed, saying that “to properly boost Bloomington, home money should not be invested in other cities.” W. S. Bradfute, editor of the Telephone, and Tony Coyle, baker and restaurant owner, “believed the existence of a Commercial Club would be of great assistance in pursuading [sic] Monon officials to build Bloomington a respectable looking depot to replace the present time-worn structure.” Professor A. W. Rawles of Indiana University felt certain that “the Club would attract and hold industries here, as similar organizations had done in Terre Haute, Marion, and other enterprising cities of the State.”5

“On April 4, 1910, tentative organization of the Bloomington Commercial Club was completed at a meeting of various citizens. James Karsell, who at previous times had acted as temporary chairman, presided.” A constitution prepared by a previously appointed committee was read and adopted. The purposes of the Club were to (1) “promote the welfare of this community,” (2) “beautify our City,” (3) “encourage … manufacturing and assist in obtaining new industries,” and (4) “assist … in obtaining trade relations of advantage to this city and county.”6

A committee was appointed to solicit subscriptions for stock from business men and citizens. Capital stock “was set at $20,000, divided into 2000 shares of $10 each. A limit of five shares was allowed each member … . A payment plan was found.” The Greater Bloomington Commercial Club was Chamber of Commerce Forerunner

By Penelope Mathiesen

Bloomington's Commercial Club Was Chamber of Commerce Forerunner

The Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce celebrates its 100th year in support of the local business community in 2015. The organization was formed in March 1915 by the owners of businesses that included the Bloomington Milling Company, Whitaker Grocery Company, and Davis Hardware. Earlier attempts to form an organization supportive of business interests occurred as early as the 1880s, when a Grocer's Association represented that segment of Bloomington's commercial activity. “This particular association flourished for quite awhile” and grew to the point where it sought and received the use of meeting space in “the City Building, situated in the Northeast portion of the Court House yard.” Another organization, the Bloomington Retail Merchants Association, is listed in the 1907 city directory, but no further information has been found.

On 29 March 1910, “talk of organizing a Commercial Club for Bloomington had reached a productive stage,” and an organizational meeting of business and professional men was called to order by James Karsell of Bloomington Milling Company. The club was to “be exclusively devoted to the business interests of Bloomington and also to the advancement of present industries and the securing of new factories.” City Councilman E. F. Fletcher suggested that “for lack of a Club, some of our industries had moved away.” Mort Whitaker of the Whitaker Grocery Company stated that there was “plenty of money in Bloomington to start new industries.” Local merchant Otto Rott agreed, saying that “to properly boost Bloomington, home money should not be invested in other cities.” W. S. Bradfute, editor of the Telephone, and Tony Coyle, baker and restaurant owner, “believed the existence of a Commercial Club would be of great assistance in pursuading [sic] Monon officials to build Bloomington a respectable looking depot to replace the present time-worn structure.” Professor A. W. Rawles of Indiana University felt certain that “the Club would attract and hold industries here, as similar organizations had done in Terre Haute, Marion, and other enterprising cities of the State.”

“On April 4, 1910, tentative organization of the Bloomington Commercial Club was completed at a meeting of various citizens. James Karsell, who at previous times had acted as temporary chairman, presided.” A constitution prepared by a previously appointed committee was read and adopted. The purposes of the Club were to (1) “promote the welfare of this community,” (2) “beautify our City,” (3) “encourage … manufacturing and assist in obtaining new industries,” and (4) “assist … in obtaining trade relations of advantage to this city and county.”

A committee was appointed to solicit subscriptions for stock from business men and citizens. Capital stock “was set at $20,000, divided into 2000 shares of $10 each. A limit of five shares was allowed each member … . A payment plan was available for those short on cash.” Committee members included Moses Kahn (Kahn's Clothing Store and Annex), Samuel Pfrimmer (Assistant Cashier, First National Bank), W. J. Von Behren (Von Behren Hardware Co.), A. C. (Tony) Coyle...
ANNUAL GALA UPDATE

On the evening of Friday February 27, friends and supporters of the History Center gathered at the Bloomington/Monroe County Convention Center for our annual gala fundraiser. It was a spectacular evening with nearly 300 in attendance, a selection of top-notch silent auction items, and a delicious buffet dinner, all highlighted by a fascinating talk by Dr. Charles Beeker about his underwater explorations, including work on early Columbus landing sites. Thanks to all who attended.

A special thank you to our gala underwriters: Cook Medical, Markey’s Staging and Rentals, Oliver Winery and Vineyards, and Smithville Communications. Thanks also go to our event sponsors: BMO Private Bank, Commercial Service, Nature’s Way Landscaping, and Old National Wealth Management. We also appreciate those individuals, businesses, and organizations that sponsored tables.

HISTORY CENTER MUSEUM TO MARK 35 YEARS

Join us on Thursday April 16 at 5:30 pm, after the Annual Meeting, to mark and celebrate 35 years of exhibits, programs, and the preservation of local history at the Monroe County History Center. Visit with friends, founders, and key supporters over light refreshments. View our new exhibit about the corner of 6th and Washington Streets, new features in the Bill Cook corner of the main gallery, and newly woven rag rugs in the log cabin. Share your memories about the early days of the museum and your ideas about future programs and exhibits.

It was April 1980 when the Monroe County Historical Society leased space in the Carnegie Library and opened its local history museum. This occurred ten years following the relocation of the public library to a new site and years of battling over the future of the building—should it be converted to a community cultural center or razed for a new parking garage? Thirty-five years later, it is time to celebrate the accomplishments of that museum and the many founders and supporters who have sustained the organization, now operating as the Monroe County History Center. Join us for the celebration on Thursday April 16th at 5:30 pm!

ATTEND THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MONROE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

APRIL 16, 2015 at 5:00 PM—MONROE COUNTY HISTORY CENTER

The Bicentennials are Coming!! The Bicentennials are Coming!!

Next year, the State of Indiana will mark its 200th anniversary of statehood. Two years later in 2018, both Monroe County and the City of Bloomington will commemorate their bicentennials. And two years after that in 2020, Indiana University will mark its 200th year of existence. Since summer 2014, the History Center has been hosting monthly meetings of community representatives to discuss how we will recognize the anniversary of the founding of the Hoosier State. The state’s Bicentennial Commission has already planned a torch run through all 92 counties, beginning in Corydon and ending in Indianapolis, in the fall of 2016. It will come through Monroe County in late September 2016. The Commission has identified several initiatives regarding history, youth and education, nature conservation, and community involvement. To learn more about the state initiative, visit www.indiana2016.org

We also are beginning preliminary discussions about how Bloomington and Monroe County will mark our own 200th birthdays in 2018. How do we honor and commemorate those individuals and families who founded our county and city? Shall we identify and mark more historic sites? What about creating a bicentennial park or plaza? What about a “community call-out” for historical records and photographs to ensure the future preservation of our local history? And what types of programs and celebrations should we have to mark this significant milestone? Bicentennials only come once, so we want to make this occasion memorable. We welcome your ideas as we continue our planning. Contact us at director@monroehistory.org
On the evening of Friday February 27, friends and supporters of the History Center gathered at the Blooming-ton/Monroe County Convention Center for our annual gala fundraiser. It was a spectacular evening with nearly 300 in attendance, a selection of top-notch silent auction items, and a delicious buffet dinner, all highlight-ed by a fascinating talk by Dr. Charles Beecker about his underwater explorations, including work on early Col-umbus landing sites. Thanks to all who attended.

A special thank you to our gala underwriters: Cook Medical, Markey’s Staging and Rentals, Oliver Winery and Vineyards, and Smithville Communications. Thanks also go to our event sponsors: BMO Private Bank, Commercial Service, Nature’s Way Landscaping, and Old National Wealth Management. We also appreciate those individuals, businesses, and organizations that sponsored tables.

ANNUAL GALA UPDATE

The Bicentennials are Coming!! The Bicentennials are Coming!!

Next year, the State of Indiana will mark its 200th anniversary of statehood. Two years later in 2018, both Monroe County and the City of Bloomington will commemorate their bicentennials. And two years after that in 2020, Indiana University will mark its 200th year of existence. Since summer 2014, the History Center has been hosting monthly meetings of community representatives to discuss how we will recognize the anniversary of the founding of the Hoosier State. The state’s Bicentennial Commission has already planned a torch run through all 92 counties, beginning in Corydon and ending in Indiana-polis, in the fall of 2016. It will come through Monroe County in late September 2016. The Commission has identified several initiatives regarding history, youth and education, nature conservation, and community involvement. To learn more about the state initiative, visit www.indiana2016.org

We also are beginning preliminary discussions about how Bloomington and Monroe County will mark our own 200th birthdays in 2018. How do we honor and commemorate those individuals and families who founded our county and city? Shall we identify and mark more historic sites? What about creating a bicentennial park or plaza? What about a “community call-out” for historical records and photographs to ensure the future preservation of our local history? And what types of programs and celebrations should we have to mark this significant milestone? Bicentennials only come once, so we want to make this occasion memorable. We welcome your ideas as we continue our planning. Contact us at director@monroehistory.org

MUSEUM STORE

Are you looking for some interesting gifts or books about state and local histo-ry? How about works of fiction from some of the best Hoosier authors? Are you into local family history and genealogy? Maybe you are looking for good used and rare books to expand your library? Then, visit the History Center’s Museum Store. You will find a wide selection of reading materials, gift and craft items, children’s books and games, and local preserves. The store is open Tuesday through Saturday 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Visit us soon!

ATTEND THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MONROE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

APRIL 16, 2015 at 5:00 PM—MONROE COUNTY HISTORY CENTER

Join us on Thursday April 16 at 5:30 pm, after the Annual Meeting, to mark and celebrate 35 years of exhibits, programs, and the preservation of local history at the Monroe County History Center. Visit with friends, found-ers, and key supporters over light refreshments. View our new exhibit about the corner of 6th and Washington Streets, new features in the Bill Cook corner of the main gallery, and newly woven rag rugs in the log cabin. Share your memories about the early days of the museum and your ideas about future programs and exhibits.

HISTORY CENTER MUSEUM TO MARK 35 YEARS

It was April 1980 when the Monroe County Historical Soci-ety leased space in the Carnegie Library and opened its local history museum. This occurred ten years following the relo-cation of the public library to a new site and years of battling over the future of the building— should it be converted to a community cultural center or razed for a new parking gar-age? Thirty-five years later, it is time to celebrate the accom-plishments of that museum and the many founders and sup-porters who have sustained the organization, now operating as the Monroe County History Center. Join us for the cele-bration on Thursday April 16th at 5:30 pm!
Bloomington's Commercial Club Was Chamber of Commerce Forerunner

By Penelope Mathiesen

The Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce celebrates its 100th year in support of the local business community in 2015. The organization was formed in March 1915 by the owners of businesses that included the Bloomington Milling Company, Whitaker Grocery Company, and Davis Hardware. Earlier attempts to form an organization supportive of business interests occurred as early as the 1880s, when a Grocer's Association represented that segment of Bloomington's commercial activity. “This particular association flourished for quite awhile” and grew to the point where it sought and received the use of meeting space in “the City Building, situated in the Northeast portion of the Court House yard.” Another organization, the Bloomington Retail Merchants Association, is listed in the 1907 city directory, but no further information has been found.

On 29 March 1910, “talk of organizing a Commercial Club for Bloomington had reached a productive stage,” and an organizational meeting of business and professional men was called to order by James Karsell of Bloomington Milling Company. The club was to “be exclusively devoted to the business interests of Bloomington and also to the advancement of present industries and the securing of new factories.” City Councilman E. R. Fletcher suggested that “for lack of a Club, some of our industries had moved away.” Mort Whitaker of the Whitaker Grocery Company stated that there was “plenty of money in Bloomington to start new industries.” Local merchant Otto Rott agreed, saying that “to properly boost Bloomington, home owners, “believed the existence of a Commercial Club would be of great assistance in pursuading [sic] Monon officials to build Bloomington a respectable looking depot to replace the present time worn structure.” Professor A. W. Rawles of Indiana University felt certain that “the Club would attract and hold industries here, as similar organizations had done in Terre Haute, Marion, and other enterprising cities of the State.”

On April 4, 1910, tentative organization of the Bloomington Commercial Club was completed at a meeting of various citizens. James Karsell, who at previous times had acted as temporary chairman, presided. A constitution prepared by a previously appointed committee was read and adopted. The purposes of the Club were to (1) “promote the welfare of this community,” (2) “beautify our City,” (3) “encourage … manufacturing” and “assist in obtaining new industries,” and (4) “assist … in obtaining trade relations of advantage to this city and county.”

A committee was appointed to solicit subscriptions for stock from businessmen and citizens. Capital stock “was set at $20,000, divided into 2000 shares of $10 each. A limit of five shares was allowed each member … A payment plan was available for those short on cash.” Committee members included Moses Kahen (Kahn’s Clothing Store and Annex), Samuel Pfrimmer (Assistant Cashier, First National Bank), W. J. Von Behren (Von Behren Hardware Co.), A. C. (Tony) Coyle.

Volunteer Spotlight:

Fran White

Say “Hello” to Fran White, our Tuesday morning greeter. Fran retired from Edward Jones after 13 years. Before Edward Jones, Fran worked with AT&T/Indiana Bell/Ameritech companies, working with customer accounts and providing customer service at those jobs.

Fran is a long-time Bloomington resident. She attended Bloomington High School South and Indiana University. She and her husband, Terry, were childhood sweethearts and are celebrating their Golden Wedding Anniversary. They enjoy planting a big vegetable garden and cooking and hosting their family. Fran also enjoys genealogy research in her spare time.

Fran and Terry are the parents of one daughter, Penny, who is an RN at IU Health Bloomington Hospital. Their grandson, Zach, will graduate from Bloomington High School South in May and plans to attend Kelley School of Business at Indiana University in the fall.

Fran is a great conversationalist and a great listener so you’ll enjoy meeting and talking with her. Please stop by to say hello if you’re in the History Center on a Tuesday morning.
Collections’ Corner
Compiled by Rebecca Vaughan
mchecollection@gmail.com

Featured artifact
A recent addition to the Permanent Collection includes a framed Victorian-era wreath made of human hair. Dating to the 1880s, the wreath was made by Mary Eliza Humphrey (maiden name Sylvester) of Smithville. Mary was born on November 24, 1862 and died January 8, 1929. Her husband was John Wesley Curtis Humphrey who framed the wreath in a shadow box before his death on September 1, 1886. According to donor Robin Humphrey, the wreath was passed down through the family traveling from Smithville to St. Petersburg, Florida before returning to Bloomington, Indiana in 1988.

There are many types of hair artworks from the Victorian era including jewelry, wreaths, and albums. Wreaths in particular were most commonly used for mourning purposes and would incorporate the hair of deceased family members. Composed of human hair, wire, string, and multicolored fabric, this wreath made by Mary Humphrey features intricate floral designs with varying shades.

Hair Wreath, c. 1880’s (#2014.073.0001)

New Items in the Collection
Compiled by Rebecca Vaughan

An English language dictionary souvenir from Breeden and Company Dry Goods of Bloomington, date unknown.
Gift of Alice M. Pruitt.


2 Time magazines relating to the moon landing and Edward Kennedy, 1969; 6 coverlets woven by Sarah LaTourette, of the LaTourette family from Covington, Indiana, 1820s-1850s. Gift of W. H. Hegarty.

Thank you to Polly (Bruce) Tilford for sharing research pertaining to the Bruce Family and Monon history.

****NEEDED FOR COLLECTION: 1919 Bloomington High School Gothic ****

NEW EXHIBIT ON THE OLD LIBRARY
Sixth and Washington: One Corner, Many Stories
This new exhibit, located in the hallway of the History Center’s main floor, explores the fascinating history of this corner in downtown Bloomington. It begins with the city’s “Colored School,” which occupied the lot from the 1870s to c. 1915. The exhibit then tells the story of how the community secured funding from the Carnegie Corporation to construct a new library in 1918. For over 50 years, the public library served the community before moving to its current location. The exhibit then examines the several year battle over the building — whether to save it or demolish it for a parking lot — and addresses the emergence of the local historic preservation movement and how the Monroe County History Center came to be.

Do you remember the Old Library? Then come and record your memories in our Memory Book. Do you have any photographs or objects pertaining to the building’s history? Let us know so that we can continue to preserve and tell the story about this incredible corner.

Notes
4 Bloomington, Ind. Directory and Monroe County Gazette, 1907–8, p. 29.
5 Reed, “First Chamber.”
7 Reed, “Club.”
8 Reed, “Club”.
9 Reed, “Club”.
10 The Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce.
11 Reed, “Club.”

Souvenir of Bloomington, Indiana: Seat of Indiana University and Center of Oolitic Stone Belt
Prepared to the Members of THE COMMERCIAL CLUB
Cover of promotional book produced by Bloomington’s Commercial Club in 1912.

(Coyle’s Bakery and Restaurant), Edward Neeld (Neal & Co., hardware merchants), Charles B. Waldron (attorney), Allan Wylie (salesman), W.T. Breeden (Breeden & Co., dry goods and house furnishings), Mayor John Harris (attorney), and City Treasurer Jesse A. Howe (confectioner).9

“By June, 1910, over 100 citizens had signed up as stockholders.” Permanent organization of the Bloomington Commercial Club took place on 9 June 1910. Chairman James Karsell presided, and was nominated and unanimously elected Club president. “Thus began Bloomington’s first united effort to organize the City’s business and professional men as a companionable adjunct of good citizenry and as a booster of local interests.”10 As a demonstration of the Commercial Club’s goals, the members produced an attractive illustrated book in 1912: Souvenir of Bloomington, Indiana: Seat of Indiana University and Center of Oolitic Stone Belt.

The United States Chamber of Commerce was organized in 1912,11 and the formation of local groups followed. In 1915, the Bloomington Chamber of Commerce was established, “using the ramparts of the Bloomington Commercial Club as a foundation.”12 Several men were involved in setting up both groups, including James Karsell, Mort Whitaker, and Gus Davis. Karsell in particular seems to have been a main force behind each organization. More information on him and his primary business, Bloomington Milling Company, can be found in the next article.

Monroe County Historian
April/May 2015
Page 4

Monroe County Historian
April/May 2015
Page 9
By Penelope Mathiesen

James A. Karsell was born in Jamestown, Ohio, on 27 January 1842. He and his wife, Martha C. Galloway, were raised in Greene County, Ohio, and were married at the Galloway place in 1864. They moved the following spring to Carroll County, Indiana. In 1873, when Karsell was 31 years old, they moved to Bloomington.1

Karsell’s boyhood friend, Walter Collins, also left Ohio for Indiana and became his Bloomington business partner. “Their first venture in Bloomington was a combined bakery and restaurant on south College avenue.” They continued the business as a grocery firm at several locations on or near the public square for 25 years, until “Mr. Karsell severed his connection with it, and devoted all his time to the Bloomington Milling company … Mr. Collins, who had been a member of the milling company’s firm, took the store, and Mr. Karsell the mill.”2

The 1889 special issue of the Telephone also included an article on the flour mill (known variously as Collins & Karsell, Karsell & Collins, Bloomington Roller Mills, Bloomington Milling Company, and Karsell Mills). It was located “on the corner of Seventh and Railroad” and was “supplied with a side track connecting it to the railroad,” which fits with Bloomington Milling Company’s location next to a railroad siding on the Sanborn map.

In 1889, a special issue of the Bloomington Telephone highlighted local businesses. It mentioned Collins & Karsell’s “large and complete grocery house, which is one of the oldest grocery firms in the city,” going on to state that the store made: “a specialty of always supplying its customers with all the earliest to latest delicacies of the market, and [made] it a special point to handle only fresh and healthy and palatable goods. Persons who deal here can implicitly rely upon getting the best and purest the market affords.”3

Collins and Karsell may have acquired the milling operation from previous owners. On the Sanborn Fire Insurance map for Bloomington, Indiana (1897), the Bloomington Milling Company, located at Seventh and Railroad, as shown on the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for Bloomington, Indiana (1897).4

The article notes that “the prices paid for grain by this firm is [sic] always the highest known to the market.” The firm also sold the fertilizer that farmers needed to grow the wheat. An advertisement for Collins & Karsell in the special issue announces that it is “now taking orders for St. Louis Pure Bone Meal and Crop Mutilier,” which seems “perfectly adapted” to local soil. “We want to buy [wheat] from Monroe County farmers,” but “WE can’t make good flour out of bad wheat and YOU can’t raise good wheat without FERTILIZING.”5

ANNUAL MEETING, APRIL 16, 2015, 5:00 PM—MONROE COUNTY HISTORY CENTER

MONROE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SLATE OF OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

President
Dave Musgrave
Nominated for first 3-year board term, starting April 2015

Vice President
Linda Sines
Jennifer Moore, Cook Medical

Treasurer
Glenda Murray
Christopher Williams, Tri-North Middle School

Secretary
Lee Dodge
Linda Williamson, Linda Williamson Consulting, Inc.

Associate Secretary
Bob Dodd
Nominated for second 3-year board term, starting April 2015

President
Dave Musgrave
Nominated for first 3-year board term, starting April 2015

Vice President
Linda Sines
Jennifer Moore, Cook Medical

Treasurer
Glenda Murray
Christopher Williams, Tri-North Middle School

Secretary
Lee Dodge
Linda Williamson, Linda Williamson Consulting, Inc.

Associate Secretary
Bob Dodd
Nominated for second 3-year board term, starting April 2015

Lee Dodge
Bob Hammel

Board Terms ending March 31, 2015

Becky Boyle, Kevin Leftel, Dennis Maloy, Joyce Poling

JOIN US FOR A RECEPTION IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE MEETING TO CELEBRATE THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OPENING OF OUR MUSEUM!
The name of a prominent member of the Bloomington business community had vanished from the scene.

Notes


11 “James A. Karsell, Prominent Citizen.”

12 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for Bloomington, Indiana (1907), p. 3; “10 Principal Businesses and Indiana University,” Bloomington Progress, 13 June 1867.

13 “Grocers,” Bloomington Telegraph, 16 July 1889.


15 An advertisement for Collins & Karsell, Bloomington Telegraph, 16 July 1889.

16 “James A. Karsell, Prominent Citizen.”

17 Clay Sacker, Geographer of Limestone Mills to 1950 (By the author, 1989), pp. 33 and 112.

18 “James A. Karsell, Prominent Citizen.”

19 “Death Comes to Mrs. Karsell.”

20 “Infant Dies,” Bloomington Saturday Courier, 21 March 1885.

21 Death notice for Rosa Collins Karsell, Bloomington Saturday Courier, 28 February 1885; Monroe County Death Index, 1882–1920, p. 75.

22 Monroe County Marriage Records, 1882–1920; “Death notice for Lyra Karsell, Bloomington Saturday Courier, 28 February 1885; Monroe County Death Index, 1882–1920, p. 75.

23 Monroe County Marriage Records, 1882–1920, p. 60; “Celebrate 50th Wedding Day.”


Do you want to help preserve history? If so, call 812-332-2517 ext. 7 to find out more about volunteering in one of the many departments at the History Center.

**Membership Form**

**Method of Payment**
- Visa
- MasterCard
- Check

**Annual Membership Levels**
- Student/Teacher: $20
- Basic: $35
- Family: $60
- Sustaining: $100
- Patron: $500

**Corporate - Service Organizations**
- Exhibit Supporter: $100
- Gallery Sustainer: $250
- History Patron: $500
- Monroe County History Maker: $1000

**Check if you are interested in:**
- Volunteering
- Genealogy
- Civil War History
- Planned Giving

**Send to:**
Monroe County History Center
202 East Sixth Street
Bloomington, IN 47408

**Hours**
Tuesday – Saturday
10am – 4pm

**Museum Admission**
- Adult: $8
- Child (6-17 yrs.): $4
- 5 yrs. & Under: Free

**Members – Free**

**Issue Highlights**

2 - Events Calendar
3 - From the President’s Desk
4 - Collections’ Corner
5 - Volunteer Spotlight
6 - Gala Update
7 - Event Information
8-11 - Library Articles

**Corporate**

Help the History Center save resources by having your newsletter sent to your email. To opt out of the paper copy and start receiving your newsletter in your inbox email: mchceducation@gmail.com.