The following article "Agencies of Mercy" by Bennett Reed recounts some hot events from 1883.

Bloomington, as both town and city, has always borne the name of being among the first in responding to calls for aiding the victims of circumstance. Organized agencies which sponsored acts of mercy could count upon local citizens to share their substance. Calamity, according to an old saying, makes the whole world kin. Perhaps to some extent, it is a truism. Sacrifices are made, grudges are cast aside and a charitable spirit, once latent, glows with a luster of helpfulness.

As it so happened, in the month of February, 1883, the mighty Ohio overflowed its regular river channels. In consequence the city of New Albany and surrounding territory were inundated. From the effects came the calls for relief.

The plight of the people grew so serious that the officials of New Albany sought means to relieve present distress. Statewide appeals for aid were sent out to meet the emergency.

Hon. B.C. Kent, who was New Albany’s Mayor at the time made known his city’s misfortune by asking help from Bloomington. In answer to the plea of Mayor Kent our Mayor Dodds and the City Council held a special meeting at eight o’clock on the morning of February 19th.

It did not take long to reach a decision relative to giving assistance to the unfortunate inhabitants of the river city. Without debate the sum of $500 was voted out and at once turned over to Benj. A. Voss and Wm. N. Showers for flood relief use.

Word had been received that flood, clothing and other items were growing scarce in the flooded district. With the City’s donation and other local contributors, provisions, clothing and so on were purchased here. The necessities were loaded in a car and sent free of charge to New Albany by the L.N.A. and C. railroad. To say that the flood sufferers were grateful is putting it mildly. Bloomington was hailed as a benefactor in the hour of dire distress. This, the flood bound victims kept in mind for we were destined to have our trials later on of a different nature...

March, 1883, is a date in the annals of Bloomington history that will be long remembered. A disastrous fire wiped out the south half of the public square on the west side. All the resources of the pioneer firemen were used to combat the big blaze... The lack of water in abundance and out-moded equipment were looked upon with alarm by the advocates of fire engines and waterworks plants. When the fire had spent itself, chimneys and walls were left standing as a grim reminder. Mayor Dodds and the Council referred to the ruined portion of the square as the “burnt district.”

Public safety was put in jeopardy by the fire. Sightseers, in viewing the destruction, took unwarranted risks. The Council determine that tottering portions of buildings in the burnt dis-

The steam engine would pump the water, but it still had to be pulled by man or horse power. Illustration from Big Fire Engine Book by Virginia Brody, 1958.

Story continued on page 3
Exhibits

“What Did You Do Today, Dear?”
Closes August 29th
Housekeeping in the 1930s and 40s. The Rechter gallery has been transformed into vintage kitchens, a dining room, and a laundry area. If the 30s or 40s were in your lifetime, you will enjoy “stepping back” into your Mother’s or Grandmother’s houses. Bring your children or grandchildren with you to teach them about life in that era.

Collection of Collections 2004
Closes on September 26th.
This fun exhibit highlights just some of the interesting things collected by Monroe County residents. Collections include giraffes, angels, pickles, dollhouses, British monarchy, bookmarks, alphabet books, etc.

Forget-Me-Not: Love Tokens in Victorian America
Closes September 26th
Discover the subtle language of love used by suitors in Bloomington during Victorian times. This great exhibit features lovely artifacts, jewelry, gifts and love tokens.

Stop in soon to enjoy our three special exhibits.

Schedule of Events

All meetings and programs will be held at the History Center and are FREE, unless otherwise stated.

General Board Meeting—
2nd Thursday of the month, 4 pm

August 14
College Coeds of the Late 19th Century
Come and enjoy this fascinating talk on student life of some of the first female students of Indiana University. The guest speaker will be Dina Kellams of the Indiana University Archives. The program begins at 10:30 am.

Coming Soon
Special Members Only Event
October 22nd 7-8 pm. Come and preview the exhibits of the Indiana History Train. More details in the next newsletter. Refreshments will be served. Mark your calendars today!

Calling All Cooks!

As a part of our upcoming 100th anniversary of the Society’s founding, a cookbook is being compiled.

Recipes Wanted

The History Center is looking for your favorite recipes. All types of recipes are needed.

- Entrees
- Desserts
- Salads
- Vegetables
- Appetizers
- Condiments
- Wild and Wacky
- Grandma’s Favorite
- Special War Recipes

Call the History Center for more information.

Coming Soon!
A NEW Family Heritage Book

The Monroe County Historical Society has contracted with Turner Publishing to create a new family heritage book. The Society would like to strongly encourage every family to participate.

There is no cost to participate!

Each family can submit up to 500 words and one photograph at no cost. The Society’s goal is to get 800 Monroe County families to participate. Even if you have only lived here a short time, you are a part of the Monroe County’s family.

Before the book can be published 800–1000 books have to be pre-sold. This is going to be a must-have book, so order yours today. If you would like more information or to pre-order a book ($53.50) please contact the History Center so a brochure/order form can be sent to you.

Deadline extended to Sept. 1, 2004

Monroe County History Center
Kari Price, Executive Director
202 East Sixth Street
Bloomington, IN 47408

Office/Museum               Genealogy Library
812-332-2517          812-355-5588
E-mail: mchm@kiva.net
Web Address: www.kiva.net/~mchm

Museum/Store        Genealogy Library
Tue– Sat                   Tues and Sat
10 am –4 pm               10 am—4 pm
Sunday 1-4 pm            Wed-Fri 1-4 pm

OFFICERS for 2004-2005
Rachel McCarty, President
Larry Stephens, VP Finance
Laura Newton, VP Operations
M. Phil Hathaway, Treasurer
Marilynn Mundy, Secretary*
Maryknoll Mundy, Assoc. Secretary
Liz Knapp, Library Director

*Molly Joy recently resigned as Secretary.
Bloomington’s First Fire Engine

Continued from page 1

trict must be pulled down. An order to the affect was authorized by the City. The Marshall was instructed to keep the curious-minded at a safe distance while the tearing-down process was going on.

The fire showed that the people of New Albany were quick to sense our need for a fire engine. One that could pump water in sufficient quantity to outsmart any fire… Word was received here from the Mayor and Council of New Albany. A petition signed by several hundred citizens, asked that a fire engine be given to the City of Bloomington. This act, they said, was in recognition of our aid given in their time of need. The official group of New Albany declared that each concurred with the petitioners and that a steam pumper was to be given to Bloomington. The communication went on further to say that officials of that city would accompany the fire engine, which went by the name of “Sanderson”…

Plans were formulated to make that day a holiday. Entertainment for the visiting men was mapped out and nothing left undone to make the occasion a gala affair… The fire engine arrived in Bloomington and along with the apparatus was the New Albany contingent. The steamer was taken from the depot and placed on display at Kirkwood and College. Pent up speeches flowed forth with a fervor from all sides. Our speakers, it is said, gave all they had from their repertory of speech making talents. At the end of the jollification a grateful Bloomington left the scene with a better feeling of security in the event of a fire.

By the end of 1883, the City still had not built a structure to house the Sanderson engine. The City Council did agree that the general lay of the city showed that hills were hard to negotiate with the heavy steamer when pulled by man power. The Council in consideration of facts, put the transporting of the Sanderson engine squarely before the general public. A resolution was passed requiring citizens to respond to the alarms and help pull the engine. The resolution gave notice that if the citizens expected to get service and to be protected from fire they would have to lend assistance...

Garage Sale Report

The annual MCHS benefit garage sale was another success! It brought in $9377—perhaps even more if we can sell the Brown County watercolor by Kenneth Reeves.

Special thanks goes to the following wonderful people:

**Patterson Management Group**—Skip Harrel, Rick Naftzger, Larry Newell, who allowed us to use the former RCA/Thomson warehouse and were a big help to us during the preparation and sale.

**CFC, Inc.** and their crew, who donated truck use, hauling, labor, merchandise, tables and storage. The sale wouldn’t be a success without them.

**Oscar Rodriguez**, who helped greatly by hauling away the surplus electronic items—old computers, especially.

We also thank all the volunteers and friends who donated items, sorted, priced and bought—and enjoyed lots of laughs and lunches together over the four weeks we worked in the warehouse.

Now start saving for the February auction!

The Fourth of July in Ellettsville

On 30 July 1887, Ellettsville’s Monroe County Citizen announced: “OUR 4th DESTINED TO BE A DAISY.” A celebration was scheduled to be held at Worley’s Grove, where the Kelli Heights addition stands today. “Every preparation has been made to have the Best Fourth of July Celebration ever held in Southern Indiana, and you will miss a good thing if you fail to attend.”

Events were to include a contest for the largest, smallest, and best-looking babies under a year of age, band concerts, and a “grand plug ugly” display of one hundred individuals. According to the advertisement, “It will pay anyone to come 20 miles to witness this.” In fact, the railroad planned “to run a special train from as far away as Greencastle.” Among the other enticements: a parade, a two-hour oration, a “greased pig march-around,” fireworks, and a balloon ascension.

The 7 July issue of the Monroe County Citizen pronounced the event “a great success.” Although threatening weather resulted in less than “the expected crowd of 10,000,” attendance was enhanced by about 1,000 people from Bloomington. The Telephone later commented that Bloomington “was near depopulated” on the Fourth of July, 1887. Ellettsville apparently tried harder!

—From “Looking Back,” by Rose H. McIlveen (Bloomington Herald Telephone, 3 July 1982)
News from the Library

Workshop on Writing Family History

On Saturday, 19 June 2004, Julian and Mary P. Livingston presented a workshop on how to write up your family history. Some of the topics included identifying personal goals, writing techniques, style, and polishing your material. The Livingstons provided a valuable handout that lists the main points covered in the session. The handout is available in the Genealogy Library, and additional sessions may be scheduled upon request.

New Volunteers

The Genealogy Library welcomes two new volunteers: Mary Jane Blustein and Mary Alice Parks. Both will be helping with special projects. We have many interesting projects, and if you’d like to help us, we’ll find something you’ll enjoy doing! Please contact Liz Knapp (355-5588, 332-2517, monroehistsoc@hotmail.com).

New Acquisitions

The library extends thanks to the donors of the following items, which will be added to the shelves soon:

*Diary of Michael Van Buskirk, Co. F, 27th*

Regt. of Indiana Volunteers donated courtesy of Pat Peruch and Corban Goble. Van Buskirk entered into service on 7 August 1861; the entries run from 10 March 1862 to 14 September 1864.

Family histories of the Hall, Hardin-Harden, Axsom, Shields, and Burch families, donated by Marcella Deckard. These items will be welcome additions to our family history shelves.

Maxwell History and Genealogy, revised version, donated by Howard Maxwell of Indianapolis, who transcribed the original and put it into computer form. It includes additional material from family members who have worked to revise and expand the original history.

**Monroe County Indiana Divorce Index 1818–1960.** Database and indexing by Marilyn McCoy; coordinated and assembled by Claude F. Rice and Rachel Rice, 2002.

Great News!
The 1850 Census is now available.

WANTED FOR UPCOMING EXHIBIT

Lingerie
Gowns (not prom dresses)
Baby Furniture
Baby Clothes

Exhibits run three to four months. If you have items that the History Center can borrow or if you have questions, please call 332-2517

FARM ART AT FARM FEST 2004

Each spring, the Peden family invites hundreds of area children to visit their farm to learn more about agriculture and conservation. Volunteers were on hand this year to share with kids how to carve limestone, shuck corn, and weave baskets, to name a few activities. Historical Society Board President Rachel Peden McCarty invited the Historical Society to participate, and staffers Rachael Himsel and Cindy DeFries helped kids make “Farm Art” - a total of five chalk murals created by the kids and displayed briefly at the History Center. Kids drew pictures of the animals they saw—pigs, sheep, cows, kittens, and the popular peacock!
News from Other Places

Indiana Historical Society Collections On-line
Twelve digital collections containing more than 2,000 images are currently available on the Indiana Historical Society web site (http://www.indianahistory.org), and other collections are in progress. These include photo company archives, postcards, and seasonal images, such as “Christmas Greetings” and Indiana through the Seasons.”

The Indiana Historical Society’s map collection is now cataloged, and the records are available on-line. The maps date from 1540 to 1998 and number nearly 1,100 items. Subject areas cover early exploration of the North American continent, the creation of the Northwest Territory, the settlement of the State of Indiana, transportation routes, land ownership, and more. The library catalog can be accessed through the society’s web site at: http://www.indianahistory.org; the maps themselves can be requested and viewed at the Indiana Historical Society’s William Henry Smith Memorial Library, 450 West Ohio Street, Indianapolis. Please allow time for retrieval from storage. (From The Bridge (July/August 2004)

Databases from the Far West
The History and Archives Division of the Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records has created an Arizona Biographical Database from mentions of persons in its collection of books, newspaper articles, periodicals, obituaries and vertical files. You can access it directly by going to: http://www.lib.az.us/bio/index.cfm.

Web Sites
* Need to find a relative fast or check surname spellings? Try the on-line white pages! Go to: http://www.whitepages.com
* American Notes: Travels in America 1750–1920. See the young United States through the eyes of travelers who experienced it. Go to: http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/lhtnhtml

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New and Renewed Members

Basic
Dale Anderson
Don and Rose Armstrong
Nancy & Peter Boerner
Paula Cain
John Davenport
Stella Jane Franklin
Ted & Kathy Frick
Karel Gilbertson
Thoral Walden Haskell
Carol Hudson
Indiana Room– MCPL
Lucy Katz
Sally Kofmehl
Naomi Lawlis
Virginia Leonard
Diana Lambdin
Frank Lester
Robert Love
Marjorie McCormick
David & Marilyn Mundy
J. Patrick & Anita Page
Patricia Patton
Patricia & Anthony Pizzo
Jerry and Dot Spore
Virginia & Don Tyle
Frances Wampler
Wayne Warden, Jr.
John Warring
Donna Zimmerman

Friend
Phil & Bonnie Anderson
Carol Curry
Robert & Joann Dodd
Bill and Liz Knapp
J.H. Madison
Charles & Judy McClary
Dick & Kathy McFall
Laura Newton
Sherry Rouse
David & Janet Rowland
George M. Smerk
Dolores Stevens
Randi & Linda Williamson

Contributor
Jane M. Fletchall

Sustaining
Susan Bucove
Wm. and Patricia Cron
Lee Ann Merry

Patron
Cullen and Rachel McCarty

A local family enjoying some of the activities at the opening reception of the “Love Tokens” exhibit.

Archy Camp was a big success this summer. Here a camper is trying out a hydraulic chisel on a piece of limestone at the Limestone Symposium.
Revision of Index Book No. 1 to Monroe County Land Records Now Available  By Lee H. Ehman

The second edition of the first of four indexes of land record books held by the Monroe County Historical Society, *Deeds of Monroe County, Indiana 1811–1844*, is now available in hard copy in the Genealogy Library and electronically from a link on the MCHS web page (www.kiva.net/~mchm/monroe.html). Previously omitted entries and spouses’ names have been added, and other errors corrected. If a land record transaction is located in the revised index, a copy of that page from the record book can be viewed or copied in the library. Work on the second index book is underway, and all four should be revised and combined into a single index in 2005.

Land transaction records are a rich source of information on local history. Records typically name both husband and wife as sellers for most transactions, and so may provide information about the identity of a spouse not available in early census tracts. Location of land parcels is given. The disposition of estates, which frequently include land, often name heirs not part of census records and locate the community in which they reside.

The vast majority of transactions involve land, but many document other legal actions of great interest to the local and family historian. For example, the establishment of early area churches and schools, with key individuals’ roles, can often be identified. Entries about actions of the “county overseers of the poor” contain information about orphans and other individuals otherwise lost to history. Terms of indenture, and a few instances of manumission of slaves, are also recorded. Some records involve non-land property, including livestock, tools, and goods. Also recorded are appointments of county and state officials, wills, appointments of attorneys or powers of attorney, patents, and civil law suits. (An article describing some of the more interesting non-land records will be published in the next *Monroe County Historian*.)

The indexes consist of two sections, the first alphabetically by Grantor (seller) name, and the second by Grantee (buyer). Each index entry contains the following information:

- **Grantor Name**: The seller of the property (“party of the first part” in the actual record), ALL CAPS, last name first, no comma between last and first name, second and other grantors (spouse first name or complete name of another grantor) following.
- **Grantee Name**: The buyer of the property (“party of the second part” in the actual record), capitalized but lower case, last name first, no comma between last and first name, second and other grantees (spouse first name or complete name of another grantee) following.
- **ID Number**: A number used by the indexers for each discrete entry.
- **Date of transaction**, in the following format: Year, Month, Day, with no spaces.
- **Book letter designation of the original Land Record book** (A through X).
- **Page number within each book**.

A typical index entry looks like this:

<table>
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<th>Grantor (Seller)</th>
<th>Grantee (Buyer)</th>
<th>YMD</th>
<th>BK</th>
<th>PG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOEL LEWIS &amp; SALLY</td>
<td>Kerby Jeremiah</td>
<td>18241116</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>321</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are several “formats” for the entries, but a typical entry begins with “This indenture...” and proceeds with a date, followed by name and residence of the grantor, or seller (“party of the first part”) and then name and residence of the grantee, or buyer (“party of the second part.”) This is followed by a legal description of the land being purchased, padded with standard legal language, concluding with the signature lines for the grantor(s) (but not the grantee) and county official. Another section follows, in which a county official certifies that the grantor(s) appeared before them and freely agreed to the selling of the land. For cases in which the transaction was made outside of Monroe County, additional certifications attesting to the authenticity of the outside county officials are found.

Plat maps are reproduced and their locations noted; these are indexed arbitrarily as “Plat” in the Grantor category, and therefore are found together in a single section in the alphabetical listing of Grantors.
**ASK GENIE**

Dear Genie: Census information is now available in paper indexes, on microfilm, and through on-line resources. Are there advantages to using one over the other?

Answer:
Each of the three types of census records mentioned above has inherent strengths and weaknesses. No one type is the perfect genealogical resource for census information.

Consider first a compilation of abstracted census records with an index. A document of this nature usually has been compiled at the county level. This type of index, if available, should be a great finding aid to the original census and should provide some information about members of a given household.

It is always a good first resource for census information, but should never be the last resource. It is subject to errors of interpretation, omission, and typographical errors especially if compiled by someone unfamiliar with given families living in the area at a given time. Additionally, there may be format errors that make certain names difficult to find and, therefore, overlooked. For example, the names McIntyre, McINTYRE and MCINTYRE would be indexed separately, and McIntyre and MCINTYRE would follow MUSSER. Furthermore, due to space limitations, certain information like race, occupation, value of property, etc., is usually omitted for all records.

Last but not least, one should not overlook problems with pagination. There are several sets of numbers at the top of a census page and, if the compiler does not frequently use the finding aid to locate an original, s/he may not be aware of those numbers or use them correctly in such a way as to lead the researcher back to the original.

Unfortunately, original census records on microfilm are not usually readily available except at large libraries such as state libraries. When they are available, the microfilm is sometimes very difficult to read. Consequently, when on-line and CD census records became available a few years ago they were eagerly welcomed. Not only did this make census records more accessible but, through technology, they were enhanced and more legible.

The downfall of on-line and CD census records and their indices, like abstracted census records with an index, is errors of interpretation, omission, and typographical errors. Additionally, the images load slowly and generally, if the text is large enough to be really legible, only a portion of the page is visible at one time. Some indexes include every name in the household; some include only the heads of household. Without making that clear distinction between the two, the novice or nave researcher might easily overlook the difference and jump to incorrect conclusions.

A search for a Jesse Goss family who was believed to be living with his family in Monroe County in 1880 illustrates the limitations. The first search was in the 1880 Monroe County abstracts and every-name index. No Goss family members were found. The second search was nation-wide in the on-line census and every-name index compiled by Ancestry.com. Again, no Jesse Goss. The third search was of the 1880 census abstracts and national every-name index prepared by the Church of the Latter Day Saints. Jesse Goss was noted there in Van Buren Twp., Monroe County, Indiana, page 127C. It was later determined that Jesse was identified as Gass in the Ancestry.com index and Jefor R. Gafs in the Monroe County index.

In sum, one might say that a digital image is equal to and sometimes better than a

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**History Center Wish List**

- Typewriter
- Digital Camera
- Laminator
- Paper Cutter

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**Corporate Members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 4</th>
<th>CFC, INC.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>Curry Buick-Pontiac-GMC Truck, Inc.</td>
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<td>Commercial Service Heating &amp; Cooling</td>
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<td>Level 2</td>
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<td>Old National Bank</td>
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<td>United Commerce Bank</td>
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<td>Adele Edgeworth</td>
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<td>Scott C. May</td>
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<td>Elegant Options Gallery</td>
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<td>Oliver Wine Company, Inc.</td>
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<td>Hurlow &amp; Smith Capital Management, Inc.</td>
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<td>Central Lions Club</td>
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<td>Cook Group Inc.</td>
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<td>Grazie! Italian Eatery</td>
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<td>Bloomington Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau</td>
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<td>Panera Bread</td>
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<td>Kroger South</td>
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<td>The Bakehouse</td>
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<td>Golden Corral</td>
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<td>Grazie! Italian Eatery</td>
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<td>Cafe Pizzaria</td>
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<td>All American Title, Inc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As most of you know, your membership expiration date appears on this newsletter’s label. Please check it now…….. Your membership dues are the keys to the Society’s success. All membership income goes toward operating expenses and is a vital part of our budgeted income.

Individual – Family
- Basic $25
- Friend $50
- Sustaining $100-249
- Contributor $250-499
- Patron $500+

Corporate - Service Organizations
- Level 1 $100-249
- Level 2 $250-499
- Level 3 $500-999
- Level 4 $1000+

Please Send to:
Monroe County Historical Society, Inc.
202 East Sixth Street
Bloomington, IN 47408
Or Fax to 812-355-5593

☐ Check if you are interested in volunteering.

☐ Check if you have a special interest in genealogy.

Gift Givers Name

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Address

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- MasterCard
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Credit Card # Exp. date

Signature