Monroe County Historical Society, Inc. presents

Monroe County Historian

Exploring Our History

Favorites from the Collection

By Jill Lesh & Erica Kendall

The newest exhibit spotlights rarely exhibited Historical Society artifacts chosen by staff and volunteers. Our collections manager Erica Kendall created this exhibit pairing personal stories and photographs with the artifacts. The result is a unique local perspective on gems from the third floor archives.

Erica has an affinity for the iron “Row Digger,” c1870. She says, “I clearly remember my great grandmother using one of these every spring to prepare the garden. I thought it was torture to use since the weight of the iron was so heavy, and it was too big for me.”

A sampling of other artifacts include a Maytag Washing Machine, c1922; original Star Wars Action Figures; and a 1940s RCA 45 Record Player. Comments are from Betty Van Birgeijk, Dick Worsena, Dara May, and many others. Now we would love to hear your memories about these artifacts.

Above: Collections manager Erica Kendall positions an iron row digger made in the 1870s by Will Hendricks, a relative of Henry Wahl.

Right: “Nestle” Spiral Hair Permer with dryer, c1930.
**Mission Statement**
The mission of the Monroe County Historical Society is to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of Monroe County’s history, culture, and natural environment by all.

**Events Schedule**
All meetings and programs will be held at the History Center unless otherwise stated.

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

**Civil War Roundtable Meetings**
2nd Tuesday of each month from Sep.-Jun. from 7-8:30pm. For more information, please contact Steve Rolfe at 336-0757.

**3rd Thursday Series**
3rd Thursday of the month from Jan.-Nov. a free program is held, usually at 7 pm.

**Genealogy Group**
Every 1st Wednesday of odd months.

**June**
- **TUE 2**: Red Cross Blood Drive, 10am
- **TUE 9**: Civil War Roundtable, “Traitor or Patriot: Lee’s Decision to Go with Virginia,” w/ John Crosby, 7pm
- **WED 10**: “Photo Identification Workshop,” 9am and “Photo Housing Workshop,” 1pm, w/ IHS paper conservator Susan Rogers
- **FRI-SAT 12&13**: Annual Garage Sale Benefit, opens 8am, behind Cook Pharmica
- **THR 18**: 3rd Thursday, “The Cultural Landscape of Limestone in Southern Indiana,” w/ Laurel Cornell, 7pm
- **SAT-SUN 20&21**: Garden Walk Open House and Garden Décor Sale, 1-5pm

**July**
- **WED 1**: Genealogy Group, WWI History, w/ Ron Darragh, 2pm
- **THR 16**: 3rd Thursday, “A Hoosier Photographer’s Colorful Journey Through Midcentury America,” w/ Eric Sandweiss, 7pm
- **SAT 18**: Opening Reception for Bleeding Heartland Roller Derby Exhibit, 7pm, see page 4
- **FRI 25**: Monroe County Fair Booth evenings to July 31

**August**
- **THR 20**: 3rd Thursday, “Buskirk Cemetery: A Monroe County Treasure,” w/ Steve Rolfe
- **SAT-SUN 22&23**: Civil War Encampment on History Center lawn, all day Sat., Sun. morning

**Exhibit Schedule**

**“Hello Ma Baby: A View of Us in Infancy”**
Opens: March 6
Closes: June 21
Baby photos of well-known Monroe County citizens, and historic infancy-related artifacts.

**“Freedom: A History of US”**
Opens: June 25
Closes: August 1
The Indiana Historical Society’s “Freedom” exhibit is the centerpiece of this exhibition that portrays the evolving principle of freedom.

**“Favorites from the History Center Collection”**
Opens: May 19
Closes: Oct 3
Rarely exhibited Historical Society artifacts were chosen by staff and volunteers. Collections Manager Erica Kendall has paired personal stories with artifacts.

**“In Mr. McGregor’s Garden”**
Opens: June 19
Closes: September 19
Jamee Wissink creates a whimsical scene of Mr. McGregor’s Garden and exhibits Jeanne Speakman’s Beatrix Potter collection.

**“Community Voices Gallery: Bleeding Heartland Rollergirls”**
Opens: July 18
Closes: October 3
Members of the local women’s flat track derby league present an enthusiastic and local perspective on the resurgence of roller derby’s popularity, its culture and customs.
Update from the Managing Director

Garage Sale June 12 & 13
Our biggest fundraiser (& biggest garage sale in Monroe County) needs your donations. You can bring things directly to the garage sale site in the warehouse behind Cook Pharmica, Tues through Saturday between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. through Wednesday, June 10. You can make this a success.

Matthews Brothers Stone Company
Do you have photos or memorabilia related to the Matthews Brothers Stone Company? We would love to make a copy of any related document or photo your might have to include in the History of the company that we are creating in partnership with the Monroe County Public Library. This exciting project will culminate in a photo-history available on the web.

June is Limestone Month
In Monroe and Lawrence Counties, June is now the designated month to celebrate our limestone heritage. See www.limestonemonth.com for a complete list of June events. The printable listing includes our Third Thursday program, on June 18, “The Cultural Landscape of Limestone in Southern Indiana” with Laurel Cornell.

The Mystery Man in the Fire Photo
When we submitted the photo of the Central Junior High School fire to the Herald-Time for a “Looking Back” factoid, we were unclear about the identity of the man with the bullhorn. Now we know it was Clyde Black! We received 39 calls or emails: 35 for Clyde Black and 4 for Carl Stewart. The definitive call came from Russ Watson who was the principal at Central Junior High with Clyde Black at the time of the fire. We received such wonderful stories related to that historic event. Thank you.

Founders’ Endowment – Great Start
I am delighted to report that we have pledges or gifts of $25,464 toward our Founders’ Endowment campaign goal of $50,000. If you haven’t pledged, please consider a three-year pledge. Any amount is welcome. No amount is too small. Help us reach the goal of hiring a curator of exhibits and providing him or her with a budget to make our exhibits more interactive and meaningful for school-age children.

—Jill Lesh

Annual Meeting & Celebration
At the annual meeting on April 2, 2009, we unveiled the recently restored oil portraits of Austin and Jennett Seward. Conservator Margaret Contompasis explained her restoration of these early settler portraits from the early 1860s. The portraits were donated to the Historical Society by Nancy Seward Taylor and Marilyn Seward Warden in 2004.

The election resulted in our current board of trustees for 2009-2010. Glenda Murray will serve a third year as president.

Sue Ellen Bowman  Jackie Gilkey  Joyce Poling
Anne Cady  Pat Haley  Bob Ralston
Dax Collins  Judie Iverson  Steve Rolfe
Tosha Daugherty  Liz Knapp  Marilyn Skirvin
Mary Lee Deckard  Kevin Leffel  Gary Wiggins
Lee Ehman  Lou Malcomb  Jamee Wissink
Susan Ferentinos  Jenn Marcum
Wenona Freeman  Glenda Murray

Margaret Contompasis tells how she restored the Seward portraits.
Not To Be Missed

Garden Walk Open House
Sat. & Sun. June 20 & 21
1-5pm

Garden Décor Market on the Lawn
10am-6pm Sat., 12-5pm Sun.

The open house will feature the “In Mr. McGregor’s Garden” exhibit with Beatrix Potter collectibles, and a special appearance by Mr. McGregor with live bunnies to pet from 1-4 p.m. both days. Josephine Bunny’s chamomile tea punch and carrot cake will be served. Tickets for the Garden Walk include admission to the museum. Tickets are available from Bloomington Garden Club members, $8 in advance; $10 the day of; children free.

Greg’s Antiques will have a sale on the lawn, featuring unique garden ornaments and furniture.

“The Cultural Landscape of Limestone in Southern Indiana”
with Laurel Cornell
Thursday, June 18
7pm

How is the limestone landscape of southern Indiana distinctive? Why should we pay attention to it? Professor Cornell will trace the history of limestone extraction in southern Indiana and examine how it has created a distinctive cultural landscape.

Cornell is an associate professor in the Indiana University Department of Sociology.

Opening Reception for “Bleeding Heartland Rollergirls”
Saturday, July 18
7-9pm

We will host the Bleeding Heartland Rollergirls exhibit in the Community Voices Gallery through October 3. The opening reception will feature players from all four teams wearing their uniforms and roller-skates. Our local Bleeding Heartland Rollergirls League has four teams, the Slaughter Scouts, Farm Fatale, Flatliners, and Code Blue Assassins. Enjoy refreshments and experience their contagious enthusiasm for the sport of women’s roller derby.

“A Hoosier Photographer’s Colorful Journey through Midcentury America”
with Eric Sandweiss
Thursday, July 16
7pm

In 1969, an unknown amateur photographer named Charles Cushman left more than 14,000 early color photographs to IU. Eric Sandweiss will share Cushman’s story taking us on a path leading from small-town Indiana to some of the most important sites and personages of the American Century.

Eric Sandweiss holds the Carmony Chair of History and is an Associate Professor at Indiana University. He is also editor of the Indiana Magazine of History.
According to the 1884 “History of Monroe County,” in Counties of Morgan, Monroe, and Brown, edited by Charles Blanchard, John Kutch entered land in Monroe County, Indiana, in 1816. In 1841, John Kutch was one of the highest taxpayers in Clear Creek Township. John Kutch, together with his wife, Elizabeth, had 13 children: John, James, Alfred, Levi, Jane, Elizabeth, Eu-in (sic), Jacob, Nancy, Clarinda, David D., and two infants, deceased.

In an early history of Greene County, Indiana, titled All Matters of Interest Connected with the Early Settlement of the County From 1813 to 1850, compiled by Jack Baber based upon the recollections of pioneer settlers and published in 1875, Alfred L. Kutch provided a brief sketch of his father, John. It reads as follows:

“By request, I will give some of my recollections of my early days, and in order to do so, I shall speak of my father. He was from the State of Maryland to North Carolina; thence to Kentucky; thence to Washington County, Indiana, near Salem; thence to Brownstown, Jackson County. I was born near Salem in the year 1814, December 2d.

“Now it is but justice to the reader of this to note that the State of Indiana was only a territory at that time. After staying in Jackson County, Indiana, two years, father removed to Monroe County, Indiana, and as there was no road from Brownstown to Bloomington, only what was known as Bigger’s Trace, he took his family on horseback to the place he settled on, one mile and a half south of John Ketcham’s watermill, and eight miles south of Bloomington on Clear Creek.

“He then went back to Jackson County and dug himself a large watercraft and landed it in the Muscatatuck River and made his way downstream to where it empties into the east fork of White River; thence down White River to the mouth of Salt Creek; thence up Salt Creek to the mouth of Clear Creek; thence up Clear Creek within three quarters of a mile of Harrodsburg. As that was as far up as he could get, for fallen timber in the creek which had been fell by William Chambers who had settled there one year before, he landed within four miles of where he settled. This was about the 17th of April 1817. He built a small, round log house, cleared and fenced the land, and raised a crop of corn that year.

“When he got out of bread stuff, he went to Shakertown on Shaker prairie and carried his meal on horseback. There were no mills there, at that time, and but few settlers, and not much else except a howling wilderness. The most frequent salutation was the howl of the wolf or the yell of an Indian. The early settlers were William, David, John and Anthony Chambers; Jacob, John and David Say-ers.

“John Ketcham built the first water mill in the county. He also built the courthouse in Bloomington.

“The early settlers had a very hard time getting breadstuff, having to beat their corn in a mortar—a hole burnt in the end of a log of wood, such as beech or white oak—and most of the time the corn was frost-bitten which made poor bread. After the second and third years, they managed to have biscuits on Sunday mornings. Clothing, also, was very hard to get. They raised flax and hemp for shirting and overalls for spring and summer wear, and buckskin for winter.

“When the settlement became thick enough settled, they built round, log school houses, cut out about seven feet of one end for a fireplace, and the scholars had the wood to get, the most of the time. There was one log taken from the side of the house and paper pasted in to give light. The scholars had to go from one to three miles to school. The early settlers had a nice time killing deer, bear and turkeys. The range for stock was good...

“My father was a farmer and had eleven children—seven boys and four girls—all except three lived to be married. The oldest girl was scalded to death by falling into a tub of hot water when she was two years old. One of the boys was a cripple from birth and died at about the age of 30 years.

“Father and mother belonged to the Christian Church in which they lived until their death. Mother died at the age of 61 on the farm where her father first settled in Monroe County. Father died December 11th, 1869, in his 83d year at Harrodsburg within three quarters of a mile of where he landed his water craft in getting to his place of destination.”

An Early History of John Kutch and Monroe County Prior to 1850

By Randi Richardson
Whenever Bud Lynch comes through the doors of the History Center, I know I’m about to hear a story. Bud is a man of stories – he shares his own from his life experiences and collects those of others through the Veterans History Project.

In 2004 a need arose at the History Center for a volunteer to lead the Veterans History Project in Monroe County. Cathie Lynch, a Museum docent, volunteered her husband Bud. When she told him about being volunteered, his first reaction was “thanks a lot.” He had only heard of the Project, and had not given much thought to it. Thankfully, Bud made the task his own and has grown to enjoy it.

Bud served active duty in the Army for 22 years. Between 1953 and 1975 he was stationed throughout the United States, Germany and in Vietnam as Special Forces and a Paratrooper.

In 1975 Bud retired from the military as a Lieutenant Colonel and returned to Bloomington with his wife. He worked on his Masters degree at IU and was employed as a staff coordinator for the Disaster and Emergency Services at the college. 18 years later he retired and has been staying busy ever since. Besides volunteering for the History Center, Bud is also involved in AMVETS, the American Legion, and Meals on Wheels.

Bud’s extensive career in the Army has given him a great background and understanding for conducting interviews with fellow veterans. He has interviewed more than 250 veterans, concentrating on World War II era because they are older and fading so fast. Bud shares that many of the men are reluctant to talk initially, but he can relate to them and put them at ease. Bud feels good about his role in having contributed to recording the stories for posterity. Cathie is also involved in the Project by helping Bud. He says they “make a pretty good team.” The goals and his involvement in the project are open ended. He interviews anyone who is interested and hopes to continue his efforts to preserve history. Bud is a story teller and collector, and we are grateful that he shares his talents with us at the History Center.
Veterans Oral History Project

The Monroe County History Center is continuing a project to record the military experiences of local Veterans in cooperation with the Library of Congress Veterans History Project to collect oral histories of veterans.

According to information from Sen. Richard Lugar’s office, approximately 5000 completed interviews have been submitted to the Library of Congress from Indiana. Program coordinators have a special interest in those who served in World Wars I and II, Korea and Vietnam, as well as Somalia, Desert Storm and Bosnia.

H. M. “Bud” Lynch, a Monroe County native, who served in the Army for 22 years in Korea and Vietnam, will continue to conduct the interviews at the Monroe County History Center. If you are a veteran and have not been interviewed, please consider doing it. Those interested in sharing their memories should call the Museum at 812-332-2517, to set up an appointment.

Earliest Monroe County “Abstract of Title” Book

We are thrilled that the earliest Monroe County “abstract of title” book has been repaired and can be used by the public in our genealogy library. The book, now divided into two volumes, contains a wealth of information about local city and county land ownership, sellers and buyers, from 1816 to the 1880s. The township & range lines indicate the location of the property and, in the early years, the owners’ names were actually written in each section of the grid.

Thank you to County Recorder Sam Allison for having each of these large, fragile 15x22 inch pages repaired and encapsulated in clear archival polyester film so that researchers can see the original document. We are privileged to be entrusted with the beautiful red leather volumes now on permanent loan from the County Recorder’s Office. Please stop into the library and see these treasures.

Craftacular: A Spectacular Craft Event

The History Center’s first Craftacular was held Sunday, March 29, and indeed it was a spectacular success. More than 140 adults and children participated in hands-on craft activities and were treated to live music.

Participants learned crafts at the six stations. Boxcar Books and Bleeding Heartland Rollergirls sponsored booths and Tiny Umbrellas performed. Lisa Simmons organized this event and Erica Kendall led a hands-on workshop; both hope to make it an annual event.

Left: Ulla Linenthal shows traditional wool spinning to a group.

Right: Sally Crouch taught adults and children about pysanka, a traditional Ukrainian egg art.
News from Other Places

Morgan County’s Grassyfork Fisheries Building
The historic Grassyfork Fisheries Building in Martinsville has been acquired by the Morgan County Historic Preservation Society. Grassyfork Fisheries was started in 1899 by Martinsville entrepreneur Eugene Shireman on property converted from swampland. It is part of a tradition of fisheries in Martinsville, once known as the “Goldfish Capital of the World.” The display and show room building was erected in 1936. The Morgan County Historic Preservation Society Board’s priorities are to restore electrical service to the building, complete a structural assessment, address issues of asbestos remediation, and prepare a marketing packet for prospective new owners.

The Morgan County Historic Preservation Society seeks to promote awareness and appreciation of the county’s architectural heritage. For more information on the society and its projects, contact: MCHPS, P.O. Box 1377, Martinsville, IN 46151; or go to: http://www.mchps.org (From C. Dale Risch, “Historic Grassyfork Fishery Building Finds New Owners,” Gosport Express News, Week of April 6, 2009; and the web site, accessed 10 April 2009.)

Gosport Bridge Restoration Nears Completion
Restoration of the old Gosport Bridge for bicycle and pedestrian use is expected to be finished by the end of June 2009. Completed in 1903, it is “the longest clear span bridge of its type still in existence in Indiana.” In 1996, it was accepted into the National Registry of Historic Places. The restoration project, which began over ten years ago, has been funded primarily by a federal grant, with some assistance from Monroe County.

Gosport Bridge no. 9 (the Secrest Ferry Bridge) was under construction from 1901 to 1903. It replaced a ferry system in use since the 1860s. Owen County and Monroe County shared the cost of this bridge, which provided an important link between Gosport and its neighbors across the west fork of the White River. The metal bridge, originally designed for horse and buggy traffic, handled an average of 1,100 cars a day—limited to one vehicle at a time—when it was taken out of service in 1990. It was replaced by a modern concrete bridge, just to the west of the original, on County Line Road.

Once it is open to the public, the restored 1903 bridge will be restricted to bicycle and pedestrian traffic. Access on the Monroe County side is off Texas Ridge Road just east of its intersection with County Line Road. On the Owen County side, the old road leading up to the bridge was removed nearly twenty years ago, and access consists of a dirt path widened by construction equipment. Planners originally envisioned a park in the area around the old bridge site, but the land on either side of the White River is subject to severe flooding. Roads leading to the bridge site on both sides of the river are occasionally closed due to inundation. Limited access to the object of this expensive restoration project has earned it the nickname “the bridge to nowhere.” (From Kyle Hall, “Project to Restore Gosport’s Bridge to Nowhere to Cost Taxpayers Nearly One Million Dollars,” Gosport Express News, Week of April 6, 2009; and site visit by Penelope Mathiesen on 1 May 2009.)
New & Renewed Members

March 14—May 13

Gallery Benefactor
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Nancy Werner
Tod & Lisa Wesemann
Scott & Jammie Wiswick

Student/Teacher
Doyle & Paula Cain
Bettye Lou Coller
Audrey Elizabeth Schmalz
News from the Library

By Penelope Mathiesen & Lee Ehman

MCHS at IGS 2009
The annual conference of the Indiana Genealogical Society was held on 25 April 2009 at the Marriott Center East in Indianapolis. The meeting opened with the presentation of colors by the Indiana Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. Genealogists in attendance enjoyed a variety of presentations on military resources, researching African-American ancestors, evaluating Internet sources, and Irish ancestors in the American Revolution.

The MCHS was represented by Genealogy Library volunteers Liz Knapp and Penny Mathiesen, who staffed an exhibit table that provided free brochures and offered MCHS publications for sale. Other MCHS members in attendance were library volunteers Mobie McCammon and Randi Richardson, as well as past MCHS board member Michael Maben. At this year’s conference, Michael concluded a two-year term as IGS president. Next year’s conference will be held in Fort Wayne, Indiana, on 10 April 2010.

New Library Resources Available
Several new resources for genealogists and local history buffs are now available in the Genealogy Library. “Area Stone Workers (Stinesville, Indiana)” is a compilation of information taken from handwritten index cards that list names, birth and death years, and trades (cutter, driller, planer, foreman, etc.). The original cards were given to the library by Mary Jane Baldwin.

“The Record of Graduates, Young People Reading Circle, 1894–1910, Monroe County, Indiana” is a compilation of names arranged in two parts. The first part is organized according to year; beginning in 1899, the ages of the students, ranging from 12 to 18, are included. The second part groups the students under the names of their teachers.

The 1855 issues of the Bloomington News-Letter: A Weekly Democratic Newspaper were digitized in January 2009 by Ben Johnson and Lou Malcomb. A list of the issues and the URLs for electronically accessing the .pdf files is available in the Genealogy Library, along with a CD-ROM version. The News-Letter, published every Saturday morning by A. B. and J. C. Carlton, was “devoted to news, politics, literature, agricultural and mechanical interests.” The articles and advertisements offer a view of Bloomington during a time period where historical information is not always easily available.

New Books on the Shelves
• Distinctive Houses of Indiana Limestone. Bedford, IN: Indiana Limestone Quarrymen’s Association, 1924. Gift from Doran W. May.
• Hartley, W. Douglas. Otto Ping: Photographer of Brown County, Indiana 1900–1940. Indianapolis, IN: Indiana
Two Exhibit Openings

The opening reception for the Community Voices Gallery: American Red Cross of Monroe County was held Friday, May 1.

Left: Laura Marcum shows the defibrillator to Jamee Wissink.

Right: Volunteers Janice Partenheimer (left) and Jamee Wissink (right) chat with Sue Gulley the Executive Director of the Monroe County Chapter of the American Red Cross.

An opening reception was held Thursday, May 12 for “Hello Ma Baby,” a delightful exhibit created by Jenny Mack, Rachel Mitchell, and Lisa Simmons.

Bottom Left: Susan Sandberg and Rachel Mitchell
Bottom Right: Jenny Mack with exhibit photos

Con’t from page 10


• Lackey, Richard S. *Cite Your Sources*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1980.


• McCammon, George W., transcriber and Burchard, Helen, indexer. *Lawrence County, Indiana, Commissioners Record Book B, 1823–25*. Lawrence County, IN: Lawrence County Library, n.d. Gift from Mobie McCammon.


• The Quarrians. Stinesville, Indiana, school newsletters, 1930–50. Gift from Ronald Baldwin.

• Scrapbook of Homes. Chicago, IL: Architects’ Small House Service Bureau, 1928. Gift from Doran W. May.

Garage Sale Benefit
June 12 & 13

Monroe County History Center
202 East Sixth Street
Bloomington, IN 47408

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Vol. 2009 Issue 3

Brought to you by the Monroe County Historical Society

Society established 1905
Museum established 1980

For subscription information contact the Monroe County History Center at 812-332-2517, or www.monroehistory.org

Membership Form

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

Corporate - Service Organizations
☐ Exhibit Supporter $100
☐ Gallery Benefactor $250
☐ History Patron $500
☐ Monroe County History Maker $1000

Method of Payment
☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Check

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

Please write your information as you would like it to appear.

Name

Address

Phone

E-mail

Send to:
Monroe County Historical Society, Inc.
202 East Sixth Street
Bloomington, IN 47408

Garage Sale
Fri., June 12, 8am-5pm
Sat., June 13, 8am-3pm

Former RCA warehouse behind Cook Pharmica,
1300s S Patterson Dr.
Bloomington

You can bring donations to the garage sale site Mon—Fri,
10am-2pm through June 10.

For more information call the office at 812-332-2517.