Monroe County History Center

Where the past and present meet.

812.332.2517

202 East Sixth Street
Bloomington, Indiana 47408

monroehistory.org

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Monroe County Historical Society's

Monroe County Historian

October 2011
Vol. 2011 Issue 5

Society established 1905
Museum established 1980

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

Cole/County Farm Cemetery- Cemetery of the month for October and location of Iron Fence Restoration Workshop

Mt. Carmel Cemetery– Stinesville, Cemetery of the month for November and December

Cover painting by Dorothy Bain, courtesy of the Arthur Clark Estate, from the MCHC Collection

Membership Form

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

Annual Membership Levels

□ Student/Teacher	$20
□ Basic	$35
□ Family	$60
□ Sustaining	$100
□ Patron	$500

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□ Gallery Benefactor	$250
□ History Patron	$500
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October, 2011
Vol. 2011 Issue 5

Monroe County History Center

Museum
Genealogy Library
Museum Gift Store
Educational Facility

History Center
202 East Sixth Street
Bloomington, IN 47408
812-332-2517
www.monroehistory.org

Hours
Tuesday — Saturday
10am — 4pm

Museum Admission
Adult — $2
Child (6-17 yrs.) — $1
5 yrs. & Under — Free
Members — Free

Issue Highlights

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Historian Staff
Editor: Diane Ballard
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Monroe County Historian

Preserving the Past for Future Generations

Newsletter of the Monroe County Historical Society, Inc.

SAVE the DATE

Annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner- Monday, December 5 at 5:00pm, the dinner will be provided but we invite you to bring a dessert. RSVP by Monday, November 28

Annual Gala– Friday, February 24 at 6:00pm. RSVP by Friday, February 17

Haunted Hoosier History

Saturday, October 22, at 6:00pm

The History Center will provide transportation to some of the most haunted locations in Monroe County! We will visit Stepp Cemetery, Reed Hall, Matthew's Mansion, Rose Hill Cemetery, Paris Dunning House and many more locations. You will hear about the hauntings that have occurred at these locations and events that took place to make these spirits unable to rest!

Dinner will be provided and a ghost hunt will take place at the museum, complete with paranormal investigators. $20.00 per person or $30.00 for two for the entire evening, $10.00 per person or $20.00 for two for the driving tour only. RSVP by October 7th at (812) 332-2517 ext. 3 or education@monroehistory.org

Holiday Dream-house Raffle

This amazing dollhouse will light up the eyes of any child or the young at heart. The house was graciously donated by a community member and brilliantly restored by the Madison Avenue Miniatures Club. The seven room house is fully furnished and accessorized.

The house is currently on display in the History Center and will be up through the beginning of December. Tickets can be purchased by coming in the Center during normal business hours or by phone at (812) 332-2517, ext. 2 The drawing will be held on December 6th, 2011. Need not be present to win. Tickets are $3.00 each or 2 for $5.00.

Proceeds from the doll house raffle will benefit the interactive exhibits plan for the permanent gallery and entrance area.

Our efforts to make the History Center more interactive is a major undertaking and one that will add interest and promote appreciation of local traditions and history.

Calendar of Events

All events held at the History Center unless otherwise stated.

October

- SAT 1st– Teddy Bear Picnic, please bring the special children in your life, along with their favorite "friend" $2.00 per person, 1:00pm-3:00pm
- SAT 8th- WFHB presents Saturday's Child, 10:00am-1:00pm
- TUES 11th - Civil War Roundtable 7:00pm
- THUR 13th —Board meeting, 4:30pm
- FRI 14th– Iron Restoration Talk at the History Center, 6:00pm-8:30pm, Free
- SAT 15th– Iron Restoration Workshop at the Cole County Farm Cemetery, 9:00am-4:00pm, $20.00, registration open
- THUR 20th—3rd Thursday Series: Local Cemeteries, presented by Lou Malcomb, 7:00pm
- SAT 22nd– Haunted Hoosier History, join us for a bus tour of "haunted" locations around the county, followed by dinner and a ghost hunt in the museum, 6:00pm -12 midnight, $20.00 or two for $30.00, registration open

November

- TUES 8th- Civil War Roundtable 7:00pm
- THUR 10th– Board Meeting, 4:30pm
- SAT 12th—WFHB presents Saturday's Child, 10:00am-1:00pm
- THUR 17th—3rd Thursday Series: Bloomington Band Scene, presented by Gary Wiggins 7:00pm
- FRI 25th– Canopy of Lights Open House, step in and warm up! Free cider, pastries and music

Current & Upcoming Exhibits

Also available at www.monroehistory.org

"Reflections of the Civil War" Photographer Robert Morris **Opens: July 18th Closes: October 30th**

Robert Morris has spent several years capturing emotionally evocative images of the historic battlefields of the Civil War. This exhibit features some of the most historically significant sites of the War as they are preserved today.

"Making Clothes Making Do: Carol Wise and the Art of Daily Living" **Opens: October 11th Closes: February 4th, 2012** Carol has made clothing, much of it by hand, for most of her adult life. For Carol, clothes-making offers a sense of self-sufficiency and continuity with the past. She can do for herself as did her ancestors.

"Toys through the Ages" **Opens: September 27th Closes: February 3rd, 2012** This exhibition looks at the development of toys, games, and childhood memorabilia from the early 1900s to today. Many toys we used to play with have evolved or fallen out of fashion, but there are many that continue to be entertaining for all.

CASCI

Citizen Advocacy of South-Central Indiana, Inc.

Together, we can change our community.

Community Voices Gallery **Opens: August 5th Closes: November 19th** CASCI works to match individuals with disabilities (Partners), who want someone to assist them in improving the quality of their services and to provide practical assistance and freely-given companionship, with citizens (Advocates) who possess personal qualities and talents that fit with the personal qualities and needs of their Partner.

Bloomington Community and Marching Bands Opens October 18th Closes December 2011 This exhibition celebrates the history of the Bloomington Community Band and other school marching bands with photographs, textiles, and other pieces from the collection.

Sarkes Tarzian Radios Opens October 14th Closes January 28th, 2012 In 1945 engineer Sarkes Tarzian embarked on a remarkable experiment to establish a successful local broadcast radio station in Bloomington. A number of Sarkes Tarzian radios will be on display.

Welcome New Members

The following new members have joined the Monroe County Historical Society and History Center. If you know any of the individuals, please say a word of welcome and encourage them to utilize the services given by the Center and participate in our events.

Sustaining Members- $100
Tom Osborne
George and Jan Ridgway
Steve and Connie Jackson
Jennifer Moore
Wayne and Kathy Radford
Rob and Missy Santa

Family Members-$60
Kristin Blackwell
Don and Mindy Kyle
Rick and Carrie Snapp
Laird and Nancy Smith

Basic Membership-$35
SusieCarter and Joe Wooten
Richard Hvale and Catherine Hoff
Nikki Johnson
Dean McElhinney
Bob Childress
Jack and Marlene Peterson
Jason Kinney
Roger Kugler
Dale Drake
Elizabeth Schlemmer

Recruit-a-member *…. Please help grow our membership numbers. Ask one person you known to join today. A form is printed on the back page of this newsletter and an envelope is enclosed. Our web site has details or call the office, 332-2517, ext. 2*

Continued from Page 4

In the March 19 *Evening World*, Bradfute addressed the many attacks made against him. He asserted that Principal Clark and teachers "conspired" to stop the work of the schools, and that Clark was "cowardly." He believed the basic issue was: "Who runs the school, the principal or the board?" He thought it had to be the board. He pointed out that 20 percent of high school students had failing grades, and that Clark was using the fraternities report as a way to deflect blame from his and the teachers' bad performance. The legal ban on fraternities made that issue moot. He denied pressuring Clark or teachers about his daughter's failing grades, and ended with negative comments about fellow board member Rawles.

On the next day, the City Council met briefly to announce Bradfute's resignation from the board. Many members of the public attended, and they met afterward, forming a citizen's committee. Two days later the City Council appointed Fred Matthews to the board; he was later elected president. The same evening, the first of several mass meetings was held. Resolutions were adopted in support of Clark and the teachers, and in favor of giving control of teacher hiring to the superintendent, rather than the board. On the next day, the board met and agreed to have teachers selected by the superintendent.

Public sentiment then turned to having the teachers reinstated. Signatures of 1,012 citizens on a reinstatement petition were collected in thirty-six hours and presented to the board on March 29. Although Superintendent Sanders told the board he was in favor of reinstatement, the board refused, voting 2 to 1 against, with only Rawles voting in favor. Two days later another mass meeting was held, attracting 1,600 people—in a town whose total population was about 10,000. The petitions were again presented to the board on April 3, when it reversed itself and voted to reinstate the teachers. The high school reopened on the following Monday, after being closed for three full weeks.

The editors of the two newspapers agreed to suspend publishing articles about the school disputes, but this truce did not hold. The *Telephone* soon published a sharp attack on the reinstatement decision, and the *Evening World* followed with an attack on the *Telephone* and its editor. The citizen's committee labeled Bradfute "an enemy of the public schools." This exchange signaled the end of the newspaper wars over the issue, except for coverage of the City Council's selection in May of the new school board. The *Evening World* campaigned for Rawles, and more petitions were presented in his favor, but the council selected a dentist instead. There were hints of anti-university sentiment in the council, and the *Evening World* published a story titled "Rawles Victim of Ring Tactics," referring to what some believed was a political cabal that ran the city's politics, with Bradfute at the center.

On May 24 the board announced the next year's teachers. Of the nine who resigned in March, two, including Clark, did not reapply, three resigned, and four were reappointed. June 6 saw the high school graduating class picture published. On June 14 the board announced a new high school principal, Earl E. Ramsey.

We can see similarities to this dispute in today's school politics, marked by turnover of superintendents, hotly contested school board elections, and controversy over funding shortfalls and how to address them. But proportionally, in 1907, the public became more intensely involved over a sustained period than is the case today. Mass meetings, petition drives, differing coverage in two newspapers—these showed a high degree of citizens' participation in school politics. This widespread involvement was effective, too. As a result of the political pressure the president of the school board resigned, teacher hiring decision-making was put in the hands of the superintendent rather than the board, and the board finally reversed itself and reinstated the teachers who had resigned in protest. Schools clearly were then, as now, of high import to the general public.

Sources Consulted: *Bloomington Evening World*, 15 March–14 June 1907; *Bloomington Telephone*, 19 March–21 May, 1907; "High School Fraternities and Sororities," accessed at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High_school_fraternities_and_sororities on 31 January 2011; High School Teachers Association, W. J. Cooper, Chairman, *Report of the Committee*, 1911 (Berkeley, CA; reprinted in the Sierra Educational News).

HOLIDAY DONATIONS NEEDED NOW
Holiday Store will be open from November 1st until January 6th

The History Center will again have its popular holiday sale featuring great donated bargains in holiday decorations, books, gift ware and jewelry. **Bring your like-new donations to the History Center any time**, so that we can get the shop open early.

Not only will we have special donated items in the Ed Room holiday shop, but the Museum Store has new and unusual books, cards and gifts for you to see, too. Both stores are open during all normal History Center hours, Tuesday-Saturday 10:00am-4:00pm.

Every year our holiday sales bring in thousands of dollars to help with programs and events, thanks to all of you.

See What's Happening At The Monroe County History Center

to see more pictures from these events please visit www.monroehistory.org

Cemetery Iron Fence Restoration Workshop

On October 14th and 15th, there will be an Iron Fence Restoration talk and workshop sponsored by the Cemetery Committee, with community support from the Monroe County Fair Board, the Monroe County Cemetery Commission, and members of the community at large. The talk will be October 14th, 6:30 p.m. at the History Center, is free and open to the public, and will be given by Jason Church, a nationally known iron fence restorer.

October 15th a workshop will be held at Cole/County Farm, located near the County Fairgrounds, to restore the fences and headstones. Please call 812-332-2517, or email admin@monroehistory.org to register. Feel free to contact us about a donation to support these restorations and our instructional programs.

Canopy of Lights Open House

Come by the History Center between 5:00pm and 9:00pm on Friday, November 25th for our annual Open House. There will be hot cider, pastries and holiday music. Admission is free the entire evening and our holiday gift store will be open in the Deckard Education Room.

The Holiday Dream-house we are raffling will be on display. See the front cover for more information.

Message from the Board President

At our April Annual Meeting, Ric Snodgrass, consultant for Museumcroft, presented the concept details for our Interactive Exhibits project. This summer the Interactive Exhibits Committee recommended that we begin Phase I with an emphasis on the second floor entry area, our schoolhouse and log cabin. Experience has shown that our tour groups enjoy these areas – especially in our educational programming with school age children.

Our Build History Fund has enabled us to contract with Museumcroft in our planning period. While there are still funds available to begin the new interpretive exhibits, we will begin to fundraise to underwrite the exhibit costs. We intend to be good stewards of our funds, as well as upgrade our exhibits so that our members and visitors will enjoy the History Center for many years to come.

Please note our upcoming schedule of exhibits and events. Our Garage Sale Committee will again have the Holiday Sale beginning in November in the Education Room. And we will again host the reception on the evening of the Courthouse Square Lighting - Friday, November 25! Our Board of Trustees and staff are looking forward to our upcoming schedule and hope you will visit the History Center.

We would also like to thank Joe Pritchett and Pritchett Brothers Construction for their generous gift of expertise in repair work done to our building this summer. Monroe County is indeed a great community and we are proud to preserve its history.

Anne Cady

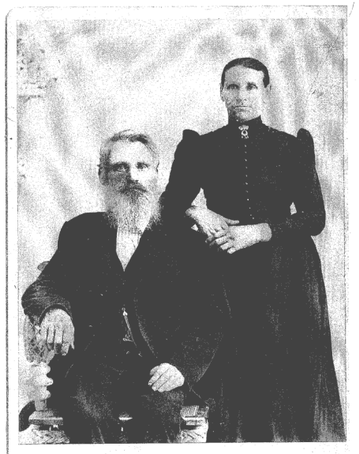
News from the Library
genealogy@monroehistory.org

News from the Library
Compiled by Penelope Mathiesen

What's New in the Library
The Genealogy Library has received a donation from Andy Mitz of Sarkes Tarzian materials including an autobiography, a history of the company, and articles on the development of television in Bloomington. *Ryles' Historical Atlas and Gazetteer Series, Monroe County, Indiana* is available in the library and also for sale in the Museum Store. It includes maps; lists of airfields, communities, and post offices; and details such as 1912 driving directions from Bloomington to Gosport: "turn right on stone road ... turn left with telephone poles."

Recent Acquisitions
* *Cemeteries of Martin County, Indiana*, vols. 1–3. Martin County Historical Society, 1963–1971.
* Civil War pension records for John D. Bryant and Miles Wesley Harris. Gift from Judy Jefferson.
* *The Echo: Bloomington Hospital Training School for Nurses*. Yearbook. 1927.
* Gioe, Joan Colbert. *Indiana: Her Counties, Her Townships, and Her Towns*. 1979.
* Jefferson, Judy. *The Salee and Baldridge Families*. 2011. Gift from Judy Jefferson.
* "Monon Railroad History, Five Killed by Fast Train, Ellettsville, in 1912." CD. Gift from Ron Marquardt.
* Renneisen, Mick. "Bloomington Parks: 90 Years of Good Green Fun." 2011. CD and printout. Gift from Bloomington Parks and Recreation.
* Schlemmer, Elizabeth. "'The Old Library' Debate: How Bloomington Preserved Its Historic Carnegie Library." Senior Honors Paper. May 2010.
* Skinner, Gerald. *Oolitic of Yesteryear*. 1984.
* Wolfe, Barbara Schull. *Mexican War Pension Applications*. 1985. Gift from Lucy Jacobs.
* *The Zionsville Almanac*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1975–76.

The Genealogy and Research Library is open Tuesday—Saturday from 10:00am to 4:00pm. Research volunteers are available to assist you.



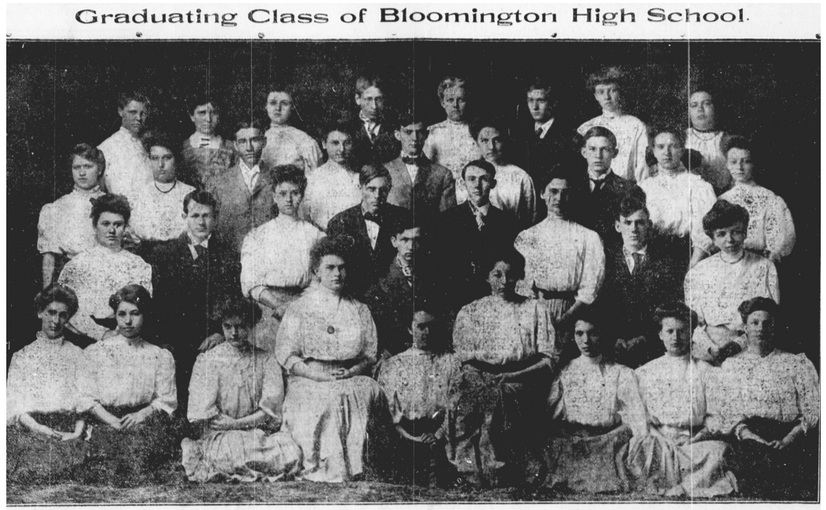
John D. Bryant & wife Nancy Brown, Civil War Pension Records

Citizen Involvement in Bloomington School Politics, 1907

By Lee Ehman

On 15 March 1907, Howard H. Clark, principal of Bloomington High School, and eight of his teachers resigned in protest over school board actions. This set off a nearly three-month-long series of events, showing the intensity of public feeling toward the schools and their management. The *Bloomington Evening World* (published daily except Sunday) and the *Bloomington Telephone* (bi-weekly) devoted more coverage to this story than any I've seen in scanning the last hundred years' worth of local newspapers.

It is important to note that the publisher of the *Telephone* was Walter Bradfute, who was also president of the school board and postmaster of Bloomington—making him a powerful political insider. There was clearly no love lost between Bradfute and Oscar Cravens, publisher of the *Evening World*. I depended mostly on the latter paper in researching this article, but consulted the *Telephone's* coverage as well. Reporting of the school controversy in the two papers was very partisan, with the *Telephone* defending Bradfute's actions and the *Evening World* attacking him.


Graduating Class of Bloomington High School.

Bottom Row, from left to right—Ethel East, Bessie Fish, Bessie Stewart, Emma Batman, Kate Johns, Hazel Scott, Edith Hennel, Millie Whitaker, Amy Ping.
Second Row, from left to right—Cora Williams, Ralph Hiemlich, Merle Graves, Samuel VanValzah, Paul Edmondson, Daniel McLaughlin, Ruth Burns, Melville Ross, Cora White.
Third Row, from left to right—Leafy Deckard, Leafy Davis, Oliver Goodwin, Edna Campbell, Clifton Steele, Delphine Cassell, Vern James, Helen Hicks, Grace Bray.
Top Row, from left to right—Josephine Baker, Goldie Fuller, Alice Cogswell, Harold Johnston, Ethel Smith, Max Aley, Lucile Cassell, Thana Winslow.

Class of 1907, Bloomington High School. From the *Bloomington Evening World*, 6

Clark and his teachers explained their actions in the *Evening World*. First, they cited the school board for "purposely concealing the truth" regarding two issues. In the fall of 1906 the local papers carried a story, attributed to Bradfute, asserting that 40 percent of Bloomington High School students were failing. The teachers submitted a report to the board showing that about 10 percent were failing, but the board quashed the report. The board also refused to publish a report by the State Board of Education "highly commending the management and work of the school." Second, the board refused to publish a report by Principal Clark on the state of fraternities in the high school. Finally, the teachers accused Mr. Bradfute, president of the board, of intimidating a teacher, trying to force her to pass his daughter when her grades did not justify it.

Mr. Bradfute responded to the principal and teachers, explaining that the report on fraternities was created at the behest of the board, and therefore was "for its private use." He wrote that an Indiana state law had been passed recently outlawing high school fraternities, and no good would come of belaboring the issue. He didn't comment on the accusation of intimidation on behalf of his daughter, later to be reiterated by the teachers.

On March 16, Principal Clark's report on fraternities appeared in the *Evening World*, together with the board's acceptance of the resignations and notification that there would be a two-week suspension of school. The term "fraternities" included three Greek letter societies for boys and one for girls; membership was 34 boys and 15 girls, out of a total high school enrollment of 257. (Fraternities were first established in Bloomington during the spring of 1905. They had begun nationally, however, in 1859, and by 1910, there were 25 fraternities with over 31,000 members nationwide.)

The principal's report outlined reasons for its claim that the fraternities "…exert a harmful influence on their members and are detrimental to the welfare of the school." These included failing grades, bad deportment, increased discipline and suspensions, and establishment of cliques and factions. The report points out that these negative effects were not apparent in the girls' organization.

William A. Rawles, secretary of the three-person Board of Education and professor of political economy at Indiana University, wrote a letter to the *Evening World*, explaining he had voted to accept the teachers' resignations with regret and felt that the board's president, Mr. Bradfute, was wrong in believing that public sentiment was against those who resigned. This set off a long series of letters from various parties in the dispute, including teachers and students. In the *Evening World* coverage, very few agreed with Bradfute, and most argued for reinstatement. Many of the statements in meetings and in letters to the *Evening World* argued to maintain the high grading standards observed by the principal and teachers, implying that Bradfute inflated the numbers of failing students and was in favor of lowering grading standards.

Continued on Page 7

Sarkes Tarzian Radio Receiver Donation

By Elizabeth Schlemmer

Sarkes Tarzian is perhaps best known for his television station WTTV. A pioneering station, it demonstrated that the fledgling television market could operate profitably in small-town America. In the 1940s Bloomington could boast that it was the smallest city in the United States with its own television station. Bloomington also remembers Mr. Tarzian as an inspiring example of the American Dream fulfilled. He emigrated from Armenia as a child, spending his first night on the streets of Philadelphia. His father was a weaver in a textile mill and later began a small ice cream cone manufacturing business. Sarkes put himself through school "by his own effort and ice cream plus a scholarship at the University of Pennsylvania" to study electrical engineering.[1]

Tarzian came to Bloomington as a chief engineer for RCA and in 1944 founded his own manufacturing company, which still operates today. In 1945, he embarked on a remarkable experiment to establish a successful local broadcast radio station in Bloomington. He established W9XHZ, an experimental radio station that went on the air in July 1946. Tarzian was a brilliant engineer, and this project is a great example of his ingenuity and resourcefulness. The experiment was to see if AM broadcasting on the FM radio band could provide the benefits of FM at the cost of AM. Back in 1946, AM radio stations suffered interference from other cities at night, but FM stations were expensive for both the broadcaster and listeners. Tarzian designed several hundred receiving converters that cost only $5.95 each by building his circuit into ice cream cans! These converters sat next to regular AM radios to receive the W9XHZ signal. Area listeners heard his station's broadcasts of everything from NBC programs to local news, football games, poetry readings, and live bands at gym dances.

In addition to the ice cream can converters, Tarzian built 27 custom radio receivers that operated without another AM set. One of these receivers was purchased on eBay by Andy Mitz, an engineer and radio collector from Maryland, who recently drove to the Monroe County History Center to donate his rare find. Everything about the receiver suggests economy. It was modified from an AM radio set; the tuning dial, now unnecessary, was replaced by a glued in television knob that lights up when the radio is on. Around this, a printed paper label announces W9XHZ, the only station you could receive on the device. Other pieces appear to be recycled from broken discarded parts. This radio receiver is not only cheap—it is clever.

Note

1. "SCT Publisher Receives Honorary Degree," *Bloomington Courier Tribune* (4 June 1969).

Additional Sources: E. Ross Bartley, "Tribute to Sarkes Tarzian, Inc. as Presented to Sarkes and Mary Tarzian," speech to the Bloomington Chamber of Commerce (23 May 1958); Andrew Mitz, "Sarkes Tarzian and His HiFAM Experiment," *Radio Age: Newsletter of the Mid-Atlantic Antique Radio Club* (vol. 29, July 2004); Brian Werth, "Tarzian's Life Tops Alger's stories," *Bloomington Herald Times* (11 October 1987).

This donation, along with other Sarkes Tarzian models in our collection, will be on display in the first floor free case exhibit beginning in mid-October. If you have any recollections, photos, or examples of a W9XHZ ice cream can converter, please let us know! Contact Elizabeth Schlemmer, Library Manager, 812-332-2517 ext. 4.

Trisler Civil War Letters Published

By Randi Richardson

A former Monroe County resident and past educator in North Carolina, Dr. Constance (Trisler) Shotts, recently published a book of local interest titled *If I Live: The Civil War Letters of William H. Trisler, Company K, 14th Indiana Volunteers, Infantry* (2011). Trisler served as a private in a company that was made up entirely of men from the Monroe County area. The company was organized in June 1861, and members were to serve for a period of three years. During Trisler's enlistment, he often wrote home to family and friends in Bloomington.

Many of those original, handwritten letters are archived at the Indiana Historical Society. Shotts, who is distantly related to Trisler, transcribed them verbatim. Then, using her long-time interest in genealogy along with substantial research skills, she brought them to life by providing Trisler's family history, a brief introduction of those individuals who were either mentioned in the letters or were recipients of the letters, and details related to the experience of the unit in which Trisler served. Lastly, a comprehensive index makes it easy to find references to a given person.

Anyone who has a family member who served with Company K, 14th Regiment, Indiana Volunteers, or who has an abiding interest in Monroe County history or the Trisler family, is sure to find gems of information in Shotts' book. It is currently available in the Monroe County History Center's Genealogy Library and Museum Store, the Monroe County Public Library, or through Amazon.com.