Monroe County History Center

Where the past and present meet.

812.332.2517

202 East Sixth Street
Bloomington, Indiana 47408

monroehistory.org

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Bloomington, IN
Permit No. 171

Monroe County Historical Society's

Monroe County Historian

June/July 2012

Vol. 2012 Issue 3

Society established 1905
Museum established 1980

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

June Cemetery of the Month: Van Buskirk

Van Buskirk cemetery is located north of Wampler Road in Bean Blossom Township. There are graves there dating back to the 1820's.

July Cemetery of the Month: Bethel/Coffey

Bethel Coffey cemetery is located off of Ratcliff Road in Richland Township. There are graves there dating back to the 1830's.

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

Please note, if your membership is expired this will be your last Historian.

If you are interested in helping the History Center preserve our resources and would like to receive an electronic, early version of the Historian please contact the office at (812) 332-2517, extension 2

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

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

Method of Payment

□ Visa □ MasterCard □ Check

Credit Card #

Expiration Date CVV Number

Signature

Print Name

Address

Phone

E-mail

June/July, 2012
Vol. 2012 Issue 3

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

2 - Events Calendar
3 - Message from the Board President
4 - Circus Comes to the Square
5 - Geological Control
6 - What's Happening
7 - 1940 Census
8 - Membership Form

Historian Staff
Editor: Diane Ballard
Copywriter & Design: Hillary Detty

Monroe County Historian

Preserving the Past for Future Generations

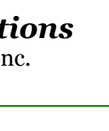
Newsletter of the Monroe County Historical Society, Inc.

31st Annual Garage Sale Extravaganza!

The garage sale is Friday, June 8 from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm and Saturday, June 9 from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm. This year we have a sail boat and the 1972 Triumph TR6, pictured below. The bidding for these items will start on Thursday, June 7th at 10:00 am and end on Saturday, June 9 at 2:00 pm. To place a bid on Thursday please call 812-327-4827. Friday and Saturday bids can be made at the sale or over the phone. Visit our Facebook page, website and view the insert for more sale items and photos.

1972 Triumph, Graciously Donated by Janet Rowland

New Board Members



Rebecah (Becky) F. Boyle teaches 8th grade history at Batchelor Middle School. She received the Caleb Mills Indiana History Teacher of the Year Award from the Indiana Historical Society in December 2010. Becky lives in Monroe County with her husband Kevin and two children Jack and Erin.

Lee Dodge has a degree in Industrial Engineering but spent his entire career working for the U.S. Navy. Lee and his wife Eleanore have lived in Bloomington for 22 years and their daughter graduated from Indiana University.

Bob Hammel is a native Hoosier and has worked at several newspapers throughout the State before settling in Bloomington as the sports writer of the Herald Times. He has authored eight books and coauthored three. He has received numerous awards in sports writing, and has covered many sporting events including 5 Olympic Games. Bob has been inducted into 5 halls of fame including the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame and the Indiana Journalism Hall of Fame. Bob and his wife Julie reside in Bloomington.

Dennis Maloy is the new executive director for the Ivy Tech Corporate College. He has over twenty years of economic development experience. In 2009, Dennis received the Excellence in Leadership award from the Indiana Economic Development Association for career achievement. Dennis and his wife Nancy have two children.

Calendar of Events

All events held at the History Center unless otherwise stated.

June

- FRI 1st– Friday Folk Series, 7:30 pm
- MON 4th– FRI 8th, Week One of the Jr. Historian Summer Camp
- THURS 8th, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm and FRI 9th, 8:00 am to 3:00 pm– Annual Garage Sale Extravaganza at Cook Pharmica Warehouse
- SAT 9th—WFHB presents Saturday's Child, 11:00 am
- TUES 12th— Civil War Roundtable, 7:00 pm
- THURS 14th– Board Meeting, 4:30 pm
- SAT 16th– Bunger Cemetery Workday, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm
- THURS 21st– Third Thursday Series, 7:00 pm
- SAT 23rd, 8:00 am-5:00 pm and SUN 24th, 8:00 am-1:00 pm, Bloomington Garden Club Annual Flower Show

July

- WED 4th– CLOSED in observance of the holiday
- THURS 12th– Board Meeting, 4:30 pm
  Genealogy Group, Finding Your Place in History: Old House Research, 7:00 pm
- SAT 14th– WFHB presents Saturday's Child, 11:00 am
- THURS 14th– Third Thursday Series, 7:00 pm
- MON 23rd– FRI 27th, Week Two of the Jr. Historian Camp

Current & Upcoming Exhibits

Also available at www.monroehistory.org

"What is your quilting story?"
Open: March 2 to July 31

The theme for the annual quilt show is "The Quilter's Story". We are displaying quilts from community members along with the stories attached to the quilts. We have gathered stories about where the quilts come from, why they were made, who were they made for and many other fascinating details. Please come see this amazing show of color and memories.

"Bloomington: Then and Now"
Open: May 6 to October 27

The Monroe County Preservation Board and the Monroe County History Center is celebrating May as National Preservation Month by featuring Bloomington Fading, an online community dedicated to Bloomington's past by overlaying Bloomington's current infrastructure through photography.

"Indiana Limestone"
Open: June 1 to October 31

June is Limestone Month. The History Center is putting together an exhibit that will look at the history of the Limestone Industry in Monroe County.

Monroe County Preservation Board in the Community Voices Gallery
Open: May 6 to July 21

The Community Voices Gallery Celebrates the Monroe County Preservation Board for National Preservation Month. The Preservation Board of Review was established in 2001 to promote the educational, cultural, economic, aesthetic and general welfare of the public through the preservation and protection of historic or architecturally worthy buildings, structures, sites, and neighborhoods that are significant at the local level.

"Garden Glamour: A Floral Fashion Frenzy"
Open: April 6 to August 25

This exhibit explores the flower motif in functional and decorative accessories such as hats, gloves, purses, neckties, scarves, shoes, combs and jewelry. This exhibit will feature pieces that are from both the Sage Collection at Indiana University and the Monroe County History Center. This exhibit will delight visitors of all ages with its beauty and charm.

We are looking for . . .

We are hoping to acquire video files, vhs tapes or any video recording of famous Monroe County basketball shots and copies of television shows or commercials from 1949 to 1956 that aired on WTTV here in Bloomington. The clips will be used in the Gateway Gallery, the first phase of our Interactive Exhibit Initiative remodel for the Cook Gallery. Please let us know if you have anything like this to donate or that we could copy and return. Contact Jenny Mack at (812) 332-2517, ext. 5 or email exhibitdesign@monroehistory.org.

Fairview School Alumni from the 1930s, 40s, 50s, 60s and 70s

On 5 July 2012 at the Monroe County Public Library Auditorium from 4 – 6 pm, meet Fairview School alumni who will share "What Was It Like," their experiences of attending this west side community school between the 1930s and 1970s. The program is open to the public at no charge, and it will be taped and broadcast by Bloomington's Community Access Television Services (CATS). Contact Jan Rosenberg for more information at (812) 339-2180, email: janrosenberg@att.net

Continued from Page 5

came an increasing problem. This led to some interesting incidents in the county's history before the building of lakes Griffy, Lemon, and Monroe in that order.

Mixed rock types, including beds of limestone, sandstone, and shale, underlie the southwestern part of the county (Figure 1). These rocks were deposited as the shallow sea was filling with sediment. Streams deposited some of the youngest rocks. Erosion of these rocks forms a varied but in general rugged topography. The area in southern Indiana consisting of this topography is called the Crawford Upland. Broader ridges and valleys than the Norman Upland to the east characterize this area. The soil in this area is adequate for agriculture in places where the slopes are not overly steep. This area has not suffered the economic problems that afflicted the eastern part of the county. Farming continues to be important in this area, and as Bloomington has grown, commuters have found home sites here.

Monroe County history is also influenced by what is absent geologically. The history of much of the state was strongly influenced by glacial deposits that blanket the northern two thirds of Indiana. Glaciation also had effects on Monroe County, but to a lesser extent than northern Indiana. Those effects will be the subject of a future article.

Figure 1. Geologic cross-section from NE to SW across Monroe County. The section depicts a vertical view of the rocks underlying the county. The top of the section shows the surface topography. Note that the rock strata in the county are slightly tilted to the southwest. The section was prepared by Matthew Johnson of the Indiana Geological Survey based on a section in Indiana Geological Survey Special Report 47. Walter Hasenmueller of the IGS also helped with acquiring the section.

Note: Much of the information in "More Than Skin Deep" can be found in Special Report 47 of the Indiana Geological Survey, "Geology for Environmental Planning in Monroe County, Indiana," by Edwin Hartke and Henry Gray.

Genealogists Cheer: The 1940 Census Is Here!

By Penelope Mathiesen

Images of the 1940 U.S. Federal Census were released to the public on 2 April 2012. Under the terms of a confidentiality law, personal information in a census cannot be made available for 72 years, so this is a big event for genealogists! The 1940 census is made up of 3.8 million images, scanned from over 4,000 rolls of microfilm. There is as yet no index, but the official web site (go to: 1940census.archives.gov) offers several tools, including a helpful video, to guide you in searching for a particular person.

In 1940, the population of Indiana was 3,427,796. Of this number, 1,887,712 were urban dwellers and 1,520,084 were rural residents. There were 110,992 people living in Indiana who had been born in another country. The leading countries of their birth were Germany (18,784), Poland (14,257), Italy (6,309), Czechoslovakia (5,782), Canada (5,588), England (5,562), and Yugoslavia (5,342).

The Indiana Genealogical Society has joined other organizations around the country in forming the 1940 U.S. Census Community Project, which aims to produce a free, searchable online name index for the benefit of family history researchers. If you are interested in helping with this worthwhile effort, go to: the1940census.com/getting started.

Sources Consulted: Tina Lyons, "Help Index the 1940 U.S. Census," Indiana Genealogical Society Newsletter (April 2012), pp. 6–7; and the web sites.

MCHC News

By Diane Ballard, Director

Welcome New Staff Members

Stop by the History Center and welcome our new staff members: (Please visit our website for more information.)

Carey Beam – Collections Manager

Angi St.Clair – Education and Volunteer Mgr.

Julie McMath – Membership Coordinator

Library Expansion

Work has begun to expand the Library into the North side of the Education Room. The added space will be used for document storage and create more area in existing space for the public and volunteers. Completion date is expected on June 1. (Funding is provided by the Lola Burkhart bequest.)

Questions/Comments? Please contact director@monroehistory.org; 812.332-2517

Annual Report

The Annual Report for April 1, 2011 through March 31, 2012, will be submitted to the Board at its June meeting. The full report will be included on our website and a synopsis included in our next Historian Issue.

Experience History Campaign

The initiative to introduce 32 new interactive exhibits in the Wahl Gateway and Gayle Cook Permanent Galleries is progressing well.

Plans for the new exhibits are being finalized and acquisitions for displays are being obtained from local musicians and sports heroes.

Remember to renew your membership. A form is included on the back page of the HISTORIAN.

See What's Happening At The Monroe County History Center

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

Be More Awards

The City of Bloomington held it's annual Be More Awards, honoring Bloomington's volunteers, in April. This year the History Center had two nominations, one for our Collection and Exhibit's committee in the category for a group of volunteers, and one for Mary Lee Deckard as an individual.

Mary Lee (far right) was awarded the volunteer of the year award in the Arts and Culture category, and we are all so happy for her. Mary Lee does so much for the History Center and, in turn, the community. The History Center was awarded $500 in honor of Mary Lee. These funds will be used to improve the Deckard Education Room.

Annual Member Meeting

Our annual member meeting was held in April and we recognized the board members whose terms came to an end, the officers terms that are over, new board members and new officers.

Mark LaPointe provided live Civil War era music as entertainment for the evening.

Anne Cady (right), past Board President, accepted gifts in appreciation of her service to the Historical Society from the newly appointed Board President, Laura Newton. Laura was active on the board prior to this appointment as the secretary.

Message from the President

Greetings!

Many of you may not be familiar with me, but I have been involved with the History Center since 2002 in various capacities as a Board Member and Committee Chair. As I take over as President, I look forward to continuing the positive momentum the History Center has seen in the last several years.

While volunteers are hard at work on the garage sale to be held June 8-9, there are many other events and exhibits to look forward to. The Civil War Round Table: Wilder's Brigade at Hoover's Gap, our continued partnership with the Summer Garden Walk, and planning for the second year of the Gayle Cook Junior Historian Program. As you can see there are lots of activities for the young and the young at heart.

If you haven't already done so, check out our Facebook page. Personally I like to keep up with family and far away friends on this social media site, but the History Center has a very nice page to keep you informed of all that is going on in between newsletters. Speaking of newsletters, if you would like to receive the Monroe County Historian via email instead of through the mail, you will receive it sooner and help save resources; just call Hillary at 332-2517 to make arrangements.

Hopefully I will run into many of you at the History Center, but in the meantime don't forget to get out and shop!

Laura C. Newton

Laura Newton
President
Board of Trustees

News from the Library

genealogy@monroehistory.org

News from the Library

Compiled by
Penelope Mathiesen and Elizabeth Schlemmer

Revised Monroe County Deed Index Now Available

A new edition of the index to early Monroe County deeds is now available in a convenient two-volume set: *Deeds of Monroe County, Indiana, 1811–1870: Grantee Index*, 3rd ed. (2012); and *Deeds of Monroe County, Indiana, 1811–1870: Grantor Index*, 3rd ed. (2012). The original research was done by Patricia Mitchell. The revision and production of the new edition was done by Lee Ehman. The index provides access to the original Monroe County Land Record Books A–Z. These early records cover not only land transactions but other transfers of property, such as the manumission of slaves. They are valued by family history researchers because the entries sometimes contain the names of ancestors who lived in Monroe County but missed the 10-year census enumerations, as well as relatives who lived outside the county but conducted business here. Deed records also include women's first names, which were frequently omitted in other types of early records.

Other New Items on the Shelves

* Cowie, Jefferson. *Capital Moves: RCA's Seventy-Year Quest for Cheap Labor.* 1999. (Chapters 2 and 5 discuss Bloomington plants in depth.)

* Cronin, Blaise. *Bloomington Days: Town and Gown in Middle America.* 2006. Gift from Elizabeth Schlemmer.

* *Dear Blanche.* Edited by Curtis R. Sylvester from a collection of 65 letters written to Blanche Esther (Perry) Sylvester between 22 November 1943 and 30 March 1946, mostly from men in the military. 2009. Gift from Curtis R. Sylvester.

* *Dear Junior.* Edited by Curtis R. Sylvester from a collection of 52 letters written to Sergeant Ralph Sylvester, Jr., and never delivered due to his being killed in action on 20 October 1944. 2009. Gift from Curtis R. Sylvester.

* *Death and Burial of Sergeant Ralph Sylvester, Jr.* Edited by Curtis R. Sylvester from a collection of items related to the life, death, and burial of Sgt. Sylvester. 2009. Gift from Curtis R. Sylvester.

* *Diary of Mary Eliza Sylvester Humphrey Clay.* Edited by Curtis R. Sylvester from a collection of diaries kept from 25 December 1910 through 30 November 1924. 2009. Gift from Curtis R. Sylvester.

* Duvall, Carol. *Alexander: Connections in Indiana and Kansas.* 2012. Gift from Carol Duvall.

* *Gothic*, 1938. Bloomington High School yearbook. Gift from Stephen Bailey.

* Hammel, Bob. *The Bill Cook Story.* 2008.

* *Homer Franklin Perry and Mary Faucett Perry: Their Ancestors and Descendants.* Edited by Curtis R. Sylvester. 2009. Gift from Curtis R. Sylvester.

* *Letters from Sergeant Ralph Sylvester, Jr.* Edited by Curtis R. Sylvester from a collection of letters written between 1 April 1943 and 20 October 1944 by Sgt. Sylvester to his family in Indiana. 2009. Gift from Curtis R. Sylvester.

* *A Proposed Comprehensive Plan for the Reorganization of the School Corporations, Monroe County, Indiana.* 1961.

* Wallace, Mary H. *Old-Time Preacher Men.* 1992. (Includes Pentecostal pastors from Bloomington.)

Circus Comes to Courthouse Square

By Penelope Mathiesen

The accompanying photograph shows a large circus tent pitched next to the Monroe County Courthouse on Bloomington's downtown square. The pillared entrance of the courthouse faces Kirkwood Avenue. The tent has been erected near the corner of Kirkwood and Walnut and extends into the street. The rooflines of storefronts on the west and north sides of the square can be detected along the left and right edges of the photograph. Striped banners hanging on lines strung from the corner light pole may indicate a patriotic holiday, such as the Fourth of July. A bearded man in the foreground appears to be carrying a block of ice (suspended by string from his gloved hand). Perhaps he is connected to the circus?

The photograph was probably taken shortly after the limestone courthouse building was dedicated in 1908. The streets are unpaved, and no trees are visible. Earlier courthouse buildings had occupied the same grounds, and shade trees had made the area a popular gathering place for visitors to rest and picnic. At the time the limestone courthouse was built, the trees were cut down, but the public complained, and new trees were planted a few years later.

There is no sign of a hitch rack in the photograph. The old hitch rack was removed after completion of the new courthouse, but some citizens (particularly farmers) objected. The issue was hotly debated in the 1908 election, and the hitch rack was soon replaced. There is also no sign of the stone lamp posts that were erected about 1910 around the downtown square, including placements at the four corners of the courthouse grounds.

A rectangular facade fronts the circus tent. It is decorated with depictions of animals performing circus acts and must have been quite colorful. Identical panels on the lower corners bear the words: Performing / Wild Animals / Lions / Leopards / Tigers / Bears / Monkeys / and Baboons. Flights of steps lead to an arched opening, where an amplification trumpet projects over a drape.

Bloomington, of course, had its own circus (Gentry Brothers, which wintered here and also staged local performances), and traveling circuses entertained local crowds, but there is nothing to identify this particular company. The photograph reveals an absence of hustle and bustle. No crowds are present, no animals or performers visible. The banners have been twisted by the wind and offer a rather forlorn appearance. Perhaps the show is over?

Sources Consulted: Penelope Mathiesen, "Hitch Racks: Parking on the Square a Hot Topic in 1908 Election," *Monroe County Historian* (October 2008), p. 8; "Monroe County Courthouse Program Notes" (26–28 October 1984); Lee Ridge, "Bloomington's Stone Lamp Posts, Part 1: 1910," *Monroe County Historian* (August 2003), pp. 3, 6–7; "A Walk through the Monroe County Courthouse" (Historic Tour Guide No. 9, 2002).

Circus tent pitched next to the Monroe County Courthouse.

Undated photograph from the Genealogy Library's Vertical Files.

More Than Skin Deep: Geologic Control of Monroe County History

By Bob Dodd

If someone were to ask you what effect geology has on the history of Monroe County, you might think of the limestone that is the basis for the building stone industry. Or if you were knowledgeable about the county's early history, you might know that iron was once produced from ore found in Indian Creek Township. You might even think of the salt that gives Salt Creek its name. These would all be correct answers, but the history of the county has been determined in an even more profound way by the nature of the bedrock.

Because a layer of soil of varying thickness covers the bedrock in practically the entire county, most people are not aware of the rock below us. But the nature of that bedrock has a profound effect on the topography.

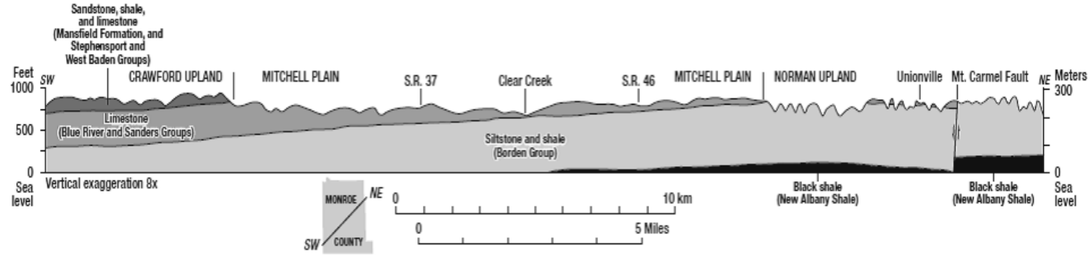
The eastern part of the county is underlain by what geologists call the Borden Group (Figure 1). It consists of rocks that were derived from sediments deposited in an inland sea by a river draining a highland to the east some 275 million years ago. The rocks are predominantly siltstone, shale, and a few beds of sandstone. Geologists call this area and the region outside of the county with similar topography the Norman Upland.

Long after these sediments were deposited and hardened into rock they were uplifted above sea level and then eroded forming narrow valleys and ridges. The only broad expanses of flat land in this area are along the larger creeks, especially Bean Blossom and Salt Creek. The soil that overlies the bedrock is formed by natural weathering processes that slowly break down the rock (with the addition of organic matter and other components). Soil formed by weathering of the siltstone and shale is thin and not very fertile. The combination of infertile soil and lack of flat surfaces makes this area poor for agriculture. The best agricultural land in eastern Monroe County is in the larger valleys, which do provide expanses of flat land and richer soil carried in by the creeks from outside the area. Stable water supply is also limited in this area. The smaller streams dry up in the summer and the fine-grained bedrock contains limited ground water for wells.

Nevertheless, early settlers attempted farming in this area. They cleared ridge tops and valleys and harvested timber from the slopes. But the soil lost its fertility, and erosion on the steep slopes removed part of the soil. In addition, modern agriculture required larger expanses of property for economically viable cultivation. Thus these early farms were largely abandoned. Much of the area was purchased by the state and federal government and turned into parks and forests. These areas are well on their way to returning to their original natural condition.

Most of the central portion of the county, including Bloomington, is underlain by limestone (Figure 1). These rocks formed in a shallow, tropical sea after the eastern rivers stopped flowing into the area. Millions of years after that rock was formed it was uplifted and eroded. Limestone is more resistant to erosion by running water but is slightly soluble. Underground solution results in the caves and sinkholes characteristic of this area. Although this area is far from flat, it forms a more gently rolling topography than the eastern part of the county. Weathering of limestone produces thicker soil that is richer in clay than the soil in the eastern part of the county. Geologists assign this area to the Mitchell Plain. Water supply is also a problem for this part of the county because there are few permanent streams. Ground water is more abundant than in the east, but there are few extensive aquifers.

Although this area is not ideal for agriculture, it is more suitable than the eastern part of the county. The less rugged topography is also more suitable for urban development. Thus this area has always been the most prosperous part of the county. It was originally heavily forested, but for the most part has remained open after its original clearing. As population grew, finding a stable water supply be



Continued on Page 7