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

Aug/Sept 2012

Vol. 2012 Issue 4

Society established 1905
Museum established 1980

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

August Cemetery of the Month: Shiloh

Shiloh Cemetery is a circa 1800's cemetery located near Unionville. The earliest graves are mid 1800's. There are around 50 graves located there.

September Cemetery of the Month: Garrison Chapel

Garrison Chapel Cemetery is located at the intersection of Garrison Chapel and Rice Roads in Van Buren Township. It was established in 1933 and has over 250 graves.

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

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

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Aug/Sept, 2012
Vol. 2012 Issue 4

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

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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.

American Girl Doll Raffle

For that special child in your life, an American Girl complete with a traveling trunk filled with her wardrobe and other accessories. This holiday season we are conducting a raffle that will light up the eyes of any child or delight a collector.

Rebecca and her accessories will be on display beginning September 15 at the History Center. Tickets are $3 each or two for $5. The drawing will be held Friday, December 7, but you do not have to be present to win.

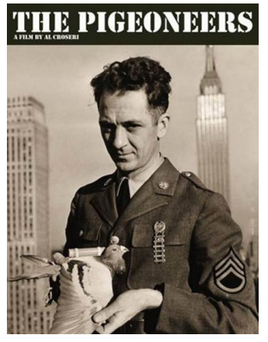
The raffle proceeds will be used to provide scholarships for the 2013 Jr. Historian summer camp program.

The American Girl Division of Mattel donated Rebecca for our raffle. Our thanks and appreciation to Jeanne Speakman and Joan Caulton who are donating the raffle accessories.

American Girl Rebecca Rubin's story: Rebecca is a lively nine-year-old girl growing up in a big Russian-Jewish family in New York City in 1914. She dreams of becoming an actress, but her parents and grandparents have traditional ideas and don't think young ladies should perform. When Rebecca learns that her cousins in Russia are in great danger and must escape to America, she puts on a show to raise money—until her disapproving grandmother steps in. Unexpectedly, Rebecca finds another way to earn money. But for her plan to work, she'll have to keep it a secret.

The Ryder Film Series and MCHS present The Pigeoneers

The Pigeoneers is a heartfelt, stunningly beautiful ode to combat pigeons and their remarkable wartime adventures. The Pigeoneers follows Col. Clifford Poutre at age 103 and looks at his somewhat unheralded career training homing pigeons for covert missions during World War II. The film tells the story of Poutre's 31 years of service as Chief Pigeoneer of the U.S. Army Signal Corps, his enlightened approach to training defined by kindness and care and his pigeons' remarkable feats in combat, executing vital and covert spy missions, in the process saving thousands of lives. (2012; 1hr, 51 minutes) The Pigeoneers will be screened on August 10, 11, 17 and 18 at 8:00 p.m. at the IU Woodburn Hall Theatre. Woodburn Hall is on 7th Street, next to the Lilly Library. Free public parking is available in the IU Main Library parking lot off of Jordan Avenue. The Pigeoneers will also be shown off campus at Bear's Place on Sunday, August 12th at 7:00 pm. Admission is $5 for all screenings. For more information call 339.2002 or visit www.TheRyder.com



Calendar of Events

All events held at the History Center unless otherwise stated.

August

- 6th-10th Jr. Historian Camp, week two, Family History
- THURS 9th– 4:30pm Board Meeting
- SAT 11th– 11am Saturday's Child
- THURS 16th– 7pm Third Thursday Program
- FRI 24th– 8pm Friday Folk Series
- WED 29th– 4pm Convention Center Member's Social Event

September

- THURS 6th– 7pm Genealogy Group
- FRI 7th– 8pm Friday Folk Series
- SAT 8th– 11am Saturday's Child
- TUES 11th– 7pm Civil War Roundtable
- THURS 13th– 4:30pm Board Meeting
- THURS 20th– 7pm Third Thursday Series

Current & Upcoming Exhibits

Also available at www.monroehistory.org

"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.

"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.

"Small Voices Big Impact: Children during the American Civil War"

Open: September 1 to January 26, 2013

The American Civil War had a profound impact on both Northern and Southern people, especially young children. *Small Voices Big Impact* examines the stories and experiences of real young adults in battle and at home.

TWO THOUSAND TWELVE IS THE YEAR OF THE GIRL

"The Girl Scouts"

A Community Voices Gallery Exhibit

Open: August 3 to November 3

Reception: October 19th, 5:30pm-8pm, Celebrate the Girls Scouts 100-Year Anniversary at the Monroe County History Center! Enjoy light refreshments.

Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

Collections' Corner

By Carey Beam

We recently had the great pleasure of having L. J. Cramer of Martinsville visit us here at the museum. Mr. Cramer spent a full day repairing spinning wheels and spinning both flax and wool onto their appropriate wheels. He and Jenny Mack, our exhibits designer, rearranged the wheels in our museum and updated the exhibits.

A castle wheel (donated to the museum by Sabine Rodatz) has been moved from collection storage to the museum in order to complete a flax spinning display. It has been set up with its distaff full of flax fibers. Hackles sit nearby to illustrate part of the process of preparing the flax for spinning.

Mr. Cramer repaired and spun wool on to the pendulum wheel in the cabin (a gift from Jean Anderson). We have kept the great walking wheel in the cabin as well. The pendulum wheel represents an improvement upon the great wheel, both of which are designed to spin wool.

Mr. Cramer also volunteers his time at Spring Mill State Park, demonstrating spinning for its interpretive pioneer village. He plans to return to the history center in September to complete some minor repairs and get our loom up and running. We are so very appreciative of his time and expertise!

Continued from Page 5

the hitch rack's drain and nearby shallow wells. However, an ordinance prohibiting hitching horses for more than 30 minutes was voted down. No other action was taken, but a spate of articles appeared in the *World* about public health concerns like dirty streets and spitting, community clean-ups, and enforcement of various sanitary laws.

The controversy occurred against the backdrop of a statewide typhoid fever epidemic, including Monroe County, during the fall and winter of 1897–98. In March 1898, the City Council established a city Board of Health.[8]

The hitch rack was not removed as a direct result of these 1897–98 events. When the new courthouse was built in 1907–08, part of the rack was removed as part of the construction. Later, the rest was torn down, but after an outcry and legal action by farmers, the rack was rebuilt.[9] The then-unused rack was finally taken down in the 1930s.

Public health was in its infancy in the 1890s. The State Board of Health had been formed only in 1881, and Indiana counties did not begin reporting health statistics until the 1890s.[10] In the 1880s doctors generally were not yet convinced that germs caused illnesses. Not until its 1889 Annual Report did the State Board of Health acknowledge germ theory.[11] There were numerous deaths from typhoid fever, as well as many other diseases almost unknown today. The pressure to remove the hitch rack showed the society in the throes of advancing public health as a priority.

The events also show the impact of women's groups. The Federation of Women's Clubs led in advancing the hitch rack agenda in the City Council. This was part of broader social and political women's influence, with temperance and suffrage movements having been underway since the end of the Civil War.

The concern over the hitch rack's impact on public health has echoes in today's concerns about the contamination of Monroe County's water supply from wildlife or livestock operations.[12] Runoff from these sources can carry E. coli into the watershed, just as the manure from the old courthouse contaminated Bloomington's water supplies in the 1890s.

Notes

1. *Bloomington World*, 23 July 1896.
2. *Bloomington World*, 6 February 1897.
3. *Bloomington World*, 16 February 1897.
4. *Bloomington World*, 5 May 1897.
5. *Bloomington World*, 10 September 1897.
6. *Bloomington World*, 11 September 1897.
7. *Bloomington World*, 15 September 1897.
8. *Bloomington World*, 16 March 1898.
9. *Bloomington Telephone*, 5 March 1932.
10. Clifton J. Phillips, *Indiana in Transition: The Emergence of an Industrial Commonwealth, 1880–1920* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau and Indiana Historical Society, 1968), p. 469.
11. Ibid., p. 470.
12. Indiana Department of Environmental Management, "Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) in Beanblossom Creek Watershed, Brown and Monroe Counties, Indiana," 20 March 2006, accessed at: www.in.gov/idem/nps/2866.htm; Dick Miller and Bowden Quinn, "Open Sewers in the Hoosier Countryside?" *Indiana Sierran* (Winter 2012), pp. 1–2.

Photo 1: The old court house with hitch rack in the foreground. From the collection of the Monroe County History Center, 1998.082.0001.The old court house with hitch rack in the foreground. From the collection of the Monroe County History Center, 1998.082.0001.

Photo 2: Cartoon from the *Bloomington World,* 10 September1897.

$$ Extraordinary Extravaganza $$

By Gayle Cook

Once again Monroe County's largest garage sale drew thousands of customers and earned thousands of dollars for the History Center! Our 22,000 sq. ft. warehouse was packed from end to end for the big June 8-9 event. A huge thanks goes to all who donated the good quality merchandise, worked throughout the year hauling and sorting, and—most fun of all—found great bargains to take home—$69,000's worth! A special thanks goes to the helpful folks at Cook Pharmica who contributed to the success by again allowing us to use their warehouse and parking lot.

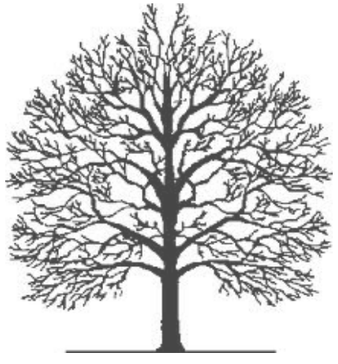
This year we again had access to the warehouse all year-round, which means that we had more on-site hours to collect and organize donated merchandise. This also means that you can donate items YEAR-ROUND. Call the office for information, and remember: no clothing, no old TVs, no outdated computers or non-working appliances.

As you can see, our "re-sale sale" business is really helping our budget needs, so let us know if you have items for the upcoming annual holiday sale, held at the History Center. We encourage donations of like-new Christmas decorations, holiday dishware and especially small gift items like jewelry, scarves, books and candles. If possible, bring the holiday items now or anytime before November 1.

Thanks again to all the donors, workers and the shoppers who helped make the June sale a success. See you at our holiday sale!

See What's Happening At The Monroe County History Center

Please visit www.monroehistory.org for more information

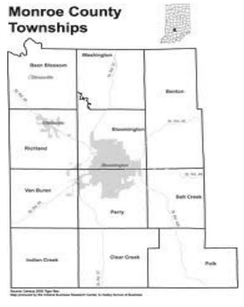


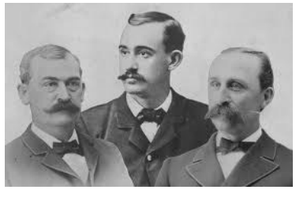
Genealogy Group New Day and Time

The Genealogy Group will be meeting on the first Thursday of the month at 7:00pm every other month (odd months).

September's presentation will be a History of Law and Order in Monroe County, presented by a member of the Bloomington Police Force. November's presentation will be a History of the living conditions endured by soldiers in the Civil War presented by a member of the Monroe County Civil War Roundtable.

The presentations are free and open to the public. Bring any questions you may have. Refreshments will be provided with the presentation.





Third Thursday Series

August: Monroe County Communities: Bob Dodd and Elizabeth Schlemmer will talk about the communities project in the Genealogical Library at MCHC. They will review their methodologies for identifying and research historical communities including some of the unique qualities of specific communities.

September: Showers Brothers Furniture Company. Carrol Krause Herald-Times columnist and author of "Showers Brothers Furniture Company: the Shared Fortunes of a Family, a City, and a University" will talk about the rise and fall of the local business that was run by four generations of the same family and was the mainspring of the Bloomington economy for half a century. Today, a small number of old-timers in Bloomington still remember working at the Showers factory during the 1940s and '50s, but the company at that point was on its last legs. The company began decades before, in the late 1860s, under the benevolent command of two generous and optimistic brothers. The company grew and grew until more than 2000 workers were on its payroll by the 1920s. Dogged by the Great Depression, it could not compete in the modern business world and was shuttered in the late 1950s."

Message from the Director

Dear Members,

The summer months have been busy at the History Center. Despite the challenging weather, we have conducted two summer camps and we are preparing for the third camp in early August.

The Garage Sale was a resounding success in every way imaginable. Our heartfelt appreciation is extended to the group of dedicated volunteers who work more hours than can be counted. Over $69,000 was raised for our operation and programs. The sale is the ultimate in garage sales as well as community recycling project.

A grant by the Bloomington Garden Club made a landscaping project possible that improves the appearance of the Sixth Street side of the property.

Staff and the Volunteer Interactives Committee have had many sessions finalizing the interactive plans for the Wahl Gateway Gallery and the School Room inside the Permanent Gallery. The artwork and bid documents have been completed and bids will soon be received and awarded. Funding of the project is made possible by the Wahl Family Charitable Trust, a grant from the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) and the 2012 Gala.

The library addition is completed and volunteers are helping with moving reference materials.

Thank you for your support that makes all of this possible.

Diane Ballard

News from the Library

genealogy@monroehistory.org
Compiled by
Penelope Mathiesen and Elizabeth Schlemmer

New Resource and New Space

Ancestry.com Library Edition is now available in the Genealogy Library free to all patrons. Visitors can access more than 8 billion records on Ancestry.com, which is the largest selling genealogical software in the world. Access is available at any computer station in the History Center or through our wireless internet connection on laptops. This is big news as it allows you to do in-depth research for family going back further in time and beyond Monroe County. Thanks to Penny and Tom Mathiesen for donating a subscription to the Genealogy Library!

Expansion and renovation of the Genealogy Library has begun! Construction in the library storage area is complete, thanks to Pritchett Bros. Construction. Expect more changes in the library in the coming months. This renovation is made possible by a bequest from the Lola Burkhart estate.

The Genealogy Library has become a Library Affiliate of FamilySearch, allowing us to offer microfilm services from an extensive collection held at the FamilySearch Libraries in Salt Lake City. Patrons can order microfilm for a small fee at www.familysearch.org/films and have the film delivered to the Monroe County History Center library for viewing.

New Books

* *Cutters of Stone.* [1990?] (DVD.) Gift from Debby Reed.

* Hendrickson, Nancy. *Finding Your Roots Online.* 2003.

* Higgs, Steven. *Eternal Vigilance: Nine Tales of Environmental Heroism in Indiana.* 1995. Gift from Steven Higgs.

* Higgs, Steven. *Twenty Years of Crimes Against Democracy.* 2009. Gift from Steven Higgs.

* Jonas, Linda and Paul Milner. *Discovering Your Scottish Ancestors.* 2002.

* Kraus, Carrol. *Showers Brothers Furniture Company.* 2012.

* *Lucas Family History.* [n.d.] Gift from Frances Wampler.

* McClure, Rhonda. *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Online Genealogy.* 2002.

* Schwomeyer, Herb. *Hoosier Hysteria: A History of Indiana High School Boys Basketball.* 1990.

* Tepper, Michael. *American Passenger Arrival Records.* 1993.

Monroe County Politics in 1936

By Penelope Mathiesen

A collection of materials from the Monroe County Democratic Central Committee* demonstrates the workings of the political patronage system in the election year of 1936. Items include a bulletin urging support for the "Democratic administration" (of President Franklin D. Roosevelt) in Washington, D.C., and a memo from the Indiana State Central Committee (1 October 1936) advising the local committee to expect "a package containing a number of small boxes of Townsend advertising matches," which they are to deliver to cigar stores, garages, restaurants, and other businesses operated by Democrats, asking them to pass these matches out to their customers.

The local committee maintained lists of pledges paid to the party organization by Monroe County Democratic candidates and kept rosters of state employees from Monroe County with their positions, salaries, and contributions. Before appointment to a state government job, a party member had to "receive the O.K. of the Democratic leaders in his county for the work he has done for the success of the party." A list of the obligations of state workers, sent to local Democratic committees in the autumn of 1936, shows that some of the responsibilities were light, such as soliciting votes from Republican friends. Others required a heavier commitment. State employees were told to "go home and work in [their] county every week-end, from now until election," doing "whatever the organization wants them to do." Those who owned cars were urged to register them and "leave them at the disposal of the State Committee … girls that do not have cars" should "go home on week ends [and] do clerical work. They have received a lot of favors and what they do this fall depends on whether or not they have jobs next year." Local committees were instructed to set up a card file for the purpose of tracking party service. If a state employee was asked to do something and did not do it, it was to be noted; repeated instances would indicate that "he does not have the Democratic party at heart." In the middle of the Great Depression, when jobs were not easy to come by, such admonishments surely carried weight.

Correspondence between the Monroe County Democratic Committee's finance chairman and party members in 1936 reveals a style quite different from present-day mass mailings and electronic communications. The letters were typed or handwritten on committee letterhead, business or personal stationery, or ordinary sheets of paper. The finance chairman made carbon copies of his letters and retained these for the files. The correspondence covers pledges, payments, meetings (and reasons for not attending), and the fairness of assessments in relation to salaries and party service. Frustrations with bureaucratic record keeping strike a familiar chord with us today. On 8 September 1936, a local candidate for the upcoming election wrote:

"I just received your statement in the morning mail for $56.00. Just consider the matter closed as for [sic] as I am concerned. When a reasonable assessment was made I played ball and not because I had to either. Whether or not I am elected doesn't make a large difference to me so you can do what you like about it."

A lengthy correspondence between the finance chairman and a worker at Central State Hospital in Indianapolis concerned a dispute over her place of residence. Born in Monroe County, she had lived in Marion County for 30 years, giving "more than 2%" of her annual salary to the Marion County Democratic organization. As she explained in her letter of 2 October 1936:

"I can not understand why you persist in saying I am a Monroe Co. state employee. My father died in 1891 and I have not had a home in Monroe Co. Since that time, I have no ties what ever in Monroe Co. … I thought it was settled in 1934 that I was a resident of Marion Co. as I have lived here 31 years. I never did vote in Monroe Co. … My salary is small and I have several places it is necessary to use it for. I am willing to do my part for the party and if you will kindly find out which Co. I belong in I would know where I stand. … I am enclosing money order for three dollars all the money I have. … I am not a young woman any more, and alone in the world. Have to count my pennies to get by. P.S. Kindly sen[d] receipt for money order."

The Monroe County Democratic Committee's finance chairman wrote back on 6 October 1936 to say that he had sent her letter on "to the proper person in the State House, informing them that I have returned your money-order, which is being enclosed." On 18 October 1936, she wrote to let the chairman know that she was still receiving mailings from Monroe County. The correspondence file ends at this point. Knowing how hard it is to get off a mailing list today, we hope the matter was finally resolved!

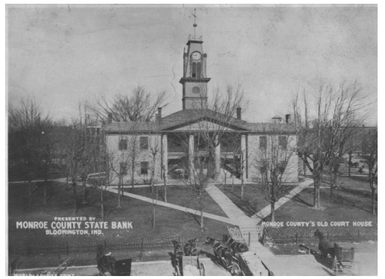
** See the Genealogy Library's Vertical Files (Politics—Democratic Central Committee for Monroe County, 1936).*

The Courthouse Hitch Rack and Public Health in the 1890's

By Lee Ehman

Monroe County in 1897 was a dirty place. Many illnesses and deaths were attributed to lack of cleanliness, which led to typhoid fever, an often fatal disease. There were frequent calls for cleaning up the streets, bans on spitting, and tests of various water sources. Some advocated for eliminating the hitch rack surrounding the courthouse square. This convenience to out-of-town visitors offered a place to hitch horses free. However, the manure and urine from the animals made the place unsightly and smelly, and more importantly, contaminated water supplies.

In July 1896, the *Bloomington World* reported that the Indiana State Board of Health would inspect sanitary conditions in Bloomington, responding to a complaint made by the State Board of Charities about conditions in the Monroe County Jail. The courthouse hitch rack would be inspected as well, and the article predicted that the Board of Health would insist upon its removal.[1]



The State Board of Health was unwilling to act unless the Monroe County Board of Health so ordered, and only if they "…had the aid of the people," according to the secretary of the state board, speaking at a Federation of Women's Clubs meeting. He also said that either the City Council or the county commissioners had the authority to have it removed. He stressed the prevalence of typhoid fever, due to "filthy drinking water," with Indiana having over 19,000 cases and 2,400 deaths in 1896 alone. Monroe County itself had 96 cases and many deaths.[2]

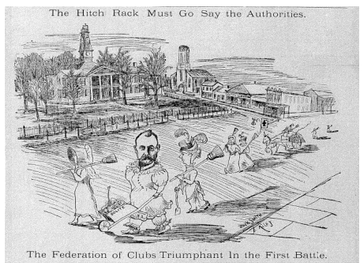
The February meeting resulted in formation of a committee to draw up resolutions on the matter and gauge public support. The issue was discussed in other Monroe County communities, including Payne and Dolan. The Ellettsville newspaper commented wryly:

"The Bloomington citizens are holding meetings and resolving nightly to remove the hitch rack. If the citizens of Bloomington can do anything successfully, it is meet and resolve. The way the citizens of Ellettsville got rid of the hitching rack in their town was very simple – they met and removed it."[3]

There were letters to the editor arguing for and against removing the hitch rack. Farmers and businessmen favored keeping it as a convenience and aid to commerce.

In May the issue was brought to the Bloomington City Council, with the Federation of Women's Clubs reporting that they had a city cleanup campaign underway and had raised $300 for purchase of alternative hitching places. They asked for an ordinance prohibiting hitching horses on the public square. The council referred the matter to another committee.[4]

The debate disappeared from the *World* until September, when it reported that the State Board of Health, responding to a petition of 112 citizens, as well as the board's sanitary inspection, ordered the Monroe County Board of Health to remove the rack. The county commissioners initiated a suit against the order, bringing the case to the Monroe County Circuit Court, which enjoined Sheriff Thornton against removing it. The article featured a cartoon, showing federation women wielding brooms, and an unidentified man dressed as a woman, pushing a wheelbarrow presumably filled with horse manure.[5]



The Bloomington City Council sidestepped the hitch rack decision. When the federation committee appeared before the council's hitch rack committee, there was sharp give and take, but no decision was taken.[6] A *World* editor commented that "…the [City] Council and [County] Board of Commissioners are both on the fence one awaiting for the other to jump."[7]

Later in September, the City Council heard various views on cleanliness of streets, including the university's chemistry professor, Robert Lyons, who explained the connection between

Continued on Page 7