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 Cautlon 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 disappointing 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 some-what 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.

The film 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 p.m. Admission is $5 for all screenings. For more information call 339.2002 or visit www.TheRyder.com
May as National Preservation Month by featuring Monroe County History Center is celebrating The Monroe County Preservation Board and the October 27 Open: May 6 to October 31 "Bloomington: Industry in Monroe of the Limestone to together an exhibit that Center is putting Month. The History June is Limestone Open: June 1 to October 31 "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.

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.

“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.

Notes

2. Bloomington World, 6 February 1897.
4. Bloomington World, 5 May 1897.
5. Bloomington World, 10 September 1897.
7. Bloomington World, 15 September 1897.
11. Ibid., p. 470.
13. Ibid., p. 5.

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 21st – 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 13th – 7pm Civil War Roundtable
- THURS 13th – 4:30pm Board Meeting
- THURS 20th – 7pm Third Thursday Series

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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—$60,000’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!

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 mainstays 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 1930s.

$69,000’s worth! A special thanks goes to the group of dedicated volunteers who work more hours than can be counted. Over $69,000 was raised for our operations 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.

News from the Library

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 Buchhart 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

* Cotters of Stone. [1996] (DVD.) Gift from Debby Reed.
* Higgs, Steven. Twenty Years of Crimes Against Democracy. 2009. Gift from Steven Higgs.

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 the living conditions endured by Order in Monroe County, presented by a member of the Monroe County Civil War Roundtable.

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

Please visit www.monroehistory.org for more information

Message from the Director

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.
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 2½”% 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 no 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 send 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, in- forming 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!

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 on 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. Frustration 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 far 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.”

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.” 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.

The Bloomington City Council sidestepped the hitch rack decision. When the federation committee appeared before the 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.

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 federal-ation women wielding brooms, and an unidentified man dressed as a woman, pushing a wheelchair presumably filled with horse manure.

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 Health. The courthouse hitch rack should be inspected as well, and the article predicted that the Board of Health would insist upon its removal.

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 remove the rack. 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.

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 resolv- ing 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.”

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.

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. 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.”

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...