The Monroe County History Center is excited to be celebrating our 40th Anniversary in 2020! With this momentous milestone in mind, our gala theme, “Loving Our History,” embraces our ruby anniversary and pays tribute to the fact that this year’s event is taking place on Valentine’s Day: February 14th, 2020 from 5:30-8:30pm.

With so much to celebrate, everyone is sure to find something to love about this year’s gala. We are excited to announce that the evening will feature a musical performance by jazz pianist, Monika Herzig—including various works by composer Hoagy Carmichael. We will also be sharing a glimpse into the past 40 years of the History Center, as well as looking forward to what’s to come in the next decades.

We love that the history of Monroe County is a history of dreamers, inventors, thinkers, and hard workers and these stories are at the heart of our vision to be the foremost authority and storytellers of the history and culture of Monroe County, Indiana. Our annual gala is not only an opportunity to celebrate the love we have for our community’s history, but also a pivotal fundraising event that ensures our ability to protect the historical artifacts and documents in our care and to provide educational and social enrichment programming for members. We hope that you’ll consider sharing a part of your Valentine’s Day with us to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Monroe County History Center while showing your love for our community’s amazing history.
Rechter Gallery:
Holiday Exhibition: Dolls in Toyland

All around the world dolls have sparked children’s imaginations. In Monroe County, generations have played with and collected a unique variety. Howdy Doody, Barbie, and many more are on display for the holiday season.

Open through December 30th, 2019

Hoosier Hysteria: Monroe County High School Basketball

Countless games, dramatic moments, and heroic characters have taken center stage in the basketball capital of Indiana. “Hoosier Hysteria: Monroe County High School Basketball” tells the stories of players, coaches, and fans who created a rich history and tradition known around the world. From underdogs to five-star recruits and national and world champions, the game of basketball serves as a defining characteristic for the people of Monroe County.

Open January 24th to May 30th, 2020

Tiny Gilmore (left) and George Gavit (Right), University High School, 1940s. Gift of Susan Houseworth.

Hill Gallery:
The Many Paths to Monroe: Family Portraits from Our Permanent Collection

One way or another families start, settle, grow, and move through Monroe County, Indiana. Hidden deep within our archives are a collection of family portraits from the county’s history. They tell of the triumph and tragedy of the people who left a mark on this community as they settled, grew, and moved through Monroe County.

Open through January 24th, 2020

Community Voices:
Monroe County History Club

Our Community Voices display in the Deckard Education Room features information and artifacts from the Monroe County History Club. Starting with only six members in 2013, the Monroe County History Club is a group dedicated to local history. Free and open to the public, local and regional historians and speakers present programs on the last Tuesday of the month. Programs are recorded by CATS TV and uploaded to YouTube.

Open through December 6th, 2019

Upcoming suffrage exhibit by Hilary Fleck:

“VOTES FOR WOMEN: The Women’s Suffrage Movement in Monroe County”

Highlighting the remarkable women of Monroe County who fought for more than 50 years for the right to vote, this exhibit introduces visitors to the political activities of the Equal Suffrage Club and the Bloomington Franchise League in the context of the State and National suffrage movement.

The exhibit is free and open to the public starting January 13, 2020 in the Deckard Education Room and will be on display until December 30, 2020.

Upcoming events:

Opening Reception: January 24, 2020 from 5 to 7pm (Free and open to the public)

Hilary Fleck, Collection Manager, will be presenting her research on the Women’s Suffrage Movement in Monroe County at the Monroe County History Club on Tuesday, December 17th at 12:30pm at the American Legion Post.
From the President

Greetings friends and fellow history-lovers. A few weeks ago, at a Volunteer Fair hosted by the city, I had a chance to talk with members of our community about the History Center and all the great things we do, as well as the many wonderful volunteer opportunities we offer. In addition to connecting new people with volunteer opportunities, it also proved to be a delightful opportunity to hear from many members of our community who’ve already been involved in one way or another History Center. I spoke with several teens who were excited to learn more about internship opportunities that we offer through our Education Department. I met one of the “ghosts” for the recent Halloween tour of Rose Hill Cemetery who had had a great deal of fun learning about the deceased individual she was portraying. I met a woman who bought a piano at the History Center garage sale a few years back and was so appreciative for the music that it has brought to her life. I met a young man who enjoys reading the History Center Library’s blog to learn more about the community he calls “home” while attending IU. I spoke with a health care professional who was thrilled to learn more about our “Living with History” program designed for people with dementia and their caregivers. And I met a couple who has made it a holiday tradition to join us at the History Center every year after the Canopy of Lights program—to have some treats, hear some music, and get a head start on their holiday shopping by checking out the great selection of gifts and holiday decor at the History Center’s Holiday Sale. These are just a few ways that the History Center has had an impact on the lives of people in our community, and I’m sure you could help me come up with many more.

Recently, while visiting family in Texas, I had an opportunity to visit the National Museum of the Pacific War. As a benefit of my membership at the Monroe County History Center, I was able to visit for free—through our membership in the North American Reciprocal Museum program (NARM). Like our own History Center, the National Museum of the Pacific War strives to bring history to life. Its exhibits explained the complex historical events that led to conflicts throughout the Pacific, and shared moving stories about the brave men and women who fought, and sometimes perished, to preserve freedom and defend our country during the Second World War. It was a particularly poignant experience given that my visit fell over Veterans Day weekend, but it was also a wonderful reminder of how important it is to preserve stories and artifacts from the past to share with future generations. If you are a veteran, please accept my most sincere thanks for your service, and thanks as well to anyone who has helped to preserve the stories of the brave men and women who’ve served in our armed forces.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Borland
President

Calendar of Events

December
- 10th, 6:30pm, Civil War Round Table’s Holiday Dinner at MCHC
- 14th, 11am, WFHB Saturday’s Child at MCHC
- 14th, 4pm, Log Cabin Christmas at MCHC
- 17th, 12:30pm, Hilary Fleck, Collection Manager, presenting her research on the Women’s Suffrage Movement in Monroe County at the American Legion Post, during the Monroe County History Club
- 19th, 4:30pm, Board Meeting at MCHC
- 25th, CLOSED

January
- 1st, CLOSED
- 11th, 11am, WFHB Saturday’s Child at MCHC
- 14th, 7pm, Civil War Round Table at MCHC
- 16th, 4:30pm, Board Meeting at MCHC
- 20th, CLOSED
- 24th, 5pm, Suffrage Opening Reception at MCHC
- 27th, 10am, Memory Walk at MCHC
Education Desk
By Andrea Hadsell

We’ve had another busy fall here at the Monroe County History Center! Our second year of “Dearly Departed Cemetery Tours” of Rose Hill Cemetery was a success thanks to our partnership with the City of Bloomington’s Parks and Recreation Department. The weather was clear and crisp which provided a fantastic atmosphere for the weekend. Many thank yous to Bloomington High School North’s drama department for lending our ghosts costumes and to our volunteers who acted as tour guides and ghosts on the tour. We sure had fun and are already looking forward to next year’s tours!

We are again partnering with the Wylie House Museum at Indiana University for an evening of holiday open houses for the community. Our “Log Cabin Christmas” is returning on December 14 and will offer a chance to explore our decorated cabin, make pomanders, and enjoy live music.

Mark your calendars! February 1 is the date for the much anticipated PuzzleFest 2020! Keep your eye out for registration information on the History Center website. There will be new opportunities for local puzzle enthusiasts to get involved this year!

Annual Holiday Sale
This year’s Holiday Sale is now open!

Find new and gently used gifts, holiday decorations, jewelry, scarves, and much more. Don’t miss out on these one of a kind items.

The sale will be open during regular business hours though January 11, 2020 and open during Canopy of Lights.

Regular hours are Tuesday - Saturday 10am to 4pm

YMCA Corporate Challenge
Monroe County History Center’s volunteers, board members, and staff participated in this years Monroe County YMCA Corporate Challenge. We competed with other companies from Monroe County in sports, games, and trivia. The Monroe County History Center placed third in our division and had a lot of fun networking with members of the community. Thank you Jen Borland, Susan Dyar, Tom Dyar, Hilary Fleck, Ross Fleck, Andrea Hadsell, Paul Hessert, Rose Hessert, David Lemon, Margaret Lemon, Ellyn Pruitt, and Phil Stafford, for participating.

CEO Boat Race
Jen Borland rowing

Pickelball
David and Margaret Lemon
Volunteer Spotlight

Area 10 Senior Salute Award Winner 2019, Glenda Murray

Glenda Murray received an Area 10 Senior Salute Award this year for her work in providing educational opportunities for Monroe County as well as for her passion for preserving and sharing the history of Bloomington and Monroe County. In January, she was appointed as the official Monroe County Historian by the Indiana Historical Society and will serve as a resource person for historical inquiries both within and without the county.

Glenda serves on the History Center Education Committee and has also provided support for children in the community to attend the History Center Junior Historian summer programs. She was a member of the History Center board as well as various other MCHC committees over the years. During that time she put together a summary of Monroe County’s history in “A Brief History of Monroe County.” Her community involvement extends to many other areas. She has also provided city and county tours for Leadership Bloomington/Monroe County classes and other organizations and individuals interested in learning more about our community.

Glenda is a volunteer at Fairview Elementary School and has been active in the Prospect Hill neighborhood association for a number of years where she joins with her neighbors to help cultivate a spirit of community and livability for all members of their neighborhood and the community at large.

Bloomington Chamber of Commerce Annual Community Awards

Two History Center members were honored recently at the Bloomington Chamber’s annual Community Awards Ceremony. Debbie Lemon received the Lloyd Olcott Community Service Award for her outstanding community service in the area of volunteerism. Debbie has volunteered her time to a number of local organizations over the years including the Bloomington Hospital Board and Foundation, Girls, Inc., the Local Council of Women, LBMC Alumni Board, the United Way Campaign, and Vanguard Co-Chair of the IU Campaign. Debbie was also a 2017 Women Excel Bloomington Honoree and served as a State of Indiana Bicentennial Torchbearer.

Bob Zaltsberg was honored with a Life Achievement Award. Bob was the editor of The Herald-Times from 1985 until his retirement in early 2019. In April, Bob joined the WFIU-WTIU news team on a part-time basis where he is a host of WFIU’s Noon Edition, a weekly public affairs call-in program. He also teaches part-time with the IU Media School. For a number of years Bob was the moderator for the Ivy Tech O’Bannon Institute’s “Conversations” event, where he interviewed visiting celebrities and politicians. Incoming Chamber chair, Mike Richard, said of Bob, “He’s worked hard to ensure that all topics across the Bloomington area were being discussed and that all sides were heard.”

News from the Museum Store

Looking for that perfect stocking stuffer? Come in to the Monroe County History Center’s Museum Store to see all of our wonderful gifts including our limestone paperweights in the shape of Indiana. These paperweights are carved right here in Monroe County at Bybee Stone Company in Ellettesville, Indiana.

These Indiana paperweight are available for $6.00
MCHC Contributors and New Members

September and October 2019

The History Center wishes to acknowledge and recognize those who provided financial gifts to support our operations in September and October 2019:

Sponsor Membership
Richard Rechter
Rogers Group Investments

Patron Membership
Lee Ann Merry

Benefactor Memberships
Cathy and Jim Murphy
Jennifer Moore

Sustaining Membership
David John Belbutoski

Supporter Memberships
Teresa Creek and John Brumleve
Rosemary Dever
Kathryn and Craig Holden
Dr. David Matthews Kelso
Diana Lambdin and Frank Lester
Thomas Breyer and Christine Peterson
Barbara Hawkins and Robert Poortinga
Mike and Linda Stines
Kris Yoho

Donations In Memory of
Sue Shelden
Cullen and Rachel McCarty

Donations In Memory of
Juanita Hedrick
Cullen and Rachel McCarty

Donation to Gayle Cook Scholarship Fund
Mark Wiedenmayer

New Members
Kim Alexander
Jeanie Cox
Lois DeHoff
David John Belbutoski
Dr. David Matthews Kelso
Andrew Krebbs
Andrea Smart

Thank you, Martha Wainscott

We are sad to announce that Martha Wainscott, whom many of you know as the History Center’s Volunteer and Membership Coordinator, retired from the History Center on November 29. Martha held a variety of positions during her time at the History Center, gradually taking on more and more responsibility as the years went by. We will truly miss her smiling face, her kind heart, and her wise counsel which we relied upon on a day-to-day basis. Enjoy the next adventure, Martha! All the best from all of us.

Announcements

- **Acknowledgements**: We always want to acknowledge the passing of History Center members and supporters in the newsletter. Since we know that from time to time we may miss seeing an obituary, please let us know if you notice this has happened. We will place an article in the next newsletter to correct the omission. Thank you.

- **The Gayle Cook Youth Scholarship Fund** received a substantial contribution this month which we greatly appreciate. The fund continues to serve students county-wide and donations are always welcome.

- Please remember to link your Kroger Rewards Card to the Monroe County History Center so we will receive a donation from Kroger each time your card is scanned when you shop. Questions? Call 812-332-2517.
Remembering

James Robert “Bob” Dodd died September 15, 2019 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He is survived by his sons Paul and Mark. Bob was a Professor Emeritus of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences at Indiana University. He had studied and worked with others in the U.S. and abroad in his studies of paleoecology and sedimentology and also co-authored a textbook on the subject.

Bob volunteered with the History Center for many years and he loved his volunteer work at the Center and also off-site with the Cemetery Committee. Even after he moved to New Mexico, he traveled back to Bloomington to help at cemetery workshops. He added GPS locations to all known Monroe County cemeteries, and visited many of them in hard to find, out-of-the-way spots.

Bob wrote many articles for the Monroe County Historian on the geology of Monroe County, the history of long-lost communities and points of interest (such as railroads), the history and locations of old cemeteries, and unusual subjects such as vigilantes in Stinesville, flatboats, and his father’s restaurant, the Wigwam (where he worked when he was young). In the Research Library, Bob worked tirelessly organizing and adding to the map collection. He also maintained the Community Files and researched the locations of many forgotten communities. His efforts contributed to the creation of the large Monroe County Communities map that hangs in the library. Bob also served on the MCHC Board of Directors.

Bob and his late wife, Joann, were longtime members, volunteers and supporters of the Monroe County History Center as well as being involved community members. They volunteered together as a team in the History Center kitchen for the annual Canopy of Lights open house for many years. He and Joann were friendly, kind people and were real treasures of this community!

Edwin Caldwell died October 25, 2019. He graduated from University High School and from Indiana University with a BFA. He had lived in many places around the world but spent most of his life in Bloomington, Indiana. He was an accomplished spelunker, a gifted musician, and will also be remembered for his ceramics. He and his wife, Pauline Wolber, were happiest when motorcycling across the country or just around Monroe County.

Eleanor Jones Baker passed away July 29, 2019, in Harrisonburg, Virginia. She and her husband, John, called many places home but were also proud Bloomingtonians for many years. Eleanor was a school teacher and homemaker, dedicating most of her energy to her family and various service organizations. John Baker was a former professor and Assistant Dean of the IU Law School.

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Monroe County History Center’s Dementia Friendly Program Receives Statewide Recognition

The Monroe County History Center and Alzheimer’s Resource Services of IU Health were awarded the Indiana Historical Society’s 2019 Outstanding Collaborative Project Award. The award was given in recognition of the collaborative efforts on the “Living with History” program initiative.

The Monroe County History Center is a certified Dementia Friendly Business that offers the “Living with History” program at no cost to visitors. The program is supported by the Community Foundation of Bloomington and Monroe County, which presented the History Center with a 2019 Community Impact grant.

We are honored to receive the Outstanding Collaborative Project Award and grateful that we can assist those living with Dementia as well as their caregivers.

Susan Dyar and Dana Thompson
New in the Library
The following items have been recently accessioned:


Eagle Scout Project Restores Chrisley Hillenberg Cemetery

The Research Library has received a copy of Jack Smith Wildman’s *Eagle Scout Service Project: The Chrisley Hillenberg Cemetery and Associated Genealogy Information* (2019), donated by the author, Jamie R. Wildman. The project was done in the summer and fall of 2018 by the author’s son, with help from Troop 343 and adult volunteers. The cemetery is located in Polk Township in the Hoosier National Forest off of Dutch Ridge Road. The work involved clearing non-native invasive shrubs at the trailhead, restoring fence posts, and attaching new woven wire fencing. An old information board had been broken off at ground level, and whatever information it had contained was illegible. The new board installed by Jack and others includes historical and genealogical information and a list of burials. The project booklet has been added to the library’s Cemetery Files.
Swing-In Pizza: “You've Tried the Rest—Now Try the Best”
By Penelope Mathiesen

In the early 1950s, a small building was erected on a previously vacant lot at 301 West 17th Street. The first tenant was the Outpost Drive-In Restaurant, perhaps named for its location on the northwestern edge of Bloomington’s main population area near the intersection of two main highways: State Road 46 (17th Street) and State Road 37 (College Avenue/Walnut Street). The drive-in restaurant was only six blocks away from Indiana University’s Memorial Stadium.

In the early 1960s, the Outpost closed and a new establishment opened in the same space: Swing-In Pizza, operated by Fred R. Rice, who was born in Bloomington on 15 October 1934 at 316 ½ West 16th Street, just a couple of blocks from the future location of the restaurant.

In 1966, Swing-In Pizza placed a large advertisement with the slogan: “You’ve Tried the Rest—Now Try the Best.” Who were “the rest”? There were at least three others. The Pizza Barn was located at 1428 East Third Street (now Mother Bear’s Pizza Campus), opposite Indiana University. Ye Olde Regulator, at 319 North Walnut Street (now Kilroy’s Sports Bar), offered “sandwiches, pizza, corned beef, Italian beef, ham, roast beef, cold beer, package liquors.” The Pizzaria, at 405 East Kirkwood Avenue, advertised “Pizza and Italian Sandwiches delivered to your door … Side Walk Café, Delivery and Carry Out.” The Pizzaria is still in business today at the same location.

In 1967, Rice opened Fred’s Pizza at 1434 East Third Street, across from the IU campus between Jordan and Swain avenues. This business operated through 1973. Swing-In Pizza continued to be listed in the city directories at 301 West 17th Street with other operators. Fred Rice eventually returned to his original location after a number of years “in various incarnations and locations … all of which used the original Swing-In recipes. In 1997, the original building [at 301 West 17th] became vacant, and Swing-In was reborn.”

Fred Rice died on 28 September 2004 and was buried in the Presbyterian Cemetery in Ellettsville. His wife Charlotte carried on the tradition at Swing-In Pizza until her retirement. In 2017, her son Jeremiah and two partners bought the restaurant and moved it nearby to 1280 North College Avenue, taking “with them the ovens, sign, recipes and a legacy started by Rice’s father.” The new restaurant has plenty of seating—something that the original location lacked—and serves pizza and strombolis. A sign pictured on Swing-In Pizza’s web site features the original slogan: “You’ve Tried the Rest—Now Try the Best.”

Notes
7. Ibid.
Much of Bloomington’s 19th-century economy was based on timber harvested from the thick forests that greeted Monroe County’s first settlers. “Saw mills dotted the hill sides,” and “long lines of heavy log wagons bearing from one to three huge logs, drawn by teams of thin, tired horses” came into town to supply the needs of local industries: a spoke factory, tannery, chair factory, basket factory, creosoting plant, and the Showers Brothers Furniture Company.\(^1\)

In 1870, around the time the Showers business was established, it was noted that: “Within seven or eight miles of Bloomington, are hundreds of acres of land, that may be purchased at from five to seven dollars per acre … upon which is an unlimited quantity of the best hard timber in the county.”\(^2\) The land was covered with “the finest of trees, oak and walnut, maple, hickory, beech and cherry.”\(^3\) James D. and William N. Showers “knew firsthand about the quality of the local hardwoods; intermittent deed-book records of purchases outside the city limits show many parcels of land that they purchased and presumably logged.”\(^4\)

On 3 February 1909, William N. Showers purchased a farm in northwestern Monroe County on which he was “arranging to build a large house—60x90, with 14 rooms, to include spacious porches.” Hereafter, “during the heated spell,” the family could escape Bloomington “to enjoy themselves in a real country home.”\(^5\) The homesite was approximately half a mile north of the intersection of present-day North Maple Grove and West Maple Grove roads.\(^6\)

By March 23, work had already commenced. The *Bloomington Telephone* announced:

“In addition to the house … Mr. Showers is having about 40 acres laid out, according to the latest rules for golf and tennis and other outdoor sports. He has also planned an attractive lawn about the house. It is his intention for Mr. Showers and his family to spend most of the summer at his country place.”\(^7\)

On April 20, the *Telephone* reported:

“Mr. Showers plans are to celebrate his birthday there May 28th, when a number of his friends are to be guests and dedicate the beautiful summer home. He spends most of his time now superintending the work and makes the trip from town in his car in 20 minutes. The barn is already completed and from the pike may be read the words thereon ‘Weary Wood Farm—W. N. Showers.’”\(^8\)

In 1911, William Showers carried out extensive improvements at Weary Wood, which again took place under his personal supervision:

“The improvements consist of the building of a complete water works system for the house and farm. In a valley below a large spring on the place, he has thrown a 16 foot dam across and backed up a good sized lake. A gasoline engine below the dam pumps the water to a huge steel tank located in an elevated position, the height of the tank giving the necessary force for the water works system.”\(^9\)

The Showers summer home was not only a family retreat but also a showplace on the order of a country club or lodge, with a dining room that could seat 40–50 people, large first- and second-floor fireplaces served by a stone-faced brick chimney, a balcony that surrounded the upper story, and a wrap-around porch.\(^10\) In addition to the summer home (also referred to as the bungalow or party house), the property included a concrete fish pond, a caretaker’s house and cellar, and a maple syrup house.\(^11\) A network of underground plumbing provided a level of “modernization unique for a country home of that era.”\(^12\)
But the family’s fortunes declined, and the house was eventually abandoned and torn down “because the Showers business could no longer pay the taxes.” As word of the planned demolition spread, many Bloomington residents visited the site “to see it once more before it was torn down, because there probably is not another building in the state that can compare with it.”

Work on wrecking the building, “a landmark in Monroe County for more than 20 years,” was started on 15 February 1937 by the H. B. Wegmiller Lumber Company which purchased the aging structure.” After wrecking the building, Wegmiller planned to sell “the valuable timber of which it is made. Hemlock, oak and red cypress are among the rare timbers that are being removed. … Although the structure has been abandoned for ten years and the roof has leaked for, perhaps, five, the timbers are still in a good state of preservation Mr. Wegmiller says.”

Three wagon loads of windows and doors in a vertical position were hauled away. Much of the demolished material ended up in Bloomington.

Today, a few traces of the property’s habitation remain: the concrete fish pond, the cellar of the caretaker’s house, and “a water pump that stands on a concrete pad just north west of the foundation of the old chimney.” Of the chimney itself, only a four-foot-tall portion is left.

Notes

* Many thanks to Joe Peden and Daniel Scherschel for providing information and giving me a tour of the site on 3 July 2019, and to Nancy Smith, great-granddaughter of William N. Showers, for sharing her family photos.

3. Winslow.
5. “Purchases Clinton Houston Farm; Will Build Summer Home There,” Bloomington Telephone, March 12, 1909; Monroe County Deed Record 53, p. 427 (Madison A. and Elizabeth G. Houston to William N. Showers).
10. Scherschel, 32–34.
11. Site map provided by Joe Peden.
12. Winslow.
13. Scherschel, 32–33.
15. Ibid.
16. Recollection of Carr Stanger, reported by Daniel Scherschel on 3 July 2019; Scherschel, 32–33.
17. Scherschel, 35.
Membership Form

Annual Membership Levels

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