Sand College: A One-Room School in Bean Blossom Township

By Penelope Mathiesen

Sand College School was located in the northwest corner of Monroe County on land donated to Bean Blossom Township by David Campbell Van Buskirk. It stood at the intersection of Brighton, Wampler, and Sand College roads, not far from Gosport across the White River in Owen County. Sand College does not appear on a map of Monroe County schoolhouses published in 1888, but it was in existence at least by the early 1900s, when photographs in the Monroe County History Center collection show Floy Summit as the teacher in 1903 and Laura Lincicome in 1906. Other teachers over the years included Mary Grubbs, Lucille Legg, and Milo Wells. Roy Smith was the instructor in 1922. Mr. Edwards, who taught in 1930, “walked from somewhere outside Gosport to the school, crossing the railroad bridge over White River.”

In 1908, the teacher was Amy Ping. A souvenir program she gave her pupils at the end of the school year included her picture on the cover and the motto: “Education Is Wealth.” Inside, the first page states: “In memory of days spent together in the schoolroom, this token is presented with the compliments of your teacher.” The following page lists 32 pupils by name and grade. Their surnames included Bowman, Brighton, Canada, Fulford, Gilaspy, Goodwin, Lee, McCown, McPhetridge, Smith, Van Buskirk, Waggoner, Walker, and Wamplar. (Names reflect the spelling used in the program, which may differ from other sources.)

Most of the Sand College pupils walked to school, and some of the families were immediate neighbors. According to census records, children from two Bowman households (Leola, Amos, Willie, and Brunetta) and one McPhetridge child (Ollie) lived on adjoining farms. The Van Buskirk siblings (Ruby, Noah, John, and Mary) lived just down the road from the Wamplars (Burton, Joie, Gladys, and Edith). Most of the fathers were farmers, although Amos Bowman was a house carpenter, and David N. Wamplar worked for the railroad. At least two of the pupils lived in households headed by women running farms on their own: Joana, divorced mother of Raymond Smith; and Clara, widowed mother of Ollie McPhetridge.

It is not known how long Amy Ping, about 19 years old in 1908, taught at Sand College. The 1910 U.S. census and 1916 Bloomington city directory both list her as a teacher without naming the schools. The 1916 *Arbutus* includes her among the second violins in the Indiana University Orchestra. A Monroe County marriage record for 29 November 1916 gives her occupation as “student.” She married Farra L. Botkin, a veterinarian from Muncie, and went to live with him in that city.
In 1921, the *Ellettsville Farm* reported that Sand College School had been “closed by the state board of education,” due to enforcement of a law stating that a school with fewer than twelve pupils was not authorized to receive state funding and “the trustee may be compelled to pay all expenditures of such school.” Some solution must have been reached, for John Martin remembered having attended Sand College from 1922 to 1930. Outside the building, he recalled a well “with a hand pump and a tin cup to drink out of,” a sycamore tree that pupils climbed, and separate outhouses for boys and girls. Inside, desks “sized for first graders to eighth graders” were arranged front to back.  

John’s younger sister, Jean Martin Hodges, attended Sand College her first year of school, 1929–30, the last year it was open. She remembered walking from the family’s home a mile northwest of the school, near Gosport, and recalled that: “One room schools were like a big family—the older students helped the younger ones. Everyone had a responsibility some time during the day.”

Sand College School was abandoned in 1930. The building was briefly rented out as a residence and torn down in 1933.

Notes

1. Monroe County Retired Teachers, *Echoes from One-Room Schools, Monroe County, Indiana* (Bloomington: AuthorHouse, c2006), 18, 46.
6. Amy Ping was born on 6 August 1888, according to Monroe County Marriage Record 16, p. 37.
10. *Echoes from One-Room Schools*, 47.

**Part II: The Meetings of the Edgeworthalean Society**

By Lee Ehman

The first article in this series* provided an overview of the 1840s Edgeworthalean Society comprised of Bloomington women. This article describes the Society’s meetings—their format and content.*  

Meetings were usually held every Friday afternoon. Two two-month breaks occurred in the spring and fall months. At first, the meetings were held in the Female Seminary, a two-story building at the northeast corner of Seventh Street and College Avenue. From June 1842 to April 1844, the women met in a place they referred to as “Edgeworthalean Hall.” A typical meeting numbered about 12 women. Fines of 6 ¼ cents were imposed for unexcused absences.

The structure of the sessions is revealed in the minutes. For each meeting, the members were divided into four groups, called “classes,” each responsible during the meetings for “Reading, Composition, Recitations and Debating.” Members had assigned reading, wrote essays, participated in debates and critiqued each other’s work. The groups rotated each week. The minutes never described the contents about which the members read, wrote, or recited. One might assume that, because they called themselves a “literary society,” these had to do with written works. Or, the Reading, Composition, and Recitations groups might have aimed at the debate topic. The minutes noted that these three “exercises” always came first, followed by the debate.
The argumentation, or debate, “exercise” was always centered on a specific topic, stated in question form, with women in the Argumentation group assigned to argue either the affirmative or negative side of the question. The minutes noted occasions when one or more of the Argumentation group were not present or unprepared. The Argumentation group chose the debate question for the following week.

After debate of the question, two judgments were made. First, the president decided which side made the best quality arguments. Second, the whole group voted on which side they agreed with.

Here is an example of the minutes for a typical meeting:

“Edgeworthalean Hall, June 24, 1842

Society met at the usual hour. The President took the chair and called the meeting to order. At the calling of the roll the following members were absent: E. Deming, L. Howe, M. Forbes, C. Morrison and M. E. Lowe. The members present were all prepared to perform the several duties assigned them. The question discussed on the last evening was decided in the negative as to argument and affirmative as to merits. The arrangement for the classes of the next meeting was as follows: Reading: M. L. Hinkson, L. Howe, M. Forbes, C. Morrison, M.A. Maxwell, M.E. Lowe; Composition: F. J Dunning, R. Rogers, J. L. May; Recitation: M. Buskirk, A. McDonald, E Deming, C. Swearingen; Debating: A. D. Maxwell, E. Baugh, C. Bowland, M. Batterton. Question for debate: Is it desirable that females take an active part in the great political questions of the day?”

The minutes recorded 114 meetings, with 90 debate questions considered. Space precludes discussing them all. There are themes underlying them, among the most interesting being social/political questions, happiness, and marriage.

**Social/Political Questions:** Society members were certainly concerned with more than literature, and their debate topics showed a keen awareness of societal questions, some very relevant then, and several of which persist today. Slavery, capital punishment, imprisonment for debt, toleration of Roman Catholics, poor relief, role of political parties, women’s suffrage, dueling, and freedom of the press were all debated. For the most part, members’ votes on their beliefs were recorded in the minutes. There were some surprise votes. On the question: “Should women be allowed to vote?” they voted in the negative. They were split, six to six, on: “Should the Roman Catholic religion be tolerated in the U.S.?” When they considered: “Ought the clergy to be supported by law?” they disagreed. They were skeptical about the merits of political parties.

**Happiness:** The women were concerned about what leads to happiness in life and debated questions on several sides of this issue. They wondered about the impact of wealth and decided that it brought more misery than happiness. They asked: “Which would be most conducive to our happiness, to be at once created with all the knowledge to be acquired, or to obtain it by slow degrees?” The vote was not recorded. One question was: “Is there more happiness found in the married or single state?” They voted for single. “Is happiness more dependent on the mind, or on surrounding circumstances?” they asked, and decided it depended more on the mind. Particularly interesting was their query: “Were we created to enjoy life or to endure it?”

Unfortunately, the minutes only record that they “decided in the negative,” which isn’t clear. Perhaps they voted for endurance.

**Marriage:** The Society was composed of both single and married women. They chose a few questions about marriage. Which exerts the greatest influence over society, either for good or evil, married or single females? They voted for married. Is marriage favorable to the development of talent? They voted in the negative. Which has the advantage in making a matrimonial connection, the lady or the gentleman? They voted for the lady. Should Love or Reason be the principal guide to matrimonial alliances? They voted for Reason.

**The Demise of the Society:** For the first two years of its existence, the Society appeared to be an active and vibrant group of women. Very few meetings were canceled. But beginning in the winter of 1844 something happened to bring it limping to an end in June of that year. On January 6th there was “no debate because of non-performance and attendance.” The next meeting was “Adjourned with many absent.” They lost their meeting place and had to return to the Female Seminary building for their meetings. On January 20th there was no debate recorded, and they decided to take a very long break from meetings, setting May 3rd for re-convening. However, the minutes for the last four meetings reflect problems with maintaining their usual format. The last meeting recorded was for 14 June 1844.

The final article in this series will explore the Society’s women themselves.

**Notes**


1. The existing minutes of the Edgeworthalean Society are contained in one book, held in the Indiana University Archives, and can be accessed at: http://webapp1.dlib.indiana.edu/findingaids/view?docId=InU-Ar-VAC9160.xml&doc.view=items. Use Firefox browser; Chrome does not work.


3. The debate question was: “Does novel reading improve the management of classes?”
Letter from the Director

Happy February and a belated Happy New Year to all of you,

Now that we all have 2020 in our rearview mirror, I know we’re all looking forward to a better 2021. As I write this note in early January, Monroe County is still in Orange COVID status but looking so much better than the counties that surround us as well as most of the state. During this time, the History Center is requiring appointments to visit, which means we can take precautions to ensure that you are able to visit without others around you. As more of us are able to receive doses of one of the miraculous COVID-19 vaccines that are rolling out, we look forward to seeing more of you in person again.

It feels strange to be writing this letter for the February newsletter and not be talking about the annual History Center gala. As you probably already know, the Board made the decision to cancel this year’s gala. Hopefully by February 2022 we will be able to gather again in person for this fun annual event. In the meantime, we have so much to look forward to in the coming year. A.J., Andrea, Hilary, and Megan are working hard to develop a variety of digital resources for you, including collection and exhibition videos, 360 degree exhibition tours, school workshops, a new podcast series, and more. Megan is able to handle a wide variety of genealogy research questions by email and phone if you prefer not to visit, and she is waiting for your call. If you feel comfortable coming to the Center, you can still make an appointment to use the Research Library resources in person. We continue to be able to offer these resources because you have been there for us through this crazy time. Your membership dollars, donations, city, county, and state grants as well as federal CARES funding have enabled us to keep operating through 2020 and for that we can’t thank you enough.

The chaos of 2020 has transformed all of us in so many ways, including how the History Center collects, preserves, and shares our county history. The pandemic has challenged us and we’re not done with it yet. It has also opened our eyes to a variety of new perspectives and new ways of doing things. Who knew we would all be able to video chat so easily when we started the year? Even with the wonderful technology that has allowed us all to stay in touch, I personally am so looking forward to once again being able to see your face without a mask, and offering and receiving a handshake or a hug.

Susan Dyar, Director

History Center’s Revised Visitor Hours

The Board of Trustees for the Monroe County Historical Society recently approved new policies for the History Center related to COVID-19. In addition to adhering to all state and local guidelines while the Coronavirus outbreak continues, the History Center will remain open with our modified regular hours if Monroe County is at the “Yellow” level (or better). If Monroe County is at the “Orange” level, the History Center will be open by appointment. If Monroe County reaches the “Red” level, we will temporarily close the History Center to public visitation. If you have questions or would like to schedule an appointment to visit the History Center, please call 812-332-2517.

We will continue to have many events and exhibits online, and members of the public are welcome to make research requests for the MCHC library. For information about upcoming events, please visit our website or Facebook page, or call the History Center at 812-332-2517. For research requests, please call the History Center or send an email to library@monroehistory.org.

On January 20, we started taking donations again at the Garage Sale site (at 4015 Profile Parkway). Barring any further closures due to COVID-related guidelines, volunteers will be there on Wednesdays from 10am to 2pm to accept donations. Donors are encouraged to call the History Center to confirm that we are able to accept donations or visit our website at https://monroehistory.org/annual-garage-sale/. Mark your calendar: the dates for the 2021 sale are June 11th, 12th and 14th; stay tuned for more info!

Save the Date

The Annual Member Meeting for the Monroe County Historical Society, Inc. will take place on Thursday, March 18th 2021 at 5PM. All History Center Members are welcome to attend and help us elect new Trustees and Board Officers. So that we can safely accommodate all who wish to attend, we will offer both a zoom link for at-home participation, as well as socially distanced space for people to attend in-person at the History Center (if state and county regulations in place at that point in time permit us to do so). To RSVP for this meeting, email office@monroehistory.org or call (812) 332-2517.
Current Exhibits

Online Exhibit Spotlight: *Monroe County’s Firsts: Breaking the Color Barrier* celebrates the triumphs of Monroe County’s African American citizens and the vast accomplishments achieved throughout the county’s two hundred years. You can visit the digital version of this exhibition through the “online exhibits” tab on our website: monroehistory.org. This exhibit was made possible with funding from the Operation Round Up program of SCI REMC and the Wylie Foundation. We are always updating this digital exhibit as we gather more information and photographs. If you have details to add or someone you would like to recommend for the exhibit, please let us know.

Nights at the History Center: A New Online Video Series

The History Center at night is a special place reserved mostly for staff and volunteers who have a key and an alarm code. But this special place shows a different side when the windows go black and only the pipes and electrical equipment keep it from complete silence. The light bounces off the yellow paint of the Cook Gallery, and the stories that make up the history of our county come alive. The stories from the limestone quarries, RCA, basketball gyms, and others that make up our permanent and temporary galleries will be brought to you through a new video series accessible on our YouTube channel or through mocohistoryctr on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram.

BROWN GALLERY: Transportation in Monroe County

For the past 200 years, the import and export of raw materials, finished goods, and even people has been a challenge for those living in Monroe County. Exhibits in the Brown Gallery tell the story of how Monroe County continued to grow despite obstacles presented by hilly terrain and a region without a major water source. The ongoing theme of the exhibits in the Brown Gallery will be transportation in Monroe County with changing artifacts throughout the year.

HILL GALLERY: Extra! Extra! Bloomington Newspaper Advertisements

Before the internet, television, and radio, newspapers told Monroe County families what was happening around the world. It wasn’t just the stories, but the advertisements that captivated people’s attention. Car dealerships, retail stores, and everything in between relied on this method to spread word of their sales and events. The Monroe County History Center has on display larger than life copies of advertisements showcasing the Monroe County community from almost a century ago. (Image source: *Bloomington Evening World*, April 16, 1915.) On display until March 5, 2021.

DECKARD EDUCATION ROOM:  See Her Run

Through research gathered from Monroe County Election Records, the exhibit, *See Her Run: Monroe County Women in Politics*, will highlight the remarkable Monroe County women to run for office, including the earliest recorded candidate Maude Luzadder who ran unsuccessfully for coroner in 1913. Our research has listed over 300 women who have won their races and many hundreds more who did not, and we hope to share their stories with our visitors.

Opening March 2nd, the exhibit features artifacts, documents, and photographs from the museum collection that trace the difficult defeats and historic victories of women in local politics. The exhibit will be accompanied by a series of virtual and in-person programs that encourage visitors to explore the experiences and significant contributions of women in local politics.

Calendar of Events

As the pandemic continues to challenge us, rather than list events in the newsletter, we will keep our website up to date with changing programs and exhibitions. Please visit our website at www.monroehistory.org for the most up-to-date list of events.
The holiday season at the History Center looked a bit different this year without our annual Canopy of Lights and Log Cabin Christmas open houses. Thankfully, we were able to continue our annual PuzzleFest program. This year we hosted the sold out program virtually via Zoom. It was an interesting experience bringing this community event to the digital world, but it enabled us to expand our reach and welcome new local participants as well as those from out of state! We are so grateful to the Book Corner, this year’s PuzzleFest competition puzzle sponsor, and Press Puzzles, for again donating the custom awards.

While the state’s Department of Education advises classrooms to avoid fieldtrips for the time being, we are working to bring the History Center to classrooms in a new fashion! We are excited to announce that our traditional educational programs are becoming available via Google Classroom. Grace Rosenbaum, our fall intern, brought a fun spin to our workshops creating supplementary worksheets and video content for our Civil War and prehistoric animal programs. More programming will be available in the spring!

Be sure to stay up-to-date with all of our programs by visiting our website!

Volunteer Spotlight

Do you know Marlyn Naylor? As it turns out, you might! Marlyn began volunteering with the History Center in the summer of 2019 after her cousin and fellow volunteer, David Lemon, introduced the idea to her. She is now a regular welcome desk greeter and welcomes all of our patrons like they are an old friend.

Marlyn is a natural born storyteller and will always share wonderful tales of her time as a teacher and of her family and friends.

News from the Museum Store

Once the “television capital of the world,” Bloomington, Indiana, was home to manufacturing operations for the Radio Corporation of America, employing thousands of Hoosiers. Coming to Bloomington homes this winter, The RCA Bloomington Plant: An Illustrated History shares the history of the legendary plant. Co-authored by Gib Apple and Alexandra “Sandy” Lynch, the book features photos and memorabilia from the Monroe County History Center collection.

Copies of The RCA Bloomington Plant: An Illustrated History by Apple and Lynch are available for purchase at the Monroe County History Center in the Dunn Museum Store for $15.00.

The History Center is open by appointment Tuesdays through Fridays from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

2021 Book Club List

- Feb 27: The Bone and Sinew of the Land: America’s Forgotten Black Pioneers and the Struggle for Equality by Anna-Lisa Cox
- Mar 27: The Spoilt Quilt and Other Frontier Stories by Candace Simar, Larry D. Sweazy, and Sandra Dallas
- Apr 24: The Pioneers: The Heroic Story of the Settlers Who Brought the American Ideal West by David McCullough
- May 29: Two-Moon Journey: The Potawatomi Trail of Death Book by Peggy King Anderson
- Jun 26: Prairie Fires: The American Dreams of Laura Ingalls Wilder by Caroline Fraser
- Jul 31: The Giver of Stars by Jojo Moyes
- Aug 28: Api’s Berlin Diaries: My Quest to Understand My Grandfather’s Nazi Past by Gabrielle Robinson
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Updated Online Indexes

All Monroe County Court records (1818 through 1960) held in the Research Library have been indexed, and the up-to-date index is available online at: www.monroehistory.org - Library - Indexes and Resources. Updated Divorce and Probate indexes for the same time period are also available there.

MCHC Volunteer Joins IGS Board

Research Library volunteer Penny Mathiesen has been appointed Director of the Indiana Genealogical Society’s South Central District. This position was formerly held by Randi Richardson, also a Research Library volunteer, for many years. The South Central District comprises twelve Indiana counties: Bartholomew, Brown, Clark, Crawford, Floyd, Harrison, Jackson, Lawrence, Monroe, Orange, Scott, and Washington.

IGS Annual Conference in April 2021

The Annual Conference of the Indiana Genealogical Society will be held virtually on April 9–10, 2021. Lisa Louise Cooke will be the featured speaker. For more information go to: www.indgensoc.org and select the “Events” menu.

News from the Library

Compiled by Megan MacDonald and Penelope Mathieson library@monroehistory.org

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REMEMBERING

Terrence Edgeworth was a member of Sherwood Oaks Christian Church and a Veteran of the United States Air Force.

Janet Scank was the Director of Peabody Library in Columbia City, Indiana before retiring and working as the CFO for Classic Catering Inc. in Bloomington.

Richard Stuart taught at Bloomington High School, then Binford Junior High School prior to retiring from Batchelor Middle School. Richard was secretary for the Monroe County Fair Board for 50 years and a volunteer for the Monroe County Historical Society for several years.

Paul Henry Taylor served in the United States Army where he operated a crane, which sparked his love for excavating. He ran his own business and has passed that passion down through three generations.

Pamela Walters graduated from University High School in 1944 and Indiana University in 1950 with a degree in Business. Pamela was active in several organizations throughout Monroe County.
Monroe County Historical Society’s
Monroe County Historian
February/March 2021
Vol. 2021, Issue 1

Society established 1905
Museum established 1980

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

Collection Spotlight

“Dear Virgie, Am I still on the Bum?”
Valentine postcard to Miss Virgie Mason, 1914.

Our collection includes a wonderful selection of vintage valentines. Treat yourself to a look at these, and other artifacts, online at https://monroehistory.org/explore-the-collection/.

Monroe County History Center Membership Form

Annual Membership Levels

- Student: $10
- Teacher: $20
- Individual: $40
- Family/Grandparents: $50
- Supporter: $100
- Benefactor: $250
- Patron: $500
- Sponsor: $1000
- Sustaining membership beginning at $5 a month

Name (please print):
______________________________________________
Address:
______________________________________________
______________________________________________
Phone: _____________________________
Email: _____________________________

Method of Payment

- oVisa    - o Mastercard  - o Discover  - o Check

Credit Card Number: _____________________________________________
Expiration Date: ________     CVC Number: ________

Check if you are interested in:
- o Volunteer Information

Renew and donate online at: http://monroehistory.org/join-and-give

Or Send form to:
Monroe County History Center
202 East Sixth Street
Bloomington, IN 47408

Signature: _____________________________________________