# Starke County Historical Society

## THE PRIDE OF STARKE COUNTY

WINTER 2006 Newsletter

### **Starke County Interim Report**



The Starke County Interim Report is a new publication about Starke County and lists 647 Starke County homes, businesses and other sites. This book highlights the historic architecture of Starke County. It is an extremely important document for the local governmental agencies and the citizens of our county.

Indiana's Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology (DHPA), uses the report in the Section 106 reviews of federal programs throughout the state.

Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, with the help of local organizations like the Starke County Historical Society, conducted the survey. Field surveyors drove every road in the county, identifying, documenting, and photographing the historic sites and structures.

It is called an interim report because it is recognized that the surveys become outdated almost overnight. Properties can be demolished or altered in some way changing their historic character.

To qualify to be in the survey, a property must be at least 50 years old and have retained their historic integrity. Several alterations to the fabric of a building, including the addition of siding, removal of

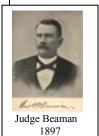
decorative features, and replacement or resizing of windows affect the integrity of a structure. Many of these listed structures are now eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If you would like a copy of this new and significant book about Starke County, stop at the museum, Tues-Fri, 12 - 4. Your home may be listed.

### **Photo Indexing Project**

The photo-indexing project is now in its fifth year and going strong. Over 19,000 historic photos have been scanned and digitized on CD discs by Marvin Allen. These have been copied and stored, not only in the museum's fire-proof safe, but also in two other places in the

county.



Ann Shearin has been indexing these photos into the computer so a photograph can easily be found by subject matter. You can see many of these photos,

maps, phone books and histories on the Museum-Library web site. There are several photos unidentified on this site. If you can identify any of the people in the photos, call Marvin Allen at 772-5936.

Museum/Library photo site with over 3500 images and photos: www.scpl.lib.in.us/historical

Help!!!! You can help us by bringing in your historic photos of family, class pictures, yearbooks, phone books, or any other historical items relating to Starke County that we might scan.

### **Our Purpose**

The Starke County Historical Society's purpose is to foster an interest in local history and to preserve historical items of Starke County. If you have photographs or other items of local historical interest that you would like to donate to the museum, call 772-5393.

# Video Productions by the Historical Society

During the past three years, the Starke County Historical Society has made a number of videos.

These videos, as well as many others, are at the museum and may be taken out on loan to view at home. Several other videos are being processed and will be completed in the near future. More are in the planning stage.



### **Presentations**

### More Lewis & Clark Programs - 200 years

Eli Roscka, Alan Selge and Marvin Allen recreated the Lewis and Clark Exploration (200<sup>th</sup> anniversary) for guests at the Cass County Historical Society Annual Meeting. Their



presentation included maps and drawings of this historic exploration of the Northwest. Dressed in period uniforms, Eli & Alan told of the great successes and dangers of this amazing journey into unknown territory. Over one hundred people attended that annual meeting.

Eli, Alan and Marvin also gave another Lewis & Clark presentation to the Culver Lions Club last fall.

If you would like to see a video of this great Lewis & Clark presentation (One hour in length), it can be borrowed from the Museum.

### LaPorte Genealogical

In October, Marvin Allen led a half-day workshop on Digital Imaging in LaPorte for the LaPorte County Genealogical Society. Marvin not only started his presentation by demonstrating the basics of scanning, but later tailored his talk to the person who may be advanced in digitizing photographs and images.

#### Marvin Allen and the Mayors

Marvin Allen made a digital presentation about the life of Governor and Mrs. Schricker to Northern Indiana Mayors' Roundtable held in Knox. Each year the Roundtable is held in a different location in Northern Indiana and this year it was held in Knox. Mayor Estok, as host this year, felt keenly that we should portray the interesting life of our most distinguished couple to the rest of Northern Indiana.

This half-hour presentation is now on video, if you would like to borrow it from the Museum. Marvin is listed in the speakers bureau of



the Indiana Historical Society.

# Other Presentations for Starke County

- Video slideshow of Historic Bass Lake photos for the Bass Lake Splash.
- Audio CD of Historic Bass Lake for the Bass Lake Tours.
- Presentation on land measurement to the Starke County Genealogical Society.
- Presentation of old photos of North Judson to the Lutheran Ladies Aid.
- Maps for genealogy research to the Starke County Genealogical Society.
- Grade School pictures for the Knox Class of 1950 reunion.

If you would like a presentation of some of the history of Starke County for your club or organization, call Jim Shilling at 772-4311 or Marvin Allen at 772-5936.

### MUSEUM HOURS

Tuesday thru Friday 12 to 4 pm (when volunteers are available)

Our Ice Cream Social was a big success this past July. Kathy Jerrell showed The Ice Cream Social

her talents by providing wonderful background music with the dulcimer. Exhibitors Ray & Roseltha Hallowry, Marvin & Marge Schuster, Bob Stachura, Harold Small, Clarence and Judy Benninghoff, Bob and Gail



Yakimicki, Bud & Beverly Albright, Pat Atkinson, Warren & Marilyn Bickel, Mike & Charlotte Combs, Steven & Patti Craft, Ruth Kado, Joe & Louise Kingsbury, Jim & Nancy Kopchik, Dean & Pearl McIntire, Romon & Gayle Nunez-Gross, Marvin Peters, Eli Roscka, Dave Thompson, and Richard Wieczorek displayed everything from farm machinery and antique autos to Indian arrowheads on the lawn of the museum. Inside the museum, visitors stayed cool while looking at the new exhibits and videos.

Maybe <u>you</u> have an antique tractor, a doll collection or arrowhead collection, or perhaps a talent with an old type of musical instrument that you are willing to share. We would love to have you, also, at this summer's old time Ice Cream Social, July 2, 2006.



# The old Nickel Plate Watchman's Tower is up again.

The watchman's tower was first installed in January 1927 on the east side of Pearl Street north of the Nickel Plate tracks and depot. The little 6-foot by 6-foot house was manned 24-hours a day. Before that time, a watchman at each crossing pedestrians would warn motorists with a flag or lantern of the approaching trains. With the new watchman's tower, the operator, when notified by a buzzer of an approaching train, would turn on the flashing red lights at Heaton, Pearl, Main and Shield Streets. In 1986, when the automated crossing signal devices were installed, the Starke County Historical Society, with the financial help of Dr. Walter Fritz, saved the tower and temporarily relocated it on Dr. Fritz's farm on State Road 23. Now, after being refurbished, the watchman's tower will again have a place near the Nickel Plate Depot.

In October, workers installed the base and post of the old Nickel Plate Watchman's Tower on the west side of U.S. 35 and across the street from the Nickel Plate Depot at the north edge of Knox.



The above photo shows the watchman's house being installed on its large steel post on Friday, December 2, 2005.

# Christmas Time at the Museum

Marilyn McCarty at Governor Schricker's piano, along with Ed



Hasnerl, Anita Goodan, Doris Michael, Diana Riddle and Kathy Allen, led the guests in singing Christmas carols during the Museum's Christmas Open House on December 4, 2005. This year, because of the gift by Frank Boilini of a Console Victrola, the group sang to the music of White Christmas while being accompanied by the vinyl record. The guests enjoyed the lively singing, the new exhibits in the museum and the hot cider and homemade Christmas cookies furnished by the board members.

The Memorial Tree near the entrance of the Museum was decorated this year with 90 red ribbons in memory of loved ones.

**Starke County Historical Society dues:** 

Individual ...... \$ 5.00 Husband & Wife..... \$ 8.00

# Gleaners meet at Museum

The Starke County Historical Society hosted the Ober Arbor Gleaner members of Starke County on Thursday evening, October 13, 2005. Jim Shilling, president of the Historical Society, conducted a tour of the museum and showed a video of an interview with Mrs. Margaret Robbins, the daughter of Governor Henry and Maude Schricker. In the movie, she tells of her childhood days growing up in the Schricker home. In appreciation for having their meeting at the museum, the Gleaner members presented the Historical Society with gifts for the museum, such as copy machine paper, toilet paper, paper towels, soaps, cleaning supplies and potted plants.

The Ober Arbor Gleaner organization is part of a system representing a charitable force of nearly 100 individual non-profit benefit societies with a membership of approximately 10 million persons of various ethnic, religious, and vocational backgrounds. The system stretches throughout the North American continent, flourishing in small communities as well as in large metropolitan areas. It provides a completely unique opportunity for the societies to be responsive to the needs and desires of their members and communities.

WWII Exhibit at the Henry F. Schricker Public Library in Knox has been a great success.



It was to honor those veterans of the war that ended 60 years ago.

Marvin Allen, with the help of Eli Roscka, has displayed many of the museum items and some others to highlight this 60-year celebration of the end of WWII. Push the play button on the special CD player (wait a moment) and hear some of President Roosevelt's speech to congress and the American people the day after the attack on Pearl Harbor.

### **Annual Meeting**

The year 1945 was a very special year.

It was the end of WWII. Year 2005 was the 60-year celebration of the end of WWII. Our annual meeting program was to honor the men and women of Starke County who served in this great battle of survival of the free world, and those who have since continued in their unselfish service to our country.



Steve Lee, Anita Hershman and 15 middle and high school students from North Judson-San Pierre School presented a very special program honoring these and other veterans. It was a very moving program as the students used video/audio effects, along with patriotic songs and readings, to honor the veterans in attendance. Near the end of the program, the students went into the audience and shook each veteran's hand in appreciation for service to our country.

It was a very moving program that reminded us of the sacrifices that have been made, and are being made, in the hope that someday we will live in peace.

### Obuth mage 48 M

Starke County Historical Society was featured on Channel 34 Open Studio program again this year. Marvin Allen and Jim Shilling and demonstrated quests the importance of preserving old photographs. They showed several photographs by professional

photographers and how the details of these photos can give clues to the lives and activities of a certain time period. Often the year when the photograph was taken can be determined by the license plates on cars.

that information, can see that certain businesses in were existence that year. Marvin and Jim also highlighted the many activities of the Historical Society which are in progress each year.

Tips for Storing of important documents:

Store important

documents in a cool, dry place where there is minimal fluctuation in temperature and humidity. Generally avoid attics and basements.

- Letters and other documents are best stored unfolded and flat. Items too large to store flat are better stored rolled than folded.
- Use acid-free sleeves, envelopes, storage boxes, or albums. Polyester or polypropylene sleeves and pages are also acceptable.
- Never put an adhesive on a document or paper that you wish to keep permanently. Use photo corners, or polyester mounting strips or sleeves to mount items in albums.
- Remove paper clips and rubber bands, both of which can cause permanent damage to paper.
- Keep highly acidic paper such as newspapers and clippings from touching other paper items.
- If newspaper clippings are being kept for the content as distinct from keeping the original paper as an artifact, photocopy onto acid-free paper, which will last much longer than the original. Handle your important paper items by their edges and with clean hands or cotton gloves to avoid soiling the surface.

### Help tell the Story

Our membership is steadily growing each year. For the last two years our membership has been over 500 people. This year we are again fast approaching the 500 mark. Your dues and contributions are extremely important for the upkeep of the museum and programs of the Starke County Historical Society. Checks may be sent to the Starke County Historical Society, Inc., 401 South Main, Knox, Indiana 46534.

Share this newsletter with a friend or neighbor and help tell the story of preserving the history of Starke County.



### County Historian Retires

Melba Shilling, Starke County Historian for the past 12 years, has resigned that position. Marvin Allen has been nominated by the Starke County Historical Society to take Melba's place and has been appointed by the Indiana Historical Society. Each Indiana County Historian volunteer is appointed for three years and is a liaison between the Indiana Historical Society and the local county historical societies. Thank you, Melba, for a job well done.

#### MUSEUM VISITORS

Each year hundreds of people visit the museum. Some of our visitors are classes of school children from OD, Knox and NJ-SP. It is always a great experience for our tour guides to watch the expressions on the faces of our young visitors as they learn about the life styles of our forefathers. The classes are shown old maps of the county and are given demonstrations about the way people lived and worked years ago. Some of the classes go on a tour to the top of the Courthouse, like Mrs. Claxton's 3<sup>rd</sup> grade NJ-SP class (shown below).



#### Volunteers

Each week, volunteers are helping at the Museum – cleaning, sorting items, scanning old photos and documents, indexing items and greeting visitors. Below, June Golding is entering on a spreadsheet hundreds of dates, names, places and subjects into the computer. This gives a database so items can later be sorted and viewed.



This year we have had more than one hundred volunteers give of their time helping to show and tell the history of Starke county, run and maintain the

# **Starke County Historical Society, Inc.**

401 S. Main Knox, Indiana 46534 574-772-5393

museum and depot and governing the Starke County Historical Society. Also helping financially to support the Society and the Museum are the Knox Community Schools, the County Commissioners and Council, the City of Knox, and over 500 individuals who pay their dues each year. If you would like to help around the museum, please call Jim Shilling at 772-43ll.

#### MUSEUM WEB SITE:

www.in-

<u>map.net/counties/STARKE/governmen</u> <u>t/historical\_society.htm</u>

This is part of the Starke County Government

web site. Our second web site shows many of the



photos and history of Starke County. It is supported by the Henry F. Schricker Starke County Public Library. www.scpl.lib.in.us/historical/

#### **Round Lake Church Celebrates**

In August the congregation of the Round Lake Church celebrated the 120 years of their building with an ice cream social. Dozens of members and neighbors gathered for the festive occasion. This church was built in 1885, but a log church preceded this building and was located across the road in the cemetery.

It was 20 x 30 feet in length. It was constructed of hewn logs and chinked, but not plastered. The foundation was of large stones which were found in the immediate area. The church was lighted by kerosene lamps and heated by a wood stove on the east end of the building with a stove pipe connection from the stove to the chimney on the west side of the building.

According to records, this was probably the first church building erected in Starke County.

In our modern age with electricity and gas-powered equipment, we forget the

difficulties our forefathers faced in constructing a building. They cut the trees with crosscut saws, not chain saws. They maneuvered the logs by hand, not with loaders or cranes. And they fit the logs together by hand hewing, not table saws. Pioneers

were dedicated!

### Mark Your Calendars

July 2, 2006 Ice Cream Social at the Museum

November 16, 2006 Starke County Historical Society Annual Meeting at the Knox High School

December 3, 2006 Christmas Open House at the Museum

This newsletter has been sponsored by:

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