# Starke County Historical Society

# THE PRIDE OF STARKE COUNTY

Winter 2008 Newsletter

# More on the MAP grant



A study grant was awarded, a little over a year go, to the Starke County Historical Society to help in developing guidelines and standards for collections of materials

at the museum. This program is called Museum Assessment Program (MAP) and is made possible by the **American** Association of Museums (AAM). AAM is the only organization representing the nation's entire museum community and is dedicated to promoting excellence within the museum field for more than

100 years. With 17,000+ museums in the United States, we feel fortunate to have been awarded this grant.

For several months, our Society has been using a self-study guidebook. In January of this year, Sara Feldbauer from the Sauder Village, a large historical village and museum in Northwesten Ohio, visited the Starke County Museum. She is a specialist in museum collections and works with AAM as a "surveyor" for this 3-year Museum Collections Assessment Program.

On her three-day stay in Starke County, Ms. Feldbauer studied the Starke County Museum's collection policies and the care of the thousands of photographs and objects in the museum. She will be compiling a report of her findings and submitting it to AAM and to the Starke County Historical Society Board of Directors. With these findings, the Board of Directors can then further implement steps in better handling the Museum's collections in the future.

Giving us an example of collections management, Ms. Feldbauer asked during her visit, "Do you want this quilt to last 50 years, or do you want it to last 550 years?" She reminded us that we have to think long-term in the preservation of our collections of Starke County History.

#### **Mark Your Calendars**

July 6, 2008

Ice Cream Social at the Museum November 20, 2008

Starke County Historical Society Annual Meeting at the Knox High School

**December 7, 2008** 

**Christmas Open House at the Museum** 

various design, operable diesel switch engines and an Orton Locomotive crane comprise the bulk of the museum's collection.

All the work of building the Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum has been and is being done through the efforts of the museum's own membership. The land, track materials, buildings, freight cars and locomotives have all been made possible through the generosity of many local and non-local individuals, companies, and

corporations.

# **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 that we can copy or other items of local historical interest that you would like to donate to the museum, call 772-5393.

# **Annual Meeting**

The program for the Starke County Historical Society's annual meeting in November was on Railroading in Starke County. Marvin Allen treated the one hundred and ten people attending to a presentation titled "150 years of

Railroading in Starke County". They were taken on a virtual tour of the nine railroads in the county. Many people recognized the sites, as more than 100 photographs were shown.



Joe Kingsbury from the Hoosier Valley Railroad in North Judson gave a history of how that Museum has developed in the nearly 20 years that it has existed. In 1988, the C&O engine #2789 was relocated to North Judson, Indiana, and resides today at the Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum. Since the spring of 1988, and with just the engine #2789 on the end of a stub track, the concept of building a working railroad museum was becoming a reality.

Track and switches have been re-laid on the abandoned right-of-way of the Erie Railroad through North Judson. A 60' x 100' donated building was relocated and reassembled in 1994-95 and now serves as the museum's backshop, where repair and restoration work continues on the C&O #2789.

The museum has over 30 pieces of rolling stock in its collection. Freight cars of the various types, cabooses of

#### **LaPorte Hospital Retirees**

are just one of the many groups that have toured

Starke County.
Here they pose in front of the restored Nickel



Plate Depot on the north edge of Knox, where they viewed the video about Starke County. Their day in Starke County also included visiting the Starke County Museum, a caravan tour of Knox, and dinner at a local restaurant.

Starke County Historical Web Sites Updated If you haven't been on our Starke County web sites in the past couple of days, you need to check out the latest updates. Marvin Allen has been putting in extra hours perfecting these sites, and it shows. He has updated the Library/Historical Society web site and added several more historical accounts about Starke County. There are many more photographs, a video, some recordings and newly found histories of Starke County.

#### http://www.scpl.lib.in.us/historical/ http://www.starkehistory.com

The second site is a new home page for the Starke County Historical Society. We have our own domain name now, **Starke History**. It lists a few of the interesting items in the museum, plus photos and activities of the Society. Check out these newly updated sites. You will be amazed how easy it is to "point and click".

# Membership

In 2007 our membership was 651 members from all across the United That's almost 100 more States. than last year. We have members in 20 states. Can we raise our membership to 1000 in the next few years? When you have finished with this newsletter, perhaps vou can share it with who might be someone else interested in Starke County history. Encourage a friend to become a member.

**Starke County Historical Society dues:** 

Individual ......\$ 10.00 Husband & Wife.....\$ 15.00

Board members: Marvin Allen, Mary Ann Awald, Peg Brettin, Alice Dolezal, Wayne Emigh, Jim Hardesty, Ed Hasnerl, Joe Kingsbury, Helen McCarty, Marvin McLaughlin, Betty Osterreicher, Eli Roscka, Alan Selge, Ann Shearin, Jim Shilling, Ruby Torok, Clarabelle Troike and Bob Yakimicki...

Presentations - We have made many presentations in and out of the county during the past year. Marvin and Kathy Allen presented a slide show of the historic one-room schools of Starke County in September for the Henry F, Schricker Public Library and again in October for the Genealogy Society. At one

time Starke County had 62 of these one-room schools.



A few of the programs that

we have presented for people and organizations include: Knox School Board, Extension Homemakers, Knox High School Seniors, Knox Class of 1957, JESSE program, Gleaners, and the Lions. If your group would like a program for your meeting, either at the museum or your regular meeting location, let us know. We can do programs of 8 minutes or 80 minutes.

#### Upgrades of the Museum

Over the years, maintenance continually needs to be done to any building and the Museum is no exception. Built in 1915 by the Schrickers, the Museum must be upgraded occasionally.



During the past few years, the maintenance has included items like upgrading the electric wiring, the plumbing, carpet and painting.

This last fall, Stuart Thompson, Terry Thompson and Steve Earnest repaired some of the brick and stonework on the Museum. Ed Reiss worked on a new sidewalk in the back of the Museum and is scheduled to do some new concrete work in the front of the Museum.

Thanks also to the dozens and dozens of other volunteers who have helped this past year, including the board members, exhibitors at the Ice Cream Social and the Christmas open house. Almost 100 volunteers help the Society each year. We are especially indebted to those who keep the Museum open Tuesday through Friday, 12 – 4, Ann Shearin, Peg Brettin, June Golding, Kiyo Ikeda, and Glendon Wilke.

Other volunteers are tour guides for the groups of students (over 300) who come to the Museum and Depot each year. They include Kiyo Ikeda, June Golding, Betty Osterreicher, Ann Shearin, Marvin and Kathy Allen, Virginia Wireman-Duncan, Eli Roscka, Dan Roscka, Jim Hardesty, Wayne Emigh, Carol Blastic, Robyn Griffith, Beverly Feddeler, Joe & Ursula Smrt, Elizabeth Darda, Duane Snyder, Pat Atkinson, Mariann Gappa and Jim Shilling.

Thanks - The Ober Arbor Gleaners have met at the Museum several times. We provided tours of the Museum and historic programs. In October, the Gleaners donated three new tables to the Museum. Thank you, Gleaners for this generous gift.

While we are giving thanks, we thank the County Commissioners, the County Council, Knox Community Schools and the City of Knox for their financial support of the Historical Society over the years. We also thank all of our members, not only for supporting the Society with their dues and volunteering, but also their generous contributions each year. We need these funds for the maintenance of the Museum, paying the utilities and developing programs. Again, thanks for your support. We really appreciate it.

#### The Ice Cream Social is

always enjoyed by all. It has been held on the first Sunday in July from 1-3 pm, for years so mark your calendars for this year - July 6, 2008 1 - 3.

This past year, 21 friends of the Museum showed their interesting exhibits. There were arrowhead collections, antique autos, trucks and tractors. We even had a fire engine.



Ruth Kado
with her
1880's dress
is often at
the Museum
entrance
greeting
people, and

Kathy Jarrell provides beautiful background music on her dulcimer. Wayne and Joann Emigh keep very busy dishing ice cream to an estimated 300 people.

If **you** have a unique collection and would like to exhibit at next year's Ice Cream Social, call Jim Shilling at 772-4311.

Pictured above are Marge Schuster, Lyn Allen & Tom Allen looking at one of the exhibits.

# **Christmas time - 2007**

Fifty guests gathered together to sing Christmas

carols and sip hot cider with homemade cookies on the first Sunday in December. Ed Hasnerl,



Marilyn McCarty, Doris Michael, Diana Riddle, Sally Povilaitis, Frances Vohlman, Anita Goodan Soltis, Penny Willing and Kathy Allen led those gathered in familiar carols.

Peg and Tim Brettin's Christmas coffee mug collection was on display for the season.

**Videos** - During 2007, we have made several videos for the Museum. One of these is a small 8-minute video that is used at the Nickel Plate Depot visitor's center. It shows some of the moving and restoration of the Depot and how the Railroads have played an important part

in the development of Starke County. Another video made was of the Memorial Day Services at the Courthouse. This photo shows Joe Gurrado and Bob Wolfe raising the American flag to half-mast.



Remember, if your ancestors moved to Starke County in the 1800's or if you just came here a week ago, you are a part of Starke County History. Anything happening today is history tomorrow. If you have historic photos of family or scenes and events in Starke County that we can copy and put into our collection, call Marvin Allen at 772-5936.

Starke County Railroad exhibit in the Starke County Library has been a great hit. On top of the showcase is a CD player. Pushing the play button, one will hear a brief history of the railroads of Starke County over the last 160 years.

#### "Mom" Schricker

A biography of Governor Schricker would not be complete without a word about his wife of more than 50



Maude (Brown) Schricker. years, Historians have credited much of Governor Schricker's political success to Maude Schricker's public appeal. She radiated a kindness and gracious friendliness that was said to force the governor's bitterest enemies to speak only good things about her. She was known as 'Mom" Schricker throughout the state, possessing womanly qualities that made her an invaluable asset to Governor Schricker throughout his long political career.

But there was more to Maude than her gracious public image would have suggested. At the age of 18, having already taught at a one room country school in Jackson Township, she moved west to North Dakota to homestead 160 acres. There she lived alone in a pioneer cabin, while teaching school and fulfilling her 3-year residency requirement to obtain a deed to the land. Her companions were her pony, Brownie, her dog, Dewey, and her Stevens rifle. Many years later the sale of this land would put her children through college.

Young Henry Schricker never forgot the girl he saw taking her cow out to pasture at the edge of Knox as he walked the railroad tracks to his job at the county clerk's office. During the summer of 1914, Henry visited Maude in North Dakota and convinced her to move back to Knox. On October 21, 1914, they were united in marriage and honeymooned 3 days in Indianapolis.

**Some years** ago the North Judson - Wayne Township Public Library obtained

a grant to index obituaries in local newspapers going back to 1897. Joyce Sheets volunteered to input the first 90 years or so into the database, and the library has kept the database current since that time.



Early last year Sandi Kuehl at the library provided County Historian Marvin Allen with individual files which he merged together and put in a format usable on any computer, including the Internet.

Many thanks to North Judson Library Director, Jane Ellen Felchuk, for allowing the Starke County Historical Society to partner with the Starke County Genealogical Society and provide printed copies to local libraries and societies, including the Pulaski County Public Library in Winamac.

A limited version of the obituary file is now available on both the North Judson Library's web site at <a href="http://www.njwt.lib.in.us/">http://www.njwt.lib.in.us/</a> and our Historic Photo website at <a href="http://www.scpl.lib.in.us/historical/">http://www.scpl.lib.in.us/historical/</a>

#### **Indiana Memory**



This past year the Starke County Historical Society, in collaboration with the Starke County Public Library, has been participating in a "pilot" program called Indiana Memory. We were one of three organizations chosen statewide to participate in this new Indiana State Library initiative.

The idea is to create an Indiana Digital Library of historic photos and documents that can be accessed and shared over the Internet with everyone. What makes this project unique is that local organizations will be uploading and sharing their collections, in addition to collections housed at the State Library. The Internet makes this possible.

Marvin Allen prepared digital photos of Bass Lake for this collection. Kathy Allen added the metadata (catalog and indexing data) for each photo. It is important to make sure the metadata for each photo will make it accessible to people searching for particular subjects or key words in the midst of millions of digital photos world-wide.

The collections will soon be available to the public. Local Indiana public libraries are now able to apply for a federally funded (LSTA) grant to join the project and share their collections. Local historical societies may also participate by partnering with their public library.

Howmet Castings in LaPorte, a division of Alcoa, has again provided monetary funds to the Historical Society this year. This was made possible because of the extensive work by Janet Lewis and Wanda Patrick, who indexed the Democrat Hit Parades of 1959-66.

WKVI Starke County Bus Tour on November 1, 2007 was a great experience to see some of the history, industry, recreation and unique features of the county. Some of the "tourists" are pictured below.



Ed Hasnerl, Marvin Allen and Jim Shilling showed videos and highlighted the historic features of Starke County as the tour bus traveled.

Stops on the way were the Knox Middle School, Nickel Plate Depot, Jensen's Munitions Museum, Henslers Nursery, Norton Packaging, LaSalle Landing site, the historic Jordan School, Lena Park, Kerstings, and the Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum.

Johnny Holiday Some of you older folks may remember the movie Johnny Holiday released in 1949. It starred William Bendix as Sgt. Walker and Allen Martin Jr. as Johnny Holiday, the young street tough sent to a reform farm. Johnny is torn between friends from his past and those who are



trying to help him change his life. Governor

Henry F. Schricker is also in the

film and plays himself. As Governor, he is inspecting the Indiana State Reformatory and speaks to the boys during a military presentation. The movie is available at the Public Library in Knox, or you may watch a short clip of the Governor's address to the boys when you visit the Museum.

Starke County Historical Society, Inc. 401 S. Main Knox, Indiana 46534 574-772-5393



# **Glass Plate Negatives**

Many black and white photographs made from 1880 and into the 1940's were made from glass plate negatives. These followed the tin-type and other one-of-a-kind photographs of the nineteenth century. Glass plate negatives had an emulsion side of a soft layer of gelatin in which a metallic silver image was suspended. While more inherently stable than modern color negatives, black and white negatives still glass deteriorate over the years. Unprocessed chemicals in the emulsion, contamination from storage materials. dust. moisture, extreme fluctuations of temperature and relative humidity, mold, mildew and rough handling will damage all photographic materials. especially fragile glass plates.

These images from times past should be carefully preserved. An article on the care of these plates can be found on the U.S. National Archives site at — <a href="http://archives.gov/preservation/storage/glass-plate-negatives.html">http://archives.gov/preservation/storage/glass-plate-negatives.html</a>

If you have glass negatives, you might want us to look at them to see if any are of historic value to the Starke County Historical Society. We can copy glass negative plates as well as other negatives and positives and store them in our computer. From there, we can reproduce new photographs.

Anonymous Donors have created a Starke County Historical Society Endowment Fund through the Starke County Community Foundation. The earnings from this Endowment Fund benefit the Museum. You can contribute to this fund by calling the

Starke County Community Foundation at 574-772-3665.



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# Courthouse & Road Rally

On May 5th, we will be hosting 50 people who are on a Road Rally around north-central Indiana. They will be visiting Starke County and touring the



Courthouse. We need your help. If you can climb the 155 steps to the top, you can be a Courthouse Tour Guide. Call Jim Shilling, 772-4311, if interested.

The Courthouse is the oldest, tallest and most respected building in Starke County. It is on the National Register of Historic Places. For years the Starke County Historical Society has been conducting tours of the Courthouse. Ours may be the only Courthouse that allows tours to the top to see the clock and hear the 1400-pound bell toll. We must give credit to the Commissioners back in 1897 for building such a beautiful structure and to the County Commissioners in the 1990's for refurbishing the tower for public access.