

Starke County Historical Society

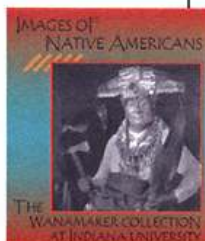
THE PRIDE OF STARKE COUNTY

Winter 2009

Newsletter

Wanamaker Collection

is coming to Starke County. The Starke County Historical Society has made arrangements with the Mathers Museum of World Cultures at Indiana University to display its traveling photo exhibit in the Starke County Public Library in Knox, March 18th to April 16th 2009.



The title of this exhibit is "Images of Native Americans: The Wanamaker Collection at Indiana University". The exhibit is sponsored by the Moveable Feast of the Arts Program at IUB. Created through a generous gift from the Lilly Endowment Inc., the Moveable Feast of the Arts Program was initiated by the IU Office of the President in 2004 with administrative and financial oversight provided by the Office of the Vice Provost for Research. The program's mission is to showcase and extend IU's cultural resources to Hoosier communities and IU campuses across the state. We are extremely fortunate to have this renowned exhibit come to our rural area.

This exhibit represents some of the photographic themes of Joseph K. Dixon, who spent 15 years visually chronicling the Native peoples of the American West during the early decades of the last century. Dixon, who was funded in his many expeditions by John and Rodman Wanamaker of Wanamaker Department Stores, initially viewed Native American tribes as a "vanishing culture," and his efforts to preserve images of their way of life on film resulted in a vast collection of photos depicting more than 150 tribes. The images not only depict the daily life of the different tribes, but show portraits, landscapes and staged presentations.

The exhibit contains 30 - 16" x 20" placards and is a representation of the 8000 images that were taken by Dixon. Many of these images can be seen on line at:

<http://mathers.indiana.edu/wanamaker/>

Membership

In 2008 our membership was **701** members from all across the United States. That's 50 more than the year before. 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 you can share it with someone else who might be interested in Starke County history. Encourage a friend to become a member.

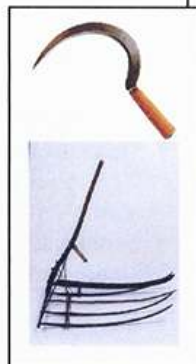
Starke County Historical Society dues:

Individual\$ 10.00

Husband & Wife.....\$ 15.00

Videos

- During 2008, we have made several videos for the Museum. One of these is a 3-minute video that is used at the Museum to explain how agricultural tools like the sickle and the scythe have contributed to the production of foods and fiber.



The Museum has had a sickle on display for years, but recently, Jerry Wilson donated a cradle scythe to the Museum. The video highlights the use of the two tools and then brings the visitor up to date by showing the reaper, the binder, the thrashing machine, and the modern day combine.

Two other videos were made of the honoring of the last Civil War Veteran, William Garner, and the Dedication of the Washington Township (Osborn) Cemetery. Those activities are described elsewhere in this newsletter.

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.

Happy Birthday !

The Starke County Historical Society is 35 years old this year. In 1974, Bruce Van Gilder and several other local citizens gathered together to form the Society. Bruce had been active in the Marshall County Historical Society while living in Plymouth, and felt strongly that there should be a Society in Starke County to preserve the county's history. Officers elected at that first meeting in June of 1974 were Bruce Van Gilder, President, Tom Bell, Vice President, Marilyn Swanson, Second Vice President, Stella Bonner, Secretary, and Tom Talmage, Treasurer. Other board members included Jennie Goll, Mary Craigmile, Bob Robertson, Lily Golding, and Helen McCarty.

By September of that year, the charter members of the Society (names on our website) had grown to over 244 members.

The new Society had a few displays at 4 N. Main Street in Knox, then moved to Dean Wells' building on Shield Street. In 1977, the Society purchased the former home of Henry and Maude Schricker to be used as an office and Museum. The Main St. and Schricker Dr. sign was installed in 1979.

In reality, Bruce Van Gilder was not the first president of the Starke County Historical Society. The January 16, 1918 issue of the Starke County Democrat has an article about the formation of the Starke County Historical Society in that year. Charles Laramore, a resident of the county since 1851, was elected president, and James Fletcher, secretary. Newspaper Editors John L. Moorman and Henry F. Schricker prepared the by-laws. The purpose of the new Society was very similar to our present-day goals, but we don't know what became of this noble cause. If anyone is doing research in the old issues of newspapers and finds information about the "first" Society, let us know.



The dedication of an Indiana Cemetery Heritage Sign was held on May 10, 2008 at 2:00 P.M. at the Washington Township Cemetery, also known as the Osborn Cemetery. The guest speaker was Ed Hasnerl.



This pioneer burial ground is located three quarters of a mile west of the Marshall County line on 50 N, south of Eagle Lake, and dates back to 1845. The Cemetery Heritage Sign program is sponsored by the Indiana Historical Bureau and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. This Cemetery Heritage initiative has three purposes: to reinforce the importance of cemeteries as a resource for the interpretation of Indiana's history; to bring attention to the existence of Indiana's remaining cemeteries with a visual reminder of their importance; to assist the many individuals and groups working to preserve and maintain Indiana's cemeteries through a heightened awareness of their existence and needs.

Upgrades at 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.

Ed Reiss poured a new sidewalk in front of the Museum and replaced the two dangerous steps with new sidewalk this year, which was made possible with a grant from the Starke County Community Foundation.



Starke County Historical Web Sites Updated

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

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

The second site 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".

Gateway video.

On the www.starkehistory.com site, Marvin has installed a "Featured Video" section. Click on it and you will see the 8-minute video that is shown to visitors at the Starke County Visitors Center. It tells a little about Starke County history and the restoration of the Knox Nickel Plate Depot and the watchman's tower. Melba Shilling and Ed Hasnerl narrate.

Presentations - We have made many presentations in and out of the county during the past year. Marvin Allen presented a slide show of the historic one-room schools of Starke County recently for the Starke County Genealogical Society. At one time Starke County had 62 of these one-room schools.

Other Programs have been presented to: Knox School Board, Knox High School Seniors, 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.

Thanks to the dozens and dozens of volunteers who have helped this past year, including the board members, exhibitors at the Ice Cream Social and those who helped at 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.

Thanks - The Ober Arbor Gleaners have met at the Museum several times. We provided tours of the Museum and historic programs. Thank you, Gleaners for your generous gifts.

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 has become a "destination" each summer. It is held on the first Sunday in July from 1 - 3 pm, so mark your calendars for this year - **July 5, 2009 1 - 3.**



This past year, 21 friends of the Museum showed their interesting exhibits. There were arrowhead collections, antique autos, trucks and tractors. There was even a Studebaker buggy. Kathy Jarrell provides beautiful background music on her dulcimer. Wayne and Joann Emigh keep very busy dishing ice cream to an estimated 300-350 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.

Christmas time - 2008



Fifty guests gathered together at the Museum to sing Christmas carols and sip hot cider with homemade cookies on the first Sunday in December. Doris Michael, Kathy Allen, Marilyn McCarty, Ed Hasnerl, and Sally Povilaitis led those attending in singing familiar carols.

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 may copy and put into our collection, call 772-5393 and leave a message.

Historic Photo website at
<http://www.scpl.lib.in.us/historical/>

Tours

In May, Knox Troop 13, Boy Scouts of America, along with their advisors, cleaned the yard and bushes around the Starke County Historical Museum as a community project. Afterwards, the boys enjoyed a short tour of the Museum, located in the former home of Governor Henry F. Schricker, who was one of the founders of Boy Scout Troop 13.

The Society was also the host for a series of other programs and tours this past year. On April 12th, the Boy Scouts of Troop 13 were given an evening tour of the Starke County Courthouse. They not only saw the Courtroom and the clock and bell areas, but were shown the historical structural features of this 111-year-old building.

Also on April 12th, the Home-Schooled Students of Knox were guests of the Historical Society. They enjoyed a tour of the Gateway area with its Depot and Caboose; the Courthouse tower and the Historical Society's Museum.

The Starke County Library held one of its summer reading programs in the Museum.



On April 15th, 5 classes of the North Judson/San Pierre 3rd grade toured the Courthouse, Starke Memorial Hospital, the Knox Post Office and the Starke County Museum. At the Museum, they viewed short historic videos, watched the pioneer woodworker as he applied his craft and saw a presentation of the development of Starke County.

The Chicago Cubs, known originally as the White Stockings and later the Colts, have a long history in the Chicago and surrounding area. Locally, there are Cub fans and there are extreme Cub fans. Glendon Wilke is probably somewhere in between, but she has been a collector of Cub memorabilia for years. Some of her extensive collection was on display as a temporary exhibit at the Starke County Historical Society Museum. One of the interesting items in this exhibit was a 1929 panoramic photo of the Cubs in Wrigley Field by the Kaufmann & Fabry Company. Even if you are not a Cub fan, this exhibit was a unique display of special baseball stickers, pins, photos and other memorabilia that was of interest to many people.



Starke County has been home to many authors over the years. The Starke County Museum is fortunate to have a collection of their published works, all having been donated to the Museum. A new exhibit featured in the Museum is a showcase of some of these works. Locals may recognize the names of authors Martha Tilson Amos, Pat Atkinson, Mary Jack Stevens McCaslin, Alice Prettyman Shilling, Al Jonas, and Sylva Reiss Jonas. One of the most recent books donated to the Museum is *Quality of Life* by Karen Bachert, a native of North Judson and a motivational speaker, now living in South Bend. You can view the exhibit at the Starke County Museum. Some of these books can also be read online at http://www.scpl.lib.in.us/historical/scpl_files/Page470.htm



Craig Phipps, Knox High School Band Director, along with Andy Shearin, President of the Knox Band Boosters, and Carole Surfus (in a new Knox High School



Band Uniform), presented one of the retired Knox Band uniforms to the Starke County Historical Society at the annual meeting in November. The retired uniforms have been used by more than 700 students during the years. The uniform and two caps will become another token of history and will be added to the display of band uniforms in the Historical Society's Museum.

If you are not on our e-mail list (to receive historic tidbits of Starke County History), and would like to be, call Jim Shilling at 772-4311. All e-mails are sent Bcc (blind copy) so that your e-mail address is not shown to others.

Brenda Krom,

Knox, designed and made an eight - inch Christmas ornament for the Indiana State Museum in Indianapolis. The



State Museum asked an artist from each of the 92 counties in Indiana to create a Christmas Tree ornament for their 25-foot tree which stands in the Great Hall. The theme for the ornaments was to be transportation. Even though railroads played an important part of Starke County's development, Brenda chose to highlight the Kankakee and Yellowstone Rivers, as well as the Yellowstone Trail and the Lincoln Highway. The three-dimensional ornament is made from native woods of Starke County – oak for the main body, cottonwood for the Yellowstone Trail and Walnut for the Lincoln Highway. The rivers are blue tinted clear acrylic, penetrating the depth of the ornament.

William Wallace Garner

was recognized as Starke County's Last Civil War Veteran in a special program that was held September 20, 2008 at the Crown Hill Cemetery in Knox. The Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, David D. Porter Camp, conducted the ceremony and was assisted by Ed Hasnerl and Marvin Allen.

Mr. Garner, who was born in 1847, attended grammar school in Knox and enlisted at the age of 17 in Company D 29th Regiment



Indiana Volunteer Infantry. This unit was engaged mainly in Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee.

After the war, Mr. Garner returned to Knox, tried his hand at operating a general store known as the Bee Hive and then established The Enterprise, a forerunner to the Starke County Republican newspaper. Upon selling the newspaper, he joined the railroad and worked in their mail department in Chicago for many years. Later in life Mr. Garner moved back to Knox and took up residence at the Home Hotel.

Each Veterans Day, Mr. Garner would march down to Crown Hill Cemetery and say a few words. Soon it became expected, and local residents

looked forward to his presence. Mr. Garner made his last march July 4, 1940 and passed away just 3 months later at nearly 93 years of age. Uncle Billy, as he was known to everyone, is buried in the old section at Crown Hill with many of his fellow Civil War Veterans.

Mark Your Calendars

July 5, 2009

Ice Cream Social at the Museum

November 19, 2009

Starke County Historical Society Annual Meeting

December 6, 2009

Christmas Open House at the Museum

Annual Meeting

The Huckleberry Queen was the main attraction at the Starke County Historical Society's 2008 annual meeting, held on November 20 at the Knox High School Cafeteria. Following a carry-in meal and a short business meeting, the Huckleberry Queen, portrayed by Anna Liechty of Plymouth, presented a program about the legendary ruler of the huckleberry marshes around the late 1800's in the Koontz Lake area.

Shortly after the Civil War, in the 1870's, it was reported that as many as 5000 people would come to the Koontz Lake area during the huckleberry season to pick berries. The huckleberry marsh was about 2000 acres in size and extended into the counties of Starke, St. Joseph and Marshall.

The stories and legends of the Huckleberry Queen can be viewed on our web-site:

http://www.scpl.lib.in.us/historical/scpl_files/Page470.htm - then scroll down and click on "The Huckleberry Queen".



Eagle Creek School

The Eagle Creek School, located in Washington Township at the corner of 25 N and 700 E, held many memories



for former students. In 2007 the building, which had been used as a Greek Orthodox Church, was destroyed by fire. Last summer, the large 4-foot wide stone showing the names of the trustee, advisory board and contractors, dated 1913, was removed from the ruins of the burned building by Ken Kostros and Jim Shilling, and put into Museum storage.

This newsletter has been sponsored by:

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574-772-5393

Starke County Historical Society Board members: Marvin Allen, Mary Ann Awald, Peg Brettin, Marvin McLaughlin, Alice Dolezal, Wayne Emigh, Jim Hardesty, Ed Hasnerl, Joe Kingsbury, Helen McCarty, Betty Osterreicher, Eli Roscka, Alan Selge, Jim Shilling, Donna Toth, Paul Sellers, and Clarabelle Troike.