## Starke County Historical Society THE PRIDE OF STARKE COUNTY

February 2013 Newsletter

#### **Courthouse Tours**

During Knox Harvest Days, held the last weekend in August, the Historical Society conducted tours of the century-old Starke County Courthouse. Students from the county schools were trained as tour guides. What a wonderful group we had this year! They were Hanna Allender, Emma Allender, Nicole Knutel, Jordan Bulick, and Katlynn Surfus.



We also offer tours of the Courthouse at other times of the year. If you have a group that would like a tour of the Courthouse, call Debbie at 574-772-0896 or Ron at 574-772-2580.

Also available is a 32-minute video about features of the Courthouse which

you have not seen before. It is a personal Tour of the Courthouse, narrated by Ed Hasnerl. If you are interested in



viewing or purchasing this video, call Jim Shilling at 574-772-4311.

#### Koontz Lake Mill

If you have travelled to Walkerton or South Bend by the way of Koontz Lake on Indiana 23, you will know that the State Highway has rebuilt the curves around the dam area of the lake. In doing so, they did extensive archaeological work to find any remains of the Koontz Lake Mills that were built on that site.

The first mill that Mr. Koontz built was a saw mill. After that was destroyed by fire, he built a stone ground grist mill. Later he changed the mill to a steel roller mill. We were hoping that some of the old grist stones could be found on the site (none were found). A complete report from their investigations may be downloaded from the IPFW Archaeological Survey web site (http://new.ipfw.edu/centers/arch aeology/reports.html). It shows some photos of the articles they found, including thousands of nails and screws, plus other interesting items. The report also gives a detailed history of the compiled from mill, many sources.



Second Koontz Mill 1858

### **Endangered Heritage Exhibit**

Endangered Heritage, collections-care advocacy exhibit Indiana Historical Society, was open at the Henry F. Schricker Library in Knox last March and in the North Judson/Wayne Township Library in April. The purpose of the exhibit was to educate local communities and potential funders about the need for good collections stewardship and to

encourage contributions for collections care. It also gave examples of the dangers to objects in collections.

We added a photograph from our collection. It was an old Daguerreotype. That was a photo first used in process photographic industry - around 1827. The process uses a silver clad copper sheet for the positive image. Like Tin **Types** developed later, it was a one-ofa-kind photograph. There were no negatives. A spacer was used over the copper, and then a protective glass was placed on top to protect the image. The edges were then sealed with tape to keep air from tarnishing the silver plate. Some glass covers were made from "weeping glass". This produced a milky, substance oozing from antique glass, causing damage to the photograph. In the example below, the glass cover (left) has



been removed and a new glass cover has been installed and sealed. This photograph shown is more than 150 years old. To help preserve photographs, they should not be placed in wet basements, garages or attics, and should be kept from direct sunlight.

Annual Meeting this year was held in the Knox High School Cafeteria with approximately 100 people enjoying a carry-in dinner. During the business meeting, reports from the treasurer, nominating committee and president were given.

David Altman presented a historical narrative of the settlement of the Indiana Territory, highlighting the life of Tecumseh and his conflicts with the advancing Americans. The story of Tecumseh, his brother the Prophet, William Henry Harrison, and others was told as if by the frontiersman, Simon

Kenton, as he lived it. Mr. Altman's narrative gave insight and details of our history that are not usually found in history books. David Altman began this narrative 17 years ago while teaching fourth grade. Since



then, he has traveled throughout Indiana giving his unique view of history to schools and civic organizations.

Mr. Altman is scheduled to be at the Starke County Public Library in Knox on February 14<sup>th</sup> to tell of historical insights of the Grand Kankakee Marsh. Call the Library at 574-772-7323 for details of this and other programs.

#### 4-H Fair



Thanks to Peg and Tim Brettin, the Society's historical photos and quilts were a big hit in the Women's Building at the Starke County 4-H Fair last year.

When you go to the 4-H Fair this year, don't miss the FFA building on the north side of the fair grounds. Emily DuVall, FFA sponsor at North Judson, set up our exhibit of the 1937 AC threshing machine with a video of Dick Pettinato telling about it. The building includes historical agricultural exhibits as well as the Starke County Purdue Ag Alumni exhibit.



**Membership** 

purpose of the Starke County Historical Society is to foster an interest in local history and the preservation of items of historical interest for future generations. We have members from all over the United States. If you are already a member in 2013, thank you! If you are not a member of the Starke County Historical Society, you may join today and help us tell the story of our county and its people. Membership in the Society is open to anyone wishing to further the mission of the Society.

Starke County Historical Society dues:

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

#### **Everglades of the North**

PBS video was shown at the Henry F. Schricker Public Library in Knox on the 16<sup>th</sup> of January. Then on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of January, Patty Wisniewski, Brian Kallies, Jeff Manes, and Tom Desch, producers of the film, and

Jim Shilling were invited to talk about the Grand Kankakee Marsh. They answered dozens of questions about the video and the marsh for the 60 members of the public in attendance. As Patti Wisniewski and some of the others mentioned they had never heard of the Marsh until they moved to our area. The Everglades of the North is a well thought out PBS publication that has been shown now on two PBS stations, Lakeshore and WNIT in South Bend. One of the producers. Brian Kallies, said they are now offering it to the rest of the Indiana PBS stations, and by this time next year, it should be on all of the national PBS stations. People living in this area from South Bend to Momence, III. were interviewed for the documentary, including our own Marvin Allen.



The Grand Kankakee Marsh (GKM) was one of the largest wetlands in North America. This million-acre marsh covered much of present day Northern Indiana, including much of Starke County, and was home to some of the highest concentrations of wildlife on the planet. If one wanted to travel from Indianapolis to Chicago, he would have to go via South Bend or Kankakee, Illinois to be able to get around the Marsh. For centuries the marsh gave and man took.

Everglades of the North explores the diverse ecology, unveils the astonishing history, and illustrates the controversial saga of the GKM.

It brings to life the story of how people have used and perceived the GKM from early Native Americans to modern day industrialists, while educating viewers about the vital role wetlands and prairies play in our ecosystem. You can buy this video for \$24.95 from Lakeshore Television at 219-756-5656.

#### Ice Cream Social

Svenja Chesna is shown spinning wool while listening to the dulcimer music of Kathy Jerrell on the porch of the Museum at last year's Ice Cream Social. The



Starke County Historical Society's event had more than 20 exhibitors with antique farm tractors, trucks, autos, arrowheads, wood carvings, musical instruments and some historic documents and guns dating from 1657. Plus, the Emighs served that delicious ice cream. If you have a collection of historic nature and want to exhibit it at next year's Ice Cream Social on July 7, 2013, call the museum at 772-5393 or Jim Shilling at 772-4311.



Photos by Alice Dolezal

#### The **Christmas Open House**

is always a fun time at the museum. Guests have a chance to view some of the exhibits. Ed Hasnerl always brings his wonderful group of song leaders, Doris Michael, Diana Riddle, and Marilyn McCarty. Everyone enjoys singing Christmas carols around Governor Schricker's piano. Ed's guests this year were the Show Stoppers, a vocal group from Knox High School. The group was lead by Chris Pickell and



accompanied by Char Geisler. Thanks to Board members for decorating and hosting the museum during the holiday season. Thanks also to Ron Vendl for being in charge of the Christmas Memorial Tree and to Wayne Emigh and Eli Roscka for helping to install it.

During the Christmas season, for a

\$1.00 donation, a ribbon in memory of a loved one is placed on the outside Memorial Christmas Tree, donated by Hensler Nursery. This year, more



than 438 names and ribbons were placed on the tree, a record number in recent years. Thanks to all who donated and also to Marge Bonham, June Golding, Alivia Jensen, and Terry Rosenburg who braved the cold to help Ron fasten the ribbons on the tree.



The Starke County Historical Society Endowment Fund in the Starke County Community Foundation has grown to over \$30,000. The fund distributes a percentage of the annual earnings back to the Society for the Museum operation. Thanks to all who continue to make financial gifts to this long-term fund.

**Tours** Every year the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classes from the Starke County schools come to the Museum for a tour. We have a little class first and teach them about the Grand Kankakee Marsh, some use of old tools and one room schools. Then we take them on a tour through the Most all of them Museum. remember Che Mah, the 2-headed calf, and the huge doll house. A couple came to the Museum recently so the husband could see for himself the things his wife remembered from her 3<sup>rd</sup> grade tour. He had not believed her about the smallest man in the world named Che Mah.



Mrs. Wallsmith's 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class with Ed Hasnerl as host.

#### Interesting Inquiries

Ed Hasnerl, County Historian, and Jim Shilling receive many inquiries from our websites. One was. "When was the Knox VOR installed?" "What is that?", you might ask. VOR stands for VHF omnidirectional radio (VOR), and is a type of short-range navigational system for aircraft, enabling aircraft to determine their position and stay on course by receiving radio signals. Developed in the US beginning in 1937 and deployed by 1946, VOR is the standard air navigational system in the world, used by both commercial and general aviation. There are

about 3000 VOR stations around the world, and right have one in Starke here County. Jim & Ed's research that found the Knox VOR was



established in 1958. It is that upside down cone west of County Road 300 on the North side of Indiana 8.

#### Starke County Historical Society Board of Directors for 2013:

Peg Brettin, Alice Dolezal, Marilyn Folkers, Ed Hasnerl, Don Henricks, Erl Henry, Van Janovic, Marvin McLaughlin, Debbie Mix, Eli Roscka, Alan Selge, Jim Shilling, Donna Toth, Paul Sellers, Dolores Surfus, Clarabelle Troike, Ron Vendl and Ken Whiles.



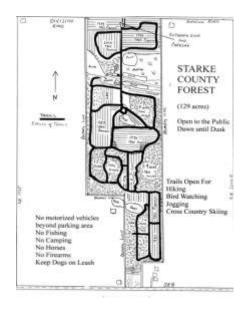
# Painting of the Museum was a big job that the Board wanted to do last summer. You will have to come by the Museum and see the fresh look.

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

the Society's websites: <a href="http://www.scpl.lib.in.us/historical/">http://www.scpl.lib.in.us/historical/</a> <a href="http://www.starkehistory.com">http://www.starkehistory.com</a>

The Starke County Forest

was established in 2011 for the County by Bruce Wakeland to set an example of environmentally sound management of woodlands and wetlands, while providing public access so that citizens can learn about and enjoy Income from forest nature. management operations on the property pays for the maintenance of the forest.



The property, 129 acres in Section 23 of Washington Township. Starke County. Indiana, includes 5 miles of walking trails giving access to approximately 22 acres of ponds 40 acres of and marshes, native woodlands, 62 acres of tree plantings of different ages, and 5 acres of open areas.

Public access is welcome for hiking, bird watching, and cross-country skiing dawn to dusk. Access is from a parking area at 10625 East Division Road. No motorized vehicles are allowed beyond the parking area, with the property accessed by walking trails.

Center School was the first consolidated school in Starke

County. It was located where the White Flyer factory is



now, west of Knox. At one time, Starke County had 62 one-room schools in the county, so the consolidation of Center Township was a mile-

stone in public education. The school burned down in 1942.

Center School Reunions have been held for years. The reunion in 2012 (70 years after the school burned) attracted graduates from the 1930s, as well as many who had attended Center School but graduated from Knox.

With dwindling attendance, it was decided that this would be the last reunion, and all records and photographs would be given to the Starke County Historical Society. As the last president of the Center School Reunion, Wayne Emigh made the presentation at the August Board meeting of the Society.

#### Mark Your Calendars

July 7, 2013

Ice Cream Social at the Museum

November 21, 2013

Starke County Historical Society Annual Meeting

**December 1, 2013** 

**Christmas Open House** 

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