
WHITE COUNTY HISTORIAN

Volume 20, Issue 1



"Preserving and
Promoting our History"

2014

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SECOND GRADE TEA PARTY
ROBINSON-STEWART HOUSE
APRIL 22-25

ROBINSON-STEWART HOUSE
PLANT SALE
MAY 3

ART SALE
FLORAL HALL
WHITE CO. FAIRGROUNDS
JULY 4

PIONEER DAYS FOR WHITE
COUNTY 5TH GRADERS
WITH THE RETIRED TEACHER'S
ASSOC.
MATSEL CABIN
OCTOBER

CORN DAYS
OCTOBER

FALL DINNER MEETING
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
NOVEMBER

MUSEUMS OPEN DURING
WHITE COUNTY CHRISTMAS
NOVEMBER

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

We have had an interesting year at the Society.

Some sickness, some injuries, but everyone has stepped up and picked up the load. We continue on and are looking forward to a great year in 2014.

We have not begun the repairs on our leaking roof at the L. Haas Store Museum, but that is because the weather has not cooperated. Our fund raising efforts continue as we strive to preserve the buildings and artifacts of White County for future generations.

On May 3rd we are having another plant sale at the Robinson-Stewart House museum. If you have perennials that need to be separated we will be glad to take them. Barbara Kearney and Lana Anselment are coordinating the event. Funds raised will be used to repair the fence damaged by the wind this winter.

In July, as part of the Lions Club Car Show, we will have another Art Sale. The art classes at Southeastern Illinois College are donating several original works, which will be auctioned on behalf of the Society. Dee Ann Maurer and Marge Fechtig are in charge of the show and sale. We had such success last year with our painted patio tables we are looking forward to another successful sale. We are so grateful to them and to the students who have given their time and talents.

On Monday, April 7, 2014 we had our annual spring dinner. We had a program and made a presentation of a Heritage House Award to the Robinson-Stewart House. This is Carmi's oldest home and one of our four museums. We were honored to have Miss Mary Jane Stewart (Cindy Conley) present to accept the award. We look forward to our Annual Fall meeting in November.

Suellen Smith, President ✍

NEWS FROM THE MARY SMITH FAY GENEALOGY LIBRARY

by: Librarian Diane Waggoner

PO Box 121, 203 North Church St., Carmi, IL
618-382-8425 email: w.c.h.s-genealogy@hotmail.com
11:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Tuesday - Friday

From The Mt Vernon Wochenblatt:

Fri. Sept. 19, 1879 - "Here is a warning to all travelers: The road to Evansville to Newburgh is beset by thieves and robbers. Do not travel alone and be extremely alert."

Fri. Dec. 27, 1878 - "Everything was not quite on Christmas Eve. A confrontation in front of Kahn's Saloon resembled a wild west shoot out. John Ratcliff and a newly (sic) arrived immigrant couldn't settle their differences peacefully - they reached for their guns - the long arm of the law reached for them - now they are both reaching through the bars of the local jail. "

According to the History of Posey County, Indiana the Wockenblatt (German for weekly) was the "first and only German paper to be published in Posey county. " The publisher, John C. Leffel "enjoys the distinction of having been the first publisher in Posey county install power presses and is the only one who has purchased a linotype machine. " - Leffel, John C.. History of Posey County, Indiana. p. 358. Chicago: Standard Publishing Company, 1913.

The paper began with the Oct. 23, 1875 issue and ceased publication in Oct. 1881. It was printed in German but contained some notices in English. - Library of Congress website, <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84037958/>

MOUNT VERNON Wochenblatt; Fri-
days; neutral; German; John C. Leffel, pub-
lisher; circulation.....768
Mount Vernon Wochenblatt; Fridays; neutral
in politics; John C. Leffel, publisher and proprietor;
circulation 768. The Wochenblatt is an eight-column,
four-page weekly, devoted especially to local interests
and advertising. Being the only German newspaper
published within 40 miles of this city, is consequently
the best medium for advertising. Subscription, \$1.50
per year.

Listing from : Pettengill's Newspaper Directory and Advertisers' Handbook for 1878:
Comprising: A complete list of the newspapers and other periodicals published in the United States and British America; Also the prominent European and Australian Newspapers. Western Section - Indiana, p. 115. New York: S. M. Pettengill & Co., Publishers.

RESEARCH FEES

If you would like us to do research for you (White County area only), please contact us.
Cost of research is \$15 per hour. Copies are 20 - 25¢ each. Shipping & handling is \$5.

Come and visit us and we will help you do your research at no cost to you, all you pay for is the cost of copies.

SPRING DINNER MEETING

by: Barbara Kearney

The annual spring dinner was held on April 7 at the First Christian Church. A group of about 85 White County residents and friends gathered Monday evening, April 7 at First Christian Church in Carmi for the Spring Dinner Meeting of White County Historical Society. Following a welcome by President Suellen Smith, the Pledge to the Flag led by Sean Cribbs, and an invocation by Steve McClure, guests were treated to a delicious meal catered by Two Chicks and a Spoon and then reviewed a series of events which began in 1814. The program committee presented four significant events in 1814: The Battle of New Orleans, the writing of The Star Spangled Banner, the establishment of New Harmony, IN, and the building of the John Crow cabin in Carmi (now known as The Robinson Stewart House) and captivated the audience with information and pictures of the oldest house in Carmi.

The audience was guided through the changes of that two room log house with an open 'dog trot' between the rooms into the large 'living museum' that we know today. The program was dedicated to Marjorie Fechtig, Past President of WCHS, who had the vision of creating this to present the 39th Heritage House Award by the Society. This is the last of the identical bronze plaques ordered by the Society and previously presented to 38 homes throughout White County deemed worthy of the recognition of Heritage House. The committee of Marjorie Fechtig, (not present due to illness), Suellen Smith, David Brown, Barbara Kearney, Mary McRoy, Cindy Birk Conley, and Todd Atteberry presented a detailed story of the house as it slowly became rambling structure that we know today. Todd's pictures featured the historic commentary as the house changed and the plaque was presented to Miss Mary Jane Stewart (as portrayed by Cindy Birk Conley) at the end of the presentation.

President Smith recognized the Board members including Honorary Board Member, Mr. Kent Boeger, thanked those who contributed to the program, reminded the audience that the Society continues to accept donations to replace the roof on the L. Haas Store Museum, will be sponsoring a plant sale at the Robinson Stewart House on Saturday, May 3, and will have an art sale as part of the July Lions Club Car Show in July. The art sale is in cooperation with art classes offered through Southeastern Illinois College.

The meeting closed with the benediction by Steve McClure. A later edition of The Carmi Times will feature a more detailed presentation of the John Crow cabin which grew into The Robinson-Stewart House Museum.

WHITE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NAMES FINAL HERITAGE HOUSE AWARDS

by: WROY/WRUL News, www.wrul.com

The White County Historical Society named its 39th and final Heritage House Award on Monday evening recognizing the living museum that is the Robinson-Stewart House.

An integral part of Carmi's heritage, the home turns 200 years old this year. The house was built by pioneer John Crow when it was still deep in the middle of the woods. Originally, there were only two rooms with a breezeway in between.

Court was held in the home from 1817 to 1820 because the county had no courthouse. In 1835, the home was purchased by Senator John Robinson. He and his wife's daughter Margaret would be Mary Jane Stewart's mother.

Stewart, the final owner of the home lived there nearly her entire life before dying in the late 1960's. Cindy Birk Conley brought the story to life dressed and accepting the award as Miss Mary Jane Stewart.



ROBINSON-STEWART HOUSE PLANT SALE

by: Barbara Kearney

Warm weather is finally arriving and folks are ready to get out and work in their gardens. For those who look forward to this spring project, the White County Historical Society is planning their second annual plant sale at the Robinson-Stewart House on May 3. The Society is asking for donations to make this sale as successful as last year's sale. Plants and seeds are needed. Herbs, shrubs, bulbs, as well as any annuals or perennials would be welcome. If you have any plants that need to be thinned, please dig them before the sale and put them in disposable containers. Label them and bring them to the Robinson-Stewart House the week before the sale. All proceeds go to the landscaping and yard maintenance of the Robinson-Stewart House. For more information or help with digging, please call Lana Anselment at 618-382-5320 or Barb Kearney at 618-218-8249.✍



ART SALE

July 4, at the Floral Hall, White County Fairgrounds

The White County Historical Society is holding a fund-raiser on the Fourth of July as part of the Carmi Lions Club 7th Annual Car, Truck and Motorcycle Show. The art classes at Southeastern Illinois College are donating several original works, which will be auctioned on behalf of the Society.

ESTATE GIFTS - SIMPLER THAN YOU THINK

If you would really like to help the White County Historical Society but are not inclined to do so during your lifetime, you may be pleased to know that there are some simple ways to make a gift to the Society through your estate. Following are a few of the simplest and most popular ways to do so.

1. Simply instruct your attorney to name the White County Historical Society as a beneficiary in your will or trust using the language below.
2. List the White County Historical Society as a beneficiary of an insurance policy, retirement account or tax-deferred annuity. Simply request a "change of beneficiary form" and use the language below to fill it out.
3. Fill out a Transfer of Death (TOD) form where you hold your investments using the language below.
4. Request a Totten Trust form from your bank and list the White County Historical Society as a beneficiary of your account(s), once again using the language below.

"_____to the White County Historical Society to be used in the ongoing stewardship of its buildings and grounds, the conservation of its artifacts and the continuation of its educational programs."

GENEALOGY QUERY

If you have a query, please send it to the Mary Smith Fay Genealogy Library and we can add it to the next newsletter.

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

We know that many of you have stories about a historical event of White County. We would welcome having your story to include in future editions of the White County Historian. Write your story, include your name, and mail it to Mary Smith Fay Genealogical Library at P.O.Box 121, Carmi, IL or email to rshous@gmail.com. Then watch for it in future editions of the newsletter.

MISSION STATEMENT

To preserve and promote the historical interest of White County through our stewardship of its artifacts and the historic sites and education programs and exhibits that we provide for its people

VISION STATEMENT

To make the history of White County come alive for the people of White County

MUSEUMS



Ratcliff Inn
218 E. Main Street

The L. Haas Museum
219 E. Main Street

Robinson-Stewart House
111- S. Main Cross Street

Matsel Cabin
East Robinson Street

Our museums, located in Carmi, Illinois, are open on advertised dates or by appointment only:

CONTACT INFORMATION

- ✉ Mailing Address: White County Historical Society
Mary Smith Fay Genealogy Library
PO Box 121
203 North Church Street
Carmi, Illinois 62821-0121
- ✉ Email: rshous@gmail.com
- ✉ To make an appointment to visit our museums, contact the librarian at the Mary Smith Fay Genealogy Library: call 618-382-8425 or email w.c.h.s-genealogy@hotmail.com
- ✉ If you have an item you are interested in donating to the society, contact Suellen Smith at 618-384-5672
- ✉ Comments, suggestions or contributions for the newsletter can be mailed to the address above or to rshous@gmail.com. Please include "newsletter" in the subject line.

AFFILIATIONS

The Society maintains memberships in the following:
 Southern Illinois Association of Museums (SIAM)
 Illinois Association of Museums (IAM)
 American Association of State and Local History (AASLH)
 Illinois Historic Preservation
 Carmi Chamber of Commerce

MEMBERS OF THE 2014 BOARD:

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|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| President – Suellen Smith | Treasurer – Jeff Bohleber |
| Secretary – Ranelle Hubele | Lecta Hortin |
| David Brown | Marjorie Fechtig |
| Marjorie Brown | Henry Lewis |
| Glenn Coleman | Honorary Member – Kent F. P. Boeger |
| Cindy Birk Conley | Past President – Paula Pierson |
| Judy Cutchin | |