
WHITE COUNTY HISTORIAN

Volume 19, Issue 2

April - June, 2013



"Preserving and
Promoting our History"

2013 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FUNDRAISER/SILENT
AUCTION
FLORAL HALL
WHITE CO. FAIRGROUNDS
9 AM - 3 PM, JULY 4

"A GLANCE BACKWARD"
SEPTEMBER 7
(WATCH FOR MORE DETAILS IN
THE COMING MONTHS)

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

FALL DINNER MEETING
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
6 PM, NOVEMBER 4

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

It seems there is never an end to projects that need to be done. Much like our own home projects, there is never enough time or money to accomplish them all. The 4 museums the society owns are so important to the preservation of our history and they require a great deal of loving care. From roof leaks, drywall repairs, yard work, window and door replacements, and painting the list gets very long at times.

I feel very blessed to have such willing and capable people who keep an eye on these building for us. Suellen Smith and her husband Tom are the guiding hand for the L. Haas Museum. They do a wonderful job of keeping the "old girl" going. Judy Cutchin and her husband Stan oversee the Ratcliff Inn and they are learning more everyday about what treasures there are to be found in this famous stagecoach stop. Henry Lewis has agreed to check on the Matsel Cabin which has many qualities of interest. Marjorie Fechtig and Cindy Birk Conley are the driving force at the Robinson Stewart House Museum and are two of the most knowledgeable women I have had the pleasure to work with. Just try and keep up with any of these folks as they go about their work for the society and I for one can tell you at the end of the day you will indeed be tired.

There are so many people that I haven't mentioned. You all are the glue that keeps thing going at the society. I can't express in words how much I appreciate them sharing their time, expertise, and patience with me these past 18 months as president of the society. I have also discovered you are never too old to learn something new.

Sam & Martha Endicott have agreed to be our Calling Committee chairpersons. Sam and Martha are long time members of the WCHS. Their support both in the past and now are most appreciated.

We extend our sympathy to Mr. Kent Boeger at the death of his dear wife Timmye. For those of you who knew Timmye she was indeed a true lady. She was a talented artist, writer and musician. She always made you feel welcome both in their home and in their business. Her gift for story telling was something I had the pleasure of hearing many times. I felt like I knew more about her family after each story. Mr. Kent's extras added in always made me smile. We will miss "Miss Timmye" but are thankful she was a part of some of our lives and a member of our community for so many years.

Thank you to everyone for sharing your knowledge and your time.
Paula Pierson, 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

A story from *History of White County Illinois*.

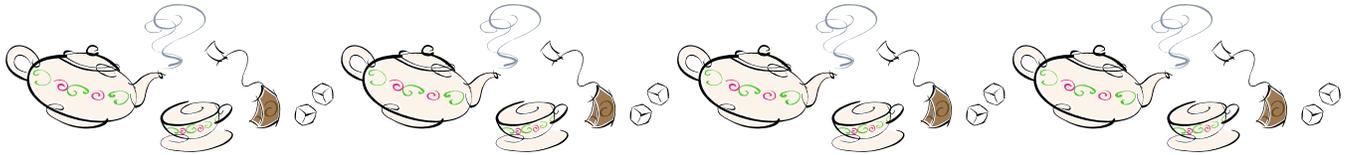
(Chicago: Inter-State, 1883. Chapter IV, pages 293-95.)

Around 1815 a man by the name of John Pond built a home in Pond Settlement, in what is now called, Indian Creek Township. He left one day to help a newcomer build a cabin. He left his wife and two little boys at home, and was absent all day. On returning at night he found his wife killed and scalped in the cabin, and his two little boys scalped and lying in a corner. All three were lying in pools of blood which had poured from their ghastly wounds. Pond lost no time in calling in neighbors to help him find the Indians that done this to his family. Pond, Hosea Pearce, and a Trousdale found the Indians and killed two, the third one got away. A few years later Mr. Pond moved away, and years after that, Pearce decided to move to Missouri. One night Pearce and a son of Trousdale were away from home and stopped at a fine and well-furnished house that night and ate supper with a middle age man. The host asked them if they knew anybody in Pond Settlement and Mr. Pearce told him about Pond and the killing of his wife and boys. The man said "Well stranger I reckon that story is about as true as any you ever told." Mr. Pearce was getting mad, the man was doubting his story. The man went over to his mantel shelf and took out of a clock, a small parcel, that showed the marks of age. He turned around and said to Pearce "Don't get excited about what I said. I only meant to prove what I am going to show you is true." He opened the paper and took out a little tuft of flaxen hair which seemed to be grown from a piece of skin the size of a dollar. He held it up and said "Here is the scalp of one of John Pond's boys." As he bowed down his head, and parting the hair from his crown, there was a shining bald scar and he put his finger on the spot and said, "and this is where it came from." Old Hosea had forgotten that while both boys had been scalped, only one was killed, although both were left for dead. He also had forgotten, too, that among the trophies of the dead Indians, the things most highly prized by Pond, were his boys scalps, which he recovered. ✍

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.



SECOND GRADE TEAS AND TOURS

by: Marjorie Fechtig

For the eleventh straight year, the Historical Society has held Teas and Tours for the second graders of White County. One hundred and seventy two students were served tea in the Robinson-Stewart House parlor over the four-day event in April of this year. Thirty-five volunteers helped served that tea and guide the students through the oldest house in the county. Over the past eleven years nearly 1900 students have been given these lessons in history and manners. The first class to participate in the Tea and Tour program graduated from high school this year. Hopefully the Historical Society has been able to introduce the students to some of their local history in a way that they will remember. The children sent Thank you letters after their visit and the letters show that the children enjoy and remember the lessons of the day. This continues to be one of our most popular events. ✍

L. HAAS STORE MUSEUM

by: Suellen Smith

Things are going good at the L. Haas Store Museum. We have received several donations. One is an Army trench coat which belonged to Mrs. Pauline Ackerman, the nurse at the high school for many years. She served in World War II. Connie Pollard Pitzer gave us several farm toys that had belonged to her son, Dain Garrett. They are on display and are a very nice addition to our collection. Tom and I have done some cleaning and re-arranging in the Indian arrowhead collection. We will have the museum all clean and ready for Corn Day. ✍

“A GLANCE BACKWARD”

by: Mary McRoy

With a nod to J. Robert Smith for the title, the White County Historical Society will offer “A Glance Backward.” On September 7th the public is invited to experience an enlightening journey of the people and events of the past 197 years. Those sites included are the Ratcliff Inn, the Webb-Hay House, the Old Graveyard, and the Matsel Cabin. Docents will explain the significance of each locale and the former citizens who contributed to our history. In addition to the main attractions, demonstrations will be ongoing at the Matsel Cabin; music will be provided by Mark Rogers, and cider and homemade cookies will be available at the Webb Hay House to all who attend. This year the Historical Society will offer a bonus with the purchase of a ticket: a souvenir booklet with pictures and information of each setting.

More information will be coming in the weeks ahead. Mark your calendars for Saturday September 7, 2013 and take “A Glance Backward.” ✍

FUNDRAISER/SILENT AUCTION

CARMI LIONS CLUB 6TH ANNUAL CAR, TRUCK & MOTORCYCLE SHOW

July 4, at the Floral Hall, White County Fairgrounds

by: Marjorie Fechtig

The White County Historical Society is holding a fund-raiser on the Fourth of July. We have eleven small patio side tables that have been painted by various artists around town and we will be auctioning them off in a silent auction in the floral hall on the Fourth of July. We hope to have the tables on display in some windows downtown for a few days before the auction. Come downtown and check out the tables and then come to the floral hall and help the historical society raise a lot of money for needed work on the museums. Place your bid and then keep checking to see if you have the high bid. You can have a nice side table with a work of art painted on the top of it. Be sure to come to the floral hall and join in the fun of bidding in the auction. It is for a very good cause.

Suellen Smith will have a table set up from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the Historical Society to sell Christmas ornaments, cook books, books from the Genealogy Library and other items. ✍





SUMMARY OF RECENT BOARD MEETINGS

by: Ranelle Hubele, Board Secretary

This report summarizes the 2012 Board meetings, and I plan to put a summary of the Board meetings in each of our Quarterly Newsletters from this point forward.

Our meetings always include reports from the Genealogy Library and recent gifts which are reported elsewhere in this newsletter.

Owning and maintaining our 4 museums is a huge effort. (The Genealogy Library is maintained by their own Board and designated funding.) The L. Haas Store Museum currently needs second story ceiling repairs. The Ratcliff Inn needs flashing repair around the chimney, and the Robinson Stewart House needs a window repaired or replaced in the back meeting room. These and other repairs are costly. While the Society still has a savings fund from a generous donation of a few years ago, the Board is always looking for ways to raise additional funds. Replacing the 2nd floor windows on the L. Haas Store Museum 2 years ago and the porches on the Robinson Stewart House last year were very expensive and very necessary. There were donations made to both projects, but the Board had to use savings accounts to complete those projects.

We recently approved the appeal asking that you consider a gift to White County Historical Society in your will. (see article elsewhere in this Newsletter).

The Board has spent considerable time researching a way in which to share the old letters which are in Robinson Stewart House. A committee has transcribed the handwritten letters between Senator John M. Robinson and his wife, children, and other family members during the time that he served as U.S. Senator. The Board is still determining the best way to make this information available.

The Board approves, coordinates, and carries out these events: Spring & Fall Dinner meetings, Second Grade Tea Parties, booth at the Home & Garden Expo, booth on July 4th at the Fairground, Plant, Bulb, & Seed Sale, Annual Fall Event, Fifth Grade Pioneer Days, Corn Day activities and parade, and others as they present themselves.

Your Society belongs to the Illinois Association of Museums (IAM), and Southern Illinois Association of Museums (SIAM). We have Board Members (Marjorie Fechtig and Cindy Conley) who are actively involved in these organizations, providing valuable information to assist with our museums and events. ✍

ROBINSON-STEWART HOUSE PLANT SALE

by: Barbara Kearney

The White County Historical Society hosted its first ever plant sale on Saturday, May 4, and Tuesday, May 7.

Hundreds of plants were donated by area gardeners for the event. In spite of a Saturday downpour, gardeners showed up in droves to purchase the plants at bargain prices. Sales were brisk on Tuesday, as well, which turned out to be a beautiful day.

Volunteer gardeners provided planting and selection advice for those who needed direction. Volunteers were also on hand serving tea and cookies to the guests, and to provide tours of the house.

The sale was deemed a huge success and the Society plans to do it again next spring. We sincerely thank all those who donated plants or cookies, and those who purchased plants.

The plants that did not sell were planted in the yard of the Robinson-Stewart House. All proceeds from the sale will be used to enhance the landscape at the house. ✍

Pictures by Tisa Gallup.





MERRITT FAMILY HISTORY

by: Peggy Merritt

A new book about White County, Illinois early residents and history is on the shelves of the Mary Smith Fay Genealogical and Carmi Public Libraries

Margaret F. Merritt, Ph.D., donated copies of her book, “The Fruits of Their Spirits: Four Centuries of American History in the Ancestry of Joseph Glenn Merritt” to the Mary Smith Fay Genealogical Library as well as to the Carmi Public Library in October, 2012. This 343-page book provides a portal into what Americans were like in their particular time through the biographies of 95 ancestors spanning nearly 400 years, from the time they stepped ashore in the New World beginning in 1632 through the Twentieth century. Nearly 200 images and maps, as well as 101 varied descriptions, are used to help portray daily life in the American past, partitioned according to political rule and events into five parts:

- Early Colonial Era: First Generation of Immigrants (1632-1702)
- Royal Colonial Era and the Road to Independence (1703-1783)
- Early National Era: Westward Migration (1784-1860)
- Civil War and Rebuilding Era (1861-1900)
- The Twentieth Century.

The reader follows Puritans, Quakers and Virginians as their lives are shaped by the political, cultural and socioeconomic forces of their eras, and watches as their religious and colonial affiliations are transformed into a national identity.

A total of 458 references are cited in the book, which should assist any historical or genealogical researcher in their quest for information. An added plus are the descriptions (set in grey text boxes) interspersed among biographies that provide a summary explanation of people, forces or ideas that dominated eras and shaped the lives of ancestors. For example, in the Puritan biographical section descriptions are inserted about the New Haven colony and early whaling on Long Island. Skipping on to the Westward Migration, descriptions are inserted about the Wilderness Road and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. The Civil War section relates the movements of the 87th Illinois infantry and descriptions of the medical corps of the Union Army. An index at the back of the book helps readers to quickly find geographical locations and descriptions.

A depiction of White County history begins in 1850 with the settlement of Marcus Lafayette Brown, Sr., M.D. (1805-1873) and his wife Martha Ann Franklin (1813-1885) onto land later called “Brown’s Station”. Shortly thereafter, William Draper (1784-1862) and several of his children settled in Enfield in 1857. The Merritts migrated from Kentucky through Indiana and on to Illinois, arriving first in Clay County in 1863 and finally White County by 1880. Never before seen photos and documents are displayed on the pages detailing the lives of these 19th century White County residents. Among other topics there is mention of Brockett School, West

Union Presbyterian Church, and the 1925 Tri-State Tornado. The first ever YMCA camp in the county, which was set up on the banks of the Ohio River by Cave-in-Rock in 1921, is chronicled including fun photos of the campers.

To access the book locally, the Mary Smith Fay Genealogical Library, 203 N. Church St. in Carmi, is open Tuesday-Friday from 11:30am to 4:30pm. While they are not a lending library they will copy pages for a small fee. The Carmi Public Library on 103 Slocumb St in Carmi is open Monday-Thursday 10am-7pm, Friday 10am-6pm and Saturday 11am-5pm. They are a lending library and participate in the Interlibrary loan program, but only within the state of Illinois. The Carmi Public Library will also copy pages of the book for a nominal fee. To find other libraries holding the book or to obtain a copy of the book, please contact the author at pmerritt@ak.net. ✍

ROBINSON-STEWART HOUSE
GARDEN, JUNE 31, 2013
Picture by Lana Anselment.



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 2013 BOARD:

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

White County Historical Society
PO Box 121
Carmi, IL 62821
Membership Information

Welcome To All: Renewing and New Members of the White County Historical Society

Through your membership in the White County Historical Society you will be assisting in the promotion and preservation of our history through a variety of fun and educational programs.

We are strongly encouraging our members to provide us with an email address. With this address we can keep in touch faster and our newsletter will reach you in a more timely fashion. With printing and postage cost rising each year your email will assist us in better budgeting of our money. PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS.... we will not share it with others.

We welcome everyone and we thank you in advance for your support!

Paula Pierson
Membership Chr.

2013 Membership Form

- () Life Member.....\$1000 () Sustaining Member.....\$50
(one time payment)
- () Contributing Member.....\$500 () Family Member.....\$35
- () Patron.....\$100 () Individual\$25

New Member _____

Renewal Member _____

NAME: _____

STREET: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

TELEPHONE #: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____