



THE BLACKFORD-WELLS TRACER

A Quarterly Newsletter of the Blackford-Wells Genealogy Society

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**1997
DUES are
DUE on
January 1,
1997**

NEWS BRIEFS

The next meeting of the Blackford-Wells Genealogy Society will be at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, January 18, 1997 at the Brass Latch, in Montpelier, Indiana.

Elections for our 1997 officers will be held at this meeting.

The October newsletter of the Indiana Genealogical Society contained information on BWGS and a mini-article about the Brass Latch!

Anyone wishing to volunteer to assist in the IGS 1870 Census Indexing project is encouraged to contact Margery Graham, 1870 Census Project Chair, 13431 Ernst Road, Roanoke, IN 46783. Some of our members are already working on this project, but more volunteers are needed!

COMING EVENTS

1/18/97 10:00 a.m.

Quarterly meeting of the Blackford-Wells Genealogy Society at the Brass Latch in Montpelier, Indiana

Don't forget: Articles and queries needed for the January 1997 newsletter! Please submit by December 15, 1996 to the Editor, Diana Busche, 4901 W. 1100 N., Markle, IN 46770-9767 THANKS!

1996 OFFICERS

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MONTPELIER FIRE DEPARTMENT

submitted by: Judy VanCamp

The Montpelier Volunteer Fire Department celebrated its 100th Birthday during the 1996 Montpelier Jamboree. Eddie Smith supplied the following information from official records of the organization.

CHARTER HOSE COMPANY #1

First Meeting - May 5, 1896

The following officers were elected unanimously: W.F. Gates - President; T.C. Palmer - Vice President; E.A. Smith - Treasurer; A.M. Bowman - Secretary. Bylaws were to be founded on bylaws then in use by the Central Fire Department of Bradford, PA. It was determined the company would meet each Tuesday at 8:00 p.m. at Dr. E.E. Latham's Dental Parlor. E.E. Sinclair was selected by the council to serve as Fire Chief. Present at the first meeting were: E.E. Sinclair, C.H. Callahan, F.E. Hurley, E.E. Latham, C.L. Smith, A.M. Bowman, E.A. Smith, T.C. Palmer, W.C. Johnson, G.A. Loucks, W.F. Gates, C.F. Ward, J.F. Hagan, L.E. Bunton, M.A. Emshwiler, W.N. Reese, H.K. Ward, and James Johnson.

A second fire department in Montpelier at that time was the Laverne Hook and Ladder Company, although little information of this company has been located. Both companies shared the same building built in 1896. They had one fire chief, but used different equipment.

The phases of their fire fighting equipment are noteworthy, as the fire department at first had only a bucket brigade. Later, a small hand pulled pumper was acquired, although exactly when it was purchased has not been determined. This pumper, built in 1886 by Rumsey and Co. of Seneca Falls, NY, had to be pulled by people to a fire. Upon reaching the destination, a hose was connected to a fire hydrant, horse trough or cistern. The pump was powered and primed by two long handles on each side of the pumper. Another hose was connected to the pump and went toward the fire with a nozzle to direct the water stream. This apparatus is still with the fire department today.

Under the administration of Mayor Rudolph Schneider (1906-1910) the city's first motorized fire truck was purchased. It was a Ford Model-T truck with a chemical tank, hose, hooks and ladders, and remained in use until 1924.

The administration of Dr. F.M. Reynolds purchased a new International truck with over-chain mounted pumping equipment. It had a 500 gallon per minute pump with a 150 gallon reserve tank for emergencies, and was used until 1955 when it was stored in the former Waterworks Building. It was later voted that this truck be restored for use in parades, but when members of the fire department went to get it they were in for a shock. Somebody had beat them to it! It was cut up with a cutting torch and sold for junk.

In 1948, the city administration of Chet Wall purchased a Fort American LaFrance pumper which was brought by railroad to Marion, Indiana and delivered on March 23, 1949. It had a 500 gallon per minute pump with a 300 gallon booster tank, and was in active use until 1970.

Harrison Twp. Trustee, Charles Beymer, purchased a truck for rural fires which had a 500 gallon per minute pump with a 500 gallon tank. The pump was a front mount built by Barton-American Fire apparatus of Battle Creek, MI. This truck is still used today.

A used truck from Center Twp of Grant county was purchased in 1970 to replace the 1948 truck. The replacement was a 1960 Ford C-800 built by Howe Fire Apparatus in Anderson, Indiana. Pump capacity was 750 gallons per minute with a 500 gallon tank. This truck also had a 65' aerial ladder.

In 1980, Harrison Twp. Trustee, Robert Walsmith, obtained a new truck built by 3-D Apparatus of Appleton, Wisconsin. It was a 1980 Ford 7000 Louisville, and features a 1,000 gallon per minute pump and a 1,000 gallon tank.

A city pumper was added during Mayor Harold McGeath's administration. It was a 1983 Chevrolet C-70 built by W.S. Darley and Co., featuring a 750 gallon per minute pump and 750 gallon tank.

In addition to the above listing of apparatus, the department also has a 1978 Ford 250 used as a grass buggy, a 1982 Step-van used as an equipment truck, and a 1988 White Volvo GMC tanker with a 3,000 gallon tank.

This department has come from fighting fires by hand pumping to motorized apparatus, as with all fire departments across the nation.

In the early days, the fire department held department drills to offer training to the firemen, although much of their training came through actual experience at the scene of a fire. Today, training is available through various local, state, and federal programs. Current training involves Hazardous Materials Operations, Fire Industrial and Motor Vehicle Accidents, Rescue, and Lending support to Emergency medical service units.

Some traditions of the department have disappeared, such as the Fireman's Ball (2 or 3 times a year) and the Annual Oyster Stew Supper. There was also a Montpelier Firemen's Band comprised of members of the department in the first 10 years of service which had the honor of playing for then United States President William McKinley's inaugural parade. Under the sponsorship of the fire department, the Montpelier Boys Bank was organized in 1921. William T. Arnold and George Bailey served as bandleaders, and the fire department presently has pictures of these bands on display.

In 1954, local women whose husbands were firemen, or whose husbands had served with the fire department, joined the Indiana Volunteer Firemen's Ladies Auxiliary. This organization is still in existence to render assistance when needed.

The first fire run made by Charter Hose Company #1 was made on May 15, 1896 with the following account: Alarm sounded at 7:30 p.m. Two story Framed house in second ward. Company worked at disadvantage, having old cart and trouble getting water, but succeeded in saving contents and lower portion of house. Members present at fire were E.E. Sinclair, L.E. Bunton, E.E. Latham, H.K. Ward, E.A. Smith, L.E. Hunley, G.A. Loucks, A.M. Brown, W.N. Reese, W.C. Johnson, C.M. Callahan, C.F. Ward, M.A. Emshwiller, L. Peande, Jas. Johnson, J.F. Hagan, and Jap Wilson. Those not present gave satisfactory excuses for absence and were excused.

The Fire Department has fought fires of great magnitude throughout its history. In its early days, most of the fires were oil tanks, livery barns, or residences. A lot of these fires were lost due to the equipment at the time. Of special memory are the Columbia Hote Explosion, the Oil Tank Fire of 1906, and the livery barns. More recent fire tragedies would be Neff Garage on Huntington Street - 1956; Fiat Bargain Center - 1963; Webb Furniture Store - 1976; Krieg's Small Engine - 1981; and Southern Wells School - 1992.

Although a century has come and gone since its organization, the one purpose of the fire department remains the same: To protect from fire, the lives and property of the community.

PRAIRIE VIEW CEMETERY

Prairie View Cemetery is located 1 and 1/4 mile north of Tocsin, Indiana (Wells County) on the west side of County Road 600 East. The entrance to the cemetery is in the center and the rows start in the northeast corner and continue west through the wooded area and then count from the west back to the east, weaving back and forth through the cemetery to the south side. There are no burials in the wooded area but it is laid out in lots for future use.

The information was abstracted from the original cemetery plot book by Margorie Myers and submitted by Joyce Bauermeister.

HISTORY:

March 21, 1909

A number of citizens of the Tocsin Community met at the Tocsin School House on March 21, 1909 for the purpose of organizing a cemetery association. The house was called to order by John Heckley as chosen temporary Chairman and Charles White was elected as temporary Secretary. After a few talks on the part of the Chairman and others as to the purpose of the meeting and how the land for the cemetery was to be purchased and where. A body of nine directors was elected to form the articles of Association and By Laws. Those nominated and elected were: John H. Johnson, John Heckley, Samuel Heckley, A.P. Kelly, N.J. Kleinknight, T.M. Hall, Jerry Rupright, N.M. Johnson, and Charles A. White.

By resolution it was voted that John Heckley be President of the Board for the ensuing year and Charles White was elected as permanent Secretary for the year. Jerry Rupright was elected Treasurer and John H. Johnson was elected as Superintendent of the cemetery grounds.

By previous arrangement it was agreed by the Association that three acres of land be purchased from John H. Johnson for the price of \$125 per acre. The land to be part of the South half of the Southeast quarter of Sec. 25, R. 12E, T 28 N, and to be described more accurately in a deed given for the land by John H. Johnson and wife.

March 24, 1909

The directors met and founded Articles of Association and By Laws. These were afterward submitted to the association and adopted.

By resolution the bond of Secretary and Treasurer was fixed at \$500 each. A resolution was adopted to acquire a surveyor to survey ground as soon as possible.

By resolution the Directors voted that the Secretary shall receive \$25 for a year of service.

It was resolved that the prices of burial lots should be established in the sections East and North and South center driveway only. (The two East sections.)

The prices were fixed as follows: The first two rows on each side of the driveway -- \$50; The next two on each side valued at \$35; The next two rows on each side valued at \$25; The next and last two rows on each side \$20.

The Directors then voted that the price for labor on the cemetery ground with man and team should be \$3 per diem and a price to be paid for a man per diem shall be \$1.50 and the price for the Superintendent for a day's work and superintending shall be \$1.50.

April 19, 1909

The Directors borrowed \$200 from William M. Kleinknight for one year at 6% interest

The North side of Prairie View Cemetery is included in this issue, the South side will be in the next issue.

North Side

<u>Lot</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Space</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Death</u>
1-9	vacant			
10	Brenda Lindamann	1	1961	1985
34	vacant			
35	Jerry Lindamann	1	1929	1987
36-44	vacant			
45	Donald Beck	1	1958	1958
46	Vernon Shady	5	1883	1951
46	William Shady	6	1884	1946
47	Walter Thompson	1	1901	1980
47	Terry Thompson	4	1964	1995
47	Roy Thompson	5	1905	1982
47	Minnie Thompson	6	1902	1977
48	Ray Thompson	1	1903	1969
48	Dorothy Thompson	2	1898	1977
49-53	vacant			
54	Dorothy Hamilton	2	1921	1990
55-77	vacant			
78	Louisa Wasson	1	1858	1903
78	Thomas Wasson	2	1845	1912
78	Cliff Wasson	3	1882	1955
79	Frank Woodard	1	1915	1992
80	Clifton Christ	1	1886	1910
80	Garth Hoover	2	1899	1965
80	Russell Mankey	1	1908	1984
80	Edith Mankey	2	1900	1987
81-84	vacant			
85	George Myers	1	1880	1967
85	Daisy Myers	2	1892	1947
85	John Myers	3	1912	1970
85	Gladys Myers	4	1931	1967
86	John Grim	1	1862	1919
86	Alice Grim	2	1866	1937
86	Elzie Thompson	4	1919	1936
86	Ira Thompson	5	1874	1952
86	Mary Thompson	6	1883	1852
87	Jenny Jones	1	1873	1909
87	Francis Jones	2	1906	1906
87	Carol Jones	6	1903	1948
88	Robert Hoover	1	1870	1942
88	Cordelia Hoover	2	1874	1918
88	Ruby Hoover	3	1909	1911
89	David Hoover	1	1840	1913
89	Lida Hoover	2	1848	1918
90	Emma Beck	4	1901	1990
90	Martin Heckley	5	1876	1952