

BLACKFORD-WELLS GENEALOGY SOCIETY

Connie Brubaker, President Kathy Davis, Vice President
Blanche Bennett, Secretary Estelina Suman, Treasure
Molly Kendall, Editor

August/September
2001

September Membership meeting will be in Montpelier

Our next meeting will be at Montpelier at the
Community building at 10 am September 15

A surprise guest speaker.

Please plan to attend and bring a friend.

Have you visited your family cemeteries lately?
If not try to do so before winter sets in. The
lawn mowers have been running wildly all sum-
mer in our precious cemeteries and we need to
do a spot check to make sure everything is still
in tact and ready for winter.

Cathy Burnsed visits Bluffton

The Wells County Historical Society held a reception for Cathy (Gardenour) Burnsed on Friday, August 31, from 3 to 4 PM at the Museum. Cathy has hosted the Wells County Genealogy web site at <http://www.rootsweb.com/~inwells/> since its startup in 1996. She is well known to many in Wells County as well as across the country for her award winning genealogy site. Cathy volunteered her service to Wells County because of her own roots here. Both her gr-grandfather Gardenour and grandfather Gardenour were born in Wells County, living in the Uniondale area, where the family name is well-known. Cathy is a librarian, living in Tallahassee Florida. She will be accompanied by her husband, Keith, and daughters, Allison and Laura.

Following her Wells County interests, Cathy discovered and provided information about a young Bluffton High School girl, Verdi Karns, who wrote and published a ragtime song, *The Bluffton Carnival Rag*, with an 1899 copy write at the age of 18. The song commemorated the first Bluffton Free Street Fair, held the previous year, 1898. In addition, through her library resources, she located a copy of the sheet music from which the Wells County Historical Society was permitted to obtain a photocopy. The *News-Banner* will carry a feature story about Verdi Karnes and the four other known ragtime songs she composed and had published in her early life, the first when she was 16. In the 1900 city directory, both she and her older brother Louis were listed as music teachers.

Members of the Blackford-Wells Genealogy Society as well as the Wells County Historical Society, greeted Cathy, who they know through their e-mail and Internet contacts.

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Bluffton Street Fair September 18-22, 2001

The Bluffton Street Fair has been a early fall event for over 100 years.

(Quote from Wells County Towns and Townships) "Farris were common enough every little town around had some kind of harvest-time celebration, usually in connection with a race track, for horse racing was immensely popular with both rural and town dwellers. But gambling and petty crime were also customary ingredients of such fairs, and Bluffton wanted to avoid any hint of that in the new Street Fair that was being planned by the Retail Merchants' Association. Consequencely, horse racing played no part in the festival that inaugurated on September 28, 1898.

The unique features of this fair were that admission was free and that it was being held on the newly paved streets of the town, away from the

usual mud and dust of the county fairgrounds. Big crowds attended, drawn by the promise of free acts, good food, a well-planned agricultural exhibition, and the usual merry-go-round and Farris wheel, in addition to sideshows and strolling bands. "The Fair" as Bluffton people have referred to it ever since, has been an annual event for nearly everyone of the hundred years since its inception at the end of the nineteenth century."

Headlines of the 1937 Evening News-Banner:

Bluffton Fair Opens Tuesday Night Big Parade to Launch Annual Five-Day Fair

Wells County's annual big festive event, the Bluffton Free Street

Fair and Wells County Agricultural Exhibit, will be opened with a spectacular parade next Tuesday evening, Sept 21, and will continue without interruption until midnight, Saturday Sept. 25.

The fair this year will be the 31st annual celebration of the county's great homecoming affair and will be staged in a setting that gives every promise of making it go down in history as the most spectacular and successful in the annals of the fair.

The city is expected to entertain 200,000 visitors during the week.

"Bigger and Better"

Exhibits at the 1937 fair will be larger and more attractive than ever before and visitors will be impressed with the work and skill of the citizens of the community.

First Family/ Pioneer Family Certificates

The cut off date for the First Family/Pioneer Family Certificates has been extended to Dec. 31, 2001. Due to the continued demand for the certificates the society has decided to extend the date so everyone who has a desire to be in the Wells County First Family/Pioneer Family Book can submit their family history.

If your ancestors were in Wells County before 1848 you may qualify for a First Family

Certificate. If they arrived between 1849-1898 then you may qualify for the Pioneer Family Certificate. See our web page at <http://www.rootsweb.com/~inwells/> for the application. Fill in the needed information and send your application to Blackford-Wells Genealogy Society, P.O. Box 54, Bluffton, IN 46714. The profit from this

project helps support our newsletter and other projects of the society.

At the end of the current dead line we will be putting all the information together into book form. For a minimal fee the book will be available to society members and anyone else who is interested.

For this to be a true success all members need to apply for aor several certificates honoring their ancestors. Don't wait until it's too late.

We have had 117 applied for and only 1 denied.



Origin of Words Associated with Undertaking

Coffin: from the Latin "cophinus" and from the Greek "Kophinus" meaning a "basket". Up until recent times, funeral directors would have used a wicker basket to transport corpses from the place of death to their mortuaries.

Undertaker: Until 1400 the term was used in a general sense to designate someone who undertook something. Later it meant a provider of funeral furniture as well as other functions. The first known advert for the present since of the word appeared in a New York newspaper in 1768. Since then we have been called "funeral directors," morticians", thanatologists", grief therapists", subsurface depository engineers", celestial healing engineers", subterranean travel agents", celestial tour operators", those unctuous men in black", etc.

Funeral: from Latin word "funeralis" from "lunis", a torch. Disposal of the dead in Roman times took place at night, hence the need of torches to light the way.

Lich Gate: from German "leiche", a "corpse". Hence the Lich Gate became a place where the corpse was temporary placed while the people assembled before processing into the church yard.

Cemetery: from Greek "koimeteion", meaning a sleeping room. The association with the final resting place of the dead is obvious.

Pall: The "pall" was an ornamental cloth placed over the coffin usually with a religious emblem on it. It derives from the Latin "pallium", a cloak. A pallbearer (NOT the same as a coffin bearer) held the pall aloft on poles providing protection to the coffin-bearers while in procession, and they walked on the outside of the cof-

fin-bearers.

The Dole: Mourning clothes distributed to the poor were called "doole" from the Latin "doleo", meaning "grieve". Hence "doole" became something given away in relation to grief after death. Nowadays it refers to giving to the deserving from the state bounty.

Quarantine: The word comes from the Italian "quarantena" meaning the forty day of mourning expected of the widow before she reappeared in society. Hence the concept of being separated from everyday activities.

Autopsy: Literally "to see with one's own eyes".

The wake: meant a "watching over of the corpse" an Irish tradition. Because someone was watching, family and friends could arrive at any time during the night for the funeral, and as they had often traveled long distances, they were given refreshments. Hence the wake was pre-funeral celebration, and became the forerunner of the modern post-funeral party. The word comes from Old English "waeccan", to wake. The idea of "watching over" was literally to ensure that the person was dead and did not waken during the vigil.

Deadbeat: In England, corpses were given free passage through toll gates: hence the dead "beat the toll". Eventually the phrase came to be associated with anyone who shirked their responsibilities.

Hearse: This comes from the old French "herse", meaning a "harrow", a triangular implement with spikes attached, which can be adapted for candlesticks, used partly for light and partly for ceremonial. It became

more and more magnificent being made of brass, with fringes and ornaments added. Later it came to be suspended over tombs, and by the 17th century, it had become a vehicle to bear the coffin from the home to the grave. The modern funeral car is a combination of the old hearse and the pall and the bier.

Mausoleum: King Mausolus, King of Caria (about 370 BC in ancient Greece) designed his own tomb, 30m high and to be made of white marble. After his death, his wife built the tomb to house his body. The word is associated with a commemorative building erected over the place of burial.

Compliments of Deal-Robins & Van Gilder and the Roanoke Memorial Chapel.

Get wells wishes to
Molly Kendall,
editor of our Newsletter.

Molly will be in a wheelchair for 8 weeks recuperating from having broken her leg in a fall in the back yard of her home.

Newsletter

The newsletter is written and edited by Molly Kendall. If you have any articles or information you would like to submit please send it to :

Molly Kendall

Box 54

Bluffton, IN 46714

Or

Mugsy1961@home.com

“Let’s all go to the Past time Movie Theater”

Or maybe to the Arcade Theater or the Star Theater. Do you know what is on at the Dawn Theater? Or the Orpheum? And then there’s also the Jefferson Theater. Decisions, decisions, decisions.

Do you know where all of these place of entertainment were????

The Arcade Theater was located on the south side of West Washington Street neat the original Mahorney Furniture Store and the Gazette News Office , in the first block west of the Public Square. T. Fred Carpenter was the manager of the Arcade which presented vaudeville and motion pictures and illustrated songs with phonograph music. Tickets were 10 cents with a money –back guarantee of satisfaction.

The Star Theater, on the west side of the Square, was owned by Arthur Fuller. Motion Pictures were shown and phonograph records and song slides were featured with Maude Simmons (Beasley) as song leader. Tickets were five cents. Phil Worthen was employed as projectionist and received \$4. Per week. The Star was sold to William Badt and his son Ferd in 1910. Circa 1912 McEldowney and Berger purchased the Star, renamed the Orpheum, and it was relocated in the newly constructed Odd Fellows Building on the north side of West Washington Street, one block west of the Square. Clark and Hipskin of Wabash, Indiana purchased the Orpheum in 1914 and later sold to Frank Waters.

In the early days of motion pictures, when America’s Sweetheart Mary Pickford, and Charlie Chaplin were demanding and receiving salaries of one million dollars a year, Hartford City movie goers were able to see these and other silent movie stars for 10-20-30 cents.

Vaudeville was presented on Orpheum’s stage on weekends. Many times the scenery equipment, flats and drops were kept in the alley at the stage entrance and brought it inside to be used at the proper time. Amber Fees was the piano player and was considered to be the very accomplished by the vaudeville stars and the audiences. Also Ruby Ritter (Tharp) played the piano and on occasion music was furnished by a small band with Ruby at the piano, John Hollis on the drums, the Legros brothers, George and Al, on horns. Stock companies,

Traveling shows, home-talent shows, high school plays and recitals used the stage of the Orpheum for their productions.

Matt Scheidler joined Frank Walters in partnership in operating the Orpheum. Eventually, Mr. Scheldler acquired full ownership and opened the Jefferson theater on the east side of the Public Square.

The dawn Theater, owned by Charles and Rose Gucker, began showing movies in a room on East Washington Street. This venture was short lived, and it was in this location that Matt Scheidler built a very elegant and beautifully decorated Hartford Theater.

On the north side of the Public Square, Aaron Rosenbush, the tailor, opened the Royal Theater in the Emishwiller Building, Irene Coulson thrillingly accompanied the silent movies at the piano located sown front in a pit below floor level.

There were also open air theaters back in those early days. One was located on the northeast corner of Monroe and Washington streets before Clair dickey’s garage was built on that lot. Another on the northeast corner of Main and Jefferson Streets was started by James P. Moffett.

Other traveling shows and Chautauqua companies presented live entertainment in huge tents in various locations in Hartford City. Often the tents were located on the east side near the site of Blackford County Hospital on the west side in “ The Commons.” the present site of Parkside and Junior High Schools.

On June 12, 1894 two big shows were offered in two big tents for one day only: Complete and Model Show; M.M. Yorks Big Shows and Real Wild West.

August 24, 1894; “LARGEST, OLDEST AMUSEMENT ORGANIZATION”, 70 YEARS OF SUCCESS: CROWNING EVENT OF MAN’S GENIUS; SOLOMON, HIS TEMPLE AND QUEEN OF SHEBA.

Other attraction: “ ROYAL, ROMAN HIPPODROME”; SPORTS AND GAMES; CHARIOT RACES OF ANCIENT ROME; STRICTLY MORAL CIRCUS; 60 CAGE MENAGERIE.

Taken from the History of Blackford County , Indiana Published by the Blackford County Historical Society 1986

DILDINE SCHOOL

The second Dildine School was build about 1890.

Land for Dildine School was deeded to the township about 1875 by Mr. And Mrs. John Wentz. The school derived its name from the Joseph Dildine family who lived across the road east of the school. The early frame building was replaced by a one-room brick building accomodating thirty students. It was heated by a coal burning stove in the center of the room, the coal shed was in back of the school. Charles Clamme remembers spinning tops with his friends in the unoccupied area at the back of the room.

Rose Richardson, now ninety three years old, vividly recalls her first day at Dildine School in 1898. She was a very shy little girl and so she sat at the back of the room on the bench beside her older brother Joseph. The teacher asked her if she could see the blackboard all right, and she answered , "Ich can seein gut." Immediately the teacher jerked her from her seat and soundly berated the startled child for answering in the language spoken in her home.

Some early Dildine teachers were Charles Barr, Leila Tyner, John Strait, Thomas Kegerreis and Mable Sunnerville.

In 1922 a large two-room brick building was completed, contractors were Clemme Brothers. Built over a full basement, the building was heated with a coal-burning furnace. The structure was designed with a large central hall with a cloak room on either side. The classrooms were separated by folding doors which could be opened to make one large room. Four grades were taught in each room.

Some other teachers were Mary Lutes, Claude Addington, Malinda Dalby, Er S. Neff, Gladys Streib and Paul Lee.

In 1959 seventh and eight students were transferred to Trenton School. The school closed in 1963. The building was sold at public auction in 1965 to Carl and Lucile Sandoe. They have converted the building into three attractive apartment.

A former student write of her days at Dildine." We had a good time especially at recess. I remember playing softball and getting together occasionally with Millgrove and Trenton to play ball. Of course, we always won! The year I had scarlet fever, the kids at school sent me cards, and one day they were allowed to walk to my house and I was able to wave to them through the window. That was great for my spirits.

I remember the many ice cream socials. Everyone in the community was involved in these happy events.

We also had great Halloween parties. One year, one of the bigger kids pushed a friend of his off the bale of straw he was sitting on. The kid was very surprised to find after all had unmasked, it was my mom that he had knocked off her seat.

My years at Dildine were happy and carefree, and many lasting friendships were made in that country school." Jessie May Brown Garinger.

Taken form the History of Blackford County 1986.

Life in the 1500's

Anna Hathaway was the wife of William Shakespeare. She married at the age of 25. This is really unusual for the time. Most people married young, like at the age of 11 or 12.

Anne Hathaway's home was a 3 bedroom house with a small parlor, which was seldom used(only for company) , kitchen and no bath.

Mother and father shared a bedroom. Anne had a queen sized bed, but did not sleep alone. She also had 2 other sisters and they shared the bed also with 6 servant girls(this is before she married). They didn't sleep like we do lengthwise but all laid on the bed crosswise.

At least they had a bed. The other bedroom was shared by her 6 brothers and 10 field workers. They didn't have a bed. Everyone just wrapped up in their blanket and slept on the floor. They had no indoor heating so all the extra bodies kept them warm.

(More next issue) Author unknown.

Next meeting will be
November 17 ,2001
Wells County Library
Bluffton IN
10 AM
Election of Officers

Invite your friends to join the Blackford-Wells
Genealogy Society.

Remember to renew your membership.

Annual membership : Single: \$10.00 Family: \$15.00

It's easy just send membership dues to:

Blackford-Wells Genealogy Society

P.O. Box 54

Bluffton, Indiana 46714

Officers for 2001

Connie Brubaker, President (2000-2001)

Kathy Davis, Vice President (2001-2003)

Blanche Bennett, secretary (2000-2001)

Estelline Suman, Treasure (2001-2003)

Appointed committee members

Molly Kendall, Editor

Dorothy Manning Publicity Wells County

Joan Pearson... Historian

Dawn Montgomery... Cemetery

Barbara Elliott... Auditing

Ken Manning ...Will extraction project

Blackford-Wells Genealogy Society

P.O. Box 54
Bluffton, IN 46714