



Greentown Historical Society

103 E. Main Street, Greentown, IN 46936

April 2007

Current Exhibit: “The Tie That Binds”

by Jean Simpson

This exhibit on the history of churches of eastern Howard County, past and present, is open now at the History Center. The histories of the churches are printed in a bound collection which is available for \$2.00 in the gift shop. The exhibit may be seen during regular open hours on Saturdays, Sundays, and Mondays from 1:00 until 4:00 p.m. or by appointment. Also special presentations can be given for groups with adequate advance notice. For more information please call the History Center at 628-3800 or Jean at 628-7674.

Ministers of area churches, staff, and families were invited to a special open house on March 18 to view the exhibit. Exhibit team members Nancy Echelbarger, Angie Sparks, and Jean Simpson were available to discuss the exhibit and answer questions. Refreshments were served by Barbara Middleton. The following persons were very helpful in providing artifacts and information for this exhibit: Meta Hume, Michael Waitt, Ethel Petro, Jane Porter, Nancy Custer, Tom Harper, Jackie Powell, Tom Howell, Mrs. William Mouser, James Sharber, Darwin Hiatt, Elizabeth Underwood, Ruth Lily, Bob Eikenberry, Mrs. Daniel Lamb, Barbara Kinsler, Esther Klaasen, Terri Summers, Michael Buck, Mary Ellen Stanley, Charles Hill, Rita Kingseed, Susann Sumpter, Dwight Schaaf, and Mary Mast Pier. The window banner was made by Becky and Barbara Middleton.

Volunteer of the Year to be Named

Join us on April 22 during regular open hours 1:00 until 4:00 for the 4th Anniversary Party celebrating the opening of the History Center. The 2007 G.H.S. Volunteer of 2006 will be recognized at 2:00. (continued on page 2)



Hopewell Methodist Episcopal Church—1845-1915 on the southeast corner of 400 E and 50 N.—began as a log cabin. In 1873 a brick building was erected, but the advent of the automobile led to members preferring to attend worship services in neighboring towns.

GHS Calendar

- **The Tie That Binds**, through June 24.
- **April 22 4th Anniversary Party, G.H.S. Volunteer of the Year**
- **June 8-9 G.H.S. Garage Sale**
- **June 16 Tributes & Tales Dinner**
- **August, upcoming Seegar exhibit**

Refreshments will be served, and the public is invited. Past recipients of this honor were the following: 2003 Joyce Lantz and Madeline Deckard; 2004 Lisa Stout and Rachel Jenkins; 2005 Ron Simpson and Barbara Middleton.

Historic Sites Tour of Western Howard County

Make your reservation to see and learn about over 50 historic sites visited by bus tours during Russiaville's Western Days during June 1, 2, and 3. There will 2 bus tours per day at noon and 4:00 p.m. Purchase tour tickets in advance for \$8.00 or for \$10.00 on the day of departure at Martin's True Value NAPA in Russiaville or call James Martin at 628-0774. Learn about the history of western Howard County from the comfort of a luxury coach bus.

Book Sale Plans

Begin now to collect books and magazines to donate for the annual G.H.S. used book sale which the Society will sponsor during the Greentown Community Festival on August 11. Call Jean Simpson at 628-7674 for further information or for pick-up.

Recent Donations to G.H.S. Artifact Collection

The Greentown Historical Society thanks the following do-

nors for their generosity in donating artifacts that represent a part of the history of eastern Howard County: Rachel and Fred Jenkins, Ethel and Carole Petro, Dan Parsons, Glenda Owens, Tom Harper, Jo Howell, Suzanne Gingerich, Ronald Simpson, Dwight Singer, and Darwin Freeman.

GHS Donations

The Greentown Historical Society thanks the following persons for their monetary donations that are used to maintain our History Center and its programs to fulfill our mission: Mike McCann, Paul Nicholson,

Bonnie Middlesworth, Jean Simpson, Virginia Coan, Harper Implement, and Freedom Financial. We also thank the following persons who made material donations to the History Center and its programs: Barbara Middleton, Jean Simpson, Nancy Echelbarger, Lisa Stout, and Harry and Angie Sparks.

Annual Garage Sale

As you do your spring cleaning, remember the G.H.S. garage sale will be June 8-9. Call Sally Imbler at 628-7174 for more information, drop-off times, or pick-up.

West Liberty Church of Christ, April 5, 1925. A remodeled brick schoolhouse was purchased in 1923 and dedicated in 1928. The church closed in 1946, and the building was turned over to the Union Twp. Home Economics Club.



Early Union Township

Facts & Stories

*Taken from "Counties of Howard and Tipton, Indiana" 1883
Charles Blanchard, Editor*

Submitted by

Joyce Higginbottom

Research Chairman

Union Township occupies the southeast corner of Howard County and comprises thirty-one and a half square miles of territory bordering on Grant County on the east, Tipton County on the south, Liberty and Jackson Townships on the north, and Taylor Township on the west. It was originally included in the territory of Green Township, and was set off as a distinct division at the March term, 1853, of the Board of County Commissioners.

The soil in all parts of Union is the fine black loam common in the eastern part of the county, and which has given to this township its peculiar advantages as an agricultural region. When first seen by white men, this part of the county as covered with dense forests of the finest timber, the principal varieties being black and white walnut, maple, beech, hickory, ash, oak, hackberry, linn, elm and sycamore in the low grounds along the water courses.

The first settler who located in Union Township as it is at present designated, was David Bailey, the exact date of whose arrival was not ascertained, though it is supposed to have been prior to the year 18842. He located near the forks of the Wild Cat, about two miles southeast of Jerome, where he erected a small cabin and cleared a patch of ground, though he did not remain there very long. In the year 1843, Jesse Lancaster came to the township and settled a short distance north of the present site of Jerome, on land at present owned and occupied by Isaac Reed. At that time, the land was still in possession of the Indians, from whom Lancaster obtained permission to settle and make improvements.

A son-in-law of Lancaster, Charles Baldwin, came about the same time and selected a site for his home a short distance west of Jerome, near a large spring, where he erected a rude pole shanty. This structure, which cannot be dignified by the term house, was constructed in a few hours, while the wind was blowing a stiff breeze and the snow was flying thick in the air. The large cracks were stuffed with moss, which, with sheets hung around the interior, served to keep out the cold winter winds. A fire on the ground, near the cen-

tral part of the domicile, there being no floor, answered for heating and cooking purposes. Smoke was allowed to make its escape as best it could through a small opening in the brush and hay roof. The following spring, a more comfortable and convenient cabin was built, but the members of the family never forgot their experience in the rail-pen during the cold winter of 1843-44.

During 1844, the following settlers located within the present limits of the township: Charles O. Fry, William Jones, Joseph Brown, Thomas Moorman, John Farrington and John Husted.

Charles Fry settled a short distance southwest of Jerome, near Big Wild Cat, on land which he "pre-empted" when it came into market. He erected his first cabin near an Indian sugar camp, which so exasperated the red men who were in no ways friendly toward the settler, that serious results very nearly followed. The Indians looked upon Fry's action as an encroachment, and gathering a number of their braves together they rode through the country, tore down a number of newly erected but unoccupied cabins, burned fences cabins, burned fences and seized the stock belonging to several

settlers. Fry and Joseph Brown visited the Indian camp to make reparation for the offense committed, which was rather more easily accomplished than they expected. The chief said that all would be well and no further depredations be committed, providing the white man (meaning Fry), would procure them a load of hay for their ponies. Brown and Fry were compelled to go to Marion for the hay, an undertaking attended with many difficulties, as they were compelled to cut their road through the woods for almost half the distance. The hay was unloaded at the Indian village in due time, and thereafter all was peace and harmony between the Indians and settlers.

Union Township

William Nash was born in Adams County, Ohio, November 20, 1818, and is the son of Jesse and Mary (Pike) Nash, of English and German descent; his parents were married March 7, 1816, in Adams County, Ohio, where they remained about thirteen years. Jesse Nash then removed with his family to Hamilton County, Ohio, where he worked in a boat yard at \$1 per day, for one year; he then moved to Brown County and lived three years on a rented farm, when he purchased sixty-five acres, near Woodville, Ohio, on which he lived until the year 1847; he then sold his land and removed to Howard County, purchasing 150 acres in Union Township, near West Liberty. Here he remained

until his death, which occurred, November 20, 1856, having survived his wife six years. Mr. and Mrs. Nash were members of the Baptist Church, in good standing. Mr. William Nash worked at home with his father until he was twenty-six years old, receiving a limited education in the common schools; he then engaged as a farm hand, at from \$9 to \$13 per month; he was married September 20, 1847 to Lucinda Brandenburg, a daughter of William and Mary Brandenburg, of Maryland, and of German descent. Mr. Nash, about four years after his marriage, purchased seventy-five acres of land in Union Township, where he still lives, having since added twenty-eight acres of good land to his farm. Mr. and Mrs. Nash have had five

Family of Stella Nash Turner, youngest daughter of William Nash and Rachel A. Harper Nash, photo taken Thanksgiving 1948.

From left to right front row: Juanita (Turner) Surface, Virgil E. Turner, Alta (Cole Pickett) Turner, Stella (Nash) Turner, Cathy Leanne Turner, William Turner, Bernice (Copp) Turner, Cecil Letrell Turner, second row: Mary (Turner) Schaefer, William Price, Kathleen (Turner) Price Ooten, Evangeline (Apple) Turner, Dallas Turner, Esther Turner, Othel (Fellows) Turner, John William Turner, Donna Kay Turner, Sharron Turner (Dillman)



children: Evermont, Wilford, Ann, Caroline and William B., four of whom are living. Mrs. Nash died January 21, 1861, a true Christian, and member of the Baptist Church. Mr. Nash was next married September 5, 1861, to Rachel A. Harper, daughter of John and Jemima (Williams) Harper, of English and Irish descent. To this union have been born six children: Martha A., Henry T., Emma F., John F., Lucretia and Stella, four of whom are yet living. Mr. Nash was a prominent member of the Grange movement, and he and his wife are identified with the Seventh-Day Adventist Church.

A Nice Walk: Clarrissa Billings' 1836 Journey On Foot From Delaware to the Doorstep of Indiana

Submitted by Brian Lord

I'm often impressed by the courage and strength of our pioneering ancestors, and what they went through to go west. One such story is of a widowed 26-year-old mother of three, Clarrissa Billings, who was born May 7, 1810, near Dover, Delaware. After the death of her husband, she chose to make the westward overland journey. Many years later, at age 87, in a conversation with her nephew Dr. Joseph Lord, "she entered with zest into a narration of that journey of 1836."

In addition to being a single mother of three small children, what makes Clarrissa's journey remarkable was that it was done primarily on foot. In picking up on Dr. Joseph Lord's narrative from his "Family History", Clarrissa "furnishing one horse and her brother Andrew two horses, with one wagon and with this three-horse team, they made the trip to Hamilton, Ohio." The party consisted of Clarrissa and her three little boys, along with her brother Andrew, his wife Harriet, and Andrew's son from his first marriage. Clarrissa and Andrew were joined by their cousin, Philip Henry Billings, who had run away from his uncle in Philadelphia to make the trip. "After their household goods were stowed into the wagon, and the little children were placed therein, Harriet given a seat owing to her condition of health, there was not much room for many more. It was Clarrissa's lot to walk a greater portion of the way."

The most likely route taken by Clarrissa and the group was the National or Cumberland Highway, America's first highway. The highway originally began in Cumberland, Maryland, on the Potomac River in 1811, but was extended to begin in Baltimore, only 80 miles from their starting point of Dover. Going northwest, the highway went

through Uniontown, Pennsylvania, to Wheeling, Virginia (now West Virginia), before crossing over the Ohio River. From there it went through Zanesville, Columbus, and Springfield, Ohio, and on into Richmond, Indianapolis, and Terre Haute, Indiana, before finally ending in Vandalia, Illinois. Much of U.S. Highway 40 and Interstate 70 mirrors the National Highway today.

Finding shelter was also an issue on the trip. Dr. Joseph Lord tells us that "only a few times, she said, did they lodge in houses at night while they were en-route." Just before reaching the Indiana border near Richmond, they turned south and settled in Hamilton, OH, the seat of Butler County. They journeyed in the late fall, as "a little snow had fallen upon them before they reached Hamilton, OH." The distance from Kent County, Delaware, to Hamilton, Ohio, is 616 miles. Clarrissa had walked roughly 24 marathons back to back!

Obviously a spirited and energetic woman, she was not to remain single for long. Dr. Lord tells us that "here it was on Christmas Day or about that time that she married William Truitt who arrived from Delaware almost simultaneously with Clarrissa's party." They were married and had four children together.

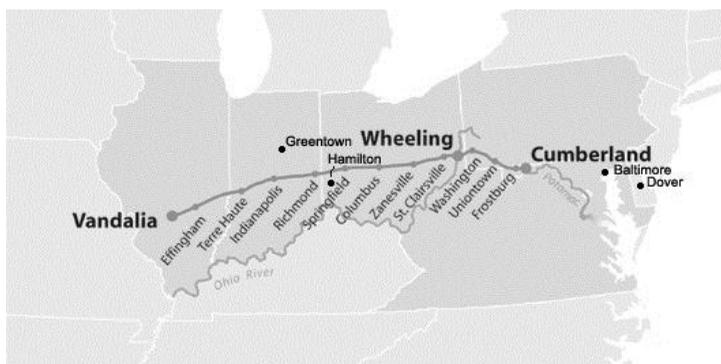
Related to the Billings by marriage through Katie Lord, (daughter of Revolutionary War soldier Henry Lord), the James J. Lord family followed the Billings family about 20 years later, and eventually settled in eastern Howard County in 1860.

Citing: "Family History" by Dr. Joseph Levi Lord, 1897

"The Historical National Road in Ohio" by Glenn Harper and Doug Smith

Brian Lord is an internationally read writer, whose works have been published in over 40 different publications and in three countries. A Greentown native, he currently resides near Nashville, Tennessee.

*National Road Map used and edited with permission by:
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Tributes and Tales Dinner to Feature Janet Lemler

The 2007 Tributes and Tales Dinner will recognize Janet Lemler and her unique place in Greentown's history. The dinner will be Saturday, June 16, 6:30 p.m. at the Lions Community Building at the fairgrounds. The price is \$22.50 or \$10.00 for children under 12 years. Reservations

may be made by submitting payment to Greentown Historical Society, P.O. Box 313, Greentown, IN 46936.

In June 1987, Janet reached her life's goal of owning a health care facility for the elderly. Her dream had developed as she watched her beloved grandmother, Blanche Frakes, a lifelong resident and farmer in Greentown, age and show signs of needing assis-

tance. Janet had longed since childhood to be a Registered Nurse, and follow in the footsteps of her mother, Gula Frakes Herber Rice.

Janet was born an identical twin August 3, 1943, in Detroit, Michigan. The first 10 years of her life were spent in Greentown living with her mother, her grandparents, John and Blanche Frakes, and her twin sister, Mary.

Upon graduation from New Haven High School, Janet married and raised two daughters, Chanda and Penny, who share ownership in Century Villa Health Care and Rehabilitation and Century Fields Retirement Community.

Janet worked for thirteen years with Catholic Charities and then was offered a position as Administrator in a long-term-care facility in Lafayette. She was given sole responsibility of opening and maintaining the day-to-day operations for a one-hundred bed facility which was under construction.

Friends and business acquaintances asked Janet why she didn't pursue building her own nursing facility. With this encouragement, Janet talked with her grandmother and mother about the possibility of establishing a nursing facility on her grandparents' land in Greentown. The community came forth with encouragement, words of welcome, and a sincere desire to accept her into the community with such a project. Knowing that the community was behind her was all she needed.

Plans were progressing and excitement was abounding, but she was denied her

request from the State, indicating there was no need for additional certified beds in Howard County according to the State formula. She appealed the decisions of the board three more times.

John Martin, Janet's longtime friend and significant other, encouraged her to make one more attempt to persuade the State. The licensing board reversed course. She would be allowed to build all sixty beds as certified. Three months before opening her facility, Janet moved into the family home in Greentown.

Janet became the first woman in Howard County and the surrounding areas to build and own a long-term care facility. The facility was named Century Villa in honor of her grandmother's 100 years in Greentown, and the logo of the facility is a cameo of her grandmother. Within ten months the sixty beds were full with a waiting list. Her grandmother, at the age of 105, had lived to see the sixty beds filled and sighed with relief that Janet had accomplished her goal. Janet then again approached the contractor to build an additional thirty beds to meet the needs of the community.

In 1991 Janet once again saw an unmet need for the elderly and pioneered the idea of the first residential independent and assisted living facility in Howard County. She constructed forty-three apartments, naming them Century Fields Retirement Community. Janet then accomplished her childhood dream of becoming a Registered Nurse.

Janet has undertaken yet another expansion of Century Villa. It will provide a state-of-the-art facility, consisting of private suites for short term rehabilitation residents, private dining areas, a larger therapy gym, a grow room, and a 3500 square foot chapel/community room. The nondenominational chapel will offer families the opportunity to join their loved ones for weekly spiritual services.

Janet will be the first to tell anyone that the most important accomplishment of her life of which she is most proud are her daughters, Chanda and Penny, and their children. When asked about her hobbies, her first response is spending time with her grandchildren. She also enjoys photography, creating greeting cards, and vacationing in Key West.

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P.O. Box 313
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2007 Membership Dues

If your address label above has a **red dot** beside your name, we have not yet received your 2007 dues payment. We hope that you will consider rejoining the Greentown Historical Society and helping us continue to serve eastern Howard County history.

Our Mission

- *To promote public awareness and appreciation of the unique history of eastern Howard County, Indiana, and its citizens.*
- *To carry out historical research, preservation, and education.*
- *To provide the public with meaningful heritage experiences.*