



WARREN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

www.warrencountyhistory.org Box 256, Indianola, IA 50125 (515)961-8085

May-June 2011

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Page 2 Highlights of Pioneer School
- Page 4 Interview with CCC Worker
- Page 6 John Frederick

WCHS MEETING

Tuesday, May 24
7:00 pm

Hoosier Row School
Program: Judy McClymond

Travel Directions to school:
Turn south on R63 at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church and Highway 92. It is right after Nevada. It will be on your right. Remember there is no public restroom.

LOG CABIN MEETING

5:30 pm Tuesday, June 14



SPAGHETTI DINNER

Spaghetti, salad, bread, & dessert

Monday, June 6
5 pm to 7 pm

WARREN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Adult \$8 Couple \$15 Child \$5

SPELLING BEE WINNERS

These are the winners of our Wednesday, May 18th Indianola 5th Graders Spelling Bee. Left to right: 3rd place, Jared Nichols; 2nd place, Liza Lathrum; and 1st place, Langley Cleveland.



ARTHUR WHERRY RICHARDS

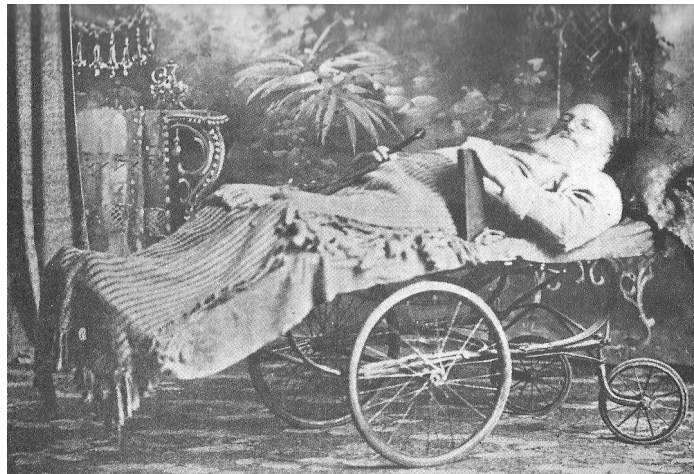


Richards was born in Columbiana County, Ohio in 1832 and was raised on a farm. He was a real estate agent and broker. Arthur learned the trade of cabinet making and came to Warren County in 1854, and engaged in this business in Indianola. He enlisted in the 3rd Iowa Infantry in May, 1861, and was discharged on December 23, 1861, at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri due to sciatic rheumatism and spinal injury caused by jumping from a train to chase rebels. The back injury rendered the soldier unable to sit up or stand.

He was an inventor and had several patents. One patent was the perambulating cot that you see in this photo. Three other patents were a corn harvester, well cleaner and corn husker. He married Miss Margaret A. McCowan in 1857 and she was born in Rabway, New Jersey. They had nine children: Frank A., Mary Ella, John M., Stella Captola, Simpson B., Sterling J., Lotta M. and Cora B; one son, Preston, was drowned in South River, August 17, 1869, aged eight years.

Comments on the Civil War from **Progress of Life & Thought** or "**Papa's Scrap Book**" published in 1892 by Richards.

"What has been gained, you may ask, in return for all this bloodshed and carnage? The emancipation of three million slaves, and in this the character of the nation, opened the way so that in a few years more the negro may be cultured up higher in the scale of humanity. We have taught the world that a republican form of government may live through the fiercest trial that can come, and that "a house divided against itself" need not necessarily fall. *"For wrongs may be righted — And we all united."*



2011 INDIANOLA 5th GRADE PIONEER SCHOOL



Bob Davey highlights the pioneer church.



Making rope with Dwight McCormick



McKee log cabin with Austin Freeman



Dennis Allen supervises the two person saw.



Visiting Allerton's (the horse) marker with Mary McCormick.



Grinding corn with Cynthia Tracy

NEW MUSEUM ACQUISITIONS

Early doll with composition head and hands on cloth body.

A single tree and an Oshkosh lug hook used to carry poles or logs.

**30th ANNIVERSARY OF THE WCHS MUSEUM BUILDING
May 31, 1981-May 31, 2011**

The WCHS had acquired and restored the Log Cabin and Mt. Hope School, but it still had no building to house artifacts and historic records. In 1975, the Warren County Fair Board gave the Society permission to construct a museum near the school and log cabin. The Society, now 400-member strong, moved quickly to adopt a financial plan and fundraising campaign. Ground-breaking for the new building was held during Log Cabin Days on Sunday, September 26, 1976. Individuals participating in the ceremony included: Charles Beam, President; Frank Ford, Sr., Museum Fundraising Chairman; Corwin Hicks, Master of Ceremonies; and Carl Hirsch, Fair Board representative.

Specifications for the museum building called for a two-story 12,000-square foot steel superstructure, a drive-in basement, poured concrete on both floors, humidity control for preservation, plumbing and heating and a 100-capacity meeting room. For security reasons, windows were omitted.

On Sunday, May 31, 1981, after countless hours of fund-raising, hammering, nailing, sawing, and painting by scores of volunteers, the WCHS Museum Building was dedicated. Corwyn Hicks, former President of the Society and director of horticulture, Iowa Department of Agriculture, was the featured speaker at the ceremony. Musical entertainment was provided by vocal soloist Jim Brommel of St. Marys and the Town and Country Chapter of Sweet Adelines. President Charles Beam announced the Society had grown to 600 members, 100 living out-of-state. The building cost approximately \$110,000 and was valued at \$175,000 at completion.

Although the interior work was only half done at the time of dedication, President Beam predicted: "When the museum is finally completed, it will stand as a memorial to the pioneers who settled Warren County and to the many Society members who have passed away and whose dream was a historical museum for Warren County." Kitchen cabinets, a gift from the Ford family in memory of their parents Mr. and Mrs. Frank Ford, Sr. were essential early additions to the museum. The new building soon inspired donations of numerous items and several showcases. Many artifacts of Warren County historic interest came from families knowing that now their precious heirlooms would be preserved and displayed free to the public in a safe and secure building in Indianola.

**WE OWE A BIG "THANK YOU" TO THESE WARREN COUNTY MEN AND WOMEN WHO
PERSEVERED UNTIL THE DREAM OF THIS MUSEUM WAS AN ACTUALITY!**



2011 Log Cabin
Festival Quilt will be
raffled on Sunday,
September 25
Raffle tickets will
soon be available.

CCC at Warren County Fair Grounds

On May 8, 1934 160 Civilian Conservation Corp men arrived at Camp 769 at the Warren County Fair Grounds in Indianola to begin work on the lake-site which is now known to us as Lake Ahquabi. The CCC was a public relief program of the federal government that operated from 1933 to 1942 for unemployed, unmarried men from relief families ages 18-25. On May 29, 1936 Lake Ahquabi State Park was officially opened and dedicated.

Excerpted from an Iowa DNR interview with Owen Beaman, Arispe, Iowa.

DNR: Why did you enroll in the program?

OWEN: By golly you had to eat and that was the depression. My mother, my dad had died, and she got \$25 a month and I got \$5 a month and my board and clothes. That was grocery money for her after all. There wasn't such a thing as all the programs like they have now a days.

DNR: Can you tell me about your first day in camp?

OWEN: Well there wasn't no, they didn't have no building then. They had taken an old - out there was a fair grounds at Indianola and there was an old shed there they had made into a latrine and a shower house. And they set up these, well the army called them hospital camps. You know what I mean. And that's what we lived in. And they set up a kitchen in one of the old barns that had been there. That's how we lived. And they built barracks, just old cheap barracks, and we lived in them. They weren't lined or anything, They were up off the ground, but they had two stoves in every one of them, big old pot belly stoves. They would freeze the fire bucket up about all the time but we had lots of blankets and the food was good. Can't complain about the food. It was just army rations.

DNR: How long do you think you were in the hospital tents before the barracks were built?

OWEN: I don't know, probably 6 months I imagine, I know it was getting pretty cold weather when we got out of the tents.

DNR: They give you some uniforms?

OWEN: Just work clothes. Most of them were pants and fatigues, army fatigues. I guess finally they did issue us ODs.

DNR: Did you have any personal items that you were able to take with you to the camp?

OWEN: I suppose, toothbrush and razor and so on and so forth. I suppose we did, anyhow it seems like we did but they issued you them too.

DNR: Do you remember who your bunk mates were? Or anyone else you would have roomed with there in the barracks.

OWEN: Oh, yes, I can remember some of them. There was Jim Weaver was one of them. And oh, by golly, Harold? Harold Loudon, no not Loudon, but Harold, he was from Lacona, I can't say his last name, and a fellow by the name of Kline, Carl Kline. I just remembered them names off hand.

DNR: OK let's talk about some of the work that your camp did. What was some of the main projects the camp was involved in?

OWEN: Building Lake Ahquabi, putting in the dam, so on and so forth, clearing the timber off where the lake stands now. Putting in the dam and so on. Building the roads in there, the parking lots, the campground, putting up the shelter houses, the bathhouses, the beach, the water system, putting the pump house in, taking the water out of the lake and running it through a purification plant, piped it up to the custodian's house. Put the drinking fountains up in the campground.

I worked on most of these. I usually, I was on machinery most of the time. We didn't have dozers then, we had a tumblebug and a cat. A tumblebug is just nothing but a, it is not an old horse scraper, but something like that. Put it behind the cat and you had a rope you tripped it, I don't know how wide it was anymore it has been so long ago. You tripped it and it rolled and dumped the dirt out. It was used as a scraper. We didn't have, I don't know why we didn't have a scraper, they made them then, but we never had one there. We had a cat, I run the cat most of the time.

JUNE WCHS MEETING 7:00 p.m. WCHS
Jo Reynolds will talk about the Warren County Fair—Past, Present and Future



INDIANOLA GETS GATE

100 years ago on June 15, 1911, the Haldeman Gate Factory of Milo began shipping its machinery to Indianola. The reorganized factory-The Haldeman Manufacturing Company-is lead by C.D. Haldeman, president; C.M.Trimble, secretary and treasurer; C. L. Haldeman, assistant secretary; and John L. Powers, advertising manager. The new company will occupy the old mill building.

Charles had two patents-January 5, 1909, #9085664 Fence Gate and July 23, 1912 #103394 a Farm Gate. The fence gate involves the bridge truss idea, making the gate adjustable and equalizing the strain. The framework is made from carbonized hollow steel, which stand the strain and keeps it shape.

The gate is the best thing of its kind on the market. Locally 50 of these gates are in use on the Hopper farms, three gates are at the Indianola cemetery, and others have been places on many farms in the area. The gates have been on the market for only one year, but are selling fast. From the Indianola Record

Ethel Morgan teaching Milo 3rd graders



In April Jerry Wetzel helped us start thinking about the Civil War Sesquicentennial by sharing information and stories about Civil War Union Soldiers in his family. He provided the following hint: if you know your ancestor’s company or unit, you can find additional information at the National Archives in Washington D. C.

MEET WCHS VOLUNTERS

Cris was born in Des Moines and has one daughter and a grandson. She is related to folks in Allen Township and Avon Lake.

Her hobbies are genealogy, sewing (recently, she sewed Dennis pioneer shirts and pants for Pioneer School), collecting and refinishing antiques, cooking and crafts.



Cris Nagla

Cris had been a district manager for a candy store. That job required lots of travel and we are glad she now has time to volunteer. She serves as the WCHS Librarian and is responsible for recording and indexing obituaries and probates, among other duties. She is currently acquiring funeral home records. She is our primary genealogy researcher.

You can find her busily working in the WCHS library most Thursdays and Saturdays. She is an excellent organizer and helps keep those of us who are not so neat on our toes.

**WARREN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP
Renew or become a member today!**

Name:

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

Annual Membership is \$15

**Send to: WCHS, Box 256
Indianola, IA 50125**

Thank you for your support.

JOHN FREDERICK (Frederick Stiffler)

NEVER MET A CAMERA HE DIDN'T LIKE

Actor John Frederick (sometimes know as John Merrick) was born Frederick Stiffler on July 4, 1916, on a farm near Norwalk, the son of Maud and Fred Stiffler.

He became enthralled with movies after seeing his first one at the Des Moines Orpheum.

At 16 he sold a calf to raise money for his first trip to Hollywood. After graduation from Norwalk High School, he attended Drake University on a music scholarship, then switched to the University of Iowa on an athletic scholarship but was injured during a football scrimmage.

The acting bug bit when actor MacDonald Carey, a fellow Iowan, encouraged him to try out for a campus play. Before daring to try acting as a full-time career, Frederick became a school principal at Ira in Jasper County and later taught at Frederika. His rendition of Irving Berlin's flag-waving song, "God Bless America," in a movie talent contest during the early days of World War II won him a screen test at RKO. The 6-foot 2-inch actor arrived in Los Angeles in 1942 and enthusiastically took a variety of stage and movie parts.

He and actress Louise Allbritton were secretly married in Mexico, but their careers put them on separate coasts. Before divorcing, they had one daughter, adopted and raised by Allbritton's parents.

John Frederick never met a camera he didn't like, and the feeling was mutual. It's little wonder the actor with the sturdy physique and photogenic face was sought for roles in theater, motion pictures, and television, ranging from hero rancher to despicable villain, from Broadway baritone to movie *Tarzan*, from big-screen devout cardinal to little-screen hunky *Superman*.



Along the way, Frederick's chosen profession put him next to history being made. Touring the front lines in *Ten Little Indians* for the USO, he saw war and GIs in raw close-up. Later during his years in Rome he appeared in films for legendary directors Sergio Leone, Luchino Visconte and Federico Fellini, and there he met Oleg Vidov, Russia's Robert Redford, whom he would later help to defect to the United States with some string-pulling assistance from an old Iowa family friend, President Ronald Reagan. Also down the road, appeared opposite Mae West on Broadway, had tea with Princess Grace at the Monaco palace, escorted Elizabeth Taylor as a "cover" when she and Richard Burton were meeting in public during their clandestine romance, and shared a newspaper with Garbo on a park bench in Switzerland.

He appeared in such films as *The Ten Commandments*, *The Shoes of the Fisherman*, *Cleopatra*, and as Lord of the Jungle in *Tarzan Meets His Mate*, and on television series such as *Superman*, *Bonanza*, *Twilight Zone*, *Tales of Wells Fargo*, *Death Valley Days*, and *Playhouse 90* with Helen Hayes.

He retired on his ranch-style home in Palm Springs in the 1970s, and in 1999 he wrote his autobiography, *Name Dropping on your Head*. You can find a copy of this at the Warren County Historical Society Library.

He filmed TV Superman episodes while George Reeves was on leave deciding whether to continue. They never aired.

WARREN COUNTY HISTORICAL TIDBITS

On May 18, 1915 Bishop Austin Dowling, D. D. presided at the cornerstone laying of the St. Augustine Church in Milo.

The Pyra Post Office was established on June 18, 1856. William S. Glaze was the first postmaster. In 1859 the name of the post office was changed to Norwalk.

On December 28, 1911, E. L. Thompson and F. C. Stiffler have started the foundation for the erection of a 26 x 80 town hall in New Virginia. The building is to be a frame one and is being put up on Thompson's and north of William's blacksmith shop. A stage will be built and when completed will be a credit to the town. We'll now have a place to hold entertainment and political speaking.