



March 2016

WARREN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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WCHS ANNUAL MEETING

Tuesday, March 22

6:15 Bring your own Burger King Supper 7:00 pm

**Deborah Taylor
The Underground Railroad in Warren County**

Indoor Farmer's Market

April 9, 9:00

WCHS EXECUTIVE BOARD

Sat. April 9 at 9:30

LCF COMMITTEE

April 9 at 10:30

WCHS GENERAL MEETING

Burger King Tues.

April 26

Stories from WC Jails

Kathi Stanfield

WCHS EXECUTIVE BOARD

Sat. at 9:30

May 14

LCF COMMITTEE

Sat. at 10:30

May 14

Silk & High Tea

WCHS Victorian Thru 1960s, Wedding Gown Style Show and High Tea

June 5, 2:00

MARCH 22 WCHS ANNUAL MEETING

Join us Tuesday night March 22 at 6:30 pm with your Burger King take out. Dessert will be provided. We will have election of officers and a brief meeting to be followed by a program on the Underground Railroad by Deb Taylor. She has been researching this subject for the past year and has discovered new information to share with us. **Map of Iowa UGRR**

From *The Underground Railroad*, by Curtis Harnack, **The Iowan**, June/July 1956

Proposed 2016 WCHS Officer Slate:

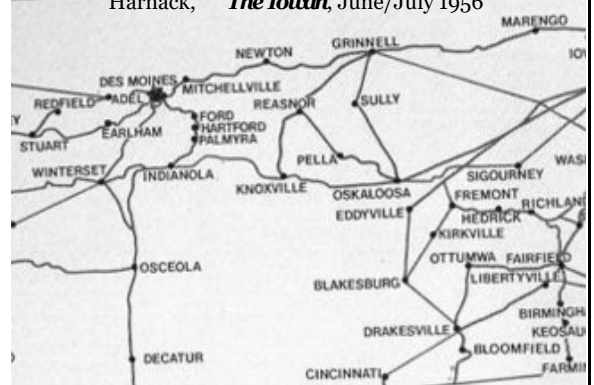
President: Kathi Stanfield

1st Vice President: Darlene Lawyer

2nd Vice President: Deb Taylor

Treasurer: Judy McClymond

Secretary: Linda Beatty



STORIES FROM WARREN COUNTY JAILS

At the April 26th WCHS Meeting Kathi Stanfield will present a program with stories of our jails. With the bond issue, it seems appropriate to learn some jail history. Here is one story. **J.B. Wilson Not Sentenced But Locked UP!** From **Indianola Record Herald**, July 28, 1944

Lawyer J. Berkley Wilson was let into a client/prisoner's cell to discuss his case by Warren County Sheriff Lewis Johnson. Johnson said teasingly, "I'll be glad to lock you up."

And that is how Mr. Wilson spent two hours behind jail bars, where he had placed a good many law-breakers while county attorney. His interview over, Berkley waited 10 minutes, then 1/2 hour, 1 hour and still the sheriff didn't show up. Two hours and still no sheriff. He thought of yelling but yells often came from the jail.

Meanwhile at Berkley's office, clients came in for appointments and no Mr. Wilson. Finally, his wife called the sheriff asking if Berkley had accidentally been left in the cell. "Well, I'll be ____, I'm sorry, I just, well I guess I'm getting forgetful," replied an embarrassed sheriff as he stumbled for words. "I'll release him at once."



BEVERLY DICKERON RETIRES AS WCHS TREASURER

You noticed in the proposed WCHS officer list above that this cornerstone of our historical society was no longer to be our treasurer.

Beverly became treasurer when Mary Long retired a number of years ago. Eventually, she took over the presidency, LCF and served as treasurer until 2008. It was at this time she continued as treasurer but brought in new people to take various leadership roles. Without Beverly Dickerson's vision, prudence, encouragement, and willingness to persevere, this organization might have failed to exist early in 2000. We can never thank her enough for all that she has done for this organization. When you see her, acknowledge her dedication and work with a big "THANK YOU".



WORLD WAR II REMEMBERED, Warren County Valor 2017 Book by Jerry Beatty

Jerry Beatty has decided that his next book will have information about Warren County residents who served during WW II and those who remained at home. Notice that this book will not be completed until 2017. Thanks to Marty and Jim Ford we have over 80 videos of WW II Veterans telling their personal stories. We are asking that you share your family stories, memorabilia, and photos with us. We can scan or photograph your items at the museum on Thursdays 9-4 or Saturdays 9-noon.

INDIANOLA JEWELER LEVI TAYLOR

According to the 1870 Census, Levi Taylor was a 27 year old jeweler living in an Indianola hotel run by S.F. Downing. He designed and made his mini engine from materials he had on hand as a jeweler. He was born in Pennsylvania about 1843. In the 1900 Census Levi had moved to Osceola. He married Emma in 1880. They had several sons who continued in the jewelry business in Osceola after Levi's death.



What was called 'the smallest steam engine in the world' was exhibited at the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia by Levi Taylor of Indianola, Iowa. This engine was so small that a magnifying glass was needed to see some of its parts. It was displayed on the platform of the giant Corliss engine which powered all the displays in Machinery Hall. Levi's mini engine rested on a gold coin.

Here is the story of Levi's mini engine. No one knows why he made it or why he brought it to the expo. After Levi's death the engine was in possession of his sons in Osceola. Eventually, the engine made its way into the Henry Ford Museum.

Levi's mini engine is now located in the Henry Ford Museum Collection, Dearborn Michigan. Ford Museum Photo

While a large throng of visitors from all countries were standing silently around the mighty Corliss engine, watching its gigantic movements with feelings partly of delight and partly of awe, a tall, gentlemanly-looking personage, who afterward gave his name and address as Levi Taylor, of Indianola, Iowa, joined the crowd, and with the others paid unspoken yet

eloquent homage to the wondrous monster before him. After watching the motions for a few moments the gentleman passed around to one side, and extracting from his pocket a small tin case, took from it what looked like a diminutive alcohol lamp, and striking a match, started a miniature flame and placed the contrivance (Levi's miniature engine) on a corner of the platform which surrounds the mighty steam giant from Rhode Island. (Mini engine) It has the regular steam gauge, and, though complete in every particular, the entire apparatus weighs only seven grains, while the engine proper weighs but three grains. It is made of gold, steel and platinum. The fly-wheel is only 3/4 of an inch in diameter; the stroke is 1/24 of an inch, and the cut-off 1/64 of an inch. The machinery, which can all be taken apart, was packed in films of silk. From Fort Wayne Weekly Sentinel, Fort Wayne, Indiana Aug. 2, 1876



Corliss Engine at 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition From Harper's Magazine 1876

INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC From 1918 Zenith

Simpson College will not close her doors until June 25 this year, owing to the lengthy influenza quarantines of last winter. During the last quarter, college has been held on Saturday in order to insure the students a full year's credit.

The influenza (also known as Spanish flu or La Grippe) epidemic of 1918-1919 killed more than WWI. Somewhere between 20 to 40 million died. More died of influenza in one year than in 4 years of the Bubonic Plague 1347-1351.

In spite of the lateness of Commencement, plans are being made for a record week including the Class Day exercises, the Senior Class Play, and May Festival with the crowning of the May Queen and dancing round the Maypole.



Dancing round the Maypole at Simpson May Festival 1909

WCHS ENDOWMENT FUND UPDATE

The Dec. 31, 2015 value of this fund is \$155,011. Based on the Endowment, By-Laws, the WCHS Board may withdraw up to 4% of each year end value as needed for any purpose they deem necessary. This year that amount is \$6,200. As can be seen if we could grow this endowment over time, the stream of annual income also increases. This will give the WCHS a greater presence and value to the community.

Most of the money invested in this Endowment has been through memorial gifts.

Two ways we can grow the WCHS Endowment:

- 1) Through the current investments
- 2) Additional contributions

Contributions may come in 2 ways

- 1) Charitable contributions while living
- 2) Charitable contribution through planning your estate



Charitable giving can be done in several ways with favorable income and estate tax benefits. We encourage those interested in charity giving to contact your attorney for planning ideas.

WCHS Endowment Board:

- Chairman Phil Langstraat
- Sec/Treasurer Eileen Thompson
- Everett Brown
- Bev Dickerson
- Dan Porter
- Kathi Stanfield
- Juanita Ott



VFW Auxiliary Donates Flag and Pole

The Indianola Veterans of Foreign Wars Women's Auxiliary disbanded in 2015. They have donated a beautiful flagpole and flag which is located on the east side of our building near John Parker's mural. John Parker Sr. and Dwight McCormick dug the hole, Dwight put in the lighting and John and grandson put up the pole. Thanks to Anne Parker and the VFW Auxiliary, John Parker Sr. and Dwight McCormick.



Have you renewed your 2016 WCHS Membership? If not, clip and return to WCHS, Box 256, Indianola, IA 50125

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

E-mail Address: _____ Send Newsletter via E-mail _____

Each Newsletter mailed costs \$2.00

\$15 Annual Dues: _____ Life Member Annual Gift: _____ Gift for Indianola Newspaper Digitizing: _____

INDIANOLA PHILLIPS' SISTERS

The Phillips Sisters Orchestra had six young women who could play one instrument especially well and traveled the Redpath-Honer Chautauqua Premier Circuit for about 7 summers from the late teens into the 1920s. They began with six sisters and then one quit and they added Helen Carrie. *The sisters have had the advantage of developing their musical talent together since babyhood. For this reason the ensemble numbers are so well rendered that this little orchestra of six people produces music, both popular and classic, such as you would expect from a much larger organization. The solo work of all of them is splendid. They also danced the Highland Fling.*

Miss Helen Carrie, violinist, is both a talented artist and a winsome young woman. The entire combination is one that is especially interesting for it includes violin, cello, trombone cornet and drums in addition to other features. From **The El Dorado Republican, El Dorado, KS, July 7, 1922, Highland Lassies.**

The Phillips' sisters had extensive musical coaching prior to embarking on a Chautauqua tour. They studied at Simpson College, had individual music lessons and had musical directors rehearse them in preparation for their Chautauqua tours. The youngest sisters were still in high school when they toured.

The Phillips' sisters parents were James Theophilus and Jane Jennie (Bullard) Phillips. The father moved the family from Seymour to Indianola so the girls could pursue their music at Simpson.

The Phillips Sisters Orchestra made up of Ada Rachael, 1892-1972; Phyllis Marion, 1894-1978; Dorothy Clementine, 1897-1984; Alice James, 1898-1982; Carolyn E., 1903-1981. Dorothy married Henry F. Kohl in Indianola on August 24, 1923. The minister was Fred N. Willis and witnesses were Father Theophilus Phillips and C. Harlan Briggs. The other daughters married: Ada and Arman Richard Mahrt, Phyllis and Fletcher Simpson Brown, Alice and Kermit W. Parker, and Carolyn and Elmon Williams.

We learned about these talented musicians from Dr. John Benoit, Simpson College professor of music, who has been researching this group and the Redpath-Honer Chautauqua Circuit. If you have any information about the Phillips sisters, we would appreciate your sharing it with the WCHS and John Benoit.

From 1928 Zenith

Charlotte Phillips graduated from Simpson in 1926. She was an instructor at Simpson of violin and Director of the Junior and Senior Orchestras.



Phillips Sisters' Orchestra

Charlotte, Alice, Phyllis, Ada, Dorothy and Carolyn



From 1920 Simpson Zenith

Phyllis M. Phillips, Conservatory Orchestra (3) (1); Treasurer of Orchestra (2); Alpian Consul(3); Chorister (2); Student Council (10 Quiet and dignified. Very capable and domestic. Never wastes words. Noted for her dancing. Is an orchestra by herself. Can make music from anything from a fine comb to a steam calliope.

From 1921 Simpson Zenith

Dorothy Phillips (1) (2) (3); President of Orchestra (3); Messiah (3); President of French Club (2); Class Secretary (1); English Seminar (2); Alpian Consul (1); Zenith Staff (3)



Stars in modern languages. She might be called a Pollyanna. Always finds something to be glad about. An Excellent trombonist. A real Chautauqua artiste. Not a cigarette fiend, but strong for "Campbell".





PLAN TO DIGITIZE NEWSPAPERS

We are raising funds for a project to have Warren County Newspapers from mid 1860s to 1924 digitized. This project would be done by a company in Cedar Rapids at a cost of approximately \$10,000. Digitization would help us preserve our deteriorating newspapers and make them word searchable for researchers. We have some monies donated and are looking for your help. If you would like to help fund this project, send your checks to WCHS, Box 256, Indianola, IA. For more information contact Ruth Hall on Thursdays at 961-8085.

WARREN COUNTY TIDBITS

Milo, IA, July 31 –Rev. J.E. Stewart and Elder T.D. Wilson fought to a finish in the United Presbyterian Church Sunday evening, Elders H.F. Schrader and T.P. Spear acting as seconds, gate keepers and audience. A dispute had arisen which led to unpleasant and unchristian like words, then to force and later to blows. Stewart being the younger man and with more science, soon had the elder beaten. All of the participants were arrested. From the **Morning Daily Herald**, Albany, Oregon Aug. 1, 1891

Married– At residence of the bride’s parents near Ford, Thursday, the 17, 1887, Mr. John C. Richards of Hartford, Iowa, to Miss Minnie L. Woodward, Rev. David Craig officiating. **The Des Moines Register**, Feb. 23, 1887

Indianola—Determined that their neighborhood rural schools should not close, and convinced that the “3 R” methods of a quarter-century ago were not so far out of line that they couldn’t again instruct pupils, eight grandmothers resumed teaching in Warren County rural schools during the school year just closing.

Mrs. Carrie Crawford, teacher at White Breast Center School, quit in 1912, but when teachers were needed badly last year to prevent the schools from closing she offered to return to the same school she had taught 33 years ago.

Tests show the grandmothers’ pupils shared in the record made by Warren County rural schools in 1944. They were above the U.S. standardized records in the second, fourth and sixth grades. No tests were required in other grades.

The grandmothers in addition to Mrs. Crawford are: Mrs. Bessie Burns, Pleasant Hill School; Mrs. Nelle Williams, Mount Hope; Mrs. Nannie Middleswart, Mount Moriah; Mrs. Edna King, Squaw Center; Mrs. Nellie Simmons, Reddish; Mrs. Marjorie Nutting, Cumming; Mrs. Edna Wilson, Sandyville.

Supt. R.C. Norris said the rural teaching staff included 47 married teachers, of whom 14 had children in school. Fifteen teachers were unmarried. He estimated 32 of the 62 rural teachers again will sign contracts for next fall.

Thirty-two schools were closed during the last fiscal year for lack of pupils. From **Des Moines Register**, May 20, 1945

John Franklin Borrall’s parents, John S. and Melissa Borrall, came to Indianola from Des Moines in the autumn of 1868 because his father anticipated plenty of work for his trade , brick making and masonry. The Borralls settled northwest of town, near where Simpson College now stands.

John Franklin said that when the original contractor for making the bricks for Warren County’s first courthouse threw up the contract with the building in-completed, John S. Borrall, Elias Baysinger and Israel Goodman formed a company and took the contract to complete the bricks for the building. At that time John S. Borrall owned the acres on which Simpson College stands, so their brick-making equipment was moved to that location and the mud used in those bricks was made from that ground.

Later, John S. Borrall bought 15 acres along the south border of the farm now owned by Geo Mahr in the Ogden district and the mud machine and accompanying equipment were moved to this location. John S. and Baysinger continued their partnership and made bricks for most of the Jacoby block and a majority of the other buildings on the north side of the Indianola Square. They made most of Hawthorne School’s bricks and the vast number of other buildings.

From **The Indianola Herald**, January 16, 1941.

WCHS NEW ACCESSIONS

Bill Overland— Two Warren County Sheriff badges, brass knuckles, handcuffs, and shackles from Bill's relative Harry Hartzler, who was Warren County Sheriff in the 1920s

Paula Williams—Pioneer dress, bonnet, purse worn by Doris Williams, Medora

Lita Meints—1970s Indianola Band uniform

Dave & Marieta Grissom—Brach's Candy Display Case from Shoemaker Hardware Store in Milo

Marieta Grissom—Metal 1950s dollhouse and furnishings

Don E. Ames—The Ancestors and Descendants of Oren Paul Ames, 3rd Edition

Dunn Library—Wood backed copper photo printer blocks

Vivian Richmond—Bobbit support for weaving



Update on Past Perfect Software Program

We are making progress in our collection and content management system using the Past Perfect Software. We started using this software in 2009 and since that time we have recorded 2,041 accessions. Each accession often includes many items. Our objects collection has 3,570 items, the photo collection has 3,355 items, the archive collection (this is unpublished books and papers) has 2,517 items, and the library of published books has 1,179 items. We still have many other items in our collection that have not yet been entered in the computer. We are able to keep up with the record keeping for recent items as they are donated and as time permits the older donations in our collection are researched and recorded in the computer.

This program has also made it possible for us to easily maintain a membership contact list and list of people who have donated items and money.

Past Perfect is a great resource for researchers because when they come looking for information about a particular person or place we can search the computer and direct them to the location in our library or museum for their research.

SILK & HIGH TEA

WCHS

Victorian Thru 1960s, Wedding Gown Style Show & High Tea

Sunday

June 5

2:00 pm

WCHS



The Ultimate

GIRLS' Day Out!

Tickets \$10

From WCHS Members

Or Call 961-8085