

MORGAN COUNTY

HISTORY CENTER & MUSEUM



Vol. 3, No. 2

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2025

The Annual Museum Fundraising Banquet was held April 10 at River Valley Church. Local Farms featured on the program were Giles & Mary Mitchell, Leonard, Jim & Ann Lankford, Smith, Griggs & McNeff, Ron & Carroll Burnett Springvale Farm, Duckworth Family, Kivett Family, Jerry & Marcia Hodges Heritage Farm, Clements & Pate, Jack Cook, Hunter's Honey Farm, Voyles Farms Inc. & Voyles Brothers Grain, Dow Farms, The Bray Farm, Milhon Farms & Milhon Air, Percy, Burns, Cook, Stephany Farm, Byram S. Crone, Inc., Andrews/Hine Cedar Knoll Farm, Hine Brothers, Crone Farm, and the Hubbard Mill.

Food prepared and served by the River Valley Church was superb. The Silent Auction contained a variety of offerings from maps and china-painting classes, and gift certificates to a youth adventure package. The annual event was enjoyed by over 200 attendees.

We appreciate all those who contributed to the banquet. Thank you for making our annual fund raiser a big success.



Leonard Farms
"Top-Notch"

Lankford Farms
Hoosier
Homestead



Voyles Farms Hoosier Hoosier
Homestead



Duckworth Farms

Our Contact Information

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Open Hours:

Monday 10:00AM-2:00PM

Thursday 4:00PM-7:00PM

Saturday 10:00AM-3:00PM

MSD Third Grades Visit Museum

Barb Boys, Crystal Chandler, and Marcia Hodges visited the Metropolitan School District of Martinsville's third grade classes last fall. The schools bussed the children to the museum this Spring for a hands on view of our facility. Volunteers Barb, Marcia, Volitta Fritsche, Darrell French, Vickie Kivett, Ron Vail, Patty Dow, and Jill Coffey hosted the children in each of the six rooms of the museum, explaining exhibits and answering questions.

The program fulfills five of their state mandated requirements. The kids heard about WCBK radio, the Blackstone house, and telephones in the Communications room. The children learned how to dial a rotary telephone. Some of the children were able to identify family members in farm and school pictures. They learned about the history of the Blackstone house. Farming tools, Hoosier Homesteads, railroads, Martinsville's sanitariums, coaches, and businesses were viewed. They saw uniforms and pictures from the Civil War to Afghanistan, clothing from the 1800s to mid 1900s, and furniture from those eras. A miniature Tiny Phelps' house and garden was on display.



Tiny Phelps



The Denominational Garden—"Lovey Mary,"

Martinsville, Ind.

Celestina R. Phelps' cottage was located at 60 East Harrison Street in Martinsville, IN. "Aunt Tiny's" garden was the inspiration for a novel, "Lovey Mary" by Alice Hegan Rice. (The Indiana Album.pastperfectonline.com)

The home was built in 1835 and demolished not long after Miss Phelps' death in 1912. From March to November 1903, 1065 people visited the garden. The denominational garden was a favorite spot for the people registered at the local sanitariums.

"The garden was a wilderness of old-fashioned flower and vines." (The Courier-Journal, Louisville

KY 29 Nov. 1903) The article is a humorous interview with Aunt Tiny. The reporter, E. A. Hewitt, stated, "if the visitor makes a contribution or buys a photograph, they leave with a generous bouquet of the flowers." Miss Phelps was reported to be "educated, a good conversationalist, quick witted and original in ideas. As a school teacher she had written history in rhyme from the birth of Columbus to the navigation act (laws enacted by the English Parliament to regulate trade and commerce within the British Empire, 1651-1733.) Come experience more of Celestina Phelps at the museum.

Public Programs

May 17, 9:00 a.m. Cemetery headstone repair workshop led by Darrell French, 3603 N. Ramsgate Rd. (Foxcliff), Martinsville, IN, bring water, soft bristle brush, shovel, wear clothing and shoes suitable for working in the dirt.

June 14, 11:00 a.m., Indiana's Flag & Lizzie Callis, program & flag raising at the museum. The speaker is researcher and author David Reddick.

September, planned program at Foxcliff manor house about Barbasol and its connection to Morgan County

Electric Basketball Scoreboard Designed in Martinsville

Fred Preston, manager of the Martinsville Telephone Company designed an electric score board for basket ball games. The board enabled local fans to follow the plays made by the home team during away games. Will Conway assisted in the construction of the board.

“The front of the board represents the floor of the Gym; at each end are placed the baskets; in the center is the referee...In all there are a total of 39 lamps on the board, together with 53 special switches...A telegraph operator is stationed just behind the board and as he receives the plays over the wire he records them on the front of the large board.” *The Reporter-Times, Wed, Nov 10, 1920 ·Page 1*

Baskets were on each end of the board with the referee in the center of the floor. Each basket contained a green and a orange light. Green was used to show foul shots made and orange for field goals. If a foul was called on the opposing team the green light at the right hand corner of the board lit up and the player's light went out indicating that player fouled. The foul shooter's light in the regular line up would go out when he took his place at the foul line. If he made the shot the green light in the basket would go on. There were lights for out-of-bound balls and possession.

Ed Stoker attended out of town games and telegraphed the game's play-by-play to Fred Lowe and Frank Davidson who received and recorded the plays on the board. The board was placed in Toner's store show window prior to being used so the public could see it. The board was used for the first time in City Hall, Martinsville, on November 12, 1920 when Martinsville played Greencastle.

Admission to the event was charged, 35 cents for adults and 15 cents for children. Frank Davidson explained the plays during the game in case people did not understand the board. Martinsville won 18 to 15 after staging a comeback during the second half. It was reported there was “lusty rooting and cheers for the home boys” during the second half. The score board was voted as a great success.

Indiana's First State Flag

Do you know the history of Indiana's State Flag? What flag did the G.A.R. recognize as Indiana's flag? What flag did Indiana send to the Washington Monument dedication in 1885? Who designed the first Indiana flag? Who held a contest to develop a state banner? What was the current state flag known as prior to 1955? Discover the answers at the 11:00 a.m. June 14th flag program at the museum.



The first Indiana State flag will be flown at the museum following the program on June 14. Which of these flags served as Indiana's state flag?



What is it?

The What is It in the Winter issue was a cigarette holder.

Can you identify this issue's what is it, once used in a Martinsville attorney's office?



The Arletta Huff Hollis family donated this Oak side by side, secretary bookcase combination with glass front door. Arletta Huff Hollis ran a boarding house in Martinsville, IN and married Luther Hollis, a boarder, in 1925.

Luther worked for the "Big Four" railroad (Cleveland, Chicago, Cincinnati and St. Louis) as a conductor. When he became hard of hearing he was transferred to the Martinsville to Fairland railroad and moved to Martinsville.

Luther's great granddaughters, Janet Hollis Selby, Susan Hollis Bassett & Martha Hollis also donated a secretary hutch, a hall tree, a doll cradle, and genealogy of their family. These beautiful heirlooms are on display at the museum.

