



The Crawford Countian

Fall 2024

Welcome to the FALL edition of the Crawford Countian! I hope you all are enjoying the autumn season as the leaves start to fall and the temperatures drop.

It is with great sadness that I must share the news that Cheryl Allen has passed away here recently. She was always full of energy and willing to help out in way she could at the society. I have included her obituary in this issue.



Next year for our monthly programs we would like to get some family genealogy talks set up. If you would like to present your family history at one of our meetings, contact John Crawford at crawf.jr@gmail.com. We have also been planning our 4th grade field trip to the Proctor House set for May 2025. If you would like to help out, contact me and I will get you in the loop. This should be quite fun and the start of a great working relationship with the local school system.

Thank you all for your support!

-William Piper, President of CCHGS
Email: billgpiper@hotmail.com

Cover photo: Proctor House property, sure looking nice this time of year!

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UFO Sighting in Marengo!

FAA Form 2800-2 (1-55)

0052-642-5000

4 Feb 69 (1359)

DATE 2-07-69

WORK ORDER

ROUTING SYMBOL

REMINDER MEMO

→ AVOID ERRORS—PUT IT IN WRITING ←

TO: TDPT (UFO)

SUBJECT: Report of Unidentified Flying Object

The attached letter and drawing are referred to you for handling.

(Taken from <https://www.fold3.com>) Now this is quite the unusual story! I love any subjects that would have fit on the TV show "Unsolved Mysteries" so when this information about an UFO sighting in Marengo was presented to me by our county historian Roberta Toby, I figure everyone else would get a kick out of it. And if you recall such an incident or know any other information about it, please email me (billgpiper@hotmail.com)! While we are on the subject, if you have any local folklore about such strange things roaming the forests of the area, and think it would make a great story, I would love to hear about it as well.

On February 4, 1969, a 16 year old male (name has been redacted from the records) in Marengo spotted a large object in the sky. This started at 6:55pm and lasted until 7:03pm. The spotter mentioned that a pocket watch was handy, hence the precise time stamps. This object was 20 degrees above the horizon when it first appeared and when it disappeared, it had lowered to about 10 degrees, travelling from west to east. A plane

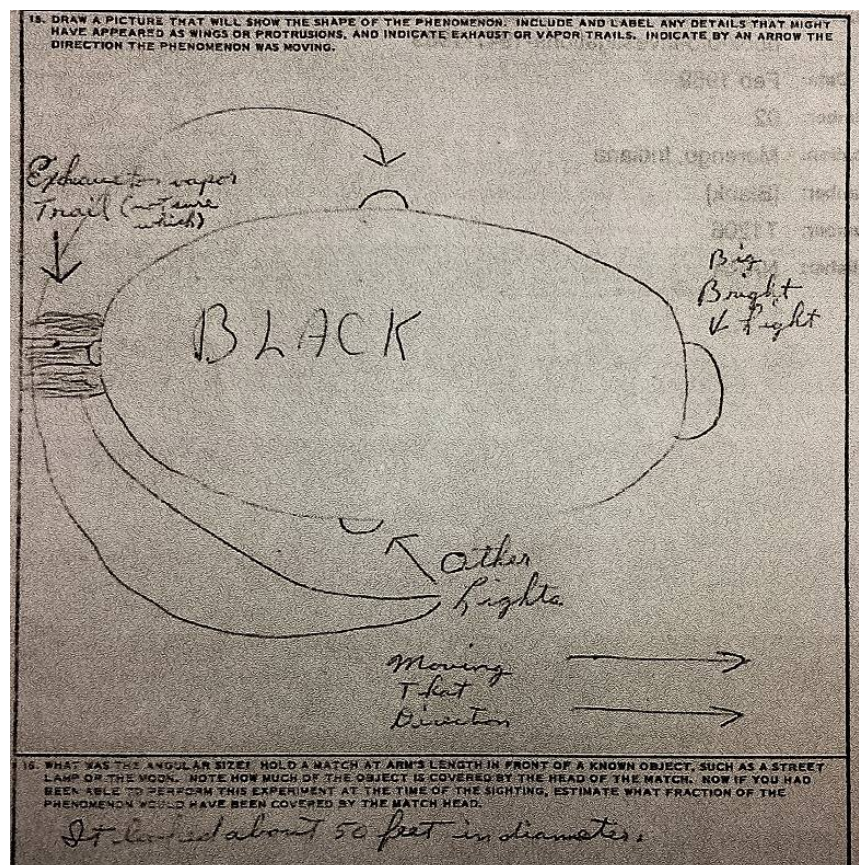
was also spotted in the sky around the same time as this "UFO". The night sky was clear and there was no moon light. Here is a description of flying craft:

"The bottom of it was dark. It looked solid. Sharp edges. It was round. It had the big bright light and three other lights around the edges. The big bright light was 3 times brighter than the evening star."

The report mentions that the object was giving off smoke and the brightness would change, and that a noise could be heard from it. The following is a quote on what drew attention to this craft:

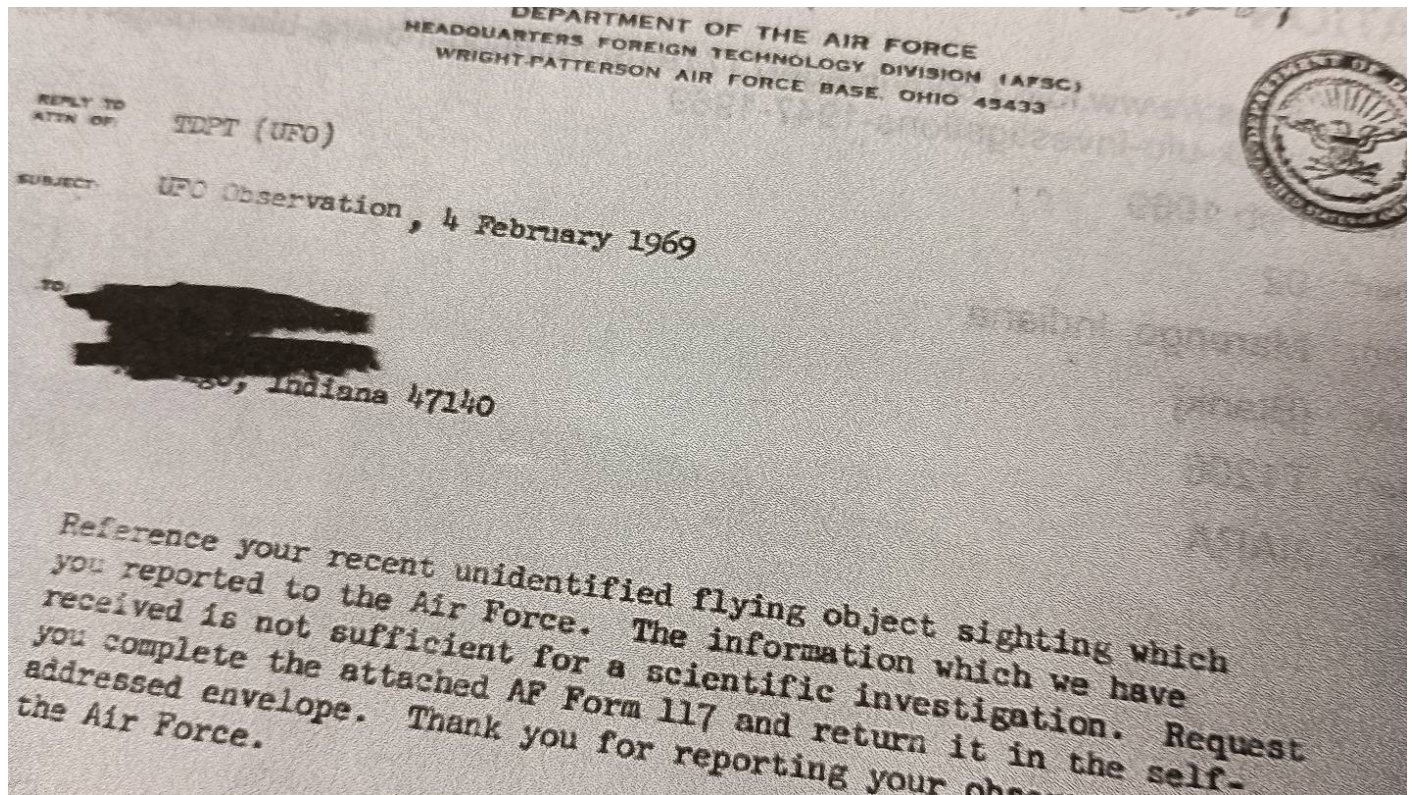
"When I first saw it, there was a very bright light in the West, three times brighter than the evening star. Well, I thought it was a plane that was on fire. It went toward the plane that I saw and then veered away from it like it was scared of it."

The object disappeared from sight once it went in the eastward direction. Below is a drawing of this object:



It is mentioned in the report that the spotter thought it resembled an upside down plate somewhat and that it looked solid but couldn't be completely sure due to the darkness. A hum noise from the craft was also mentioned. There is also mentioned that his sister saw this as well.

The Air Force mentions in their report titled "UFO Observation, 4 February 1969" that there was not enough sufficient evidence to warrant a scientific investigation, thus the manner was closed. -bP



Gerald Hughes Interview

If you had not the chance to view it yet, John Crawford and Bill Piper sat down and had a hour long interview with Gerald Hughes. Half of the interview was in regards to William Messamore and the other half about various things in Gerald's life. You can find it on our youtube channel:



<https://www.youtube.com/@Crawfordcountyindianahistory>

The Death of William H. Hobson

In our archives there is an "Inquest" records book that has quite the morbid reports. When someone mentions to me that "back in the good ole days, so and so didn't happen", I always refer them to the inquest records. Yes, bad stuff happened, and quite often unfortunately. These records are of various deaths in the county, and involve some pretty dire situations. Most of these records are rather small, typically just about discovering the body and a cause of death, if determined. However, some reports have witness testimonies and present themselves as quite the read. Years ago I did a story for the newsletter regarding such an incident (see the Goldman Murder-Suicide of 1894 - Fall Edition / 2017). I have another story, this time being the death of William H. Hobson. Mr. Hobson was a Civil War veteran. He was a Private, Co. A, 38 Regiment, Indiana Inf. Vol. He entered at the age of 18 (being born on March 4, 1845). He served in other divisions as well.

HOBSON, William H. * +

Pvt., Co. A, 38 Regt. Ind. Inf. Vol.

Age 18, b. Clermont Co. Ohio; farmer.

Eyes dark, hair dark, 5'6", complexion dark.

Enr. 17 Sep 1861 New Albany; mus. 17 Sep 1861 New Albany.

Also served Co. A & B, 24 Ind. Vol.; disch. 13 Mar 1863; disability. Pens. app. 17 Nov 1879.

Bur. Marengo Cem. (4 Mar 1845 - 16 May 1896).

Martha E. Hobson app. for wid. pens. 10 Jun 1896 Ind.

This death inquest record has testimony by several people. William was shot by James M. Weathers Jr on the evening of May 17, 1896. Below is the testimony by Felix Stewart (*I corrected some of the grammar issues*):

"I was at Mr. Hobson's this evening had a talk with him. He said he was not in a good humor. Myself and Mr. Hobson's little boy were together

and went down to the road. He was going up to Charlie Stewarts. He came past and told Mr. Weathers he had better get out of the way of his father as he would likely raise a racket with him. I came out of the sugar grove right behind Hobson and he turned round and told me, if I didn't go back he would kill me. I said, "Oh! I will go back" I didn't intend to go anyway. I went around an old house and came down to Jim Weathers. Jim was standing in his door and I asked him if he had saw Hobson. Jim said that he had seen him pass but didn't know what they meant by letting him get out that way. He came up the railroad and came down to the bridge and stopped. His little boy had already gone to Charlie Stewarts and told him to get out of the way of his father or he might get hurt. He came down from Stewarts from where his Pa was and they then went up to Mr. Stewart's but Mr. Stewart was not at home. They then came down across the field, Hobson and his boy, to the railroad. When they got to the railroad, Mr. Weathers had started to Church and was just opposite the path where they came onto the railroad.

Mr. Hobson said to Mr. Weathers: "Is that you Jim?"

Weathers replied: "Yes."

Hobson said "I would like to talk to you a bit", and started up to Weathers.

Weathers said "We are close enough, we can talk this far apart."

Hobson's little boy then said to Mr. Weathers, "For God's sake get out of his way or he will kill you."

Then Jim started to run and fell down on the railroad track. As he fall, Hobson struck him with his cane on the side of the head. I could not tell whether Jim had a revolver in his hand or got it out of his pocket. Mr. Weathers was down when he did the shooting and Mr. Hobson was standing over Weathers when he shot. Couldn't tell no words said after Weathers started running. After Hobson struck Weathers it was but a short time till Weathers shot. Hobson never spoke after the first shot

was fired. Hobson acted like he was wild. He has been that way. From the way Hobson struck, I think he intended to kill Weathers.”

That concludes the testimony of Felix Stewart. Here is the testimony of William H. Hobson Jr:

“Pa had a bad spell and I told Jim Weathers to get out of his way. Mr. Weathers was at his home when I told him. Pa then went up to Charlie Stewart’s and Mr. Stewart was not at home, then Pa started home and at the railroad he met Jim Weathers who was coming down and he got down the railroad a little ways and Pa said he wanted to talk to Jim and Jim said he wanted to talk to Pa. Pa started toward Jim and I got between them and I gave Jim a push, I tried to get Jim to run and he wouldn’t do it. He just went to walking backwards and he fell down and Pa hit him with his cane, then Jim shot him three times. Pa struck him across the head with his cane. Jim was down when Pa struck him. Jim was going backwards from him when he fell. Pa just hit him one lick then Mr. Weathers shot him three times, shots were fired just as fast as he could shoot. Pa never said anything except that he wanted to talk to Jim. He just followed him up. Don’t know what kind of a pistol it was he shot Pa with, but it was a big one. Pa never made any threats but just struck him with his cane. Pa caught hold of the bottom part of the cane and struck him with the crooked part. Felix Stewart was just a little piece above. Don’t know how close, he was but about 50 feet. Pa had a bad spell and I knew Pa would hurt him. Jim went about 15 feet backward.

He struck overhanded then Jim shot him and when he fell he fell across the railroad track and never spoke after he was shot. When I told Jim to keep out of the way I ran way ahead and told Jim to keep out of the way. I don’t know what he wanted to see Charley Stewart about. On our way back from Charley’s was when we met Jim. I told him to get out of the way on the railroad for Pa would hurt him. Jim kept walking backwards and Pa kept following and I tried to hold Pa then I got between them when Jim fell. Pa put his hand on Jim’s breast then struck him with his cane. It was double action pistol and self cocker.”

That concluded William Jr's testimony. The post mortem examination stated that the first shot went in to the right and below the nipple on the left side. The second shot ranged upward and backward toward the spinal column and entered the lung. And the third shot went downward and backward at the apex of the first and second ribs, and passed through the upper lobe of the right lung. It was of the opinion of the examiner that the second shot was possibly the fatal blow. The coroner at the time, Charley Tillery, came back with the verdict that William Hobson was fatally shot by James Weathers Jr, but that the shooting was justified.

-bP

Tombstone photo from find a grave:



In Memory of Cheryl Allen

Cheryl Lynn Allen, 65, of Taswell, Indiana passed away on Saturday, September 7, 2024, at TriStar Skyline Medical Center in Nashville, Tennessee surrounded by her family.



She was born on October 9, 1958, at Floyd Hospital in New Albany, Indiana to Martin and Opal (Felker) Smith.

Cheryl attended Hillview Christian Church and was a member of Taswell Christian Church. She was a member of the VFW Auxiliary, and the Historical Society. Cheryl worked over 35 years for the Division of Children and Family Services as a case worker, and Brittany Furniture in Paoli, Indiana. Cheryl was a 30-year cancer survivor. She loved to spend time with her family and friends and will be missed by everyone that knew her.

Cheryl was preceded in death by her parents, Martin and Opal, her sister, Donna (Smith) Nolan, nephews, Shannon Smith, and Troy Owens.

She is survived by her husband of 42 years, Larry "Skeeter" Allen, daughters, Chrissie (Jake) LaMar, Alissa Allen DVM, two grandchildren, Kaley and Case LaMar, brothers Randy (and companion Brenda) Smith, Doug (Lisa) Smith and many brothers-in-law, sister-in-laws and several nieces and nephew.

Previous meeting minutes:

July 9, 2024

The meeting began at 6:30pm with a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Program: Louie Mitchell and Tyler Gallien presented the program on the Pig Dig and the Alton Woolly Mammoth finds. Louie told us the Pig Dig fossils were discovered in 1987 in a cave close to Patoka Lake. Helen Megenity's boys found the cave. Bob Richards started work on the excavation. He had to belly crawl to get to the site. Ten years later you could crawl on hands and knees. Over 5,000 artifacts were found including bones of Timber and Dire wolves, wild pigs and peccaries. The bones are in the Indiana State Museum in Indianapolis. Tyler told us about the Alton Mammoth remains found in Dec 1989. Richard McClain discovered it when bulldozing a road for Two Rivers, Inc who was planning to build a resort. Ron Richards, along with other scientists and volunteers, unearthed the remains in 4 days. The site was muddy and awful to work in. They found a nearly complete skeleton of the 10,000 year old prehistoric animal. Mammoths were plant eaters and forged for food 20 hours a day and ate 300-400 pounds daily. They differ from mastodons because of their molars.

Minutes: were reviewed. Annette Gilliland made a motion to approve, Louie Mitchell seconded it, and the motion passed.

President's Report: The yard sale was a success despite the hot weather. The newsletter will be out in two weeks. Tyler Gallien will hold the Proctor House open this Saturday from 11-2pm.

Financial Report: The beginning balance was \$9,873.70. Deposits totaled \$2,230. Expenses were \$946.63. The ending balance is \$11,157.07.

Archives Report: Roberta Toby reported that John and Sherry Crawford helped with getting the big, heavy books on the new racks. She also let us know that Ruth Terry, a long-time member, had passed away.

Misc - A quilt that Jenny Watson had donated for the yard sale was auctioned off. After very active bidding it went to Judy Faith. Bill reported on the Town Hall meeting concerning the relocation of the Mr. English statue. There was a good discussion with many ideas put forth, but nothing was resolved.

Those attending were: William and Robin Piper, Louie and Diane Mitchell, Judy Faith, Carol Groves, Tyler Gallien, Cheryl Allen, Roberta Toby, Annette Gilliland, Angela Thompson, Bob Roberts, Mr. Whitmore and Carol Tomlinson.

August 13, 2024

The meeting began at 6:30pm with a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements: Sept 25, 4th and 5th grade teachers will be given a tour of the Public Library, the Archives and our building to see the resources available when teaching Indiana history. Upcoming presentations are O'Bannon Woods, Messamore Mysteries and the story of the railroad in English.

Program: Roberta Toby presented an informative and interesting history of the CCC camps. President Franklin Roosevelt created the Civilian Conservation Corp or CCC in 1933 because the country was in a deep depression with massive unemployment which included many WW1 veterans. The Crawford County's CCC camp known as Camp 2583 F-5 was located 4 miles north of English where Barnett's Store was located. This site was 9.56 acres and had a large spring to provide water for 200 men in the camp. However water was a recurring problem. Work on the camp was started July 19, 1935, when 23 men from Mitchell arrived to prepare for it. Many buildings were erected about a month before the enlisted CCC men arrived. The requirements for enrollment were - a U.S.

citizen, height between 60-78 inches, and weigh more than 107 pounds. They were taught school subjects and trades. They were paid \$30 per month, but could only keep \$5, and the rest sent back to help their families. They lived military style, and had a metal disk with a serial number to keep with them at all times. Some important work they did was to plant trees, build roads, telephone lines, fire towers, ponds, parks, campgrounds, fight forest fires, and help with other natural disasters. The English Camp was taken down and moved to Tell City by Dec. 1, 1940. Many of the men entered military service to help fight in WWII. Many of our members had relatives in CCC camps.

Minutes: were reviewed. Louie Mitchell made a motion to approve, seconded by Annette Gilliland, and the motion passed.

President's Report: A grant for \$3,000 was received from the CFCC to be used at our discretion. Some of it will be used to replace a rotting wall at the shelter house. And some to repair the AC at the Proctor House. Bill Piper asked for some suggestions for the rest and getting a marker for a specific grave was mentioned. Bill also talked about scanning and printing books as our inventory for some titles are getting low.

Financial Report: The beginning balance as of July 1 was \$11,157.07. Deposits were \$235. Expenses for utilities, insurance, security, misc were \$1,006.54. Ending balance as of July 31 is \$10,385.53. Membership is 41.

Proctor House Report: The committee will meet at the English building on August 27 at 1pm to begin planning for school children's visits.

Those attending: Carol Tomlinson, Jeremy Flanigan, William and Robin Piper, Louie and Diane Mitchell, Roberta Toby, Sharon Morris, John and Sherry Crawford, Douglas Wagoner, Tyler Gallien, Angela Thompson, Judy Faith, Annette Gilliland, Janet Johnson, Karen Qualters, Cheryl Allen, Carol Groves, Nidrah Dial and Bob Roberts.

September 10, 2024

The meeting began at 6:30pm with a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Program: Edward Whitmire told a fascinating story about his search to find his family's history. He grew up in foster care and an orphanage not knowing where he came from. He had very little information to go on, but along the way he met a genealogist who helped him a lot. He was also lucky to meet a man who knew about the Whitmire family.

Whitmire, NC is named after his family. He did meet his father, but his mother had passed away in Baltimore. It took a long time, but was very rewarding as he learned many interesting stories about his extended family. The video is available on our youtube channel. Ed and his wife bought the old Pilot Knob Church and restored it. They have renamed it as the Chapel of Prayer. They want it to be a place where people can come anytime. There will be a Grand Opening on September 28 from 3pm to 5pm. The first service will be held on Oct 6th at 10am.

Minutes: were reviewed. Annette Gilliland made a motion to approve which was seconded by Carol Groves. The motion passed.

President's Report: Bill Piper showed some old heavy ledges from files belonging to Judge Henry Green. They contain some interesting court cases. He thinks they should be digitized.

Financial Report: Beginning balance as of August 1, 2024, was \$10,385.53. Deposits were \$4,361.28 including the CFCC grant of \$3,311.37. Expenses were \$439.60 which leaves an ending balance of \$14,307.21. Membership is 59.

Archives Report: Roberta Toby had several donations to report - a decorative historic plate donated by her daughter, pictures and an Indiana State History book about our 250th celebration.

Proctor House Report: The planning committee met on August 27th to discuss 4th graders field trips to the museum. Many interesting ideas were generated. The next meeting is September 12 to plan for October 1 when Mary Anne Knapp, principal of South Crawford will be attending.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm

Those attending: Carol Tomlinson, Bob Roberts, Jeremy Flanigan, Roberta Toby, Bill and Robin Piper, Louie and Diane Mitchell, Chyrell and Edward Whitmire, Nidrah Dial, Bryan and Mindy Johnson, Carol Groves, Judy Faith, Tyler Gallien, Annette Gilliland, Emilie Beasley, Angela Thompson and Tami Redding.

Patoka Lake: History Under Water

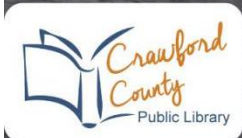
**Presented by James Merkley,
Park Ranger at Patoka Lake**

Co-hosted by Crawford County Public Library and the
Crawford County Historical & Genealogical Society

**Thursday,
November 14th
1:00 pm**

Light refreshments provided

Crawford County Public Library
203 Indiana Ave., English, IN. 47118
(812) 338-2606
www.ccpl.lib.in.us



Membership Dues

Dues for the Crawford County Genealogical and Historical Society are \$15 per year for single memberships, \$20 for family or \$25 for corporation/businesses. The fee is due each June as the new year starts in July. A renewal form is available on the website, www.cchgs.org.

Send your check to:
Sharon Morris
CCHGS Treasurer
P.O. Box 162
Leavenworth, IN 47137

Meetings

The Crawford County Historical and Genealogical Society meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, 6:30pm, at the CCHGS Headquarters (310 Oak Circle, English IN). You can call 812-338-2579 to confirm.

Website:

www.cchgs.org

Social Media:

Search for "Crawford County Historical and Genealogical Society" on FACEBOOK!

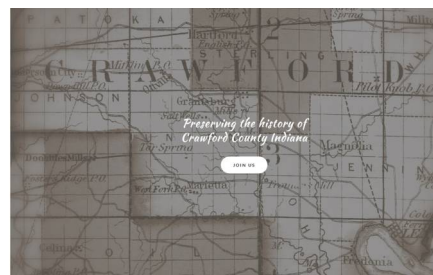


Books for sale

Our book list has been REVISED!!
Some out of print titles have now returned and we are also offering DIGITAL versions of most of our books. The digital versions will be sold on CD-R in PDF format. Check our website, <http://www.cchgs.org> for more information!

The Crawford Countian is the official newsletter of the CCHGS.

Permission is needed for
any re-productions.



Be sure to visit our website to keep up to date on various events, our hours of operations, books for sale and other misc items. If you have a suggestion, you can send it to me via the site or send queries as well for the newsletter.