

**You're Invited . . .**

*"We've Come A Long Way From The Well House . . ."*

**GRAND OPENING**

of the Newton County Historical Society

**RESOURCE CENTER**

Located at the corner of U.S. 24 and 4th Street - Kentland, Indiana

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2006**

**OPEN HOUSE 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. CST**

*We hope you will celebrate this new beginning for our "old" society!*

**The Newcomer**

A publication of the Newton County Historical Society, Inc.

Articles for submission are encouraged and may be sent to the editor, Beth A. Bassett, 1681E 1100S, Brook, Indiana 47922. bethbassett@hughes.net

**Officers of the Newton County Historical Society**

President, Jim Robbins, Lake Village  
V. President, Michael Haste, Brook  
Secretary, Becky Lyons, Brook  
Treasurer, Kay Babcock, Goodland

**Family History Division**

Jim Robbins, Director, Lake Village  
Member at Large  
Fanny Collins, Kentland  
County Historian,  
Donna LaCosse, Morocco

**Officers of the Family History Division**

Director, Jim Robbins, Lake Village  
Janet Miller, Treasurer, Kentland  
*The Newcomer*, Beth Bassett, Brook  
Send membership dues to:

**PO Box 303,  
Kentland, Indiana 47951  
219-474-6944**

**e-mail: newtonhs@ffni.com**

PRESORT STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
PERMIT  
NUMBER 35  
Rensselaer, Indiana  
47978

**The Newcomer**

A publication of the NEWTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.  
P.O. BOX 303, Kentland, Indiana 47951  
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**What's On Our Agenda . . .**

**The Newton County Historical Society meets every fourth Monday of each month, on the same day, the Family History Division meets at 2:00 at the Resource Center in Kentland and the Society general meetings are held in different locations in the County at 7:00 p.m. Local members are notified of the place and time each month. Don't Forget - Memberships Make Great Gifts!!**

*We'd Like Your Input!! We are looking for suggestions for stories, articles and pictures for our next edition of The Newcomer. We know that there are many stories of our past ancestors and their way of life that are just waiting to be told! This newsletter is designed to do just that!! If you would like to write an article, submit a photo, contact the editor or a member of our society.*

**The Newcomer**

Volume 11, Issue Three  
Summer/Fall 2006 • \$2.25

A publication of the NEWTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.  
Indiana's YOUNGEST County

**The History of the Newton County Courthouse**

by *Jim Robbins*

The present Newton County was authorized on December 8, 1859. The next action was the selection of the county seat.

Hon. A.P. Willard, Governor of Indiana, appointed three Commissioners for this selection: Livingston Dunlap of Marion County, John B. Winstandley of Floyd County, and Joseph Allen of Montgomery County. It was assumed that the Governor had a personal interest because he was present when they made their selection. Samuel H. Owen replaced Winstandley. The town of Kent was selected.

Charges of bribery and every unworthy motive were freely made. A bit east of Kent lay a considerable amount of land registered in the governor's wife's name. Also, he and A. J. Kent were intimate friends.

The governor appointed Thomas R. Barker the organizing Sheriff, who issued his call for a special election to be held April 2, 1860. There were six voting precincts. One in Beaver, Jackson, Iroquois and Lake Townships, and two in Washington Township. There was a total vote of 492. Z. Spittler was elected Clerk, Alexander Sharp, Auditor, Samuel McCullough, Treasurer, John Ade, Recorder, Elijah Shriver, Sheriff, A. W. Shidler, Surveyor, Jared Yoeman, Coroner, Thomas R. Barker, William Russell and Michael Coffelt, Commissioners.

Now they needed a courthouse.

The first session held by the Commissioners was in a building owned by A. J. Kent. One of the first transactions by the Commissioners was the appointment of Reuben White as agent to receive donations for the county seat and the selection of a site for the courthouse.

Block 16 containing 30 lots, the area being 450x322 feet, was selected.

In the interim, the Commissioners contracted with Joel Anderson to rent a building that had been erected for a store building. The contract was for six months at \$6.00 per month.

On March 6, 1861, the Auditor, Recorder, and the Clerk of the Circuit Court were appointed a committee, with full power to contract for and supervise the erection of a building for courtroom and county offices-not to exceed \$1,000.00-to be paid for out of the donation fund. A. Sharp with the assistance of Reuben White advertised for bids and found the lowest bid was made by James VanNatta. This bid of \$974.00 was accepted by the committee, but the contractor refused to accept the terms of payment.

The contract was awarded to the next lowest bidder, J. B. Chesebrough. The price was raised to \$1,000.00 and a portico added to each end of the building. In June 1861, the building was completed and accepted.

The building was a plain structure with court and jury rooms above and four offices below. The four lower offices were taken by the Clerk, Auditor, Recorder and Treasurer. The Sheriff finding offices wherever he could.

In 1867, a small building was added on the north side for the jury room. As soon as it was finished, one room was taken by the Clerk, the other by the Recorder. The Auditor took up the south half of the older building and the Sheriff took the Recorder's office and the jury still had no room.

< to page 2 >

**In this issue . . .**

**History of the Newton County Courthouse**

**Uncovered Photographs**

Lake Village, Indiana

**Focus on Families:**

The Cooper Families

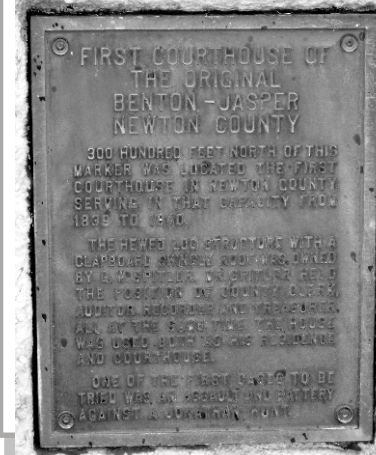
**New! Quill & Ink**

Local Poetry and Prose

**The Brook Cannon**

It's Proud Heritage

**First Benton-Jasper-Newton Courthouse**



*The first Circuit Court was held at the home of George Spittler, located south of Brook. Only one term was held here, as the county seat would soon be located to the town of Rensselaer. This photo of Spittler's home was take many years later.*

*Left, a historical marker was placed on July 4, 1974 on the roadside where the cabin once stood by the Community State Bank of Brook, Indiana.*

The prime cause of removing the county from Jasper County was the remoteness of the county seat. The new county seat actually put it farther away from some people.

Almost immediately after the county seat was selected, the petitions began being presented to the Commissioners. A petition to remove needed two-thirds of the registered voters of the county. Rather devious means were used to decide the numbers.

One group even platted out a new town and built a courthouse to no avail. It was thought that if a courthouse was built near the center of the county, the court would decide to move the county seat near that point as well. A small town was projected in the southeast part of Beaver Township, a courthouse was erected and on the fourth of September, 1860, a petition was presented to the new Board of County Commissioners by John Darroch, John Coffelt, F. W. Hamey, Andrew Hess, Silas Johnston and James Archibald for the removal of the county seat and for its re-location at and on the south half of the northwest quarter of section 36, township 29 North, Range 9 West. They averred that the petition contained two-thirds of the legal voters of the county, that their signatures were genuine, (by affidavits,) and at the same time filed a deed for the site for county buildings on the point above named, containing three and a quarter acres and upward; also at the same time, deposited fifty dollars as provided by the statute, to employ an architect, etc.; all of which was laid before the board by the Auditor. This was met by a remonstrance numerously signed and headed by A. J. Kent.

There were several days of legal wrangling before the Commissioners gave their decision. They questioned the number of voters, also that a number of voters signed both for and against. The final ruling was: "It is our opinion that the petitioners have failed, not having two-thirds of the legal voters in the county; and it is ordered that the case be dismissed."

On June 3, 1861, C. E. Triplett, Z. Spitler, E. Bridgeman, John Lyons, Andrew Hess and others presented another petition, for the removal and relocation of the county seat, this time near the town of Brook, on the Northeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of Section 19, Township 28 North, Range 8 West. There were ten petitions containing 390 signatures, a deed conveying five acres for public buildings, a bond conveying a tract of land not less than 160 acres for the use of the county, a further donation of every third lot in the proposed plat of the town, and a bond of \$1,000.00 in lawful money. This also had a counter action that was thrown out because of a flaw in the money bond.

On March 3, 1870, another petition signed by Daniel Ash and 609 others was presented. The object this time was to move the county seat to Morocco. The petition was withdrawn because some of their important papers were stolen.

Again, in December 1872, John W. Deaver, John Thompson and 952 others petitioned to move to Brook. There was a remonstrance filed by C. B. Cone, A.J. Kent and 580 others. This



The first Newton County Courthouse built in Kentland in 1861. The person standing in the photo next to what could be a blueprint for the building may be J. B. Chesebrough, who was awarded the contract to build the structure. Newton County Historical Society photo.

also failed.

On June 20, 1876 an attempt was made by Daniel Ash and others to move the county seat to Morocco. This was of course met with a remonstrance. It was venued to Jasper County, then Tippecanoe County, then dismissed under the argument that the County Commissioners had the final jurisdiction.

After almost yearly futile attempts to move the county seat, the legislature in March, 1899, passed a law to enable Newton County to move the county seat.

While the entire law covers two-thirds of a newspaper page, in essence it says an incorporated town in the county can file a petition to move the courthouse to that town with the verification by the Commissioners of that petition and cause an election to be held in the county. The rules for a regular election will be followed. The ballot would be as follows:

An "X" to be Marked in Square  
 \_\_\_ Courthouse to be moved to \_\_\_\_\_.  
 \_\_\_ Courthouse not to be moved to \_\_\_\_\_.

It will take 65% of the vote to win. The winner will be required to furnish land to put a courthouse on and hire an architect to design the courthouse. The town is also required to pay the cost of the election. If the town wins, they are required to pay for an appraiser for any county building and property in the old county seat.

On April 2, 1900, at the Commissioner's meeting, a petition was presented, bearing the required number of signatures, praying for an election to determine whether the county seat shall be located at Morocco. The Commissioners issued a formal order for an election to be held.

A notice of the county seat location to Morocco election appeared in the May 24 and 31, 1900 edition of the *Newton County Enterprise*. The election was to be held on the 19<sup>th</sup> day of June, 1900. Elections to be held at regular voting places and precincts. Each election board was to consist of one Judge for and one against. Plus the regular Clerks, Sheriffs and Inspectors.

The election vote was 1522 for, 1448 against. Not the required 65%.

**Stories and Pictures of the Brook Sesquicentennial Celebration, July 1-4, 2006**

(1) Four Cooper brothers putting "caps" on wheat shocks, for old time sake; (2) Binding the wheat, the old fashioned way; (3) threshing set up and working; (4) Ben "Uncle Sam" Combs, President of the Community State Bank, Brook, hosted their 75th anniversary float; (5) Pistol packin' Ken Marsh opened the community church services; (6) the cast of the melodrama, "The Brook Bank Robbery."



**2006 Cooper Clan Gathering's Parade Dress**

By Roy Cooper

The Cooper clan really enjoyed the Brook Sesquicentennial weekend. The annual Cooper Family and neighborhood gathering started on Friday, June 30th, as they all helped Ron and Joan Cooper Peacock celebrate their golden wedding anniversary. About seventy-five family members were present.

Fourteen year-old Kristen Cooper had made colonial dresses for herself and four of her sisters. They all wore their beautiful, long dresses as they rode on the float wishing Brook a happy 150th birthday.

The entire Roy and Avalynne Cooper family rode on, or with, the float in the 4th of July parade. Eight granddaughters and one grandson rode with their proud grandparents on the float. Two of the youngest granddaughters rode in the truck pulling the float with their parents, Gary and Karen Cooper, and with their Aunt Debbie and Uncle Bill Cooper. Everyone had a basket of candy to toss out to the spectators along the parade route.

Little two year-old Kara wanted a basket of candy, too. This was finally okayed with the understanding that she mustn't eat the candy, and she would have to wait till the parade started. Then when Mommy opens the window, she can throw the candy out.

She sat there patiently waiting as the float and truck waited in line for the parade to start. When a friend walked by the truck, Karen (Mommy) opened the window to hail her friend. As soon as the window was opened, two year-old Kara dumped her whole basket of candy out the window. "You said I could throw the candy out when you opened the window!" she said. Uncle Bill got out and picked up all the candy and put it back in Kara's basket. "Now wait until we say it's okay!" were the instructions.

What fun! Thank you, Brook, for lots more happy memories!

Right: The float crew all posed on the float as they waited in line for the parade to start. Those pictured left to right are as follows: Front row-Chelsea, Erin, and Laura; Second row-Kristen, Meagan, Heather, and Trevor; Third row-Marylynne, Autumn, Grandpa Roy, and Grandma Avalynne Cooper. - Cooper family photo.



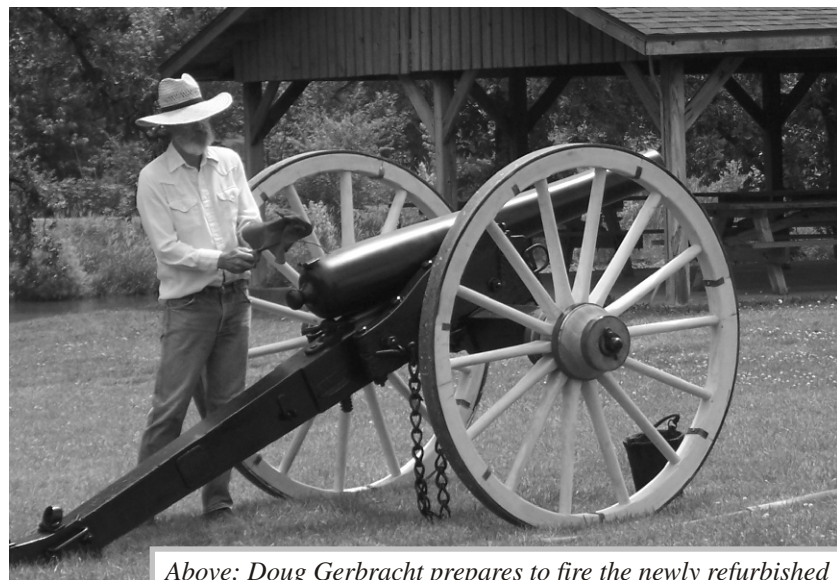
### The Brook Cannon

by Kyle D. Conrad, 2006

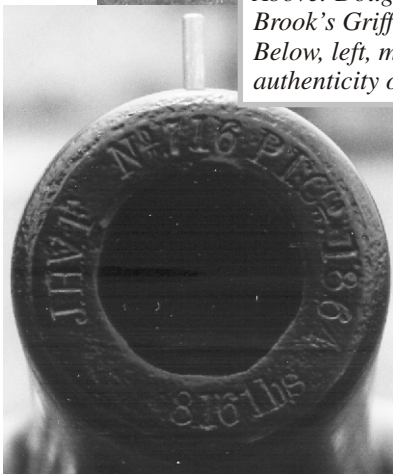
The history of Brook's Civil War cannon begins with a suggestion by John Hershman to John Bennett Lyons that a memorial should be erected to the memory of soldiers of Iroquois Township. A meeting was called and held at the Bank of Brook on a spring day of 1909 and this idea was unanimously adopted. Rev. A.M. Snyder was appointed chair and J. R. Hershman secretary. A fund raising effort was begun and John B. Lyons and George Ade headed the list with subscriptions of \$150 each. The monument was erected in McKinley Park at a cost of \$800 for the monument and \$150 for the concrete base.

The Civil War cannon and a supply of 40 8" cannon balls were ordered to complement the monument and in February of 1909 the cannon arrived. The limber for the gun was obtained from the Westerville Arsenal in New York, the barrel was shipped from Texas. News accounts of the time referred to the cannon as a 'parrot gun', a popular piece of arsenal from the Civil War. Research into this gun, however, shows otherwise.

Inscriptions on the barrel show the gun was a product of the Phoenix Iron Co. and was patented December 9, 1862. This gun shows the manufacture date of 1864 and a weight of 816 lbs. The Phoenix Iron Company dates to 1783 in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania. When the War of the Rebellion broke out, superintendent John Griffen designed a cannon manufactured out of spirally-wrapped wrought iron, making it stronger and less likely to explode than any other cannon in use. It was called the "Griffen Gun" and the Phoenix Iron Works would make 1400 for the US Army by the time the war was over. The first shot fired at the Battle of Gettysburg was from a Griffen and it proved to be a pivotal weapon for the Union forces. All markings on Brook's cannon, including the weight, prove that this is indeed, a Griffen Gun manufactured in 1864 by Phoenix Iron Works.



Above: Doug Gerbracht prepares to fire the newly refurbished Brook's Griffen Gun at the 2006 Sesquicentennial Celebration. Below, left, markings on the end of the barrel validate the authenticity of the cannon. NCHS file photos.



Brook's cannon sat proudly in McKinley Park until late 1963 when a decision had to be made to junk it or restore it. In true Brook fashion, the cannon was restored and in June of 1964 the old Griffen was taken to Lake Kenoyer and fired. It was that same year that the tradition of firing the cannon on the 4th of July was begun, and was continued for over 45 years. By the year 2000, more restoration was needed and the cannon sat idle in the town's museum until Brook's sesquicentennial year of 2006 when it was again restored. With new wheels modeled after the originals and a new coat of paint, the Griffen was

again fired during the four day festival.

With the old arsenal in like new condition once again, the Griffen gun should be heard for many more years, signifying the independence of America, and honoring those who fought to preserve her independence during the war years of 1861 to 1865.

### W.W.W. Who-What-Where . . .

some inquiries to the Society from our web site - [www.rootsweb.com/~innewton](http://www.rootsweb.com/~innewton)

SURNAMES Beckwith, Fraser, Wingard and Girard (Girard, Jirard, Cirard). Holmes O. Beckwith, the father of George W. Beckwith. George's daughter Bessie Beckwith was my great grandmother. This family is the focus of my Family History class research project. I'm preparing to be an accredited genealogist. Carolyn Carlisle 12 Wymount Terrace Provo, UT 84604 801-378-5249 carolyncarlisle@gmail.com

## ANSWERS TO DO YOU KNOW? By Janet Miller Questions on page 10

1. Mr. Barker was preparing lumber to build the Goodland Court House.
2. According to the *Newton County Enterprise* of 1906, the first factory in Kentland was the ice plant.
3. The Keokuk Pickle Company purchased 10,000 bushels of cucumbers from the Thayer and Roselawn area.
4. The first joint schoolhouse and church ever built in Newton County was later home to two businesses. They were a Blacksmith shop where Mr. Ade plied his trade and conducted the celebrated Bank of America.
5. The lady that joined the Newton County Bar in 1902 was Miss Lizzie Boyle. She had worked the eight years previous as Deputy Recorder.

One person was arrested in Morocco, Frank Froggee, and charged with bringing in a carload of thugs to vote. It was alleged the C. E. and I. furnished a car for transportation, free of charge.

On July 3, 1900, the Commissioners accepted and approved a petition from the town of Brook. They set Tuesday, September 25<sup>th</sup> for the election.

The issue of the Newton County Enterprise had an ad for the election for the removal of the county seat to Brook on August 31<sup>st</sup> and September 6, 1900. There were 1208 against, 52% for. A lack of 13%.

On October 1, 1900, the Commissioners were presented with a petition by Ephriam Sell and 558 others asking for the construction of a courthouse over the provision of the special county seat act. This petition was examined and found to contain the requisite number of signers and freeholders. Action was deferred until October 6, 1900 over protest by the petitioners.

A petition was also presented praying for an election to relocate the county seat to Goodland, but was dismissed on the grounds of insufficiency of the bond and lack of the required number of freehold signers.

After considerable deliberation, on October 6, 1900, the Commissioners at 4:30 p.m. made the order to build a courthouse, at

Kentland, for \$10,000. An ad was run in the October 11, 1900 issue of the *Newton County Enterprise*, and two other county papers, for architects to submit plans and specifications for a brick courthouse with offices for the

Clerk, Treasurer, Auditor, Sheriff, Recorder, County Superintendent of Schools, and County Surveyor. To be nearly as possible fireproof and cost no more than \$10,000.00. This was signed by Commissioners Henry T. Griggs, Edward E. Parsons and W. F. Edmondson. Attested by Schuyler C. Jones, Auditor. (At the November 6 election, Edmondson was replaced by Merchant, and Kennedy replaced Griggs, but he did not take office until December 1901.)

On October 1, 1900, the Goodland petition for an election for courthouse removal to Goodland was received but could not be acted on as this was a special session. It went over to the next term.

The Goodland petition was acted on and an election was set for January 30, 1901. The petition for building the courthouse was continued. The courthouse petitioners appealed to the Circuit Court so all matters were deferred until the court decision. No matter what the decision it will be appealed to the Supreme Court, so until that body acts, no action will be taken.

The Supreme Court handed down its decision on January 17, 1902. While it left some things in limbo, in essence the Goodland



### The Courthouse Crew, Circa 1967-68 Christmas Party

Left to right. **Row 1 (top)**, John Barce, Prosecuting Attorney; Lowell Ford, Surveyor; Eugene Turnpaugh, Recorder, Don Lawrence, County Attorney; **Row 2**, Judge Newell Lamb, George Vann, Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, Russell Zell, County Agent; **Row 3**, Harry Hawn, Treasurer, Fred Friedline, Janitor, Melvin Fisher, Baliff; **Row 4**, Bob McCoy, Commissioner, Leona Pasel, Court Reporter, Lloyd Brunton, Commissioner, Otis Anderson, Haywood Publishing; **Row 5**, Jack Haynes, County Farm Superintendent, Truman Musser, Deputy Surveyor, Unknown; **Row 6**, Margaret Snavelly, Welfare, Lucille Davidson, Assessor, Ted Bumbleburg, Haywood Publishing; **Row 7**, Eveyln Glenn, Welfare, Lucille Johnson, Deputy Treasurer, Walter Miller, Commissioner; **Row 8**, Unknown, Dorothy White, County Health Nurse, Unknown, Ed Geswein, 4-H Agent; **Row 9**, Eloise Schuster, Deputy Auditor, Kay Ford, Secretary County Agent, Lois Larson, Deputy Auditor, John Connell, Auditor; **Row 10**, Jackie Lamb, Secretary to Circuit Court, Betty Yost, Secretary Prosecuting Attorney, Vivian Ferguson, Deputy Auditor, Pauline Hiestand, Clerk, Opal Taylor, Deputy Recorder, Juanita Hall, Deputy Clerk, Mary Knowlton, Welfare Director, Dorothy Kissinger, Dep. Clerk, Bev Haynes, County Home Matron, Barbara McClatchey, Secretary, Welfare, Mary Wirick, Home Agent.



election could go ahead.

The Goodland petitions were formally presented to the Commissioners after the time limit set by the special county seat act. Attorneys felt that that and other parts of the act were unconstitutional.

On April 3, 1902, the Commissioners set June 7, 1902 for an election to move the county seat to Goodland. An ad appeared in the *Newton County Enterprise* April 24, 1902, and again on May 24<sup>th</sup> for this petition.

There were 2820 votes cast in the election. Goodland won with 65% plus 13 votes. Outside of reporting the vote and percentage in the June 14, 1902 *Newton County Enterprise*, a cartoon giving a white elephant courthouse to Goodland, the *Enterprise* had very little comment.

At the July 7, 1902 meeting of the Commissioners, a delegation of Grant Township citizens attended and stated plans would be filed by July 9, 1902. On that date an architect appeared and presented plans for a courthouse. He "droned through the specifications," and with this examination they were accepted. The estimated cost was not to exceed \$45,000, but the paper predicted it would cost \$75,000. The next step was to advertise for bids and let the contract.

The Commissioners, Edward E. Parsons, John Kennedy and Geroge F. Merchant, also Schuyler C. Jones, Auditor and John A. Wildasin, Sheriff, accepted a deed from George Sigler, and others to two acres in the corporation of Goodland on which to build a courthouse and jail. At this time in accordance with the law, the county seat was relocated to Goodland. They also accepted the plans and specifications for a new courthouse and instructed the Auditor to advertise for bids, the cost not to exceed eight-tenths of one percent of taxable property. Bids to be received by 12:00 noon September 1, 1902; also ordered that bonds of the county be issued and sold by law in sufficient number to pay for said buildings. Signed by George Merchant, John Kennedy and Edward Parsons.

In the July 31, 1902, issue of the *Newton County Enterprise*, it was reported that an injunction would be filed enjoining the Commissioners from building a courthouse in Goodland.

The governor appointed three non-interested freeholders, Senator A. B. Burns of South Bend, Senator George W. Williams of Knightstown and Capt. A. A. Anhier of Monticello to appraise the courthouse and other property. They were accompanied by Murray Moors, Assistant Attorney General of Indiana. They arrived on the 10:10 train and departed on the 11:10. They set the value of the courthouse, etc. at \$1,000.

Then the Commissioners were to order the Auditor to assess against taxable property at which the county seat is to be relocated, a tax to the amount of the appraisal of the county buildings. Said tax to be paid in two years, half each year, and said tax to be paid into the county general fund. Then the Commissioners were to convey all buildings, lots and lands to the town or city where located.

A Mr. J. R. Davis from Lake Village hired a lawyer from Momece, Illinois, Mr. Harley, to file an injunction against moving the county seat and building a courthouse. They were joined by Addison C. Harris from Indianapolis. They felt the law was unconstitutional. The injunction proceedings failed in Judge Thompson's court in Jasper County, Rensselaer, Indiana.

The County Council on September 2, 1902, failed to appropriate any money to construct a courthouse. The Commissioners opened bids for a courthouse. They were \$44,439, \$52,575, \$42,475, \$44,750 and \$40,875.

The Commissioners, acting on legal advice, announced that the

**Interior Adornments of the Newton County Courthouse**



*Left, In the main foyer of the courthouse hangs this picture of Alexander J. Kent, 1815-1882, founder of the town of Kentland. It was presented to Newton County by LeRoy H. Dorsey; right, the clock on the main floor of the courthouse was dedicated to the memory of Eloise Schuster, Newton County Deputy Auditor 1956-1972, Newton County Auditor 1973-1977. The clock was handmade by her husband, Frank Schuster, and donated in 1994. Below, this radiator, located in the main entryway, is one of the many that have heated the courthouse for years, probably since its beginning in 1906. NCHS file photos.*



whole matter would be deferred to the County Council for their decision. It was decided that future proceedings would be governed by the County Council. The Council could appropriate any amount of money they wanted to. The Council then refused to accept the low bid and adjourned. A case was filed in the County Court in December 1902, entitled, Frederick D. Gilman vs. the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Gilman appeals the order of the Commissioners rejecting bids because of no appropriation. In the January 8, 1903 *Newton County Enterprise*, an article from the *Francesville Tribune* read that there was a movement in Newton County to split the county in half. The south half going to Benton County and the north to Jasper County. A complaint against the County Commissioners and one against the County Council was filed in the Circuit Court January 28, 1903, by E. R. Bringham. Mr. Bringham averred the Commissioners were negligent in their duty in not letting a contract, that it was the duty of the Commissioners to let



*The gated entrance to North Star Cemetery, located on North Star Road, Jackson Township. Beth Bassett photo.*



*The above two photos show the erect, gleaming white stones that were at one time grey, broken and unsettled. Beth Bassett photo.*

**North Star Cemetery, Jackson Twp. Undergoes Total Renovation in 2006**

For those of us who have spent time walking through a cemetery, recording the transcriptions of our ancestor's stones, tracing them on fine paper, filling in the spaces with shaving cream, just to get a better read of the stone, you will relate to the sense of pride I felt when I recently visited the totally renovated North Star Cemetery located in Jackson Township.

Standing tall at the entrance gate is the American Flag flapping in the breeze, in honor of the Veterans of all wars . . . the bright white vinyl fence that embraces the cemetery gives you a sense of security . . . walking through the gated entrance upon the newly paved drive, you see white glistening stones that at one time were broken and grey . . . now standing erect and proud - as those who placed them many years ago intended them. . .

My Zoborosky roots bring me here. My great-great-grandfather Joseph Zoborosky rests in the northwest corner next to other relatives and a son. He came to this country in 1857 at the age of 92, and passed at the age of 108. There is no question to this - as his age was inscribed on the stone - and with the restoration that was completed by Mark Davis and Helen Wildermuth and their staff, the permanent record will remain for those that follow my footsteps in our family genealogy.

I would personally like to thank the Jackson Township Trustee and Advisory Board for taking the initiative to see this project through. I urge those of you who have an interest in North Star to visit - it will provide you with a new set of "goose bumps" - guaranteed!

If anyone would like a current photo of their family stones at North Star, please contact me, bethbassett@hughes.net or 1681E 1100S, Brook, Indiana 47922. I'd be happy to help with a digital photo, no charge. - Submitted by Beth Bassett.



**We've Come A Long Way From The Well House . . .**

*These are photos from the interior of the Newton County Historical Society's new Resource Center. The headline is a quote of Ron Humphrey, who was there at the beginning of the collection that is now being stored and displayed at our new location. The artifacts that they held at that time were stored in the well house at George Ade's Hazelden. The grand opening is scheduled for November 20, 2006, with an open house being held from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., CST. Plan to attend . . . you will be amazed!*

### My Father: Steve Thomas

McCray Scholarship Winner, 2006  
South Newton High School  
by Andrew Wayne Thomas

This is about a very important person in my life, my father, Steve Thomas. He is a very out going person and loves to see kids happy. He would do just about anything to see that a kid has fun. One of his main destinations for fun would be at the ballpark. He has showed interest in this area for several years.

It all started in 1984 when he started coaching boys little league. After two years, in 1986 he went on to coach girl's softball. In 1990, after his own daughter, April was old enough to start playing ball; he was assistant coach for pee wee. He stayed with pee wee for several years to see myself through four years of fun. After I turned nine and had to move up to little league my dad decided to move up also. This was a hard decision for him though. You see, he loves being with the younger kids and watching them learn the first fundamentals of ball. So he decided not only to help coach little league, but to also stay with pee wee and run the pitching machine. For the next nine years from 1997-2005, he was pretty much at the ballpark for five nights a week. This never seemed to bother him though.

When I was twelve, my years of little league were up. I decided I didn't want to go on and play Babe Ruth. My dad, then in 2000 decided to get involved and be on the baseball board. After two years, he took over the Treasurer's position, which he still does today. He still ran the pitching machine along with umpiring when needed. Then in 2004 he added some more duties to his list by taking over the concession stand, which he is still head.

In 2000 many people nominated Steve for Citizen of the Year. Many recognized him for his involvement and dedication to baseball for so many years.

It was on May 17, 2003 that the board decided after 20 years of loyalty to baseball, to honor my dad. They had a surprise dedication on opening day, of the "Steve Thomas Field". It is the original pee wee field. It is located at the corner of Ade and Lincoln streets in Kentland There is a sign facing Lincoln Street honoring this special field and man.

This park is known as the Batton Park, named after Robert S. and Jeanette Batton, who were long time residents of Kentland. Mr. Batton was a banker and Mrs. Batton was

active in many community activities. It was gatherings. The new walk path of the town located across the street from the old AJ Kent will go through it also. There are two ball high school. I grew up and live a half block fields. One of them being for pee wee and t-from this park, so I spent a lot of time there. It ball and the other one, which is being is a beautiful park with lots of landscaping reconstructed now, but when finished will be and a big playground It is undergoing some the new Babe Ruth field improvements, only to make it more efficient This park holds many memories for my family and me and hopefully will for many people. There is a shelter house with picnic more years to come. tables, where many people love to have

### School Pictures

These are two photographs that Damon Howell sent to us after visiting with his father, Art Howell, of Morocco. Here are his thoughts regarding the content, and he thought our members might be able to identify and verify his identifications.



**Enos School. Map:** on the blackboard is a map of the Wabash Railroad. The Wabash ran through Indiana. **Blackboard:** On the blackboard is written Room 11, 1916 Enos School. The fact that there is a Room 11 would indicate that this is not a one room school, but a school with several rooms, and possibly floors, such as the Enos School. **Black student:** located in the back row, second from right. Art Howell remembered a black family living west and north of Enos during the time that he lived north of Enos, 1916 to 1920. Damon was told a black family by the name Walter Tracey was living in the Enos area. The 1910-1920 census records might reveal information regarding the Tracey family, listing them in McClellan Township and perhaps a son would be listed about the age of the boy in the photo. **Furnishings:** note the desks, pictures and clock.



**The Templeton School,** a one room school was located at the SW corner of 100W and 400N, (NW of North Newton High School.) The teacher at ths time was Bernice Kitts and she taught all eight grades. **Students:** To the far left is Esther Howell. The boy to her left and slightly behind her in the black attire is Ewart Howell. The boy in the bibs and tie in front of Esther is Arthur Howell. The boy in the 2nd row in the very center is Eldon Howell. These children were siblings. **Furnishings:** note the decorations hanging from the ceiling above the children, the desks and benches to the right.

a contract and proceed with the building of a courthouse. Mr. Spinney attacks the record of the County Council and averred that the Council at its September 1902 meeting appropriated \$45,000.00, but the notice was improperly declared lost by the president of the Council.

The Commissioners and the Council met on February 3, 1903, and decided to stand by their actions. It was decided by both sides to take a change of venue to a disinterested county. White County Court was picked.

On March 11, 1903, Judge Palmer of the White County Circuit Court handed down its decision in the Newton County courthouse case. He decided that the Council has nothing to do with the building of a courthouse in Newton County. The County Commissioners have full power to issue bonds for the building by reason of special act which applied solely to Newton County. He held the law constitutional, except Section 12 of the act, but which is unnecessary to the enforcement of the act. This decision cleared the way for the final settlement of the law questions by the Supreme Court. Judge Palmer made his final ruling around May 15, 1903, and the case was immediately appealed to the Supreme Court. The case was expected to be decided within a year.

While there were three comparatively quiet county seat elections, it is interesting to compare to other communities. In DeKalb County, Illinois, there was an effort to remove the county seat from Sycamore, Illinois. An order from the County Judge was secured. The opponents then secured an order from a higher court stopping the election. The fight was on. No attention was paid to the last order and several polling places were opened. An army of deputies was sworn in to serve the writ, and in attempting to do so were bodily thrown out of the election rooms. The Sheriff was roughly handled and was nearly locked in his jail. Some deputies were run out of town by howling mobs bent on hanging. It was a day of mob violence at every polling place and many injuries were reported after the smoke of the battle cleared away.

On January 8, 1904, the Indiana State Supreme Court handed down a decision that the act "concerning County business" known as the County Reform Law approved by the General Assembly on March 3, 1899 was unconstitutional. Now Newton County was back to the starting point. The entire decision covered about one-third more paper than the original law.

The Newton County Commissioners at their February 1, 1904 meeting condemned the courthouse and ordered a new courthouse be built for \$25,000. They felt that the present courthouse was in a state of dilapidation and wholly insufficient and unsafe. Also that County records were stored in unsafe conditions as to fire and dampness. Auditor Schulyer C. Jones was requested to

call a special meeting of the County Council to make an appropriation and sell bonds.

The County Council met on March 7, 1904 with six members present. They were Chancellor, Herriman, Hartley, Hershman, Ewan and Roush. The question of appropriating \$25,000.00 for a new courthouse was laid before them. There was no debate, and the Auditor called the roll. For were Chancellor, Herriman and Hershman, against Hartley, Ewan and Roush. The meeting was immediately adjourned.

On December 17, 1904, a Saturday, the County Council met in special session in the Auditor's office. Auditor Jones acting as Clerk of the Council, read the requisitions on file. One called for an appropriation of \$25,000.00 for a new courthouse at Kentland, one for \$1,000.00 for an investigation into County records. One for \$500.00 for criminal prosecution and \$60.00 for official Court Reporter.

President Herriman of the Council said: "Gentlemen of the Council, we will take up the requisition calling for a new courthouse-does any member desire to debate the proposition?" Not a man spoke.

"The Clerk will call the roll," said the President. The names of Councilmen Hershman, Hartley, Herriman, Chancellor, Tyler and Ewan were called and the answer was the same. All had voted for the appropriation but Councilman Roush. The law required five votes and six had voted for it.

The Council then passed an ordinance providing for the issuing of bonds for the payment of the courthouse. The rate of interest was set at five percent, bond to begin to mature in 1907, and final payment to be made in fifteen years. After cleaning up other business and signing the record, the meeting was adjourned.

One of the most conservative said afterward, "I am sure that every Councilman is glad that the courthouse business is done. And out of the way. It has taken a long time to reach a settlement of this question, and the result is but half satisfactory, yet the matter is settled and that is a source of consolation to every conservative citizen of the county. I favored removal and voted that way, but after the three elections, and removal further away than before, and absence of any law that will give relief, and no possible way to

### Second Floor of Newton County Courthouse Houses Two Courts

*Top right is the Newton County Superior Court, located on the north side of the building. The current judge is the Honorable Daniel J. Molter. The courtrooms were both refurbished during 2002-2004. Steve Diedam, Kentland, hand painted the rooms with faux painting and gold leaf.*

*Bottom right: is the courtroom of the Newton County Circuit Court, located on the north side of the building. The current judge is the Honorable Jeryl F. Leach. Since this photo was taken the wall by the bench has framed pictures of the seven judges who have served this court since its beginning in 1933. They were George Sammons, 1993-1940; Rowland Ray Cummings, 1941-1943; Ralph Bower, 1943-1944; Newell A. Lamb, 1945-1986; George Vann, 1987-1992; Robert B. Smart, 1993-2000; William F. Sammons, 2000.*



secure one that will enable those favoring another location to effect removal, caused me and no doubt the other members of the Council to take immediate action. The deplorable and unprotected condition of our public records left those with a sworn duty to perform but one course to pursue: order a courthouse, and order it now.”

On December 21, 1904 the Commissioners held a meeting to close up the business for 1904. They noted on their record the appropriation of \$25,000 by the Council for a new courthouse and made the final order for the erection of the building.

On January 2, 1905, the Commissioners hired Joseph T. Hutton of Hammond to be the architect and draw up plans for a courthouse.

He was to submit his plans for approval February 1, 1905. The contract price is five percent of the cost of the building. On February 6, 1905, J. T. Hutton presented his plans and specifications for the new courthouse to the Commissioners. The first floor will house the Auditor, Clerk, Treasurer and Recorder. The Auditor's office will have an area of 23x31 feet, Treasurer 20x24 feet, Recorder, 20x24 feet and Clerk 23x31 feet. Each supplied with vaults. Second floor courtroom 58x35 feet, Sheriff 21x24 feet with private office, Witness room 15x11 feet, Jury room 15x20 feet, Judges room 15x20 feet, library 10x12 feet and an unassigned room of 21x24 feet. The contract was to be let on April 3, 1905. The Commissioners directed the Auditor to sell an issue of County Bonds on April 3<sup>rd</sup>. They will be issued in denominations of \$1,000 bearing five percent interest.

There were advertisements in the *Newton County Enterprise* March 2, 1905 for letting of a contract for the courthouse the heating system and the sale of bonds for the courthouse.

On April 3, 1905, the Commissioners had five bids on building a courthouse. They were: W. F. Stillwell, Lafayette \$43,954; Rush and Warren, Rensselaer, \$35,000; Herzog and Son, Lafayette, \$39,363; E. L. Danner, Kokomo, \$36,949 and Erick Lund, Hammond, \$26,195. There were also eight bids for the heating plant from \$1800 to \$2,167.

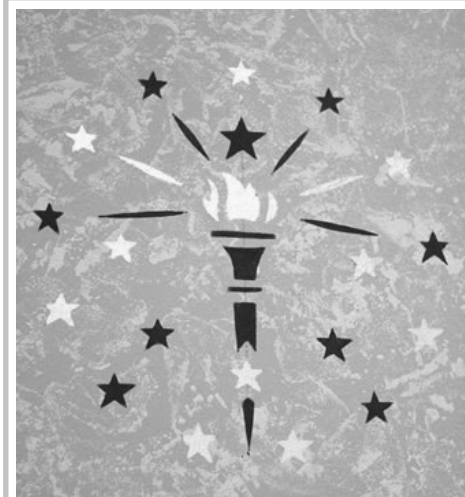
Before 12:00, two or three carriages of people from Morocco arrived to protest the letting of the contract. The Commissioners and

architect met in closed session for two hours. They then appeared in the Auditor's office and announced they would award the contract to Erick Lund. The County Attorney was instructed to prepare a contract which was signed. The citizens of Brook and Goodland were in agreement and simply wanted it settled. It seemed to be a minority from Morocco protesting. There were seventeen bidders for the bonds. J. F. Wilde and Company of Indianapolis, offering a premium of \$2,251. The Auditor declined to make the sale at once and wanted to seek legal advice. Some of his friends from Morocco advised him not to sell. The representative from the bond company advised that under the law, he was required to sell and that if he didn't, he would probably be in court the next day. The County Attorney also advised him that under the law he was required to without delay, sell to the best bidder. The Auditor, Mr. Purkey, then sold the bonds to J. F. Wilde and Company at the premium offered.

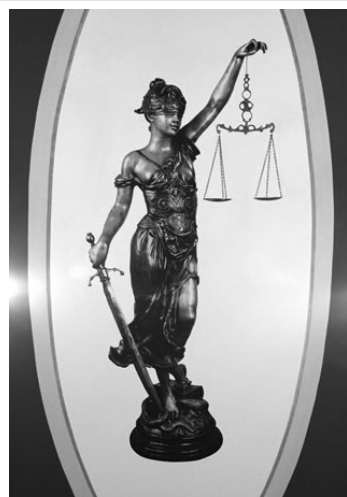
On March 31, 1905, injunction proceedings were brought by Benjamin F. Davis, Andrew J. Ellis and Joseph M. Chizum of Morocco, to restrain the Board of Commissioners from letting a contract for building a courthouse in Kentland. Attorney Rogers, from Indianapolis and Attorney Pierson of Morocco appeared for the petitioners. They set up a claim of irregularity on the part of the Council in making the appropriation in that no requisition had been made by the Commissioners, that new business could not be properly brought before the Council at a special session and that no emergency existed at the time the appropriation was made that had not existed at the

time of the regular session in September.

Mr. Rogers argued the case at some length. Then Judge Cummings and Attorney E. B. Sellers who were appearing for the Commissioners, and these gentlemen presented their case in no uncertain language. Proof was submitted in the form of the official record that a requisition had been made by the Commissioners and further that a request for the money had been pending since the special session held nearly a year ago. As to the duty of the Council, the extent of their power, and as to the duty and power of the Board of Commissioners in building a courthouse, Mr. Sellers pointed out clearly that the power to build a courthouse rested solely in the Board



This symbol of torch and stars, which appears in the center of the Indiana Flag, is painted on the walls of the Circuit Court room. **Right:** Lady Justice adorns the center of the ceiling in the Superior Court room.



These scales of justice set on the bench of the Circuit Court. **Right:** This beautiful chandelier may be found in the ceiling of the Circuit Court room.



## 1957 Goodland High School Grad Joe McConnell Voice of Purdue Football Shares Memories of Newton County Basketball

*Editor's note: After Kay Babcock read the McCray Scholarship winning essay about the 1956 basketball sectional winners, the Morocco Beavers, she contacted former resident and 1957 Goodland High School graduate, Joe McConnell, regarding his career and asked him if he remembered this particular contest. A letter and biography soon followed, and it is reprinted here for your enjoyment.*

Dear Kay, I did not remember that Morocco won the '56 sectional, although I remember the Purkey kid. I also knew Tom Shuey (who just happened to have one of the "hottest" sisters around.) Les Kline was probably the best athlete to come out of Morocco since baseball legend Sam Rice! He started as a football player at St. Joe and I knew him later on when he coached his Portage high school team to the 4-A IHSAA championship. I also know that seven of the 11 schools that comprised the field at that time, all won in a seven year span – no repeat winners for 7 years!

We won in '55 and, believe it or not, that wasn't the best team Goodland put on the floor in that span. That would be the '56 team that lost to DeMotte. GHS lost only 2 games that year. Darche, Sell and Dorton were all a year more experienced, but they were not able to cope with foul trouble and a DeMotte front line that averaged 6'6" tall! I guess after we lost, I lost interest and forgot that Morocco actually won it. My senior year (1957,) we lost only 3 as Darche became the best player in the entire area. We lost the final home game to Monon – in double OT. Bill Dalton threw in a three-quarter length shot at the end of regulation. The officials wiped it out, saying that it had come too late! We all trudged back to the locker room and were in the early states of undress when they came in and told us that the game was going into overtime. Our only other loss that season was in a holiday tournament at Wolcott. It was a very low scoring, close game – in the 30's. We couldn't seem to beat those White County teams. In the sectional semi-final, we lost in double OT to Rensselaer. But Darche and Ray Brown

had fouled out. Cappy Don came in off the bench and tied it late with a rare basket. We finally ran out of gas in the second session. I was physically ill (upset) by the outcome. We had a team meal back at Dorton's (chocolate shop?) I was too sick to eat – thought about not going back to see the Rensselaer-Wheatfield game. Did though, and I'll never forget the crowd singing "Three Blind Mice" and throwing pennies on the floor when the refs came out to work the title game. To say that we had been "helped" from the tournament would have been an understatement.

I remember hearing about Goodland's final sectional title (1960) – I was attending Franklin College at the time. Oh, to be able to go back to just one state championship. Now, nobody outside of the local school district can remember who won state (or in what class) – a year after it happened. To us, the sectional was the state! And for teams that might have played in the Lafayette Sectional, there was always the county title! Now, there's not even a major outlet that televises the event. – Thanks for your interest – Joe McConnell.

### McConnell's Career

Joe McConnell graduated from Goodland High School in 1957 and Franklin College in 1962. He started broadcasting professionally in December of 1961 on a Franklin, Indiana FM station. He worked at Purdue University, WBAA for four years, and also was the Purdue Assistant SID during the Rose Bowl season of 1966. He worked at Channel 18 for 2 years before moving to Terre Haute, Indiana, working for the Hulman Company's WTHI-AM and TV.

Joe felt his first big break came in 1969, when he became the voice of the Denver Bronco AFL football team. He moved to Phoenix, Arizona to work for the Arizona Suns, KTARAM-TV, before moving back to Indianapolis, Indiana, becoming the voice of the Indiana Pacers on WIBC. He also picked up a second job as "voice of the Minnesota Vikings" in 1971. He accepted a job from WBBM in Chicago from the Chicago Bears, then oddly enough, moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota, at the same time to broadcast for the Minnesota Twins.

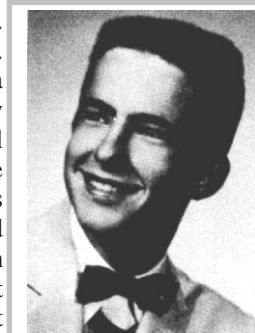
After two years, WBBM also acquired the radio rights to the White Sox, so he then moved to Chicago in 1980. Four years later he had worked over 200 games which included the White Sox, Bears and DePaul University basketball – on three different 50,000 watt AM stations at the same time – no-one had accomplished this before – or since that time. He was hired back by the Vikings as the WBBM contract ended with the Bears in 1985, so unfortunately, he missed the Super Bowl Shuffle!

Over the past 20 years, he has been the voice of the Colts for three years, the Oilers –the first two years in Tennessee; worked as the national radio voice of the NBA for five years – Michael Jordan's first three titles with the Bulls, and two by Houston; did Northwestern football and basketball; WGN-TV games with DePaul, Illinois and Notre Dame; was the voice of the Sears College Football Game of the Week for three years; and now he is winding down, with his 12th year of Purdue football this year.

"I have worked national playoffs, championships, super bowls, and twice managed to broadcast a "unique" doubleheader. Broadcasting an NFL game along with the minor league baseball game on the same day, once for different markets! While I was living in Minnesota, I broadcasted the Bears at Dallas game on a Sunday afternoon, then caught a cab and drove out to Arlington to do a Twins-Ranger broadcast. A couple of years later, (1983,) the Bears played at Soldier Field and then he drove down to air the playoff game between the Sox and the Orioles. Britt Burns pitched a shutout into the 10th, but the Sox lost when a reserve outfielder by the name of Tite Landrum homered to win the game – and eventually the series – for Baltimore" Joe wrote.

"One of the neatest things that ever happened though, was the night I brought Mgr. Tony LaRussa, Greg Luziaski and several other players over to Goodland to the Tivoli. We happened to be staying over at Remington during a three or four day spring caravan, (visiting all the major towns around Chicago,) and I called a couple of my classmates. The usual "suspects" were in the bar that night (couple of Donahues, Bill Lyons and etc), Tony played a couple games of gin rummy with Howard Burton! After we went back to Chicago, LaRussa told me he had "enjoyed that night more than any other time" on a caravan," Joe added in his letter.

Joe plans on attending the Goodland High School Alumni in 2007, when he will help his class celebrate their 50th year! – Submitted by Kay Babcock



Joe McConnell, 1957 Graduation Photo

## The 1956 Basketball Sectional Champs: The Morocco Beavers

North Newton High School McCray Scholarship Winner, 2006  
by Kevin Wiseman

On March 1, 1956, the headline for the Morocco Courier read, "Beavers Trounce Rensselaer to Win Sectional Tourney Saturday." This event, which occurred fifty years ago, was the last basketball sectional that Morocco won before they combined with the schools of Mt. Ayr and Roselawn to form one unified high school called North Newton. The Lake Village kids went to Morocco and were also part of the championship team. Many people have either forgotten the importance of that night, or never understood it in the first place, but if you talk to anyone that was in Morocco on that glorious evening, you are sure to hear another story. My grandfather, Calvin Schultz, was part of this sectional winning team, and he remembers it like it was yesterday. He told me the story, and I assure you that on that night, the entire town of Morocco was excited and celebrating.

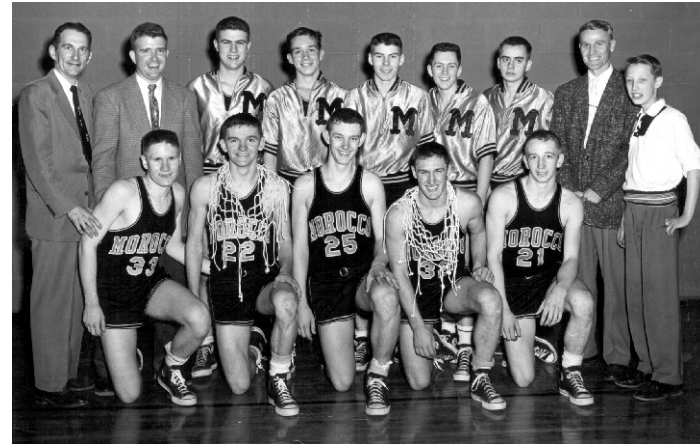
The 1956 sectional winning team was made up of ten players. They included: Don Hunter, Dave Rybarski, John Kessler, Tom Shuey, Dave Brandt, Dave Boyd, Dale Purkey, Gene Hendryx, Les Klein, and Calvin Schultz. The principal at the time was John Cronke, and the well-liked and highly respected coach was Jim Lodes. Coach Lodes describes them as a scrappy team, with an average record going into the sectional tournament, who played the game with a lot of heart. The players credit their coach as the motivating factor and many found him to be an inspiration, not only during the 1956 basketball season but throughout their lives. A few of these men still live in the area of Morocco as home-town heroes, but many others have either moved or passed away.

The team and the town share many memories from the night when little Morocco beat the Goliath Rensselaer. On the way home from the Saint Joe Field House where the game was played, the last car in the Beavers' team caravan was pulled over by a Rensselaer police officer.

Just as things started to look bad, the State Trooper who was leading the caravan turned around to save the day. After he talked it over with the disappointed Rensselaer fan, the Morocco basketball team was free to go party. The festivities that celebrated the sectional victory included a bon-fire in the road and a huge parade. The evening after the game, someone started a fire in the intersection of State and Clay Streets. This fire burnt a huge hole in the black top of the street. Sometime in the days that followed, there was a parade to celebrate the win. There was a huge turnout in our little town, and this event definitely gave Morocco something to be proud about. The important thing is that they will always be remembered due to recent and past events. There is a team photograph hanging up in the Morocco IGA, honoring this team. This photo has been hanging for years, serving as a vague reminder and most often overlooked. However, on February 18, 2006 a ceremony was held at North Newton High School commemorating the 50th Anniversary of this moment in Morocco's history. This ceremony gave a new generation the opportunity to hear the story and feel the excitement of that monumental victory. To further honor the team and the significance of their accomplishment, a brick was donated to the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame with "Morocco Beavers 1956 Sec. Champs" engraved on it.

The significance of this event to me was being able to play in the game that was in honor of my grandfather's team. My team didn't

compete for a sectional victory that night, but we did play with extra motivation and came out on top against a decent Lake Station team. My grandpa wasn't able to make it to the ceremony, due to recent heart surgery, but he did talk to me about the importance that team and that victory had in his life. Most of all, my grandfather was happy that fifty years later, people were still talking about their sectional win over Rensselaer. The ceremony out at the high school gave all of the players of that 1956 squad a chance to stick their chests out in pride, one more time.



**Morocco High School 1956 Basketball Sectional Champs**

Top row, l-r; Principal John Cronke, Coach Jim Lodes, Don Hunter, Dave Rybarski, John Kessler, Tom Shuey, Dave Brandt, Asst. Coach Frank Stucker, Mgr. Gene Deardurff. Bottom row, l-r: Dave Boyd, Dale Purkey, Gene Hendryx, Les Kline, Calvin Schultz. Not pictured, Pete Merriman, Doug Boyd, David Lindlow). *Photo courtesy of the Morocco Alumni Association, Dave DeKoker.*



**State Street, Morocco, ca 1949.** *Photo by Gene Parson, courtesy of the Morocco Alumni Association, Dave DeKoker.*

The editor would like to thank Dave DeKoker for his contribution to this Newcomer.

Visit the  
**MOROCCO HIGH SCHOOL  
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION WEB SITE**  
[www.moroccohighschoolalumni.org](http://www.moroccohighschoolalumni.org)

of Commissioners and the authority to appropriate money rests entirely with the County Council and from their decision there is no appeal and his contention was ultimately sustained by the court. Judge Hanley decided absolutely against the petitioners but deciding to give them a hearing made a temporary order against the Commissioners until 8:00 a.m. Saturday morning.

At that hour the issues were joined and cause submitted to trial. Judge Hanley felt his legal grounds carefully and deliberated at length before handing down his decisions which was for the Board of Commissioners, finding that Mr. Ellis and the other petitioners were not entitled to the injunctive relief prayed for in the petition.

Attorney Rogers on April 7<sup>th</sup>, appeared in court with another suit on the courthouse. He sought a stay of proceedings claiming that the action of the Commissioners in letting a contract with an appeal pending was illegal. As soon as the case was filed the County Attorney was sent for, and when he appeared the matter was taken up instantly. Judge Cummings moved to strike the case from the files of the court. Mr. Rogers attempted to cite authority sustaining his position. But it was apparent that the authorities cited were case where injunctions were granted. Judge Hanley interrupted Mr. Rogers and said, "You are in court on a wrong theory. The court cannot interfere with the acts of the Board of Commissioners where it has previously declined to take action. You sought relief by injunction and that relief was denied by the Circuit Court. This court cannot at this time interfere with the Board of Commissioners. The court on its own motion strikes the case from the docket. In less than

fifteen minutes, Mr. Rogers was in and out of court.

On April 17, 1905, architect Hutton staked out the new building. Contracts were let for building materials. Mr. Lund expected to use local labor. By April 27, 18 carloads of brick and stone had been delivered. The corner stone of the new courthouse was laid June 1, 1905, without public ceremony. In the stone was placed a history of the organization of Newton County written by John Ade; a list of the county officers and officers of the town of Kentland, a history of the organization of the first courts of the county by John Higgins, copy of the proceedings held for the incorporation of Kentland, signed by J. A. Hatch as secretary; various newspapers of the county. On June 9, 1905 the Supreme Court, to which the case Davis vs. the Commissioners was appealed, granted a temporary injunction until June 20, 1905. It simply stopped any more payment to the contractor. On June 20, 1905, several questions were argued by the attorney for the county and Davis. On June 30, 1905, the Supreme Court granted an injunction against the Commissioners and the contract with Erick Lund null and void.

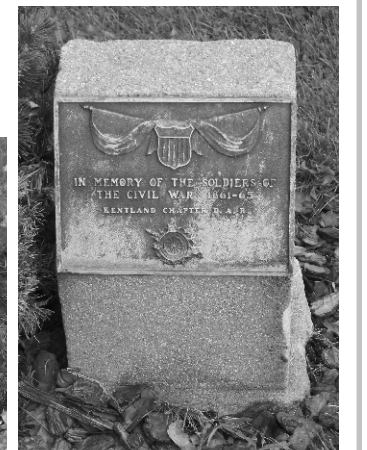
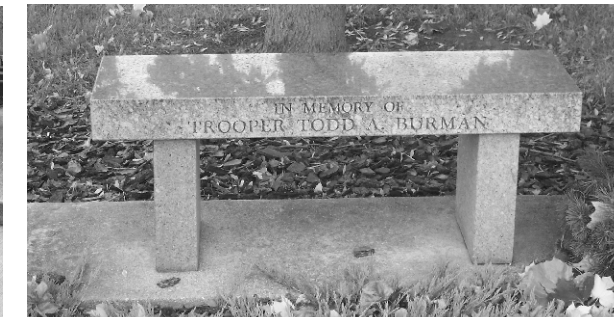
Their decision was really based on the fact that a Councilman did not introduce a paper on which had been written, "be it ordained by the Newton County Council," but instead said "I move that the request of the Commissioners be granted and that an appropriation be made to build a courthouse."

The really serious aspect of this injunction was to nullify the bonds that had been sold to pay for the courthouse. Part of the money



### Exterior of the Newton County Courthouse

*Left, the Courthouse is located at 201 N. Third St., Kentland, Indiana. This close-up of the main entrance shows the new lettering installed in 1998; center, this World War I cannon rests on the front lawn of the courthouse. It was recently restored by David Wilson of Brook, Indiana; right, this stone which is located on the front lawn, commemorates the Kentland-Newton County Centennial 1860-1960. On the north side of the stone is written: Bicentennial Time Capsule located five feet north to be opened July 4, 2076. Dedicated November 15, 1976, Newton County Bicentennial Committee, County Board of Commissioners, Pun'kin Vine Fair Board. Below, left and center bench monuments were set for the Honorable Robert Smart and State Trooper Todd Burman, right, the D.A.R. monument placed in memory of Newton County Civil War Veterans. NCHS file photos.*



from the sale of the bonds had been paid to Mr. Lund for work and material.

Work was stopped on the courthouse and on August 7, 1905, suit was filed in the Circuit Court by Joseph M. Chizum to order the Commissioners to remove all building and building materials and return the courthouse property to its condition previous to the thirteenth day of April, 1905. It was alleged that the property was extremely dangerous.

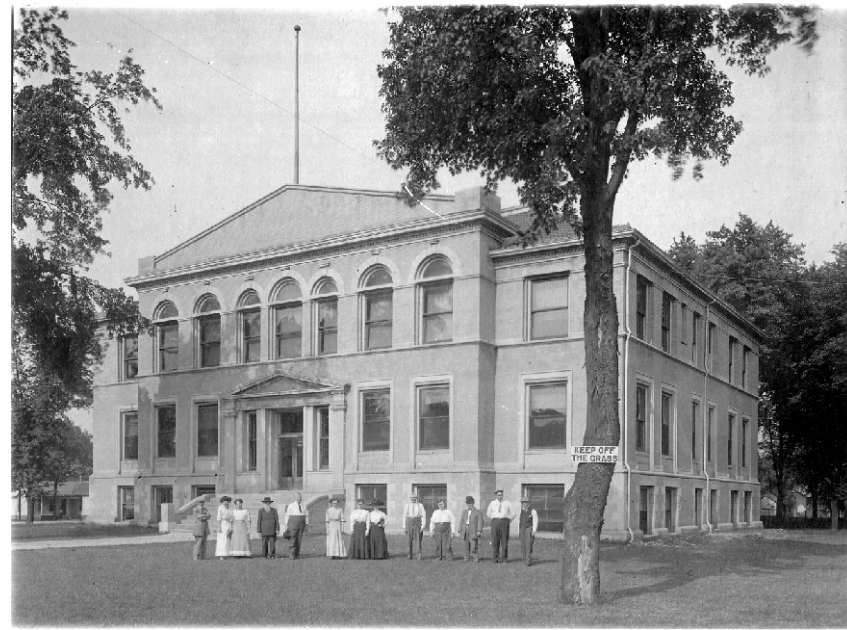
At their session on August 7, 1905, the Commissioners went over the ground very carefully with the County Attorney and the architect and arrived at the sum of \$24,500 to repair and finish building the courthouse. This included the repair and completion of the new courthouse, heating plant, plumbing, wiring, furniture and fixtures, electric light fixtures, Attorney fees and architects fees. To provide the necessary funds they addressed the County Council the following: "Said Board of Commissioners also pray for authority by ordinance to issue and sell bonds of Newton County in the sum of \$24,500 to provide funds with which to pay for the repair and completion of the new courthouse, electric light fixtures therein, furniture therefore, for fees, costs and expense of the case of State Ex-Rel Davis et al vs. Newton County Council and others, and Judge Hammonds fees hereinbefore mentioned, and the fees of the architect for such repairs and completion of said new courthouse. The current funds to be derived from taxation and other sources being insufficient for payment of above named expenditures. The total of the indebtedness of said County added to above sum will not exceed two percent of the taxable property of said County." This was signed by all of the Board of Commissioners.

The following appeared in the *Morocco Courier*: "We understand that the Commissioners at their meeting Monday, made an order asking the County Council for an appropriation of \$24,000 with which to complete the courthouse structure already half done and more than half paid for, although the payment was of an illegal

nature. If some person who is good at figures can reason out how it comes that it takes \$24,000 to complete a building that is contracted to be built for \$26,000 and on which \$13,000 has been paid, we would like them to show us how it is done. It would look like they intended to tear down the building already half done and do the work all over again from the ground up. Perhaps some of the citizens of Kentland who are on the inside of the ring can explain the matter satisfactorily to us and we wish they would as we would like very much to tell the people how figures can lie or liars figure."

*The Newton County Enterprise* answered: "The above is easily answered, for first, figures don't lie; and secondly, the officials who are doing the figuring are not liars. The original building was to have cost \$26,195, and had B. F. Davis, Andrew Ellis and J. M. Chizum let the contract stand, as did the rest of the County, the building would have been completed at those figures. If it costs more now to complete the same it is not difficult to see who is responsible for the additional cost. And further and more directly to the point, the Commissioners do not ask for \$24,000 with which to complete building as stated by *The Courier*, but their requisition plainly reads: 'for the repair and completion of the new courthouse. Also heating apparatus, plumbing, wiring, etc. \$19,450 This sum was added to the \$12,800 that has already been paid on the building,

makes a total of \$32,250. or an increase over the former contract of \$6,055. With this small increase, we are informed the Commissioners propose to substitute a tile roof for the tin roof contemplated in the first contract, and the residue is for the repair and completion of the present partially constructed building, based on the estimates submitted by the architect in charge. The remainder of the \$24,500 referred to by the *Courier*, the sum of \$3,300 is for electric light fixtures, furniture and vault fixtures, which was not included in or formed any part of the original contract. It also includes \$1500 for attorney fees, \$250 for architect fees, neither of which sums would have been necessary had Morocco permitted the



"Keep Off The Grass" - this photo was given to Kyle Conrad from John Connell, who had dated it 1911, a few years after it was built.



A closer look at those "violating the sign." Their names are unknown, if the year is 1911, they may be some of county officials at the time. Possibly someone can verify this belief. The officials were: Charles Hanley, Circuit Judge; Fred Longwell, Prosecuting Attorney; Howard McCurry, Clerk; E. R. Bingham, Auditor; Albert Schuh, Treasurer; Moses Sawyer, Sheriff; E. E. Skinner, Young Deardurff, and S. H. Dickinson were Commissioners; Henry Brunton, Recorder; Greenberry Lowe, Surveyor; W. O. Schanlaub, Supt. of Schools. Submitted by Kyle Conrad

# Quill & Ink

Featuring Local Newton County

Poetry and Prose

## Fences

By Helen (McCabe) Thompson  
Brook, Indiana

The fences are gone now,  
Once each section was  
Blocked out, and halved,  
And quartered, down to  
Eighties, and halved again  
So that the farmer  
Spoke of  
The north forty,  
The south forty.  
Fences made the bounds.  
Keeping them up  
Was a necessary chore.  
Cattle pastured  
In the winter stalks,  
Their droppings  
Fertilizing spring plantings.  
There was a coziness  
To the fenced fields  
That is missing now.  
Winds can roam  
Across the sections,  
Through the townships,  
County to county.  
The brush and hedges  
Which grew in fence rows,  
Gone now;  
Missing, too, the birds  
That nested in the bracken,  
Warbling, dawn to twilight,  
Spring to autumn.  
The shadow of the hawk  
Swept over the rich earth  
And the haunting call  
Of the rain crow came,  
Early and late,  
From far away,  
While the meadowlark  
Sweetened summer  
Mornings.  
Now, in spring,  
The farmer can plow  
Long, long swaths,  
Furrow to furrow,  
Field to field.  
No land is idle.  
Great machines  
Roam section to section,  
Leaving droppings  
Of fertilizers and seeds—  
Where no bird sings  
And wind sweeps  
Across the plain.

## Barefoot Days

Reprinted from "Because He Lives"  
By Shirley (Boyd) Storey, 1993, Morocco, Indiana

Two little Boyd Sisters  
Out on the farm  
Had a dedicated Mother  
Who kept us from harm.  
Eager to venture  
When Spring rolled around  
Shoes had been shed  
We were barefoot bound.  
Just seemed to know  
When time to shed our shoes  
Fresh plowed ground, felt so good  
Between our toes it oozed.  
Our play wasn't organized  
We created it our way  
Roll the hoop, walk the barrel, Annie  
Annie Over  
And many more, it varied everyday.  
When the days grew hot  
And no way to cool,  
There wasn't such a thing  
Like a Lake Village Pool.  
So the time had arrived  
That one could venture  
Down to the ditch banks  
Where we explored nature.  
After begging with Mom  
And heard all of the Rules  
Off to the Swimming Hole  
Were Mom's "Little Jewels"

## Little River\*

Morocco, Indiana - 1939-1948  
By Bettie Morris Magee

Little river flowing gently to big brother,  
Flowing slowly to the mighty Wabash  
Little river named long, long ago  
By the quiet people of the Iroquois  
In the marshes, erect and tall, the pussy willows stand,  
Stems swaying, thin sentries with fuzzy faces.  
Little River Iroquois,  
Is it again upon your grassy bank.  
My chestnut colt drinks deeply of your waters  
While I rest and dream of my long, long ago.

Submit your poetry or prose for publication in this section. Contact Janet Miller, 219-474-5380, 12060 S. Pun'kin Vine Road, Kentland, IN 47951; janrich@ffni.com for more information.

We were reminded -  
"What if it should storm or a tramp  
comes along?"  
But we wanted so to please her  
That it wasn't our norm.

Mom told us that she would  
Hang a towel on the clothes line  
Then we'd better start for home  
Twas' her way to tell us "it was time."  
We kept checking to see  
That we spent most of the time  
Instead of playing - kept looking to see  
If Mom has the towel on the line.

Of course we took a picnic lunch,  
And spread it on the bank.  
The usual Jar of water and some goodies  
We had our mom to thank.

So we gathered our belongings  
And walked the cow path home.  
Happy for the day of fun  
And happy to be home.

I've shared with you some memories  
About our Childhood Days  
There's plenty more to tell you  
In so many different ways.

These words may sound boring  
For some folks to hear  
But these are "Precious Memories"  
Held in our Hearts - so Dear.

My love, with curly golden hair and blue-gray eyes,  
In Hoosier tones, speaks to me across the years.  
Once we followed our little river to the Wabash  
Where we laughed and sang the song of  
Sycamores and candlelight,  
And of course the dear sweet scent of new mown hay.

For the Zoborosky and Carroll families

\*published in The Longfellow Society Journal,  
Wayside Inn, Sudbury, Massachusetts, 2006



# HISTORICALLY YOURS

By Newton County Historian  
Donna LaCrosse

Harold and I traveled to Ft. Mitchell, Kentucky in August where we attended his 63<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division Association 58<sup>th</sup> Army reunion. It was a great reunion and we all really enjoyed getting to know each other better. I have the honor of serving the Association as their secretary/treasurer and as the editor of their newspaper, *The Blood and Fire*. This really means that I get to attend all the men's meetings, which makes me the only woman in the room!! The sad part is, I am always so busy taking minutes I don't have time to enjoy the spotlight!!

Early in September, we attended another army reunion in Chillicothe, Ohio. This time it was the veterans from Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Kentucky getting together for their annual fall meeting. There were thirty in Ohio and we had a great time visiting museums and eating. One interesting point of interest was our visit to the Ross County Historical Society and being given a "little" attention because I represent Newton County as the historian and am always proud to announce that fact. I brought home a copy of their quarterly newsletter, *Recorder*. It is eight pages and has an insert announcing a new book by Victor Cleary, *Clarksburg's Courageous World War II*. Reading this publication made me so proud of *The Newcomer*. Our newspaper is so full of interesting reading material, which covers many pages and we have Beth Bassett, who really knows what she is doing!! Aren't we lucky?

Meeting again as a small group of veterans and spouses will take place in May somewhere in Indiana. And, of course there is always the annual meeting in August for the National Association and in 2007, we will travel to Tacoma, Washington. We two have never been to the state of Washington so are hoping to stay healthy so we can go and enjoy!

I know, those two events are not Newton County happenings but, we live in Newton County and they happened to us so that should make it o.k. to talk about in this column!!

Our Family History Division of the Newton County Historical Society was a week late meeting this time – the September meeting was held on October 2, but we will get together again in October on the last Monday, so I guess that will even things up!! It was so nice having Nancy Prue join us and of course we had a great time trying to help Greta Taylor gather ideas for the new Coloring Book. That was a hoot and had us all talking out of turn and over each other, tossing ideas out so fast we kept Greta's pencil busier than busy! It was great fun and made me realize what a wonderful thing it is to be able to get together with other county people and enjoy an afternoon of laughing and learning!

On Monday evening, I had the pleasure of introducing Jaleen Deardurff of Rensselaer as the guest speaker at the Morocco Literary Club meeting. She has just had her first novel published this past summer. She is married to a Morocco boy (man) and worked with me at the Morocco Courier many years ago. We also attended creative writing sessions with a few other ladies in the area, when we got together once a week and showed off our writing abilities. Please note, there has only been one author published and there were six of us in the sessions!! Does that tell you who had the writing ability?

Anyway, it was fun hearing her talk about how she started her book, why she wrote a book, how she gathered information, why she chose family to write about, how long it took her to write the book

and would she write another book. She said she was in the midst of writing a sequel to *The Music Teacher* and would be traveling in a few weeks to see family members in order to gather information about the past sites and lives of the relatives of those she wrote about in the first book. I can hardly wait to read more about this family.

I will tell you that our grandson, Daniel LaCrosse is now stationed in Iraq and I am asking all of you to remember these service men and women in your daily prayers. They are all making history – maybe not Newton County history, but county related history and need our support.

In closing, I ask all of you to keep a record of your comings and goings – some day you will be happy you took the time to jot down interesting facts about your daily activities and your family; that is history in the making, and goodness only knows, we must continue making history! Have a great winter!!

## Re-consecration of Graves

The Iroquois-Washington Preservation Committee of Brook, Indiana held a re-consecration of the graves of Thomas Montgomery and William and Margaret Niesz on Saturday, July 1, 2006, at their grave sites during the Brook Sesquicentennial Celebration

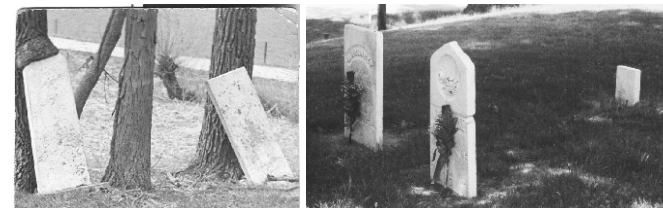
The graves of William and Margaret Niesz, located on the southwest corner of Newton County roads 250E and 1100S have been unmarked for over 30 years. In May of 2006, their original grave markers, dating from 1865 and 1858 respectively, were professionally restored and placed back on their grave site.

Just 200 yards northwest of these graves, another stone was restored that marks the grave of two year old Thomas Montgomery, who died in 1846. Thomas was the son of pioneer settlers John and Jane Montgomery.

Both projects have been made possible by Iroquois Township Trustee Jane Risley and land owners Thomas and Debra Eriks, and Katherine Kindig. The Niesz stones were donated to the IWPC by the family of Everette and Lois Moline.



Thomas Montgomery, stone condition before and after.



William and Margaret Niesz, stone condition before and after.

completion of the work under the original contract, and to be plain, and for all the enlightenment of the *Courier*, we will again say that these particular sums, together with the increased cost of the building, are directly chargeable to the acts of above named citizens of Morocco.

"The question now is not one of location, but it is question of building a courthouse. The Commissioners, realizing the pressing needs of the County are acting in good faith, and their acts are approved by nine-tenths of the people of the county. No-one but the *Courier* is charging extravagance and certainly it could not openly charge dishonesty, although the above article implies the same.

"The Commissioners started in to build a \$25,000 building and were firm in their stand that it should cost no more. And now, if they are compelled to add a few thousand dollars, surely the ones who are fighting them are responsible for the additional cost, and the taxpayers will so consider it. We have talked with men from every section of the county, even from Beaver Township, and they stand firmly by the Commissioners in the course they are pursuing and have expressed their belief that the Commissioners made a splendid contract in the original building, and one that cannot be duplicated at this season of the year. The Commissioners have acted honestly and economically, and if the completion of the building costs a little more at this time, surely they can't be charged with the loss. Briefly, it appears to us that it is not Morocco

fighting Kentland, but Morocco fighting the taxpayers of Newton County."

After the case filed by Joseph M. Chizum to require the removal of the partial courthouse was withdrawn, a new injunction was filed on August 25, 1905 against the Commissioners, County Council and contractor Lund. The court was asked to issue an injunction against the Council for making the necessary appropriation and against the Commissioners letting a contract for the completion of the courthouse. Judge Hanley denied the injunction against the Council and continued the case against the Commissioners until October.

On September 5, 1905 the Newton County Council met with Herriman, Hershman, Tyler and Chancellor present. Hartley had resigned and Zeba F. Little was appointed in his place. Roush had died and Joseph Kight was appointed. Ewan was disqualified because he was no longer a freeholder and Levi H. Dirst took his place. On September 6, 1905, the Council met and set the tax levy. Then the budget for county officers. The next item was the new

courthouse. The chairman asked if anyone had comments, no-one did. Chancellor moved that the ordinance, and this time it was an ordinance, be placed on its passage. It passed without dissent.

The completion of the new courthouse was authorized, and every step necessary to the completion of the building provided.

On October 16, 1905, the Circuit Court heard argument on an injunction against the Commissioners and the completion of the partially built courthouse. After much controversy, Judge Hanley sustained the complaint which ended its existence. He dissolved the temporary restraining order which then gave the Commissioners free hand to continue finishing the courthouse.

On October 30, 1905, the court heard the case of J. F. Wilde and Company concerning the courthouse bonds that were declared void by the Supreme Court. Judge Hanley entered a judgment against Newton County and the County could redeem the bonds and preserve the County's credit. The Board of Commissioners on November 6, 1905, issued a statement that they would not appeal the ruling.

The County Council met on November 21, 1905 and issued bonds by ordinance, in the amount of \$14,970.03 to pay John F. Wilde and Eudorus M. Johnson for the invalid bonds.

The courthouse arguments took a turn for the worse. A petition was made asking for the resignation of Commissioner Skinner of the third district. He also received death threats, as well as the following letter: "Mr. Skinner, your resignation is demanded by your constituents. Don't be late with it or that house you live in

will blow away in ashes and your people may never know what became of you."

Needless to say, this aroused widespread indignation.

On December 7, 1905, there was an appeal filed in the Appellate Court to stop the County Council from selling bonds and the Commissioners from contracting the finish of the courthouse. The Appellate Court refused to hear the bond case. The motion for the injunction against the Commissioners contracting for completion of the courthouse and the removal of the started courthouse were overruled.

On January 1, 1906, the County Commissioners awarded a contract to Erick Lund to complete the courthouse. There were two bidders, Lund and William Ahlborn, both of Hammond. Mr. Lund's bid was for \$18,525, Mr. Ahlborn \$19,653.50. The contract was for the completion of the building, heating and wiring. The only change was from a tin roof to a tile roof. There were no remonstrators present. The contract was signed by Commissioners Hess, Skinner and Whaley.



Celebrating 100 Years. An overall view of the Newton County Courthouse, 2006, as seen from Third Street, Kentland, Indiana. NCHS file photo.

The bonds were sold to Trowbridge and Niver of Chicago at a premium of \$1200.40. There were five bidders. Two bids were higher but they failed in requirements in filing with their bids certified checks as requested by law.

On the second of January 1906, Commissioner Skinner received another threatening letter: "Mr. Skinner, your resignation is demanded by 92% of your constituents. You are going out of that office, if not as requested you will go out by other means. And if other means have to be used you will beg for mercy on your bended knees. Have your resignation in by January 6<sup>th</sup>, or there will be something doing at once. There will be no other notices given you. If you fail you will see some sights."

There was widespread indignation in the county.

There were also charges that while the letter was mailed in Morocco and the previous one in Hopkin's Park, someone in another town was the culprit. It was simply an attempt to blame the area of Morocco. In other words, sour grapes.

In the February 22, 1906, issue of the *Enterprise*, it was stated that the tile for the courthouse roof had been received and the roof would probably be finished in two weeks. All brick and stonework except the steps and the stone ledge to surround the cornice was finished. Mr. Lund said the building would be completed in the last of July.

It was suggested in the *Morocco Courier* in early May that a close watch should be made of the new courthouse. "It might vanish in thin air some dark night. We would respectfully suggest that the new building be immediately connected to the light plant and all lamps kept burning continuously so that the Kentland people could have one last look at the Newton County Courthouse as it floats majestically away."

This caused much indignation in the county, but also in Morocco. They felt that if an accidental fire or other harm occurred the Town of Morocco would be blamed.

On August 6, 1906, the Newton County Commissioners accepted the new courthouse from Erick Lund. The Clerk, Sheriff, and County Superintendent moved in immediately. The other offices waited until all the furniture and fixtures were installed.

In summation, the first contract was awarded March 3, 1905, and work started on March 13, 1905, with 13 bystanders and 13 trees on the ground that the building would occupy. The work was then stopped in July after the basement and first story were completed. On January 1, 1906, the Commissioners let a new contract for the finishing of the building. On August 6, 1906, the new courthouse was accepted by the officials.

The first official act performed in the new courthouse was by County Clerk Rueben Hess. He granted a marriage license to Isaac McKinney and Mary Adaline Tyler at 11:45 on Tuesday morning, August 7, 1906. It was considered a good omen by the superstitious that cupid took precedence over lawsuits or any other business.

After the new courthouse was occupied, the old one remained to be disposed.

On November 5, 1906, the old building and its contents were auctioned off. Col. J. U. Wildasin was the auctioneer, and it was said Col. Wildasin lost his reputation for truth and veracity, but established a reputation for making sales.

There were approximately 200 bidders and spectators.

John Ade, first Recorder and sole survivor of the first county officers, was an on-looker. There were others who in later years received chilblains and censure as part pay as county officials. There

was: John Randall, John Ulrey, Jira Skinner, John Wildasin, John Higgins, George Bridgeman, Isaac Smart, Auditor Jones and Clerk Drake. Also, Dr. Hatch who had led the grand march at the dedicatory ball.

There were no tears shed for the demise of the old courthouse.

First sold was the linoleum. There were nine buyers for a total of \$36.00. There were six buyers of a chair or chairs for \$10.00; one desk for \$1.00; two filing racks for \$2.00; seven stoves for \$95.00; two safes for \$20.50; two book cases for \$4.50; one bell for \$16.00 (Ed. Note: anyone know where this might be today?); one coal shed for \$100.00; brick vaults for \$32.00; Clerk's office for \$70.00; one courthouse for \$100.00. The *Enterprise* reported the total to be \$556.50.

So ended a period of Newton County history.

Sources: *The Newton County Enterprise* and the Counties of Warren, Benton Jasper and Newton Indiana, 1883.

## DO YOU KNOW YOUR COUNTY OF NEWTON?

By Janet Miller  
Answers on Page 22

1. In 1902, Simon Hochstettler of Mt. Ayr moved his sawmill to Sam Barker's timber. He did lots of sawing for Mr. Barker who was preparing lumber to build what building in Goodland?

2. What was the first factory in Kentland?

3. In 1903, the Keokuk Pickle Company purchased cucumbers in the Thayer and Roselawn area. Take a guess to how many bushels they purchased that year.

4. *The Morocco Courier* in 1902 contained a picture of the first joint church and schoolhouse ever built in Newton County, supplemented by an interesting article written by John Ade. The building was a crude log affair, built in 1848. In 1854 it was converted into two other places of business. Can you name them?

5. The Newton County Bar, in 1902, was honored by adding the name of a woman to its membership roll. She filed application for admission to the bar, passed the examination of the bar committee and was accordingly made a full-fledged attorney. Can you name this lady?

### Publications for Sale

Hiestand's Archaeological Report on Newton County, 1951 \$5.30  
Beaver Lake, Land of Enchantment, \$10.60/\$21.20  
Ralph, The Story of Bogus Island, \$5.30  
The Morocco Sesquicentennial Collection, 2002, \$63.60  
The Newton County Historical Coloring Book, \$5.30  
Past Issues of The Newcomer, Yearly Collections \$10.60  
*Price includes tax, but not shipping and handling. Copies are available at The Resource Center, which is open each Monday 1:00-5:00 pm. See back page for other contact information.*

They planned to raise their own 8 lovely granddaughters. "Fantastic Five," but the Good Lord had other plans as they had two sons, William and Gary, and two daughters, Kim, who died at birth and Carol Lynne, who died at eight months.

Bill attended Brook School and later graduated from South Newton. He also graduated from Rose Hulman with a degree in electrical engineering. He presently works on guidance control systems for missiles, etc., at Naval Avionics in Indianapolis.

Gary also attended Brook Grade School and is presently a senior at South Newton. He helps his dad with the farming and dairy operation, and really enjoys mechanics. His future plans are uncertain, but might possibly include helping to keep the family farm cycle going.

Roy sold the dairy cows in 1992 and son Gary Cooper took over the farm operation at that time. Roy still helps with the farm work and has a small beef-cow herd and feeds out the calves.

Avalynne worked at Coast-to-Coast Hardware in Rensselaer for a few years and is now back at George Ade Memorial as an activities assistant.

Son Bill Cooper married Debra Anderson in 1985 and they moved to Spokane, Washington. After a few years they moved to Portland, Oregon where he worked for "Is-Pro". His wife Debra has her doctor's degree in nursing, so when she accepted a job teaching at the University of Kentucky, they moved to Lexington, KY. Their daughter, Marylynne was born while they were still in Oregon. Bill is presently working with a group from the University of Kentucky that goes out and gives a "hands on" simulation of the "Lean Manufacturing System". The team has worked several places in the U.S. and has gone to Paris, France on one occasion. More recently they spent 2 weeks in Siberia, where the temperature was 30 degrees F. His team is going back to Moscow in April 2004, and his wife and daughter are going along too, for an exciting "Spring Break".

Son Gary Cooper graduated from South Newton in 1985. He then attended and graduated from Northwestern Business College Auto-Diesel School, in Lima, Ohio. After working a year or so for the Kemper Farms, he came back to help his dad on the Cooper Farms.

In 1992, Gary became the 4th generation to operate the Cooper Farms.

In 1987, Gary married Karen Sanders and they have blessed Roy and Avalynne with

Roy and Avalynne live on the Homestead farms where his grandfather, William Cooper lived.

Roy has served as director for the Newton Co. R.E.M.C. for almost 30 years. He has also served on the Newton Co. Farm Bureau, Inc. board for nearly 50 years. Avalynne is also presently on the Farm Bureau, Inc. board and is serving as the Newton Co. Woman's Leader there. For more information on the descendants of Roy and Avalynne, please refer to the *Brook, Iroquois and Washington Township Sesquicentennial Collection, 2006.*

**Amy H. Cooper  
1898 - 1964**

Amy Cooper was born on a farm in Jasper County, just across the county line from the very southeast corner of Iroquois Township,

Newton County, on December 15, 1898. She was the fifth child born to William and Kate S. Cooper, who had moved to Indiana from Orland Park, Illinois in 1895. In 1900, the family moved to a farm they had purchased in Newton County. It was located in Iroquois Township, about 1 ¼ miles southeast of Foresman.

She attended the Schuette School, located ¾ mile south of her home, with her brothers and sisters. Sometime during her education at this one-room school, with one teacher and eight grades, the teacher moved her up one grade, since she was the only one in her class.

Thus it was she ended up in the class with her brother Wilbert. After finishing the 8th grade at Schuette School, they went to Brook High School and graduated together there in 1915. That summer following graduation, she attended Madam Bleekeis Teaching Academy to get a teaching permit.

In the fall of 1915 she began her teaching career at the Iroquois one-room School, located 2 ¾ miles southwest of her home on what is now the Morton farm. She drove a horse and buggy to her school each day.

She later taught at the Schuette School for a short time.

When a new brick schoolhouse was built

in Foresman in 1921 the surrounding one-room schools were closed and the pupils all went to Foresman School for their education.

Amy Cooper went with them and became the first and second grade teacher there from it's beginning. Amy taught there until the Foresman School was closed in 1952 and all the students went to Brook for grades 1-12.

Again Amy moved with her students, this time to Brook, where she taught third grade until 1963, when she was forced to retire because of ill health.

Amy Cooper never married, and spent her entire life in the Foresman community. She eventually got her Bachelors Degree from Ball State, by attending summer school in Muncie, Indiana for several years to further her education and fine-tune her teaching ability.

Though she never had children of her

own, she certainly influenced the lives of many boys and girls by getting them off to a good start in their first two years of their schooling. She also was quite active in the Foresman Methodist Church and all community affairs. She especially enjoyed directing and being in plays and skits. Her Christmas programs at school and church are remembered by many who took part and enjoyed the experiences. She was also an active supporter of the Brook H. S. Alumni and helped with many of it's gatherings. She lived at home with her parents and a sister Olive. In later years she helped to care for her aging parents along with her teaching responsibilities.

Her first love was teaching and when a bout with Parkinson's disease began to take its toll she had to give up that love. Within a year of that sad and stressful time she lost the bout with her illness and passed away on June 14, 1964.

*Submitted by Roy Cooper, a nephew.*

*Are you a resident of Newton County, or did you have roots here at one time, the purpose of "Focus on Families" is to publish local family histories - we welcome submissions from members and the public.*



Amy H. Cooper 1898 - 1964

Wilbert and Esther (Sage) Cooper. He, alone with his seven brothers and sisters, rode the school bus to Foresman Grade School and then later to Brook High School, where he graduated in 1948. One of the bus drivers who hauled the "Cooper kids" to school was Mr. Chester Sunderland. He hauled most all of Roy's brothers and sisters, and his bus driving career stretched over to the next generation as he hauled one of Roy's sons before he retired.

After graduating from Brook High School, Roy attended Ball State Teachers College for two years. He then taught school in a two-room country school at Assyria, Michigan, near Battle Creek. He taught 36 children in grades 3,4, and 5 at, what seemed then, a big salary of \$2400 per year. After two years of teaching there, his younger brother, Richard was called to serve in the Army, so Roy returned to his "first love," farming, and has been farming with his father on the Cooper Farms ever since.

He has done quite a bit of substitute teaching in Newton and Jasper County schools since returning to the farm. The highlight of his "subbing" career was when he returned to his alma mater, Foresman Grade School, and took his Aunt Amy Cooper's place one day when she was sick. He also got to teach his own son on various occasions.

After returning to the farm in 1952, he became quite active in the Newton County Rural Youth and took part in many district and state events of that organization. He especially enjoyed playing on the Rural Youth basketball team, and really treasured their trip to the State Rural Youth Tourney where they finally lost out in the semi-final round.



Avalynne and Roy Cooper.

The Rural Youth also had talent contests each year, and Roy's "performing blood" got him to try his various talents at singing, playing piano, doing skits, etc. with lots of fun, but little success in the contest. That tells something about his talents, but at least he had fun practicing on various Rural Youth and Farm Bureau groups and meetings.

Finally, in 1956, at one of the many square dances he enjoyed attending with his many Rural Youth friends, he met a young lady, Avalynne Warner, from Independence, Indiana. She was living in Kentland at that time and working as medical secretary for Dr. Paul. Since she was new in a strange community, she was hard-pressed to find new friends and things to do.

In "desperation," as she put it, she accepted an opportunity to attend a square

dance in Sheldon, Ill. with three or four car loads of Rural Youthers. At any rate, this is where she met Roy.

As they grew to know each other a little better, Roy finally got up the nerve to ask her to be his "partner" in a song and dance routine he'd had in the back of his mind for many years. Now, how's that for a new angle?

To his surprise, she agreed to go along with his "silly game," so they enlisted the help of three fellow Rural Youthers to furnish live background and accompaniment. Thus, the "Fantastic Five" was born. With Jim Marshino and Leroy Royer on electric guitars, and Joe McConnell, now of the Chicago White Sox announcing fame, on the drums, Roy and Avalynne performed their song and dance routine to a medley of tunes including: "Five Foot Two," "Ain't She Sweet," "Never Been Kissed," "Forever and Ever," and "That's All." They performed at many Rural Youth and Farm Bureau meeting all over the state with the highlight being a performance at the Purdue Hall of Music for the State 4-H Roundup, where they "brought the house down." They also performed for the State Rural Youth Convention at the Murat Temple in Indianapolis.

From there, the three accompanists went their various ways, but Roy and Avalynne decided to keep their "act" together and were married at the Foresman Church on January 20, 1957. They are still farming with his father, Wilbert Cooper, and added a dairy operation in 1963.

Avalynne worked at George Ade Hospital as record librarian until the family started arriving and in more recent years has worked at the Court House, and the Brook-Iroquois Township Public Library.



The children of Roy and Avalynne Copper: left, Gary and Karen (Sanders) Cooper; center, Gary and Karen's daughters, Autumn, Meagan, Kristen, Erin, Heather, Laura, Kara and Leah; right, Bill, Debra, Marylynne, Trevor and Chelsea Cooper. Cooper photos.

# PEOPLE, PLACES & THINGS Lake Village Post Cards



This postcard reads "Wagon bridge over the big ditch near Lake Village, Ind." It may be the ditch bridge that covered the big ditch that runs East and West out of the center of Lake Village.



This postcard reads "Big Ditch Lake Village, Ind.." It may be the ditch near Conrad that drained Beaver Lake.



This postcard reads Kankakee River near Lake Village, Ind.." Possibly a look at the River prior to dredging, ca 1920's.

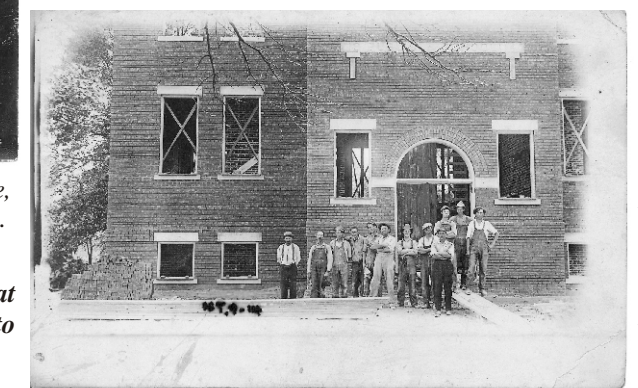
Share your photos with us! e-mail them to the editor at [newtonhs@ffni.com](mailto:newtonhs@ffni.com), or mail a good black and white copy to PO Box 303, Kentland, IN 47951

Society member Harry Lawbaugh stopped by the Resource Center in September and offered us copies of postcards he had discovered in an Illinois antique shop. Harry is researching the Lawbaugh names amongst others. Thanks Harry for sharing!

We consulted with Historian Jim Robbins for additional information regarding his postcards.



The above two cards both say "Kankakee River View." It is believed these were views from the Kanakakee of Sumava Resorts, Indiana.



The builders of the Lake Village School take a time out. Did you know that the WPA built the Lake Village School Gymnasium?

# HOME *is where your story begins*

## Cooper Families: William Wilbert, Roy and Amy

### William Cooper

In 1850, Thomas and Elinor (Hewson) Cooper came from Wisbeck, England, and settled near Orland Park, Ill. southwest of Chicago. They had thirteen children, eight of them living to maturity. Oddly, their second son, William, died in infancy, so they named their next son William also. He died at ten years of diphtheria. Not to be discouraged, they again tried the name William on their thirteenth, and last child. This William Cooper, born in 1866, lived to be almost 97 years old and became the founding father for the Cooper Clan in Newton County and Indiana.

In 1892, he was married to Catherine S. Holstein whose parents came to America to get away from having to send their sons to the Army in Germany, their homeland.

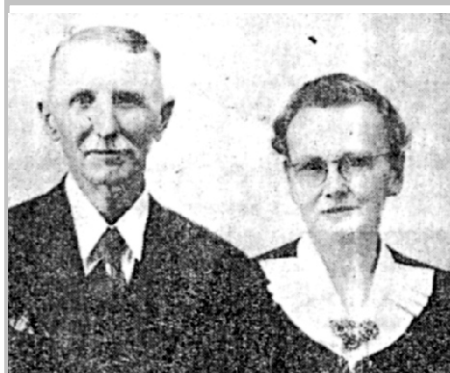
After hauling hay to Chicago and trying to eke out a living on a poor farm near Orland Park for a few years, he jumped at the chance to move to a farm near the southeast corner of Iroquois Twp., just across the line in Jasper County in about 1895. He loaded all his belongings, including his cows, horses, and farm equipment on a freight car and rode the train from Illinois, down through Morocco and Brook, and landed near the old water station near the Percy Junction Elevator in the middle of the night. He had left his wife in Illinois until he could get settled and needless to say, it was a rather strange feeling to have all your belongings unloaded in a new community and then have the train go off and leave you there in the dark. Fortunately, he had made previous arrangements with some of his new neighbors and after a lonely all night vigil, they arrived soon after daylight to help him move his belongings to his new home.

After a few years on this rented farm, they purchased the homestead farm in Iroquois Township 1 ¼ miles southeast of Foresman and moved there.

They had seven children, including two sons, Arthur and Wilbert, and five daughters, Laura, Olive, Amy, Ruth, and Elsie.

Arthur married Ora Sage and farmed in northwest Carpenter Twp., Jasper County. He had three sons, Glenn, Earl, and Wayne.

Wilbert married Esther Sage, Ora's cousin, and lived just a mile southeast of Foresman and helped his father farm. He had eight children including sons, Gerald, Floyd,



William and Catherine (Holstein) Cooper, 50th Wedding Anniversary.

Bob, Roy, and Richard, and daughters, Joan, Kay, and Joyce.

Laura, Amy, Ruth, and Elsie were all teachers and each spent over forty years in the teaching profession. Amy spent her entire life in Newton County and stayed at home along with her sister, Olive, to help care for her parents as they grew older. Though Elsie was the only one to marry (to Felix Rodriguez) and have children, Felicia, and Leta, the other girls certainly influenced a lot of children's lives as teachers, and served their community well.

Oddly enough, several of William's grandsons served in the Army during World War II and had to fight the very German Army that Mrs. Cooper's Holstein parents had left Europe to avoid.

Mrs. Cooper passed away in 1946 and William Cooper died in 1962.

Elsie (Cooper) Rodriguez is the only member of the original William Cooper family still living. She is 91 years old and lives with her youngest daughter, Leta Rodriguez in Longmont, Colorado. Elsie's husband, Felix Rodriguez, passed away at age 94 and is interred at a Crown Point, Indiana cemetery.

Wilbert Cooper passed away at his home on November 14, 1986 at age 89.

Arthur Cooper and wife Ora passed away in the 1970's and are buried in the Goodland Cemetery.

Laura, Olive, Amy, and Ruth Cooper have all passed on and are buried beside their parents in Riverside Cemetery near Brook. They wanted to be near their roots.

### Wilbert Cooper

Wilbert Cooper was the second son of William and Catherine (Holstein) Cooper.

He was born on a farm just across the line in Jasper County in 1897, but moved about 1900 to the Cooper Homestead Farm in Iroquois Township, 1 ¼ miles south of Foresman in Newton County. He, along with his six brothers and sisters, walked ¾ mile to the Schuette School for their grade school education and then rode horse and buggy to high school in Brook, where he graduated with his sister, Amy in 1915.

In 1919 he was married to Esther Sage, a teacher, and they moved to their new home, just around the corner from the Cooper Homestead Farm and his parents, where he farmed with his father.

Wilbert enjoyed being in plays and skits and often gave monologues and after dinner speeches for entertainment. He performed some with Dad Clinton and also did much entertaining at Farm Bureau meetings throughout the state with Sam Molter.

As his family and responsibilities increased, he had to drop most of his "performing" as he called it.

Mrs. Cooper liked to raise poultry to help with paying family expenses and used to hatch her own baby chicks, etc. Later, she expanded from broilers and laying hens to ducks and geese, and for about 20 years, raised lots of turkeys. With all the family still at home, helping, she sold fresh dressed Thanksgiving and Christmas turkeys to many people in the Brook community, as well as the surrounding towns. From this, she was fondly called the "Turkey Lady," by those who had done business with her.

Wilbert and Esther had eight children and from 1926-1960, at least one of the Cooper kids was in the Foresman and Brook school systems. Most of the children went on to college to further their educations. The boys all attended Ball State at least to start with, and the girls went to Business College or nurses training.

Gerald is married to Gladys Gillespe and has one son, Greg. After more than 40 years at International Harvester in Indianapolis, Gerald retired. His wife Gladys passed away in 2003 and Gerald passed away in 2004 almost 84 years old. He leaves a son, Greg and wife Michelle, and 4 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren.

Floyd is married to Carol Jean Haehl, and after teaching for a while, was head bookkeeper at the *Shelbyville News*. He has a

son, William Michael, and two married daughters, Monique Dinsmore and Jean Franklin. Floyd and wife Carol Jean are now retired and are still living in Shelbyville. Son, Mike Cooper lives in Taiwan, daughter Jean Esther lives in Yellow Springs, Ohio and daughter Monique is deceased. They have 11 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren.

Bob is married to Martha Burden. They have one married daughter, Mary Jackson. Bob and wife Martha are both retired schoolteachers living in Upland, California. Bob still plays trombone in the Community orchestra. Their daughter, Mary (Cooper) Jackson is a teacher in Hood River, Oregon. Bob and Martha really enjoy their one grandchild, Murphy Jackson.

Roy is married to Avalynne Warner, and after teaching in Michigan for two years, returned to Newton County to help his father farm. His wife helped to set up the medical records department at the George Ade Hospital before their children arrived, and then became an assistant librarian at the Brook Public Library. They have two sons, William Russell and Gary Leroy. After just a three-year lapse, from 1960-1963, there were some more "Cooper kids" in the Brook-South Newton School, and this was true until Gary graduated in 1985. After nearly 30 years in the dairy business, Roy sold the dairy cows in 1992. His son, Gary, is now in charge of the farm operation, but Roy helps out whenever he can and has kept a small beef-cow herd to keep himself active.

Richard Cooper married a local girl, Norma Brunton, and after serving in the Army, furthered his education in various Big Ten schools. He now has a doctor's degree in plant breeding. He works with the U.S.D.A. at Wooster, Ohio, in soybean research and has developed several different semi-dwarf soybeans lines, such as Elf and Hobbit. He has four daughters, Linda, June (Mrs. Duane Schwartz), Regina, and Annette. Richard retired from his job with the U.S.D.A. on January 1, 2003. He and wife Norma spend lots of time traveling, with their home base in Wooster, Ohio. They plan to spend their winters in Florida. Their 4 daughters have provided them with 5 grandchildren, which they really enjoy.

Joan is married to Ron Peacock. She was an insurance secretary and lived in Lombard, Ill. They have three children: Sandy (Mrs. Dave Everett), Jim, and Doug. After a few years with a car dealership in Watseka, Joan and Ron finished their working days with Wal-Mart. Now retired, they live in Lafayette, Indiana. They have 2



Left, this picture of the Cooper family began the traditional "family lineup." Wilbert, Esther, Gerald, Floyd, Bob, Roy, Richard, Joan, Kay and Joyce; right, Wilbert and Esther (Sage) Cooper. Cooper photos.



lovely granddaughters.

Kay married Emilio Torres. She is a L.P.N. and lives in New Jersey. They have three children, Debra (Mrs. Jim Rauch), Naomi, and Eugene, who died at 15 years of age of leukemia. Kay is a retired nurse, living in Bergenfield, New Jersey. Her 2 daughters have presented her with 4 grandsons.

Joyce married a farmer, Jim Sharp, from near Reynolds. They have two sons, Andy and Tom. Jim retired from farming and both he and Joyce now work at the Monticello Library. They still live on Jim's home farm in rural Monticello. Their 2 sons have presented them with 4 grandchildren.

Every year since about 1948, the Coopers have had a family and neighborhood 4th of July party, and each year everyone makes a special effort to be there for the fun, fellowship, fireworks, and square dancing.

A highlight occurred in 1976 when the Cooper Family Band, numbering over 30 family members, built, rode, and played on a float in the Brook Bicentennial 4th of July Parade and came home with the winner's trophy.

The year 2000 was another special time for the Cooper family. Since the original William Cooper purchased the Cooper Homestead Farm and started farming in Newton Co. in 1900, the year 2000 marked 100 years of farming the farm by the Cooper family.

In April of 2000, 25 Cooper family members traveled to the Indiana Capitol Building to accept a Centennial Farm Award at a special program honoring several families who had farmed the same farm for at least 100 years. The family had planned for a whole year to try to have a special long

weekend of festivities for the annual 4th of usual party and fireworks on Saturday July 1. On Sunday, July 2, the Cooper family put on a special program for family, friends, and neighbors, remembering some of the past history of the Cooper Family, and entertaining with various musical numbers and of course a square dance demonstration

by many family members from 4 years up to 70 years of age. Monday, July 3, was spent building a float and visiting. Then on July 4th 75 Cooper family members rode on the float in the Brook 4th of July Parade. The float was decorated with the theme of "100 years on the Farm." As the float paraded, the Coopers sang "Back Home Again in Indiana", "Born Country", and "The Old Country Church", accompanied by guitars and ukulele's, played by some of the members.

All in all, over 100 of William and Kate Cooper descendants attended and helped to make the Cooper Centennial Celebration a huge enjoyable, and memorable success. Coopers came from all over the United States, and as far away as Taiwan. Most of the Arthur Cooper descendants were there along with the Wilbert Cooper descendants. In all, over 225 people were in attendance at the Centennial Farm at least once on that long, memorable weekend.

Wilbert and Esther Cooper, who so proudly rode on the Cooper Family Band float in 1976, had since passed away, but all felt their presence watching from their eternal home. Mrs. Cooper passed away in 1977, and Wilbert passed away in 1986.

### Roy Cooper

Roy Cooper was the fourth son of