

# The Newcomer

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Newton County: Indiana's Youngest County



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## Uncovering Bogus Island

by Beth Bassett

Society member Ken Misolek has dropped by the Resource Center a couple of times recently to inquire about a place called Dice in Newton County. A map of the area in 1895 indicates that it was located northwest of Pogue, not too far from the Indiana-Illinois state line. If anyone has any information regarding this place, please contact us, I'm curious about it as well.

Ken shared with me a copy of a "Chicago Portage Ledger", Vol. 9, No.1, January/April 2008, that contained a comprehensive list of Kankakee Marsh place names. The writer, Philip Vierling, researched this topic utilizing several published histories of the Kankakee and the surrounding area, and sited all of them as part of the documentation. He took the writings of Ruth Corbin, Burt Burroughs, Marion Isaacs, Fay Folsom Nichols, Lorenzo Werich and others and compared their interpretations of the locations and histories of these landmarks.

Locals often refer to different islands of Beaver Lake, local trading posts, hunting clubs and landmarks of the area, but there has never been one list locating and describing all of them. Mr. Vierling did a great job compiling the Kankakee Marsh place-names, and it gave me an idea to do the same with our Beaver Lake country landmarks. Obviously, my list is not intended to be the ultimate list, as there are probably a variety of opinions of locations and facts regarding these places, and any additional information is welcome.

Reference material that I utilized to research these topics were: a Newton County map from the 1876 Atlas of Indiana; the Soil Survey Map of Newton County, 1906; the Highway Map of Newton County, 2006; the 1958 Newton County plat book; Hiestand's "An Archaeological Report on Newton County", 1951; and Elmore Barce's "Beaver Lake, Land of Enchantment". I also drove through the county to view the areas described to see how they appeared today. Utilize the 2010 Newton County map on page 13 to follow along this sandy trail.

Before I begin the list, I would like to share a topic covered by Mr. Vierling's document, Bogus Island. Through his research, he felt that there were two Bogus Islands, Big Bogus and Little Bogus. He cites Burt Burroughs' story, (pgs. 160-161), regarding the location of Mike Shafer's cabin and his encounter with horse thieves on Big Bogus; and to Little Bogus, (Burroughs, pgs. 145-147 and Werich, pg. 46), noting the location of the Little Bogus Island within the waters of Beaver Lake.

I have never heard of either Little or Big Bogus, only Bogus Island, so naturally, I needed to know if this was just a folly, or a bit of history ready to be unearthed. Perhaps the topic was covered at another time, by a more astute historian, but I am not aware of it at this time. So, I will share with you my journey to reveal the true Bogus Island.

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### Shafer's Ridge and Big Bogus Island

Our search begins with the description of the location of the notorious outlaw of Bogus Island fame, Mike Shafer. Mr. Burroughs writes:

"Shafer's cabin home was situated two miles west and one and one-quarter miles south of the village of Roselawn, Indiana, on an oak-studded sand ridge that bears the name Shafer's Ridge to this day (1925). This ridge laid along the northern edge of the Black Marsh, and was some five or six miles distant from the rendezvous < *Continued on page 2* >



Looking south on CR 200E in Lincoln Township which cuts through the once famous "Shafer's Ridge", home of the notorious Mike Shafer. Bassett photo, 2014.

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Looking north from CR 800N to what remains in 2014 of Shafer's Ridge. Bassett photo.

of the horse thieves on Big Bogus Island to the south. He thus maintained the appearance of having < *Continued from page 1* >

no connection with the band on Big Bogus Island, but was conveniently near to lend a hand in their operations."

From the 1876 map, we find that the West Black Marsh and the East Black Marsh were in this area, putting Shafer's Ridge in the West Black Marsh, within Sections 20 and 21 in Lincoln Township, on CR 200E, 1.25 miles south of CR 900N. In 1951, Hiestand included this area in his findings, "this area once overlooked a flat marsh that extended to the south and east approximately three miles to the next dividing line of ridges which would be in Colfax Township. The ridge starts in Jasper County and extends across Newton County to the Indiana line."

From Burrough's direction as to the location of Big Bogus: five or six miles south of Shafer's Ridge. Vierling found on a Topographical Map, Enos Quad, 1952, "a sand hill about 4.7 miles south-southwest of Shafer's Ridge in a straight line from there, immediately north of CR 400N, slightly west of CR 100E in Colfax Township. This sand hill was probably Big Bogus."

This puts us in Section 7, Colfax Township; 100E cuts through the most eastern corner of what today resembles a sand ridge. This area was noted as Bingaman's Island in Hiestand's book:

"Bingaman's Island, a peninsular sand ridge extending from its base at the edge of the old lakebed to the east a distance of one mile. This portion of Beaver Lake, Colfax Township, Section 7, was known as Mud Lake and

Little Lake." He felt that this was the largest Indian camp site in Newton County.

So, for me, this clarifies the mystery of Big Bogus. The photos included in Burrough's book showed two men standing at the site where horse thieves were arrested on Big Bogus. It would seem only natural then that this island would also carry the Bogus reputation. But, where did the name Bingaman come from?

### Little Bogus Island

This is one area that Mr. Vierling and I disagree as to the location of Little Bogus Island, where horse thieves and counterfeiters

thrived from 1836-1858. From descriptions by Burroughs and Werich in regards to Little Bogus Island, he surmises that it was located in the SE 1/4, SW 1/4, Section 4, McClellan Township.

Burroughs: "Little Bogus was reached from the west by northwest by lonely trails, obscure and winding. It was surrounded on all sides by deep water which made surprise attack by officers of the law out of the question ... From the island's highest point today (1925), the observer beholds, stretching away to the northwest, the zigzag lines of a narrow "hog-back" of sand which, lying close to the surface of the lake yet obscured by the water,



In 2014, CR 100E, Colfax Township, cuts through the east edge of Big Bogus Island, aka Bingaman's Island. Bassett photo.



Looking north from CR 800N to what remains in 2014 of Shafer's Ridge. Bassett photo.



afforded easy means of ingress and egress to men on horseback familiar with the peculiar lay of the land. From the point where the “hog-back” stopped abruptly, there was an interval of deep water between it and the adjacent sand ridge to the west of some three or four hundred feet ... The dredge discovered a roadway constructed of logs six to eight inches in diameter, placed side by side corduroy fashion ... This submerged corduroy roadway was laid in a shallow spot on the lagoon, and reached from the sand ridge on the west as far as the “hog-back”, several feet away to the southeast.”

Werich: “In the cold winter of 1838, there was an island at the west end of the lake called Bogus Island ... “

Mr. Vierling used the Topographical Map, Enos Quad, 1952 to validate his reasoning. “On said quadrangle, approximately 4.1 miles north of Indiana Highway 14, US 41 crosses the “Bogus Island Ditch”. Immediately north of this ditch and about .7 miles west of US 41, is a 25’ high sand hill which was formerly “Little Bogus Island”. This sand is shaped somewhat like a hockey stick with the tip of its blade pointing south, and the tip of its handle pointing northwest. At the northwest end of said handle can be seen on the map the zigzag ridge of the former submerged pathway which leads from the island to the northwest corner of Section 4. Immediately east of said corner is the site of the 400’ long water breach that formerly existed between the submerged ridge and the hill at the section’s northwest corner.”

I concur with the author’s descriptions, but after observing the same topographic map as Mr. Vierling, I could not make the same conclusions as to the location of Little Bogus Island.

Barce’s description, (pgs. 101-102): “Two and one-tenth mile north of the present village of Enos in Newton County, and about one-half mile west of State Highway No. 41, an island of sand rises abruptly out of the bed of the old lake and faces to the southeast. The south and east sides of this island are precipitous and seventy-five feet in height.”



**In 2012, several North Newton High School students traversed the last ridges of Bogus Island in Section 6, McClellan Township. Bassett photo.**

He continues, “One who enters upon this island from the west finds himself at once involved in a most engaging mystery. The view from the highway is wholly deceptive. As he advances over the sharply undulating surface and the landscape unfolds, he finds that he is moving upon a tract of land some forty or fifty acres in extent ... Sand drifts, like the snow, when the drifting ceases, the descent is sudden and in the perpendicular. Hence, the 75’ precipice to the south and east ... The outer edge of the precipice is 15’ to 25’ in width, forming a rampart where one could easily view the lake from the east, south and southwest ... When one approaches from the north, you descend into a deep pocket or amphitheatre, the sides and slopes of which ascend to the top of the rampart incline from 15’ to 25’ in height ... In the face of this incline, or slope, facing the northwest, a cave or den was excavated, supported by timbers ... This was believed to be the cave of the counterfeiters, still visible in 1938.”

In Barce’s outlaw chapters, he again mentions the horse thieves’ cave, (page 106): “The entrance to the cave of robbers was from the northwest and over a chain of low islands and sand knobs (perhaps the hog-back ridge), extending in the general direction of Momence to the northwest ... A trip over the road lead-

ing directly north of the old homestead of Andrew Ellis two miles (600W, then traveling east approximately two miles on 600N), directly north of Bogus Island, reveals a row of sand knobs suddenly terminating in a long stretch of swampland extending southeast towards Cherry Island. This intervening swamp was navigated by means of rafts, on which the stolen horses and the supplies for the cave were safely transported to the highlands beyond.”

The above bit of information suggests to me that Cherry Island is the area that Mr. Vierling was describing as Little Bogus Island; as well as locating Cherry Island in Section 4 of McClellan Township. Hiestand wrote that Cherry Island was northwest of Bogus Island within the lake bed. Wild cherry trees covered the island. He also stated that it was a ferry point for the bandits to and from Bogus Island.

So now you are presented with the same information that I was regarding Big and Little Bogus Islands. Traversing across the old lake bed and the Beaver Lake country will always present a sense of curiosity for the local history buffs, myself included. And, it is quite probable that the early historians were as enthusiastic as I am in attempting to clarify the tales and lore of the land of enchantment.

Now, if I could only find that nail keg full of gold eagle coins supposedly buried on Shafer’s Ridge .... See a related Shafer article elsewhere in this edition.

*Editor’s note: More photos of Bogus Island, and Bingaman’s Island can be found in the Morocco Centennial book and Burrough’s book, “Tales of An Old Border Town and Along the Kankakee”.*



**One of the best views of Bogus Island published, clearly showing the precipice on the southeast end of the island.**

# President's Thoughts

By Bernie Murphy

Our Society continues to be very busy with events, projects, visits and plans. The annual Coloring Book contest was again a success with entries from all Newton County fourth grade classes; they were judged and awards given to the winners.

We also had the South Newton fourth grade classes to first visit the George Ade home at Hazelden and then to the Resource Center where Larry and Becky Lyons and Beth Bassett entertained them with historical facts of the county.

The Society was represented by a display at the county annual Earth Day celebration held at the Lake Village Fire Department. Visitors to our booth asked about the history of the area and were able to purchase a variety of local published histories.

The "History of the Town of Goodland and Grant Township", compiled by local residents Wanda Johnson, Anne Meyer and Karen Schuette, has been finished and printed; the book is available for \$35 at the Resource Center. Thanks to all those who worked and contributed to this fine history!

The annual Newton County Historical Society picnic was held again at Sig Bozeman's beautiful farm in Lincoln Township.

Since the last issue of the *Newcomer*, we have had some very interesting programs at our monthly meetings; these include a private tour of the Fowler Theater restoration project; Show and Tell" during the winter's many snow storms; a gardening presentation by Brown's Garden Shoppe of Rensselaer, and book review and signing by Ellen Gerbracht at the Brook library.

As you can see, the society is very active and I invite all to participate in our events and projects!

## Newton County Home Educators and Their Students, Visit the Resource Center



In the latter part of spring, the Resource Center was brightened by a visit from this lovely group of students. Pictured from left to right with Mr. Bones to the far right, back row are: Alyssa Nyberg, Jessica Marter, Jeanette Marter, Julie Mlynarczyk, Nathan Mlynarczyk, Natalie Mlynarczyk, Cecelia Marter, Forest Nyberg and Savanna Nyberg. Thanks for visiting with us!

## Historical Coloring Contest Winners

Each year the society gives copies of the Newton County Historical Coloring book to the fourth grade classes of Newton County. The teachers may use this as a study guide for the students when working on local history. At the end of the year we sponsor a coloring contest, awarding one dollar coins to the three best entries from each class at each school. An over-all school winner and a county winner are selected from the winning entries. The school winner received a copy of "Ralph, the Story of Bogus Island" and the county winner was given a copy of "Everglades of the North, The Story of the Grand Kankakee Marsh."

**Morocco Elementary:** 1st place and school winner Lydia Durflinger; 2nd place, Heidi Schleman; 3rd place, Harley Schleman.

**Lincoln Elementary:** *Miss Ricker's* class: 1st place, Grace Hollopeter; 2nd place Erica Weeks; 3rd place Grace Alexander; *Miss Hall's* class: 1st place and school winner, Sarena Gaga, 2nd place; Jade N. Frayer; 3rd place, Raymond Tharp.

**Lake Village Elementary:** 1st place, school and county winner Abbie Parker; 2nd place, Niah Galven; 3rd place Jodi Lee La-faive.

**South Newton Elementary:** *Mrs. Groover*, 1st place, Garrett Sammons; 2nd place, Alex Kindig; 3rd place, Alexxys Standish; *Mrs. Dewing*, 1st place and school winner, Alyssa Vena; 2nd place, Kaylen Cote; 3rd place, Layla Ramon; *Mrs. Hoffman*, 1st place, Noah Lane; 2nd place, Zoe Wood; 3rd place, Chris Jackson.



Beth Bassett represented the society at Newton County's Earth Day celebration held this spring at the Lake Village Fire Department with a display on Beaver Lake.



## History of the Town of Goodland and Grant Township Released

A publishing committee consisting of Wanda Johnson, Anne Meyer and Karen Schuette recently finished their three-year project of researching and compiling the history of the Town of Goodland and Grant Township.

The result of their efforts is a 513 page hard bound book that covers these communities from 1861 to 2014. The book covers early history, schools, churches, business, farming,

family histories and community events from these time periods. Many hours were spent going through microfilm of the *Goodland Herald*, *Kentland Gazette* and *Newton County Enterprise* to garner articles and information from the past and in the present day. Acquired historical information on file at the Goodland-Grant Township Library including information garnered by the Goodland Centennial Committee in 1961 are utilized in

the book. There are many never before published photographs from the early businesses of Goodland, as well as the Senior portraits of the graduates from Goodland High School and the sixth grade classes from Goodland Elementary.

Copies are available for \$35 at the Goodland Library and our Resource Center in Kentland.



Society member Mike Davis, portrayed George Ade during a visit to Hazelden by the South Newton fourth grade classes. The students asked several questions and were dazzled by Mr. Ade's stories and recollections of his day and adventurous life.



Becky Lyons, pictured far right gave a bit of background information on Ella (Ade) McCray, the sister of George Ade. Larry Lyons talked about the different types of fowl and fauna of the Beaver Lake Country. Beth Bassett also spoke about the tales of outlaw Mike Shafer.

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### Ade's Church Was Once Center of Activity

*By Joan Clark, The Brook Reporter, "Our Hoosier Heritage, 1988"*

Warren McCray, who later became governor of Indiana for three years, platted out the town of Ade in 1906. It is located just west of the intersection of U. S. 41 and Indiana 16 in Washington Township.

Its early plat shows a school, an elevator, a church, a post office, a railroad and depot, a store and stockyards.

The Presbyterian Church in the town's early days was the center of activity for the area. Now the Ade Community Building, built in 1952, is the activity center for all Washington Township.

It has been the scene of wedding receptions, family reunions, club meetings, and its well-known Fish Fry. On the first Saturday in September, the town and community building is the gathering place for folks from Ade and the neighboring towns to gather for a Fish Fry and all the trimmings and an evening of visiting.

Its store is gone. Many Brook residents ran out to Ade in the evening or on Sunday for a bit of groceries that they needed before local stores opened in the mornings.

The elementary school was a gathering spot and held many happy memories. It grew from its one story to two stories and Washington Township students graduated from there to go on to their choice of high schools including Brook, Morocco or Kentland. The school closed with the beginning of South Newton High School in 1966. The school was later demolished.

The New York Central Railroad ran both passenger and freight through this little town. Many Brook residents drove out to Ade to pick up freight sent from the Chicago area. Our family made this short distance twice to pick up special pet dogs that had been sent from Michigan.

The Irol Burton family has been part of Ade's history in their own home on the west edge of town. Their Hoosier Homestead Farm was home to four generations of Burtons. It is still home to Irol and Eunice.

The train still runs through Ade but there is no depot. The old wooden elevator that burned 40-50 years ago was replaced by a modern concrete one whose white towers are seen on the skyline for many miles.



A postcard of Ade in the early years. From the collection of Marilyn Whaley.

### Farmers Once Traveled To Enos Grain Center During Harvest

*By Donna LaCrosse, The Morocco Courier, "Our Hoosier Heritage, 1988."*

Approximately 30 people live in Enos, a small village located four miles north of Morocco on U. S. 41 in McClellan Township, Newton County. This little town was founded by R. and L. Bartlett on June 22, 1907, and it lies directly next to the railroad tracks and was an important grain center at one time.

Early businesses in Enos included a grocery store owned by Porter, an elevator managed by Atkinson, and a filling station-restaurant owned by Eva and Floyd Cox.

One of the things I will always remember about Enos is that when I was a small child and traveled along Highway 41 with my Dad, I wondered who the people were that lived in those "little-bitty houses" standing in a row behind the Cox filling station and restaurant.

I knew they couldn't be very big people because the "house" wasn't much larger than the outhouse we had on the farm. Much later I learned the people who "lived" in these houses were ordinary human beings who simply needed a place to sleep before continuing on their journey the next day. This was, you see, in the days before the new popular motels.

Early names associated with the Enos settlement are Barker, Bingham, Clark, Corkins, Fields, Holms, Hunter, Lomax, Neibert, Printy, Rogers, Skinner, Timmons and Williamson. All these people did not live in Enos

proper, but owned farm ground near the town boundaries.

Hale's Grocery Store, Willow Inn Restaurant, Willow Motel, Maggio's Nursery and Rutledge Auto Center make up the businesses in the present town of Enos. The Kankakee Valley Job Training Program office is part of Enos as is the Ernie Collins Memorial Center where the Newton County Amulance Service is located.

The Enos School ceased being a learning center for the first through sixth grade students in 1966 when the students of McClellan Township were bussed to Morocco to receive their educations.

In recent years, the old Enos School building was remodeled and converted into an apartment building, while the little white cottages no longer stand in a row behind the restaurant.

### Beaver City Remains Relatively Unknown

*By Joan Clark, Brook Reporter, "Our Hoosier Heritage, 1988"*

Beaver City is home to a number of Newton County residents but, because it is on no major state highway, many residents of the county can say, "I've never been there." Beaver City, in Washington Township, is on the north edge of the township between Brook and Morocco. It was platted with three streets, two going east and west and one going north and south. It was planned that the county seat be there, centrally located to the county, but with several other towns vying with Kentland for the honor, the idea was short lived.



It had a church, an elevator, a school, a store, a railroad and several clubs. Hazel Thurston, was quoted in the 1985 History of Newton County, "many of the good times and memories I have was while growing up in and residing in Beaver City, still her home today."

## Small Town Disappears

by Rose Lansdown, *Morocco Courier*, "Our Hoosier Heritage, 1988"

Another small community in McClellan Township that no longer exists was the community of Elmer. Confirmation of its existence can be found in the Newton County Atlas of 1916.

Elmer was located three miles east of Enos on the Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad.

Just north of Elmer were stockyards where farmers would bring their livestock to be shipped to the Chicago market.

What led to the demise of this community or when it vanished is unknown.

## Remember Fussesville?

by Donna LaCrosse, *Morocco Courier*, "Our Hoosier Heritage, 1988"

"Fussesville" was the name given to the gas station and repair shop located at the intersection of Indiana 10 and Indiana 55 in the 1920s.

In the 1930s, a grocery store was added and the name was changed to "Little Chicago". In the 1980s, the busy intersection doesn't seem to have a name.

## Saturday Night Band Concerts In Brook

by Joan Clark, *Brook Reporter*, "Our Hoosier Heritage, 1988"

When someone says "Oh, for the good 'ol days," no one really wants those days of no automatic washers, dryers, dishwashers, air conditioning, VCRs or cars that have a top speed of 50 mph.

But there is one thing that lives in my memories that I would like to go back to, a time that can never return and one that can not be fully understood by our children. That is the Saturday night on the streets of Brook.

My memories may not all fit into one specific year – it's an assortment of many memories from my childhood and teen years. Some of you may say, "You forgot such and such ..." but this will refresh your memories to other events.

In the summertime, the highlight of the entire week was the band concerts on Satur-

day nights. Brook had a large, square, wooden bandstand; it had a roof, and several steps leading to the platform so that the band was elevated in order for the crowd to see them much better. On Saturday afternoons, several men hauled it from its storage place to the corner of Jefferson and Main streets, right in the middle of town. Band members, who had rehearsed once during the week on the evening's selections were men who loved music. In later years, the band consisted of younger men and high school band members (some females too); I was one of them for a few years.

Some of the local folks brought their cars to town early so that they could have a prime spot so that the ladies could sit in the cars and listen. Others parked on Main Street, from one end to the other and on both sides, and on Park Street as well. There was never a vacant spot on the streets.

It was a night that you dressed in your best outfit and everyone came to town early. In front of many stores, the town had placed wooden benches and if you were lucky, you got a seat on one of them. Then you could see everyone that passed by. Many new romances were discovered when they came to the band concert together.

The younger generation needed no seats! They walked, and walked, and walked! You went from Doc Woods corner where you could get a cold drink at the drinking fountain, down past the library, another cold drink from the fountain there, crossed the street, walked down to the Hotel corner and another cold drink from that fountain, crossed the street and back to our original spot and again, repeated that walk. The girls hoped to be seen by the boys and the boys hoped that the girls would see them.



A winter scene from downtown Brook, note the bandstand on the far left. Reprinted from "Our Hoosier Heritage, 1988".

During one of your walks, you had to stop at "Soup" Liskey's popcorn stand that was brought out on the sidewalk for the night. The popcorn was hot and fresh and you could ask for more butter to be poured on it to make it really good.

Up and down the streets – past the Gem Store, the bakery, the barber shops where some of the men gathered for a hair cut and lots of what happened during the week, on past the drug store and hardware (where men gathered for news, or was it gossip?), a stop for a visit with someone who was sitting on the benches, down to the hotel and see who was sitting on their porch, across the street and maybe a short visit with those who were swinging on the Danruther's porch.

At Adamson's, where you went for groceries or a dress or a tie, there was a raised step that ran across the front and, if you were very young, it was a challenge to walk across the front without falling off. A stop at the variety store was a great place for the wonderful penny candy, a bag of jelly beans, chocolate stars, licorice pipes, jaw-breakers and all those really good things. You could find more visitors in there at the back of the store.

The crowd usually congregated close to the band stand and gave rousing applause for each number. Those in their cars tooted at the conclusion of each song and each concert ended with everyone at attention for the Star Spangled Banner.

A perfect ending for the evening – going to Mark Karr's or later, Charlie Cliff's restaurant for a treat. There was standing room only and often, you had to wait for a seat. The treat – a big milk shake, really thick and you got the whole can of it; a sundae, (how about butterscotch and marshmallow); a flavored coke,

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(maybe a fresh lemon coke made with a slice of lemon on the edge). Maybe you went to Sam Hadden's for a treat for the whole family, a quart of hand packed ice cream from a variety of wonderful flavors.

For a time, Wednesday was special, a free movie. Jefferson Street was closed in the afternoon, tiles were set up and board planks put on them. Everyone vied for those seats to see a B-Western movie. A trip to Haddens at intermission for a treat of a push-up.

In the winter, folks took to the stores for their Saturday night visiting. Men gathered in the back of the variety store until Paul Weston turned out the lights. More men went to the hardware store for the good tall tales. The ladies to the Gem Store, owned by my grandfather and, later, my aunt. Toward the back of the store was a huge round coal stove and in a circle around it, were chairs and a big leatherette couch. It was great on a cold evening, getting all toasty warm from the stove, visiting about the week's events, and then, buying your week's groceries.

This doesn't sound exciting in this world of travel and business, but it was a wonderful time with lots of visiting, caring, enjoying friends and knowing just about everyone in our little town.

### Town Developed as Railroads Were Laid Through Area

by Donna LaCrosse, *Morocco Courier*, "Our Hoosier Heritage, 1988"

Early settlers in the little village of Lake Village were the Dillons and the Wades, followed by family names of Barker, Bingham, Brandt, Bryant, Bunch, Burton, DeWolf, Dudley, Halleck, Hansen, Hess, Jenkins, Kite, Lawbaugh, Malone, Marshall, Mott, Nichols, Rainford, Stoner and Wells.

Later came the Cools, Davids, Gephards and Newells, plus Danish immigrants by the names of Christenson, Franson, Johnson, Madison and Sorenson.

A man by the name of Dillon built the first log house in the settlement that would later be known as Lake Village.

In 1867, John Stoner purchased 40 acres of land, including the land where the first log house had been built from Dillon and, he and his wife Margaret, moved into the dwelling. This log house became known as Stoner's House or the Log House Hotel from which

Margaret served meals to the farmers and the woodsmen.

Richard Malone, one of the oldest settlers, platted the "village" in January, 1876. The name, Lake Village was given to the newly platted town by farmers who said they were "going up the lake to the village," where they could trade their wares and buy supplies.

Even though the village had a name and residents, the town did not really begin to develop until 1905 when rails were laid for the Chicago, Illinois and Southern Railroad; or the New York Central, depending on which historian you talk with.

Lake Village is one of the two unincorporated towns in Lake Township and is located in northwestern Indiana.

A Mr. Bryant owned the first grocery store, which also housed the first post office with Mrs. John Linton serving as first postmistress in Lake Village. Mail was delivered for many years by Lincoln Lawbaugh in his horse drawn buggy.

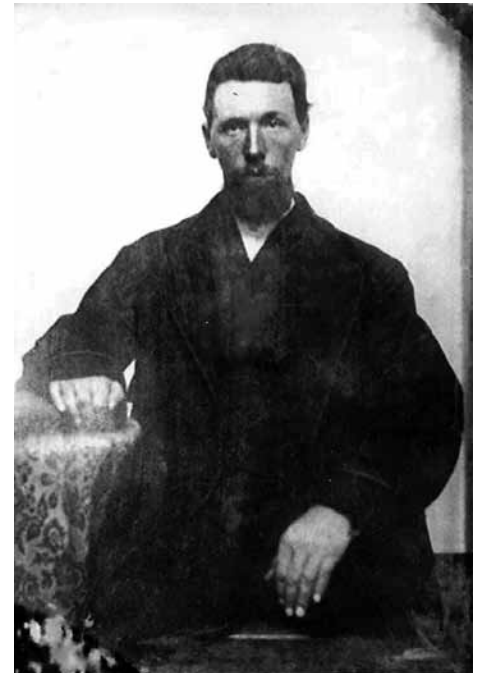
Other early businesses were a blacksmith shop, a milliner and dress goods store, a dry goods store, grocery, boots and shoe store and a grist mill.

Charles W. Lee published the first newspaper in 1881. The *Star Journal* consisted of four, seven and five-inch pages and carried two columns of advertising and news on each page. Lee was also a school teacher in the town of Lake Village.

The first established church in the village was a Catholic Church. Mr. and Mrs. Adolph Yott hosted church services in their home beginning in 1900. When the parishoners outgrew the space available in the home, the people sponsored a supper to raise money for a church building. With that money, and other donations, the group bought two old school buildings and moved them together to form a church building.

Dr. John F. Shronts came to Lake Village Cross Roads, near where the cemetery is now located.

Present businesses (1988) in Lake Village include three service stations, a super market, a beauty shop, a doctor's office, a bulk oil company, three service garages, an auto parts store, lumber yard, two restaurants, two trucking companies, a fire department, a bank, a golf course, ice cream shop, video store, salvage yard, wood working shop, art and frame shop, insulation service, a library, post office, school and four churches.



George C. A. Bryant, Lake Village. Joanne (Iwinski) Miller collection, with the permission of Gerald Born.

At the outer edge of town, one will find several beauty shops, two additional churches, and two greenhouse-nursery businesses.

Lake Village can boast of having two published residents in town, Dorothy Arbuckle, now deceased, wrote novels and, the very charming Wiley Stone, who has had poems published, is still writing poetry for his enjoyment and for those who know him well.

### Newton County Historical Society Resource Center

PO Box 303, Kentland, IN 47951

**Open Monday, and Friday**

11:00 AM - 3:00 PM CST

**Thursday, 10:00-1:30**

**219-474-6944**

**newtoncountyhistoricalsociety**

**@embarqmail.com**

**Visit our Web site:**

**www.ingenweb.org/innewton**

### Membership Dues:

**Gen. Society: \$17/yr; Lifetime, \$125**

**Family History Division:**

**(Must be society member to join FHD)**

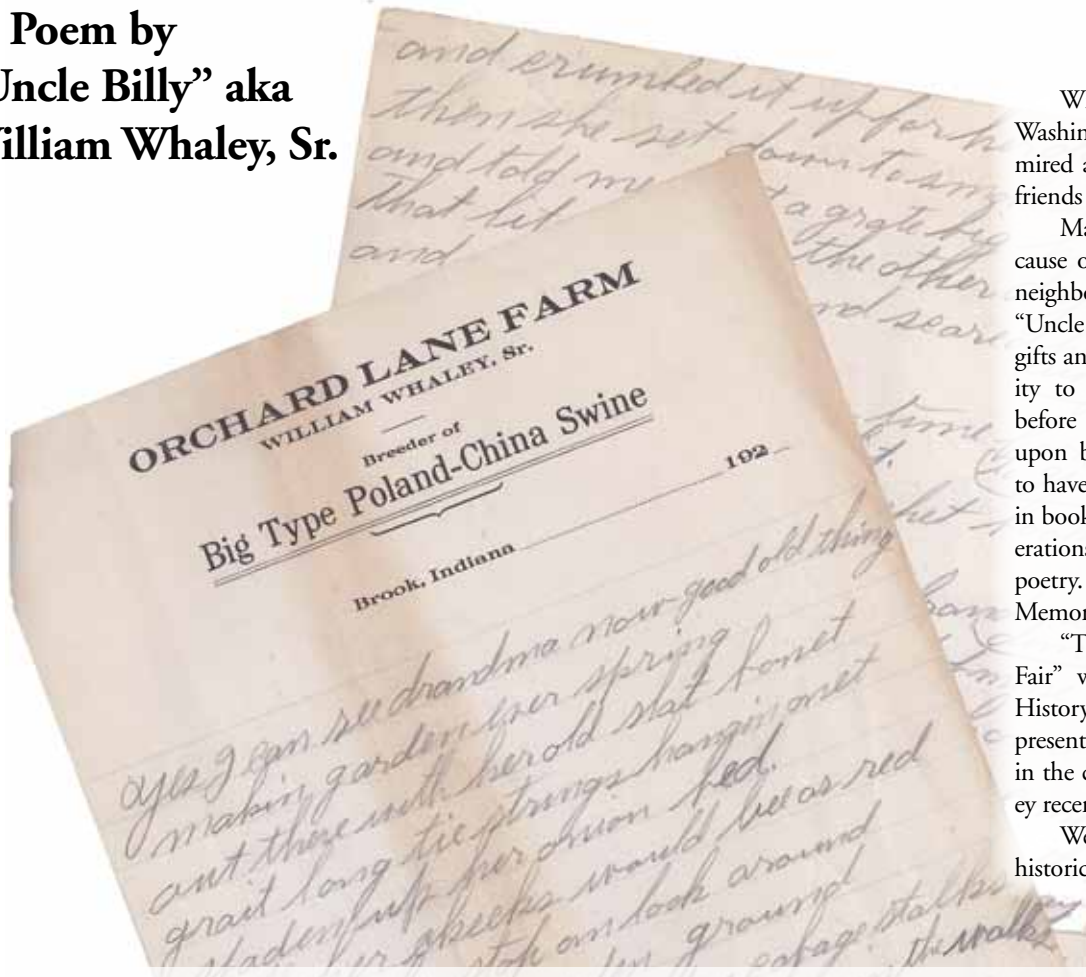
**\$5/yr; Lifetime \$50**

**Dues for both: \$22/yr; \$175 Lifetime**

**Dues are January 1 - December 31**



**A Poem by  
"Uncle Billy" aka  
William Whaley, Sr.**



William Whaley Sr. lived in Washington Township and was admired and loved by his neighbors, friends and relatives.

Many people knew him because of his friendliness, a helpful neighbor, and a good citizen. But "Uncle Bill" had other God given gifts and among those was his ability to write poetry. A few years before his death, he was prevailed upon by his friends and relatives to have his poems printed and put in booklet form so that future generations could read his "homespun" poetry. This booklet is entitled Memory Lane.

"The Week of the County Fair" was reprinted in the 1985 History of Newton County, and we present this untitled poem, found in the collection of Marilyn Whaley recently donated to the society.

We thought the stationery had historical significance as well.

Yes, I can see Grandma now, good old thing  
making garden ever spring  
out there with her old slat bonet  
grait long tie strings hangin onet  
spaden' up her onion bed  
till her cheeks would be as red  
then she stop an look around  
at her other garden ground  
and pull some old dry cabage stalks  
and pile them down there in the walks.

Then I would hapen to think  
and take her up a good cold drink  
in our quart tin  
she look at me and grin  
and say she was glad I brought it up  
for she was wishen for a sup  
then wee stood there and talked a while  
then I pitched in to help her pile  
and then I carry al I could  
and piled it out there by her wood  
so she could burn it up some day  
when the wind was tother way.  
Then I went back to help her rake

and finish thad bed she started to make  
and when we got it all raked  
down nice and fine  
she took a piece of old close line  
so she could make the rows all strate  
while I swung on her garden gate  
and watched a brown thrush in a tree  
twas singing songs for her and me  
that musick filled my hart with joy  
for I was but a bare foot boy.

Then grandma says I'm all through now  
and took her apron to wipe her brow  
then we went in and she took a twist  
of that old long green twar gist  
as dry and rife  
and crumbled it up for her old pipe  
then she set down to smoke and talk  
and told me bout a grate big halk  
that lit out there the other day  
and she went out and scared him away.

Then when I sed it was time for me to git  
she says wait a little bit.  
she went and got her pocket book  
and begin to look  
and brought me out a brand new dime  
and layed it in the hand of mine  
then when I started to go home  
she went and got her old fine comb.  
and comenced to comb her hair twas thin and  
gray  
when I went home that day.

But grandma long gone to her rest  
and the thing that I rember best  
now my hair begin to turn  
is that their old clay pipe of hern.

## Salt

Pauline Sirois by Jeff Manes

*"There's a lot more business out there in small town America than I ever dreamed of."*  
-Sam Walton

I took Memory Lane, better known as 'Ol' Bloody 41,' through downtown Lake Village for this interview. At the 4-way stop stood Christenson's Chevrolet. A block south, the Presbyterian Church.

I'd come to visit Pauline Sirois. Mrs. Sirois is a gem of a lady. Her daughter, Carolyn Brownfield, welcomed me in.

\*\*\*

"Are you the one who was the great runner in high school," Sirois began.

*No, Mrs. Sirois, that was my brother, Jason. I was the one running from the law.*

"I'll sit next to you, Jeff, so I can hear you better. After 93 years, you don't hear or see like you used to. You're the writer.

"I take the *Lowell Tribune* and Carolyn takes the *Morocco Courier*; we share them. My parents took the *Tribune* ever since I was born. Old H. H. Ragon started the *Tribune* way back before the 1890s. There was a red-headed Ragon, and also one who was a heavy-set guy; they called him Tiny. One of those Ragons was named Lorraine. There also was one who played the saxophone in an orchestra."

*Maybe Tiny was Lorraine. I would've went by a nickname if my parents named me Lorraine Manes. I know John H. Ragon passed away about a year-and-a-half ago. He was the last of newspaper Ragons. Let's see, you were a Tilton from Lowell, correct?*

"Yes; I have five generations born in Lowell. My mother was Lulu Vandercar, she married Fay Tilton. I was one of five sisters. Vandercars and Tiltons are thick around Lowell. I grew up in the Orchard Grove area. Lived on four or five different farms. There was a store there, Kenny's Corner. Jeff, haven't you ever heard of that?"

*Yeah, um, I think I have. I want to get these facts straight. Our town historian, Richard Schmal, reads my column like a hawk. Do you know him?*

"Oh yes, I knew Dick and Bob both. Bob went to school with me. Dick is younger."

*No way. Nobody's older than Dick Schmal. When did you and your late husband move to*

*Lake Village?*

"1938. Jack's real name was Bertram; he never wanted anyone to know that. Jack's parents ran a grocery store in Shelby. Emil and Sam Sirois were brothers who came from France, to Canada, to Shelby. They were blacksmiths, originally. We're working on the Sirois family tree.

"After I got married, my parents lived in the Halsted House in Lowell. Old man Halsted made every brick in that house. They've made a museum out of it."

*What year were you born?*

"1913. I remember when World War I was over. Everybody was a yellin' and screamin' and knockin' each other down. I have lived through five wars and I'm sure tired of this one. This ain't like the other wars."

*If you don't mind me asking, what are your political leanings?*

"I'm a Republican from the ground up. They come to the house so I can vote. One vote may do the job."

"Mom has had to live in the nursing home twice, but eventually got out of there both times," Carolyn said.

*You two live about a mile apart, right?*

"Yes, but I spend every night with Mom," added Carolyn. "When we get up in the morning, we have breakfast together. I go home during the day. Mom usually takes a nap in the afternoon. I come back around 5 p.m. and make supper. Some evenings I'll play cards at a friend's house or host bunco. I have euchre club at my house, too."

"She's just like her dad. Carolyn plays every card game there is! You see, Jeff, my grandfather, Frank Tilton, married a Kenny. Grandpa Tilton was a rugged guy, a hunter and trapper who lived down in the swamps. Effie Kenny was kinda wealthy. She had land and money. But Frank wasn't that type. He wasn't a farmer; he was a duck hunter. He didn't want to farm that darn farm. But Effie wanted a big spread and to build a big house on it. She was more citified. They did marry, but Grandpa never lived on that farm very much. Did I tell you he was born with one blue eye and one brown eye?"

*Did you know any of the Buckleys?*

"Heavens, yes. Rosie was a stubborn old

gal. Charlie Buckley and his wife had five kids. Not a one of them ever had a child. Well, there was one that died as an infant. All those Buckleys were stubborn..."

*Ahem. Lets move on to the Village and the lumberyard.*

*"Lumber, hardware and coal!"*

*Does the town of Lake Village look about the same as it did in the 1940s?*

"Oh, no. They took everything away. We had gas stations and restaurants. We had a business district at the four corners. There was Christenson's Garage, Gregory Maurek had a store, and Henry Stoner had a store, too. Estelle Hall and Cecil Hogan ran the Royal Blue Store. We had three stores back then. Now, we have a larger population with only one store." They say when new (U.S.) 41 was built, it killed a lot of small towns. Whereas the old serpentine U.S. 41 meandered right through the middle of them – from Chicago to Florida.

"Jeff, Lowell, Momence (Ill.) and Morocco are all about 12 or 14 miles from us. Gee, who wants to drive that far for a quart of milk and a loaf of bread? That's too bad. I wish it was like it used to be.

"And you used to know everybody! Everybody was good to each other. If anybody needed help we'd go and help them. I don't know anybody anymore!"

*There was a mom and pop place that you didn't mention. Right across from the Nick the barber. I think it was a Cardinal Store. Back in the early 1960s...*

*"Cal Osenbaugh's place?"*

*That's it, Cal's! Used to have one of those Spanish peanut machines. You could drop two pennies in it, give her a crank, and get a handful of goober peas.*

*I think Nick's real name was Harry, even though he was bald. He always nicked us with those shears that sounded liked bumble bees behind your ears, hence the nickname, Nick. I think he lived in Chicago, but would take the bus back and forth everyday or at least on weekends.*

"Nick would go into Betty Koch's restaurant and order a 'chicken' sandwich everyday. One day, Betty had a new girl fill in for her. Nick ordered the usual. He wasn't pleased. When he said chicken sandwich, he meant a fried egg sandwich."



*An egg is a chicken, I suppose.*

“Jeff, I love people. Everybody’s got good points, darn it. We lived up above the lumberyard. The ‘30s and early ‘40s were hard times. The railroad was right in our back yard. I’d fix sandwiches for the hobos. Sometimes, I’d have Carolyn take the sandwiches to them. People would admonish me for that. I’d say, ‘What’s wrong with that? Maybe they’re hungry.’ Maybe they were somebody really nice. You just don’t know. Why, everybody was out of work. After they ate, they’d take the little dirt road that led to the old pickle factory. They would sleep there; it was a roof over their heads.

“The train used to stop here. You could go to Chicago for the day and take the midnight passenger train back. The depot was right next to the lumberyard. Rufus Robinson ran the depot.

“He’d sing me funny old songs when I was a little girl,” added Carolyn. “They used a big cane like a fishing pole. It had a loop on the end of it. Rufus would hang the mail bag on the end of it and the railroad man would hook his arm around it as he went by – off Lake Village’s mail would go.”

*I remember you had an old hand water pump in the yard, Pauline. Best water around. You also had a set of those aluminum drinking glasses. Remember them? About eight inches tall. They were unique colors like gold, maroon, or turquoise. I’m gonna look for a set of those at yard sales – just for nostalgia’s sake.*

“Ever since Jack passed, Carolyn and I have been together. Actually, we’ve never been apart. She was my only child. Jeff, you come back and visit. It’s only about 12 miles from Lowell to Lake Village. Gas is goin’ down! Here, let me get you a pop for the road.”

“Mom, where’s your walker?”

“Oh, fiddlesticks. I don’t need that thing. Jeff, I’d hate to leave Lake Village after all these years, but I still feel so attached to Lowell. My roots are there.”

\*\*\*

The daughter was a widow before the mother. Carolyn’s husband, Blade, died in a car wreck just east of Lake Village. I was in junior high school when it happened. He was my Little League coach. Carolyn has never remarried.

Pauline and Carolyn.  
Inseparable.

– Jeff Manes

*This column was published several years ago in Jeff’s weekly column, “Salt” in the Lowell Tribune and Post-Tribune.*



**Pauline Sirois, front row, second from left. This group of Lake Village ladies from the collection of Joanne (Iwinski) Miller, were identified by Joan (Madison) Regan as, top row, left Minnie Christenson, Mary Flagg, ?, Mrs. Mahan, Gladys Flatt, Mrs Weaver, ? Mrs. Milford Bingham. Bottom row, left, Mrs. Russell, Pauline Sirois, Ruth Sheppard, Belva Davis, Edith Madison. Part of the left side of the photo was cut off.**

## Do You Know Your County of Newton?

By Janet Miller  
Answers on page 22

Recently a new county history has been published entitled, “History of the Town of Goodland and Grant Township, Newton County, Indiana.” The following questions are taken from that publication.

1. Grant Township was not an original township when Newton County was divided from Jasper County in 1860. What year was it established and from what original township was it divided?
2. Before the town of Goodland was established by William Foster and his brother, Timothy, the town was called by what name?
3. In 1916, Grant Township boasted of seven one-room schools. Can you name them?
4. What was the first business established in Goodland?
5. In June 1934, The Merchants National Bank in South Bend, Indiana was the scene of a daring hold-up, which left one policeman dead and four others injured. The gang that made this robbery abandoned one of their vehicles near Goodland. Who was this gang? What make of car did they abandon? This happened near what Goodland family’s farm?

## 12 The Newcomer

### Beaver Lake Country Place Names

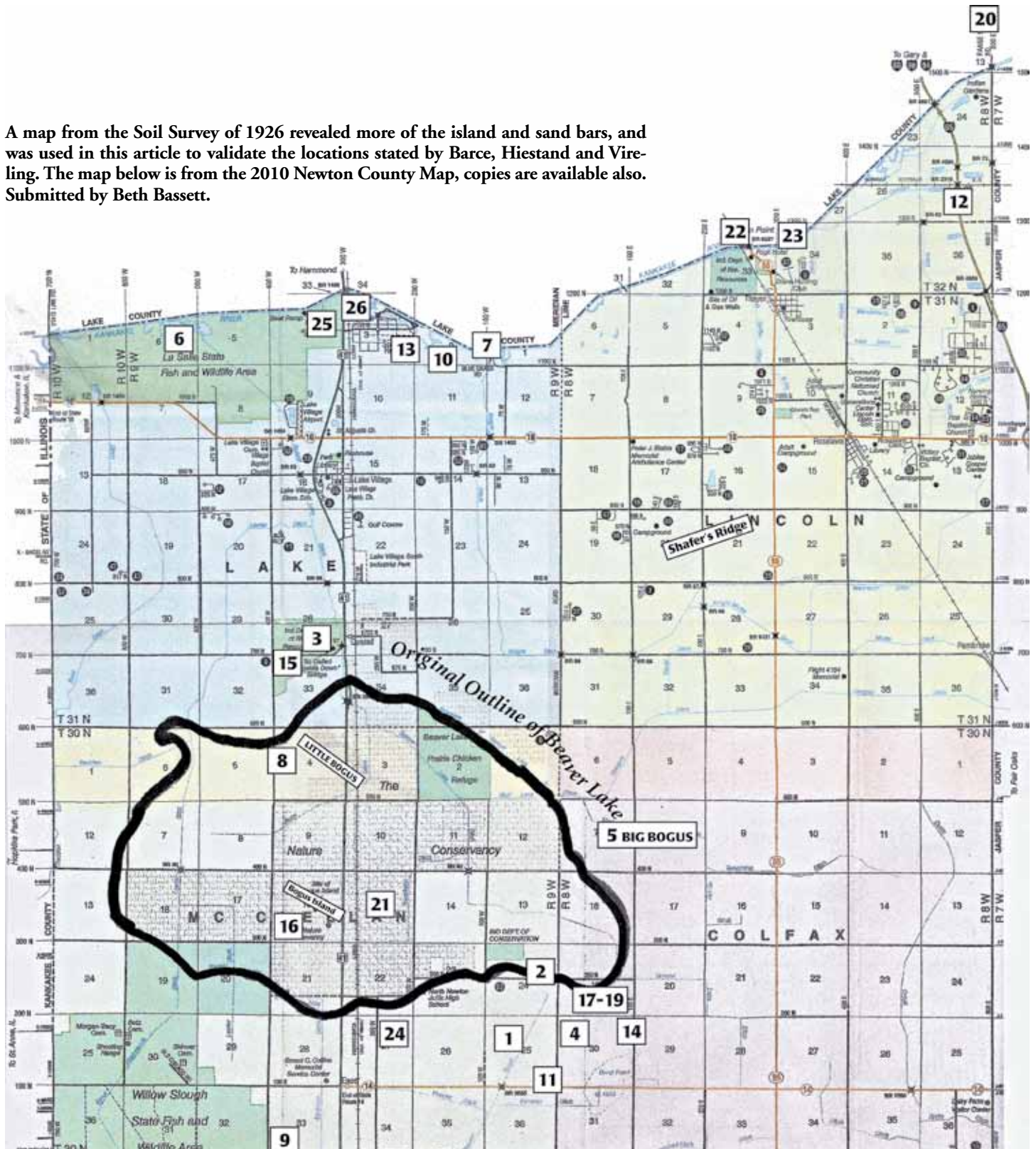
*This list was derived from the sources mentioned earlier, Hiestand (H); Barce (B); and the "Kankakee Marsh Place-Name" article written by Mr. Vierling (V). Submitted by Beth Bassett.*

1.	<b>Bald Knob.</b> Two miles east and one-half mile north of Enos, nothing covered the island. This is the island that Gurdon Hubbard landed on, became ill and was rescued by the Pottawatomie Indian. In later years, young oak trees grew and it was known as Pole Grove. It was northwest of Eagles Nest Ridge in McClellan Township, Section 25. (B)
2.	<b>Beaver Lake Farm.</b> Located one-half mile east of Wheaton Arms, the most eastern part of that landmark; farm and land owned by Bob Beckwith. On the north side of the farm was a large knob which overlooked the lake in all directions. (H)
3.	<b>Beaver Lake Channel.</b> Located in Lake Township, near Conrad, the final channel that was dug to drain the lake was cut through a high ridge located here. Hiestand believed that it was the highest point in the township; the high ridge extended to the southwest to a considerable distance. It is believed that it was this high ridge that impounded the water in Beaver Lake and made the natural slope of the lake to the south, thereby causing Beaver Creek, north of Morocco, to carry the over-run of water from the lake. The site is easily distinguished as it is the high ground to be reached after the crossing the old lake bed on US 41 heading north, just before Conrad. This was the extreme north area of the lake. The Conrad Ranch buildings were directly below the hill to the southwest of the ridge. (H)
4.	<b>Beegum Ridge.</b> Colfax Township, Section 19 and 30. A series of sand ridges east of Meridian and south of 250N. This ridge continued into McClellan Township, almost to US 41. One of the first named ridges, the highest point is Eagle's Nest Ridge. (H)
5.	<b>Bingaman's Island.</b> Colfax Township, Section 7, it was located on the southeastern shore of Beaver Lake, extending to the east from the lakebed for a mile. Vierling referred to this island as Big Bogus. (H)
6.	<b>Black Oak Island.</b> Located in the south-half of the northeast quarter of Section 6, Lake Township, close to the Illinois state line. (V)
7.	<b>Blue Grass Landing.</b> A landing on the south side of the old Kankakee River, apparently at the mouth of Blue Grass Creek, located in Section 11, Lake Township. Blue Grass Road is located 2.53 miles east of US 41 on SR 10; this road leads to the landing. (V)
8.	<b>Cherry Island.</b> McClellan Township, Section 4; located northwest of Bogus Island within the lakebed. Part of the Bogus Island chain; outlaws used it as a ferry point to and from the main island. Northwest of Cherry there was another island where buffalo bones were found. Barce stated in his book that they were buried bones by the Indians in a ritual honoring the animal. (H & B)
9.	<b>Darroch's Ridge.</b> McClellan Township, west of Enos. It was located on the south end of the George Lomax Farm, Section 33. Noted as a famous landmark for the time. (H)
10.	<b>Devil's Island.</b> An island in the former Kankakee River, not in the marsh. It was located in the center of the south-half of Section 2 in Lake Township. Then as now this site is all wetlands. (V)
11.	<b>Eagle's Nest Ridge.</b> McClellan Township, Section 25, part of Beegum Ridge. Located two and one-half miles east of Enos, about 2.5 miles in extent, rising about 25' above the level of the water. In 1937, on the highest point was a giant black oak tree where at 30'-35' above ground it separated into 4-5 forks. For 50 years there was an active nest of the American Bald Eagle there. The nest's rampart was said to be 15' in length. (B)
12.	<b>Forest City.</b> An apparent settlement which existed 100 years ago; located south of the Kankakee along what is now the CSX railroad lines in the northeast quarter of Section 25 in Lincoln Township. (V)
13.	<b>Frenchman's Slough.</b> A slough located southwest of the old Kankakee River in the area what is now Sumava Resorts in Lake Township. Said slough had an arc shape running from the northeast quarter section of Section 3, to the southwest quarter section of Section 2. (V)
14.	<b>Hickory Island.</b> Colfax Township, Section 30. This island laid south and west of the Rafferty Ranch; a deep pond was located in the southeast/northeast corner of sections 30 and 31 in 1834. (H)
15.	<b>Horse Thief Hill.</b> Located near the town of Conrad, Section 28, Lake Township, just west of US 41, where a horse thief was buried. The hill is about 45' high and is on the west side of Beaver Lake Ditch. (V)
16.	<b>Hunter's Point.</b> Location unknown, but thought to be southwest of Bogus Island. (V)
17.	<b>Little Lake.</b> The area of Beaver Lake in Colfax Township, Section 29; an arm of the main body of water; birthplace of Alexander Lanier "Ned" Barker, and the home of the first white settler in the area, his father Thomas Rogers Barker. (B)
18.	<b>Moorman Hill.</b> Beaver Township, Section 1, in the northwest corner. (H-JC Murphey)
19.	<b>Rafferty Ranch.</b> Colfax Township, Section 19, location of the first white settler's cabin, Thomas Rogers Barker. (H)
20.	<b>Range Line Bridge.</b> A bridge over the Kankakee, located at the very tip of Lincoln Township, Section 24. This bridge was built by three counties, Lake, Newton and Jasper in 1927. It is on Range Line Road, which is the road between Range 7 W (Jasper County) and Range 8 W (Newton County). Jerry Island, named after Jerry Kinney, was located just to the north. (V)
21.	<b>Squawk Island.</b> McClellan Township, located within Beaver Lake, located directly east of Bogus Island in Section 15, about the center, just on the east side of the present day railroad tracks. Named for the squawking of the geese and ducks that stayed on the island. (H)
22.	<b>Thayer's Landing.</b> Where the Monon Railroad crossed the Kankakee River in Indiana. It was originally known as Harrison's Landing. Located in Lincoln Township, Section 33 on SR 55 in Newton and Lake counties. (V)
23.	<b>Water Valley.</b> A former subdivision located on the north side of the Kankakee River, between Thayer and Shelby, on the east side of the Monon Railroad and the east side of SR 55. (V)
24.	<b>Wheatons Arm.</b> McClellan Township, Sections 26 and 27. Owned at one time by Walter and Ruby Atkinson. It was located two miles southeast of Bogus Island. A series of islands or sand knobs peninsular in shape that extended out into the lake from the southwest. It was the same height as Bogus Island at its highest point. Known as Wheaton Arms since the early days of the lake. (H)



25.	<b>White Oak Island.</b> Lake Township, Section 4. Located immediately south of the old Kankakee River on the west side of US 41, and the north side of the road leading into the LaSalle State Fish and Wildlife Area. (V&H)
26.	<b>White Oak Landing.</b> On the south bank of the Old Kankakee River, this was the landing for Lake Village in Lake Township. It was said to be in the center of the N 1/2, Section 3, about a half mile east of where the US 41 bridge (BR 1489) crosses the Kankakee into Lake County. (V)
27.	<b>Wild Cat Island.</b> Beaver Township, Section 1, northwest corner, south of Moorman Hill. (H-JC Murphey)

A map from the Soil Survey of 1926 revealed more of the island and sand bars, and was used in this article to validate the locations stated by Barce, Hiestand and Vireling. The map below is from the 2010 Newton County Map, copies are available also. Submitted by Beth Bassett.



# Pages of the Past

Excerpts taken from *The Newton County Enterprise* during Spring/Summer of 1914 by Janet Miller

## Kentland

**Handsome Quarters.** The new addition to the rear of the Discount and Deposit State Bank building has been completed and thrown open to the public. On the ground floor is the private office of Mr. McCray. On the second floor is a large room for directors and the customers of the bank. While the directors of the bank will hold their meetings in this room it was provided more especially for the use of customers, a conference room for farmers, and others who may desire to transact business privately, and the bank management cordially invites the public to make free use of the same.

**Champion Oats Yield.** So far as reported at the elevators Charles Spangler holds the belt for the largest oats yield in this section. Mr. Spangler's oats went 42 bushels. It is generally estimated that the yield around here will average about 30 bushels.

**Orchard Lake Tenants Enjoy Day as Guests of Warren T. McCray.** The sleek and lazy Herefords were left browsing in the pastures of Orchard Lake Farm, the corn crop and the drought were forgotten, and the busy thrashing season brought no concern to the tenants of Warren T. McCray Friday. This was the day for their annual picnic and all other matters were side-tracked. The picnic was held at the McCray cabin on the Iroquois, and sixty were present, including the families of Mr. McCray, James Hendry, Mrs. Starett, Frank Henderson, Otis Gordon, Alva Herriman, Roy Miller and Bert Dickson. The main feature of the day, of course, was a big basket dinner, embellished with ice cream, lemonade and watermelon. During the afternoon there was a program of events---contests, races, target shooting, etc., in which all participated with great enthusiasm. Mr. McCray provided prizes for the winners and these were carried home with considerable pride. It was a most enjoyable day for all present.

The water works tank was given a thorough cleaning Tuesday. Superintendent Dieter put on direct pressure at the pumping station and patrons were not without water for a moment during the cleaning process.

The stranger in Kentland is particularly attracted by the flower garden in front of the Arcade Hotel. Mrs. Smith has the faculty of making two flowers grow and bloom where

the average person can scarcely make a weed grow. Her flowers are now in their prime, and the wealth of beauty and fragrance is admired by everyone.

"The Girl of the Sunny South" will be presented at the Opera House tomorrow night by the Baughman-Gustine Co., assisted by local talent. Between acts there will be some specialties, including singing by Tom Gott, "Bunny" Gott, "Fritz" Gott and Meredith Lowe.

It is announced that the post-office department is officially recommending the use of automobiles instead of horses on rural routes, together with the suggestion that the length of standard route be increased to fifty miles. The present length is twenty-four miles.

Colton Dramatic Company will open a week's engagement under a big tent in Kentland next Monday, August 3rd. Each and every show guaranteed not only to please but to be entirely moral in character and will not prove offensive to the most delicate minded. We choose our plays especially with a view of pleasing the ladies, and everyone can attend our performances and be assured of courteous treatment. Adults - 25 cents - Children - 15 cents.

The Town Council at its meeting Friday night elected H. L. Sammons a member of the School Board to succeed Mrs. LeNore Allen, resigned. The new board has reorganized by the election of R. R. Cummings president, T. H. Dixon secretary, and Mr. Sammons treasurer. Many new questions are coming up in school work these days, and the *Enterprise* believes the present board will rise to every occasion and keep the Kentland schools up to a high standard.

## Brook

On account of the smallpox condition in our town it was decided Tuesday morning to dispense with every kind of public gathering until the disease has been thoroughly stamped out. There are but few cases and they are mild, but the safest way is the only way under such circumstances, and it is hoped that in this way the situation may be properly handled. A strict quarantine is being observed and the town authorities will see that there is thorough fumigation. No public gatherings will be held until public notice is given.

**On the Golf Links.** "Tis a dull day at Hazelden when there isn't a golf tournament." On Friday, July 17th, the members of the Golf

Club had a chance to show their ability playing with one club. Most of the players used the mid-iron, which is regarded the most valuable club by experts. Some played better than ever before---others found the one-club match a little trying. George Ade turned in a 73, a score which a great many players are proud to make with a whole bag of clubs.

## Morocco

A. B. Jenkins is at Schneider superintending the construction of the Lake-Newton county bridge.

Morocco had a fire Saturday night but good fortune stood by and saved the town from destruction. The moving picture show at the aerdome had just concluded and the crowd had mostly got out on the street when the cry of fire was sounded. The bandstand, which forms a part of the front entrance, and the walls and equipment of the aerdome were quickly reduced to ashes. The aerdome was located between two high brick buildings and the fire was easily controlled. Had the wind been in the south, where it could have played directly upon the flames, the entire business district would have been endangered. Morocco has no waterworks and fighting fires is carried on at disadvantage.

## Mt. Ayr

During the high wind of last Thursday the belfry was blown from the Missionary Baptist Church.

W. A. Lyons finished packing his goods Saturday and left Monday for his new home at Ligonier, where he will take charge of a 35-room hotel he purchased some time ago.

The stone road between Mt. Ayr and Rensselaer was completed Monday, making a continuous stone road from Morocco to Rensselaer and points beyond each town. The force of men and dinky engines have moved to the Woolley switch south of town from where a stone road will be built east in Jasper County to connect with the south road into Rensselaer.

## Lake Village

Sheriff Dowling was at Lake Village Monday to straighten out some irated parties who refused to give a part of the highway, were bunted by an automobile, and then drew a revolver for revenge. They received a fine instead.

They say "biting" is good now on the



Kankakee, but whether by fish or mosquitoes rumor has failed to differentiate. However, the call of the rod is being heard by many and the road from Kentland to Schneider is kept hot.

## Northern Newton

Estray. 2 steers about 3 years old, strayed from Lawler Ranch, near Fair Oaks, Indiana; finder please phone any information to 542G, Fair Oaks, Indiana, Maurice Gorman, Foreman

Dr. and Mrs. W. C. Mathews and Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Hamilton drove to the Kankakee Sunday and enjoyed a dinner at the Burton House, at Blue Grass Landing.

## Goodland

Delphi defeated the crack Goodland team Sunday, in a game at Spinney park by a score of 3 to 2. On July 12th the same teams played at Delphi, the latter winning by a score of 8 to 3. Delphi is about the only team in this

section that has been able to beat Goodland over the home plate.

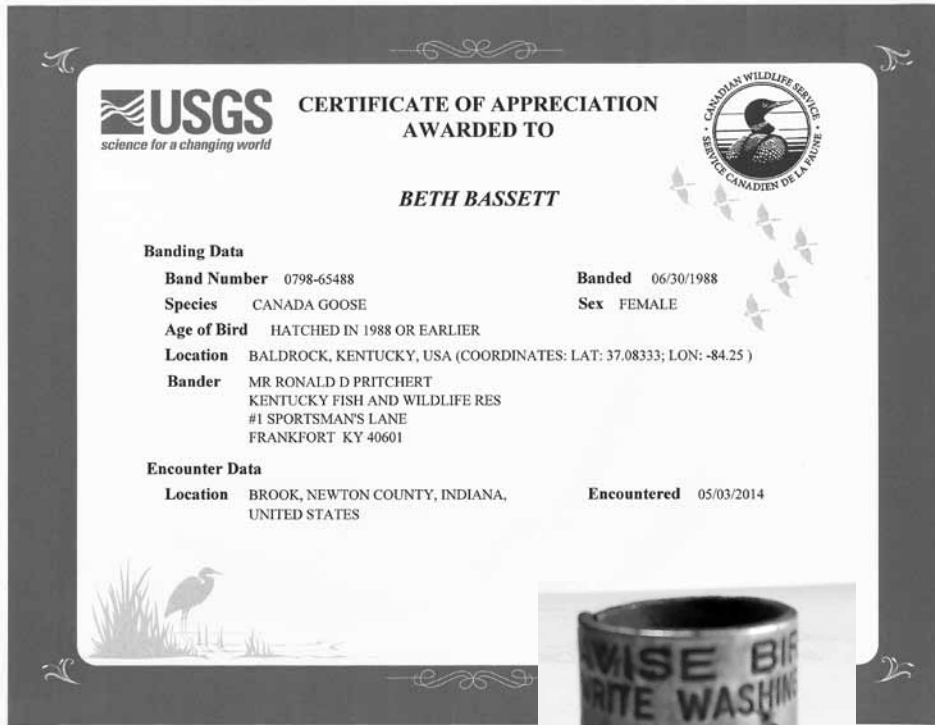
*The Saturday Times*, a new paper launched at Goodland by A. J. Kitt, has been received. Mr. Kitt is a veteran in the newspaper field of this county, and the *Times* bears the impress of his personality. The policy of the paper will be independent in politics. Both the editor and the *Times* will find a welcome in Newton county.

## Bell Cemetery in Beaver Township to be Restored



The DNR and Beaver Township are working together to restore the small cemetery located a half mile north of CR 300S and one-half mile east of CR 100W.

Access to the public is now available. Contact the DNR at 219-285-2204 or Mindy Mathis, Beaver Township Trustee for access.



## Bird Band from 1988 or Earlier Found

While walking through the woods that adjoin my property, I discovered an item on the ground that I thought might be a bird band, but wasn't really sure.

I am very fortunate to live in an area in Newton County that is considered to be part of the "fly over zone" for migrating birds.

In the fly over seasons, (spring and fall), I can hear the "clicking" of the sandhill cranes; the "honking" of the Canadian geese, and the "quacking" of the Mallard ducks.

So it didn't surprise me really that I would find this bird band, with all of the heavy traffic passing overhead.

Fortunately, the USGS has a site online that you can enter the information that is on the band and they will get back with you via email information regarding your specific band.

They also emailed a PDF of a certificate of appreciation that I wasn't expecting.

Why and what exactly happened to this female Canadian goose is not known, but those who took the time to band her do know about her demise, when and where it happened.

Perhaps my find is common amongst those who explore their backyards or wooded areas, but it was a new adventure for me, seeking information on the type of bird that this band belonged.

So, the next time you are walking through the timber or the prairie, take a little bit of time to look down and do a bit of digging if something catches your eye ... you just don't know what you can find in our Newton County soil! - Submitted by Beth Bassett.

## Local Republished History Books On Sale at the Resource Center

"The Saga of Jennie M. Conrad"  
 "The History of Mt. Ayr, Jackson and Colfax Townships"  
 "Roselawn, Thayer and Shelby, The First 100 Years - 1882-1992"  
 "Ralph, The Story of Bogus Island"  
 "Hoosier Hunting Ground"  
 "Newton County Landmarks"  
 "Beaver Lake, Land of Enchantment"  
 Past editions of the *Newcomer*  
 Post Cards - Coloring Books

DVD: "Everglades of the North: The Story of the Grand Kanakakee Marsh"

**Just Arrived**  
 "The History of the Town of Goodland and Grant Township, Newton County, Indiana 1861-2014"

# The Life and Times of the Beaver Lake Outlaw

By Beth Bassett

In Elmore Barce's book, "Beaver Lake, Land of Enchantment", he gives us an idea as to the life and times of the Beaver Lake Country during the heyday of the horse thieves and counterfeiters, 1836-1858.

"Any fair assay of the situation in the year 1837, will at once demonstrate that it was one of the easiest jobs in the world, to a man of no conscience and a proper rendezvous, to steal a horse or coin a spurious dollar. The whole western country was then in the process of evolution and development. Chicago had not been founded until the year 1833. Many of the towns on the upper Wabash and along the Illinois River and its branches had been established but a few years earlier. There was no railroad in operation in Warren County until the year 1856; none in Newton County until late in the year 1859; none in Benton County until the years 1871 and 1872. The telephone did not arrive until after the invention of Alexander Graham Bell in the year 1876. Many of the white man's highways followed the old Indian trails until late in the century. The breaking of the prairies in Benton County did not really begin until late in the 1860's and early in the 1870's. In 1837 the whole country to the south, the west and the southwest of Beaver Lake was practically a wilderness. Horses ran wild along the creeks and streams and in the prairie groves as far west as the Illinois River.

"It is apparent therefore that an outlaw who was acquainted with all the old pathways and trails across the Potawatomi plain; who could count on the aid and assistance of the many confederates who were engaged in the same nefarious business as himself; who could locate these confederates in most any grove or along any stream from the Illinois River and the Wabash to Beaver Lake, could easily elude the pursuit of any posse of citizens that might be following his tracks and securely secrete himself in the wilds and everglades of the north until the flurry blew over. The discovery of a made-to-hand rendezvous like Bogus Island was therefore immediately hailed by every outlaw in the land, as a ready and convenient accessory to his felonious machinations. It was far removed from the ordinary routes of travel and was entirely surrounded by water, locked in the embrace of bog lands and waters where no man could pursue.

"In the year 1837 the machinery of public justice was ill-adapted to prevent these conspiracies. The courts of Jasper were not open until the year following; the courts of Benton until the year 1840; the courts of Newton until the year 1860. The circuits were large; the term of court four or five days a year. The nature of the constabulary of that time is difficult of description; oft-times the constable was as criminal as the felon himself. The public conscience had not yet been aroused.

"Again, these conspirators at Bogus Island were surrounded by a class of men, posted on the islands or at the entrances to the lake who, through fear from proximity or from hope of profit, were impossible of approach. The owner of property who tracked a counterfeiter or traced a horse to the verge of the lake, found himself suddenly confronted with an impassible wall of silence or subterfuge, which at once prevented all further discovery. The agents of the bond masters of the south who inquired of the whereabouts of a runaway slave of the members of the 'Underground Railroad', met with no better success."

**"Old Shafer" aka Mike Shafer, aka William Shafer, aka "Ole Shaf"**

Probably the most well-known notorious character of the Beaver Lake



Drawing by Vic Johnson, 1992

**Thanks to Vic Johnson for allowing me to use his illustration of Prairie Bandittii.**

County was a man by the name of Mike Shafer. According to accounts published in Burt Burroughs' "Tales of An Old Border Town and Along the Kankakee"; articles published regarding his death; and the stories passed down through the generations, "Old Shafer" was a most sinister and forbidding individual. He was an outlaw steeped in crime, who was said to have ruled the isolated Kankakee swamp region with an iron hand.

"Old Shaf," was not old in years, but he was old in crime, hence, "Old Shafer", according to Burroughs. His name was associated over the years with just about every crime committed in the area from petty larceny to murder, because he was known to sometimes boast of it!

In the preface of Burroughs' book, he credits Mrs. Nutt, Mrs. Alzada Hopper of Momence, and Mr. A. B. Jenkins of Morocco, together with the patriarchal Austin Dexter for furnishing the details for the story of "Old Shafer." Austin Dexter is what he called an ancient "swamp-rat," and at the time of the writing (1925), perhaps Beaver Lake's oldest citizen in point of continuous residence. He came to the lake as a baby and was 88 years old in 1925, spending 86 years of his life there. He was born in Rensselaer in 1839, and shortly after his people moved into the lake country.

Dexter lived in a hut among the oaks of a sand ridge not far from the famous "Shafer Ridge." Burroughs interviewed him from that location, and he told him that he lived there in the summer months pretty much by himself, but in the winter he resided in Kentland. His recollections went as far back as the 1840s. The Potawatomi were there in that day and they were the principal hunters of the time. His brother spent much time with the Indians and became quite expert in speaking and understanding their language.

Burroughs wrote, "As he spoke of the happenings of the past his eye ranged slowly the vast expanse of country to the south where, traced in the swamp bottoms, were staring highways of white, farms fenced in and fields of corn white from the early autumn frosts, where formerly the boats of the hunters plied. To the northwest of "Big Bogus" laid the deep sink of old Beaver Lake. His eye rested here while he pointed out the huge dredge-ditch, its precipitous sides covered for the most part with scrub-oak, sumac and briers, through which shone dully, patches of dead gray quick-



sand. It was then the tragedy of the swamp stood revealed. Through this ditch the heart's blood of the old Beaver Lake had drained to the last drop. "They murdered this land while they were at it," said Dexter sadly, "and made a good job of it!" Man had deliberately sacrificed the plenty that here fell regularly from the hand of the Almighty and, in return, drew a burden of taxes."

Where Mike Shafer came from no one knew for sure. Burroughs writes, "He operated from famous "Shafer Ridge" in the Beaver Lake country during the 1850s and up until his death in 1869. By many it is said he began his operations there as far back as 1844.

"The gossip of that early day credited him with being a man of unusual attainments in the matter of education. He is said to have been a graduate of one of the great eastern colleges. That Mike Shafer was not his real name but an assumed one, there can be little doubt. He made his word the law in the little domain in which he operated and he enforced that law in the most vigorous and summary manner."

Burroughs actually credits Shafer's skills by saying: "He so long eluded successfully the clutches of the law that it is a tribute to his nerve, cunning and consummate skill by which he directed the underworld forces under his command."

The Mrs. Nutt and Mrs. Harper that Burroughs refers were the daughters of Hugh Williamson, a deer hunter of the Beaver Lake country in 1863, selling the carcasses to butcher shops, stores and anyone who wanted them in Mommence, as well as taking them to sell in Chicago.

It was years before Williamson took up residence in the marsh in his log cabin on the ridge northeast of "Little Bogus," the counterfeiters and horse thieves had established their headquarters upon the island, the daughters related to Burroughs.

The Williamson sisters knew "Old Shafer", as he was sometimes a caller at their cabin where he conversed with their father. Mrs. Nutt recalls that he was a powerful man, with a good head and as fine and regular set of teeth as any man was ever blessed. To her father he remarked: "Williamson, I shot a man once, and all I could shake out of him was a dollar!"

Other tales of Old Shafer state that somewhere amid the low-lying sand dunes and scrub-oak isles that surrounded his cabin there is secreted to this day a nail-keg containing a goodly quantity of gold pieces - Shafer's profits from his criminal lifetime. So persistent were these stories of hidden wealth that after his death, a search was made for it with no success. They did find casks containing pork and

beef, but not the fabled nail keg with its treasure of gold.

Reports of the gold linger still in 2014, from those who have farmed the "Shafer Ridge" area.

But the stories of his ghost appearing on certain nights prowling among the oaks in the near vicinity of his cabin home, one end of which was dug into the side of a sand dune, prevail as well.

Several have claimed to have beheld these nocturnal visitations, including one tale that with the moonlight glinting through an

open space in the oaks

fell upon the

ghost's massive back, they could see the gaping gunshot wound, giving further evidence that the ghost was Shafer, and no-one else.

Notable among the varied accomplishments attributed to "Old Shafer" was his ability to change distinguishing spots and marks on a horse. Many say that he was so good that he could transform a white horse into a bright bay, or a bay to glossy chestnut or black.

When a horse that was stolen had so

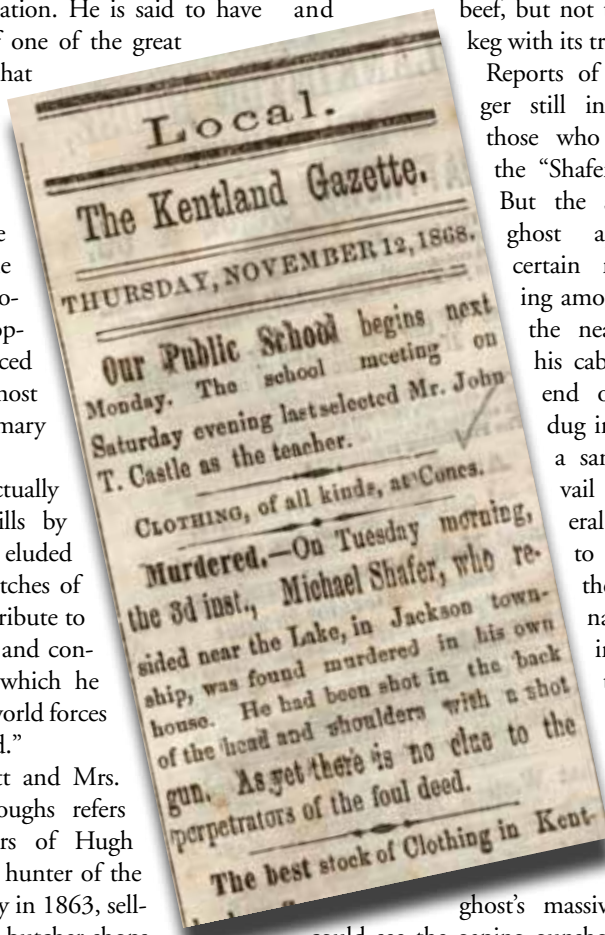
prominent of markings that would make identification easy, the thief would bring him through the marshes to Shafer's "studio" in the brush to undergo the changes needed. Shafer's practiced eye and skillful hand soon transformed the marks so that one might go with an animal out into the highways with little fear of detection.

These transformations were made with means of dyes, brewed from barks and roots. In most cases it was not necessary to change the entire color of the horse; a simple white star placed on the forehead of the animal would completely change the description of the horse. The method Shafer knew, was related to Burroughs by Dexter:

"The animal's head was first firmly secured between two posts and then a boiled potato, hot out of the kettle, would be bound to the forehead and left long enough to blister the skin, so that the hair would fall out. After five or six weeks the scar healed and the new hair that came in was always white, and the star thus produced was a permanent one."

Probably the blackest of Shafer's crimes related over the years would be the murder of his youngest daughter. Burroughs writes, "This girl of ten years observed the unusual operations that went on about her and was curious and questioning; despite numerous warnings to be silent, she prattled innocently of it all to strangers. One day when a posse in search of two stolen horses stopped by Shafer's place, they questioned him closely. The old bandit stoutly denied having seen them, although in truth they had passed through his lands several days before. Suddenly the girl exclaimed, 'Why, papa, don't you remember those men with the horses who stopped here only one day before yesterday.' He cuffed the girl soundly and told her to go about her business."

"Shafer's rage knew no bounds and he resolved to make away with the child. On the pretext of picking blueberries which grew abundantly on the sandy marsh, Shafer and the girl left the cabin. Shafer returned but the girl was never seen again. He cut her throat with a butcher knife, at least that is what the legend of the swamps states, and tearing out her hair he scattered it in handfuls in a lonely spot in the scrub to make it appear that she had been attached and devoured by wolves. Shafer's oldest and other daughter, was whispered the details of her sister's demise from her mother on her death bed, and encouraged her



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to run away, which she did.”

After the death of his wife and departure of his daughter, Shafer was left to carry on his criminal acts, which along with the Bogus Island bandits grew at an overwhelming pace. Shafer held on to a grudge like a young child to a fresh baked cookie. Shafer suspected John Coffelt in assisting his daughter in escaping to the south, the result of it all was that in a short time, he lost nine head of horses. Walter Hess was for many years the head of the law and order forces that made war on the banditti of the Bogus Island stronghold. A horse-thief was shot and “Old Shafer” arrested. Shafer ended up serving a term in the penitentiary for this, but when he returned he took up his business where he had left off. For twelve years after his release, Shafer extracted vengeance on Hess by stealing, poisoning, shooting, and butchering 53 head of horses.

After a life of crime, “Old Shafer” fell by



**Big Bogus Island. Since the draining of the waters of Beaver Lake, “Big Bogus” looms on its southeastern side like a huge promontory of sand. The figure on the right in the pictures is standing on the spot where a gang of early day counterfeiters had their “dugout.” At this point five of a gang were captured by Col. Sorcester and a band of Mommence men. Reprinted from “Tales of An Old Border Town and Along the Kankakee,” Burt Burroughs.**



**The John Jenkins Home. This place, one-half mile west of Lake Village, Indiana, was the home of John Jenkins in 1865. Here, to the right, stood a little log blacksmith shop where the autopsy was held on the remains of “Old Shafer.” Reprinted from “Tales of An Old Border Town and Along the Kankakee,” Burt Burroughs.**

the same means he had so often employed. He was shot in the back at short range, the charge of buckshot tearing a frightful hole in his body, dropping him in his tracks. There are a couple of versions as to how his death occurred which are in Burroughs book, but the story that the Williamson sisters gave may have been the most believable.

“Shafer was shot in the back at close range as he was about to enter his cabin. At the entrance to his cabin there were two or three log steps placed in a shallow area-way that led down to the door, and “Old Shafer” stood on the top most of these steps when the fatal shot was fired. In his right hand he held the bail of a small iron kettle and in his left, clutched in a death grip- an old dish rag. The assassin gathered leaves and small branches with which he surrounded the body as it laid there, and set them on fire with the evident intention of cremating the body of the old bandit in his own premises. The leaves burned out but failed to ignite the brush and, barring a scorched or charred spot here and there, the body was practically untouched.

“John Jenkins, who located to the marsh in 1865, had been elected to the office of Justice Of The Peace. On hearing the news of Shafer’s death early the following morning, he proceeded to look up the law to see what his duties as Justice were in this emergency, there being no regularly qualified coroner available. The law provided that he should conduct an inquest in such cases.

“Accordingly, he went to the Shafer home, viewed the body and took note of the surroundings, and then gave orders authorizing the removal of the body to his home. Jen-

kins at that time lived in the south-east corner of the section that adjoins the present village of Lake on the west, his home being located on the north side of the road about a quarter of a mile from the corner, west. On his land, he had a log blacksmith shop where work for the neighborhood was carried on, and to this place the body of “Old Shafer” was brought. The body arrived late in the afternoon, and a wide puncheon slab was laid upon two barrels, where Shafer’s body, still clutching in his left hand the old dishrag, and the grime of the day’s work still upon him.

“Dr. John F. Shronts was ordered to perform an autopsy on the body as the law required. So by the dim, uncertain light of tallow candles held by members of the jury, followed Dr. Shront’s every move in the gruesome procedure. A gathering of onlookers thronged the little roadside blacksmith shop that night - the last night “Old Shafer” spent this side of the grave! Thrilled by the news of his sudden demise a score of Beaver Lake dwellers gathered as interested spectators of all that went on.”

Burroughs account of the evening into quite detail in regards to the proceedings of the autopsy. Shafer’s wound contained nearly two dozen large buck shots, thus establishing beyond question that “Old Shafer” had come to his death from the effects of this wound. And, Shafer’s neighbors who talked of it said, “Lowed thar wuz none too many at that! Just a safe, comfortable load for a man like Mike Shafer - one couldn’t be too careful when hunting game like Mike!”

At the Jenkins home the investigation was renewed to discover, if possible, the perpetrator of the crime, although the public



did not view Shafer's death as a crime. Two men, Baum and Cushinberry, frequenters to the swamp area, were examined. Their stories were conflicting. They admitted having had some dealings with Shafer the day before he was found dead at his cabin, and admitted that they had a falling out with him.

A.B. Jenkins, son of John and a lad of eleven years, related the way he felt in regards to the two suspects. "He recalls the furtive, shifty manner, in which they gave their testimony and has no hesitancy in pronouncing them the real culprits."

The two were told to stay in the area, as they would be called before the jury again the next day, but they decided they would set out on foot in the darkness for the nearby Illinois state line, making their get-away. A few months later the culprit's wives would also

leave the area, residents assuming they were going to meet their criminal husbands.

It would be Beaver Lake resident Fred Tanner who would be tried for the death of "Old Shafer." The evidence that pointed to his guilt was that he and Shafer were in the midst of a bitter feud over Tanner's missing colts, Shafer being the accused thief. Tanner was later tried by civil authorities and was acquitted.

Shafer was buried the morning following the autopsy without any semblance of a funeral. Burroughs writes, "The remains with only the scant covering afforded by the half-burnt clothes he wore the day he was killed were deposited in the bed of a lumber wagon and conveyed to the little frontier cemetery that now serves the town of Lake Village on a high, sandy knoll."

No coffin was provided, only a few mourners followed the wagon, some walking, some on horseback not to mourn the passing, but "to see the thing through." Burroughs wrote that there were "jokes and laughter resounding from the eight to ten marsh dwellers, while the hounds around the countryside added their deep-toned baying to the medley of sounds more joyful than sad the day Shafer

went to his long home."

So, a shallow hole was dug, remains deposited and hastily covered. With the last shovelful on the mound the wielder of the shovel raised it high and brought it down with a resounding whack, remarking while the on-lookers guffawed: "There you are, Mike Shafer, and may the devil make you dance a horn-pipe on the hottest griddle there is in hell."

The tale continues stating that it was believed that the body disappeared a few days later. Some say it was the works of wolves, while others believe a group of young boys had strung the body up to a jack-oak tree. Mr. A.B. Jenkins thought that the bones would have been a valued accessory to a doctor's outfit in the day of the frontier, various rumors were rife concerning the final disposition of the body. Jenkins stated that he might picture a fire burning under a capacious old fashioned soap-kettle, set in some convenient copse of scrub-oak, secure from prying eyes, where the body of the old bandit was gradually reduced to nothing but bone.

So goes the tale of "Old Shafer", written here so that the next generation of history buffs can pass on the tales of the outlaws of the Beaver Lake country.



**An Ancient Swamp-Rat.** Austin Dexter, right, was perhaps Beaver Lake's oldest citizen in point of continuous residence. He came to the lake as a baby and was 86 years old at the time of the Burroughs interview. He had visions of the lake country again returning to a state of nature in time. He is quoted in saying, "They murdered this land while they were at it, and made a good job of it." Burroughs followed with, "Man has deliberately sacrificed the plenty that here fell regularly from the hand of the Almighty and, in return, drew a burden of taxes." Reprinted from "Tales of An Old Border Town and Along the Kankakee," Burt Burroughs.

## Area Boasted as Popular Resort Town

*Reprinted from "Our Hoosier Heritage, 1988"*

The town of Sumava Forest Resorts, Inc. was laid out on August 19, 1927. It was the second unincorporated town in Lake Township, located along the Kankakee River.

Once popular as a summer resort, it was the last town to be platted in Newton County.

Today, there are many home owners who reside there during all four seasons.



People from Chicago and its suburbs unload from a passenger train and line up to view and purchase lots in the Sumava Resorts area. Reprinted from "Our Hoosier Heritage, 1988".

# Home is Where Your Story Begins

Newton County Historian Diana Elijah Recalls Memories of her father, Charles Lash

Charles Daniel Lash was born April 19, 1910, second child of Brandon R. and Pearl (Landis) Lash in Auburn, Indiana. Grandma always said he was an ornery little guy, but so much help with his siblings as the family grew to eventually six children.

Charles played basketball. He played intramural basketball at Purdue with John Wooden. His younger brother Don was a Sullivan Award winner and a runner in the 1936 Olympics in Berlin. Both of them ran track in school. Don held many cross country records. Part of their conditioning for running would be to run home from school each day to work on the truck farm.

Dad always talked fondly of Don who attended I.U. on athletic scholarships. He also was a State policeman and FBI agent from Parke County. In later years, he owned a Church Camp close to Turkey Run and later sold it to Christian Athletes and worked with them. Don and Charlie's story show that you can accomplish your goals even if family can't afford an education.

As a young lad, the four children had scarlet fever and were isolated and had to destroy all their school books. Grandma said he loved books and he cried about losing them.

Charles graduated from Auburn High School and went to Purdue University with \$50 for tuition. Dad had asked Auburn Methodist Church for a loan, and that is how he paid the \$50 tuition, which he later repaid. He worked at all kinds of odd jobs to help pay for his tuition, books and living expenses. One of the jobs included purchasing sandwiches at a low price and selling them with a bit of profit added to the price to fraternities. He graduated with a Master's Degree in Agriculture, ready to teach vocational agriculture.

Immediately after finishing at Purdue, he worked in DeKalb County eradicating corn borers. His first year teaching was 1936-1937 at Hillsboro High School in Fountain County. There, he met Mabel



**Brandon and Pearl Lash family. Front, left to right, Pearl, Barb, a granddaughter they raised, Brandon, and Alice Jean. Back, left to right, Betty, Charles, Donald and Isabele.**

White of Hillsboro, Indiana, originally from Kentucky. They married on April 23, 1937, and I was born February 11, 1938.

In 1939, we moved to McGrawsville, Indiana in Miami County where Charles taught at Clay Township High School. It had a newly equipped building, built for Vocational Ag with shop equipment.

The following year we moved to Amboy, Indiana, where Charles taught. During World War II, he sometimes taught at two schools; one in the morning, and another in the afternoon in Butler Township in Miami County. He and Mom bought a grocery store in Amboy, which burned after nine months. Charles then applied at Swift and Company in Chicago; he was hired for the Marion, Indiana, plant as a chemist. The army ran the plant for cheese and dried milk. Mom told me Dad applied for the job in his bib overalls ... and got the job! Bibs were not recommended as a job seeker's wardrobe.

After the war, Dad taught veterans for

eight years. He enjoyed working with vet farmers. When that ended, he worked at Delco in Kokomo for about six months and started searching Indiana for a position as a Vocational Ag teacher.

One day in August, 1953, he asked me if I'd like to ride across the state to check out a town. I asked where, and he said Brook and I asked, "Where is that?"

His answer was, "Ride along and see for yourself!"

Dad and I visited several businesses in Brook that day. This was his way of learning about a community before seeing the School Board. It seems Verl Snyder was at the Library that afternoon after we were in town, and by then the town knew a possible new teacher had arrived with his daughter. Verl went home



**Charles Lash, 1929 graduation.**



**Mabel (White) and Charles Lash.**



and told her daughter Carol (now Whaley) and Rita Evans to go make me welcome. They found me on a park bench in McKinley Park waiting on Dad to be done with his interview.

They invited me to go swimming, I needed a suit so they looked me over and decided I would fit in Judy Connell's suit. We proceeded to her house and she kindly loaned me her suit. We went swimming and I made it back to the park bench to meet Dad.

Well, he was hired (he didn't wear his famous bibs for this interview). When we had driven into town and I saw the theatre and then the pool, I thought I surely had died and gone to heaven, as these were two of my most favorite activities.

Larry Lyons said that Charlie broadened his student's horizons. He was amazed when the class toured places, the people there knew Charlie Lash. Another trip they visited Chicago's Maxwell Street. Larry said they (the students) stuck together as it was a rather frightening experience. When George Conn was a senior at Brook High School, her dad took them to the Standard Oil Company.

Many people tell me great stories, some were afraid of him. If you were trying and interested, and behaved, he had no problem with you. Students who didn't listen were in trouble. Butch Reigle said he deserved all of Charlie's discipline.

One of his students was sleeping in class. All eyes were watching Charlie pick up a large dictionary, carry it across the room to the table where the student was sleeping. Was Charlie going to hit him? He dropped the huge dictionary on the table beside him and the whole



1953, left to right, Don, Pearl, Charles and Brandon Lash.

room jumped.

I would sometimes arrive home from school and students would be waiting to talk to Charlie. There were no counselors in those times, and Dad always kept these conversations private.

Charlie taught biology. He had a National Science Scholarship awarded to him for two summers in River Falls, Wisconsin. He was the oldest teacher there, and did well. He felt that added education challenged him and made him a better teacher.

Marsha (Haynes) Bockman told me she took Entomology in 4-H. Her parents were the caretakers of the County Home in Wash-

ington Township. Charlie stopped by the farm to see how her project was doing - and it wasn't. So out to the garden they went with a butterfly net. Now imagine BIG Charlie cavorting through that garden. She did complete the project. I had always assumed 4-H leaders visited their club members, later I found out that wasn't so. Charlie also served as Dairy Superintendent at the Newton County Fair for many years.

Charlie Lash died of cancer in late September, 1990. While having treatment he would write lists of things he thought he could do to help my mother. Mom found these lists after he was gone. Some of the items would be that he would simply pick up after himself; put the household in order; empty wastebaskets and more. He would tell people how she disciplined him, which was funny, because as far as I know, she didn't. They were soul mates and worked on having a successful marriage, with a few tricks along the way made this happen.



Typical classroom scene at Brook High School with Charles Lash and his students.

*Do you have a family history that you would like to share? If so, please send your information to us along with any photographs you would like to include in the story.*

McCray Scholarship Essay Winner, 2014, Zack Willhite, South Newton High School

### South Newton High School

The South Newton Junior-Senior High School was established and erected for the 1966-67 school year. The first graduating class from South Newton High School was the class of 1967. This year's graduating class, the class of 2014, is the forty-eighth class to have graduated from South Newton.

The South Newton High School and the South Newton school corporation came about from the consolidation of Kentland, Brook and Goodland high schools. Ade and Foresman had already consolidated with the Brook-Iroquois township high school. Because of declining class sizes and a demand from the communities, the schools combined to offer a better education to the students. The grade levels for South Newton High School were seventh through twelfth. Sixth grade and earlier grades remained in their respective towns in the same school buildings of the former high schools.

Some of the clubs that were offered to the students of South Newton in their first year were Student Council, Pep Club, Latin Club, Yearbook, Newspaper, Sunshine Society, Hi-Y, Girls' Athletic Association, and Boys' athletic groups. The courses offered included math, science, band, chorus, art, Latin, business, journalism, agriculture, home economics, health, physical education, vocational courses, and social studies. The largest class to have graduated from South Newton High School was the class of 1971 with a class size of 124 students.

One of the most notable groups that South Newton had to offer was the famous South Newton Production Company. Mr. Morris Cornell, who had previously taught at Fowler High School then Kentland High School before South Newton was consolidated, was the executive director of this notorious group. The first production in South Newton's history was *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*. Year after year, Cornell, along with the adult and student members of the Production Company, presented smash hit Broadway plays and musicals to several sold out audiences. South Newton has a long reputation from that. South Newton has many legacies for its theatre including being the first school in the state of Indiana to present Annie. Mr. Cornell retired in 1992

and was succeeded by Mrs. Karen Van Duyn, formerly Mrs. Karen Molter. Van Duyn is still director of the South Newton Drama Department and still maintains and incorporates all of Mr. Cornell's and South Newton's traditions.

Business was one of the more popular subjects for South Newton's students. After several changes in personnel, the Business faculty was consistent with Mrs. Cosette Wolf and Mrs. Betty Cassidy being the veteran faculty and Mrs. Susan Kindig being the new member of the department in the 1977-78 school year. Mrs. Wolf had a great passion for her business students, and in March of 1975 she, along with the assistance of the North Newton chapter, was able to establish the South Newton chapter of the Future Business Leaders of America. Because of the subject's popularity, many students joined in the club's inception at South Newton and, after only about five years, became the largest chapter of FBLA in the state of Indiana. Mrs. Kindig was inducted as co-sponsor when she was employed at South Newton. Many students served as state and national officers and Mrs. Wolf eventually became the sponsor of the state organization for Indiana FBLA. The club is currently in its fortieth year at South Newton.

Latin was one of the very first subjects offered at South Newton and Mrs. Kathleen Funk had a passion for both Latin and her students. The South Newton Latin Club was affiliated with the state and national Junior Classical League. This was another one of South Newton's legacies. Mrs. Funk was able to maintain a membership that made the club the largest in the state of Indiana and among the top five largest in the nation. Latin Club was very popular among South Newton's students and was available from the school's inception until Mrs. Funk's retirement in 1982. After her retirement, French was the foreign language offered after Latin. German was still being offered and had been offered since the school's inception. German and German Club became very popular after Mrs. Funk's retirement and Mrs. Martha Small served as the teacher and sponsor. However, in the 1984-85 school year, South Newton hired Mrs. Paula Reed who taught Spanish and established

the South Newton Spanish Club. Mrs. Reed was able to turn the Spanish Club into one of the largest and most popular clubs in the school. Mrs. Reed and Mrs. Small remained as the two foreign language teachers at South Newton for many years until a growing popularity for Spanish and a dying popularity for German forced the school to remove German from the curriculum and Mrs. Small began teaching math. Mrs. Small remained at South Newton until 2011 when she retired and Mrs. Reed retired in 2012.

South Newton High School still stands today approaching the graduation of its forty-eighth class. While class sizes have gone down considerably, some traditions and spirit still exist in the hallways of South Newton.

Now You Know  
Your County of  
Newton!  
By Janet Miller  
Questions on page 11

1. Grant Township was established on December 6, 1865 from the original township of Iroquois.
2. The town of Goodland was previously called Tivoli.
3. In 1916 the seven one-room schools that existed in Grant Township were: #1 – Kemper (aka Stack and Hancock); #2 – Shepard (aka Galbraith); #3 – Bowers; #4 – Sawyer; #5 – Shelland; #6 – Constable; #7 – Neary.
4. The first business established in Goodland was a warehouse for the storage of grain and a store building stocked with merchandise by Timothy Foster. This building also served as depot, post office and general gathering point for people of the community.
5. The John Dillinger gang robbed the Merchants National Bank in South Bend. They abandoned their brown Hudson car, which had approximately 30 bullet holes in it, on a country road north of the Herb Farrell farm.



## Morocco's Pocket Park and Wall of History

Located on the north side of State Street, "catty-cornered" northeast of Mel's, formerly known as The Lunch Box, you will find a comfortable pocket park named for Betty Kessler, former owner of The Lunch Box, but also a retired elementary teacher, civic minded citizen and mentor to many residents of the Morocco Coumminty. The park was dedicated on October 20, 2004, with Betty and her husband Howard in attendance.

On the west edge of the park is an art mural entitled "Wall of History." This mural is nearly 90 feet long and depicts the history and growth of Morocco, the community and individuals who lived there.

The mural was assembled and dedicated in 2003 to Sally Mangus, wife of the artist and creator, Dalton "Derb" Mangus.

There are ten murals covering the founding of Morocco entitled, "Home of Hoosier Hospitality;" Edgar "Sam" Rice; Dr. Charles Triplett, Sr.; North Newton Jr./Sr. High School; arrival of pioneers; Sept. 11, 2001; Willow Slough; Beaver Township Firehouse and Community Center; Recher Park; Intec and various organizations in Morocco. So the next time you head to Morocco, stop and take a look at this wonderful tribute to the oldest town in Newton County and to a lady who loves the town of Morocco.



Photographs of the mural and of the park. Upper right, Betty Kessler listening as they unveiled the sign for Betty Kessler Park in 2004. Photos by Beth Bassett.



## The Murphey Brothers of Morocco



An email arrived from Tim Storey this past winter asking about information regarding a building in Morocco known today as the NAPA building. He was inquiring about the name "Murphy" printed on the awning behind the gentlemen in the wagon, whether it may be the same as the founding father of Morocco, John Murphey. My research tells me that yes, this is the building that housed the store of Ira W. Murphey, grandson of the founder John Murphey. On the far left of the awning you can see the initials I. W. However, the spelling of the name does not hold to the known spelling of the founder's last name. You will find the correct version, "Murphey" on the bottom of the wagon of the two gentlemen, who I believe are Bennett Chizum and George H. Murphey. Both were prominent merchants in Morocco before, during and after the turn of the century. More information regarding the Murphey family can be found in "The Morocco Sesquicentennial Collection, 2006." Submitted by Beth Bassett.

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