

Volume 11
Issue 3
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Footprints

A publication of the Howard County Historical Society



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HOWARD COUNTY HALL OF LEGENDS

THURSDAY, AUGUST 18, 2022
HINGST HALL
IVY TECH KOKOMO

Event begins at 6pm. Tickets available online:

HCHISTORY.ORG

From the director

Dear Members,

As I sit at my desk contemplating a number of to-do lists I have drawn up, I am aware of the limits of my time here at the historical society. Last week I submitted my resignation to the HCHS Board of Trustees to take on a new challenge as executive director of the Morris-Jumel Mansion in New York City. As I said to the board, I have loved being in this role, but I have an exciting opportunity that means I can return to the east coast and be closer to family. Leaving is bittersweet. I have enjoyed my time here immensely and am proud of the work we have accomplished: we have restored the Seiberling's porte cochere and built an accessibility ramp on the northeast side of the mansion; we have broader and more diverse representation on our board and an expanded presence throughout the community; and finally, we have created important new exhibits, initiatives, and programs for the community.

HCHS's is a wonderful, dedicated staff doing amazing things. The volunteer corps is the bedrock of the organization, making sure visitors have a great experience. Members of the Board are generous people working very hard to ensure the longevity of this organization. It's been a privilege to work with all of them.

I hope I have been able to contribute to the organization's growth and stability. I began in the pandemic, which feels a surprisingly long time ago. The future looks bright for the historical society. The next executive director will bring wonderful things with them for the HCHS, and make their imprint. I know I'm going to take many lessons learned. My time here has changed me in numerous ways, and I am thankful for that personal growth.

Sincerely,

Catherine

Catherine Hughes
HCHS Executive Director

From the president

Since 2010, the Howard County Hall of Legends has been honoring people and organizations whose accomplishments and contributions are seen as, well, legendary. They may be people born here who have gone on to great success on the state, national, and international levels. They may be people who chose Kokomo as a new home, or who landed here for family or job, and went on to make their mark in service here.

Traditionally, six new "Legends" are selected each year. So far, including the Class of 2022, there have been 73 people or organizations honored with the distinction. The list (which you'll find under "Hall of Legends" on the HCHS website howardcountymuseum.org) includes military heroes, politicians and government officials, artists and entertainers, doctors and educators, business leaders and labor leaders, philanthropists and journalists and inventors, community activists and nonprofit organizations ...

And there are those who question how long this can go on at this rate. Questions like, "If

you're inducting six new members every year, aren't you going to run out of worthy candidates?" or "How many really significant people and organizations can there be?" I try to put the skeptics' minds at rest.

This is my first year going through the selection process and I'm here to tell you this can go on for many years indeed. New nominations come in every year, but the selection committee also has a treasure trove of nearly 90 names submitted in the past that have yet to make the cut.

The selections each year are made by an informal committee of people interested in Howard County and our history. It's not a scientific process but we've set up a framework of questions to consider nominations. How strong is this person/organization's connection to Howard County? How significant are this person/organization's accomplishments and contributions? And is the significance local or beyond Howard County? And how substantial are the barriers overcome by this person/organization?

We look for a class that includes folks who grew up here and folks who moved here, folks whose accomplishments are part of our past and folks who have made recent contributions. Some honors are given posthumously; some are so significant that we're proud to honor recipients still contributing. We take demographics into account; we want to be sure the Howard County Hall of Legends includes representatives of all parts of our community. And we always have before us the Howard County Historical Society's goal for the Legends program: To provide our young people with role models and examples of the character traits that engender success and contribute to a better world.

Once selected, the real fun begins as we work to gather more information. It can be a treasure hunt. Hollis King has been gone from our midst since 1982, but a selection committee member was able to put us in touch with Mr. King's great-nephew. Another committee member knew an Indiana University professor with deep professional ties to Richard Cardwell. The Genealogy and Family History Department at the Kokomo Howard County Public Library pulled archival information on some of the inductees. And, of course, the internet is invaluable. We found Marjorie Nelson's brother Beryl through Facebook and were able to connect with her story through him. Friends and relatives of other "Legends" were eager to share their stories.

As outlined in this edition of Footprints, we have a great class of new members. I hope many of you will be able to join us in honoring them at the induction banquet August 18.

Linda

Linda Ferries
HCHS Board President

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Meet the **2022** **HALL OF LEGENDS** **INDUCTEES**

Each year since 2010, a nominating committee, made up of a variety of community members, HCHS board members, and the HCHS executive director, comes together to sift through the many nominations for the Howard County Hall of Legends that have been submitted by people from the public. It is a monumental task. The nominating committee's process has continuously evolved to ensure a diverse slate. To consider what makes a Howard County legend takes a reliable and agreed-upon framework reflecting fairness, depth, and breadth. This current cohort exemplifies these qualities. Read on to learn more about each honoree.

Dr. Marjorie Nelson

As the war in Vietnam raged on, members of the Friends Church, Quakers, looked for ways to live out their belief that war is wrong and that the lives of all people are to be valued. Dr. Marjorie Nelson, whose Quaker faith was forged in Kokomo's Courtland Avenue Friends Church, decided she would travel to South Vietnam to, as her father said, "help the common people of Vietnam who are suffering

through no fault of their own."

She quickly became headline news, a 28-year-old woman from the American Midwest held by the Viet Cong as a prisoner of war.



MARJORIE ELLEN NELSON
Chemistry

Dr. Nelson was four months into a two-year stint in an American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) rehabilitation center in Quang Ngai when she went to visit an American friend about 30 miles away in Hue. On Feb. 9, 1968, the two women disappeared

during the bombing of the Viet Cong's Tet Offensive. On Feb. 11, the Kokomo Tribune reported that Mr. and Mrs. Earl Nelson were anxiously awaiting word about their daughter. The Feb. 12 story said there was still no word and that U.S. Senator Birch Bayh of Indiana, who had spoken with Dr. Nelson during a recent visit to Vietnam, was making inquiries. A page 1 story on Feb. 25 said the AFSC was reporting Dr. Nelson might be a captive of the enemy. On March 31, a front story trumpeted the news that the Viet Cong were releasing the Kokomo doctor and her companion.



What happened in those 57 days of captivity was a testament to Dr. Nelson's abiding faith and her love of all people. She and her friend endured cold rainy nights sleeping outside, trekked through the jungle with little food or water, and survived dysentery. But Dr. Nelson had learned enough Vietnamese to communicate with her captors and they expressed respect for her work. She came back with reports of compassionate treatment, of connecting with the humanity of "the enemy," of friendships that would survive the war. It began a lifetime of service in promoting peace and justice.

Dr. Nelson was born June 14, 1939, in Kokomo. At Courtland Avenue Friends, she felt led to a life as a medical missionary. There she

was introduced to the idea of becoming a doctor, an unexpected career path for a woman in the 1950s. She graduated in 1956 from Kokomo High School at the age of 16, Earlham College in 1960 and the Indiana University School of Medicine in 1964, later earning a master's degree in public health from Yale University.

Her brother Beryl was also a participant in the Quaker protest of the war, a volunteer crew member on a 50-foot ketch that sailed around Southeast Asia to bring medical equipment to both North and South Vietnam.

Dr. Nelson recorded her and her brother's experiences in a book of memoirs titled "To Live in Peace in Midst of the Vietnam War," available on Amazon.

Dr. Nelson retired in June 2009 after 32 years of teaching medical students at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio. After retirement, for several years she traveled to Quang Ngai province in Vietnam, where she volunteered with Madison Quakers Inc. She now lives in Foxdale, a Quaker Continuous Care Retirement Community in State College, Pennsylvania.

Dr. Joseph Klein

What do jet engines, Mars missions, the Space Shuttle, gas turbines, and chemical manufacturing plants have in common? All operate in extremely high-temperature and/or corrosive environments – and all depend on superalloys like those invented and manufactured at Haynes International in Kokomo, Indiana.

And Kokomo native and life-long resident Dr. H. Joseph Klein is the internationally recognized metallurgist whose leadership in the company's research and development organization led to this industry-leading success. Every one of the applications mentioned above – and thousands

more – depend on the kind of melting processes Dr. Klein was involved in perfecting.

Born in Kokomo in 1941, Joe graduated from Kokomo High School in 1959. Summer employment jobs included Allison Division of General Motors and Stellite Division of Union Carbide (now Haynes). He earned his bachelor's degree in metallurgical engineering from Purdue University and completed his master's degree at the University of Alabama and doctorate at the University of Tennessee, where he studied on a National Science Foundation Fellowship.



Dr. Joseph Klein

In 1969, Dr. Klein began a 23-year career at what is now Haynes International. During that time, his leadership touched nearly every part of the company, from engineering to manufacturing to plant management to sales and marketing. Along the way, he earned 16 patents recognizing advances in the process technologies of Haynes materials, advances that dramatically reduced the cost and lead time of production. He oversaw

implementation of a new mill using these processes here in Kokomo that was the largest expenditure Cabot Corporation, the parent company at that time, had ever made. He served as the division's worldwide production manager and later as general manager of the Haynes High Temperature Alloy Business, working with customers around the globe. He is remembered for mentoring and guiding countless engineers in R&D, plant and market development areas who went on to great success at Haynes and other companies. Since 1993, he has owned and operated Newlon Metals, a ferrous and non-ferrous scrap metal recycling company based in Kokomo.

During his career, Dr. Klein served on the boards of a number of national and international metallurgical organizations and visited and spoke in the USSR and China in collaboration with the U.S. State Department. His work was honored with awards recognizing it as among the outstanding contributions in aerospace structural materials in the 1970s and one of the 100 most significant products developed in industrial research in 1975 and 1977. Dr. Klein has been honored as a distinguished alumnus of Purdue University and the University of Tennessee.

Dr. Klein has also been a very active volunteer in the Kokomo community, serving in leadership positions for St. Joseph Hospital, St. Vincent/Ascension, the YMCA, United Way of Howard County, and Kokomo Chamber of Commerce, among others. He has been a leading advisor at Purdue and a member of the Indiana Golf Association Board of Directors.

Dr. Klein and his wife Lynda raised five children in Kokomo and now enjoy following the activities of their grandchildren. He continues to enjoy weekly breakfasts with fellow Haynes retirees and a round of golf almost every day.

Hollis King



Artwork of Hollis King by JC Barnett III.

From an early age, he faced hatred. When he was only nine years old, he talked his way out of being lynched in Middleton, Tennessee, after he tried to protect his family from being terrorized.

But when this grandson of a slave saw a white man later intervene to save a Black child from yet another lynch mob, the youngster learned that “all people do have some good in them,” and that “violence is hate, and hate breeds violence,” as he described it later in life.

Hollis King never let hatred win, and if history is the story of struggles and success, then King’s version makes him a towering local hero.

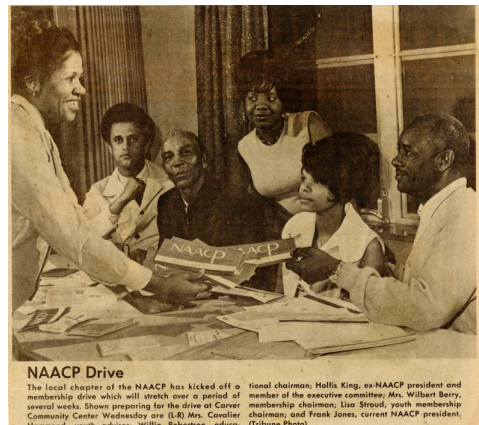
Champion of civil rights, preacher of progressive values, and fierce defender of freedom for all people, King’s life paralleled a crucial period of American history.

He came to Kokomo, Indiana, around 1916 as a teenager and found menial work in a local factory – “for Negroes and foreigners,” as the job descriptions put it then. He later sold life insurance and worked at the city parks department. Yet despite his modest work record, this washerwoman’s son with a 7th-

grade education is today revered as perhaps the most influential leader for human justice in Howard County history.

Indeed, King’s contribution to the cause of civil rights in Kokomo is nothing less than a résumé of results. He helped organize a revived local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and 56 people gathered for its first meeting on Feb. 1, 1942, at Douglass School. For four decades, until his death in 1982 at the age of 82, most of the changes affecting racial policies in Kokomo were due to his galvanizing leadership. He was NAACP local chapter president for 18 years, served on the state NAACP board for nine years (three years as vice president), and spent 35 years with the branch executive committee.

King combined action with intellect. To combat a proliferation of racially motivated propaganda, he submitted an ordinance to the Kokomo City Council to outlaw the distribution of hate literature. Among his notable contributions were the creation of Kokomo’s Human Rights Commission, influencing the city



Early 1970s Kokomo Tribune clip.

to hire its first modern-era Black police officer and firefighter, and working to ensure African Americans had equal job opportunities in Kokomo’s manufacturing industry.



Upcoming events

THE RIPPER IS BACK!

FROM DARK PAGES
OCTOBER 21-22 2022 SEIBERLING MANSION

**Come See Us
at First Friday!
October 7, 2022**

HCHS STAFF & VOLUNTEERS
WILL BE ON THE SQUARE WITH
INFORMATION ON
FROM DARK PAGES
AND MEMBERSHIP!



**Sunday, August 28 from 2-5 PM
And Monday, August 29 from 6-8 PM**

Meet at Seiberling Mansion

Actors must have availability for weekly rehearsals and
full event Friday, October 21 and Saturday, October 22.

Open Auditions!
From Dark Pages



continued from page 7...

From the factory to the home, King focused on powerful – and peaceful – changes to help make the community better for all citizens. He led the effort to integrate city public housing and assisted in desegregating the public school system and the municipal swimming pool. He made voter registration a priority all of the time.

King's philosophy is his legacy, with words worthy to be remembered and repeated by future generations: "Through concern we need to seek for proper understanding. When we find that, trust and respect follow. With action, may we all endeavor quickly to build bridges of understanding and not ditches of mistrust and prejudice."

Mike Wyant

When it ended and the lights were extinguished for the last time in 2020, well over a million dollars had been raised, and thousands of people's lives were better.



Mike greeting visitors at We Care Park. Photo by Tim Bath, Kokomo Tribune.

Spread across seven city lots on the north side of Kokomo, Indiana, the annual Christmas lights and displays event known as We Care Park had dazzled and delighted visitors from all around the United States for 27 years. And

it was quite a show each year. Besides about a million lights, there were wreaths and trees, an enormous stuffed teddy bear and fire-breathing dragons, amusement rides and a Ferris wheel, and a live-action Santa and Mrs. Claus in their house. One part of the park was dedicated to military veterans, and each year an honored guest was invited to "flip-the-switch" turning on the Christmas lights, very often a child suffering from cancer or other life-threatening condition.

The money it raised – every dime of it donated by those who came to see the show – all went to We Care, a nationally recognized Kokomo non-profit that raises money each year to support social services at Christmas time. (The We Care organization was a Hall of Legends inductee in 2018.)

Mike Wyant, who started the project in his garage with his brother Ralph in 1995, is quick to acknowledge all the help he's had – from his own family to the countless friends, community groups and local businesses, who all generously volunteered their time, talent and resources to test the bulbs and dust off the displays each year in time for the holidays. Their collective efforts resulted in record fundraising for We Care, extensive local and even national media attention, and earned Wyant the state's prestigious Sagamore of the Wabash honor, along with numerous other awards and much acclaim.

Wyant maintains that he couldn't have done it alone, but there's no doubt that without Mike, there would have been no show. Helping others is as essential as breathing to him, a lesson he learned from his parents. Paul and Mary Wyant had 16 children (Mike, born in 1945, was number 11). From an early age, everyone worked. The family economics went like this: If you made \$5 picking tomatoes for a local farmer, half of it went back to their mother. The large family had to move around a lot, usually renting, sometimes struggling,

somehow surviving. Life was so lean that young Mike didn't even know what lunch was until he started school.



Jim, Ralph and Mike Wyant, Ron Humerickhouse and Charlie Michael in 1999. Photo by Sarah Stefko, Kokomo Tribune.

To find steadier work, a 17-year-old Wyant eventually talked his way onto the midnight shift at a large printing and bindery factory. One month before dying of cancer, his steelworker father then directed him to the employment office at Continental Steel Corporation and that first day stretched into 22 years at the mill.

His other hours were devoted to Mike's Sewer Service and plumbing business, still going strong after some 60 years in Howard County. Wyant also made time to be a voice for the First District with 17 years on Kokomo Common Council and is a familiar face on the city's Redevelopment Commission.

Retired now, Mike and his wife, Nancy, have 55 years of marriage memories, grown children and three grandchildren to celebrate. He still speaks to schools and civic groups, encouraging everyone he meets to find a way to contribute to the community. The message he learned as a boy remains the same today: "Give back. It makes your heart feel full."

Symposium

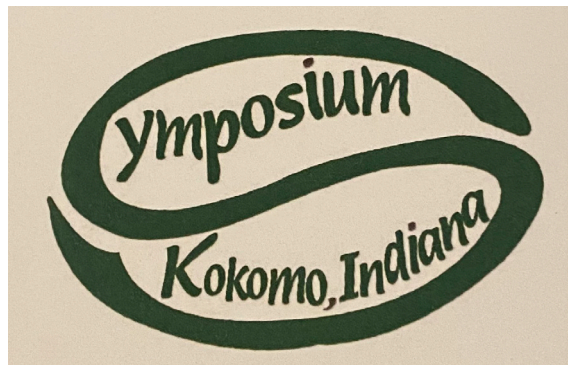
With little more than housework, children, and church to occupy their thoughts in 1896, a group of women in Kokomo decided they wanted more.

Kokomo was small, with only about 8,000 people living here. It was growing; the gas boom was bringing in more and more people. But opportunities for enrichment were limited, especially for women.

So, 126 years ago, two women, Elizabeth Carroll and Evaline Darby, organized a club called Symposium. Considered the oldest women's organization in Kokomo, it continues today.

On May 20, 1896, a few women met in the home of Evaline Darby, forming a "literary circle for the establishment of good feeling, liberality of thought and speech, and for general advancement intellectually." Their wish was to broaden their experiences both culturally and spiritually.

By October of that year, this circle had grown to 25 women. The group studied serious topics, including socialism, child labor, Jewish heroes and prophets, Siberian exiles, wireless telegraphy and liquefied air, as well as American humorists and "woman's duties." Members studied and prepared papers on subjects – without the aid of the internet – to present to the group. They also studied art and presented the first art exhibit in Kokomo.



Through the years, Symposium expanded its emphasis on art and extended it to the beautification of Kokomo. Additionally, members decided to extend their desire to educate not only themselves, but the entire community. In 1964, Symposium received a \$25,000 endowment from Ann Darby McCann, in memory of her mother, founding member Evaline Darby, that would help finance its efforts.

Notable speakers, including CBS journalist Steve Kroft of “60 Minutes” (a former Kokomo resident who was inducted into the Howard County Hall of Legends in 2010) and actress Arlene Francis, were brought to Kokomo to speak in public gatherings. Kokomo native and musical conductor Margaret Hillis (a 2011 Legend) performed with the Kenosha, (Wis.) Symphony Orchestra and the Kokomo Festival Chorus at Havens Auditorium through the efforts of Symposium. As the cost of bringing public speakers to Kokomo has greatly increased, present Symposium President Mary Tetrick said the group has joined with other local organizations to sponsor events. These include bringing authors Delia Owens, *Where the Crawdads Sing*, and Jamie Ford, *The Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*, in conjunction with the Kokomo-Howard County Public Library, and CNN reporter and author Bakari Sellers in conjunction with Ivy Tech Community College.

Symposium members continue to focus on educating each other and the community. Recently, Symposium donated to the Children’s Education Science Lab at the Russiaville Library.

Today Symposium continues to meet in members’ homes as it did in 1896 and limits membership to 30 so it can continue to do so. Members come from diverse backgrounds and religions. Members still research subjects and present papers to each other, a task made much easier with the assistance of the internet. For 2022, programs are focusing on dwellings,

with members learning more about everything from Native American homes to log dwellings, Frank Lloyd Wright designs to mansions of the Gilded Age and Sears homes.

Although Kokomo women’s lives are no longer as restricted as they were 126 years ago, they are still as driven to learn as they were in 1896, Tetrick said.

Richard “Dick” Cardwell

The First Amendment. Freedom of the press. The public’s right to know.

For Kokomo native Richard Wyatt Cardwell, these three concepts came together in a legendary career committed to the highest principles of law and journalism and a vision of better government at every level. Over a 50-year span, Dick Cardwell became known as a staunch defender of freedom and the father of Indiana’s “Open Door” law establishing the public’s right to attend government meetings.



From 1951 KHS Sargasso.

Raised in Kokomo, Dick excelled at sports as a child and was a three-sport letterman at Kokomo High School (Class of 1951). At Indiana University, he was a good enough athlete to participate in three varsity sports, football, basketball and golf, but it was in the classroom and the newsroom that he found his calling. In 1955, he graduated from IU with a

double major in journalism and government; in 1958, he graduated from the Indiana University School of Law with a doctor of jurisprudence. Dick combined his love of journalism and the First Amendment by defending newspapers and freedom of the press as the general counsel and executive director of the Indiana State Press Association for more than 35 years.



Dick's distinguished career included serving as chairman of the board of publications of Indiana University and on the committee on public notice advertising for the National Newspaper Association. He was the primary author of the Indiana Open Door Law and Access to Public Records Act, enacted and signed into law in 1979, and he represented the newspaper industry before the Indiana General Assembly on First Amendment causes throughout much of his career. He also served as a member of the Indiana Supreme Court Committee on Character and Fitness from 1974-1982 and 1990-1998.

Dick won numerous awards including the Distinguished Service Award from the Indiana Press Club, the Friend of Freedom

Award from the Indiana Professional Chapter of Professional Journalists Sigma Delta Chi, Indiana Newspaper Publisher's First Freedom Award, and the Consumer Protection Services Award for Service. In 1980, Dick was awarded "The Sagamore of the Wabash" by Gov. Otis Bowen, the highest honor bestowed on a citizen of the state.

In 1982, Dick was inducted into the Indiana Journalism Hall of Fame. Here's an excerpt from that announcement:

"As general counsel of the Hoosier State Press Association since 1961, Richard Cardwell has the job of attending to legal concerns of interest to the association. He has gone far beyond the mere perfunctory performance of his duties; however, because of his interest in journalism and his demonstrated awareness of the role that freedom of the press plays in our political system, he has become not only the leading spokesman for journalism in Indiana but a state and national leader involved in various aspects of journalism as well."



Dick also was known as a loving husband, father, son, brother, writer, poet, golfer, and friend to everyone he met. He and his wife Marcia Huston began a life-long relationship in middle school that lasted more than 70 years, including 63 years of marriage. He passed away September 1, 2020, at the age of 86, survived by four children, 11 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren. ■



Call out for stories!

Share your story with future generations.

What was 2020 like for you?

VOICES

OF PANDEMIC & PROTEST



Record on

zoom



Submit a short story to the historical society by emailing

voices@howardcountymuseum.org

or calling 765-452-4314 to arrange an interview.

Do it now, so we don't lose your voice!



Board member Alyssa Pier entertains young guests at the HCHS Strawberry Festival Booth.

SUMMER SUMMER SUMMER Time



Board member Jia Hardimon-Eddington and ShaRaya Williams representing HCHS at Carver Center's Juneteenth Celebration.

Antique autos were on display at the mansion and Elliott House during Mr. Kingston's Car Show.





Top left: Lois Bell dressed in period clothing alongside her 1934 Model A Huckster.

Middle left: Matthew Reynolds puts his foot on the gas while visiting with parents.

Middle right: Jerry Nelson reprises his role as Mr. Kingston for meet and greets with guests.

Bottom left: Bob Kerr poses with his 1904 Oldsmobile.

Three Old Houses

Continued from the May 2022 issue of Footprints: Vol. 11, Issue 2

By Jon Russell, Howard County Historian

Many, if not most, of the oldest houses in the county (those built before 1860) were timber-framed structures, though there are notable exceptions made of brick or logs. Timber framing is also found in larger outbuildings, such as barns. It was heavy and time-consuming work for the builders.

By the late 1860s, most timber framing (also called “post and beam” and “brace framing”) had become obsolete. Replacing it was the lighter “balloon framing” that had become the standard since its development in Chicago. Eventually balloon framing, likewise, would become obsolete, replaced with “platform framing,” the modern framing style still in use today.

If your frame house was built in Howard County after the Civil War and before the mid-1920s, it is likely a balloon-framed structure. If it was built of wood before the Civil War, it could be a form of timber framing. Because of the lack of available workers, few houses were built during the Civil War.

Timber framing had been the standard for house building in Europe since the Middle Ages. Brought to the colonies, methods varied between New England and Virginia, the result of availability of materials and weather conditions in the different locations. All were based on a frame built of heavy, hand-hewn timbers forming the shape of the structure (houses, barns, etc.), and infilled with any number of “fillers,” from sticks and mud to bricks and mortar. In later years, before the transition to balloon framing, cut dimensional timbers were mortised into the frames then sided on the exterior with wide clapboards (weatherboards) and lathed and plastered on the inside. These houses no longer resembled

the crude, log cabins of the early pioneer era. (The era of the “three-sided cabin in the wilderness” was not reflected in Howard County because of the county’s late founding date.)

In retrospect, when Howard (or Richardville) County was formed from the Big Miami Reserve in 1844, much of the techniques used in building finer homes had been devised.

In the 1840s, most men knew how to build a house, and they were usually surrounded by friends and family who would help in the process. There were skilled tradesmen as well, offering their services to those that could afford them. By 1852, the county was being served by a railroad, which made the movement of goods into the county much quicker. Additionally, there were small sawmills cutting boards for flooring, shingles, and siding. Within the growing village of Kokomo, there were small factories and trade shops manufacturing everything from bricks to window sash, doors, and blinds (shutters).

The fields were full of rocks that could be mounded to support the heavy timber sills, and the later addition of quarries would supply cut stone for better foundations. There was also an abundance of shale, which could be split and more evenly stacked and made into a foundation of dry-laid pieces. The most notable example of a dry-laid foundation might be the tiny “Railroad House” (c. 1852) on Kokomo’s near-northside.

Timber Framing

As most of the frame houses in Howard County that were built before 1870 were timber

frame structures, let's look at how these structures were assembled.

After the rock foundation was laid into place, large logs were then squared with a broad axe or an adze and mounted atop the foundation. Sometimes these logs were quite large, measuring 10 inches by 12 inches, occasionally larger, and as much as 30 feet long. In those days, there was an ample supply of old-growth timber of great size; straight and tightly grained, it was perfect for building a strong house and all the necessary doors, windows, flooring, and siding.



The Middleton-Fisher farmhouse. Presently, the house (built in 1859-1860) is being renovated, with details from the original Quaker-influenced vernacular Greek Revival architecture as the main theme.



Mortise and tenon joinery in the floor frame of the Middleton-Fisher Farmhouse, Honey Creek Township southeast of Russiaville.

It is testament to the quality of these timbers that we still have houses standing for over 150 years in the county, not to mention those that stand in the eastern United States that are over 300 years old, some now approaching 400!

Most floor joists were sawn and notched into the sills. Over these joists, floorboards of varying widths would be nailed into place. Generally, these boards were thicker than those found on houses built today, measuring about 1¼ inches thick. It was also not uncommon to find a mix of woods such as oak and poplar laid together to make up the floor, since many of these floors were painted.

A rare exception to this method of building a floor is found at the "American House" in Burlington (Carroll County). That building was built in 1845 and first used to house workers building a "corduroy" section of the Michigan Road, the first north-south roadway in Indiana. Corduroy roads consisted of logs cut in half, the entire length, and laid on the ground, flat-side-up. This allowed for travel over muddy roads in swampy areas

near creeks. The floor joists in the “American House” were built in this fashion, then the floorboards nailed to them, rather than traditional cut boards. The “American House” would later be used as a stagecoach stop until converted into a private home in 1902. Today, it is in the process of restoration and will house a small museum dedicated to the Michigan Road and its commercial impact on northern Indiana. There are only a few documented, surviving stagecoach inns left in Indiana.

A system of posts and braces, installed to keep the house from “racking” (going out-of-square), were then built to frame the house. Large corner posts were fitted into the sills in a process called “mortise and tenon.” In order to establish a wall thickness, these corner posts were cut to form an “L” shape, each being approximately six inches thick. (See illustration: Middleton-Fisher house.) In earlier timber framing, these corners were often left square, and the braces and cross-members were allowed to remain exposed. The walls of those houses were made with a series of smaller sticks woven together to form a basket-like wall to which a mud plaster was applied, a process called “wattle and daub.” The technique is ancient and can be seen in the earliest houses built in North America, as well as Europe.

As time and technology advanced, the process of wattle and daub was replaced by cut timbers, roughly 2 inches by 6 inches, that were cut with a tenon at each end and placed into a mortise cut into the larger sill and top plate.

Where doors and windows were to be placed, a heavy timber was cut and placed to each side, also mortised and tenoned, and served as the predecessor to today’s king and jack studs. Headers and saddles to support the wall and the window were likewise heavy timbers. The entire frame was often “nailed” into place with large pegs, with cut nails taking care of the smaller frame members.



The split-log floor framing as seen in the crawl space of the “American House Hotel”, Burlington, historic Michigan Road stagecoach stop, circa 1845 - 1890. The “American House” was built on split-log floor beams made by the workers building the corduroy road through the lower areas (along Wildcat Creek) of the Michigan Road.

Windows were generally divided into several glass panes, called “lights,” divided by muntins (the strips of wood that hold the small panes in place). Glass was a very expensive proposition in early windows. Prior to 1900, all glass was hand-blown and looking through it with any clarity was suspect. After 1900, glass was machine drawn, allowing for larger panes of clearer glass. However, it wasn’t until 1959, that modern glass of uniform thickness and clarity could be made.

Old glass is often referred to as “wavy glass” because images on the opposite side look distorted. There were two types of glass made in the 19th century, “crown” and “cylinder;” both were hand-blown. (See photos of the craft of making glass at the Bendheim Glass factory in New York. (See: Bendheim.com))

Crown glass was the earliest. It was made in front of the furnace so it could stay hot enough to blow and spin into a circular panel. It was particularly wavy, and was not popular, other than it was a step up from oiled animal hides. Looking through windows with crown

glass was akin to looking through a waterfall. It was particularly “blurry.”

Cylinder glass was popular not only because it could be spun into a cylindrical pattern, but could be made into sheet glass and larger panes.

No Shortcuts

Everything about building a house in the early years of our county was “hand-made;” there were no shortcuts available in those days.

Once walls were framed in, small wooden pieces roughly an inch-and-a-half wide, a quarter-inch thick, and four feet long were tacked to the frames with small, cut nails. This lath would then be plastered with a lime-based plaster by a skilled artisan. Eventually, this could be painted or wallpapered, but it was sometimes left to dry white (plaster generally takes a year to cure). The invention of gypsum board in 1894 would revolutionize wall finishing. Due to its manufacturing process, gypsum board could be easily installed and painted when up, hence, the nickname “drywall” was born.

Wooden trim, baseboards, window and door casing, railings, and all things related to staircase and door building, was often done-by-hand, on site. When you look at old doors and other woodwork, you might notice slight differences in their dimensions or assembly for the reason. It is often the reason that antique furniture has its variation; it wasn’t made using a “programmed machine” to assure uniformity.

Additionally, there were several patterns for doors, with two-panels-over-two- (shorter) panels being a very common layout. They could have either raised panels or flat panels, depending on the tradesman building them.

Shingles were generally of two varieties, machine-sawn and hand-split (sometimes

referred to today as “shakes”). The better-looking shingles would be used on the house; the shakes were for barns and outbuildings as they were considerably more likely to leak. Once the shingles arrived at the building site, they might be painted (usually dipped) to help preserve them.

In pre-Civil War days, paint was mixed by hand in a time-consuming process. This could be dangerous in that certain colors were made using poisonous ingredients. Emerald green, for instance, was made using arsenic and copper. And lead was a common ingredient in paint well into the 20th century.

There were essentially two types of paint used in the mid-19th century, oil-based and distemper. Linseed oil was the binder for oil paint and distemper was a mixture of water and hide glue. There was also whitewash and milk paints (a sort of mixture of charcoal, minerals, and curdled milk that’s been around for ages). Pre-mixed paints began to show up in the 1870s.

House building in the mid-19th century required skill and patience. Those that have survived are a living legacy, giving us the opportunity to experience the past in a tactile way. Each era had its own set of identifying characteristics that will help date your house. ■



**HOWARD COUNTY
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

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HCHistory.org/support/volunteer
1200 West Sycamore Street Kokomo

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Committee Corner:

A Look at the Collections - Part 2

By Stew Lauterbach, HCHS Curator

While collecting and inputting collections data, as described in the last edition of *Footprints*, the staff and collection management committee had the opportunity to get to really get to know the collection from the inside out. Recognizing that staff time, storage space, and funds for collecting are all finite, the Howard County Historical Society realized that it would have to collect intentionally in the future instead of continuing to collect passively in an unfocused manner.

In 2005, I consulted with my friend and fellow collection manager Sheila Riley. Sheila and I were classmates at the Indiana University Folklore Department in the early Eighties, and by 2005, Sheila was director of collections at the Children's Museum of Indianapolis. During a visit to her museum, she gave me a tour of their collections storage facility and consulted with me for four hours.

I returned to Kokomo having learned several important things. In order to shift from passive to active collecting, HCHS needed to put a moratorium on collecting and engage in self-study to answer the following questions: What is the purpose of having a permanent collection? How can we determine the significance of an object? Who else is actively collecting Howard County History and do our collections overlap? This became the roadmap for the next two years and the creation of a collecting plan.

One result of creating the collecting plan was creation of mission statements for both the collection and the museum. The collection statement reads: The mission of the collection department is to collect, preserve, provide physical protection for, and make accessible to

the public the significant photographic and documentary history, and material culture of the people, organizations, and institutions of Howard County, and to create and manage the HCHS collection in a manner that supports the programs of the society.

The museum statement reads: The mission of the Howard County Museum is to collect, preserve, provide physical protection for, and make accessible to the public the significant material culture of Howard County through exhibition and programming, and to provide support for the Stan Mohr Local History Library.

In other words, the society would only collect items determined significant to Howard County history. The days of the anonymous backdoor drop-off were over and items making up the museum collection would be collected primarily for exhibition purposes. This means that with a few exceptions, we would no longer collect "specimens"—generic items that have no contextual information.

Another important section of the collecting plan articulated the society's vision for the collection: "Since HCHS is the county agency designated as custodian of Howard County history, preservation of that history is the society's first priority." It goes further to state "the museum will show case the collection primarily through exhibits and programming, and will also provide support for the Library. And that "the library will maintain collections primarily for research, and will also provide support for the museum." In the past, prior to the collecting plan, it was enough just to collect the "stuff" because everybody knew that that was what museums and historical societies did. However, this is no longer the case. Today

Past executive director Kelly Karickhoff and Curator Stew Lauterbach hard at work circa 2006.



it is important that we collect for a reason, and that we can articulate what that reason is. While closely related to the mission statements mentioned earlier, the vision gives voice to the reasons we collect.

The heart of the plan is the section defining the criteria for determining whether an item is significant. The plan states, "The society will consider only those items that are compelling enough to warrant further study and will accept only those items determined significant to Howard County history." But how does one determine what is significant and what is not? HCHS decided to adopt a model published by the Australian Heritage Collections Council, which suggests four primary criteria and five comparative criterial to apply when assessing significance. The primary criteria are: historic significance (think of a photo of Elwood Haynes); aesthetic significance (perhaps the Leota Loop painting displayed on the second floor foyer of the mansion); research significance (the Helen Ross letters in our archives); and social significance (Old Ben).

The comparative criteria, used to evaluate the degree of significance and modify the primary criteria, are: provenance (chain of title), representativeness, rarity, condition, and interpretive potential. When evaluating a potential collection item, all the criteria must be considered; however, it is not necessary to find evidence of all the criteria in order to determine an item is significant. An object may be highly significant if only one or two criteria apply. Using the data in our PastPerfect software, the board of trustees and the collection management committee reviewed a random sample of the collection to learn its contents and their significance. Records were generated for a sampling of 756 items and 27 participants were each given 28 records to evaluate based on the information contained in the associated records.

The results of the random sample suggested that the collection seems weak in the areas of business, Kokomo/City of Firsts, and racial/cultural diversity. Conversely, it suggested that the collection is top heavy in the areas of architecture and Howard County.

The topics that the collection seems to support adequately are clubs, communication, culture, education, government, medical, military, natural disasters, people, pioneers, prehistoric, rural life, Seiberling Mansion, sports, and transportation. These results highlighted areas for continuing collecting.

Perhaps even more importantly, we learned that only about one-third of the items reviewed could be considered significant. In other words, it seemed that HCHS was not unusual in the world of historical societies. Often when collections are started, little discrimination is used, with the result that almost anything finds its way into the collection.

Although the random sampling was



Emma Seiberling

basic, the fact that institutionally we it could ask these questions and suggest tentative answers indicates that the society had adopted a more sophisticated approach to collection management.

Perhaps an actual example will illustrate the paradigm shift that took place. In June 2004, the Seiberling family decided to hold their annual family reunion at our mansion. As part of the festivities, the Seiberling Players reenacted Emma Seiberling's 1893 wedding to Charles Butler. The production played very broadly, included a wedding reception featuring Victorian foods and first-person interaction with the cast. The reenactment continues as the "real time" audience interacts with the "historic guests" who stay in first person character. On this occasion, after the scripted toasts were given, Margaret Butler, daughter-in-law of the real Emma Seiberling Butler, stood up and made a presentation of 11 silver teaspoons to the "historic" Emma. Margaret said that the teaspoons were from 10 of Emma's Akron schoolmates who called themselves the Decimals. The name of each classmate was engraved on the back of a spoon with the 11th engraved with the wedding date – April 26, 1893. Our Emma thanked Margaret, graciously accepted the teaspoons, and handed them to me.

After the dinner was over, I approached Margaret to return the spoons and thank her for adding her unique touch to the evening. To my surprise, Margaret refused the spoons, explaining that they were in fact a genuine gift to HCHS. You could have knocked me over with a feather. I thanked Margaret profusely and now the teaspoons are displayed in first floor South Tower room as our "Crown Jewels."

I bring this up, because the teaspoons create a benchmark against which other items can be measured. As a result of adopting the Australian Significance model, the staff now writes up a significance report evaluating both the pros and cons for each item under



Emma's Teaspoons. Currently on display in the parlor at the Seiberling Mansion.

consideration, and shares it with the collections committee whose members have the final vote to accept or reject each item. Were this practice in place when the teaspoons were donated, I am certain the spoons would be undoubtedly accepted for their historic significance and perhaps for their aesthetic significance as well. Their provenance, condition and interpretive value would certainly bolster their case. If ever there were items that were "... compelling enough to warrant further study and are significant to Howard County history," the Decimal teaspoons would certainly qualify.

As I have said on many occasions, assertive collecting will have far reaching consequences for the way HCHS does business throughout our organization. In short, instead of collecting between 300 and 400 objects about which we know very little in a given year, the collecting plan has allows us to be more discriminating. It rationalizes taking the time to research the objects that we do accept into the collection, and perhaps identify items we want to go after, so they will have more meaning for future generations of county residents. Ultimately, what matters most is how well objects in the

collection can be used to tell the Howard County story.

Note: HCHS was recognized by the Indiana Historical Society as the 2008 Outstanding Historical Organization of the year in part for its collecting plan written by Stewart E. Lauterbach, Bonnie Van Kley and Kelly Thompson Karickhoff.

The HCHS Collecting Plan Summary can be found at <https://howardcountymuseum.org/about/our-mission>

The Australian Significance Method is described here: https://www.arts.gov.au/sites/default/files/significance-2.0.pdf?acsf_files_redirect ■



Dave's Bench and Tree at the Museum

After Dave Broman's passing, the HCHS staff wanted to honor Dave in an enduring and public manner. He had been an incredible colleague and friend to each person. In 2020, Dave was saddened when a storm brought down a tree limb and ruined one of the dogwoods in front of the mansion. Planting a new dogwood seemed an appropriate way to recognize Dave. In addition, a stone engraved with his name (donated by Caldwell Monuments) and a re-furbished bench Dave made for Koh-koh-mah have been installed beside the tree. On June 30, the staff and Dave's widow Joyce gathered to dedicate the tree, stone, and bench and say a few words and share memories of Dave. It was a lovely morning. We miss him still. Please feel free to come and commune with his spirit.

IN LOVING
Memory



Ribbon Cutting celebrates new access ramp

Vice President Judy Brown and County Commissioner Paul Wyman cut the ribbon on the HCHS's new access ramp, located on the northeast side of the mansion. Built by Hearn Construction with funding from Howard County, the ramp will allow anyone with mobility challenges access to the first floor. Designed by board member Larry Hayes, the elegant ramp features black railings and a recycled plastic base.



Donor Jim Long visits this spring

On a recent trip from their home outside Boston to visit family here, long time donor to the historical society Jim Long and his husband Steve toured the museum with HCHS president Linda Ferries and executive director Catherine Hughes. They shared new developments like the Howard County African American History Revealed exhibits and the new access ramp, for which Jim is the largest individual donor. He shared fun stories of taking his college exams on the third floor of the Seiberling Mansion, and students smoking outside on the rotunda porch when he was enrolled at the Indiana University extension there. Jim's generosity and commitment to supporting the historical society is truly impressive and much appreciated.



Executive director Catherine Hughes and board president Linda Ferries meet with Jim Long and his husband Steve.



Save the Date!

Howard County Historical Society Annual Meeting November 15, 2022



HCHS is celebrating 50 years at the
Seiberling Mansion
Details to be announced!

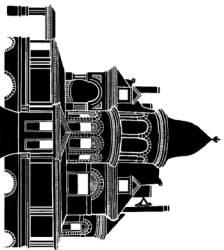
New and renewed memberships

Larry and June Barton
Cynthia Bizjak
Glen Boise
Kent and Marcia Blacklidge
James and Marvel Butcher
Joseph Cross
Rick and Beth Emry
David Engle
Diana Goodnight
Mary Ellen Harnish
Thomas and Jeanne Harrell
Christopher Heflin
Robert and Joan Hoch
Amy Huffman
Glenda Kamosa
Jay and Marjorie Katzenmeyer
Stephen Kiley
Jane Kincaid
Shirley Lee
James Lopez
Susan Luttrell

Mark and Jennifer Lyons
Richard and Marsha Miller
Ann Millikan
Shirley Moore
Sondra Neal
David and Lisa Olmsted
Gilbert Porter
Darrell and Jule Rider
Randy and Mary Rusch
Jerry and Marsha Santen
Elaina Schroer
Ronald and Jean Simpson
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Tom and Dianne Trauring
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