

Footprints

A publication of the Howard County Historical Society

Volume 1, Issue 2

May 2012

Sticks & Stones

It may not look
like much, but it
was a high-tech
military device
made in Kokomo

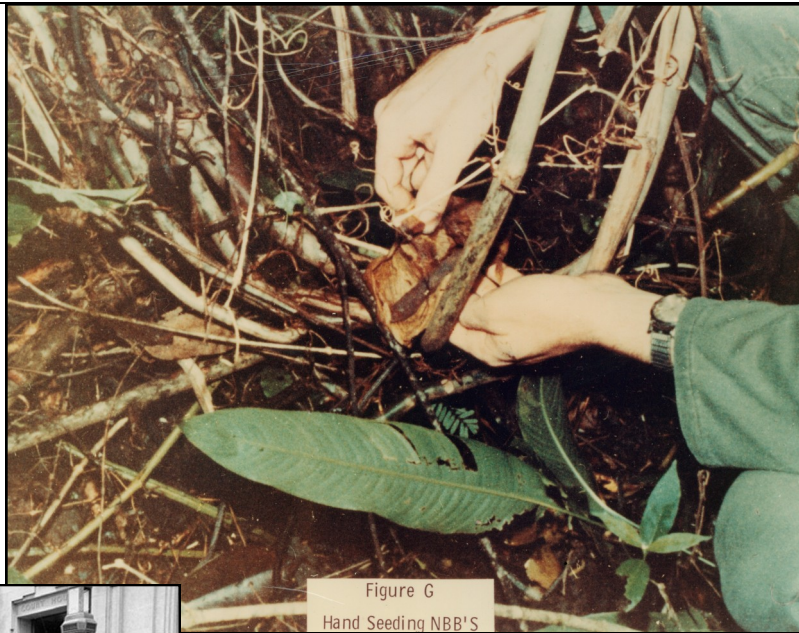


Figure G
Hand Seeding NBB'S



25 years ago **The courthouse bombing remembered**

Also this issue:

- Meet the board
- Website brings more access,
more info

Just a taste of what's going on at the HCHS

It's nothing unusual — so many people are involved in so many interests and tasks at the Howard County Historical Society.

In this issue of *Footprints*, we will focus on a few of them:

The Oral History Committee is gearing up to document the tragic bombing at the Howard County Courthouse in 1987 — 25 years ago.

Curator Stew Lauterbach found some odd looking artifacts in the Delco/Delphi Collection and is taking steps to learn more about them and their use.

The website just keeps getting better and better, making it so much easier to connect with the information and collections at the historical society.

The HCHS Board of Directors is a hard-working, talented group with a variety of interests. In case you haven't met them, let us introduce them to you.

Caretaker Bill Baldwin may have his hands full keeping the buildings and grounds looking good. So, he is always grateful when local organizations help out by donating items. We'll look at one that has been doing that for years.

And, Curator of Archives Bonnie Van Kley has another photo that needs more information.

This is just a taste of what's happening at the HCHS. Hope you enjoy!

Emily West

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Upcoming events

- ♦ **Haworth High School Celebration** - All former Haworth High School students and staff are invited to a Haworth celebration on Friday, July 20, at the Seiberling Mansion. A wine & cheese tasting fundraiser will take place from 6 to 8 p.m. Those attending are being asked to help identify photographs and memorabilia found in the school's archives. Proceeds from the event will be used for preservation of the items in the HCHS Archives, telling the story and history of Haworth High School for future generations. Tickets are \$20 per person and can be purchased at the historical society office or Sycamore Cottage, 200 E. Hoffer St. in Kokomo from June 1 through July 19. A free concert will follow the event beginning at 8 p.m. at Foster Park. The concert will feature **Jon Waite**, known for "Missing You," who performed with The Babies, Bad English and Journey in the 1970s.



See "Upcoming Events" on page 17

25 Years later, courthouse bombing to be remembered in oral history project



By Judy Lausch
HCHS Board Member

Not only is 2012 the 75th anniversary of the Howard County Courthouse, April 14 was the 25th anniversary of the explosion that blew the third story of the west side of the Howard County Courthouse to smithereens.

Amazingly, just one person was killed in the incredible explosion, John David Gray, Sr., the defendant who flipped the switch to set off four pipe bombs contained in a briefcase he carried into the building. However, the blast left five citizens seriously injured, another ten less seriously injured physically and many affected by this very scary event that captured national attention.

Gray, 42, was a 22-year employee of the Chrysler Corporation Transmission Plant in Kokomo. He lived in a trailer in Marion and had a lengthy list of alcohol, drug and personal-injury related offenses.

Three years previous he was "a very strong suspect," but never charged, in a pipe bombing incident. He was suspected of throwing a pipe bomb into his girlfriend's car, and, in another case, of shooting her foot but was not charged as she refused to testify against him.

His jury trial in Howard County Circuit Court was on charges of two counts of dealing LSD, for which he was arrested on March 17 and March 20, 1983.

On the day after the bombing, Gray's mother, Betty McKinley of Marion, received a letter in the mail from Gray thanking his mother for all of her help and guidance over the years but saying he could not face what the future may hold for him. He said in part, "Mom, this is going to be short. I love you...I'm sorry, but I couldn't see the rest of my life in prison. Why they want me so bad I don't know. I've been trying to be good the last few years."

Howard Circuit Judge R. Alan Brubaker said that he spoke with attorneys about Gray's suicidal tendencies. Gray apparently had threatened within the past few days to take his own life.

The three most seriously injured people in the explosion are no longer living, so the committee will not be able to complete an oral history on them. However, these individuals gave several quotes in interviews with *Kokomo Tribune* reporters immediately after the explosion and in an article written ten years later. Their stories are the focus of this article.

Immediately after the explosion, Gray's attorney, Charles Scruggs, standing just outside the courthouse, told a *Tribune* reporter

he was in the sheriff's office with Gray and Sheriff J.D. Beatty. He said Gray was sitting down with a briefcase between his legs. Scruggs said he thought he saw a switch on the case.

The attorney started to leave and said he thought Gray was behind him.

"He (Gray) said, 'We might as well all go then,'" Scruggs said, and the bomb went off. "It blew me out the door through the reception area."

Scruggs said that Beatty was standing over Gray when the bomb detonated.

Scruggs' pant legs were torn by the blast, and his clothes were dusty. He was helped, limping, from the courthouse about 10 minutes after the blast, which occurred at 2:02 p.m. He had a cut on his forehead and complained of his back hurting.

Soon after Scruggs' death in May 2006, longtime friend and retired jurist Dennis Parry told the *Kokomo Tribune* that on that fateful day, he came out of his courtroom and smoke was coming down the hall.

"Out of the smoke came Charlie," Parry said. "He looked like a ghost, and the back of his suit was torn from him."

Scruggs suffered injuries from 700 pieces of shrapnel to his back, some which were never able to be recovered. He was never free of pain following the injuries.

Superior Court 4 Judge George Hopkins, who knew Scruggs in law school, said Scruggs always had a ringing in one ear after the explosion.

"I remember he said he would never represent another drug dealer," Hopkins said, "and, to my knowledge, he never did."

Scruggs died in May 2006 at home from a gunshot wound to the head. A Kokomo Police Department press release indicated that investigators had recovered a handgun at the scene and believed the wound to be self-inflicted.



Jake Grimme, left, and Howard County Deputy Jon Zeck survey the debris in front of the courthouse following the explosion of a pipe bomb inside the sheriff's office on April 14, 1987. **Photos from the HCHS collection**

Howard County Sheriff J.D. Beatty was standing within five feet of the defendant. He knew what was about to happen, but there was nothing he could do to prevent the explosion. After trial proceedings broke for lunch, Gray and Scruggs were in the sheriff's office on the third floor of the courthouse. That is where Gray detonated the bomb he carried inside a leather briefcase.

"We came back up to the office after lunch, and I met with two Indiana State Police troopers and Kokomo Police Department Captain Jack Adams. They said they had probable cause to believe Gray had a gun in his briefcase, and he had made threats

against the judge (Brubaker), himself and a police informant in the case. I was standing about three to five feet away and told him we needed to look into his briefcase, and he said he didn't have a key," Beatty said. "I knew something was wrong as his eyes were glassy. I looked at the briefcase, and the latches were up, with one which looked broken with electrical tape on it. He looked at me, then looked at Charlie and said, 'You can leave Charlie.' As [Scruggs] started to leave, I went sideways going for my gun, and he undid the tape causing the explosion."

According to the *Tribune* report, Beatty said he felt the heat burning his face and felt a

rush and objects hitting him. The force pushed him back. He had much shrapnel sticking out of his chest and side. Part of his thumb and the back part of his leg were blown off, and he had a piece of wire from the bomb sticking out of his left wrist. He was hospitalized for about three weeks and underwent four surgeries, where they removed over 200 pieces of shrapnel. He suffered burns over 40 percent of his body. Beatty served as sheriff until 1994 and died on February 9, 1999, in Florida.

During the explosion, Kokomo Police Department Captain Walter "Jack" Adams was standing in the hallway outside Beatty's office. In a *Kokomo Tribune* story, Adams recalled the events of that day.

"I heard a loud boom. It was like a big rush of air and a lot of smoke and debris," Adams said. "I was on the wrong side of the glass."

Adams, who then worked on the drug task force, was outside of Sheriff Beatty's office on the third floor when the bomb went off. The blast sent glass, shrapnel and debris flying throughout the third floor. Adams was hit by the flying glass, ultimately losing sight in an eye as a result.

"We speculate [Gray] brought the briefcase bomb in after lunch," Adams said. Shortly before 2 p.m., just before the trial was supposed to resume for an afternoon session, Adams and state police detectives in the courtroom grew suspicious.

"He was out on bond, so he could come and go where he wanted. [Police] met for lunch and I said 'Well, we need to look at [the briefcase] then,'" Adams said. That's when Sheriff Beatty asked Gray and his attorney, Scruggs, into Beatty's third-floor courthouse office to open up the briefcase Gray was carrying. Adams served the KPD from 1973 until his retirement on May 13, 2007. He died on October 17, 2007.

Three others were seriously injured: Joe Coate, an Indiana State Police officer who was in the courthouse to testify in the Gray trial, suffered a severe laceration to his left leg. Sheriff Deputy Don Howard was listed in good condition after treatment for severe lacerations to the right side of his face, right arm and left leg. Stanley "Sandy" Deichman wasn't far from the blast. He was standing in the third floor hallway outside the circuit courtroom when the blast came. "It felt like I had been shot in the back," Deichman told the *Kokomo Tribune*. He suffered lacerations to the back and left calf. He had been at the courthouse to testify in an unrelated case.

Julie Norton was treated for pregnancy-related cramps and pains after the incident. She was in the basement level county prosecutor's office when the explosion occurred. She and her brother were knocked down in a rush of people trying to get out through a door to Buckeye Street. Others seen at the hospitals and released were Beverly Hueston, Marsha Yohn, Beverly Beahrs, Julia Shrader, Tamara Turner, James Johnson, Robert Johnson and Barbara Todd.

Police Lt. Ralph Stroup later broke his right leg while walking down a flight of stairs between the second and third floor during the investigation of the explosion. Jack R. Tapp, an engineer with WTHR-TV, was seriously injured in an auto accident while on the way to Kokomo to cover the explosion. Tapp swerved to avoid a vehicle that had cut in front of his van, and he hit a tree.

The *Kokomo Tribune* also included articles about other bomb threats on that day, and reports that businesses in the area were asked to close for the rest of the day. The courthouse was closed. The Chrysler plant where Gray worked was evacuated while dogs searched for bombs, and the trailer

Continued on page 16 

Updated website now lets you learn, see, plan and shop more than ever

By Dave Broman
HCHS Executive Director

A museum of history is so much more than “old stuff.”

Simply preserving the items in the collections and archives serves no one, but preservation with a purpose is something else altogether.

If you’ve read our mission, you know that sharing and connecting are two of its key concepts — our purpose for preservation. They’re just empty words, though, without accessibility. Thus, access was top-of-the-mind when our website committee began its redesign discussions last year. Their solutions to the problem of accessibility are on display now at the all-new howardcountymuseum.org.

Why visit the website?

Recent visitors can see photos and a short article about a Globe American, made-in-Kokomo, World War II lifeboat that washed up on the shore of the Columbia River in Oregon. They can learn about top-secret motion-sensing devices that were developed and built in Kokomo and deployed in the jungles of Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War. They can browse

through our searchable photographic archives, see thousands of historic images of Howard County, and purchase one or two that catch their eye. They can take a virtual tour of the Seiberling Mansion or the Elliott House to preview a visit or plan an event. They can contact the curator or archivist for an answer to a burning local history question or to share their own discovery. They can shop for books in our online gift shop, pay their dues, volunteer at the museum or archives, plan a trip, schedule an event in the Seiberling Mansion or Elliott House, become a member, or check the schedule of events.

With the new website (and this new quarterly publication), you now have more and easier access to information about the museum, the archives, the society and Howard County. With greater access comes more opportunities to share and fascinating ways to enjoy and celebrate our heritage.

With the rebirth of howardcountymuseum.org, the society is “connecting us to our neighbors, the past to the future, and our home to the world.” Join us online today and share the fun by telling your friends.

howardcountymuseum.org
facebook.com/hchistory



**By Judy Lausch
HCHS Board Member**

The Howard County Historical Society Board of Trustees is a diverse and interesting group, all sharing the common interest of preserving Howard County history.

Some of the members may be very familiar to you, but others are active behind the scenes. Let us introduce you to all of them.

President Peggy Hobson — Built in the 1890s, the first house Peggy owned was on Walnut Street in Kokomo. She became a founder of the Old Silk Stocking Neighborhood District and loved gathering historical information about the area. She began volunteering for the HCHS in the 1970s, but became more involved after she went to work at the Kokomo Convention & Visitors Bureau where she developed, produced and was also a cast member in the Emma Seiberling wedding reenactments. She enjoys working with stained glass and other art projects and loves to travel. Her dog, Zach, is the only canine member of the HCHS, and attends many of the board meetings.

President-elect Marilyn Skinner — Marilyn has taught Indiana history to elementary and middle school students and has a general interest in people, places and events that are a part of Howard County history. As an administrator, she brings many strategic planning and leadership skills to the board. After leading a strategic planning session for the board, she was

asked to become a member. As chairperson for fundraising, she has been a great aid in financing HCHS activities.

Vice President Ted Goff — Although Ted is currently vice president, he has served as president and has been involved with board and committee activities since 1994. He says that he is in the twilight of his recreational basketball career. He also takes guitar lessons, and you might catch him performing on student nights at Rhum Academy. Historically, he is most interested in all the “stuff that’s surprising and obscure.”

Secretary Rebecca Lepper — After reading an article in *The Kokomo Tribune*, Rebecca called Peggy Hobson to talk about how the convention and visitors bureau was making Howard County an event destination location. Peggy invited her to visit an upcoming HCHS Special Events Committee meeting, and since then Rebecca has been very involved as a volunteer of that committee, then as chair of the marketing committee and now as a member of the executive committee.

Treasurer Judy Brown — After 34 years, Judy is retiring as a bank vice president after the merger of Central Bank with First Farmers Bank & Trust. As treasurer Judy keeps the financial records in order. She began volunteering at the HCHS as a cast member of the Seiberling wedding reenactment. Her mother was a charter member of the historical society in her hometown of Bunker Hill, Illinois.

Opposite page, 2012 HCHS Board of Trustees: First row - Jan Briscoe, Julie Rider and June Scoggins; second row - Priscilla Pelgen, Peggy Hobson, with Zach, and Jan Chase; third row - Diane Knight, Judy Brown, Kathy Pfettscher, Marilyn Skinner, Mary Ellen Hamish and Judy Lausch; back row - Ted Goff, Heather Fouts, Allen Safianow, Linda Ferries, Rebecca Lepper and Marcia Nelson. Not pictured - Cheryl Currens and Mike Ullery.

Jan Briscoe — As a member of the DAR, Jan became interested in the Seiberling when that organization sponsored a room during the renovation. Jan loves the Seiberling Mansion and everything connected with it. As a volunteer she has been responsible for the creation, design and production of the historical society Christmas ornament in recent years. She also serves as a member of the development committee.

Cheryl Currens (not pictured) — Cheryl loves being a part of an organization that is preserving the past for our future. As a volunteer and board member, Cheryl has been involved in fundraising and board development. With her theatrical background, she was very involved in staging the cemetery walk stories

Jan Chase — Many years ago Jan was asked by Judy Lausch to develop a computer program so artifacts could be computerized. She then volunteered to help set up the computer system for the museum and has done much to teach former staff members about computers. Later she became a board member and more recently served as past president. She is particularly interested in David Foster and the Indian and French aspects of Howard County history.

Linda Ferries — Involved with Howard County historic preservation, Linda served as a founding member of the Old Silk Stocking Neighborhood Association. In 1974 Linda and her husband, Ken, bought a small Carpenter Gothic-style home on West Taylor Street, but she was captivated two years earlier while watching Seiberling renovation crews shovel out the remnants

IUK had left behind in the mansion. Her interest in local history found its greatest expression in her work editing Ned Booher's pictorial histories of both Kokomo and Howard County.

Heather Fouts — Kokomo is Heather's hometown. Heather's bachelor's degree in humanities focused on folklore and anthropology, and she is now working on her master's degree and K-12 certification in art education. She has been very involved in planning special events for the HCHS.

Mary Ellen Harnish — A volunteer for the HCHS since 1972, Mary Ellen has been chairperson of the collection management committee for 20 years. She researched and co-wrote the book *Monroe Seiberling's Mansion*. She was board president when the mansion was renovated for climate control and when it was the Designers' Showhome. Mary Ellen looks forward to seeing what the next decade holds for the historical society.

Diane Knight — The Armfield-Moyer Barn, recently relocated to the pioneer village at the Howard County Fairgrounds was built in 1908 by Diane's great-grandfather, Joseph Armfield. Diane has served on the marketing committee, and on the oral history committee she was an active participant in the Ryan White Oral History Project. She enjoys visiting museums and historical sites while traveling.

Judy Lausch — A volunteer for more than 25 years, Judy has seen many changes in the organization and has been a part of many committees and activities. She is particularly interested in collecting history and has found satisfaction in researching, writing scripts, acting and assisting with

cemetery walks and in interviewing people for oral history projects. She says her claim to fame was being the chairperson for the committee that hired Kelly Karickhoff as the historical society's first executive director.

Marcia Nelson — Marcia enjoys discovering new information about old things and observing how history has shaped the community. She enjoys telling others about Howard County's history and its connection to the world. She loves acting and has been involved in more than 100 Emma Seiberling wedding re-enactments. She has helped plan and participate in Christmas candlelight tours, acted in cemetery walks and, for the past 15 years, has welcomed visitors to the mansion during *Christmas at the Seiberling* as "Mrs. Seiberling."

Priscilla Pelgen — One of the newest board members, Priscilla serves on the marketing committee. She enjoys learning about the community and playing a part in the preservation of local history. Priscilla is a custody and divorce attorney for men and coaches new solo lawyers on establishing and marketing their practices. She operates the legal website, ilawyerindiana.com.

Kathy Pfettscher — Kathy has served on the board for several terms. She volunteers for various programs and also serves as a docent at the museum. Kathy has volunteered for 12 years in candle-dipping activities at the Koh-koh-mah Encampment.

Jule Rider — Although this is her first year as a board member, Jule has volunteered for many years assisting with the collection inventory, as well as organization and

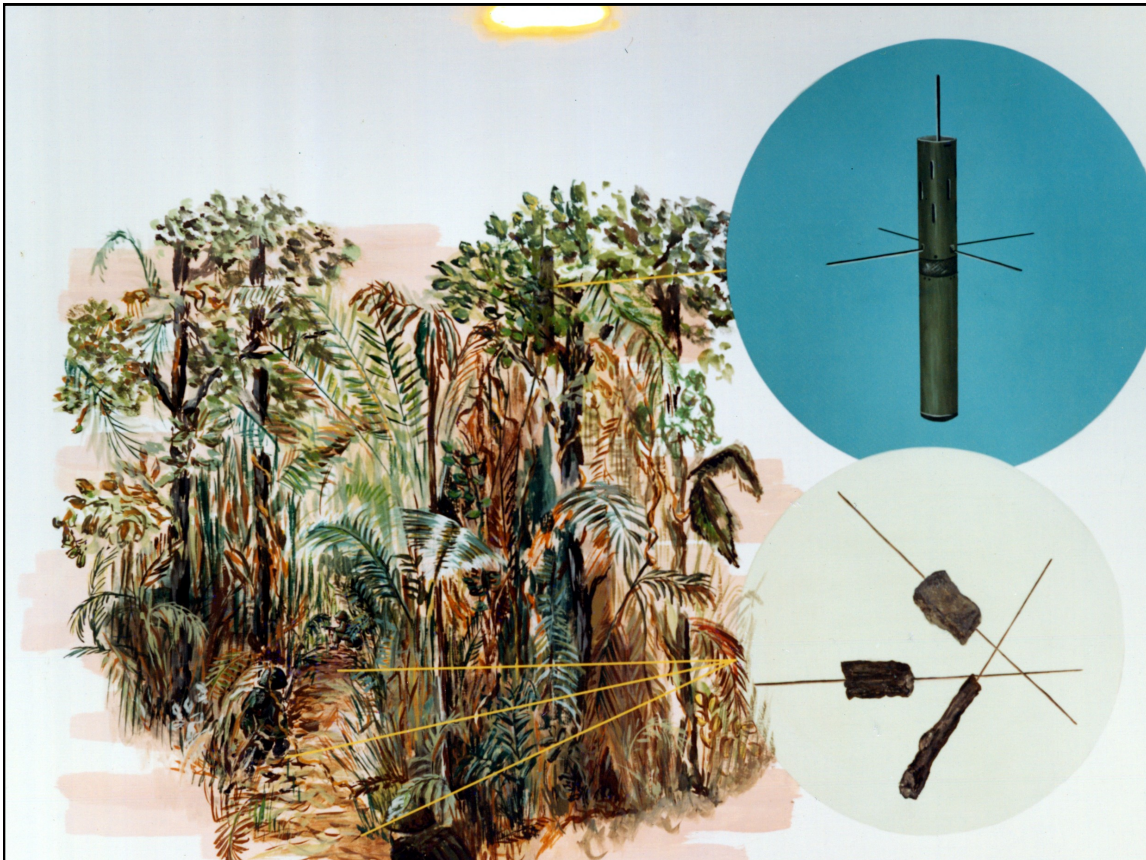
preservation of artifacts. Jule helped develop the collection management policy, assists with special events and is a weekly volunteer in the archives. She enjoys visiting historical sites while traveling.

Allen Safianow — A retired professor of history at IUK, Allen has served as a volunteer for more than three decades. His specific interest is in research on the Ku Klux Klan. At the HCHS he has been very involved in the many activities, including the newsletter and collection management. Notably he has chaired oral history projects and has served as the academic supervisor of a number of interns who worked at the museum or in the archives.

Mike Ullery (not pictured) — A board member for 20 years, Mike served as president for three of those years. As a professional building contractor, he is interested in the architectural design history of Howard County and has contracted and managed the renovations of the Seiberling Mansion and the Elliott House, as well as being very involved with the maintenance and renovation of the grounds.

June Scoggins — June had said that serving on the collection management committee gave her the opportunity to learn more about the functions of the museum. She was fascinated with how ordinary people can achieve extraordinary things — thus, her interest in the Hall of Legends project. In business, she and her family were involved in the commercial development of Center Park. June passed away in early May. Her contributions as a board member are appreciated by the HCHS, and she will be greatly missed. The staff and board members offer their condolences to her family.

Not just sticks and stones



The “sticks and stones” were placed along jungle trails. When disturbed, they sent a signal to a buoy, which looked somewhat like a birdfeeder, up to 300 feet away. The buoy then transmitted the signal to the those monitoring enemy movement.

Photos from the HCBS collection

By Emily West
Footprints Editor

Among the artifacts in the collection at the Howard County Historical Society are a few things you might not really notice at first.

Some rocks, some sticks and some ... well, let's just say, some things you probably

wouldn't want to touch if you saw them laying on the ground. And for these items, that is exactly the point.

These are actually high-tech detection devices manufactured by Delco Radio to be used by the U.S. military during the Vietnam War.

They were used to track enemy movements during the McNamara Offense Pro-

ject. The small devices were placed along trails in the jungle. As enemy troops moved through the area, and the devices were disturbed, a signal would be sent to U.S. troops monitoring the movements.

Stew Lauterbach, HCHS Curator of Collections, said the items were in a collection of Delco artifacts donated to the museum about six years ago.

Lauterbach said he had seen a small box in the collection containing what appeared to be fake rocks. He later learned these were transmitters used in Vietnam.

"That piqued my imagination," he said.

Someone suggested Lauterbach speak to Bud Wiechmann, who had worked on the project at Delco.

"Initially it was just going to be a conversation," Lauterbach said.

But, after Wiechmann arrived last fall, bringing with him photos, more materials and his stories, Lauterbach was intrigued.

"To me, it's one of those really compelling stories," he said. "It just kind of grabs my imagination."

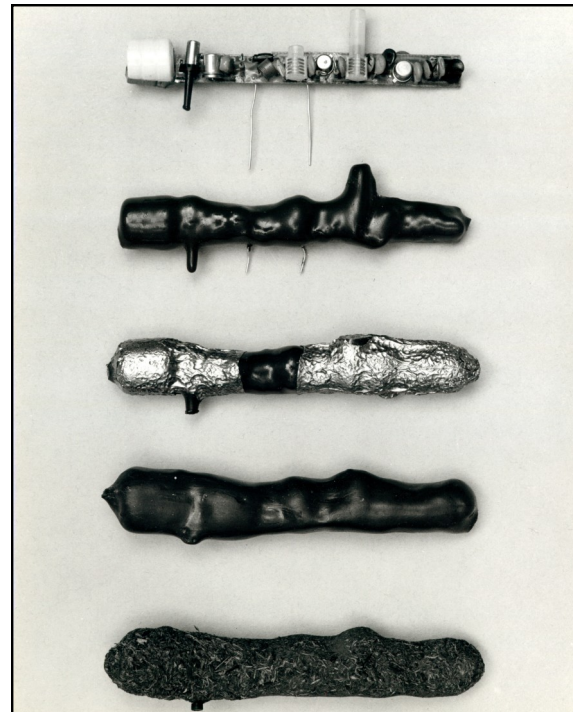
Wiechmann, now retired, served as a senior project engineer on the project, which ran from 1966 until about 1975.

These "sticks and stones" were actually called noiseless button bomblets. The military previously had been using another type of NBB that exploded when disturbed, but these were deemed too dangerous. The military was looking for a small detection device that would use a radio signal, instead of noise, to detect enemy movement.

Delco Radio decided to bid for the project, competing against much bigger companies, such as General Electric, Motorola and other military contractors, Wiechmann said. Delco's only other major military contract at that time was for a "squad radio." It was designed to clip to a soldier's helmet, allowing

him to have both hands free, and could transmit up to a mile away.

The small transmitters were designed to fit into the jungle landscape. They weighed about an ounce but contained electronics and batteries able to withstand at least 30 days in moisture and mud. The photo below shows the progression as they were dipped in an epoxy, another sealing agent and a peat moss blend for camouflage.



Delco Radio won the NBB contract and the development began. Some of the Delco employees who worked on the project included Dick Kennedy, Jim Puterbaugh, Charles Harmon, Archie Wells and Dane Ridenour.

The NBBs were to weigh less than an ounce with a battery that would last at least 30 days. Signals from the NBBs were sent to a nearby "buoy" device, which was either placed by hand in a tree or dropped from a helicopter. It would relay the radio signal to U.S. troops more than a mile away.

Among the challenges was making the NBBs non-detectable by not only the enemy but animals as well. Early tests picked up movements from wild animals and cats. Later improvements allowed signals to differentiate between people and anything magnetic, particularly vehicles.

Rocks from the Vietnam trails were sent to Delco so an outside coating could be made to match.

As development and testing took place, it soon became apparent that animals not only noticed the devices but would disturb them as well. Eventually a rodent repellent was developed by the Wildlife Research Center in Denver, Colorado.

Once the initial design was approved by the military, another requirement was added, Wiechmann said, that they must be able to withstand 20,000 Gs of force.

"I thought, 'Wow! That's a lot of force,'" he said.

The reason was because they were not only going to be hand-seeded on the trail but shot out of a Howitzer as well.

The military didn't want any transistors or electronic devices in any type of plastic container because they weren't that reliable at that time, Wiechmann said. The devices also had small antennae.

"They found out after we blasted a few of these units off in a canister, those transis-

tors...they just collapsed," he said. Circuit boards, batteries, antennas and other components were destroyed too.

As the tests were underway at the Picatinny Arsenal, Wiechmann said it became clear the items were not compact enough in the Howitzer and needed some other medium to hold them.

"I looked around, and I saw a coffee can there, too. And I said, 'Well, we're going to put coffee in there, stuff it in there with these units, and then we'll test it.' Guess what? They all survived." Wiechmann laughed.

More testing took place several times in Panama, which closely resembled the jungle of Vietnam. Delco engineers worked closely with soldiers who had been stationed in Vietnam.

Wiechmann said he learned a lot from the soldiers about the types of invasion tactics used by the Vietcong.

He was told how troops would be camped in an area they believed to be safe, only to be ambushed during the night.

"They didn't expect [the Vietcong] to be that close to where the U.S. was," Wiechmann said. "They had to scramble to defend themselves."

Camping near the Vietnamese, U.S. troops were never certain who was the enemy because the Vietcong intermixed with civilians, Wiechmann was told. One soldier told him about an incident after a U.S. encampment was attacked in the night. As the sun came up the next morning, the U.S. soldiers went to see the result of the fight.

"One individual shot was the Vietnamese barber who had cut his hair the day before," the soldier told Wiechmann. "That's how Vietcong attacks were generated."

Testing was conducted not only in exotic locations, but locally as well. One time engineers placed NBBs in a ditch along State Road 19 only to have a passerby stop and

take them as they were being tested, causing some concern because the project was classified. Another time Wiechmann tested them in his own backyard and was awakened by alarms at 3 a.m. because a raccoon or possum was in the yard.

NBBs had to be able to withstand the wet, muddy environment of the jungle. To do so, the electronics were first coated in epoxy. The antenna was wrapped around it, followed by a second coating to seal it. Next, it was camouflaged with a coating that was a type of refined peat moss, which was then "cooked" on with an animal repellent.

Rats were brought in to test the coating. "Can you imagine the lab having rodents in there?" Wiechmann asked.

NBBs were manufactured at about 1,000 per day for at least a year in Plant 5, he said, with about 100,000 made in total.

The project was declassified in 1973, near the end of the war.

When Wiechmann retired years later, he brought home many of the items he had worked on, including a number of NBBs.

Sometime in the 1990s, he received a call from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency, which was interested in using a type of NBB along the Mexican-U.S. border to detect drug traffickers. Wiechmann was asked if he had any of the manufacturing drawings, so the DEA could make their own. Although he had no drawings, Wiechmann asked how many the DEA would like.

"They said, 'Well, we want at least 100.' I said, 'How about 500?'" Wiechmann recalled. They replied, "Oh, you have 500?"

Wiechmann told them to choose the ones that still had the most sensitivity.

"I packed up 500 and sent them to them," he said. "That was included in the stuff they gave me to take home when I retired."

The NBBs are just a part of the Delco Collection at the HCHS. Other items include



Dane Ridenour uses an oscilloscope to check the function of the electronics in the NBBs. Ridenour, now in his 90s, said the above photo was taken in what was then a field just east of Plant 10 in the early 1970s. He said it was not unusual to be doing the same thing at 3 a.m. in a snowstorm.

radios, photo and slides. Lauterbach said he believes a large amount of material will be donated to the museum in the future.

He said he hopes to find one of the squad radios from the Vietnam War for the collection.

Plans are also in the works to make an oral history of Delco/Dephi's involvement in the community.

Lauterbach said he would like to find someone who had experience in Vietnam using the NBB system.

"It would really round out our knowledge on them," he said.

Year after year, VFW keeps the flag flying at Seiberling Mansion

By Emily West

It may seem like a little thing, but all of the small things and those who help us do them are what helps make the Seiberling Mansion a centerpiece of pride in the community.

One of these “small things” is the American flag that flies on the north side of the mansion.

Long-time museum caretaker Bill Baldwin says a flag does not last long when it’s exposed to the elements year round. But thanks to the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1152 in Kokomo, the Howard County Museum can fly a flag proudly all year long.

“In the almost 18 years I have been here, the VFW has donated a new flag to us every year,” Baldwin said.

John Ayres, post commander, said donating flags is just part of the organization’s mission of community service.

“We donate flags to just about any not-for-profit group that asks for one,” he said.

Ayres said some people may be unaware of the VFW’s charitable endeavors.

“We do a lot of stuff people may not know about,” he said.

Recently the group donated \$8,000 to purchase a new scoreboard for the Northside Little League. The group is also sponsoring a Boy Scout unit, helping underprivileged boys go to camp.

The group’s charitable actions have brought it statewide recognition — being named the number one VFW in community service an unprecedented three years in a row, Ayres said.

The reason for that?

“We’ve got a very generous membership,” he said. “It’s pretty simple; we donate money wherever we can. We’re doing what we are supposed to do.”

A special thank you to VFW Post 1152 from the Howard County Historical Society for its annual donation.

Courthouse bombing, continued from page 6

park in Marion where Gray lived was evacuated during a bomb search.

Perspectives of the explosion were given by several different spectators, one by Roger A. Grady, a juror in Gray’s case, and another by Ann Taylor, a *Tribune* staff writer who had an appointment to speak with Sheriff Beatty. Different views were given to the *Kokomo Tribune* by employees and visitors to surrounding businesses, as well as people who were in the courthouse at the time of the explosion.

The responses by the city and county employees and first responders were noteworthy. The employees, sheriff’s department, fire departments and emergency and medi-

cal personnel were very professional, and they are to be commended for their actions.

The HCHS Oral History Committee believes the personal accounts of many of these citizens will be an important addition to the HCHS Archives. Also, this is an excellent time for citizens who have artifacts from the explosion to consider donating them to the society’s collection.

We want to hear your story about the explosion. Please visit our website at howard-countymuseum.org to indicate your interest or join our conversation on Facebook. We look forward to hearing about and honoring your experiences.

Upcoming events, continued from page 2

- ♦ **Howard County Jail Exhibit** - The Howard County Historical Society is partnering with the Howard County Sheriff's department to create an exhibit of jail memorabilia to be displayed at the Howard County Criminal Justice Center, 1800 W. Markland Ave. The display will feature a cell door from the county's third jail, which was located at 212 S. Main, a control panel from the fourth jail, located at 623½ S. Berkley, and historic photographs of several of Howard County's jail facilities. The public will be able to visit the display by arrangement with the Howard County Sheriff's Department, as well as viewing it when tours of the Criminal Justice Center are given. The exhibit will open in mid-May.
- ♦ **Haynes Apperson Festival** - June 28-30 in downtown Kokomo
- ♦ **Howard County Genealogy Society Meeting** - The public is invited to join the Howard County Genealogy Society on August 6 at 6:30 p.m. at the Elliott House. The meeting will include a tour of the Seiberling Mansion, the monthly meeting and refreshments.
- ♦ **Hall of Legends** - Inductions to the 2012 Hall of Legends will be August 17, in the Casa Bella Room of Pastarrific Restaurant, Kokomo.

Annual campaign donors

Thanks again to the many people and businesses who helped make the 2011 annual campaign a success. Our apologies to the following donors whose names were omitted from the March *Footprints*.

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Membership

**Thanks to all who joined the Howard County Historical Society
or renewed their memberships in March and April**

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***Renew your membership, join today
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Historical Society Membership Application

I wish to become a member of Howard County
Historical Society or renew my membership.

Enroll me as:

- ☐ 1 - Chief Kokomo Individual Member - \$25-\$29
- ☐ 2 - Foster Family Member - \$30-\$49
- ☐ 3 - C.V. Haworth Contributor - \$50-\$99
- ☐ 4 - Seiberling 100 Club - \$100-\$249
- ☐ 5 - Rev. Henry Perry Corporate - \$250-\$499
- ☐ 6 - Haynes/Apperson Benefactor - \$500-\$999
- ☐ 7 - George Kingston Patron - \$1000 and up
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Contributions to the Society are tax deductible in accordance with Internal Revenue Code Regulations. The Society is a tax-exempt, non-profit, educational, charitable institution under state and federal laws. \$10 of your membership dues have been determined to represent cost of service; the balance of your dues payment may be tax deductible. All monies are put into a general operating fund to be used as designated by the Society's Board of Trustees. Return to: Howard County Historical Society, 1200 W. Sycamore, Kokomo, IN 46901

Do you know...?



This group of men from the 1900s includes a number of people we do know, including Elwood Haynes, who is in the back row on the left end, and Charles Rayl, who is in the first row, seated second from the right. Others in the photo include Mark Brown, standing third from the left, followed by Ralph Tudor, an unidentified person, Pearl Seward, Bum Sammons, A.L. Thalman and J.A. Kautz. Fuzzie Williams is seated to the right of Rayl. All of the men are wearing arm bands with the letters "AIDE". Do you know what "AIDE" means? Or, can you help identify any of the other men in the photo? If so, please call Curator of Archives Bonnie Van Kley at 765-452-3414.

**Howard County
Historical Society
1200 W. Sycamore St.
Kokomo, Indiana 46901**

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