

Leaves of Thyme

Vigo County Historical Society

Volume 48, Number 2

Summer 1993

pace car in history

255 hp
DESOTO



The new De Soto selected to pace the 40th annual running of the Indianapolis "500" is a stock model 255 horsepower Firelite convertible. It is equipped with a mechanical, completely foolproof push-button drive selector (standard equipment on all De Soto Firelites), "Full-Time" power steering and Feather Touch power brakes.

*An advertisement for the DeSoto Pace Car appeared in the
1956 Indianapolis 500 Official Program*



Fads and Fins ... The Fabulous Fifties

The Fabulous Fifties, a decade of growing, learning, discovery, and, above all, hope will be the theme of the Vigo County Historical Society's Summer Celebration at the Indiana Theatre on Saturday, July 10. The Society will celebrate an era which began with the conclusion of World War II and which found the nation little changed from the Thirties. The Big Band sound would soon give way to rock and roll. Cars with big, sleek fins and powerful engines would replace the utilitarian cars of the pre-war era. For the first time, the car would be more than a plaything of the rich or a work horse for the blue collar worker - it would symbolize the hope of a new generation. The advent of television would change the way we saw ourselves and the world. In 1950 less than one in ten homes boasted a television, and by the end of the decade almost nine in ten homes would rely upon the television for news, entertainment and education.

The traditional pre-show activities will set the mood beginning at 7:30 p.m. with a display of cars from the Fifties. Ticket holders will be entertained outside and in the lobby as the Society recreates some of the fads of the era - hula hoops, the jitterbug, sipping sodas at the fountain, Davy Crockett caps, and poodle skirts. The customary wine, beer and lemonade will be available in addition to a cash bar.

At 8:30 p.m. the stage show *Fads and Fins - The Fabulous Fifties* will be presented. Written and directed by Bunny Burris Nash, the show will take us back in time to celebrate an era of profound growth and change. A cast of dancers, singers, musicians and other performers will entertain us as they reminisce and recreate some of the local and national events that brought us through this cultural journey to the future.

Join the Historical Society on the evening of Saturday, July 10, as we cruise through the care-free days of bobby socks, crewcuts, tailfins and fads. For ticket information, call 235-9717.

Vigo County Historical Society, 1411 South 6th Street, Terre Haute, IN 47802
(812) 235-9717. Address all mail regarding change of address and material for publication to the above.

1993 Society Membership Dues: Student - \$10.00; Individual over 65 - \$10.00; Individual - \$15.00; Family - \$20.00; Club or School - \$20.00; Patron - \$25.00; Contributing - \$50.00; Sustaining - \$100.00; Business Associate - \$50.00; Business Patron - \$100.00; Business Sponsor - \$250.00; Life Membership - \$500.00

Museum Hours are 1 to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. Groups are requested to make tour appointments in advance.



FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM

Interest in our monthly programs has remained high, and we want to thank Alice Fowler and Tom Cummins who have presented recent programs.

In March, Alice Fowler shared with us her wonderful collection of old rugs and discussed ways in which early American housewives recycled materials to create floor coverings for their homes.

On April 19th, we were treated to a luncheon hosted by board members of the Vigo County Historical Society. This nice event, which honored Museum volunteers, was held during Volunteer Appreciation Week.

Tom Cummins, of the Apple House, was with us at our May meeting. He displayed and discussed a variety of plants which thrive in shady garden spots. We appreciated all the helpful gardening tips he gave as he talked and, then later, responded to audience questions.

The May meeting was the last meeting of the 1992-93 year. Our fall luncheon will be held September 20th, so I hope you will plan to be with us. New members are always welcome.

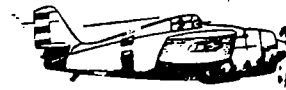
Officers for next year will be:

President - Mary Wright
Vice President - Jan Buffington
Secretary - Barbara Wilkinson
Treasurer - Barbara Daily

A vote was taken at the April meeting favoring an increase in the number of hours required for receiving an angel award from 20 to 30 hours. This will not be effective until September.

Have a great summer!

Mary E. Wright



TERRE HAUTE TORNADO

The memory of D-Day had special significance at the Vigo County Historical Museum on Sunday, June 6th. A reception was held to commemorate the history of a WW II bomber called the Terre Haute Tornado.

The Tornado, which flew 114 missions over Belgium, France, Holland and Germany during WW II, is the subject of a current exhibit at the Museum.

The crew of the aircraft named the bomber after the hometown of its pilot, Robert E. Wilson. Robert Wilson graduated from Wiley High School in 1938, attended Indiana State Normal and entered the Air Force in 1942.

During its 13 months tour, the Martin B-26 Marauder took part in some of Europe's most famous battles. It was in the first wave of bombers over Cherbourg Peninsula on D-Day.

The Museum exhibit, which will be continued through July 16th, consists of nearly 60 color photographs of the Terre Haute Tornado and its crew, beginning with "operation training" at Lakeland Army Air Field in Lakeland, Florida and continuing with its wartime missions. Extensive memorabilia is also on display to commemorate the 50th anniversary of WW II.

Mayor Pete Chalos announced that June 6th was *Terre Haute Tornado Day*.

Several people with strong ties to the Tornado were guests at the Museum on June 6th. Among them the family of the pilot, Robert Wilson who passed away this past spring. Also present was Jack Havener from Cordova, Tennessee, co-pilot of the Tornado. Mr. Havener has authored two books and written numerous articles on aviation. Autographed copies of Mr. Havener's book about the Terre Haute Tornado are available at the gift shop.

1 9 5 3 WAS QUITE A YEAR IN TERRE HAUTE

Since we'll be remembering the 1950s in this year's Summer Celebration, we thought it timely to look back at some of the happenings exactly 40 years ago in our city and beyond.

Our thanks to Frances E. Hughes for allowing us to print excerpts from her article which appeared in the *Saturday Spectator* on April 29, 1978.

This week, lets talk about 1953 locally.

In January, the cornerstone of Schulte High School was laid. Henry F. Schricker was Governor of Indiana, Homer Capehart was Republican Senator, and Ralph Tucker was Mayor of Terre Haute, Mary Hollis was elected president of the School Board and Mary Townsley president of the Woman's Department Club.

By Greyhound bus, it cost you \$17.50 to go to New York, \$42.65 to Los Angeles and \$4.25 to Chicago.

In February, Warren Miller was elected president of the Country Club of Terre Haute. Ellen Church was administrator of Union Hospital.

Indiana State University's Kappa Kappa Sorority went national to become Alpha Omicron Pi.

An A&P Market was opened at 8th and Poplar Streets.

The cornerstone of the new St. Ann's Church was laid.

In March, Cliff McCormick was named president of Community Chest.

In May, the Centennial of the city's incorporation was observed by the Vigo County Historical Society.

Dr. Raleigh W. Holmstedt was named successor to Dr. Ralph E. Tirey as president of Indiana State Teachers College.

Mrs. Robert G. Nunn was installed as regent of DAR.

On June 8, the Trinity Lutheran Church placed the cornerstone for a new building at Ohio Blvd and Marigold Dr.

Ed Whalen became the president of the Chamber of Commerce.

Construction was started in July on the Student Center at Rose

Polytechnic Institute.

In August, Delta Airlines advertised that it had flights to Chicago non-stop in 67 minutes, Memphis in three hours, New Orleans in five hours and 17 minutes and Houston in nine hours and 20 minutes.

On Sept. 7, the Terre Haute Phillies baseball team wound up its season when the team played the Braves at Evansville.

Building of Camp Na-Wa-Kwa Girl Scout Camp at Poland, IN was started.

Dr. Ford L. Wilkinson Jr., was president of Rose Polytechnic Institute.

Platolene Gasoline was put on the market for the first time.

The Terre Haute Auto Company advertised the Buick Special for \$226.88 and Shanks advertised the new Studebaker for \$1928.19.

On October 31, there were dedications of Schulte High School and of the Trinity Lutheran Church and also rededication of the Plymouth Congregational Church, Seventeenth and Sycamore streets.

On Nov. 14, coast-to-coast color TV, both live and filmed, was first transmitted from New York to Hollywood.

The Terminal Building at Hulman Field Municipal Airport was dedicated Nov. 29.

The Woolworth Company leased the building at 647-653 Wabash Avenue from the Anton Mayer Company.

The Standard Food Store opened at Ninth and Poplar streets where the K of C is now.

On Wednesday, Nov. 11, the 30th Annual Armistice Day football game between Wiley and Gerstmeyer took place.

Union Hospital's Women's Service League was started by 40 women.

On Dec. 24, it was announced that the cost of living had eased down and was only six-tenths of a percent above the previous year.

And the year ended with us hearing that the president's Christmas peace prayer gave thanks that the nation had Christmas without war.

Many Thanks...

The Historical Society appreciates receiving gifts from the following: the Freed family, Peggy Brown, Charlotte Stahl, Maryanne Roehm, John Royse, Mona Dees Clare, John Turner and Marian Parcus.

Many thanks for recent monetary donations to the Society from: Diana Tharp, Miriam Johnson, Patricia Englland, Prairieton Young Homemakers, Clay City High School, First United Methodist Women, Kathleen Gregg and Dixie Bee Elementary School.

A special thanks to the Friends of the Historical Museum for providing funds for the purchase of a printer so that mailing labels can be done at the Museum.

Thanks also to Marcia Price Danielson, of the Wren Chapel, for a wallpaper border for the Museum's rest-room.



RECYCLING TERRE HAUTE T-SHIRTS

Do you have a T-shirt or sweat shirt with any Terre Haute motif printed on it? Have you outgrown it? Are you getting tired of wearing it? Are you planning to sell it in a garage sale?

If you've answered "yes" to any of the above, the Historical Society has a better idea!

We are collecting T shirts or sweat shirts that refer to Terre Haute in any way - just bring them to the Museum. Thanks!



William C. Linton and Thomas H. Blake, two area men, actively involved in the development of the Wabash and Erie Canal, are buried at Woodlawn Cemetery in unmarked graves.

William Linton, one of the founders of the Indiana Historical Society, was the first Fund Commissioner for the Canal. He was entrusted to take specie from holders of Wabash and Erie Canal bonds to New York. He died in 1835 while on such a mission.

Thomas Blake, a trustee of the Canal, was also a U.S. Congressman. He moved the headquarters of the Canal to Terre Haute in 1847. He was Indiana's first financial agent to Europe and died in 1849 of cholera contracted from the Canal while returning to Terre Haute from the East.


Believing that these men deserve the dignity of having marked graves, B. Michael McCormick, a long time history buff, contacted the Indiana Canal Society and the Vigo County Historical Society for support.

Hence, the 1993 preservation project of the Canal Society is to raise approximately \$1500 for markers.

Support for this project would be appreciated.

Donations may be sent to: Canal Society of Indiana
302 E. Berry St.
Ft. Wayne, IN 46802

BOOKS BELOW
USED BOOKS FOR SALE
OUT-OF-PRINT SEARCH SERVICE



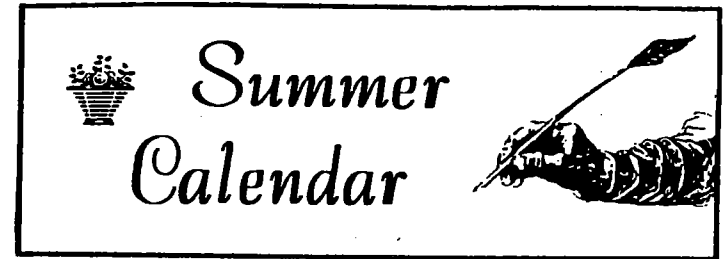
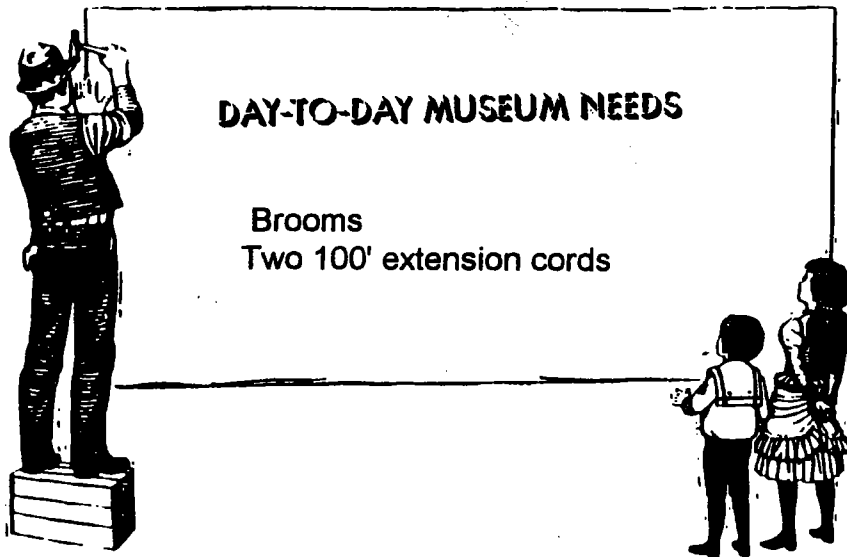
Elizabeth H. Bevington

BY APPOINTMENT
(812) 234-8989

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Vigo County Historical Society members are encouraged to make nominations for the Board of Directors. Proposed board member nominations must be sent to the nominating committee, c/o the Historical Museum, 1411 South 6th Street, Terre Haute, IN 47802. Each nomination should contain a brief biography of the nominee and be received at the museum by August 15th.

*If you need a little something
for a Special Someone
Remember the
Museum Gift Shop*



Current Exhibit	<i>Terre Haute Tornado WW II Bomber In the Vigo Room</i>
July 4	Museum is closed.
July 10	Summer Celebration <i>Fads and Fins - The Fabulous Fifties</i> Indiana Theatre 7:30 P.M.
July 10 and 11	Museum will be closed
July 27	New Exhibit - <i>Artwork from the Attic</i> Vigo Room
September 20	Friends Dutch Treat Annual Luncheon Laughner's Cafeteria at 12:30 p.m.

*Remember, when you are cleaning out your attic, garage,
or basement, the museum can always use books (no
magazines), antiques or collectibles for its fund raising
booth at our flea market*

VIGO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1411 South Sixth Street
TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA 47802

FORWARDING AND ADDRESS
CORRECTION REQUESTED

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Terre Haute, IN
Permit No. 933

TIME VALUE MAIL