

# Hendricks County Museum News

May 2023

*The mission of the Hendricks County Historical Museum is to collect, preserve and interpret items relating to the people, places and events of Hendricks County and to stimulate public interest in the heritage of the county through education, exhibits and special programs.*

## President's Message

Dear Friends of the Hendricks County Museum

Spring, my favorite time of the year is here, bringing wildflowers and gardens in bloom. Which reminds me of a question I have every year—why are redbuds called that, when they are more like purple or magenta buds?

A great opportunity to help us during the warmer months is to volunteer when we are open on Fridays and Saturdays. We never leave it up to just one person, and we have a guidebook to help with tours. It is so much fun to see what people find interesting, whether it is the organ in the parlor, the children's toys, or the very popular jail cells!

Be sure to stop and check out this year's display on agriculture. You will enjoy it and learn a bit, even a city girl like me found it fascinating to see the implements and learn about what life was like in our county not really that long ago.

—Pat Baldwin

## A big welcome to our newest board member Mark Belloni!

Mark has a background in history with a Bachelor's in Anthropology with a focus on Historical Archaeology and is currently pursuing an MA in Public History. His "side gig to history" is

working in Marketing & Communications for IU.

"I always knew about the museum and historical society, but I did not start getting involved until I made contact

with Linda Cook who helped me with some research I was doing. Linda and I got to know each other and I eventually started helping her and the rest of the digital team in digitizing the museum's photograph collection.



"My wife and I are 5 years into restoring an 1880 farmhouse north of Brownsburg — and probably have 5+ more years to go! We document much of our work and research on the house on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/SquankumHouse> if you'd like to follow along!

"I have a strong background in historic property/landscape research, some history preservation knowledge, and a love for making old photographs accessible to the public. I want to highlight the phenomenal digitized photograph collection that is growing larger by the day.

"I encourage everyone to check this out and see what you might discover: <https://hendrickscountymuseum.org/digital-collections/>."

## 10 Reasons to Visit a Museum

**Want to do something good for yourself and the people you love? Go to a museum!**

- 1. Museums make you feel good**
- 2. Museums make you smarter**
- 3. Museums provide an effective way of learning**
- 4. Museums are community centers**
- 5. Museums inspire**
- 6. Museums help bring change and development to communities**
- 7. Museums are a great way to spend time with friends and family**
- 8. A museum may be your next community partner or business endeavor**
- 9. Museums need your support in order to keep educating and inspiring people**
- 10. There is a museum close to you!**

[www.colleendilen.com/2009/07/31/10-reasons-to-visit-a-museum/](http://www.colleendilen.com/2009/07/31/10-reasons-to-visit-a-museum/)



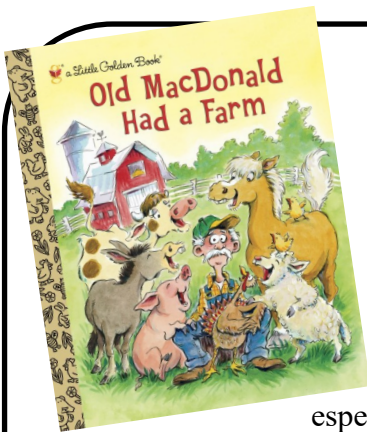
## Harvesting Oats, Clayton, IN, July 1936 *Photographer, Dorothea Lange*

From 1935 to 1943, professional photographers were hired by the Historical Section of the Farm Security Administration to document the lives of Americans affected by the Great Depression. The Indiana pictures focus mainly on farms.

The most famous of the photographers was Dorothea Lange, best known for her pictures of the far western states and migrant workers.

In 1936 Lange visited Hendricks County, taking a series of pictures of the oats harvest on the Hadley farm in Liberty Township, noting the mechanization of agriculture. As more farmers began using combines, threshing crews became rare sights.

**“Hoosier Homesteads of Hendricks County” is our new exhibit and is chockful of information on how our past generations lived.**



# SATURDAY JUNE 3

Our first Saturday in June event this year especially for children is tied to our exhibit on agriculture. During our regular open hours we will have stories, handouts, and hopefully some farm animals for entire families to see. This has been very popular in the past few years, and is a great chance to introduce our history to the younger generation.

**DON'T BE LEFT HANGING!**

**Stay informed!**

[www.hendrickscountymuseum.org](http://www.hendrickscountymuseum.org)  
Or on Facebook and Instagram!



Instagram

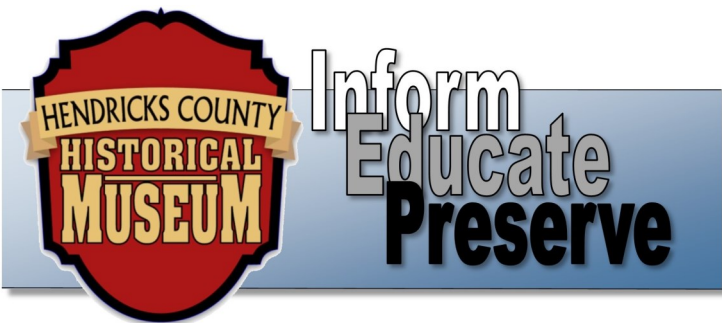
## Don't forget to renew your membership!

Hendricks County Historical Museum invites you to become a partner in our mission. Your valuable support enables us to bring awareness to the rich past of Hendricks County. Although our property is owned by Hendricks County, we are responsible to generate funds for the contents, care and display as well as to provide tours and special programs.

Historic preservation is an important way for us to transmit our understanding of the past to future generations. The museum is the first building in Hendricks County to be added to the National Registry of Historic Places. It is our county's only surviving example of Second Empire style architecture.

The contents of the museum feature items from the time of the opening of the building in 1866 and to today, and artifacts dating back to the time Woolly Mammoths roamed the banks of Eel River, as well as an extensive military room collection.

Please help us continue to honor and display our common history by joining as a supporting member of the Hendricks County Historical Museum. Visit our website [hendrickscountymuseum.org](http://hendrickscountymuseum.org) for Membership information.



### Board of Directors

Pat Baldwin, President, Danville  
Marty Carter, Vice-President, Pittsboro  
Reann Poray, Secretary, Plainfield  
Helen Corbitt, Treasurer, Danville  
Mark Belloni, Brownsburg  
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Donny Cook, Pittsboro  
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Newsletter Editor: Emily Hansen

# Know Your Towns...



## Clayton, Indiana (Liberty Township)

In 1829, the town of Clayton was first named "Claysville" after Henry Clay, the Kentucky statesman. In 1858 the town was renamed Clayton because, it turns out, there was already a Claysville in Washington County, Indiana. Clayton was platted in 1851 by George Washington Wills, but was not incorporated until 1909.

The first train passed through Clayton in 1852 — right literally through the middle of town. And by the early 1900s, the town boasted a bank, grocery store, two general stores, two hardware stores, two implement stores, two lumber companies, three druggists, four physicians, one dentist, a milliner, two barbers, and a flouring mill. Lots going on for such a compact town!

The town also supported several churches, including Baptist, Christian, Presbyterian, and Methodist. Fraternal organizations included the Knights of Pythias, the Odd Fellows, and the Masons.

Just north of town, along State Road 39, sits the large brick home where the Vandegrift family lived. You'll notice that SR 39 makes a sharp curve around this property, so as to avoid the homestead. The Vandegrifts had a daughter named Fanny, who married the famed Scottish author Robert Louis Stevenson, of *Treasure Island* fame. So this is a literary fun fact!



Our main fundraiser is now officially sold out!!

There is still an opportunity to participate in the fundraising by going online and voting for your favorite dancer with a donation, or bidding on the wonderful gifts that will be

displayed at the Silent Auction. This auction will go "live" three days before the event!

If you have any questions or want to know how you can help at the event, give Robin Pickett (317-362-7978) or Deanna Hindsley (317-695-5602) a call.



*(Seen on t-shirts for sale at CVS)  
"While we love Danville, the town and county were established in 1824, Indiana as a state in 1816, and a territory in 1800. There will be more information on the County Bicentennial and how you can take part this summer".*



## Hendricks County Bicentennial

2024 marks the 200<sup>th</sup> birthday of Hendricks County, April 1 to be exact, and it was not a joke! The first white settlers came to the southeast corner of the County, and Belleville was the first location of the court and government, until Danville, being more centrally located and with a donation of land for the courthouse by several citizens was named in July.

The Friends of the Hendricks County Museum will be heading up the historic portion of what will be a year long celebration throughout the County. There will be many opportunities to volunteer, and we appreciate those who have already given us their names as wanting to participate. Visit Hendricks County and the Hendricks County Community Foundation are taking a major role, and the County Council has agreed to help with funding.

Keep your eyes open in the next few months for more information.



We are starting a new series highlighting Hendricks County then and now! Volunteer Mark Belloni is working on his Masters in Public History and has researched memorable places throughout our county to celebrate. It is extremely interesting!

Just one more reason to "follow" and "like" us on Facebook!!

**Thank You to Our Current Sponsor**



# We're Back Open!



Lisa Mathews from Alabama was fascinated with the idea of ice harvest.



Feed sacks were printed with prints so dresses could be made from them.

Sisters Tinley, Rhettley and Lyra (not pictured) Smith enjoyed their Museum tour!



Cascade students from Mr. Neilson's class and their families visited the Museum after watching this year's research projects depicted in "Secrets on the Shelf" at the Royal Theater March 15.



Sometimes, the museum comes to you! Recently we visited Our Shepherd Lutheran Church and School with a display and talk about reading and schools of the past.

If you are a school, we would love to work with you to bring Hendricks history alive for your students!



Trying out a rotary phone.

The cost of printing and mailing our quarterly newsletter has raised considerably. Therefore we are sending it out electronically to all of our Museum members who have email addresses. We are asking your help in providing us with your email address, should you not have done so already. If you are a member and prefer receiving a printed copy, please contact the Museum with your current mailing address. You can email us at [hcmuseum@co.hendricks.in.us](mailto:hcmuseum@co.hendricks.in.us) or call us at 317-718-6158.

Come discover interesting Hendricks County facts displayed throughout the Museum! Museum hours are Fridays and Saturdays, 11 AM to 3 PM. **JOIN US!**