



GRANT COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2013

JANUARY 15, 2013
Marion Public Library
Room B, 7 p.m.

BOARD MEETING
6 P. M., Room B

Interactive Program
On
Townships in Grant County
Juanita Rapp

Juanita Rapp has served our Grant Co. Historical Society well for many years. She has been President (several times) and held other offices, including Vice-President, who finds all the speakers for our programs. She has also been our speaker many times and her programs have always been informative, interesting, and, quite often, fun. You can be sure that our January 15th meeting will have all of the above qualities. I hope to see you there.

*THE INDIANA BOOK
of RECORDS, FIRSTS, AND
FASCINATING FACTS*
FRED D. CAVINDER

A collection of trivia from the Indiana Division and the Microfilm Division of the Indiana State Library, the keepers of the files at *The Indianapolis Star*, colleges and universities, many historical society museums, and sundry associations and statistics keepers.

The center of U. S. population was in Indiana longer than in any other state; it was first found in Indiana in 1800 and stayed within the state 60 years until a site in Illinois was designated in 1950. The center is chosen by mathematically calculating a spot from which the same number of people live in every direction.

The earliest site was a spot in front of a farm occupied by A. M. Armstrong 10 miles south of Greensburg, chosen in 1800 as the population center of the U.S.A.

A spot 75 feet east of a walnut tree on the old Bailey McConnell farm three miles southeast of Carlisle was *the last center of population in Indiana*, chosen in 1940. The farm was owned by Gilbert and Ralph Corbin, managed by their father, John Corbin, and occupied by Chancy Bennett. Professor Wilbur A. Cogshall of Indiana University was the last man to precisely locate the U.S. center of population in *Indiana*, using a mathematical formula and figures from the census.

What may have been the first old-age pension system in the nation was established for widows by George Dean, an Englishman farmer of wealth near Winslow in Pike County. Under a trust established at the time of Dean's death in 1885, widows living within eight miles of Winslow got \$1.50 a week, then a sum sufficient for survival. In 1926, a total of 28 widows were cared for by the trust, which died when the Social Security system began in 1935.

We have heard the official report that 2012's summer was the hottest on record. The *coldest summer* was that of 1816, when ponds and rivers froze every month and an estimated 60,000 pioneers suffered bitter weather throughout the season. In May, Indiana had snow or sleet on 17 days. In June there was snow, and livestock froze to death. A farmer, leaving home June 17, joked that he might get lost in a snowstorm; he did, and was found with both feet frozen. Similar weather afflicted the rest of the nation, too; 1816 was called "the year without a summer".

Now a public relations message

The first person *from Indiana to be vaccinated* was said to be Little Turtle, chief of the Miamis, who was vaccinated while visiting Washington, D.C., a few years before his 1812 death. He carried the news of the procedure back to his people in Indiana.

More people died in Indiana of influenza in 1918 than any other disease outbreak. The mortality list totaled 5,553, plus an additional 5,958 who died of pneumonia associated with the flu.

A word from *MARION A Pictorial History* by June R. McKown. "As the population climbed, there was a growing need for a central location where the seriously ill could be provided humane medical care. There was a "pest house" located near Lagro Road where those with contagious diseases could be quarantined. This, at the time, was an accepted method of dealing with an all most impossible problem..."