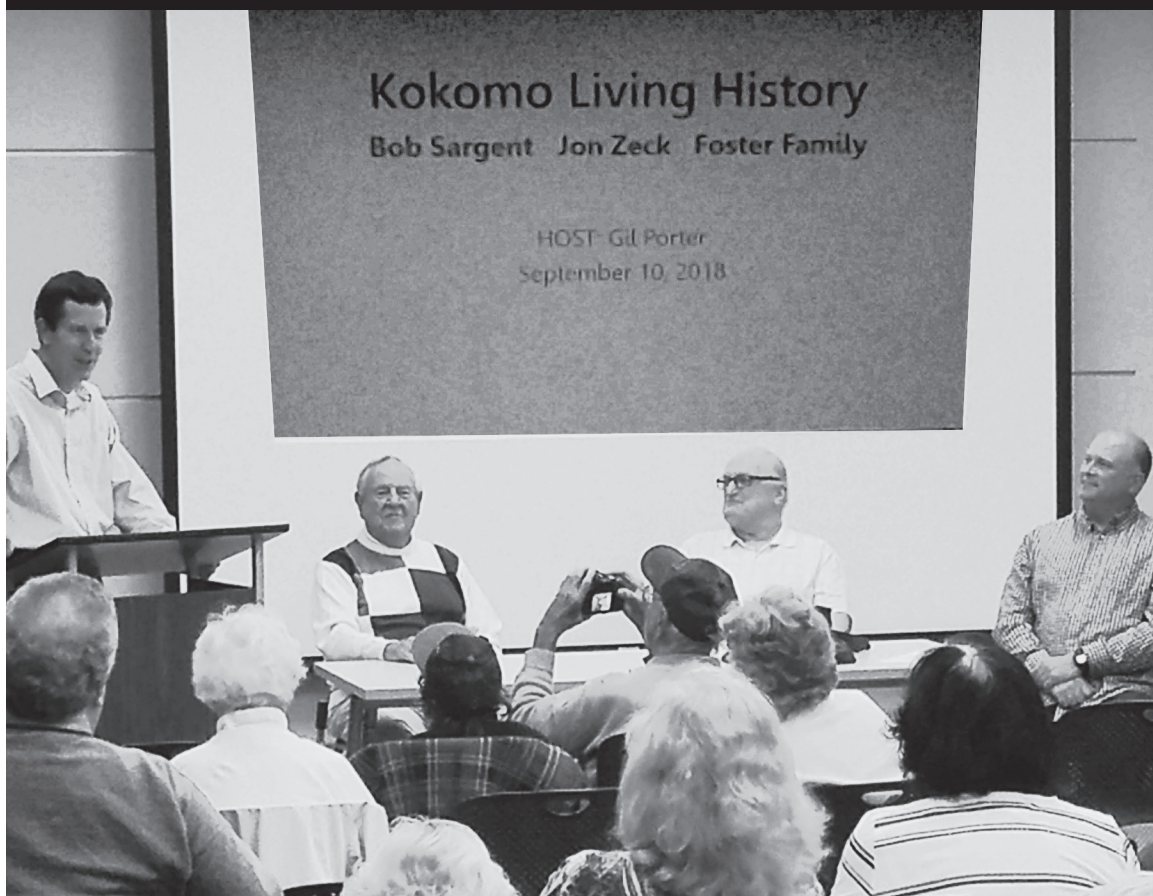


Footprints

A publication of the Howard County Historical Society
Volume 13, Issue 2 May 2024

Howard County's New History Highlighter



Gil Porter, far left, newly named County Historian, in September 2018 during the "Kokomo Living History" program at the Kokomo-Howard County Public Library.

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It is truly a pleasure to greet you all this quarter with this most recent edition of Footprints.

I hope this letter finds you well as we embark on the second quarter of 2024. As we continue to navigate the challenges and opportunities of this point in time, it is imperative that we remain steadfast in our commitment to preserving and celebrating our shared history.

Our local historical society plays a vital role in connecting us to the rich tapestry of our past, reminding us of where we have been and inspiring us as we chart the course for our future. Through your dedication and passion, you have ensured that the stories of our community may endure for generations to come.

In the months ahead, I encourage each of you to actively engage in our society's mission. Whether it is by attending our events or contributing your own knowledge and expertise, your involvement is crucial to our continued success.

Speaking of upcoming activities, our next big event will be Mr. Kingston's Auto Exhibition on Friday and Saturday, July 26 and 27, on the grounds of the Seiberling mansion.

Make sure you mark your calendar as this is a great family event with an opportunity to connect with our county's rich historic automobile past. We will have much more information going forward.

Thank you for reading! I continue to look forward to walking through this year in history with you all!

Please feel free to contact the HCHS with any questions OR, if you are able and willing to step up,, to volunteer in any capacity in 2024! Peace.

Respectfully,

Dave Dubois
HCHS Board President

From the Executive Director

Future planning

If you have the feeling that you just recently got an issue of Footprints, you are correct! We are trying to get back on our regular schedule. I hope you also received your annual campaign letter – something that helps sustain us throughout the year. We hope you are able to contribute to our mission.

We're moving right along into summer, my favorite season of the year. The 2024 Hall of Legends event was a huge success and we were able to induct six very deserving individuals this year. Thank you for all that attended! If you missed the event, the video is up on our website at www.hchistory.org/programs/hall-of-legends. Planning has already started for the 2025 Hall of Legends event – our 15th year! We are looking forward to celebrating not only our next class, but 15 years of the program. Nomination forms are on our website at the address listed above and are due by Aug. 1, 2024.

As we cruise into summer, we are very busy planning for Mr. Kingston's Auto Exhibition on July 26 from 4-8 p.m. and July 27 10 a.m.-2 p.m. This year promises to be even better than last including some favorites from last year and some new additions this year! We are excited to share some new educational components, vintage clothing displays, and of course a repeat of the derby race between Mayor Tyler Moore and Mr. Tom Tolen.

I am VERY excited to share some event news – this year we are brining back our Cemetery Walk event that many remember from years past. Join us on Oct. 4 and 5 for an updated version of walking back through time in Crown Point Cemetery to learn about some Howard County residents of long ago.

Lastly, I'd like to send out a blanket call for volunteers. There are many ways to become involved with the Society, including but not limited to hosting in the mansion, assisting with events, and numerous committees. You can help plan exhibits, work with our collections, provide expertise for our buildings and grounds, help with landscaping, and cleaning. If you have extra time and a burning desire to utilize your skills, we can use you!

Sincerely, Anne
Anne Shaw
HCHS Executive Director



Anne Shaw, HCHS executive director, and Pastor William Smith, vice president, HCHS Board of Trustees, welcomed honorees, families and guests to the event April 25, 2024, at Hingst Hall in Kokomo, Indiana.





Honorees and their awards. From left, Bob Auth, Robert Stein, Xenia Cord, Joan Stein Jenkins, David Luljak, Angela Martino, and John Grant. (Photo by Randy Smith, HCHS)

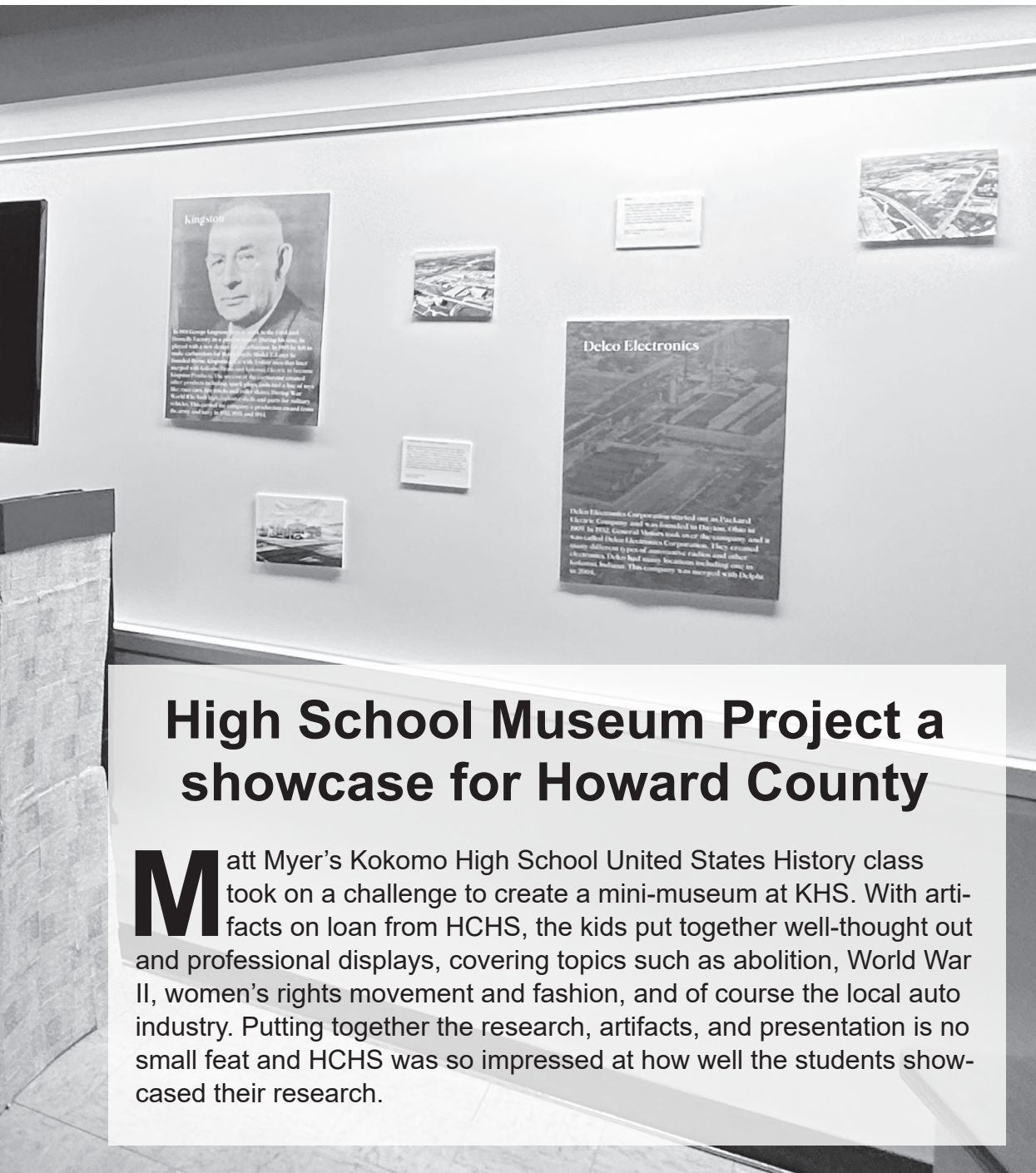
Honoring the 2024 Hall of Legends

The 2024 Hall of Legends event was a huge success as we honored six deserving individuals on April 25. Bob Auth, Xenia Cord, John Grant, Jane Ann Noble Luljak, Angela Martino, and Frank Stein joined 80 other individuals and organizations that have been inducted into the Hall of Legends. This year was especially sweet as we were joined by families of Jane Ann and Frank, who are both deceased. David Luljak and his wife, Barbara Christen, traveled from Baltimore, Maryland; Joan Stein Jenkins arrived from Los Angeles, while her brother Robert came in from New York.



OOTD | Outfits of the Decades |





High School Museum Project a showcase for Howard County

Matt Myer's Kokomo High School United States History class took on a challenge to create a mini-museum at KHS. With artifacts on loan from HCHS, the kids put together well-thought out and professional displays, covering topics such as abolition, World War II, women's rights movement and fashion, and of course the local auto industry. Putting together the research, artifacts, and presentation is no small feat and HCHS was so impressed at how well the students showcased their research.

Howard County
Historical Society



JOIN OUR TEAM!

**Curator
Office Manager
Volunteer Coordinator**

Complete job descriptions:

www.hchistory.org/connect/employment

Questions?

anne.shaw@howardcountymuseum.org
1200 W. Sycamore, Kokomo | 765-452-4314

MR. KINGSTON'S AUTO EXHIBITION

MR. KINGSTON'S AUTO EXHIBITION



Historic cars · Derby races · Prizes · Refreshments

Free admission!

Friday, July 26

4 pm to 8 pm

Saturday, July 27

10 am to 2 pm

1200 W. SYCAMORE ST. KOKOMO, IN

WWW.HCHISTORY.ORG



Howard County's New History Highlighter

Gil Porter, left, the new Howard County Historian, points out where Howard County will be to Amy Russell in the Genealogy and Local History Department at the Kokomo-Howard County Public Library. The survey plat is from the U.S. government documents relating to the 1834 treaty with the Miami Tribe of Indians. (Photo by Matthew Behnke)





By Linda Ferries

Chair, HCHS Publications Committee

Like so many others, a job in an innovative industry brought Gilbert Porter to Kokomo, Indiana, but once here, he realized he had found his home.

Now retired, he's excited to be able to give back to the city he says has given him so much – in a new role as Howard County's official historian.

Gil was appointed county historian by the Indiana Historical Society and the Indiana Historical Bureau in February 2024. He said it's a bittersweet honor as he fills a vacancy created by the death of Jonathan Russell, a noted artisan, restorationist, and historian.

"This transition is indeed bittersweet because of the circumstances," he said. "Jon left a huge legacy as a renowned expert on historic preservation and I lost a very dear friend."

With the change, there will be a shift in the emphasis of the county historian's focus. Where Jon was a recognized expert on the history and architecture of a structure on a piece of land, Gil has become an expert on the history of the land it's sitting on.

Gil is a local history writer in Kokomo who works with the Howard County Historical Alliance to revise and revitalize the area's early history stories. A frequent program presenter and guest speaker on area history, his research and writing about Kokomo and Howard County have been featured in the Howard County Historical Society Footprints as well as the Indiana Historical Society's Traces magazine, on WISH-TV and WRTV-6 television in Indianapolis, and in the Kokomo Tribune and Kokomo Perspective newspapers. He worked in organizational communications as both a teacher and practitioner for more than four decades and currently produces family history books through his publishing business, GWP Stories.

A native of Oklahoma who lived in North Carolina before joining the U.S. Navy, Gil first came to Indiana in 1984 as a sailor assigned for training in journalism and broadcasting at the Defense Information School at Fort Benjamin Harrison in Indianapolis. Through a connection he made there, he returned to the Hoosier State in 1988 to join the communications team at Delco Electronics Corporation, later Delphi. For the next 28 years, Gil

worked on employee communications for the global automotive supplier, using technology to move the company's internal communication from printed publications to a global intranet. Along the way, he earned a bachelor's degree at Indiana University Kokomo and taught for 15 years as an adjunct professor in computer graphics technology at Purdue Polytechnic Institute in Kokomo.

After leaving Delphi, Gil found a new avocation after attending the annual meeting of the Howard County Historical Society in the fall of 2016.

The meeting included the unveiling of an original artwork commissioned by the David and Elizabeth Foster family (the founders of Kokomo in the 1840s) designed to represent a new, more authentic imagining of a Miami Indian long associated with the name of the county seat of Howard County.

"This portrait represented a beginning to correct stereotypes and to try to make a more authentic representation of a period Native person," Gil said. It inspired his interest in local history research. This research, he says, has been

aimed at "not putting the same pictures in new frames but in coming up with new pictures all together."

Gil brought "a fresh set of eyes" to local history, unencumbered by the myths that had been passed along for decades. "I wasn't biased in any way, other than the fact I love living here and that Kokomo has been very good to me," he said.

Recruited to work on *Footprints*, one of his first large assignments involved the Miami Indians. With tribal historians at the Myaamia Center at Miami University in Ohio, he found a rich source of information to present Howard County history from a new perspective.

Recruited to work on HCHS's *Footprints*, one of his first large assignments involved the Miami Nation With tribal historians at the Myaamia Center at Miami University in Ohio, finding a rich source of information to present Howard County history from a new perspective, that of the Miami Indians who called this land home long before European settlers arrived to take it.

"I knew we had a chance to

revisit the past and tell the story in a new way,” Gil said. “I got caught up in it because we were finding new information that adds richness and authenticity to our historical narratives – and now, in my new role, we can continue to elevate it.”

“I knew we had a chance to revisit the past and tell the story in a new way ... because we were finding new information that adds richness and authenticity to our historical narratives.”

For Gil, it’s an opportunity to bring a new sensitivity, to offer a different way to interpret the past. “Local history writers like me aren’t looking for answers,” he said. “We’re looking for context.

“We’ve been able to find new information with the help of the tribal historians. We are working very hard to be sure their voice is part of everything we publish going forward.”

Perhaps at the top of the list of remarkable discoveries he has made is a petition presented to the United States Congress in January 1846 by a local Miami named Šaapontohsia appealing the expulsion of Miami families from

Howard County. The petition was also signed by David Foster and 100 other white men living in the county at the time. This information completely reoriented the view of Foster’s relationship with the native culture here, Gil noted.

Other fascinating stories uncovered so far include those of Aliff Henley, a woman freed from enslavement in North Carolina who is documented as the first Black purchaser of property in Howard County and the Rev. Jermain Wesley Loguen, who traveled through the Miami Reserve in 1835 as he escaped slavery and offered what seems to be the oldest written description of the area.

Gil is a co-founder of the Kokomo Early History Learning Center and has been integral in efforts to expand understanding of Native Americans in Howard County through the Kokomo Native Initiative. He is a member of the Howard County Historical Society and the Howard County Genealogical Society.

Gil also works with the Genealogy and Local History Department at the Kokomo-Howard County Public Library and contributes to the online Howard County Memory Project.

Historical Happenings



Gil Porter, left, with the late former Kokomo Mayor Bob Sargent, historian Jon Zeck and David Foster of the Foster family in September 2018 at the Kokomo-Howard County Public Library. (Photo by Linda Ferries)

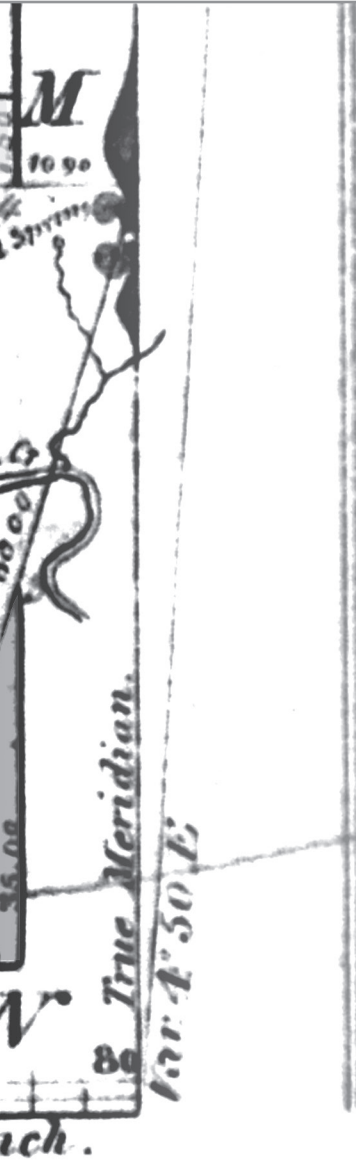
As Howard County historian, Gil Porter has ambitious goals.

First, he wants to boost the teaching of local history in the K-12 world. “In this role, we can draw on state and tribal historical resources with the goal of providing material and programming that meet state curriculum standards,” he said. “I want to make that material available to schools here in Howard County to foster an interest in history in the coming generations of community leaders.”

He also wants to help establish Howard County and Kokomo as a cultural and educational “center of excellence” for Native history in the state of Indiana.

Already, according to the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission (one of Indiana’s five state cultural commissions), the City of Kokomo is the first municipality in the state to be active in an effort to reexamine the shared history of Natives and the European settlers.

Led by Kokomo Mayor Tyler Moore, a citizen of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, the city is part of the Kokomo Native Initiative along with several tribal and historical groups. They work to develop programs and events to make Kokomo a destination for people interested in learning about this history.



House Hunting

By Matthew Behnke
HCHS Publications Committee

The November 2023 issue of *Footprints* included an article I wrote about the second owners of my home at 1226 W. Walnut St. They left a time capsule in 1920 in the cinder blocks in the garage ... and a massive paper trail to follow. I thought it would be a fun challenge to find the land patent and work my way forward through the chain of deeds to the building of the house.

The Miami Indians ceded this portion of the Great Miami Reserve to the United States in 1840.¹ The title of ownership for the land in the newly formed Howard County where I now live starts with Nathaniel Lindsay, Kokomo's first attorney and land agent.² His name was ubiquitous in early land records as I pored through transfer and deed books in the Auditor's and Recorder's offices.

Continued, page 18 ...

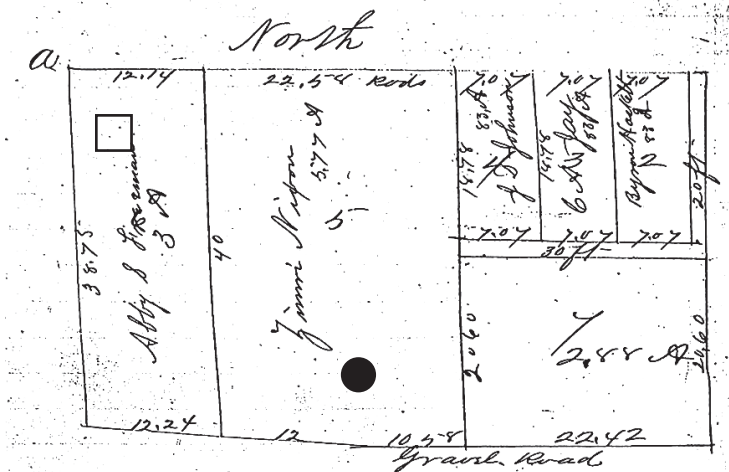
EXPLANATIONS: Details from the 1846 U.S. government land survey, left, and the entries for Section 36, Township 24 North, Range 3 East in the Winamac General Land Office Tract Book, below. Nathaniel R. Lindsay (Lindsay), Samuel L. Mills and Adam Clark bought the remaining parcels of land in Section 36 that were not part of the Foster Reserve, where the unincorporated county seat township of Kokomo was located. The circle shows the approximate locations of today's 1226 West Walnut Street (the Behnkes) and 1200 West Sycamore Street (Howard County Museum), respectively. (Illustrations by Gil Porter.)

DATE OF SALE

PATENT DATE

DATE OF SALE	17360	17361	17362	17363
10 th Sept. 1847				Nathaniel R. Lindsay
18 th "	17370	17371	17372	Samuel L. Mills
26 April 1848	18062	18063	18064	Adam Clark

PATENT DATE	33	294	500	258
1 st June 1849				
10 th April 1850				



Details from an 1874 survey plat, showing the approximate locations of 1226 West Walnut Street (Behnkes) □ and 1200 West Sycamore Street (Howard County Museum) ● in Kokomo, Indiana. SOURCE: Miscellaneous Record #1, Page 68, Howard County Recorder's Office.

On Sept. 10, 1847, Lindsay made a personal purchase of 128 and fifty hundredths of an acre of land at \$2 an acre, totaling \$259.³ It was bought at the United States General Land Office in Winamac in Pulaski County, Indiana. The details of this transaction are recorded in Tract Book #16, Winamac Dist. #1, which is digitized on the Howard County Memory Project at khcpl.org.⁴

This section of the Miami Reserve had been surveyed in November 1846 and released for sale in June 1847.⁵ Lindsay purchased four parcels of land, just outside of the original 40-acre plat for the city of Kokomo in David Foster's Reserve, which was originally the Miami Chief Francis LaFontaine's Reserve per the 1840 treaty.⁶

The land was defined using the Public Land Survey System, or rectangular survey method, as "the Sectional boundary of 35 and 36, the fractional Northwest corner of Lot 3 of the Northwest Section 36 Township 24 North and Range 3 East."⁷ Lindsay's purchase was complete when his patent from the U.S. Government was issued on June 1, 1848.⁸

Interestingly, the surveyor's field notes also reveal "metes and bounds" descriptions of physical landmarks like a stone marked "N.W. Corner" where Lindsay's land adjoined Foster's rhombus-shaped reserve. The land is further described as bordering north of the Burlington-Kokomo Road. The Likely existence was evident even on the 1846 survey map where it is shown culminating at a

grouping of wigwams in the village of Ko-Ko-Mo. Likely a Native hunting trace, this path would become West Sycamore Street or Ind. 22.⁹

Linsday would make a fine profit on this land. Within a few years, much of it was parceled out. First, 97 acres was purchased by Elihu Hunt on Dec. 28, 1852, for \$3,500.¹⁰ Another acre would go to Abraham Nordyke, an early Howard County squatter.¹¹ This would leave 32 acres remaining from the land patent. Within this were the three acres that eventually became the Mary C. Philips addition where my house resides.

The family that originally purchased the three-acre tract from Linsday would forever be associated with the city of Kokomo. Theophilus Philips and his young family came to Kokomo in 1854 from Butler, Ohio.¹² He quickly rose to ranks of promise, first as postmaster, then within a few years as owner and editor of a fledgling newspaper that would become the Kokomo Tribune.¹³ He led the publication through the Civil War era, a contentious period politically.¹⁴ Today, Philips Street in Kokomo (note: one “l” is the correct spelling) is named after him.¹⁵

Theophilus, his wife Julia, and

their four children would be joined by Julia’s parents of advancing age, Dr. Clarkson Freeman and his wife, Abigail Schenk Freeman.¹⁶ The Philips family lived in a house at Sycamore and LaFontaine inside of the town’s original 40-acre plat.¹⁷ The Freemans lived next door. Like many other early male settlers of means, Theophilus and Clarkson bought land, then parceled and sold it for a profit.¹⁸

However, Clarkson’s wife, Abigail would also purchase land.¹⁹ Six months before Clarkson’s death, on May 11, 1868, Abby purchased 3 acres remaining from Nathaniel Linsday’s original land patent from 1847 for \$1200.²⁰ The land remained in her custody for the next 10 years, described as “Lot 6, 3 Acres” in the Kingman Bros. 1877 Atlas of Howard County.²¹ Her name appeared as AS Freeman. Her lot was parallel to the “North-South border of Lot 5,” belonging to another widow, L. (Loisa) Nixon, at the future site of the Seiberling Mansion.²²

In 1878, Abigail Freeman passed away, leaving her oldest daughter, Sarah Freeman to inherit the land. However, Sarah was unable to retain it for long. In 1883, the property was seized and sold

by the Howard County Sheriff.²³ Although no clear legal or financial evidence exists, it is probable that Sarah struggled to support herself. According to the 1880 Federal Census for Howard County, she lived with her younger sister, Mary Covil, and Mary's husband, listed as "Maimed, Crippled, or Bedridden."²⁴

Luckily, the land stayed in the family, as Sarah's niece, Mary C. Philips, daughter of Theophilus and Julia, purchased the three acres in Section 36 for \$1600 at the Sheriff's Sale. Buying and selling land was nothing new for Mary; she was a shrewd land speculator. The day of Mary Philips' purchase from her aunt was just one of eight land transactions between Mary and her brothers, Charles and Albert.²⁵

Mary C. Philips was a fascinatingly independent and colorful woman for her time. She broke the mold for a Victorian woman by never marrying, despite being described in the local papers as a woman "of intellect and beauty."²⁶ Mary was a fixture in the society pages, which was no accident as the daughter of the Tribune's publisher. She traveled often and was part of a social circle that included Kokomo's upper crust.

Along with her status and wealth,

she was fiercely independent. On April 21, 1883, Mary was again featured in the Kokomo Tribune, visiting her 160-acre claim in the Dakota Territory where she stayed in her "sod shanty" for eight months.²⁷ As a woman of means, she did not need to work in a job to support herself. However, in addition to her real estate dealings, she eventually moved to Washington D.C., where she held a clerkship in the Pension Office.²⁸

In 1886, the Gas Boom hit Kokomo. Suddenly, the city's population exploded, necessitating the development of new homes. On April 6, 1886, an article in the Tribune mentioned the dis-annexing of the Mary C. Philips Addition by the City Council.²⁹ On April 11, 1889, Lot 6, consisting of 3.012 acres would be platted into 12 lots by W.F. Mann, the Howard County surveyor.³⁰ This coincided with the start of construction of the Seiberling Mansion on Lot 5 next door.³¹ Soon a new neighborhood in Kokomo's 3rd Ward would develop, part of what became known nearly a hundred years later as the Old Silk Stocking Neighborhood.

For the better part of a decade, the land would remain free of

development. It wasn't until Aug. 9, 1900, that the lots were purchased. Caroline Wright, the wife of Edgar Wright, purchased lots 4 through 12, as well as 8, 21, and 22 in the nearby D.C. Spraker Addition.³² Edgar was a real estate developer and owner of the Kokomo Hoop and Lumber Company, but clearly, his wife also showed ability in land transactions.³³

But this was not the last time Lot 6 was bought and sold. In a time of rapid speculation, a total of 30 transactions took place between Feb. 11 and Oct. 14, 1905.³⁴ On the tail end of these transfers was George Hansell. George had purchased the Kokomo Hoop and Lumber Company in the nearby lot at Philips and Taylor streets. In a few years, he would move the Hansell Coal Company and expand his enterprise there.³⁵ He also purchased Lot 6, then sold it to his son, William, where, in the next few years, the home at 1226 W. Walnut St. was built.³⁶

And that is how property that began as 128 acres in a land patent went from Kokomo's first attorney through three generations of women and numerous transactions to become what my wife and I now call home.



1226 West Walnut Street, Kokomo, Indiana

End Notes ...

- 1 1840 Treaty – United States and Miami Indians
- 2 September 10, 1847 Land Patent United States to Nathaniel Linsday
- 3 Ibid
- 4 Winamac Tract Book, Howard County Memory Project
- 5 1846 Survey Map of Howard County, Indiana
- 6 1840 Treaty – United States and Miami Indians
- 7 1846 Survey Map of Howard County, Indiana
- 8 1847 Land Patent
- 9 1846 Survey Map of Howard County
- 10 1852 Land Sale Nathaniel Linsday to Elihu Hunt
- 11 Ibid
- 12 Kokomo Tribune July 4, 1928 p. 5
- 13 Ibid
- 14 Ibid
- 15 Kokomo Tribune April 13, 1986 p. 11
- 16 1870 Federal Census of Howard County, Indiana
- 17 Kokomo Tribune July 5, 1918 p. 2
- 18 Land Deed recorded September 28, 1855 - Brunk to Clarkson Freeman, Theophilus Philips and family
- 19 1868 Land Deed from Nathaniel Linsday to Abigail Schenk Freeman
- 20 Ibid
- 21 Kingman Bros. 1877 Atlas of Howard County
- 22 Ibid
- 23 Kokomo Tribune April 21, 1883.
- 24 1880 Federal Census of Howard County, Indiana
- 25 Kokomo Tribune April 21, 1883.
- 26 Kokomo Tribune April 6, 1922 p. 1
- 27 Kokomo Tribune April 21, 1883.
- 28 Kokomo Daily Tribune December 11, 1896 p. 4
- 29 Kokomo Gazette Tribune Newspaper April 6, 1886 p. 3
- 30 April 11, 1889, Survey Map for Mary C. Philips Addition W.F. Mann, Surveyor
- 31 Kingman Bros. 1877 Atlas of Howard County
- 32 Land Deed August 9, 1900 Mary C. Philips to Caroline Wright
- 33 Ibid
- 34 May 25, 2023 Deed Index Laredo Database Howard County Recorder's Office
- 35 The Kokomo Daily Tribune March 8, 1909 p. 4
- 36 1910 Federal Census of Howard County Indiana Sallie Freeman

Drums Along the Wildcat



Saturday, September 21, 2024

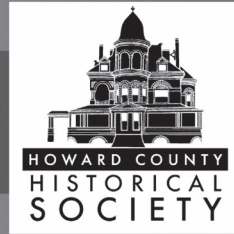
Foster Park, Kokomo, Indiana. 10 a.m. to dark.
MORE INFORMATION: tuttle.ss@comcast.net



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2024

EVENTS



APRIL

25

HALL OF LEGENDS

14th annual event

JUNE

15

JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION

Free museum admission

JULY

4

CELEBRATING VETERANS

Free museum admission for veterans

JULY

26-27

MR. KINGSTON'S AUTO EXHIBITION

Free event on mansion lawn

OCT

4-5

CEMETERY WALK

Join us at Crown Point Cemetery

NOV

19

ANNUAL MEETING

All Society members welcome

NOV

30

CHRISTMAS AT THE SEIBERLING

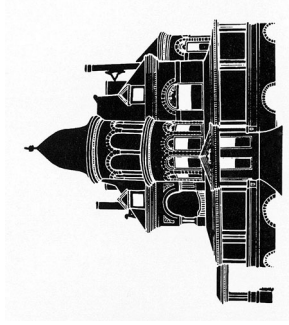
Sponsored nights:

Dec. 5-6, Dec. 12-13, Dec. 19-21

Open Tuesday-Sunday 1-4 pm

www.hchistory.org

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