

Rush County Genealogical Society

VOLUME X , ISSUE I

MARCH, 2017

2017 RCGS Programs

Our Officers:

- *President:*
Carol Jones
- *Vice-President:*
Bill Baetz
- *Secretary:*
Katrina Cole-Cooper
- *Treasurer:*
Marilyn Yager
- *Historian:*
Kevin Harr

April 8, 2017 - Working meeting. Presentation by Carol Jones on how to organize your Genealogy research. Discussion on Video project.

May 13, 2017 – Larry Stout from the Orange Township will be speaking on Knowles Sahw, the author and composer who wrote “Bringing in the Sheaves”. He is buried in the East Hill Cemetery. Marilyn Yager to be contact person for this program.

June 10, 2017 – Tips on how to find your relatives and how best to document/photograph their stones.

July, 2017 – No Meeting

August 12, 2017 – Field trip to Cincinnati Library for Family Research.

September 9, 2017 – Working meeting. An opportunity to share Tips and Tricks of your Family Research. Bring 1 item to share of either something you have learned or a tool you use that really helps in your search.

October 14, 2017 – Second Historical Homes Tour – Coordinated by Katrina Cooper

November 11, 2017 – Eleanor Arnold Presentation. Carol Jones will be contact person

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Please help support Rush County Genealogical Society by shopping on Amazon. We have signed up for the **Amazon Smile Reward** program and this is how RCGS can earn .5% of all your Amazon.com purchases. Go to <http://smile.amazon.com>. The 1st time you visit the site, it will ask what charity you want to donate to. Select “Rush County Genealogical Society”, then click “OK”. From then on, ALWAYS shop by going through **smile.amazon.com** in order for RCGS to receive this percentage.

If you simply go into Amazon.com first, we will not get any reward.

Thank you in advance for your contribution. — We have received \$15.50 to date from your efforts.

Old Settlers Meetings

The first meeting of the early settlers of Rush County took place in August, 1869. For many years, the settlers met at the Rush County Fairgrounds and it was scheduled for the third Thursday of the August until 1873 when it was switched to the third Thursday in May because of warm temperatures. Meetings in May were not well attended with the busy season of May so they were moved back to August. The first meetings were typically called to order with a business meeting before noon and then everyone brought well filled baskets of food to share for the noon meal. In the afternoon, several early settlers would speak about how the county had been settled and covered such topics as what had induced them to leave their childhood homes and come to the heavily timbered and unbroken forests in Rush and adjoining counties. They told of the hardships they experienced in making an opening in the forests to grow a little grain and get some grass started, which essential to the development of livestock of all kinds. They shared how hard it was to raise livestock and carry it through the winter months in early Rush County.

As the years progressed, there were less of the early settlers living so they began having speakers who were descendants of the early settlers that gave speeches on various topics. One of the first meeting records found in the Rushville Republican listed the 1890 officers as: President: Elisha King; Vice-Presidents: David Conner and Jehu Perkins; Secretary: Dr. John Arnold; Treasurer: T. N. Link; Statistician: Rev. D. M. Stewart who kept records of the deaths of the members throughout the year and would bring a list to the meeting. Some forty-five settlers were listed as passing for the year 1888-1889. Please check for your relatives in the lists provided. I was able to find at least one ancestor in each list and several in some of them.

The following are the Old Settlers who have left us within the last year, 1888-1889:

Mrs. Garland Alexander	W. H. Moore
Mrs. Lucretia B. Scaringer	Mrs. Ann H. Webb
Mrs. Mary Moore	Mrs. E. Johnson
Mrs. Polly Ewing	Mrs. David
Jacob Plough	Mrs. Charlotte Perkins
Philemon Rhoades	Mrs. Susan Cox
James Pursell	Mrs. Charles Thompson
Mrs. Maria Parish	Mrs. Calvin Anderson
Mrs. Mary A. Hilligoss	Harmony Laughlin
Mrs. William Powell	Collins Heflin
William Austen	Alexander Jarald
Jacob Gayhamer	William Cassady
William Morris	William W. Carr
Finley Bigger	Joseph McBride
Ross Smiley	John Leonard
Jesse Winship	James D. Pattison
Mrs. John Jefferson	Mrs. Susan Eaton
Mrs. Samuel Beber	Mrs. Mary Zion
Mrs. E. Hurst	Mrs. Leah McDaniel
Mrs. Titus	Mrs. Catherine Goldsmith
Jesse Lyons	P. J. Beachbard
Jefferson Stevens	George Mahin
Thomas Ochiltree	Daniel Ricketts
George F. Ward	

Old Settlers Meetings

At the 1890 Old Settlers Meeting, the following officers were appointed:

E. H. M. Berry – President Dr. W. A. Pugh and James Bussell – Vice-Presidents

Dr. John Arnold - Secretary T. N. Link- Treasurer

J. H. Mauzy – Statistician

G. W. Reeve, J. T. Hinchman and J. T. Gregg – Executive Committee

A report was given that \$4.08 was collected to meet incidental expenses. E. H. M Berry spoke at this meeting comparing Rush County life as it was in early days to how it was at that present time.

-The look of the countryside – from forests to fields of waving grain and growing grass

-Homes – from log cabin to stately mansions and spacious farm houses

-School – from log cabin with harsh furnishings to brick or frame structures

-Teachers – from ones with little education to accomplished teachers

-The Press – from on 10 x 12 sheet called the Dog Fennel Gazette to three large eight page papers

-Roads – from barely passable to graded and graveled and free

-Agriculture – from sowing grain by broadcast to now evenly sown by the two-horse drill; then harvested with the sickle and now with the self-binder, then tramped out by horses to now using the steam thresher

Mention was made of the steamship, the railroad, the telegraph, and telephone which unify and bind together people throughout the country.

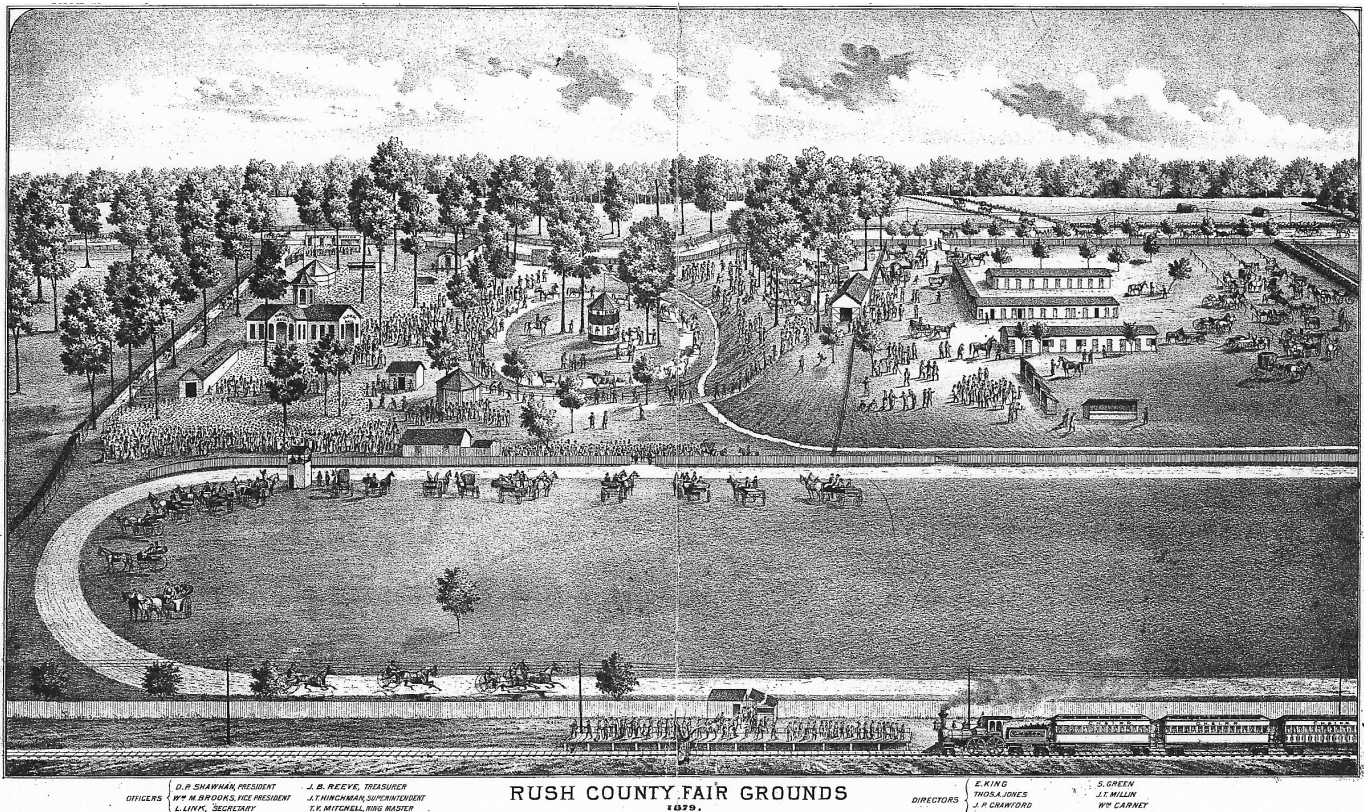
1890	George Mahin	George Hufford
	Mrs. Barbara Hilligoss	Aaron Jones
	Thomas J. Boring	G. A Loudon
	Jerry Starks	Thomas Talbott
	William W. Carr	Aaron Mock
	Mrs. D. B. Smith	Isaac Laforge
	William Young	Mrs. Joseph Heaton
	Sam Worthington	Mrs. Mary Pattison
	Machlan Jeffries	Benjamin Powers
	Hiram Bitner	Mrs. Ellen McDaniel
Old	Robert Moore	Thompson Havens
	Mrs. Blanagain	A. J. Todd
	Mrs. Sarah Miller	J. B. Cook
	Mrs. Eliza Cox	Mrs. J. L. Robinson
Settlers	Jonathan Hatley	Mrs. Joseph Tomes
	Landen Gardner	Widow Runyon
	Richmond Baity	Mrs. D. M. Willey
	J. J. Amos	Alexander Miller
Obituary	Benjamin Machlan	Mrs. Thomas Ochiltree
	William Barber	George B. Elstun
	J. J. Glass	Mrs. Sarah Kenner
	George Martin	Mrs. Pamela Anderson
List	Jesse Adams	Mrs. Eliza Swain
	Mrs. Eliza Cowan	Mrs. Edmonson
	William Marsh	Abijah Hunt
	Mrs. Eliza Miller	Mrs. Lucinda Leisure
	Mrs. Amanda Ward	Mrs. Nancy Thompson
	James A. Newhouse	Rev. D. M. Stewart
	Dr. R. D. Mauzy	

Old Settlers Meetings

By 1905, the headline of the Old Settlers Meeting was "Attendance Was Small". It was not as large due to so many pioneers having died or not able to attend. Most of those who did attend were the next generation. At the beginning of the day for the business meeting, which was called to order at 10:30 a.m., only fifty were in attendance. More gathered at the mealtime and more for the 2:00 afternoon program which included Reverend John F. Tevis. He was 78-years-old and he had been pastor of the M. E. congregation in Rushville 33 years prior. He spoke of how it was not unusual for early pioneers to remove the door of their house from its hinges so it could be used as a table; how the women baked "Johnny cake" and "sweet loaf" bread; how the old-fashioned homespun clothing was made by the women and it tended to scratch your body; and how the pioneers made pure maple syrup. He also shared about the neighbor men who would plant the corn or cut the wood if the farmer or his wife took ill, and the neighbor women would do the sewing, baking and other housework; .

Bert Reeve, secretary of the association read the list of the members who had died during the year. John Kiser had been the oldest at age 96. Of the day's attenders, Mr. Richey was the oldest there at the age of 88 and for the afternoon there were 125 in attendance. The officers for the upcoming year were announced: President, George W. Guffin; secretary, A. G. Reeve; treasurer, J. R. Woods.

The 1908 Old Settlers Meeting was held at the Chautauqua grounds in a tent and attendance was estimated to be 3,000 in attendance in the afternoon sessions. They met in a tent and in the morning, the began with a song service and Rev. V. W. Tevis and Senator Gifford were speakers. After dinner, the Diapason Singers sang old hymns under the leadership of John A. Spurrier. The first song books used had music which ran in only four notes and were titled "The Missouri Harmony". Diapason refers to that type harmony. After the afternoon speakers, the following officers were appointed: President: T. B. Gary; vice-president: Col E. H. Wolfe; secretary: R. F. Scudder; Treasurer: J. R. Woods; and statistician: A. G. Reeves. The roll of those who had passed away during the year numbered 130 people.



Reproduction from atlas of 1879, showing the fair grounds at the site of the present Conservation Club. The view is looking south, toward the present state road 44.

Old Settlers Meetings

The 1909 Meeting was held at the Fair Grounds. John A. Spurrier led singing of the old-time hymns bringing a tear or two to the elder settlers who remembered when they used to make the woods ring with sweet music long ago. The list of those who died during the year follows:

Mrs. Mary Geraghty, 59	Mrs. Edith B. Crawford, 82	Mrs. Mary Ryan, 75
Daniel Shortridge, 87	Mr. Huddleson	Mrs. Barbara Mook, 76
Mrs. Bentley Reeve, 61	Mrs. Elizabeth Adams, 88	Mrs. Fielding Hodge, 66
M. E. Inlow, 67	Mrs. Nancy Bundy, 87	William Mahin, 74
Mrs. Sarah Wagoner, 76	Mrs. Amanda Patterson, 75	Abram Mohler, 65
Mrs. Frank Redman, 68	Mrs. Miriam Pitts, 74	John Parrish, 73
Mrs. Mary A. Hilligoss	James Greely, 81	Mrs. Henrietta Maudlin, 65
Mrs. Martha Hamilton, 70	Mrs. Mary Webb, 77	R. H. Phillips, 69
Mrs. Z. B. Marshall, 87	Lon Rush, 74	Mrs. Elizabeth Stanley, 95
Mrs. Mary Ertel, 62	Hiram Peck, 83	James McConnell, 86
George White, 50	Elizabeth Beale, 73	Mrs. Elizabeth Hilligoss, 73
James Osborne, 71	Mrs. David Kempel, 80	Samuel Schuck, 65
Mrs. Mary Swinehart, 54	Michael Oneal, 78	Isaiah McCoy, 65
Mrs. Jacob Fender, 52	Mrs. A. B. Irvin, 56	John Hill, 54
Mrs. Harriett Peck, 71	Mrs. Mary Smith, 74	Mrs. Ellen Abernathy
John L. Moore, 75	Mrs. McCoy	Mrs. Mary Kiplinger, 50
Mrs. A. Kuntz, 77	Wiley A. Smith, 76	Mrs. Anna Dearing, 60
Mrs. J. J. Robertson, 63	Mrs. Margaret Fox, 80	Mary Ann Jones, 71
Tine Tevis, 54	John Havens, 55	Mrs. James Geraghty, 62
Harvey Piper, 83	Thomas Barrett, 55	John Clifford, 62
Thomas Richey, 55	Mrs. Mary Meyers, 74	Stephen Higgs, 80
Stephen J. Hobbs, 77	Mrs. Mary A. Buell	Jane Gwynnup, 56
John Haehl, 77	Joseph Holman, 75	Phoebe Rotan, 65
Floyd Kinnett	Henry Mull, 77	Mrs. John Heaton, 57
James Edwards	W. F. Stewart, 68	Sarah A. Lester, 82
Samuel Wilkinson	Abraham Beeler, 65	Mary Harris, 77
Mrs. Oscar Stewart, 56	Paul Kerr, 87	Mary York, 67
Joseph Macy, 76	John Holmes, 74	Dick Miller, 65
E. J. Davidson, 78	George Alter, 83	Nancy Selby, 87
Dayton Bitner, 59	Mrs. Susan Maxey, 84	Celia Bowman, 66
Mrs. Elizabeth Laughlin, 85	Mrs. Sarah Gordon, 83	Mrs. John Winship, 51
Martin Rigsbee, 93	Mr. John, 60	L. S. Hurst, 70
John Richey, 75	Mrs. Martha Morris, 86	Henry Tonyes, 58
Abraham Fry, 73	Mrs. Mary Woodward, 82 J	ohn Ebbing, 62
Mr. Miller, 65	G. W. Wethers, 73	George Witters, 79
William Alexander	Mrs. Esther Hughes, 80	Ms. Ira Somerville
John Parsons	Mrs. Nancy McMillin, 72	Marcus Williams
		William A. Somerville, 86

The Old Settlers Meeting met on August 18, 1910. One of the most interesting items shared that day was a photo taken in 1877 of the Old Settlers by A. J. Sargent, one of Rushville's pioneer photographers. After reviewing the photo, only Mr. and Mrs. Clinton Blackledge, Mr. and Mrs. William Alexander, E. Dill, George and Louise Newhouse, and E. B. Hood are still living of the 150 settlers pictured. The oldest person present was J. D. Lowden who was born in Bourbon County, Kentucky on September 28, 1818 who came to Rush County in 1824 with his parents before hardly enough underbrush had been cleared to make driving possible. Officers appointed for the year: President, George W. Looney; vice-presidents: Edson L. Aikens and E. H. Wolfe; corresponding secretary: William M. Alexander; statistician: A. G. Reeve; treasurer: Joseph R. Woods, and recording secretary: Allen R. Holden.

RUSH COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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Our Mission:

*To bring together those interested in the
history and genealogy
of Rush County*

Diapason Singers

Stephen Ducan of Franklin was the first man in Rush County to teach classes using the Diapason song book in 1861 and 1862, leaving to enlist as a Union soldier. His health failed and he came home after a year's service and resumed lessons. In 1864, Charles Chester took up the work and had classes in Milroy, Richland, Arlington, Carthage, Flatrock church, and Manilla. Two years later John A. Spurrier started a Diapason class. He taught classes at New Salem, Pin Hook, Little Flatrock churches, and other places. Three years later, Mr. Spurrier devoted himself to the work and taught classes in every neighborhood in Rush county and bordering counties.

Rush County Fair

- ◆ Rush County's first Fair was held in 1851 close to where lower cemetery is located on South Jackson Street. William S. Hall was Grand Marshall. There were no horse races, and the main attraction was a buffalo brought in by Pierce Guffin who lived near Mauzy.
- ◆ The second fair was held near site of old B & O Depot and Havens School.
- ◆ In 1852, the Rush County Agricultural Association was formed. In 1853, the directors sold stock. On May 23, 1856, the Association purchased 11 acres from Joseph Lakin for \$950. They they held the fair in 1857 on this land which was two miles east of Rushville on Highway 44 with 2,000 in attendance.
- ◆ The big attraction at the new fairgrounds was the running and pacing horse race in the afternoons.
- ◆ For years, the C. H. & D. railroad ran a shuttle train to the fairgrounds taking on passengers at Fourth and Main Streets. Later the Indianapolis and Cincinnati Traction Co ran interurban cars to the grounds. The Railroad ran its last train in 1908. There was a small bridge near the Fair Grounds that was used as a toll bridge charging people 2 cents to enter and 2 cents to leave.
- ◆ Businesses closed on Thursdays, the biggest day of the fair, so employees could attend. For years, the local Post Office had a branch office on the grounds.
- ◆ The last Fair held on the old fairgrounds was in 1917 because of WWI, the lack of interest in horse racing, and the Fair was no longer profitable. The fairgrounds and buildings were sold at a sheriff's sale.
- ◆ In the fall of 1926 a group organized a Free Fair with W. A. Alexander as president and Glen Foster, treasurer.
- ◆ In 1927, the Fair was held in Memorial Park.
- ◆ 1931-1934: Exhibits held in the Court House and on the streets of Rushville.
- ◆ In 1935, a horse show and a full-scale adult show of all classes of livestock was held at the Park. 1939 was when the carnival and concessions were added and the exhibit of agricultural equipment.
- ◆ In the Fall of 1940, Mr. And Mrs. Ora Lower of Homer purchased and deeded the Rush County Agricultural Association 18.6 acres of land Adjacent to Memorial Park. In 1942, two livestock 40 X 144 feet buildings were built.

From "The Rush County Fair" by Jean Green, Rush County Sesquicentennial, 1822-1972, page 46.