



WARREN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Box 256, Indianola, IA 50125

Phone -515-961-8085

(Highway 92 West, 1300 West 2nd Ave. Turn north into fair grounds, then turn east)

E-mail - contact@warrencountyhistory.org

August 2026

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2nd Thursday of Month

9:30 Board Meeting

10:-00 LCF Meeting

Saturday, September 26

LOG CABIN FESTIVAL

10:00 Parade (Square to WCHS)

11:00 to 1:00 Ham Ball Dinner

1:00 Honor WCHS Royalty &

Free Birthday Cake

2:00 Celebrate Pioneer Families

Please continue to collect Indianola HyVee receipts and bring them in to the museum. We have a large glass container near the kitchen where you can place them. We can use gas, pharmacy, grocery or any other HyVee receipt. It is an easy way to raise funds for WCHS. When HyVee asks if you want to have your receipt, say **YES!**



Here is a tax-smart way for traditional IRA owners, age 70 1/2 or older to give to WCHS. Make a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) and pay no tax on the gift. For 2024 you can transfer your QCD gift directly to Warren County Historical Society.

WCHS NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED

In 2009 Dwight McCormick created, programmed, edited and assumed financial responsibility for our WCHS website. It was so exciting for WCHS to be online. Think back to how many changes there have been in technology—use of the internet, watch and phone technology, AI, and the speed and access we now demand.

In the spring we received a grant for \$1,800 from the Warren County Philanthropic Partnership to help in funding a redesign of our WCHS website by Indianola's Gradient9 Studio. A couple of weeks ago the new website was launched. If you have not visited www.warrencountyhistory.org visit the new design. Please let us know what you think and if you notice an error or have suggestions please share them. We are trying to work out any bugs.

A committee of Juanita Ott, Elodie Opstad and Debbie Larrison spent many hours planning and discussing what should be included on it. Special thanks to Juanita for seeing that this happened and steering all involved to make the redesign a reality. One thing you will love is how easy it is to research our digital newspapers now.

2026 LCF DINNER MENU CHANGE

Did you know that ham balls are strictly Midwestern and that the East and West do not know about them unless they have a Midwest connection.

Ham balls originated in the American Midwest— Iowa & Nebraska, in the late 1800s. Many Midwest settlers came from Sweden (known for Swedish meat-balls) or German Pennsylvania Dutch (ham loaf) and shared their popular ground meat specialty. Resourceful settlers who raise hogs, repurposed leftover holiday or farm ham as ham balls.

After WW I and WW II there was a resurgence of the ham ball topped with a brown sugar/vinegar or tomato sweet/tart sauce. If you look in Midwest church cookbook you will always find several recipes for ham balls. Everyone who loves this undeniably Iowa dish would agree it is present on the buffet table at most church potluck, funeral lunches, family reunion or anywhere a community of people gather to eat.

Therefore, we will be featuring ham balls at our LCF Dinner. For those of you who are gluten free, we can prepare these with oatmeal so you can eat them.

FROM THE PRESIDENT:

2026 marks the 250th Anniversary of the United States (1776), the 180th anniversary of Iowa's statehood (1846) and the 50th anniversary of the ground breaking of the Warren County Historical Museum & Research Library (1976). Warren County citizens have a lot of things to celebrate!

The theme for our 2026 Log Cabin Festival is : "Warren County, Iowa Before 1876, Honoring Old Settlers and Community". We are recognizing the descendants of Warren County's early settlers and have planned a program commemorating founding families and their stories. You can find the Warren County Pioneer Family Application form in this newsletter or can pick one up at the museum. We look forward to hearing about our early settlers.



Jerry Beatty

It has been a busy year maintaining, repairing and enhancing our museum and 9-building Heritage Village. The Pioneer Church has new cedar siding, wheelchair accessible ramp and is scheduled to be painted. The ramps to Mt. Hope School, Freeman's General Store and the South River Meeting House will be power washed and stained.

An epoxy/polyaspartic concrete coating will be applied to the Carver Museum floor in August. Next year we hope to install new ceiling tile and paint the interior of the 37 year old Carver building, provided funding is available.

The historic HARRISON'S sign that graced the northeast corner of the Indianola Square is currently leaning against the Carver's west side. We are looking for someone interested in pursuing what should be done with this sign.

After 50 years our museum building needs work in keeping storm water out of our basement and providing a disability entrance. We need to provide this for persons who cannot navigate our ground floor to basement chairlift. We are working on a plan that would allow door access and keep flooding water from gushing under and around the door during heavy rain storms. This is a next year project that will have significant cost but will make the basement drier and more accessible for our popular model railroaders exhibit. During the Warren County Fair there were over 200 children and adults visiting the train display.

Thanks to a donation and \$1,800 grant from the Warren County Philanthropic Partnership, a new Warren County Historical Society website has been designed. It shows many of our exhibits and connects us to other organizations. Check out our website and let us know what you like or dislike about it. We would appreciate your input as we strive to improve our ability to share information and communicate with the public.

Our Log Cabin Festival the last full weekend in September (Saturday, September 26th) is our major fundraising event. We hope all residents interested in preserving Warren County artifacts, historical information and our Heritage Village will attend this year's event. We will also be looking for volunteers to setup/take down, staff, cook/bake, enter the parade and help with the many tasks that make this event a success!

Thanks for your donations and volunteering that allow us to do the things listed above. You are the Warren County Historical Society.

STORIES & MEMORIES ABOUT HARRISON'S DIMESTORE

By Janet Harrison Clevenger

My memories may be a little different from others, as I'm the youngest of Rex Harrison's three children. Reflecting on my childhood, I am so proud of my dad for pursuing his dream to have a store that provided a variety of things that people may need or want.

I remember how special Sundays were, when my family would go to the dime store together. My mom would shop for the items she needed, while I happily spent time in my two favorite aisles, the toy aisle and the candy aisle.

Back in those days the candy was kept in large glass bins with sliding doors. I would sneak delectable chocolates from several different bins, convinced that just a few pieces would never be missed.

I also remember the elevator. I was never allowed to use it without dad or mom. My brother Bob actually caught his leg in that elevator once and ended up on crutches for quite a while!

Another special memory is when my dad allowed me to participate in the Ridiculous Day Parade. The Harrison employees would dress up, and I felt so honored to be included in the parade festivities.

I also enjoyed working at the dime store. However, I quickly learned from our manager that my desire to visit and talk with everyone checking out was not always the fastest or most efficient way to run a store.

Long before the era of big-box chains and overnight shipping, our family home store was a cornerstone of the Indianola town square.

The store did not simply sell toys, candy and household goods, it offered connection. Looking back on those simpler days, we realize the true value of the neighborhood dime store. It was never just the merchandise on the shelves, but the sense of community gathered inside.

I will forever be grateful for the many memories I have of the dime store. Forever grateful for my first page numbers family and forever thankful to have been raised in Indianola, a small community filled with kind and loving people in every store around the square.

HARRISON'S Five & Dime

The R, M, Harrison Company was founded in 1911 by R.M. Harrison of Hampton Iowa.

Mr. Haarrison was in the banking and lumber business. In 1929 he lost everything except \$20,000, which he was able to save. In those days it took \$5,000 to start a store.

R, M. had four children: a daughter, Bernie, who was married to Maury Vilmont, and three sons, Charles : "Chuck", Glen and Rex. In 1931 R.M. took part of his \$20,00 and opened three stores in Hampton, Waverly and Eldora. He gave the Waverly store to his son-in-law Maury Vilmont, the Hampton store to his son Chuck and since Glen and Rex were still in High school, he hired someone to run the Eldora Store. The Eldora store failed to prosper and was sold a few years later. In 1935 a store was opened in Indianola. The original store was located in a portion of what was the old People's Bank on the east side of Indianola's square. At the same time they opened an Ice Cream Store, which was located on the north side of the square. Blen Harrison had graduated from high school and was given the Indianola stroe to manage. The Ice Cream Store was managed by Eddie Walker. After Rex Harrison graduated from high school, he came to Indianola to work at the Ice Cream Store.

In 1943 a store opened in Winterset and Glen moved there and Jack Hilton was hired to manage the Indianola store. In 1946 Glen Harrison left the company and moved to Colorado and Jack Hilton moved to Winterset and Rex Harrison became manager at Indianola.

Rex died in Indianola in 1962, leaving his wife Shirley and children Bob, Jenny and Janet. In 1959 Marvin Boland joined Harrison's Company as a high school student through the Distributed Education Program in Iowa Falls. After graduation he went into the National Guard for 6 months active duty and upon returning in January 1961 went to work for Harrison's as Assistant Manager at Iowa Falls. He married his wife Lorena in 1962 and became a manager in 1965 in LeMars.

In July, 1969 the Bollins moved to Indianola to manage the Harrison's Store. Marlin eventually became President of the Company. In 1985 the Harrison Company sold all of its stores. Marlin and Lorena purchased the Indianola business but store belonged to Shirley Harrison. In October of 1985 purchased the silk-screening equipment and inventory of screens from Hogan's Sporting Goods Store and added a Sporting Goods Department. They kept the Harrisons name but added V & S (Value & Sincerity) because their main supplier was Otter Company, who supplied True Value and V&S stores. In October, 1988 they purchased the building.



1930s Harrison's Dime Store and Ice Cream Store



This year during the removal of Harrison's facade, they removed the large Harrison sign. It landed at WCHS. Any ideas of what should be done with it? You can see how huge the "H" is.



Do you remember how filled with necessities the old variety store was?





Warren County Pioneer Ancestor Recognition

In celebration of the **250th Anniversary of the United States**, the **Warren County Historical Society** will recognize and honor the **pioneer families who settled in Warren County, Iowa by 1876.**

To have your ancestor included in the **2026 Warren County Pioneer Family Program**, please complete the **Pioneer Family Application** and submit your ancestor's story along with supporting documentation.

Eligible pioneers are individuals who settled in Warren County from the **late 1840s through 1876**. All approved Warren County Pioneer Ancestors will be formally honored during the **WCHS Log Cabin Festival on September 26th at 2:00 p.m.**



2026 WARREN COUNTY, IOWA PIONEER FAMILY APPLICATION (Settled in Warren County by 1876)

Application must be received by September 10, 2026

Contact Person _____ Address _____
Street Town State Zip
Phone # _____ E-mail _____

Name of Warren County Pioneer _____

List immediate family members of this pioneer _____

Date your ancestor came to Warren County, Iowa. _____

Warren County Settlement Location Town _____ Township Location _____

Provide your ancestors Warren County Story with documentation such as census, land, birth, military, marriage, and death records.

Certificates shall be awarded at the Saturday, September 26th Log Cabin Festival at 2:00 pm in the WCHS Museum.

Please mail, E-mail or personally deliver to Warren County Historical Society by September 10th.

Warren County Historical Society

PO Box 256

Indianola, Iowa 50125

contact@warrencountyhistory.org

LOG CABIN FESTIVAL

**WARREN COUNTY, IOWA BEFORE 1876
HONORING OLD SETTLERS & COMMUNITY**

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26th
2026**

10:00 Parade-Square to WCHS

**10:30-4:00 Heritage Village Tours, Scare Crows,
Quilt Show, Music and Dancing, Pioneer Costume
Dressup/Photo Opportunity, Games & outside activ-
ities**

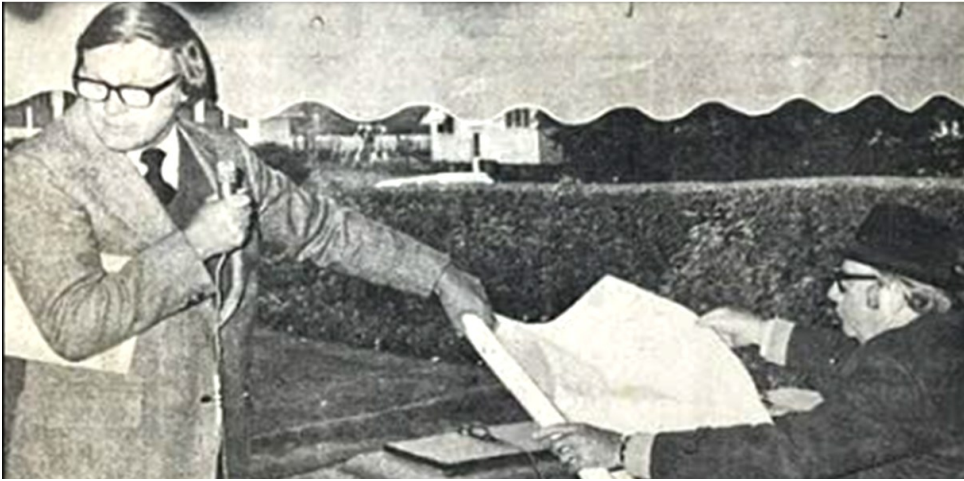
In the Museum:

11:00 to 1:00 Ham Ball Dinner \$15.00

**1:00-1:30 Honoring WCHS Royalty & Free 250th
Birthday Cake, while it lasts**

2:00 Honoring Warren County Pioneer Families

3:00 Pie & Baked Goods Auction



WCHS GIFTED WITH TIME CAPSULES

During the construction of Warren County's new courthouse, three time capsules were discovered. One metal box was damaged during the digging and papers got wet. A second was opened and the air caused disintegration of the paper items. One is still sealed.

Dr. Joe Walt, who was in charge of collecting material for the 1976 Bicentennial Time Capsule presents a map of Indianola to James Weinman, project finance chair. The map was the last item to be placed in the vault during a brief ceremony in Buxton Park. Others participating were Don Koontz, chairman of the Simpson College Bicentennial Committee, Mayor Kenneth Smith and Wendell Tutt, chairman of the Time Capsule Committee. A sun dial eventually will mark the vault's location with instructions that it is to be opened July 4, 2076.

It is obvious that through time the capsule locations became unknown. No doubt the capsule placers thought the courthouse lawn would be a safe keeping place.

Above is a 1976 capsule that is buried in Buxton Park and is to be opened July 4, 2076. Who is going to know or remember this event fifty years from now? Maybe this 50 year reminder will help someone remember in 2076.

To create a time capsule that will last until it is retrieved, follow these guidelines:

- Choose a durable, waterproof container made of materials like stainless steel or high-quality plastic.
- Use acid-free materials for items inside to prevent deterioration over time.
- Seal the container tightly to protect against moisture and air exposure.
- Include a detailed inventory list of the contents and a note explaining the purpose of the capsule.
- Store the capsule in a stable, climate-controlled environment, away from direct sunlight and extreme temperatures.
- Mark the location and date of burial clearly for future retrieval.

Did you know that **Family Time Capsules** can be created. These could be a shorter time type of capsule.

The Milestone: Wedding, graduation Birth

A Year in the Life: Items that reflect a special year in the family

Holiday: Artifacts from a special holiday

Friendship: Collect items from group of friends

Dream: Participants include their aspirations and dreams to their future selves, vision boards, or life-time goals



Three Warren County Time Capsules given to Warren County Historical Association. Now we need to figure out what to do with them. Two were damaged and opened and the third is unopened.

LYDIA (JACKSON) MYRICK

INDIANOLA RECORD, July, 1891

Mrs. Myrick was born in Maine in 1804. She married Elias Myrick in Athens, Ohio on Dec, 24, 1822. She came to Palmyra Township with her husband Elias on October 11, 1845, when it was still occupied by Native Americans.

Elias came ahead to look over the area and with him came Henry James and William Freel.

They camped one night 1 mile northeast of what is now Palmyra. They awoke the next morning to see smoke curling from the Native wigwams. After looking over the area and picking out the place they hoped to settle they returned to eastern Iowa and Washington County where they had left their families. There they remained until the government would let them settle west of Red Rock.

When they returned to the land he had chosen Mr. Myrick built his log house one mile north of (now) Palmyra.

The wild prairie, brush patches, hazel nut bushes and wild fruit grew in abundance. The deer and elk were also plentiful for meat. There were wild turkeys, prairie chickens and quail which provided them not only with meat but their eggs. However, BREAD the staff of life, was sometimes a luxury. It was the next summer that they found their corn meal was running low. South river, Middle River and the Des Moines River were all overflowing their banks all over the lands.

The Myricks, the James and the Freels cut dead elm logs and made a raft large enough for their wagon and rowed it across South River.

They then made the oxen team swim the river. When they reached the river bank on the other side the oxen were hitched to the wagon and William Freel started on his way to Washington County (Keokuk) where he obtained a supply of corn meal for bread.

Now in those days the wagon wheels had to be kept greased but they did not have anything compared to what is used today. Pine tar and animal fat were mixed to lubricate the wagon. The tar bucket was carried outside the wagon but when he came to a stream Mr. Freel put the tar bucket inside the wagon to keep out the water. But the tar bucket became upset. When he returned home they were happy to have bread again until they found the bread had a very bad taste and found the pungent odor of the pine tar had perfumed all the corn meal and they were forced to eat the off-flavored bread or go without. In the fall of 1848 the Myricks cut and stacked about seventy tons of blue stem grass hay and stacked it a few rods west of Turkey Creek where the north and west branches of the creek join in Section 32. About twenty feet from the stack a furrow was plowed, when the frost had killed the grass between the two furrows, the grass was burned that space gave the hay protection from prairie fires. But the prairie fires did come with a high wind, the flames leaped the space and destroyed their hay. They had worked so hard with only the old swathe, a wooden pitchfork and a wooden hand rake that they had made themselves, were the only tools or implements used for making hay in 1848.

The other tools used on the farm were the ax, maul, wedge, hoe, grain cradle, the sod plow and a single shovel plow.

For entertainment they would hold a party called a frolic. A good fiddler was much sought after. Later when the school houses were built they had church services, spelling schools and singing schools.

Natives would often enter the home when mother was cooking. They would go to the fireplace and look in the pot, and if they like what they saw in the pot they would stay to eat. They did not wait for an invitation but just took seats at the table and helped themselves. The Warren County Native were known as Woodland Indian. They lived from the woods and the land. They evidently were friendly as there is no record of any trouble in Warren County. For many years they returned to Warren County to hunt and fish. Myrick had eleven children. Among them was Roxy James who married Henry James and came to Warren County with her parents. Mrs. Myrick had son Alva Myrick, who lived in Kansas.

Lydia lived to 97 years old and at that time had 235 descendants which included 70 grandchildren, 146 great grandchildren and 12 great great grandchildren. She died October 23, 1903 at the home of her son Alva in Kansas.

Elias Myrick was born
November 24, 1800
and died May 26, 1863.



by Gerald Schimmelpfennig & Linda Beatty

1933, March 1 Indianola Mayor Briggs met with William Buxton III, Ray Sullivan, Bessie Matson Ellis, Lois Hardin, J.S. Hamilton and others to create a historical society

1939, Discouraged group met with well established Madison County Historical Society for help

1942, WCHS acquired fireproof vault of Don Berry to preserve their archives

1963, Organization was reorganized

1964, Aug. 1 Officers elected: Pres. Don Berry, Treas. William Buxton III, Secretary Helen Carpenter

1965, WCHS incorporated with 85 members and met at the Arcade Roomm People's Bank (now Regions)

1967, Purchased Mt. Hope School and moved to Fairview Park. Renovated and furnished it for \$525

1968, Warren County Genealogical Society was established as part of WCHS

1969, 200 members

1970, Given 1873 Sandyville Christian Church. Upon examination the structure was found to be unstable and unmovable

1972, Wallace McKee family gave Wayman's 1850s log cabin and 1st fundraising Log Cabin Days held

1973, Log cabin was moved log by log, reconstructed and furnished. 15 volunteers and 670 hours

1975, 1st Log Cabin Day's Parade and Warren County Fair Board gave WCHS property to construct a museum

1976, Sept. 26 Broke ground for museum, Charles Beam, President; Frank Ford Sr., Museum fundraising Chair; Corwin Hicks, Master of Ceremonies and Carl

1989, Nov. 29 Carver laundry shack was donated By Godwin Brothers Construction and moved to museum concrete slab at the museum complex

1990, Sept 9 the 35 feet x 30 feet metal George Washington Carver museum was completed. Thanks to Lois & Ed Carty. Ed also wrote a booklet about Carver's time in Indianola

1996, Don & Deloris VanRyswyk give South River Meeting House. It had been moved from Ackworth to William Clarkson Moffitt's farm. In March it moved to WCHS

April 2009, Dwight McCormick got WCHS Website online

2010, March \$800 Tourism Grant from Indianola Chamber for printing of 1,000 WCHS brochures to be placed around Warren County and Tourism Areas

2010, May Warren County Philanthropic Partnership Grant for \$3,000 and donations from Wayne Dillard and the 3 Barker brothers helped create a ramp and hand rail, making the entrance to the museum and library accessible.

2010, \$2,500 Grant from Iowa Cultural Affairs (SOS) Grant helped provide a computer server

2012, March Juanita Ott with the help of Toni Rath has gotten all accession sheets from past years entered digitally into our system

2013, May Log Cabin arsonist fire set. Lost an original window and several logs were replaced

2013, Aug. Geraldine Barker's great nephews added a ramp to Mt. Hope. Funded by donation from former Mayor Kenneth Smith and wife Florence who had taught at Mt. Hone in Lincoln Townshin