



**Henderson County Genealogy
and Family History Society**
110 Hill Crest Dr., Biggsville, IL 61418
hendcolibrary@gmail.com 309-627-2450
Summer, 2024

Hend-Co Hills
entrance on US Route 34
Biggsville, Illinois

June Meeting – The next meeting of the society will be held on Thursday, June 20 at 7 pm at the Henderson County Library in Biggsville. Janet Stubbs will present the program about the Phelps House in Oquawka. She will recount the history of this house and its importance to Henderson County over the years. She will also talk about recent events and future plans for the Phelps House. Representatives of the Henderson County Historical Society will give an update on this year's activities at the Raritan Museum and the Phelps House.



There will be a short business meeting afterwards to approve two genealogy society matters.

April Meeting – Yesenia Lambert, the Henderson County Public Library Director, gave a presentation about our new digitized collection of historical newspapers. She demonstrated how to access, search, and save newspapers from the database. According to Yesenia, the new online resource aims to preserve the county's local newspapers dating back to the 19th century and to improve accessibility to our newspapers for library patrons and those who no longer live in the county.

Yesenia created a PowerPoint presentation on how to search and save newspapers from the database. Her presentation is on the library's main website. This shows people how to access the information from home computers. The library staff will assist library patrons who use the library's computers.

New Scrapbooks to Peruse – We have assembled several albums and scrapbooks donated to the genealogy society by Sally Rankin Bell. Bill Leonard scanned and reproduced them into four books for the convenience of researchers. They are available in the genealogy room at the Henderson County Library. The books contain photographs and newspaper articles about people and places in the area. The time and energy Sally put into this project is a great asset to us. We thank her for her gift. In addition Bill scanned two albums originally collected by Louise Gibb Milligan. These are also available in the genealogy room.



Kemp Cemetery – “At one of the highest points in Henderson County, Illinois, on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi River Valley, rests 65 souls, including 2 Civil War Veterans. Several were born in the 1700’s. Many were among the first pioneers who settled this land in the early 1800’s when Illinois was first being settled. These people were laid to rest on an acre and one-half of land known as the Kemp Cemetery named after John Kemp, first white homesteader to own this land.” (Ron Kemp, *Kemp Cemetery*, 1999)

The first burial was that of John J. Elliott, son of J.H. and N. Elliott. He was born 15-Oct-1841 and died 24-Dec-1841.

A tall tablet of local limestone reads: SUSAN, Daughter of J.H. & M. ELLIOTT, DIED March 27, 1848, Aged 13 Yrs, 5 Mos, & 14 Ds., AMANDA M., Daughter of J.H. & M. ELLIOTT, DIED Aug. 21, 1847, Aged 6 Mos, & 24 Ds., JOHN J., Son of J.H. & N. Elliott, DIED Dec. 24 1841, Aged 2 Mos, & 3 Ds.

The last burial in Kemp Cemetery was that of Jessie L. Tate who died August 5, 1924.

(Photograph by Ron Kemp)

Henderson County Museum and Alexis Phelps House 2024 Summer Hours –

Museum – Main Street, Raritan

Thurs., July 4 10 am – 2 pm
 Sat., Aug 3 10 am – 1 pm
 Sat., Aug. 31 10 am – 1 pm

Alexis Phelps House – 101 Hancock Street, Oquawka

Sat., June 8 10 am – 2 pm
 Sat., July 6 10 am – 2 pm
 Sat., Aug. 10 10 am – 2 pm
 Sat., Sept. 28 10 am – 2 pm

Also open by appointment

Admission is free of charge, but donations are always welcome and appreciated.

For more information, please contact the Henderson County Historical Society at 309-221-2711 or by email at hendersoncohistoricalsociety@gmail.com.

High School Adds Religious Course – (*The Stronghurst Graphic*, June 9, 1932) “The Ministerial Association met in the local Stronghurst high school together with Prof. Magnusson, Wednesday morning to discuss the possible new course of religious education. Motion prevailed that since the High School Board have given their consent that religion may be taught in the high school during the coming school season of 1932-33, that the Stronghurst Ministerial Association accept the opportunity to make out a course and offer it to all the high school students this fall at the opening of school. The course is being planned to fit in with the intellectual and spiritual development of the child throughout the four years spent in high school. A two-hour per week course will thus be offered to each class. Rev. Hutton will teach the freshmen class; Rev. Vissering, the sophomore; Rev. Dees, the junior and Rev. Eklof, the senior.”

Assets of Media and Stronghurst Banks Sold – (*Stronghurst Graphic*, August 25, 1938)



“The remaining assets of two banks in Henderson County were sold at public auction to the highest bidders. John Brook of Stronghurst bought the remaining assets of the State Bank of Media for \$470; this bank has been in the hands of the receiver since Dec., 1931. Charles Fort, Jr. of Stronghurst purchased the remaining assets of the State Bank of Stronghurst for \$515; this bank has

been in receivership since Dec. 1, 1932.

“If the sales are approved by the state auditor and circuit court, a complete report of all transactions of the banks since they went into receivership will be made to the state auditor. The remaining cash on hand will then be distributed among the depositors in a final dividend.

“All papers and books will be removed from the banks to the state department to be destroyed or placed on permanent file. Anyone having any papers at these banks which they want, should get them immediately.

Oldest Active Ford In County Thought To Be Johnson's “T” – (*Stronghurst Graphic*, May 29, 1946) (A Follow-Up to “Who Has the Oldest Ford Car and Truck in This County” from *Stronghurst Graphic*, May 22, 1946) “Mr. Henry Johnson of Oquawka has a Model T Ford car which he purchased 31 years ago and it still gives him good service. This is thought to be the oldest Ford in active service in Henderson county. If anyone has an older Ford in use this newspaper or the county's Ford dealer, Davison Motor Sales at Stronghurst, would be glad to get the facts for the next issue of this paper. This is the 50th anniversary month of the Ford automobile.



“Mr. Johnson's Model T is a three door touring, and was purchased in 1915. It has black leather seats. There is no door on the left hand side of the front or drivers seat.

“Due to Mr. Johnson's meticulous care the car is still in running condition after its 31 years of use. The motor runs like a top, and Mr. Johnson still uses the car for short trips. The first Model T's had convertible tops, and Mr. Johnson usually goes

sailing by with the top down on mild days.

“The Ford has a four cylinder motor, and one of the old types of horns, on the left side of the automobile that squawks like a chicken when you push the button down....It has a real self starter, that is, a real live one. YOU are the self starter with a good stout crank....On bad roads the old Ford will still pass up most of the newer models.”



Maple Grove School – 1957 – 1958:

Alice Powell, teacher.

Back row – Lyle Long, Lynn Long, Doug Bennett, Roger Malcolm, Nancy Shunick. Middle Row – Phillip Malcolm, Bill White, Calvin Malcolm, Donna Fox. Front Row – Rita Roe, Steve Shunick, Randy Fox. Absent – Judy Shunick.

(Photo submitted by Roger Malcolm)

Maple Grove School (Stronghurst Township) Reunion – Students who attended Maple Grove School are invited to attend a school reunion and potluck lunch on June 22, 2024 at 11:30 am in the Stronghurst park. The event is open to anyone who feels they have a connection with the school by having gone there, had a family member who went there, or just lived in the neighborhood! Bring pictures, memorabilia, and memories to share. Maple Grove School was located about four miles west of Stronghurst on what is now County Road 7. The original building opened in the 1870s. The second and last building closed in 1958. (Another Maple Grove School was located in Rozetta Township.)

Biggsville High School Reunion #25 – by Trish Alexander

The Biggsville High School Alumni Association held its 25th reunion on May 25th, 2024, at the American Legion in Monmouth, Illinois. There were 43 people in attendance for the gathering which included alumni and spouses.

Social hour began at 11:30. The tables were beautifully decorated by Kay Marguerite, class of '61, with red and white carnation bouquets and memorabilia donated through the years. Others on the committee who helped make this another successful reunion are Marilyn Simmons, Max Cole, Trish Alexander, and Dean and Ginny Clark. Priscilla Saben has offered to be on the committee for our future reunions.

The very delicious meal, cooked and served by the American Legion, was at 12:30. On the menu were ham balls and roast beef and a whole buffet that was thoroughly enjoyed by all. The American Legion provided the tables, chairs, tablecloths, servers, drinks and just about anything needed.

Before lunch, Russell Liston gave the welcome, Jon Graham led the Pledge of Allegiance and Dean Clark gave the invocation.

After eating, we continued our tradition of singing our school loyalty songs from 1937 and 1950. Trish Alexander then read the minutes from the 2022 reunion. She announced that we have a “big red book” on display in the back of the room full of pictures and minutes



and newspaper articles from reunions dating back to 1975. Marilyn Simmons gave the finance report. We have \$3,156.31 with all bills paid. She also read a few notes from alumni who were not able to be there for one reason or other. Marilyn has been the one to communicate with all alumni and handle finances, etc., for quite a few years.

Dean then read the names of 28 classmates, from the classes of 1941 through 1960, who have passed away since May 28, 2022, after our last reunion.

He also introduced Rosie Melvin from the class of 1943, who was enjoying this year's reunion with her daughter, Anne Hass.

Dean then led a discussion about a topic that has been heavy on our minds, "Should we continue these reunions with our numbers dwindling so?" BHS closed with the graduating class of 1960. Our alumni are all in their 80's at least. The general consensus was that we enjoy these get togethers too much to stop now. Let's have a more informal gathering with communication by e-mail. Marilyn will begin collecting emails as she receives them. Dean announced that when we do discontinue the reunions, any funds left over will be donated to the Henderson County Library, and he asked that everyone please share their email addresses with Marilyn.

A good time was had by all. The reunion committee thanks all who attended and who keep in touch with news of their lives and/or send donations. Hope to see you all in 2026!

Media High School and Stronghurst High School Reunions – The Media High School Alumni will have its reunion on Saturday, June 29 at St. Patrick's Community Center northeast of Raritan. The Stronghurst High School Alumni banquet is Saturday, June 22 in Burlington. Details of the events will be in the Fall, 2024 newsletter.

Grant Is Renewed for Illinois Newspaper Project – (*Illinois State Genealogy Society Quarterly*, Winter, 1992) "The Illinois State Historical Society recently received a second 3-year National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) grant for nearly \$600,000. The project is an effort to catalog and preserve all papers ever published in the state....It could take as many as a dozen years to complete and may ultimately include microfilming fragile 19th and 20th century newspapers to prevent them from crumbling into dust."

(We don't know how many newspapers were microfilmed through this project before the practice of microfilming became obsolete and was discontinued. Thanks to our library's collection being converted to a digital format through Newspapers.com we have access to the Henderson County newspapers online. The last step of the process is getting the hard copies of The Henderson County Quill, The Oquawka Current, and The Prairie Review converted to the digital format. These newspapers were not microfilmed so they have not been available to the public since they were published beginning in 2014.)

Quarterly Newsletter – Beginning with the Spring, 2024 issue, the *Henderson County Genealogy Newsletter* will be available to read online on the Henderson County District Library's website in the *Community* section. We would like to thank the library for making this space available. Please submit articles and photographs for the newsletter by mailing or emailing them to the library's addresses that are printed on the last page of the newsletter.



The Good Ole Days – George Jamison Farm –

contributed by Russell Liston

“This picture was taken circa 1906 on the farm of Geo. M. Jamison.

“The plat book of 1876 shows this farm to be in the name of above. It stayed in the Jamison name until 1913. After that it went from heirs to others. In 1934 it was purchased by a Lewis Long. The first tenant for Mr. Long was Frank & Jessie Anderson who moved there that

same year. Their son Dale, also had a brother Albert and a sister, attended Record School grades 1 – 8. The Anderson family stayed there until 1954. In 1954 Bob and Betty Seymour rented the farm and were there until 1970. They then built a new house just west of the Long farm on the old Cochran homestead. The old Jamison/Long farm was purchased in 1977 by Ellen Graham.

“Dale stated that he can remember as a boy part of the old race track still recognizable. “In the background in the picture you can see the old house and barn.”

Picture donated by Bob Seymour

The History of Hend-Co Hills (from English III and U.S. History honors project written by Brad Henry, Union High School, 1998) “An important attribute of all Illinois residents is their sense of community togetherness. In the rural towns, everyone pitches in at one time or another to make their community better. One such development occurred in Henderson County around the end of the 1960's. Henderson County, Illinois, is a rural, agriculturally-based county. Most of the county is littered with small towns laced with country farms. There are really no large cities in the county. There are also very few entertainment places. The nearest cities are either Burlington, Iowa or Galesburg, so when the idea came up to create a recreational facility in Henderson County the citizens did not hesitate to support it.

“The history of the Hend-Co Hills recreational facility begins around 1968. A group from Stronghurst, which is in the southern part of the county, had been discussing for some time the idea of putting in a public pool, while a group in the northern part of the county was talking about creating a public golf course. The groups soon found out about each other and decided to hold a meeting to discuss their ideas. The meeting took place around the middle of 1968 and was attended by nine people. The nine people in attendance became the Board of Directors for the Hend-Co Hills project. Charlie McChesney was appointed President and Ivan Jacobs was appointed Vice-president. Russell Liston became the Treasurer. Other members included Verna Stephenson (sic), Art Olson, Bill Nolan, Bob Hamilton, Roland Wilson, and Haven Vaughn. The treasury for the project was started by everyone throwing in a dollar.

“The FHA, Farmer's Home Administration, is a government agency which financed many loans for rural recreational facilities in the 1960s. The Board decided that a government

loan would be the best way for them to finance the project. The Board contacted the local branch of the FHA to discuss the possibility of getting a loan. Arnold Wright was the head of the local division of the FHA. Wright told the Board to search for a site for the facility while he worked on getting them the loan.

“The Board of Directors looked at 26 farms in Henderson County. They needed a plot of land that was relatively flat, consisted of enough land to build a golf course on, and was in a centralized place in the county. The land they found was located just west of Biggsville and was owned by the Worthy Acres Company. The Worthy Acres Corporation had turned 20 acres of the land into a housing development. Worthy Acres agreed to sell the remaining 134 acres to the Board of Directors. The only problem was that the Board still did not have any substantial amount of money in their treasury. As a money raising venture, the Board sold lifetime memberships for only \$100. This brought in the needed funds and in October of 1968 the Board of Directors bought the 134 acres of land from the Worthy Acres Company....

(To follow is summary of problems with the FHA during 1969 that required a trip to Washington, D.C. to meet with the FHA administrator and many of the Board's Illinois representatives.)

“In the spring of 1969 construction began on the facility. The large pond, which lines hole number nine, was built. Little else was done then because the Board still didn't know if they would get an FHA loan. In February of 1970 the Board of Directors received a check for \$274,000. Their FHA loan application had been improved....

“As soon as the FHA loan arrived the work began on the facility. One of the first things done was that a name was chosen for the course. A contest was held in the local school system and the name Hend-Co Hills was chosen. The golf course was designed and built by the Tri-State Aero Engineering Company of Bettendorf, Iowa. C.L. Cook and Sons built the clubhouse and the pool shower house. When the recreational facility was first constructed it consisted of a nine hole golf course, a swimming pool, and a campground. Other buildings were added later. The first manager of the facility was Bob Schroeder. He took care of both the business and maintenance side of the facility. Bob Schroeder lived in a trailer on the campgrounds.

“Hend-Co Hills reached its peak very early. In the middle 1970's it had 400 members with a waiting list to get on. The rates during this time were also very high. For a two person membership it was \$350. In the early 1970's the trap shoot building was constructed. The pro-shop and cart building were built during the middle 1970's. During the middle 1970's, rates were raised and memberships dropped off. The course also began to acquire a large amount of debt. Towards the end of the 1970's the management drastically lowered the membership rates, but former members didn't come back.

(Brad included a newspaper photograph of the 1970 board of directors of Hend-Co Hills in his paper. They were Charles McChesney, President; Ivan Jacobs, Vice President; Mrs. S.C. (Janet) Lindo, Secretary; Russell Liston, Treasurer; and Directors William Nolan, Bob Hamilton, Jon Graham, Roland Wilson, and Art Olson.)

“By the middle 1980's the course was in debt to the FHA for \$225,000 and owed about \$11,000 to other businesses. The course and facilities were also becoming dilapidated. At

this time the course operations were run by a 68 (sic) member board. In 1987 Jim and Elaine Rima became the managers of the course. When they took over there were only 54 members. Jim and Elaine used phone calls and letters to increase the membership by 100 members. The membership in 1987 for an entire family was \$195. Elaine ran the pro shop and much of the business side. Jim, with only one other hired hand and 2 mowers, maintained the entire course. It took them only 1 ½ years to pay back the \$11,000 debt and start paying on the FHA loan debt. After two years they had reached their goal of 270 members. They used many things to keep the facility going. They reopened the restaurant in the pro-shop which had been closed for some time. They also reopened the pool which had been closed because of needed repairs. The droughts of 1990 and 1991 burned up the grass on the golf course. All of the greens had to be rebuilt and reseeded. The facility's business and membership fell.”

Parts II and III of “The History of Hend-Co Hills” will follow in September and December issues of the newsletter.

Dan Shook, Pioneer Stronghurst Restaurant Owner – (*Stronghurst Graphic*, January 29, 1942) “Dan Shook, a resident of Stronghurst for the past half century passed away after a lingering illness Monday night, January 26 at the home of his son, Roy and family. Funeral services were held this afternoon (Thursday) at the Mellor Funeral Home and burial was in the Biggsville cemetery.

“Mr. Shook would have been 87 years old if he had lived until February 25th. He and his wife who survives him, would have observed their 64th wedding anniversary February 18. After their marriage they farmed for fourteen years and moved to Stronghurst.

“Mr. and Mrs. Shook engaged in the restaurant business and had the reputation of serving the best eats in this section of the country. It was in Shook's restaurant that the first phonograph was played in Stronghurst. It drew crowds from miles around to hear the magic music.

“When Mr. and Mrs. Shook lived on a farm young folks would often gather at their home for old fashioned parties and dances. Mr. Shook often recalled the memory of some girls from Burlington who were in the crowd of young people. They were the envy of all the other girls because their hair was so long it touched the floor and they tucked it around their waists while dancing.

“Mr. Shook was also known as a great trader. He was a kindly man of friendly disposition and well known over a wide area.”



The Dan Shook Restaurant was in the building on the east side of Broadway in Stronghurst where the present Fisher's Food Center stands. The building was later owned by R.B. Porter as a meat market and Ardell Perrine Jewelry.

Photo courtesy of Raymond and Eva Johnson

Dues for the 2024 Year -- If you have not paid your 2024 dues there will be a red notice with this newsletter. Your dues may be mailed to the address at the top of the newsletter or dropped off at the library in Biggsville. Thank you for your continuing support of our society and its endeavors.

Your Help Is Needed – You probably know this already, but according to our by-laws we need to have a full slate of officers for the genealogy society. We are still short two officers. The vice-president presides over meetings in the absence of the president. The secretary keeps meeting minutes. These are both important positions. Please consider taking one of these offices. Contact President Trish Alexander to volunteer. Thank you in advance for taking one of the offices.

Perrine Store in Raritan, Illinois – While many banks and many small towns had serious, often terminal, financial problems during the Great Depression of the 1930s, some were fortunate to continue their businesses. In this newspaper advertisement from *The Raritan Reporter* of July 4, 1935 The Raritan State Bank and Perrine's Store joined forces to support their businesses and the town of Raritan.

The Raritan State Bank
 IS A GOOD SAFE PLACE TO
 SAVE MONEY

PERRINE'S STORE
 IS A GOOD SAFE PLACE TO SPEND IT

Plan an outing or picnic this week-end. The outdoors is beckoning. Health and happiness await you in the open air. To make your holiday enjoyable glance over these timely suggestions offered this week-end at money-saving prices.

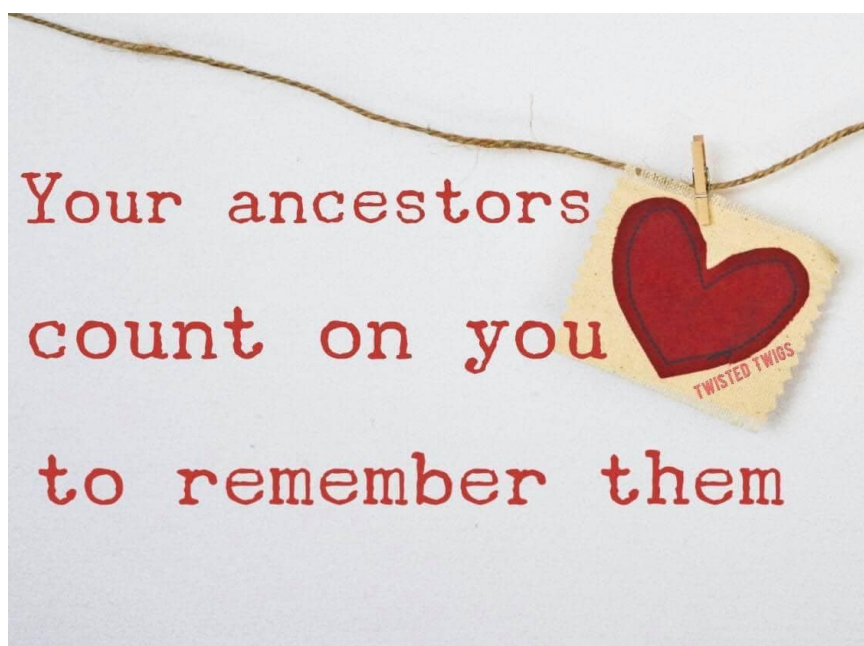


Cream Cheese Spreads ... 18c	Peanut Butter, lb. jar ... 25c
Maxwell House Coffee, lb. 29c	Pork and Beans, No. 2 can 10c
Early Riser Coffee, lb. ... 19c	Paradise Soda Crackers ... 10c
Mart Coffee, lb. 23c	Schulze Butter Cookies ... 15c
Red & White Vacuum	Grape Nuts, pkg. 17c
Packed Coffee 30c	Shredded Wheat Biscuits,
Shinola, white liquid	2 pkgs. 25c
Polish, bottle 9c	Super Suds, 2 pkgs. 17c
Crystal White Soap,	Palmolive Soap, 3 for ... 14c
5 giant bars 25c	Gold Dust, large 19c

We carry a full line of Picnic Supplies, Paper Plates, Cups and Napkins at low prices.

FRESH MEATS, FRESH FRUITS, FRESH VEGETABLES.

Henderson County Family and Genealogy Society
110 Hill Crest Dr
Biggsville, IL 61418



Henderson County Public Library

hendcolibrary@gmail.com

309-627-2450

Library hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday – 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Thursday – 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Saturday – 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. (open through noon hour)

Closed Sundays and holidays

Genealogy meetings held on the third Thursday of February, April, June, August, and October