

Jasper County Historical Society

The Jasper County Historical Society (JCHS) was organized on June 30, 1966 and incorporated as a nonprofit on August 28, 1969. The JCHS meets monthly September to December and February to June. The Society has a museum that is open to the public on the first and third Saturdays of each month. It also maintains several historic structures at the Jasper County Fairgrounds that are open to the public during fair week.

The JCHS collects and preserves items of significance to the history of Jasper County and provides speakers for local groups, schools, and other groups outside the County. JCHS meets with individuals and families seeking genealogical information and photographs from its collections. It also publishes the *Vintage Views* magazine.

Weston Cemetery

The first burial in Weston Cemetery occurred on August 24, 1842, (five years after the first settlers appeared in what is now Rensselaer). The owner of the original section of the cemetery, Dr. Henry Weston who was the son-in-law of the eventual city's namesake, gave the land to the City of Rensselaer in 1868. When the city platted the cemetery in 1873, there were already about 200 recorded burials.

There are over 700 veterans buried in Weston Cemetery. Veteran burials encompass all wars beginning with the War of 1812. In Section A of the old section there is a row of Civil War veterans buried next to each other. This area is known to cemetery employees as "Civil War Row". The military ranks of those within Weston Cemetery range from General (two), to private/airman and seaman.

The cemetery has been added to numerous times through purchases or gifts to arrive to its current size. In 2019 we will visit sections added in 1912 (G), 1913 (I East), and 1947 (U). A board of trustees governed the cemetery until the 1980's at which time the board was dissolved and the City of Rensselaer assumed full responsibility of the cemetery operations.

The Jasper County Historical Society
presents the Second Annual

Memories

Alive

at

WESTON

CEMETERY



September 21, 2019
3:00 pm CDT

Tour starts at the Hall Shelter in Brookside Park
Rain date September 28

Pre-Sale Tickets: Adults \$10; Under 12 \$5
Event-Day Tickets: Adults \$12; Under 12 \$6

The Walking Tour

This year's walk will be confined to the middle section of Weston Cemetery. It will feature eight of the 7500+ graves in Weston Cemetery. Costumed actors will tell the stories of the featured deceased. Those attending will be divided into groups, with each group starting at a different station on the tour.

We hope the event will be entertaining and educational. Because the Cemetery has many more than eight interesting stories to tell, the JCHS plans to make walking tours an annual event.

Featured Decedents

a) Mary Ellen Travis Thompson (1830-1916) was married to Alfred Thompson (1829-1896), a prominent banker in early Rensselaer. After he retired from banking in 1881, he devoted himself to his agricultural holdings. Mary Ellen was the driving force behind the establishment of Milroy Park, Rensselaer's first park, and the commissioning of the Milroy statue. Her son, Delos Thompson (1864-1950), was an organizer and later president of the State Bank of Rensselaer.

b) Dianah Evans Moore (1825-1904) was the daughter of Revolutionary War soldier John Evans (1761-1832) of South Carolina. Accounts of her life say that John Evans at one time owned a plantation with slaves, but lost them and moved West. She is the only Real Daughter of the Revolution (meaning that her father fought in the Revolution) buried in Weston Cemetery.

c) Lura Irene Luce Halleck (1865-1941) was a music teacher before she married Abraham Halleck (1860-1944), a prominent businessman, lawyer, and politician. He constructed the first telephone lines in Jasper County, connecting DeMotte, Kniman, and Wheatfield. Lura read law in her husband's office and was admitted to the bar, practicing law with her husband. She had five children. Son Charles (1900-1986) served in Congress from 1935 until 1969, rising to the position of minority leader.

d) Leandus "Lonny" Davisson (1895-1918) died in France during WWI. He participated in the Meuse-Argonne offensive, but as most American soldiers who died in service during WWI, his death was from disease, not battle wounds. Originally buried in France, his body was returned to the United States in the 1920s.

e) Howard "Lefty" Clark (1894-1979) followed his father into the newspaper business. He was a long-time reporter and editor of the *Rensselaer Republican* where he wrote a column called "The Gossiper." There is a bench dedicated to him in Hal Gray Park. His father Leslie Clark (1867-1952) was editor of the *Rensselaer Journal*, which merged with the *Rensselaer Republican* in 1908.

f) Frederick Fendig (1911-2001) was the son of Benjamin Fendig (1868-1934) who owned a drug store in Rensselaer. He became a banker at Harris Trust in Chicago, but left that profession when he purchased the Circle Z Ranch, a guest ranch in southern Arizona that was used as the set of several movies and television shows. Frederick never married and left no offspring.

g) George Zorich (1916-1967) was a star college football player at Northwestern University who played briefly for the Chicago Bears. He married local girl Jacqueline Dean (1924-2015) and settled in Rensselaer. Active in the parks where he promoted and developed summer athletic programs, the Zorich Park Shelter is named in his honor.

h) Benjamin Harris (1838-1916) was a successful and prosperous farmer. He held at least one public office, that of County Surveyor for Newton County from 1876 to 1878. He left much of his wealth to endow the Harris Homes for Widows and Orphans, which continues in existence. His old home in Newton Township is now a drug rehabilitation facility.

Cast

Mary Ellen Travis Thompson	Elizabeth Gray
Dianah Evans Moore	Melissa Ahler
Lura Irene Luce Halleck	Linda Buschman
Leandrus "Lonny" Davisson	Robert Pfaff
Howard "Lefty" Clark	John Rahe
Frederick Fendig	Phil Nagel
George Zorich	Chris Grow
Benjamin Harris	John Waymire

Tour Guides: Vandeline Baker, Karen Brunton, Beverly Crynes, Peggy Gratner, Judy Kanne, Nancy Klockow, Tori Robertson, Kristi Slaby

Cart Drivers: Roger Buschman, Kelly Cochran, Kevin Cochran, Darrald Crynes, Jennie DeWees, Kate Kanne, Janett Kingman, Sean Kingman

Planning, organizing, researching, etc.: Linda Buschman, Judy Kanne, Beverly Crynes, Kevin Cochran, Ronald DeMoss, Sue Caldwell, Janett Kingman, Roger Buschman, Robert Schenk, Melissa Smith, Melissa Widner, Joan Lindstrom, Ron Cox, and Jenny DeWees. Apologies to those who were omitted.

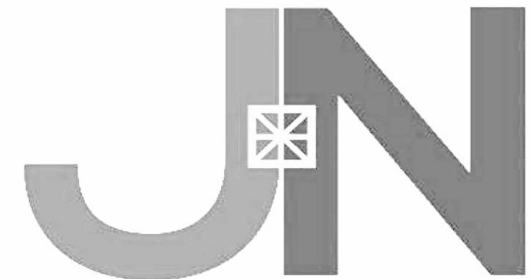
Rensselaer Printco printed the tickets and program.

Biographical Notes

Elizabeth Gray directed the 2019 production of the Carnegie Players *Drowsy Chaperone*. She is employed at Purdue University's School of Engineering. • An eighth grade history teacher, Melissa Moore Ahler is married to Dr John Ahler and mother of seven children. She is the great great great granddaughter of Dianah Evans Moore. • Linda Buschman is Vice President of the Jasper County Historical Society. • Rob Pfaff taught chemistry and Core at SJC until its closure. An avid genealogist, he is past president of the Indiana Sons of the American Revolution. • John Rahe taught theatre, speech and

Core at SJC until its closure. John is currently directing Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap* at The Memorial Opera House in Valparaiso. • Phil Nagel has had many roles with the Carnegie Players and is a member of Iroquois Valley Harmonizers. • Chris Grow was born and raised in Rensselaer where his ancestors were the first white people to arrive in Jasper county in the 1830s. • Born and raised in Rensselaer and a graduate of Saint Joseph's College, John Waymire is a retired elementary school teacher and principal who currently supervises student teachers for the University of Phoenix.

Special thanks to the Jasper Newton Foundation, the Jasper County Tourism Commission, and Wendy and Rick Odle for financial support.



JASPER NEWTON
Foundation

www.jaspernewtonfoundation.org
 (219) 866-5899



Support our Sponsors

<p>BEAVER & BEAVER P.C. Attorneys at Law Est. 1970 Eric J. Beaver Lori S. James 201 West Washington St Rensselaer, IN 47978 219.866.4171 www.beaverlegal.com</p>	<p>eMbers Venue & Station  HISTORIC DOWNTOWN RENSSELAER www.embersvenue.net (219) 869-9537</p>
<p><i>Rensselaer Monument, Inc.</i> 3455 W Clark Street Rensselaer, IN www.renselaermonument.com 219-866-8102 In Memory of Ronald L. Woolley & Rhonda Woolley Parker</p>	<p> STEINKE FUNERAL HOME www.steinkefuneralhome.com (219) 866-5151</p>
<p>Jackson Funeral Chapels Rensselaer www.jacksonfuneral.com 219-866-5123</p>	<p>The Law Office of Clifford M Robinson 214 W. Kellner Blvd, Suite 17 219-285-1436 cmrobinson@cmrobinsonlaw.com</p>
<p>Brown's Garden & Floral Shoppe 925 W Clark St, Rensselaer (219) 866-8735 www.brownsyardenandfloral.net</p>	<p>Autumn Trace 219-964-2110 <i>Chasing the Past Genealogical</i> <i>Services</i> chasingthepastgenealogy.us</p>

