

ILLIANA NEWS

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NEXT MEETING: The next meeting of the Illiana Steam and Power Association will be January 19th, at 6:30 P.M., at the Show Grounds. Bring a covered dish for a snack or a meal before the meeting. After the holidays we should be eating carrot and celery sticks. Lets all make an effort to get out to the meeting and renew old aquantences. Bring any show and tell (bragging) items to the meeting that might interest others.

REPORT OF LAST MEETINGS

The November meeting was at Ted & Carol Stouts where we gathered the week before Thanksgiving. The meeting was well attended with lots and lots of rain. The food was great as was the socializing.

The December meeting at Bodine's Tool Shed was also well attended with great food. We all had a great time and was glad to see some who we have not seen in a while. The train guys and the kids (sometimes I could not tell the difference) ran their toys all evening. They sure had a good evening, some even had some new trains tested for the first time.

Our thanks to all who made it possible for these fun events. Its the glue that keeps our club going.

QUILTING TIME

The ladies will be meeting over the next few weeks to finish the quilt that so many of us signed at the last show. The finished quilt will be raffled among the members at the February meeting. Tickets will be \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00. If you cannot make the February meeting and would like to buy tickets contact another member or mail the money to Doris Manlief.

BLACKSMITH GROUP REPORT

The blacksmiths met at Dan Michaels parents home in November. Dan has set up shop in a pole barn and was host of the meeting. We had a good turnout and Dan demonstrated his new setup. A noon lunch prepared by his mother and sister and pitch in from members made for a great spread. We blacksmiths have to work hard because we eat so well.

The December meeting was at Stout's. This was an armchair blacksmithing meeting, we watched numerous blacksmithing training videos. Again we ate like kings and queens.

Both meetings were well attended and all seem to have a good time.

Due to the construction of Ted's dream shop there will no January meeting of the blacksmiths. The February meeting plan will be a tour through a local fabrication plant for caterpillar parts and a high pressure water steel cutting facility, both located in Williamsport.

WHICH BONE ARE YOU?

Someone said the membership of an organization is made up of four bones:

Wishbones, who spend all their time wishing somebody else would do the work.

Jawbones, who do all the talking but very little else.

Knuckle bones, who knock everything that everybody else does.

And finally, back bones, who get the load and do the work.

Its fortunate we have freedom of speech, but its unfortunate that the supply usually exceeds the demand.....

hardly be imagined. Until now the cost of shipping a load of pork to market from this town had equaled 4/5ths of its selling price. Attica's dockside and warehouse business doubled in a short time because her new canal rates to freighters were two-thirds cheaper than the old river rates.

The only cloud in the blue, blue sky lay in the fact that the autumn rains would undoubtedly mar the picture, for the admittance of water to the Covington section would make that village the new western terminus, a position she would presumably hold for some time, because the ditch south of there was far from completion. From Attica's point of view, this presented a revolting situation to which she had no intention of waiting for rain. At her continued insistence, canal officials were induced early in September to open the proper lock to admit whatever water might seep in, which might in time be adequate, since there was already a slight rise in Shawnee Creek which served as a canal feeder. But when this important lock was at last opened, and only the barest trickle came through, Covington suspected the worst. Attica was closing off the flow from above.

Covington's Senator Edward A. Han-negan immediately offered the influence of his persuasive tongue, if a local committee would accompany him to Attica, in hopes of inducing that befuddled neighbor to see the light. The visit was made and the delegation returned home as mad as wet hens, and rolled out a rusty cannon and fired it which aroused the entire countryside. By nightfall a sizeable assembly had gathered on the village green primed for a raid.

Fearing that the matter might get out of hand, a few persuaded the many to sleep on the idea first, then see how it looked in the morning. By daylight a raid looked even more advisable. So, the honorable Senator, together with 300 townsmen and farmers, and a fine array of clubs started up the River Road. All were white-hot with excitement and as stern in purpose as were the minute men of Concord and Lexington.

A Mr. John Wamsley, who lived on a bluff overlooking the River Road, discovered Covington's young army advancing on Attica, so he proceeded by horseback into Attica spreading the alarm as he went, sort of a Paul Revere.

Attica had already dispatched a well-armed wagon load of men down River Road to do a little scouting of their own. The two factions met midway with Atticans arriving to late with too little. In a matter of minutes they were surrounded, captured, disarmed, and held prisoners, while the invaders continued their march to town and forced their way to the upper lock, which immediately earned the name it was to retain for years to come - Battleground.

Until now, most Atticans had considered the whole affair to be something of a lark. All business had been suspended and many townspeople had gathered along the towpath and berm to enjoy a little excitement. But when the invaders had forced their way through town and succeeded in opening the floodgates, letting the precious water rush into the lower section, it became evident to all that this was no longer a mock battle. Thirty expensive and heavily laden canal boats in the Attica section were in danger of being stranded - unless Covington's vigilantes could be stopped. Suddenly the stakes became very high.

Reinforced by additional villagers and the tough crews of the helpless boats, the home guard now attempted to rush attack, hoping to reclose the floodgates. Failing in this, they began moving hay and strawstacks into the channel above the lock, hoping thereby to plug it up. The idea was good one, but a little late. In a matter of minutes the thirty canal boats lay topsy-turvy, mired, dumping their precious cargo into the mud.

Abruptly, the battle was over, with victory going to neither camp, since Covington's success has availed her little because that fourteen mile section had absorbed most of the in-rushing water, leaving hardly enough to float a raft, much less a canal boat. So now both towns were again lost in the wilderness, hundreds of miles plus two dry canal sections away from New York.

The concluding years of the canal were characterized by active public hostility toward the enterprise in some parts of Indiana, and its usefulness was several times destroyed as a result of mob violence.

IN TIMES OF SORROW

Dorthy E. Newton, 82, of Boswell died December 4th. Dorthy who was our club secretary for many years lived in the Boswell area most of her life. April 20, 1946 she married Gene Newton who survives. Our hearts go out to the family of Dorthy and our thanks for all the contribution she made to the Illiana Steam and Power group. She was a good friend to many of us as we will have fond memories of her.

Charles F. Clark, 69, of Independence died December 4th. "Charley" was not a member of the club, but he was always set up at our flea market and participated in our shows. He too was a good friend to many of us and will be missed greatly. Our sympathy goes out to his wife Harriet and their children.

EVENTS TO LOOK FORWARD TO

The February meeting will be held at Greg Stout's Auction facility in Williamsport. The meeting time will coincide with one of his two day auctions the following weekend, so you train enthusiasts should enjoy the visit. There is a kitchen available and plenty of meeting space.

President, Dick Fontaine has suggested a visit to the huge dairy farm "Fair Oaks Dairy" about 50 miles north of Lafayette. This is no ordinary dairy farm. They milk about 10,000 head 3 times a day. A \$7 million visitor center was recently built by the dairy council to promote dairy products. You will see all aspects of dairy and even get a chance to milk a fiberglass cow. More than 30 interactive displays help explain the modern dairy practice. There is an ice cream factory, a cheese factory and many other attractions at this site. There is no cost for the tour. The current thinking is to charter a bus for the trip and leave from Williamsport. If the bus is full the cost will be \$10 per person with a limit of 49 passengers. Be thinking about this trip and how many will be in your party. More discussion will follow at the January meeting.

(See the Journal Courier article page 1E, January 4, 2004)

ATTICA AND COVINGTON WAR??

Attica and Covington had both been rivals from the beginning. Both were laid out by pioneers when the old Erie Canal was being conceived. Sixteen years later, when the Wabash and Erie Canal engineers were surveying the level valleys between Indiana's western hills, both of these villages were marked for canal ports.

Attica was determined to undermine her neighbor's good fortune if possible, because she was still bitter over the fact that Covington had been chosen as the County seat. The controversy over that earlier issue had been so strong that the Legislature had demanded from each of these hamlets a list of its inhabitants, promising that the larger settlement would get the official nod. In a matter of hours Attica had produced a fine large list that included her cemetery dwellers as well as those in town. And Covington's roster was made larger by the inclusion of her muster for 1812, which far outnumbered Attica's dead. Each hamlet felt that the other had acted in a distinctly shabby fashion in the whole affair, and promptly forwarded resolutions to that effect to the State Assembly.

An investigating committee arrived at Covington and after holding a secret meeting, galloped off to the town's public square and marked the location of the new County Court house. The whole affair smacked of rank favoritism, according to Attica. For years she had been waiting for a chance to get even. And now the way had come.

It was the weather itself that gave Attica the advantage, for the completion of this western canal section to the point of being ready for the water came in the middle of Indiana's big drought of 1846. And when the clay-colored Wabash River water was finally admitted to the canal channel at this point, it was discovered that there was barely enough to flood the ditch as far as Attica, with not so much as a trickle left over for the Covington section.

This meant that Attica would enjoy the rare good fortune of acting as the western terminus of the Wabash and Erie Canal for that entire summer. The monetary aspect of this coveted position, in addition the the honor of it, can