THE GAZETTE

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Madison County Historical Society, Inc.

Volume 61 Issue 3 **July 2026**

Please consider the MCHS in your Estate Planning

The Best of Anderson's Historic West 8th Street - Part Three: John F. Kennedy Visits Madison County

It's hard to believe that sixty-six years have passed since John F. Kennedy first visited Madison County on April 5, 1960, and again October 6, 1960. Both the April and October visits made lasting impressions on those who attended. Seeking the Democratic Party nomination, his plane touched down at the new Anderson Airport near Chesterfield. An estimated 600 people had gathered to greet the young, charismatic senator from Massachusetts.

Kennedy's caravan went from the airport to the Anderson Eagles Lodge and Alexandria's Beulah Park. At noon, he spoke to an audience that had packed the 200-capacity shelter house in the park. His speech on the farm program and his unwavering determination to halt the rapid fall in farm prices, a pressing issue for the local community, lasted 30 minutes.

He was treated like a Hollywood celebrity. It was a Tuesday, but schools had been let out at noon, and the senator was confronted with squealing, determined autograph hunters. The local residents, especially the students, were in awe of the young senator from Massachusetts. He patiently autographed every piece of paper he got his hands on as he moved slowly back to his car.

Kennedy returned to Madison County in October of 1960, this time as the Democratic Party's candidate for president. His first stop was an unscheduled one in Pendleton on October 5. His motorcade was enroute from Indianapolis to Anderson and was to only pass through Pendleton. However, in a surprising turn of events, Pendleton Avenue had been purposely barricaded, blocking the passage of the motorcade. Just north of Pendleton Avenue and State Street intersection was a pick-up truck acting as a makeshift campaign platform.

Seeing what was happening, Senator Kennedy graciously exited his convertible and jumped on the back of the pick-up. He spoke briefly for a few minutes, thanking the assembled crowd of about 150 and asking for their support in his campaign, and then moved on.

The next day, Kennedy made his second campaign visit to Anderson. He was scheduled to deliver a 12-minute speech at 10 AM from the east side of the courthouse. But as his caravan of three buses and seven cars entered Anderson from the south on Indiana 9, turned north on Madison Avenue to 8th Street where he was greeted by Columbia Elementary School assembled curbside, and then to the courthouse, he was 50 minutes behind schedule.

After Mayor Ralph Ferguson welcomed him to the city and Fifth District Congressman J. Edward Roush introduced him, Kennedy began speaking around 11 AM. In a brief but powerful 8-minute speech, he addressed the estimated crowd of 6,000 spectators, leaving a lasting impact. Although rushed, he took time to shake numerous hands and sign a few autographs before leaving for Muncie.

Stephen T. Jackson
Madison County Historian

8th St. Gaslight Festival Set for August 22nd

Anderon's annual 8th Street Gaslight Festival is scheduled for Saturday, August, 22, 2026. The festival will feature a parade, a classic & hot rod car show, arts & crafts vendors, musical performances, historical presentations, and a Victorian Tea. The festival occurred from 1973-2004 and was resumed in 2023.

The 1973 Gaslight Festival began the tradition to celebrate the era of the 1880's Gas Boom and to appreciate the architectural heritage along 8th Street. The streetlamps along 8th St. were originally coal-oil lamps during the 1860's and transitioned to gas-fired lamps during the 1880's. The present-day streetlamps have been converted to electric.

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Membership Dues

Please remember to renew your MCHS membership for 2026.

Annual Dues:

$5.00 Student
$25.00 Adult Single
$40.00 Family/Same household

Please use the form on **page 8** to submit your 2026 membership dues. Thank You!

Madison County History Trivia Questions:

1. On July 4, 1913, a community park was dedicated in Anderson with the name of the current Anderson's Mayor. What was his name?
2. On August 19, 1900, fire destroyed a prominent business in Alexandria. What was the name of the business?
3. On September 26, 1919, a famous entertainment venue burned in Elwood. What was its name?

(Answers on Page 7)

Schedule of Events

First Sunday - 2:00p.m.

July 5, 2026 - 2:00 p.m.
Holiday Weekend - No Meeting

August 2, 2026 - 2:00 p.m.
Stephen T. Jackson
Wendell Wilkie Returns to Elwood - Witness the story and photographs of Madison County's most colossal event.

September 6, 2026 - 2:00 p.m.
Holiday Weekend - No Meeting

Civil War Roundtable - 7:00p.m.

July 20, 2026 - 7:00 p.m.
Maryanne Mathews
Mrs. Lincoln: A Visit with Mary Todd Lincoln

August 17, 2026 - 7:00 p.m.
Tony Rosetti
Acoustic Shadow

September 21, 2026 - 7:00 p.m.
Stephen Ritchie
The Christian Character of Lee and Jackson

Society Monthly Meetings

July 26, 2026 - 2:00 p.m.
Carol Grace
Mills to Clothing

August 23, 2026 - 2:00 p.m.
Gerald Jones
The WWII Liberator Pistol and the Anderson Connection

September 27, 2026 - 2:00 p.m.
Stephen T. Jackson
The American Revolution: "We Must All Hang Together"

2026 Museum Supporters:

Platinum Level Donors

Fred E. & Thelma V. Boze Foundation
Max Howard
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Gold Level Donors

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UAW Local 662 & 663 Retirees

MCHS Membership Meetings

The April 26th MCHS membership meeting was entitled ***Tale of Two Mills*** presented by Madison County Historian, Stephen Jackson. The presentation provided an overview of the various mills in Madison County during the early 1830's to the late 1870's. The various uses of these mills included the milling of grain, rough-saw timber and lumber planing, wool carding and flax-straw fibering for making linen.

The Moss Island Mill began its operation in the mid-1830's a few miles west of Anderson along the White River. The location was believed to have been chosen due to its vicinity to the north branch of the Indianapolis Central Canal. Upon the Central Canal's failure due to the Panic of 1837, the Moss Island Mill continued to provide grain and lumber milling services to the Anderson area until a fire destroyed it in 1873. The mill was rebuilt by Sam Moss and remained in operation until the steam-powered mills became more prevalent.

The Killbuck Mill was built in 1860 by William Sparks. Its location was on the west bank of Killbuck Creek just north of the confluence of the White River and Killbuck Creek. The mill cut logs for construction lumber as well as milling grain into grist. In 1862 Sparks partnered with A. Siddel to build a larger mill to meet the demands for lumber and grain milling. With its increased capacity, the Killbuck Mill was able to annually produce approximately 60,000 bushels of grain. A well-known flour called "Killbuck Flour" was also produced at the mill. The Killbuck Mill remained productive for 47 years and was sold to the Union Traction Company in 1907.

The History of Anderson Theaters, 1883-1942, was presented by Stephen Jackson at the Paramount Theater on June 28, 2026. Mr. Jackson gave an overview of the varieties of theaters in Anderson.

The first theater was built in 1883 by Charles T. Doxey on Meridian Street between 9th & 10th St. The Doxey Opera House burned in 1884 and was reopened in 1885 as the Doxey Music Hall. In 1893, another fire destroyed the Doxie Music Hall which ended its venue at that location.

From 1883 to 1942, 35 theaters operated in the Anderson area. These theaters ranged from a 40-seat to a 1,458 seating capacity. Each theater provided its own unique specialty including musicals, vaudeville acts, burlesque shows, silent films and eventually talking pictures. These theaters included the Grand Opera House, Casino, Bijou, Crystal, Nickelodeon, Orpheum, Starland, Riviera. Regent, Ritz and many others.

The Paramount and State theaters were built in 1929 and 1930 respectively. Both venues proved to be the most popular as well durable throughout the theater era. In the mid 1980's, the Paramount Theater began a 6-year a recovery and restoration campaign to its original splendor. Following the restoration, the Paramount has become the "Crown Jewell" of Anderson's civic venues. The State Theater has been vacant since the late 1980's and awaits for its own recovery and restoration.

First Sunday Presentations

Stephen Jackson's May 3rd presentation, ***American Revolution, How Indiana Was Impacted,*** highlighted the military engagements around the Indiana area during the American Revolution. These areas included the boundary regions prior to Indiana's statehood. In late 1778, George Rogers Clark launched a campaign to seize Fort Sackville in the southwest Indiana/Illinois territorial regions. Clark marched to Vincennes in February, 1779, and captured British General Henry Hamilton during a surprise winter march. Other military conflicts included:

a.) **Battle of the White River Forks**, March 20, 1779, 50 miles East of Vincennes;

b.) **La Balme's Defeat**, November 6, 1780, Kekionga (present-day Fort Wayne);

c.) **Battle of Petit Fort**, December 5, 1780, near the Indiana Dunes;

d.) **Lochry's Defeat**, August 24, 1781, near Aurora, Indiana.

The June 7th presentation was entitled ***The American Revolution, A Link to Eisenhower*** and was presented by Stephen Jackson. The presentation focused upon veterans of the American Revolution, their accomplishments and their longevity.

Adam Link's family perished during an Indian massacre at Wheeling Creek, Virgina, in 1762. Adam was raised by survivors and neighbors until his enlistment into the Continental Army in 1778. He mustered out in 1782 and lived until 1864. Adam Link is the longest living American Revolutionary War veteran at 102 years and a distant relative to **Dwight D. Eisenhower**, 34th U.S. President.

Mary Ludwig Hays joined her husband at the Continental Army's winter camp at Valley Forge in 1777. She served as a water-barrier during the Battle of Monmouth in June, 1778. Her husband, Artilleryman William Hays, was killed by the British during the same battle. She took his place swabbing and loading his cannon until the battle was won. She was later given a Letter of Commendation from George Washington. It is believed from Mary's heroics that the nickname **"Molly Pitcher"** originated. Other women veterans of the American Revolution believed to be accredited with the **"Molly Pitcher"** nickname include Margaret Corbin and Deborah Sampson.

Civil War Roundtable

MCHS Civil War Roundtable presentation for April 20th was entitled ***Lt. William B. Cushing and the Sinking of the CSS Albemarle.*** Arie DeJohn, Anderson University History undergraduate, gave a brief biographical background of Lt. William B. Cushing and his unfortunate exploits at the U.S. Naval Academy. Cushing was expelled prior to his graduation for poor scholarship and numerous pranks. In 1861, Cushing petitioned and pleaded his case to the U.S. Secretary of the Navy and was granted a commission as a naval officer.

In 1862 Cushing was promoted to Lieutenant and his naval warfare heroics proved to define his naval career. In 1864 Cushing had designed a rudimentary torpedo system scaled for sinking the Confederate Navy's Ironclads. On October 27, 1864, Lt. Cushing commanded a retrofitted steam launch with the necessary torpedo systems to navigate the Roanoke River. The CSS Albemarle was torpedoed and sunk in six feet of water. Cushing was promoted to Commander in January, 1872, and died in 1875 from chronic back injuries received during his tenure as a naval warfare officer.

MCHS Civil War Roundtable Chairman, Gerald Jones, presented ***Morgan's Great Raid of 1863*** on Monday, May 18, 2026. The presentation focused on Confederate Brigadier General John Hunt Morgan's incursion into Indiana. The raid was designed to divert attention away from the Vicksburg and Gettysburg campaigns and for the Union Army to reallocate troops to counter Morgan's march into Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana, and Ohio.

On the evening of July 8, 1863, Morgan's Raiders crossed the Ohio River near Mauckport, Indiana. After a few brief skirmishes, Morgan marched into Corydon on July 9th. The Battle of Corydon was brief and brutal for the Indiana Home Guard. On July 10th, the Raiders continued to terrorize and loot the small towns of Vernon, New Pekin, Salem, Dupont, and Versailles. On July 11th, the 73rd Indiana Infantry captured a detachment of Morgan's Raiders near New Pekin in a skirmish known as the Battle of Oak Ridge. After burning bridges and barns in Salem and Versailles, Morgan was last seen leaving Harrison on July 12, 1863, with the U.S. Cavalry and the 5th U.S. Regulars in hot pursuit. On July 13th, Morgan crossed the Ohio River near Cincinnati and thus became Ohio's problem.

The June 15th Civil War Roundtable presentation was entitled ***Women of Courage and Commitment***. Steve Magnusen, Purdue engineering graduate and U.S. Army Reserve infantry and armor officer, provided the overview of the lives of three women from Marietta, Ohio. These women were instrumental in the life of Rufus Dawes during his Civil War experience as a young commander of the Sixth Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry. Mr. Magnusen's presentation also drew heavily upon the biographical study of Rufus Dawes and his future wife, Mary Beman Gates during the Civil War era in Marietta, Ohio.

Madison County Historian Activities April-June 2026

April 12 - Participated in the public presentation of Titanic at the Museum of Madison County History.

April 13 - Guest on Mitch Henck's WHBU Radio Station afternoon show.

April 20 - Guest on Mitch Henck's (Host Greg Graham) WHBU Radio Station afternoon show.

April 22 - Attended an America 250 committee meeting at the Museum of Madison County History.

May 1 - My article about the three **College Corner schools in Madison County** appeared in the summer 2026 issue of the Madison magazine.

May 18 - Guest on Mitch Henck's WHBU Radio Station afternoon show.

May 27 - Conducted Bethany Pointe Independent Living Community residents on a City of Anderson History Tour.

May 27 - Attended an America 250 committee meeting at the Museum of Madison County History.

May 30 - Conducted a tour of Anderson automobile manufacturing sites and nearby points of interest for the Model A Restorers Club.

June 10 - Attended an America 250 committee meeting at the Museum of Madison County History.

June 20 - Participated in the Madison County America 250 Celebration, "Old Tyme Country Fair", at Beulah Park in Alexandria.

April-June 2026 - Presented programs about local history to various organizations, including Anderson Noon Lions Club, Jolly Keenagers of Grace Baptist Church, Primrose Retirement Community residents, Keystone Woods residents, Madison County Tea Party, Frankton Community Library, Madison County Historical Society First Sunday Lectures, Chesterfield Christian Church Men's Fellowship, Madison County Triad, AARP Chapter #1686, Anderson Noon Rotary Club, Anderson 1st Nazarene Church Homeschool Ministries, Anderson Intermediate School 5th & 6th Grade Students, Holy Cross School 5th Grade Students, Madison County GOP Meeting, Madison County Historical Society Monthly Meeting, Sparklers Home Economics Club, Bethany Pointe Independent Living Community, Model A Restorers Club, Anderson Noon Exchange Club, Chesterfield/Union Township America 250 Celebration, and the Lunch Bunch of Central Christian Church.

Submitted by Stephen T. Jackson, Madison County Historian

Madison County Historical Organizations

Madison County has a new historical society! The ***Summitville-Van Buren Township Historical Society*** conducted its first meeting on Sunday afternoon, March 29, 2026. The meeting was held at the Hazelbaker Library in Summitville starting at 3:30.

Fourteen members attended the meeting as reported by Scheri Blanton, the new president. Of the fourteen attendees seven were board members. In addition to Scheri Blanton the new members are Susan Barton, Glenn Eddleman, Dion Barton, Margaret Blakely, Janet Moore, Dorothy Sears, Dixie Carpenter, Kent Wilson, Donna Elsworth, Tim Elsworth, Devin Dow, Pat Frazier, and Lesley Gaddis.

When I was first appointed county historian in 2008, Summitville had a historical society. It lasted but a few years and then disbanded. How nice it is they have had a re-birth!

In keeping with my duties as county historian, I have notified the Local History Services Department at the Indiana Historical Society of their formation.

They have requested the following. "If you do Facebook, please add us! Town of Summitville memories / Indiana Madison County."

They are not alone in promoting history!

The Town of Pendleton has two historically oriented groups with different missions.

The ***Pendleton Historical Museum*** is in Falls Park and is dedicated to preserving the history of the South Madison area.

The Museum is managed by a volunteer board. In addition to regular hours, the Museum is open to special tours upon request.

Museum Hours of Operation: Saturdays and Sundays 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm (May through October) Admission is Free. They can be contacted at P.O. Box 345 Pendleton, IN 46064.

The second group is the ***Historic Fall Creek, Pendleton Settlement***. Their mission: *"to promote and preserve the historic character, association, and architecture of Pendleton, Indiana, and the surrounding areas."*

For more information, see www.historicfcps.org.

Located in Elwood is the ***Elwood Heritage Center and Museum*** located at 117 S Anderson St in Elwood, Indiana 46036. Elwood Heritage Center can be contacted via phone at 765-552-9624. Hours are Fridays 1- 5pm April through November. Other times are available with appointments.

A quote from a recent visitor – "I finally got to Indiana to see this amazing place! Many thanks for the work and efforts that many have done to create this wonderful place."

Not to be overlooked is the ***Frankton History Club***. They meet on the fourth Thursday of every month at 6:30 p.m. Their meetings are in The Frankton Heritage Building 109 E. Walnut St. For more information franktonheritage-club@gmail.com.

The ***Alexandria-Monroe Township Historical Society*** (AMTHS) started in 1979. The AMTHS museum is located at 313 North Harrison Street. They have a great collection of articles on display including Aladdin Lamps, and memorabilia from Lippincott Glass, Kelly Axe, and the Union Traction Co. For information alexhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

The Gruenewald House was converted to a living museum that centers on the history of the community in a space that offers Victorian architecture, furnishings, and decor**.** Located at 626 Main Street. Anderson, IN 46016. Please call (765) 648-6875 to schedule an appointment to tour.

The ***Madison County Historical Society and Museum*** wish all seven of our sister historical organizations "Well" as they strive to preserve and present our county's history.

Stephen T. Jackson
Madison County Historian
July 15, 2026

Munching Through the Midwest

Ah, food...glorious food!! My entire earthly life has revolved around food...teaching it, cooking it, serving it, but mostly consuming it. And the very best food comes with summertime! I have such vivid memories of food celebrations: deviled eggs and angel food cakes at family reunions; homemade bean salad and fresh raspberry pie at all-church picnics; elephant ears and lemonade shakeups at county and state fairs.

There was usually a big pot of freshly picked green beans and new potatoes with ham hocks paired with hot buttered corn on the cob. The best tomatoes were eaten in the garden with a salt shaker while sitting on a small stool!! Sliced and sweetened strawberries were served ofver Twinkies and homemade vanilla ice cream. The freezer would be full of butter cakes and yeast rolls during July with 4-H judging.

Camping weekends always included open campfires with foil packet dinners and s'mores. Lime chiffon or butterscotch meringue pie was the standard request for birthday celebrations.

My Romanian heritage centered around stuffed peppers or cabbage, pickled beets, and prune -filled kolache. The meal would *always* include a dish of cucumbers and onions. Traditionally, it was *only* thinly sliced cucumbers and sweet onions, apple cider vinegar, salt and pepper. Some have varied that recipe to include chopped tomatoes, green bell peppers, or sour cream.

Anyone hungry yet? Does life get any better than this? *Thank you Lord, for everything!*

Submitted by Carol Grace
Research Librarian

America 250 flag-raising ceremonies was provided by the East Madison Fire Territory and the Alexandria Fire Department.

America 250 Chairwoman Karen Smith emcees the ceremonies at the Old Tyme Country Faire at Beulah Park, Alexandria.

A patriotic-themed quilt on display during the America 250 Old Tyme Country Faire at Beulah Park, Alexandria.

Bethany Christian Church members prepare gift bags for the America 250 Old Tyme Country Faire at Beulah Park, Alexandria.

America 250 Chairwoman Karen Smith and Volunteer Lori Maynard display Lori's mural, ***The Founding Spirit***.

America 250 Volunteers Carol Grace, Deb Weston, and Janene Jackson prepare gift bags for visitors to the Paramount Theater.

Andersontown Powwow Scheduled for September 12-13, 2026

The Andersontown Powwow and Market will be held on Saturday, 11:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m. and on Sunday, 11:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. September 12th & 13th, at Beulah Park, Alexandria.

The Powwow is an annual celebration of Native American culture and heritage with tribal dancing, music, food, and living history. The Andersontown Powwow provides a cultural recognition of Chief Anderson and the Delaware/Lenape Indians during their presence along the White River during the 1790's-1820's.

Native American foods offered at the Powwow will include bison burgers, Indian tacos, squash soup, and Indian fry bread.

Native American cultural activities will be offered in the following areas:

Arena – Tribal Dance Exhibitions; Hoop Dancing; Intertribal Dancing; Douglass Blue Feather Concert; Grand Entry

Education Tent - Stories of Indiana's Past: Native American & Early Settlers Tales; Birds of Prey Take Flight Wildlife Education; Douglass Blue Feather - Flute Demonstration

Artist Pavillion – Children's Activities by the Anderson Art Museum; Artifact Identification by Jim Mohow; Arts & Crafts Market; Information Booth by Madison County Historical Society

Living History –Tipi Displays; Eastern Woodland Camp with Jim Sawgrass

For further information, go to:
www.andersontownpowwow.org

Madison County History Trivia Answers:

1.) Foster Park was named for Anderson Mayor Frank Foster. At the conclusion of his term of office the park was renamed to its current name of Athletic Park.
2.) Kelly Axe.
3.) Kramer Grand Opera House.

Mike Campbell

Mike Campbell began his volunteer work with the MCHS in January, 2025. Mike previously worked for the State of Indiana for 14 years and for the Hopewell Center for 8 years. His duties include various building maintenance repairs, clearing the entranceways, and any other tasks deemed necessary for ensuring the safety of visitors and fellow volunteers. Thanks Mike!!! Your work is gratefully appreciated.

Acknowledgement and Appreciation

Thank you from ***Deb Weston, President:***

Volunteers: Thank you for your commitment and everything you do.

Trustees: Thank you for believing in us, and supporting our vision.

Members: Thank you for supporting the MCHS with your membership dues and helping us complete the projects as they unexpectedly rear their ugly heads.

We would not be the organization we are without **ALL of you.**

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Jim Garrison

Jim Garrison began his volunteer work with the MCHS in the Spring, 2026. Jim is an Elwood High School graduate and a 40-year Delco-Remy, General Motors retiree. Jim's primary focus at MCHS will be updating the local church directories and their history in Madison County. If anyone has any questions regarding local church history, please contact Jim at 765-683-0052. Welcome Jim!!! Your work is gratefully appreciated.

The Gazette
Madison County Historical Society, Inc.
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Madison County Historical Society ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

Check One: New Membership_____Renewal_____(due on January 1st of each year)

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