

# Besancon, Indiana Chronicles

Issue No. 5

November 1997

The Besancon Historical Society  
15533 Lincoln Highway East  
New Haven, Indiana 46774

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## President's Message

If your year was as busy and hectic as mine, then you must be asking "where did the time go?" November is upon us with the celebration of Thanksgiving, and the Christmas holiday season will soon follow. Makes you wonder how our immigrant ancestors celebrated the holiday season upon their arrival in America. No doubt they clung to "French" customs until later generations.

November is the month for the election of the Society's new officers. I encourage each and every member of the Society to attend and vote for the Society's officers for the next two years. The direction in which the Society goes and its accomplishments will depend greatly upon your votes and the officers you elect.

I want to thank everyone for making this

year enjoyable for me. I especially want to thank those individuals who served on various committees. Their loyal dedication and hard work were appreciated. Three projects were accomplished during this year. One was the plotting of the old St. Louis Cemetery by Jim Lomont and the reading of grave markers by Sue Kratzman and Judith Schroff. Verification of the dates will be made this winter, and copies of the results will be available as a publication of the Society next year. This will be the most complete and accurate reading of the cemetery to date.

The second project was the study and revision of the by-laws of the Society into a more understandable and workable format by Terry Gorney, Barb Gorney, Arlene Curts, Theresa Martin and Carlton Giant. Assistance for this project was provided by the president of the Indiana Historical Society.

The third accomplishment of the Society was the appointment of a membership committee with Judith Schroff and Betty Markley in charge. They will promote and advertise the Society and  
*Continued on page 9*

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**ELECTION OF OFFICERS WILL TAKE PLACE AT 9:30 A.M. ON SATURDAY, 22 NOVEMBER, IN ST. LOUIS ACADEMY IN BESANCON. PLEASE PLAN TO ATTEND.**

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## **IT'S TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP**

**Your annual dues must be paid by the 1<sup>st</sup> of January each year in order to be considered a member in good standing of the Besancon Historical Society of Eastern Allen County. A renewal form is enclosed as an insert to this newsletter. Before the next issue of the Chronicles is sent out a new mailing list based on 1998 renewals will be compiled, and only those who have renewed their membership will receive the 1998 Chronicles.**

**Members who have life-time memberships are also asked to check off the appropriate box and return the renewal form to the Society so that our records can be verified.**

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### **Survey and Ancestor Chart**

**There are two additional inserts with this newsletter. One is a survey of the membership. If you are interested in furthering the work of the Society in a direct way, please indicate your preference(s) on the form and return it with your renewal.**

**A blank ancestor chart is also enclosed. The Society's primary function is to compile genealogical information about the eastern Allen County area. If you have such information to contribute, please fill out the chart and return it to the Society.**

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### **Donations to the Society**

**The Society is always pleased to receive donations which will help it further its work. These can be materials or cash. The Society currently needs usable file cabinets, bookcases, and folding tables. The Society will also accept cash contributions for its library book fund and for supplies. If you wish to make a donation to the Society, please indicate the nature of your donation on your renewal form. All donations will be greatly appreciated!**

## **The Lane - Roussel Drive**

by Joan Jacquay Monnier

About one-half mile east of St. Louis Church at Besancon, Indiana on the old Lincoln Highway in Jefferson Township is a road sign that reads, ROUSSELL DR. 4300S. Previously, this gravel road was simply called "the lane." From any direction the term used was "down the lane."

Down the lane to the north, then, after a turn to the east, was the home and farm of LOUIS and MARY IDA (GLADIEUX) ROUSSEL. Of seven children born to Louis and Ida, five children--LILLIOSA, JUANITA (my mother), LOUIS, JR., WILBUR and ALDON--grew to adulthood in this home.

In later years grandchildren came to visit and stayed a while during the summers. The parlor, as Grandma Ida called the living room, was the play area while the adults usually socialized in the large country kitchen.

There were curiosities about this house. In the parlor some of the window sills were low to the floor and deep enough to allow a child to sit on the sill. A large curtained doorway gave access to the back bedroom. (There was also a door from the kitchen to the bedroom and a door from the kitchen to the parlor.) The ceilings of both the parlor and bedroom had parallel wooden box structures.

Many years later I learned that the boxes covered the logs of an original log house.



Wedding Photo of Louis Vetal Roussel and Mary Ida Gladieux Roussel, Married at St. Louis Church, 16 April 1901

Against the back bedroom wall a staircase led upstairs to bedrooms, one for the boys and the large front bedroom for the girls. From the boy's bedroom there was a door to the attic over the kitchen, where the grandchildren loved to play. Grandma stored her heavy hand-made quilts and extra furniture there.

Many family holiday gatherings were held in this home. The main entrance from the front porch was a door into the kitchen, the principal room in the house. The furnishings were constructed of oak--a

buffet, chairs, a round table which could be extended for company and several rocking chairs stuffed with hand-made cushions. To one side of the kitchen, near the pantry, was a large black iron cooking range fueled with wood. Near the wood box was a rug for the Beagle, not a pet but a hunting dog who would also join Grandpa Louis during his farm chores.

### *Reminiscences*

When grandchildren visited, they would go down the lane to get the mail from the mail box mounted on a post near the highway. At times there would be a stop at the house to the west of the lane to play with the children of LESLIE (LES) and VIOLA (VOIROL) COONROD. Mr Coonrod joined hands with the children's games of Red Rover, Red Rover, Won't you come over!

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If Grandma Ida needed some strawberries or raspberries from the garden, we'd take a basket down the lane past the fenced pasture where cows with large black eyes following us stood chewing their cud.

\*\*\*\*\*

We spent quiet times in the front yard with Grandma who sat in a rocking chair in the shade of one of the maple trees planted in a long row along the lane or under a tree closer to the house. We sat on stools near Grandma. Beside her chair were baskets of green string beans or peas in their pods. On the other side were cooking kettles. Large handfuls of the

garden vegetables would be placed in Grandma's large apron. Then we'd all snap ends from beans and remove peas from pods to place into the kettles.

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We accompanied Grandpa with a shovel in hand to a place in the garden where the soil was rather sandy. He dug a clump of peanuts to let us see that peanuts grow in the earth similar to the way potatoes grow attached to the roots of the plant.

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At the turn in the lane was a ditch from the west that turned north. There Grandpa laboriously dug roots from a plant. From the roots Grandma prepared a tangy relish for meat called horseradish.

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East of the house the lane passed the yard and barn to the garage where Grandpa kept his tools. He sharpened scissors on a small stone and a scythe on a large stone wheel that turned by the motion of his foot on a treadle. He had iron shoe forms of various sizes to insert into shoes to repair them and instruments to cut leather.

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Past the garage and a tall cottonwood tree the lane narrowed and turned north along another ditch. The lane led to an old house rented by a family. Grandpa said the house was the old "FAVORY Place" (FAIVRE Homestead).

As I pass ROUSSELL DRIVE today my thoughts are of happy childhood days. I like to think the extra "L" attached to the Roussel name represents the word "Love."

## Two Delayed Birth Registrations with a Besancon Connection Terri Gorney, CGRS

The following are delayed birth registrations located in Elkhart County, Indiana by Pat Johnson of the Elkhart County Genealogical Society. The Elkhart County Probate Office was going to destroy 1500 delayed birth registrations for Elkhart County before the genealogical society took possession of them.

Delayed birth registrations can be filed years after the actual birth. They do not have to be filed in the county or state where the birth occurred. They were usually filed in the county where the person was a resident at the time of the filing.

### Birth Certificate Record # 1

**John Ernest Ternet**

**Date filed: 6 April 1943, Elkhart County, Indiana**

**Born: 17 May 1885, Paulding County, Ohio**

**Color: white**

**Father: Francis Ternet born: Allen County, Indiana**

**Mother: Mary Socie born: Paulding County, Indiana**

**Number of children in family: 9**

**Number living at time of birth, including his birth: 3**

### Birth Certificate Record # 2

**Olive Beerbower Tyndall**

**Date filed: 6 November 1942, Elkhart County, Indiana**

**Born: 4 January 1898, Allen County, Indiana**

**Color: white**

**Father: Albert Beerbower born: Allen County, Indiana**

**Mother: Clara Donat born: Paulding County, Ohio**

**Number of children in family: 7**

**Number living at the time of birth, including his birth: 2**

**Midwife in attendance: Phoebe Donat**

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The Indiana Historical Society has published a 703-page book, with illustrations, which documents the various ethnic groups which settled Indiana. There are several essays, including an essay on the French written by Ralph Violette, which should interest members of the Society. The book is entitled Peopling Indiana: the Ethnic Experience. It was edited by Robert M. Taylor, Jr. and Connie A. McBirney. It is available for \$39.95 from the Indiana Historical Society, 315 West Ohio Street, Indianapolis IN 46202-3299. Tel.: (317) 232-1882

## Document from the Past

*The following is a transcription of a column which appeared on the Journal Gazette on 19 January 1913*

### NAILS STATION NEWS

Nails Station, Indiana, Jan. 18--Mr. Harvey Bacon is ill with la grippe.

Mrs John Schrader was shopping in Fort Wayne Wednesday.

Albert Weilemann, Clem Gladieux and Rudolph Weilemann assisted Louis Girard with his butchering Tuesday.

Charles Gerardot, Simon Gerardot, Eddie and \_\_\_ Gerardot were helping butcher at Mrs. Frank Gerardot's, Wednesday.

Mr. Wm. Richman, who lives on the Conrad farm, has sold his farm here and purchased one four miles north of Columbia City. He is having a sale Thursday, Jan 23, and intends to sell all his stock and farming implements. He will move about March the first.

Mr. Melvin Fry was the guest of William Behrman and family Sunday evening.

Mr. Frank Rose spent Sunday at the Joseph Girardot home.

A delightful sleighing was given Monday evening. Driving to the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Kennirk, a pleasant evening was passed in playing games and dancing. Those present were the Misses Mildred and Pearl Behrman, Mary Girard, Eva Dodane, Mae Dodane, Edith and Julia Ryan, Charlotte Lamont, Mate and Emma Heine, Franciela Bandelier and Bertha Kennirk, Messrs. Clem and Arthur

Gladieux, Albert Weileman, Joseph Dodane, Arthur Lamont, Bernard Henry, Lawrence Ryan, Stephen Bowers, Herbert and Albert Heine, Frank Kennirk, and Paul Walker.

Mrs. Francis Gerardot and son John pleasantly entertained Miss Mildred and Miss Pearl Behrman, Addie Farre, Simon Gerardot, Bernard and Charles Gerardot Wednesday evening.

Jesse Lomont has sold his farm near Besancon and purchased one in Trombone [possibly Trumbull, ed.] County, Ohio. He intends to move his family there in the near future.

Mr. and Mrs Elmer Richard attended the Lomont sale Thursday.

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### Items Donated to the Society

The following items have been donated to the Society by Charles Smith:

A crocheted bonnet worn by Frances Converset Girardot (1841-1934)

A leg warmer knitted by Justine Monnot Dodane (1828-1909) and worn by Isabelle Dodane Smith at her wedding on 20 October 1908 to Albert J. Smith (1881-1958)

A linen runner made in France ca. 1839 and brought to Besancon by the Frances Converset Girardot family in 1850.

**My Ancestors from Besancon, Indiana**  
by Alyce Jane Morow

**JULES or JULIAN REUILLE** was my great grandfather, the son of **JOSEPH REUILLE** and **MARY FRANCES AULON** and brother of **CHARLES, JAMES** and **HENRY REUILLE** and **EUGENIE REUILLE BEAUCHOT**. Julian was only an infant when he was brought to the United States from France in 1847 by his father and mother along with two older brothers. His sister Eugenie was born in New York in 1849, shortly before the family settled in Jefferson Township, Allen County, Indiana.

As related in the genealogical study of the Reuille family<sup>1</sup>, these "original five," as I like to refer to them, lost their mother when they were very young and not too many years after their arrival in Jefferson Township. Joseph's farm was not far from St. Louis church whose steeple Joseph could view clearly from his fields. We believe that Mary probably died during childbirth or shortly after a child was born to her. Her death probably occurred about 1853 which would have been two years after giving birth to her youngest child Henry, the only child of Joseph and Mary Frances born in Allen County. Joseph then married a widow **CATHERINE BOUVIER MARTIN** in October 1856. She already had six

children and bore Joseph six more. The 1860 Federal Census taken on the 26<sup>th</sup> day of July shows two adults and fourteen children living on the farm in Jefferson Township. It was said in the Reuille family that "he had six, she had six, and together they had six." This was a quote from a surviving grand-daughter when the Reuille study was done.

When Julian reached the age of eighteen, he, like his two older brothers, entered the army at the time of the Civil War. But unlike his brothers, he entered the service as a substitute. On 31 March 1865 he mustered in at Fort Wayne and was assigned to Company K, 53<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of the Indiana Volunteer Infantry. At this time the war was winding down, and Joseph never experienced any action. He was discharged after a few months and returned home to Jefferson Township, but his short stint in the military dramatically changed and possibly shortened his life. The story that has come down in the family notes that during his military service he was setting up camp somewhere and accidentally fell onto pegs or equipment used for that purpose, possibly injuring his kidney and liver. The fall obviously didn't have any effect on him at the time, as no hospitalization records of the accident exist anywhere. However, a Declaration for Widow's Army Pension filed by his wife Mary Alice notes regarding Julian: "who while in this service, aforesaid in the line of his duty contracted liver and kidney trouble and died thereof."

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<sup>1</sup>Michael Roy Morow and Alyce Jane Morow, The Reuilles of Old Besancon, A Genealogical and Social History, 1847-1920.

I imagine Julian as a small, fragile man, but could be mistaken as no pictures of him have survived in the family. Descriptions of him at age eighteen taken from Civil War Records indicate that he was at that time 5 feet, 4 inches tall, had hazel eyes, brown hair and a dark complexion.

At the time of Julian's discharge, his brother Charles had returned home from the war a very ill and broken man. Julian, Charles, and their unmarried sister Eugenie appear in the 1870 census on a farm in Madison Township in Allen County, Indiana with Eugenie "keeping house." It is possible, because of Charles' and Julian's poor health and the eventual marriage of Eugenie to AUGUST BEAUCHOT, that this arrangement was short-lived.

Julian married MARY ALICE GAUTHIER on 12 October 1876. She was the oldest daughter of JOHN and MARY ELISE GAUTHIER, and it is believed that her family lived in close proximity to Joseph Reuille. Julian was twelve years older than the seventeen-year-old Alice.

Julian and Mary Alice tried their hand at farming but were not successful. Julian's health declined, and the farming venture failed. After years of struggle, Julian died in November 1888, leaving Mary Alice with three young children. A fourth child had died at the age of four just days before Julian's death.

A young widow now, Mary Alice in just nine months time married an old friend of the Reuille family. He was a widower named FRANCIS LAUYER of Monroeville. Mary Alice's second marriage lasted thirty-five years and was blessed with the birth of a son FRANK LAUYER in 1894. In 1902 the family moved to Hammond, Indiana. Mary died there in 1924, and Frank died shortly thereafter; they are buried in Calvary Cemetery in Portage, Indiana.

The life story of Julian Reuille is rather short and tragic. But I am always mindful that if Julian had not married at the age of 29 and had a family of his own, this writer would not be here. His first and only surviving daughter was my beloved grandmother CLARA ROY (REUILLE). She was married at an early age to FRANCIS M. FARRELL of Sheldon, Indiana, in St. Aloysius Church, but the marriage was short-lived and ended in divorce in the early 1900s. They had one daughter MARIE FARRELL who was my mother.

Julian is buried in the quiet little cemetery next to St. Louis Church in Besancon. It is here that his father Joseph Reuille is also buried. Whenever I visit Julian's small grave and say a prayer for him, I hope that he knows that his memory lives on in all of his descendants.

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*Submit your reminiscences of growing up in eastern Allen County to the editor of the Chronicles.*



## President's Message (continued)

will issue a complete updated list of members for 1998.

We had several new people join the Society this year, and we do want to give them a "heartily welcome" and to make sure that they are very much part of our Society. Several members live out-of-state, but we encourage those of you who live in the Fort Wayne area to attend some of the meetings.

The primary purpose of our Society is to collect and preserve the history and genealogies of the early families of east Allen County. We want to continue work on establishing a place where our materials may be filed and shelved so that we may have a research library. This should be our most important objective for the coming year. I trust that this goal will be continued by our newly elected officers and by the Society. We must continue to build upon this concept if we wish to be successful and grow.

Again, thank you for your support and dedication this past year. Merry Christmas and do have a wonderful holiday season. And may God bless each and everyone.

*"Gene" Yoquelet*

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Society members Barb Gorney and JoAnne Johnston are copying the Besancon columns from the early 1900s Journal Gazette. An example of their materials appears in this issue.

## Cemetery Project

Society members Sue Kratzman and Judy Schroff report that the cemetery project is progressing nicely. They plan to have all the tombstones in the old cemetery read before bad weather sets in. They are comparing the inscriptions with church records, other cemetery records and death records at the Allen County Public Library to compile as accurate a register as possible.

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*The Society's Archives, located in the former convent at Besancon, are open for research every Wednesday between 9 AM and 1 PM.*

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*The Society maintains a web page at:*

*<http://cvax.ipfw.indiana.edu/www/depts/history/historgs/besancon.html>*

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*The Society will hold a business meeting on Saturday, 31 January 1998.*

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*Fr. Thom Lombardi is continuing to process the photographs collected as part of the Album in the Attic project. Questions regarding the photographs should be directed to him at St. Joseph's in Garrett.*

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*The By-Laws Committee was formed in August and has met several times. The by-laws are being revised with the help of John Harris of the Indiana Historical Society. Members of the committee are Terri Gorney, Barb Gorney, Carlton Giant, Arlene Curts and Theresa Martin.*

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Historical Genealogical Collection \*CMP\*  
Allen County Public Library  
900 Webster Street  
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