



History of the Gibson County Fair & The Gibson County Horticultural and Agricultural Society

**Let us pay honor and thanks to The Pioneers of this Great Fair of
Gibson County; Truly a progressive testimonial to one of the best
Counties in the Great and Friendly Hoosier State of Indiana.**

**The fine unselfish men and women of high purpose, who conceived this Fair were typical
Pioneer stock. The same pattern that gave our United States the most wonderful
heritage and Spirit under God, of any nation on earth. Each succeeding generation has
carried on to uphold the ideals and traditions of these great pioneers. May we of 1955
and the future dedicate ourselves to the unselfish effort of making this our County a still
better place for the people who follow us.**

**Gibson County Fair Board
Chase Derbyshire,
President 1955**

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Princeton was rapidly developing by the year 1850, with many interests which included businesses, schools, post office, court house, churches, lawyers, saloons, licensed taverns, blacksmith shop, gun and silversmith, distillery, newspapers, doctors and many more.

Gibson County was also growing. King Station, south of Princeton, came into existence with the building of the Evansville & Terre Haute railroad in 1851 and 1852. Dongala, another Gibson county town of the past, was on the Patoka River near the Pike county line and was laid out in 1851 with a public square. The Wabash and Erie Canal promised to make it a real city, but it died with the canal. The village plat was laid out for Francisco in Center Township on January 6, 1851.

Interests in agricultural began to develop in Indiana and especially throughout the out lying areas of Princeton and Gibson County. This interest created a demand for a county fair. The population being mainly agricultural the general interest centered in the production of the soil. It became a friendly rivalry among the agriculturalists as to who could excel in these products.



The movement begins in the 1840's toward a county fair, but did not reach definite results until 1851. The credit of the first fair belongs to one man, Dr. George Graff who came to Princeton in 1843.

Mr. Graff was at all times interested in the growth and welfare of Gibson county and when he projected the idea of holding a county fair, he secured the support of the leading citizens of Princeton and the surrounding county which included such gentlemen as Rev. John McMaster, William Kurtz, John Hargrove, Dr. Wm. W. Blair, Dr. Andrew Lewis, Dr. Joseph Neeley and others whose names were closely linked with the history of the later organized fair association.

Agricultural Society Established in 1851

On the first day of November 1851, a notice was published in the Princeton Clarion, calling for a meeting of farmers of Gibson County, to take place at the courthouse in Princeton on Thursday the 13th day of November 1851, at 12:00 o'clock for the purpose of organizing the Agricultural Society.

In accordance with his notice a meeting took place on said date which was the first public movement toward the establishment of an annual fair.

Joseph V. Hill was chosen as presiding officer and Robert McCurdy as its secretary. On the motion of S. M. Halcomb, a committee consisting of Archibald Warnock, Wm. Kurtz and S. M. Halcomb was appointed by the chair to draft a constitution for the consideration of the meeting. This committee reported a constitution which was unanimously adopted by the group. Also, at this meeting a committee composed of gentlemen representing several townships of the county was appointed to present the plan and constitution, solicit signatures and receive one dollar for membership to be paid to the treasurer of the society.

It was also resolved that this meeting designate a president, treasurer and secretary to act as such until their successors be elected under the constitution, at a meeting to be held at the courthouse in Princeton on the second Saturday in January, 1852, at one o'clock P.M. The Purpose of this meeting was to permanently organize and also that the committee appointed to solicit membership would report their proceedings. The meeting was held as published, with

John Hargrove being elected president, Wm. Krutz, treasurer and Andrew Lewis as secretary in accordance with the resolution. At this January 10, 1852 meeting, the solicitation committee of membership reported seventy-five signatures to the constitution and the same number of dollars as fees, which were paid to the treasurer. It was filed that the first Gibson county fair would be held on November 11, 1852 at the court house in Princeton

First Gibson county fair November 11, 1852

The first Gibson County fair was held on November 11, 1852 at the courthouse in Princeton. This fair was financed by officers and a board of interested parties. Such live stock as was exhibited was tied to the fence surrounding the court yard and an effort was made toward a display of farm products of all kinds. No admission was charged and premiums were made on from money given the merchants and others of Princeton. The premiums amounted to \$30.50. In addition to the cash premiums, silver cups were awarded as prizes and this feature continued long after the fair association was organized.

The first fair was so well attended and was such a success that it was repeated at the same location the following year, on October 4, 1853. There was quite an interest taken, in the attendance, the number of entries and variety exhibits. The total premiums offered included cash, silverware and other articles amounting to \$169.50 with the highest cash premium being \$2.50.

No Fair in 1854 or 1855

During the following two years, for some reason, no fair was held; but in 1856 the movement was revived with added success. The third fair was held at the courthouse in Princeton on October 15th 16th, 1856. The premiums paid at this fair amounted to \$225.00, 410 entries in all classes.

The interest taken in the fair was so great that the sum of \$200.00 was raised by voluntary donations toward the purchase of fairgrounds, which was estimate would cost \$500.00.

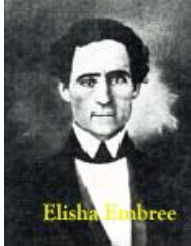
First Fair Board 1857

June 22, 1857, a meeting of the Gibson County Agricultural Society was held at the courthouse in Princeton. On motion of the Rev. John McMaster, it was resolved that the society be organized as a joint stock company, agreeable to the statues of the State of Indiana. It was resolved that a committee of seven men be appointed to nominate twelve directors to serve the issuing year. The committee reported the names of Elisha Embree, A.B. Lockhart, George Kendel, S. Mead, John Ennis, L.S. French, Azzo Harrison, J. M. Cockrum, W.B. Jaquess, W.B. Graff and Wm. W. Blair which was adopted thus, forming the first board of Directors of the Gibson County Fair Society.

On September 19, 1857, a general meeting was held for all members and all the citizens of the county interested in the subject of the fair. At this meeting a new constitution was adopted and the name of the association was changed to "**The Gibson County Horticultural and Agricultural Society**". With the changing of the name, new officers were elected under the new constitution with Elisha Embree, President; A. Harrison, vice president; George B. Graff, Corresponding Secretary; Wm. W. Blair, Recording Secretary; A. B. Lockhart, Treasurer. The directors were George Kendle, S. Head, Wm. Jacquess, John Ennis, L .S. French, A. Poland, J. M. Cockrum, S. M. Holcomb, Alex Devin, Thomas S. Smith and

Dunston Mills, John K. Finney was appointed the first general superintendent for the coming fair. It was resolved that the first fair of the Gibson County Horticultural and Agricultural Society would be held October 20- 21- and 22, 1857. The articles of incorporation stated that non-dividend paying shares of stock should be issued and at the beginning of the organization, 233 of these shares were sold. In later years considerable other stock was issued but always with the original idea that they should not become a commercial asset.

First Fair at the New Fairgrounds 1857



The constitution gave the directors authority to purchase and improve a suitable piece of ground, not to exceed ten acres of land to be used as permanent grounds for the fair. This ground to be located near the town of Princeton and in accordance, the directors purchased from Elisha Embree a tract of land consisting of about 7 acres, situated about ½ mile northwest of Princeton, paying therefore the sum of \$734.40. The ground was hurriedly prepared, and the first fair of the Gibson County Horticultural and Agricultural Society was held. Admission to the grounds was charged for the first time. From this time forward the Gibson County fair has had a prosperous existence. This fair proved to be a huge success with over 700 entries being made that year and the proceeds of the fair were over \$700.00. No money premiums were offered this year but spoons, silver cups and (plated) thimbles were given instead.

There was a fair in 1858 but for some reason all of the records were destroyed. The year of 1859, the fair receipts were more than \$1500.00 and the premium list was a trifle over \$850.00. By this time the fair had grown to such proportions that it was necessary to purchase more land and on January 4, 1860, six more acres adjoining the original tract was acquired from Judge Embree. The additional land permitted the grading of a show ring, 1/3 of a mile in circumferences. For many years following the organization of the Association, racing was not a feature of the fair and this ring was used for show purposes only. Eventually racing became popular and the tract was utilized for this purpose, not however, without considerable opposition on the part of many stockholders who were opposed to it from principle.

Civil War Encampment November 1861



The Following Contributed by Gerald L. Osman

There have been interesting features connected with the grounds of the Gibson County Fair Association, aside from the fair itself. The grounds furnished camping space for three regiments of soldiers, which went from Gibson County during the Civil War, the Fifty-eighth, Sixty-fifth and Eightieth Indiana Volunteer regiments, which were recruited on the fair grounds and it was there the men received their first military instructions.

B. M. Brokaw

The 58th Regiment of Indiana, which on the 10th of November 1861 had a total of 891 men, took up encampment at the Gibson County Fairground. The 58th Regiment began forming from not only Gibson County but all of the other nine southwestern Indiana counties. The organization of the 58th Regiment began with Company B which was made up entirely of men from Gibson County. Company A was made up of men from Pike County and Gibson County. The recruitment of men for several Regiments besides the 58th began on the 21st of October 1861. The Gibson County Fairgrounds was offered to the Regiments by Doctor William W. Blair, who was one of the original members of the Gibson County Fair Board.

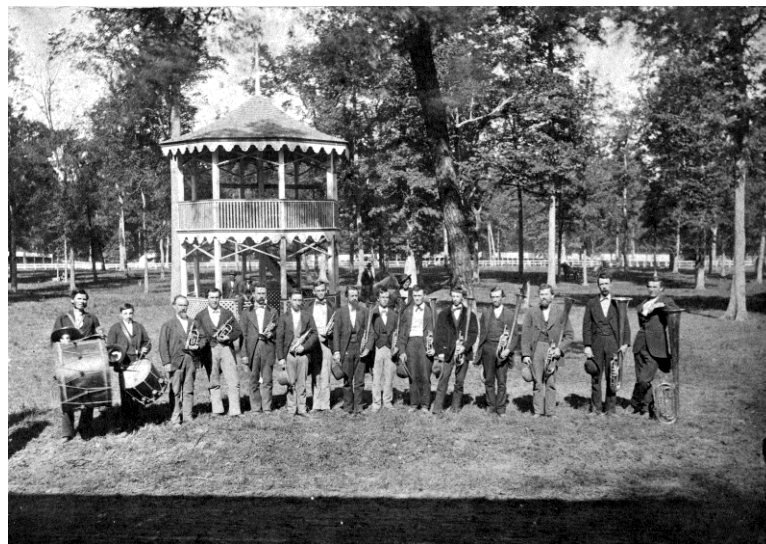
Doctor Blair was the Chief Surgeon for the 58th Regiment. His kind offer was accepted and the recruitment of men began. Soon after the first of October 1861, the military changed the Gibson County Fair Ground's name to Camp Gibson. Camp Gibson became etched in history as a Civil War Camp. The entire fairground was used as a camp spilling over into what in 1861 was called Embree Woods. Embree Woods later became what is now the north side of the fairgrounds. The men were housed in make-shift barracks, as well as in the exhibition buildings, livestock barns, and the remaining buildings on the fairgrounds. What is now the infield was used as a drill field and the area where the merchant buildings now are was a camp tent hospital. The 58th Regiment remained at Camp Gibson, trained and waited for orders to move to the South. The 58th Regiment broke camp on the thirteenth of December 1861 and left Camp Gibson by train for Evansville where they boarded the riverboat Baltic for the slow trip to Louisville, Kentucky. Camp Gibson was kept open for some time after the departure of the 58th Regiment. The camp was used for the training of replacements for the three regiments that left Camp Gibson. By the fall of 1862 the grounds had been turned back over to the Gibson County Fair Board and the Sixth Annual Gibson County Regional Fair was held.

Contributed by Gerald L. Osman Special Thanks to: Princeton Public Library

Due to the Civil War no fair was held in 1862. The next year, 1863 the Society was indebted over \$600.00 to the estate of the Hon. Elisha Embree. The object of the 1863 fair was to make money to pay this debt. The Society risks the venture of a fair during the crisis of the country and urged the public to give generous and free offerings of their means to meet this debt.

From time to time more additions were made to the grounds and in 1870 six more acres were purchased to expand the fairgrounds.

1871 As it is necessary and desirable for the prosperity of welfare of the society to increase the capital stock, thereof, the following liberal offer is made: Anyone purchasing "One share" of said capital stock valued at \$5.00 will be entitled to a complimentary ticket, admitting during the fair all members of the family under fifteen years of age.



Professor Cox's Band on the infield of the Gibson County Fairground in 1871. Members include from left: Andrew Pfohl, John Patterson, Prof. Cox, Will Wade, Louis Pfohl, Billy Snow, Robert Howe, Dan Miller, Robert Erwin, Will Carpenter, E.R. Pinney, Alex Devin, Mr. Baker, Mr. Curl and Nathan Bucklin. Notice the gazebo which adorned the racetrack for many years.

1880 The Fair Board purchased three more acres.

1882 The Fairgrounds was expanded by three acres. Also in 1882 a half mile speed ring was surveyed and several new buildings were erected.

1883 The fair board expanded the 1/3 mile speed ring to a half mile speed ring just in time for the fair. Trotting and Pacing horse races would be on tap everyday on the newly expanded horse track, it was claimed by some to be the best half mile track in the state. There were five photo tents on the grounds this year and many were having their photos taken. The street train was doing a good business taking people to and from the fair and the air-line accommodation train ran the last three days of the fair every fifteen minutes, single trip was five cents, round trip ten cents. Going to and from the fair on the roads was almost unbearable due to the dust. It was uncertain if the water supply would be sufficient to handle the large demand until the wells were put to the test. The Princeton Community Band were on hand providing music.

1884 The big improvement for this year's fair was the concrete floor in the floral hall and gone was the saw dust floor and all the fleas that came with it. One of the notable merchant displays was by S. F. Gilmore a local dentist who had it made out of molars he had extracted. Many groans were heard as fairgoers passed by.

1885 The most noticeable addition to the fairgrounds this year was the water fountain constructed under the direction of Robert Mitchel, this was no small feat as it would be another 18 years before the grounds would have running water. To accomplish this feat the fair association erected a large iron tank in the southeast corner of the grounds with a pipe leading northwest to the center of the grounds where the fountain was located. The fountain itself was 25 feet in diameter and about five feet deep. It was constructed of brick, rock and English cement, giving the appearance of limestone rock. A number of flower pots were arranged in the center of the pool of water with several life like wooden ducks floating around. A two foot high rail was placed around the top containing a number of water jets and one in the center of the fountain that constantly flowed water. Water would then flow into an overflow pipe leading further to the northwest where it emptied into large troughs for watering of the live stock.

At the same time J. G. Miller was finishing Gibson County's third courthouse the "Great One and Only" Gibson County Fair was preparing to open its doors. Over 3,500 were entered for the fair in various categories. It was estimated that on Thursday between 12,000 to 15,000 people had entered the grounds that day. Both railroads ran special excursion trains to the city to accommodate the number of people wishing to attend the fair. The exhibits and displays were overflowing, the horticultural hall was claimed to have had a third more displays than ever before, with displays of cereals, fruits and vegetables. Twenty four pens were filled with sheep, the hogs filled twenty pens with one to ten per pen, a number of horses were on display, the cattle display comprised mainly of Short Horn, Devon, and Jersey breeds. The building containing the floral displays was full of floral arrangements and in the center of the main hall was an arrangement of cut flowers twenty feet high. In the north wing on the floral hall was a display of canned fruit and over 500 varieties of jellies and jams, in the south wing of this large hall was displays of photographs paintings and about 600 designs of fancy needle work. The machinery exhibits had everything used on the farm from a hoe to a threshing machine, including displays of engines, self binders, reapers, mowers and clover hullers. In the merchants hall there was a number of displays from local businessmen. W. H. Smith displayed his parlor and bedroom furniture, Downey and Welborn displayed their dry goods, Decker Brothers of Evansville had pianos and organs on display, Charles Brownlee

goods from his store downtown, Seth Ward had goods on display from his leather store and Mossman Brothers displayed all kinds of groceries.

The smell of freshly roasted peanuts filled the air as concessionaires filled the midway with a verity of refreshments.

Entertainment was provided all week by the Owensville community band for a sum of \$125. The horse racing was good with more horses entered in the trotting and pacing races than ever before.

A new feature to the fair this year was the Old Relics Hall. The hall containing relics of days gone by was the most visited place on the fairgrounds. Some of the items on loan or donated to the fair association for display included, cream and sugar spoons awarded by the Gibson County Agricultural society during the 1856 fair, a wooden lock used in 1828, a fifty-five year old bear trap, a ninety year old looking-glass that had been handed down from father to son in the Wheeler family, seventy-five year old candle sticks, swords used in the revolutionary war, a gun used by Gen. Harrison, and the cradle in which rocked the first white child born in Gibson County and many other items.

1886 the amphitheater was moved to the south side of the arena. The amphitheater seated 3,000 comfortably and was moved to the south side so the sun would not shine in the visitors eyes and a new judge's stand was built on the opposite side of the amphitheater. Also two new stalls were added to bring the total stalls for cattle and horses to 225 stalls. The wells were cleaned out and there was plenty of good water for everyone. A new feature of the fair was a daily newspaper published on the grounds each day by C. W. Welman, editor and proprietor of the Fort Branch Telephone. The Princeton Cornet and Reed band played in the new exposition hall the largest in the state.

1887 the fairgrounds grew by six acres as more ground was purchased. On Wednesday morning the third day of the Fair a large number of people arrived on the early trains, at 9:00 am the award committee began giving out the awards in the exhibition hall and proceeded to the arena in front of the amphitheater were coach and general purpose horses, Jersey, Holstein and Devon cattle were exhibited. Afternoons saw the usual horse racing events.

1892 The Fair Board purchased an additional 19 acres, and with the purchase of several smaller lots between 1892 and 1914 the grounds had grown to just over 60 acres.

1893 Exhibits to the fair were down considerably this year due to the great fire of 1882 that destroyed 63 buildings in the downtown area and the complete west and north side of the Princeton Square. Many businesses were not able to recover in time to attend the fair with their exhibits.

1885 It was estimated by ticket sellers that 12,000 to 15,000 people were on hand at the grounds Thursday. Many people came on excursion trains run by both railroads and continuous lines of buggies and wagons were making their way to the grounds from early morning until near noon. As normal trotting and pacing races were held daily. The Owensville community band played, the old relic hall was full, in the center of the floral hall was a pyramid of green and cut flowers towering over twenty feet tall, and 500 different varieties of jams and jellies filled one wing of this building. One of the areas that drew a lot of attention was the fountain. A huge iron tank was erected in the southeast corner of the grounds and from it was a pipe running northwest to the center of the grounds where the fountain was located. The fountain was a large circular basin about twenty five feet in diameter and five feet deep, constructed of brick, rock and overlaid with English cement, giving the appearance

of having been dug out of limestone rock. Around the top was an iron railing about two feet high containing a number of jets which constantly flowed water. The overflow pipe lead to the northwest part of the grounds and emptied in to large troughs used to water the livestock.

1886 A daily newspaper was published on the grounds by editor and proprietor of the Fort Branch Telephone C. W. Welman. The paper was a first class journal of the happenings at the fair.

1887 Seen the normal speed racing events for trotters and pacers a long with a large number of exhibit entries.

1888 On a tragic note Thursday during the Fair, Sylvester Grubb of Oakland City shot and killed his girlfriend Miss Gertrude Downey because on the advice of her parents she had stopped seeing him.

1899 Temperatures during the week were reported to be up to 105 in the shade. Horse racing, Old Fiddlers Contest, Balloon Ascensions, Horse Racing, and The old Relic Hall were all part of the 1899 fair. It was also noted that several couples took the opportunity while visiting the county seat for the fair to stop by the clerk's office to pick up a marriage license. On Wednesday alone 5 marriage licenses were granted to Matthew Kiesel and Elizabeth Haspe, G. Ellis Daughery and Elizabeth Kirkpatrick, John Sellers and Ethel Kendle, William Skelton and Bertha Lynn, Daniel H. McNew and Ida M. Huff.

1900 the first Ferris Wheel to come to the fair, it was 50 feet high. Dr. Thomas Folkes optician had his office at the fairgrounds during fair week. Thursday and Friday two balloon races where held between two balloons. The fairboard had been attempting to arrange for the first automobile race at the fairgrounds 1900. We do not believe the fairboard came to a final agreement with the owners of two racing machines which could have made the a mile in two minutes.

1901 on Thursday and Friday balloon races were held it was said to have been the biggest balloons ever sent up and to have been more fun than the horse races. Family admission was 4 cents and single admissions were 3 cents.

1902 Fair was held September 1st – 6th and featured The Kennedy Brother's Great Wild West Show Hippodrome. The act included lassoing of horses, rough riding, and fancy trick riding. Wild Bill and his genuine cowboys rode any horse, mule or steer brought to them. Bessie Kennedy, the champion lady rifle shot of the world was on hand. There were Roman Chariot Races, six standing horses, a four horse tandem race, lady jockey races, and much more. Also at the fair was the usual livestock shows, horse racing everyday, Princeton Band (*not the high school band*), and displays.

1903 As in years past their was old soldiers day, a day dedicated to them as they were give free admission, at the same time was Educational Day devoted to education work, several bands including Poseyville, Oakland City and Haubstadt bands, real live Indians were on hand, Kennedy Wild West Show, horse racing and displays of all kinds.

This fair ticket was used by the Woods Family for the Forty-Ninth Gibson County Fair in 1903 and reads as follows.



This ticket admits man and wife, boys under the age of 15 years and all unmarried daughters, not friends, once each day during the fair. Good only on days denoted by the uncanceled figures. Cost of the ticket was \$1.50

1905 Horse Racing, Old Soldiers Day, Education Day, Free admittance was provided for all civil war veterans and their wives and also graduates of all Gibson County Schools.

1906 from all references it was the largest year to date for the Gibson County fair; this insert was taken from a 1906 fair book.

To the Patrons: We have continued from year to year to place before the Public a statement of success of the Gibson County Fair, and this year the association owes no man a dollar.

The result will be that greater care, better service, additional comforts and increased benefits will be given to the public. Also bigger premiums will be offered to the many exhibitors.

It is not boasting to say that the Gibson County Fair is bigger and better each year. All possible endeavors will be made for the year 1906 to outclass any previous year and the patrons again helping assures success.

So we again solicit your continued and united efforts to affect the common end - the good of the greatest number - and ask that you, together with your friends, meet with us for our annual out-door meet and family gatherings.

No gambling, No intoxicants.

Thanking you, we remain,

The Gibson County Horticultural and Agricultural Society

During the year of 1906, everything within the power of the officers and directors of the Fair was done to build a bigger and better fair. The fair had reached a phenomenal stage in its growth, and it seemed that more could hardly be accomplished but their progress had only begun. The fair board had continued for a great treat in the way of free attractions that the patrons could have the best and the public be assured that there would be lots of things that would be of interest to, entertain and to instruct. On the grounds, about 1000 shade trees, advantageously located to assure the patrons seating. Under the trees were placed rustic seats and a great string of easy circus seats were placed at comfortable points. There was iced drinking water for all.

1906 A New Amphitheater

A new amphitheater, 450 feet long was ready for fair week. It was fitted with high backed, solid formation seats with its comfortable seating capacity of 9,000. In addition to this, circus seats were set up to hold 3,000 more people.

25,000 Came to the Fair on a Thursday

Transportation facilities were better than ever with 80 more cars being furnished by the railroad. The traction line also increased its car allowance. Hotel space was at a premium Wednesday the night before the fair opened, finding a place to stay was almost impossible people wondered around town late into the night until they found accommodations. The next day the crowd would began arriving in the early morning and prepared to spend the entire day at the fair. It was estimated that 25,000 people passed thru the gates on Thursday of the 1906 fair. It was the biggest crowd ever to attend a Gibson County fair. The flying Baldwin's, an aerial act, was the entertainment for the day. The special program included boy's pony riding, ladies driving, buggy pacing and buggy trotting. The first premium in the ladies driving was won by Miss Mabel Tichenor and second place was won by Mrs. Charles Steele.

Along with the normal horse racing and Merchant Displays, at the fair this year was Pete's Monkey Show, W. M. Pete's show furnished amusement to thousands of people fair week. The monkey show which included eight performing monkeys entertained the audience with feats and acts that were comically human in character. On Thursday Pete was short one monkey as one of his monkeys had decided he wanted to see what was at the fair; he wandered over the fairgrounds for more than two hours before being captured. The Oakland City, Ft. Branch and Harrington Show Bands made several appearances at the fairgrounds this week.

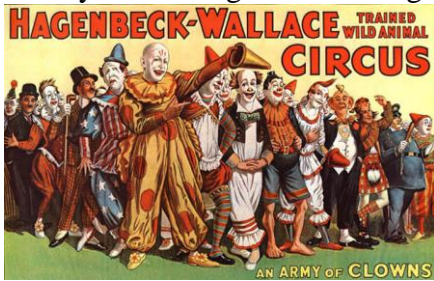
The Princeton Clarion reported that the Thursday crowd in the amphitheater was a sea of faces sweeping from end to end of the big grandstands, 10,000 human beings under one roof, thousands and thousands sitting and standing, tier upon tier from the track to the roof, that was what the spectators standing on the opposite side of the track saw at 2:00pm Thursday afternoon.

The 1906 fair was termed a record breaker from every point of view. With the exception of a shower on Thursday morning, the weather was perfect. Transportation facilities were better than ever. The fair from the attraction stand point was as good as ever. Provision for seating and handling the crowds was far better than ever before. William F. Parrett was president of this record breaking fair held September 3rd thru 8th, 1906. Other officers were Vice president - James S. Knight, Treasurer - Stewart Fisher, Secretary - John R. McGinnis, and J. Perry Key was General Superintendent. The directors were Oscar Spore, Henry Redman, Joseph Cunningham, John W. Johnson, Joseph R. McCarty, Joseph P. Yochum, Thomas Emmerson, Jos. H. Armstrong, W.H. Lewis, Abert G. Holcomb, John F. Fulling, John K. King, and Geo. Shull.



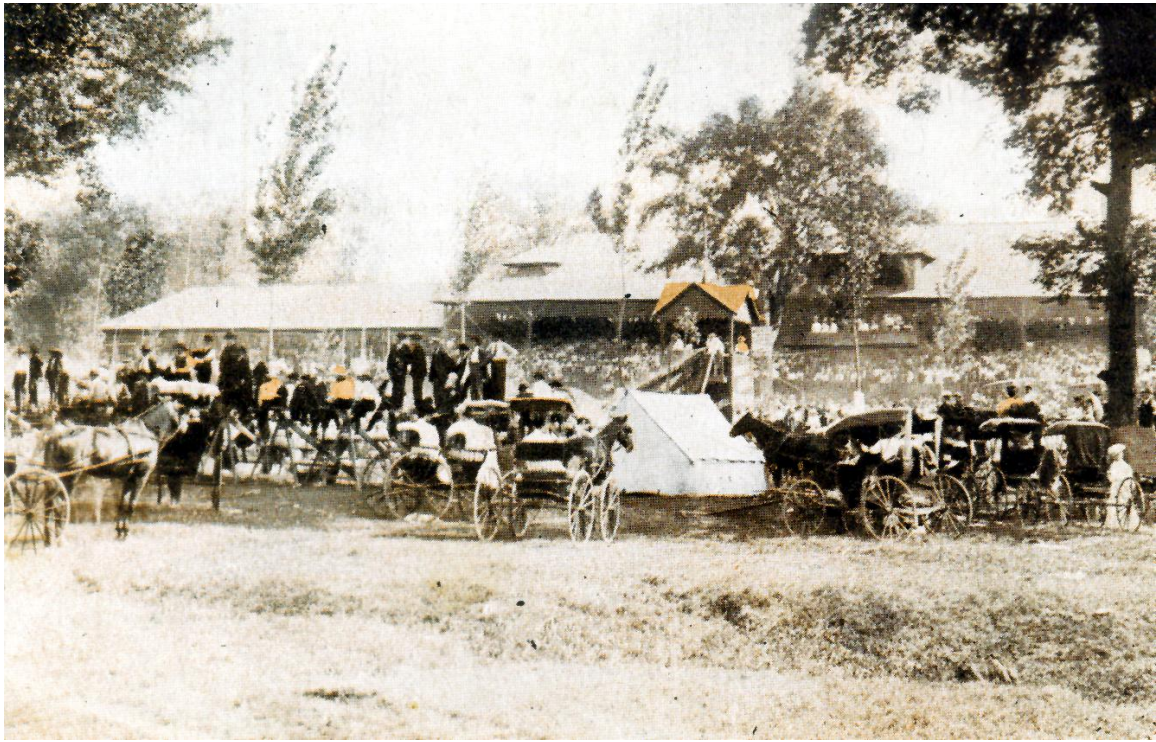
September 1907 Gibson County Fair

In 1908 two big attractions would head to Princeton to compete for the attention of the Southern Indiana and Illinois residents. Not only was the annual fair underway but on Thursday what is normally the biggest day of the fair, Hagenbeck and Wallace management had brought their traveling circus to town. The circus arrived in town on the E. & T. H. Railroad depot near Brown Street. They immediately began unloading all the large tents, wagons, and animals and transporting them the Tichenor farm out west Broadway just passed the B. M. A. Addition. At 11:00 am a parade began at the large tents on the Tichenor farm and preceeded up Broadway and around the public square. Thousands of people lined the streets to see the parade. Wallace estimated the crowd to be around eighteen thousand people. This was by far the largest crowd to gather around the public square. The circus included many



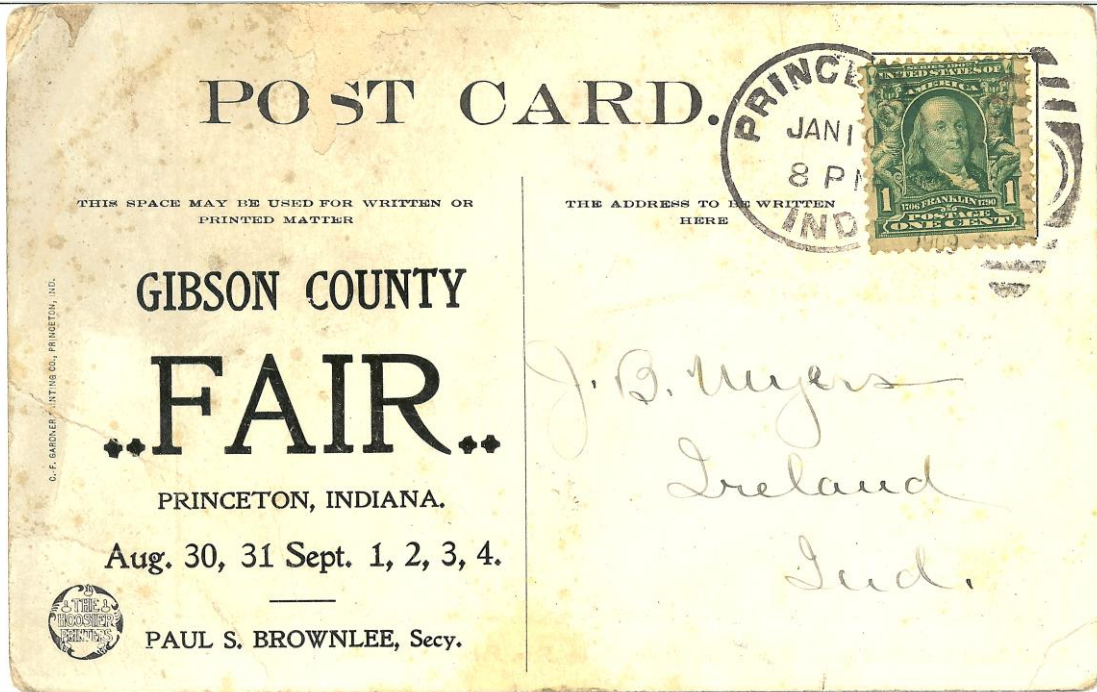
European acts and animals of all kinds. Two big shows were to be given, one this afternoon after the parade and one this evening at 7:30 pm. Following the afternoon performance Col. Ben Wallace one of the owners of the circus attended the Gibson County Fair as a guest of the fair association. Wallace who was very good at estimating crowds, estimated the attendants at the fair was 25,000.

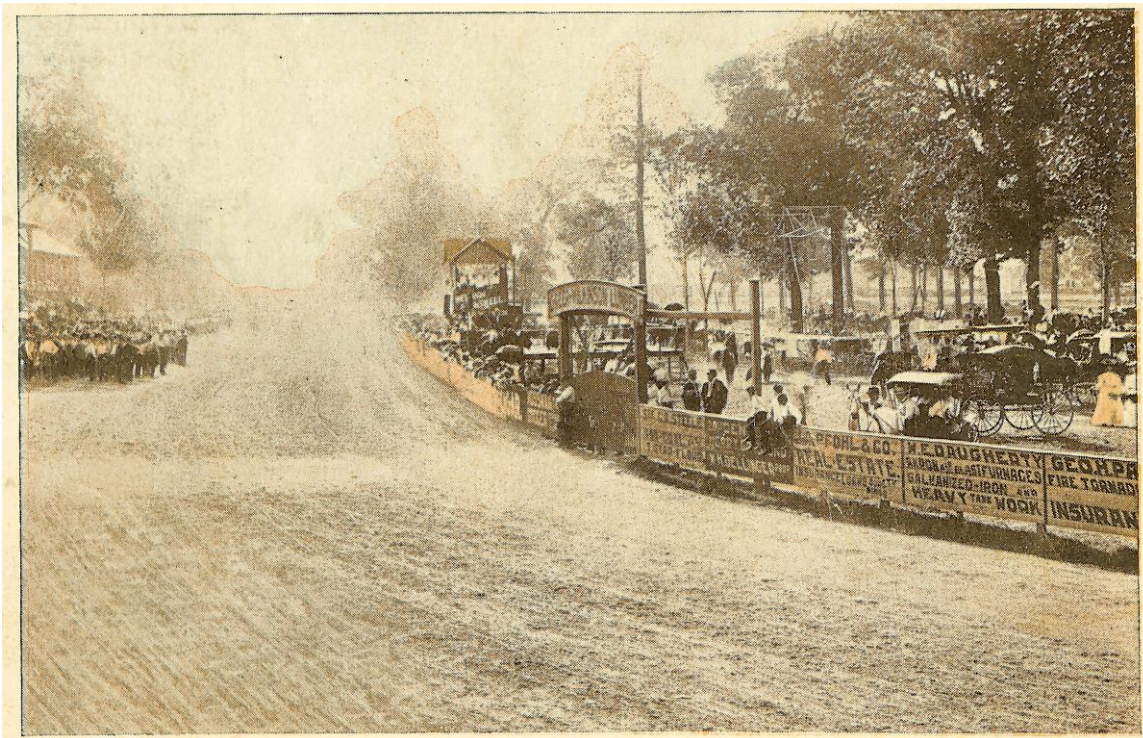
Col. Wallace was quoted by the clarion newspaper as saying "I have often heard of the Gibson County Fair, and that no circus could ever successfully buck it, and now I know it," said Mr. Wallace late Thursday afternoon. "It is certainly the greatest county fair in the Midwest. We gave one of our best parades today and of course expected to draw a large crowd, judging from the immense throngs on the streets, but I'm ready to acknowledge that we had the smallest attendance this afternoon that I have ever had since I've been in the circus business, It's no use to try to buck this fair Wallace said."



1907 or 1908 Gibson County Fair

This is the back of the card above; this card was mailed January 10, 1909 to stockholders announcing the 1909 fair dates.





1907-1908

1909 Horse racing, Free attractions, Balue First Regiment Band of Vincennes and Kennedy XIT Ranch Wild West Show, the show included twenty-six horses, twenty persons, seven Indians and two Mexicans. One of the free acts at the fair was the Hippodrome Races, these races included thrilling chariot and running horse races.

1910 September 5-10, the fair featured a free concert uptown on the courthouse lawn each evening, the bands on hand for the fair entertainment were the Belmont Hussar band, Indianapolis military band, and the Old Union band. Returning to the fair were aerialists The Flying Baldwins, Professor Kernan with his large balloon and daily parachute leaps and horse racing.

1911 Sept 4-9th A ad in the Princeton Daily Clarion boasted that the Fair had more and better attractions than ever before, with unusual expositions of art, industry, trades and amusements. There was something going on all the time. There were free concerts uptown each night, featuring the Belmont Hussar Band, the Indianapolis Military Band, and the old Union Band. At the fairgrounds was the Flying Baldwins, Professor Kernan and his big hot air balloon, Horse racing, Ben Holmes Wild West Show, Vaudeville acts, and a bowling alley was setup on the grounds, and more premiums were offered for a variety of winning exhibits than ever before. Also on hand were venders selling hokey-pokeys these were balls of ice cream wrapped in paper, popcorn, red lemonade, boneless fish, and several other treats. The Girls in Yellow Oriental Show, and the management claimed this show was moral and instructive and was just filling time before the big acts.

1912 On August 28 just a few days before the fair was to open the main part of the new soldier's monument had arrived from Montello Wis., at the C. & E. I. station and was being unloaded with derricks and wagons. The base of the monument was due to arrive in the next couple of days from Barre Vt. The heaviest piece of the base weighed 13 tons. Henry Hackleman assembled the soldier's monument. On that same day Arthur Embree was at the Boonville fair recruiting motorcycle riders to compete at the Gibson County Fair. Other attractions at the fair included daily balloon ascension and a parachute leap, The First Regiment Band of Vincennes, Horse races, Mule races, acrobats the Five Malvern, Seymour's

Wild Animal Show, Vaudeville acts, The Kawsand Brothers acrobats and equilibrist were the first Japanese artists to appear at the Gibson County Fair. Tuesday was Sunday school day and all children enrolled in Sunday school was admitted free, Wednesday was old soldiers day and all civil war veterans and their wives were admitted free.

On September 2, 1912 the day before the fair opened the new Palace Theater picture house opened at 210 west State.

In 1913 a permanent administration building was erected and improvements were contemplated for the future, which included an exhibit hall of ample proportions, new Judges stand and men's toilets.

Every year since its formation has seen the association more successful, and in 1914 it stood as one of the most stable of organizations of its kind in the Midwest. They boasted that Gibson County had one of the best county fairs in Indiana or surrounding states was not an idle one. It has kept pace with modern thought and as conditions have changed, so has the policy of the fair managements been changed, except as to the fundamental ideas upon which its success has been built. It has always been the policy to not limit competition in the matter of exhibits, except during the first 3 fairs and in awarding of premiums, the non resident of the county stands had equal chance with all. Quality alone has always been considered.

From the very first, the Gibson County fair Association has been capably officered, which fact alone is responsible for much of the success. A roster of its officers and directors have contained the names of many of the most conscientious and influential men of Gibson County.

From the beginning it was always the policy of the association to bar all exhibits and attractions which were lacking in morality. Gambling in all its phases has always been strictly forbidden, as well as the sale of intoxicants on the grounds. In the belief that running races attracted an undesirable class of people, no speed contests were staged until after 1911 except harness events. In the strict and impartial enforcement of these rules, lies much of the success of the fair in all the years of its successful operation.

In 1913 major improvements were made to the fairgrounds as city water was for the first time piped throughout the grounds. Men's and women's restrooms were installed and construction on a new brick administration building was begun. The administration building being constructed is being built on the site of the old ticket office and will have four rooms. One room for the directors, treasurer, secretary and a ticket booth. Also under construction is a new judges stand and a free attractions platform and the large amphitheater was being painted red.

1914 The fair each year became bigger and better and the 1914 fair was no exception. There was plenty of free hitching space and water for the horses. The admission prices had stayed the same 25 cents for adults and 15 cents for children. Attractions at the fair this year where horse racing, motorcycle racing, over 800 chickens where on exhibit in the poultry building, Baine Band of Vincennes, Balloon Races, LaVanior and Macomb on the horizontal Bar, The Flying Vaneltinos, and much more. On Thursday evening of that year, at 6:15, many Fair excursionists were on their way home by way of the Traction Car when it crashed head-on, near Spore Crossing 2 miles south of Princeton. More than 20 people were injured.



1915 Forty seven hack (taxi) licenses had been issued by the City Clerk Earl Miller. Three of the taxies were trucks that carried twelve persons each from Union, Evansville and Vincennes and were only charging five cents per rider. The other taxies were charging ten cents per rider. Upset with the price cutting the forty four charging five cent demanded their money back for their licenses. Mayor Head had stated that the city was not going to regulate taxi fees. However City Clerk Miller tried to smooth thing over and two of the three agreed to charge 10 cent and the taxi from Vincennes was the only hold out. At noon the Vincennes taxi driver went to lunch at a restaurant on the north side of the square and to his surprise when he came out forty four taxies had surrounded his truck, the man through his hands up as to say I give and tore up his five cent sign.

At the fair that year were Automobile and Motorcycle Racing, horse racing, music and bands played, all the normal open class displays were on hand and a number of free acts. On the midway you could find concessions, side shows and freak attractions. Among the attraction was the spider lady, a movie tent that played three different movies, Betsy the two legged calf, the Motor-Drome a large circular tube that they race motorcycles in, Wild West exhibition and a vaudeville show. During the motorcycle racing in front of the amphitheater the crowd was surprised when the fairboard put on a novelty race. The race was for fourteen miles but after the first mile the riders had to stop in front on the amphitheater where they were each handed a package of women's clothing that they were required to put on the clothing including a corset and a long bungalow apron. The rider had to finish the race without losing the clothing. Unfortunately Robert Sisson from Hazleton was seriously injured in turn four when his apron got caught in the gearing and threw the rider into the fence.

1916 fair saw Balloon ascensions, wrestling between young Zsobscos and all comers, the Balue Vincennes band, harness racing and for the first time ever a horse running event that didn't include sulkies. A Farris wheel and big swing added to the amusements.

1917 Many vendors and concessions were on the midway this year; one notable difference was that many of the concessions came on trucks. It would seem they travel from fair to fair by this means. The 1917 Fair had Horse Racing, Balloon Ascensions, Balue Band from Vincennes, and many free acts.

1918 Col. J. E. Brumfield and his Boy Scouts setup an information booth near the front gate of the fair where you could find fair information, times and schedules for the train and traction cars and much more. The Jacky band from the great lakes naval training station was on hand, The Princeton Public Band directed by well known Charles Benton played three days at the fair. Benton and his band were determined to put on a better show than the Balue Band from Vincennes did last year.

In 1919, sixteen hundred men of Gibson County, who were the counties representatives in the Great War, were present to receive the welcome of the county at the homecoming celebration at the fairgrounds this was to open the fair September 2, 1919. Over 1000 of the returned soldiers, sailors, and marines were in uniform and the Khaki and blue and white lent a touch to the fairgrounds which it hadn't had since the big reunion of Civil War veterans a number of years before.



1919 Gibson County Fair

In 1919, a big raid was held during the fair with 13 paddle wheels and fortune tellers being cleared from the grounds. Five people were arrested. There was no charge for the night fair during the 1919 fair.

The Old Relic Hall

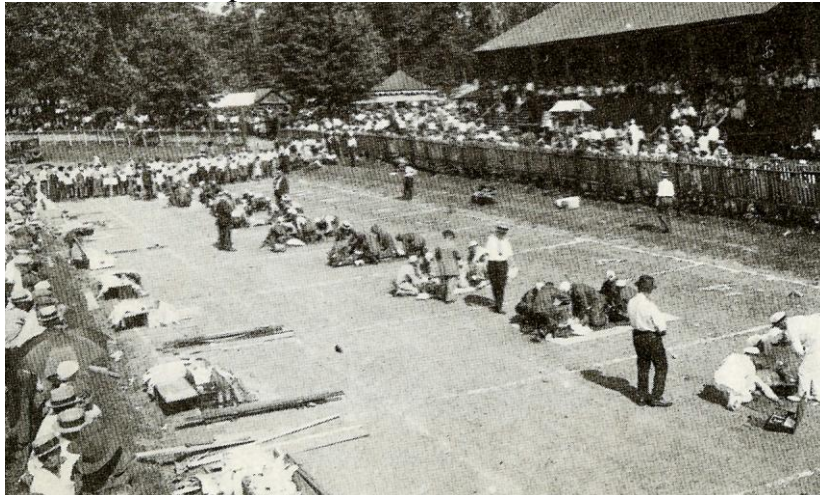


Just inside the main gate of the fairgrounds south of the ticket office was the old Relic Hall. This small museum contained many artifacts relating to Gibson County and its pioneer days. During fair many people would loan many more antiques and artifacts to be displayed during the fair. The old log cabin in which Abraham Lincoln was said to have spent the night in was once the home of Dr. John Scott, a Presbyterian minister and before being moved to the fairgrounds the cabin was located on the North West side of Broadway, between Hart and West Streets.

1920 Horse Racing, fireworks, balloon ascensions were the main attractions. Tuesday was Sunday school day and all Sunday school students under the age of 15 were admitted free.

1921 A 80' x 30' Poultry Building was constructed at a cost of \$5,672. The new building will allow the display of poultry to more than double, in the past many people refused the display there because the building being used was too hot and caused the animals to become ill. A New Hog house was built in time for the fair, the new building was 108' long and 35 feet wide with a concrete floor and 40 pins, on the west side of the building was an amphitheater with a show arena and seating of 250 to 300. The cost was \$6,012. At the fair the agricultural hall was filled with farmers exhibits, some of the best farm products from the county were on hand and a large automobile display from local dealers was under a huge tent. The main attractions of the fair were the fireworks and the horse racing.

1922 The fair was still held in September as it had been for a number of years, Mammoth fireworks, First Regiment band concerts, the Worden brother's foot juggling act, Riado dogs, and the McDonald trio all good free vaudeville acts. The normal horse racing, and A big feature of the fair this year was the demonstration by the United States bureau of mines. In the photo below is the bureau of mines giving a rescue demonstration in front on a huge fair crowd seated in the amphitheater.



The United Mine Workers held a disaster drill on the track at The Gibson County Fairgrounds in the late 1920's

1923 The free acts continued this year, with many vaudeville acts including the death defying act of Captain Joe Flory as he would dive from 100 feet into a five foot pool of water. Labelle Frances slid 300 feet down a cable hanging from her teeth. The Frew Hand Brothers balancing act, The Aerial Fondaws aerial act, Tom Mills Comedian, Captain Charles Sriver balloon ascension and his thrilling parachute jump. Big fireworks, horse racing and Battery D, Princeton National Guard Unit gave a firing display in the center of the track. Captain Joe Florys high diving act seemed to have gone wrong after Joes final jump he did not exit the tank. After some investigation it was found that Joe had lost his swim suit during the jump and needed to retrieve them before exiting.

1924 The finest kind of fair weather was on hand, two large tents had been set up for the cattle entries and as the entries began showing up it was necessary to send to Evansville for a third tent. Still the biggest event of fair week was the horse racing; over 75 trotters were on the grounds and at least 25 running horses. Two big fireworks shows were held at the fair this year and the Princeton Independents band played in concert prior to the fireworks shows. Friday night was Shrine night; a parade of shiners from the Evansville Hadi Shrine Temple

and band was on hand and gave a fine concert. Professor Sriver's near accident on Thursday when his chute opened late, had the crowd on its feet for his next parachute jump on Friday. Outside the fairgrounds a taxi war was escalating, Taxi fares which had started out a .25 cents at the beginning of the week had dropped to .15 cents by mid week, but two taxi drivers had done even better, they dropped their price to .05 cents for a ride to the fairgrounds the lowest fare ever recorded for a trip to the fairgrounds.

1925 During the 1925 fair one of the attractions was a balloon ascension in which George N. Coover of Decatur Ill would ride the balloon up high and parachute back down to the fairgrounds, Coover would carry six chutes with him on his jumps, cutting some of the chutes away to excite the crowd. However on September 5, something went terribly wrong as Coover's fifth chute failed to open properly and he was too close to the ground for this sixth chute to fully open. George Coover fell to his death just about a mile south of the fairgrounds on the Paul Cary Farm. Mr. and Mrs. Cary had just finished supper and stepped out in their yard to see the balloon. It appeared to the Cary's that all was well until they noticed Coover frantically trying to cut away one of his chutes.

1927 Besides the normal horse racing the fair always brought to town, this fair included the Flying Lamars. It was stated in the Princeton Clarion that as for the Flying Lamars it is doubtful you could see anything as good even if you went to a bigger city. The family of three young men and two women must have been very exciting to watch as they jumped from their lofty perches to a swinging trapeze and doing somersaults in mid air. Also joining the flying Lamars was the Balmain Trio on the tight wire. Other activities at the fair in 1927 was the Bachman's Million Dollar Band, horse pulling contest, \$5,000 was awarded in horse racing events to Trotting, Pacing, and Running horses. Rumble's Four Rides was on the grounds with his Caterpillar, Chair Plane, Merry-Go-Round and a Ferris Wheel. There were daily Balloon ascension, with five or six parachute leaps. \$2500 was spent by the fair association for the fireworks displays on Tuesday and Friday. It was said to have been the grandest fireworks display produced in Indiana. There were displays and demonstrations of all kinds from community clubs, and local merchants. There were displays of domestic science, fine arts, ladies works, farm and garden products, canned fruit, floral displays, automobile exhibits, a large display of machinery from farm equipment to Frigidaire appliances for the home. There were shows and premiums awarded for cattle, sheep, hogs, horses, mules, chickens of all kinds, rabbits, pigeons, guinea pigs, and galore. All this for just a 50 cent admission.

1928 the featured program of the Fair was the Auto races held Saturday afternoon. Thousands packed into the amphitheater to see Bill McCoy from Sullivan Indiana win the 40 lap main event.

1929 Fair featured the Bachman's Million Dollar Band, three nights of fireworks, horse pulling contest, horse racing, parade of Shriners, The Hadi Temple Concert Band and Drills and auto racing Saturday on the ½ mile speed ring.

1930 On hand this year was more Fireworks and free acts, Balloon ascensions, Horse Racing, the Legion Band, boxing match, parade of machinery, and auto racing. The climax of the fireworks show on Tuesday night was a gigantic naval battle reproduced with a barrage of bursting shells.

The Great Depression

The fair was always known as the Great one and only Gibson County Fair. During the 1930's and the great depression, many county fairs failed because of the lack of interest and money to maintain their fairs. Gibson County managed to have a fair every year during these depressed times until 1942.

1931 The Fuller Brothers balancing act. Over 10,000 people visited the old relic hall.

1932 Paul Reno Revue, The Flying LaMars, Horse and Mule racing, The Graham Farms 25 piece Band, and Parade of live stock. Mule racing mostly consisted of local businessmen competing for bragging rights. Admission to the grandstands was .10 or you could reserve your seat for the whole day for .25, or .75 cents for the week.

1933 Several bands were on hand to play at the fair this year including, the Owensville community band, Cynthiana band, Princeton High School Band, horse racing, other act at the fair were Maxine's Ballyhoe revue with 40 performers, Raum's horse acts full blooded Indian and rodeo, one of the stunts for the horse act was jumping an automobile with the rider,

1933 Fair Board Members; President W. W. Sipp, Dr. A. H. Rhodes, David Gleseke, Fred R. Gray, W. B. Bringham, Adolph Campbell, Lowell R. Westfall, C. L. Dyer, Henry Embree, Clarence Mauck, Charles Clem, J. Floyd Hull, Eldon Armstrong, Stuart T. Fisher, Charles A. Fisher, Carl L. Woods, and Charles A. Steele.

1935 The headliner of the 1935 fair was the Sinclair Minstrels. The Sinclair Minstrels drew large crowds at the one and only Gibson County Fair, they were one of the most popular radio shows at that time. The Sinclair Minstrels arrived on the C. & E. I. and was greeted by members of the fair association and escorted to the Emerson Hotel where they stayed. Later that day they were the guest of the Princeton Rotary Club and in the evening they were dinner guests of the Elks. The Heth carnival shows offered several rides and side shows. Other act included Edna Deal Grover LaRue "Million Dollar Revue" which included popular entertainers and dancing girls. Opera star Carmine di Ciovanni was on hand, the Three Orloff's, the Aerial Blacks offered comedy, a trapeze act, contortionist act and dancing. The Harry High Band from Evansville preformed daily, and the Members of the Evansville Hadi Temple were on hand for shrines day.

1935 October 13 1937 fire destroyed two buildings and heavily damages a third. The fire that destroyed the floral hall, the red hall and badly damaged the poultry building was believed to have been started by transients sleeping in the buildings. Over 5,000 dollars in damage was done and only \$500 dollars in insurance was carried on the buildings. The fire was first noticed by a C & E I railroad crew who gave a sharp series of blast on the whistle that summoned neighbors in the coal mine road area who then called the fire department.

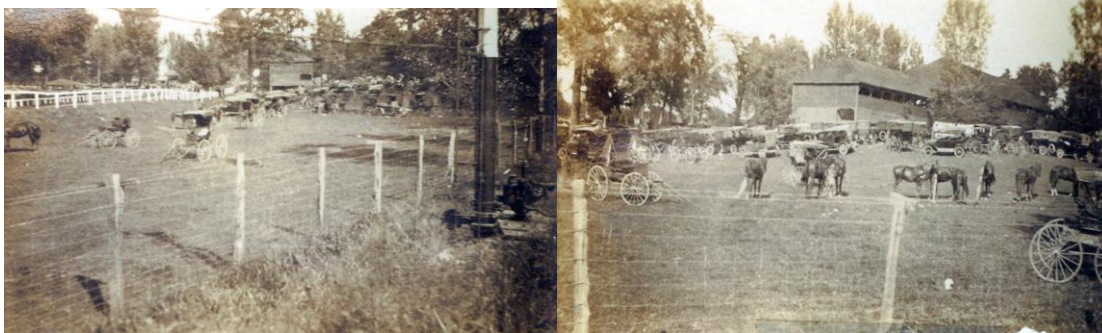
1936 Jan 20, 1936 Fire does \$500 damage as a roll of 17 wooden horse stalls were destroyed. Only two horses were in the stalls at the time of the fire one owned by Henry Embree and the other by J. D. Clift, both were lead to safety. An assistant care taker of the grounds was arrested, it is believed the Vaughn had been drinking and had kicked over a gasoline lantern that started the fire. This was the second fire at fairgrounds in two months.

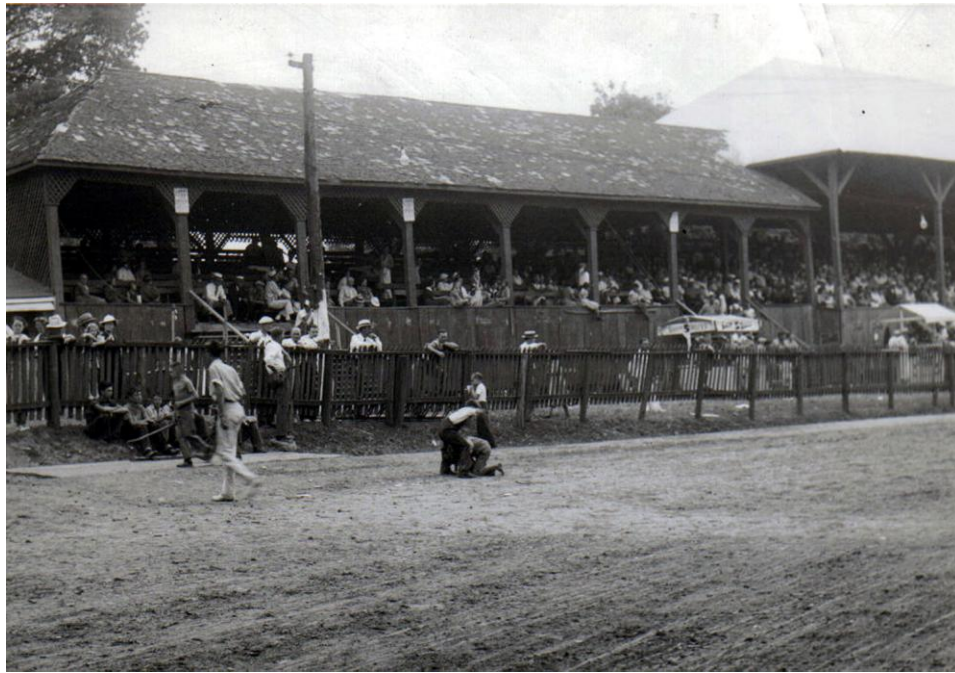
1936 Schools were dismissed and the post office, courthouse, library, banks, and city offices were all closed for two days during the week so employees could all attend the fair. The big show of the 1936 fair was Gene Arnold and the NBC All-Stars. Gene Arnold, Mac

McCloud, Joe Parson and eight other radio and stage stars pleased large crowds at the fair. Other attractions were Earl Taylor Oo La La Continental Revue with a cast of fifty, included Chorus and dancing numbers, Harry Hooper "Banjo Maniac", and the Frazier Brothers with their acrobatic balancing and weight lifting acts and much more.

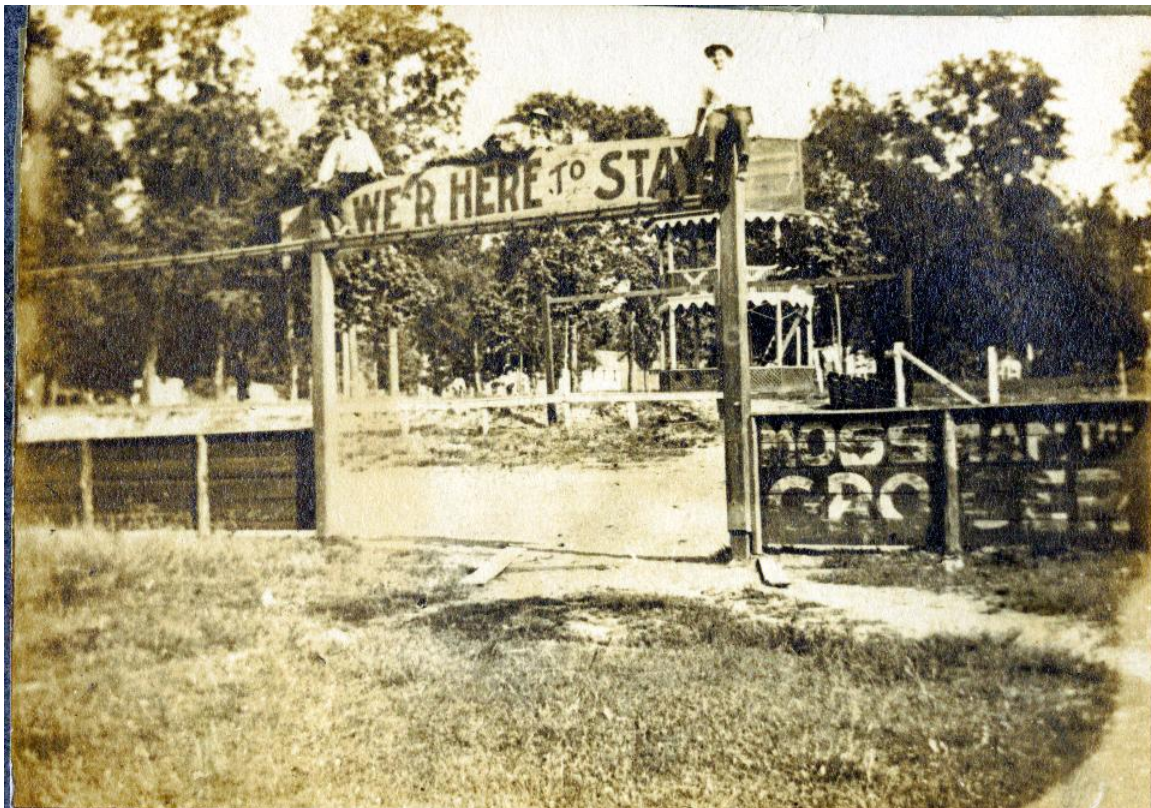


This Photo was taken sometime before 1937 in front of the amphitheater of Sue Redenbacher and her Reserve Grand Champion Calf.





April 19, 1937 Fire destroys the Amphitheater at the fairgrounds. The intense heat from the fire scorched the signs across the track on the inside fence.



This photo was taken some time after the Amphitheater burned down

A used grandstand was purchased with a seating capacity of 2,000 and a large overhead Canopy. The grandstand was equipped with 2,000 folding chairs and had only been used once before. A band stand was erected in front of the stands, for visiting bands that included, Princeton High School Band and Bachman's Million Dollar Band.

1937 Featured numerous radio and stage stars as the Pine Ridge Follies Revue. A mainstay of the fair was horse racing, it continued to be a large attraction, The Silver Cornet Band and several hillbilly entertainers, Bachman's Million Dollar Band, The Princeton High School Band, Skaters, spring board and tumbling acts, The Three Royal Hawaiians music act, horse racing, and goat racing.

The Little Drummer Boy Never Missed a Fair

In 1937 Civil War veteran J. J. Criswell at the age of 95 had never miss a Gibson County Fair and this year was no exception. Criswell who was a drummer boy in the civil war had attended every fair and this year was a special one for him indeed. Criswell was invited by Harold Bachman to perform with Bachman's Million Dollar Band. Criswell enjoined his time on stage and the audience gave him a warm hand for his performance.

1938 Zimdar's carnival company provided 14 rides and numerous midway attractions. The midway itself had its own attraction as electricians had wired the entire midway with alternating red, white and blue lights. The free acts featured Fireworks, The Princeton High School Band who had just won a class B State Championship last spring, and Owensville band, Balleti Troupe Aerialist, Kaltenmeyer's Kindergarten featuring a professor and his pupils in a school scene was reported to be a riot of comedy and laughter, new to the fair this year was the 4-H clubs amateur show. Also popular was the National Barn Dance that included several stage and radio stars. Colonel Frank Moore was the starter for the Horse Racing events. Sheriff Stencil Williams took bragging rights in the mule racing event over two regular drivers and Prosecutor Harvey Garrett.

1939 At the fair was Sterling Magicians, Steiner Trio, Kellam and Wells Clowns, Ziegfried Norway's grate ski jumper performing his stunts with out snow and ice, Hollywood Thrill Circus, the Princeton High School and Owensville band, 4-H amateur show with Gene Eckerty a well-known attorney of Princeton as master of ceremonies, horse racing, and the Old Relic Hall was open.

1940 August 26th-30th Highlights of the fair were the Spirit of America revue consisting of tap and specialty dancers, Barker Brothers Rodeo, Walter Guice horse show, Edna Deal's minstrels with a cast of 50, harness racing, St. Louis American Legion concert band, Fireworks and the WIS National Barn Dance. A total of 625 4-H club members displayed various 4-H projects.

1941 The fair featured The Flying Forms aerialists, Farrell and Boot Comedy dancers, Kuma an illusionist, Jugglers, WLS Barn Dance, Graham Western Riders, Princeton High School Band, free dance revue presented by the Princeton Recreation Board, Ezra Buzzington Revelers, Midget Auto Racing and the Mighty Sheesley carnival company provided the rides and concessions. The Old Relic Hall was still a big attraction at the fair and by this time over a million people had passed through the museum. Among items in the hall this year was a mantle from Governor Jennings the first chief executive at Corydon another item was a pulpit used by Dr. John Stott a reformed Presbyterian minister. Both are the property of the fair association. Other items included an old bed that had been in the hall since the first Gibson County fair and it was donated by the Robb Family the bed was 84 years old at the time of the first Gibson County Fair, a 125 year old organ donated by Mrs. Con. Adams, a high chair that was brought to Owensville from Virginia in a covered wagon in 1819, a corner cupboard made in 1805, an 1811 grandfather clock donated by Dr. A. H. Roads of Princeton, there were old guns, spinning wheels, tools, and various war items. Only a few items were owned by the fair association most were donated only to be displayed during the fair.

1942 War Cancelled Fair

The fair was cancelled in 1942. The officers of the association regretted that it was necessary to take action as they realized the thousands of people who enjoyed the fair. It would have been the 87th annual fair. Too many who helped to make the fair a great success were being drafted, so under these conditions, rather than have an inferior fair, the board decided to cancel the fair. Since the existence of the Gibson County Fair in 1852, 1942 was the fourth year not to have had a fair.

1946 Horse racing was a big attraction, midway shows and rides were presented by J. F. Sparks's shows, numerous eating and novelties stands were on the midway. Among the talent on hand for the fair were acrobatics, gymnast, soloist "Lorelei" dog acts, dancing girls and comedy acts. The Army and Navy had displays of fighting equipment. Earlier in the year on January 13, A fire in the ladies restroom claimed the life of William Brucks. The Princeton Clarion reported the body was found Sunday morning on the concrete floor in the ruins of a building which had been used as the ladies restroom. It was stated that Brucks and other often slept at the fairgrounds. It was believed the Brucks built a fire in the building and either went to sleep or was over come with fumes.



Gordon White Looks at the remains of William Brucks following a fire
In the ladies restroom at the fairgrounds Jan. 13, 1946

1947 The Eddie Young Shows provided the midway entertainment, the always interesting harness racing was on hand for four big afternoons and the winners of each race received \$150. In the grandstands was the five Flying Fishers a thrilling aerial act, dog act including dogs jumping from a high dive and dancing, Bud Anderson liberty horse act, the five Miamians an acrobatic act, and many musical acts.

1948 The Gibson County Fair got back to its pre war glory, headliners at the fair were The Gus Sun circus the circus featured Buck Steele a movie star, Flying Fishers on the high trapeze, Princeton High School Band, Funkhouser Post Band, Elks Chanters, Summertime Follies the musical revue included 75 people, balancing and juggling acts, horse riding acts, clowns and horse racing. On the midway you could find Fish and Hoky Poky's. Royal Crown

Shows provided the midway attractions including rides like the merry-go-round, a Ferris Wheel, tilt-a-whirl, airplanes, the octopus, and loop-o-plane.

1949 Stockholders sued to have Mr. Steel and his clan removed.

Charles A. Steel was General Superintendent and Privilege Manager (Tickets). We know from old fair books that Mr. Steel was on the Fairboard, and was General Superintendent and Privilege Manager for at least thirty-seven years straight, from 1911-1948 without sitting out and that W. W. Sipp was president for 15 years and B, F. Murphy for 11 years straight.

1949 The Princeton Kiwanis hosted a variety of amateur acts on the main stage, Bob Smith and his orchestra, played during the variety show, members of the orchestra where Jack Rominger, Jerry Reinhart, Bill Hirtle, David Woods, Billy Smith, and Don Morrison. On Tuesday night the show opened with the 4-H band. The 4-H Band and Chorus was made up of members of 4-H from all over the county. The 30 piece band was directed by Carl Lehman, the chorus by Aileen Hofman and the president of the organization was Geraldine LaGrange. Also featured at the fair was horse racing, exhibits of all sorts from pie's to electrical appliances. Rogers Grater Shows provided 13 rides, side shows and over 50 concessions stands.

1950 New lights were installed in the grandstand area. The grandstand shows featured 10 State Fair Acts on stage, 4-H dress revue, Tug-of-war contest, High School Bands, Harness Racing, Vincennes Municipal Band, Tractor driving and Racing contest, Horse pulling contest, Western Horse Show, and B. Ward Beam's Auto Thrill show. Kellams and Wells two popular clowns were on hand all week for the kids.

1951 Some of the attractions at the fair this year were the 105 Ranch Rodeo with bare back riding, saddle bronc riding, bull riding, wild steer wrestling and rodeo clowns. Captain Ferguson's Circus with dogs, pony's and monkeys. An English Horse show, tight wire and balancing acts, 4-H revue, horse racing, The shrine band, a balloon ascension, and a western relay race was held between the Francisco, Oakland City, and Ft. Branch saddle clubs.

1952 Another new grandstand was constructed with a seating capacity of 1,500 persons, a new steel roof was planned but do to a steel strike the roof was never finished. On hand for the fair was Joie Chitwoods auto thrill shows, Pee Wee King and his Golden West Cowboys a comedy show, a Western Horse Show, Horse Racing and Stock Car Racing.

1953 Many 4-H clubs as well as individual 4-H'ers competed in this years fair for top honors in food preservation, food freezing, baking, home improvements, food preparation, clothing, handcraft, electricity, wood crafting, and many other areas.

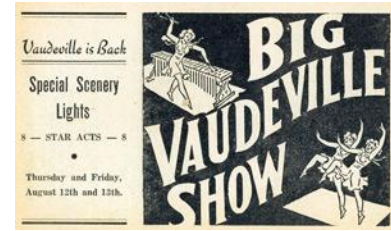
In 1953 Fair officials took a solemn oath to be ever watchful to see that 4-H had their proper place at the County Fair. Realizing the importance of the 4-H in to the youth of the community, fair officials have allotted all the time and space necessary for 4-H youngsters to carry out their activities during fair week.

Featured acts in front of the grandstands were The Wallace Dancers Chorus Line, Jack Kochman's Hell Drivers, Paramount All Star Revue, Horse Racing, Renfo Valley Barn Dance, "Ladies First" Musical Comedy, and The 105 Ranch Rodeo.

Livestock exhibits have a big spot in the annual fair; some of the top livestock were exhibited at the 1953 Gibson County Fair. It has been known for many years the Gibson County Fair was a true testing grounds for livestock competition in preparing for state fair

shows. Several blue ribbon and grand champion winners have gone on to win top honors at the Indiana, Illinois and Kentucky State Fairs.

The 1954 Fair featured, Kitty Wells, The Duke of Paducah, Tennessee Mountain Boys, Hell Drivers, Vaudeville Acts, An Ice Show, Amateur Show, Fireworks and Harness Racing.



1955

100th Birthday of the Gibson County Fair

The 100th birthday of the Gibson County Fair was held on August 13th thru 20th, 1955, this was a big event with all of Princeton taking part in great celebration. Fair officials and townsmen, along with the spirited help of the ladies, went all out to make this celebration one that would long be remembered in Gibson County. Everything possible had been done to make the observance of the 100th birthday of the great fair a success.



The fair was always noted throughout the Midwest as one of the top county fairs, so the Gibson County organization really went all out to make this the best of them all. For 99 years it had been great but this centennial occasion was to be the greatest. "There was Brothers of the Brush", "Sisters of the Bonnet", kangaroo courts, horse tank dunking, etc. all leading up to the climax - Fair week. There was a big parade from the Princeton uptown area to the fairgrounds. Throughout the whole week there were livestock shows and judging, a midway of rides, shows and concessions plus displays of all kinds of interest for all ages. Then there was the grand Finale - fireworks for every one. Chase Derbyshire was president of the fair board during 1955

New electrical service was installed throughout the fairgrounds and the Home Economic Clubs of the County raised money for a new 120x50 Home Economic Building which was completed in June and used for the first time at the 1955 fair. The building was

designed without center supports and a large sliding door to allow for the display of large equipment for implement shows.

1955 Fair featured; on opening day the McKinnley's Wild West Show at 2:00pm and that evening Stars of the Grand Ole Opera, the following day was Jimmy Lynch's Auto Thrill Show, Horse Racing, Mule Racing with local businessmen driving. Uncle Bob Hardy and the Hayloft Frolic, and numerous free acts on the midway, on the final night a large fireworks show closed the 100th Fair.



1955 Fair Gibson County Fair Board



Brothers of the Brush, 1955 Beard Contests

Fair officials and members of the "Brothers of the Brush" committee assembled Friday morning to map final plans for the launching of the organization in keeping with the observance of the centennial year of the Great and Only Gibson County Fair.

Rules announced by the committee include:

1. Every male resident of Gibson County of "shaving age" (from 16 to 86) is eligible for membership in the Brothers of the Brush club and for participation in the centennial beard growing contest.
2. The contest starts on May 1st and continues to August 19th. Penalties will be assessed non-growers and by-law violators after May 15th.
3. To join the club a man must purchase a membership lappel button (appropriately worded and decorated) for a dollar and grow a beard of some nature. He must wear the button at all times in public or be fined \$1 if caught without it by a club member.

4. A moustache alone will not count. It must be a beard of some design or both a beard and moustache.



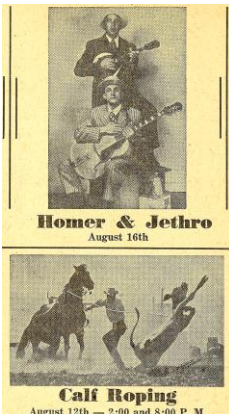
Brothers of the Brush

5. Those unable or too weak natured to grow a beard, must pay \$6 for a shaving permit. They must wear the shaving permit badge at all times or be fined \$1 each time caught without it.

6. All proceeds derived will be strictly for the members of the organization to use as they see fit. None of the proceeds go to the fair association.

7. Buttons (membership and shaving permits) will be available from the following committee member's or at Derbyshire's Pharmacy or Beckner's Jewelry Store:

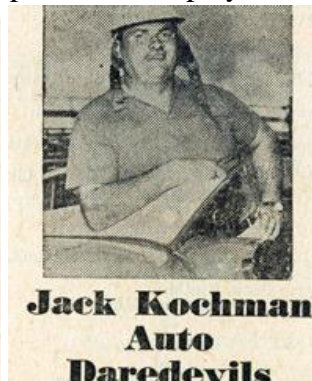
"Pud" Caniff and "Fuzzy" Wright, co-chairmen of the committee and Mayor M. Vernor Woodruff; Police Chief J. S. Mitchell; Charles Reinhart, Gilbert Stephens manager; Wayne Bruner, president Retail Merchants Association; Roy E. Owens, editor of the Princeton Clarion Democrat; Ray Harry, news editor, radio station WRAY; and all members of the fair board.



1956 Fair featured; McKinnley's Wild West Show, Joe Chitwood Thrill Show, Fireworks and Horse racing.

Fair Board Members included: R. W Garrett, Clarence Kirk, Floyd Strickland, Warner Clem, Ed Moore, Warren Mauck, D. M. Puckett, Warren Wheaton, D. T. Woods, Pud Caniff, Claude O. Brown Art Kunkel, Ross McElhiney and Chase Derbyshire. Admission was .50 cents daily and \$3 for an adult season pass and .25 cents to park.

1957 Fair featured; Annie Oakley, Minnie Pearl, Auto Daredevils, Gene Autrey, Troy Willing and the Purple Sage 4-H and open Class Displays, and Horse Racing.





1958 Fair featured; Hank Snow, Joie Chitwood Thrill Show, Cisco Kid, Pig Scramble, 4-H and open Class Displays, Western Horse Show and Harness Racing.

1959 The First ever Gibson County Fair Queen pageant, Lucinda Ann Smith was selected the first fair queen, 4-H and open Class Displays.

Featured acts at the fair in 1959 were; An all Girl Auto Thrill Show, June Taylor Dancers, Showboat Minstrel Show, Jimmy Boyd & His Orchestra, 4-H and open Class Displays, and Horse Racing.

1960 Featured acts at the fair where Kochman Auto Thrill Show, 4-H revue and Queen contest, Harness racing, Grand Ole Opry Stars Boots Randolph, Alice Lon, Kitty Wells, Tennessee Mountain Boys, Bill Phillips, Western Horse Show and much more.

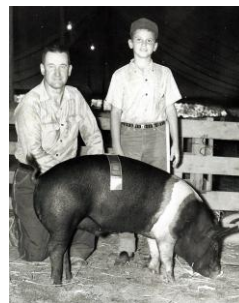
Grand Ole Opry
Stonewall Jackson
GRANDSTAND ADMISSION
Adults 75c Children 50c
YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND EVERY
PERFORMANCE AT THE GREAT GIBSON
COUNTY FAIR DURING

STONEWALL JACKSON
SATURDAY, AUGUST 26
2:00 p. m.—Grandstand—
Tractor Pulling Contest
8:00 p. m.—Grandstand—
Western Horse Show
New 1961 Ford
to be Given Away

1961 Fair featured; Grand Ole Opry's Stonewall Jackson, local School Bands, 4-H Dress Revue and Queen Contest, Harness Racing, Frosty Ice Revue, Tractor Pulling Contest, 4-H and open Class Displays, and a New 1961 Ford was given away.

1961 Fair Board Members included: L. H. Caniff President, Joe Binhack Vice-President, Ross McElhinney, Billy Sam Redman, Warner Clem, Melvin Elliott, Roy French, Lloyd Hollen, J. D. Thompson, Ed Harvey, Russell Baldwin, William Chappell, H. B. Fulford, John Theriac, Clarence Kirk, Henry LaMar, Robert Barrett, and Lloyd Douglas.

1962 Fair Featured; Jimmy Dean, Ferlin Husky, High School Bands, Fair Queen Contest, Harness Racing, Tractor Pulling Contest, and a Western Horse Show.



Above photos are of Warner Clem with his 1962 Open Class Grand Champion barrow, next is Donna Johnson Reserve Grand Champion 4-H barrow and in the final photo Gordon Lowry 4-H Grand Champion barrow and John H. Stewart who purchased the pig.

1963 Fair Featured; Sons of the Pioneers, Guys and Dolls Musical, High School Bands, Fair Queen Contest, Harness Racing, Tractor Pulling Contest, 4-H and open Class Displays, and a Western Horse Show.



1965 Fair
The Statler Brothers, The Bands, Fair Queen Contest, Harness Racing, Tractor Pulling Contest, 4-H and Horse Show. New to the Fair this year was the addition of two new livestock buildings, a 60x160 cattle barn and a 36x200 hog barn.

1964 Fair Featured; The Clinger Sisters, Captain Silver and Arabian Nights Show, High School Bands, Fair Queen Contest, Harness Racing, Tractor Pulling Contest, 4-H and open Class Displays, and a Western Horse Show.

To the left is Cindy Hofman and her 1964 4-H Grand Champion barrow.



Featured; Johnny Cash, June Carter, Porter Wagoner Show, High School Contest, Harness Racing, Tractor open Class Displays, and a Western



1966 Fair Featured; Little Jimmy Dickens, Molly Bee, High School Bands, Fair Queen Contest, Harness Racing, Tractor Pulling Contest, 4-H and open Class Displays, and a Western Horse Show.



New to the Fair this year was Carnaby Street USA dance pavilion, a private retreat for the youth: Carnaby Street provided dancing and live music every night at the fair from 8pm till 11:15pm for the youth. On the right is Jimmie Freudenberg and his open class Grand Champion barrow. On the final night of the fair Bill McClure won the new 1966 Ford that was given away.

CARNABY STREET, U. S. A.



New, gaily decorated dance pavilion, a private retreat for the youth at the Fair: Dancing every night from 8:00 P. M. to 11:00 P. M. to live music. Popular area bands will be featured nightly.

1967 Fair Featured; The fair opened as it had for the past several years with the Gibson County School Bands program on Monday night, Tuesday Fair Queen Contest and 4-H club Program, Wednesday Harness Racing, Thursday saw Harness Racing in the after noon and Waylon Jennings that evening, Porter Wagoner on Friday, Saturday was a Tractor Pulling Contest, 4-H and open Class Displays, and a Western Horse Show. Carnaby Street USA dance pavilion was open all week.

1968 The Fair Featured; Faron Young, High School Bands, Fair Queen Contest, Carnaby Street USA dance pavilion, Harness Racing, Tractor Pulling Contest, 4-H and open Class Displays, Stoney Mountain Cloggers & Square Dance Contest.



1969 Fair Featured; Roy Acuff, The Ink Spots, King Kovaz Auto Thrill Show, High School Bands, Fair Queen Contest, Carnaby Street USA dance pavilion (dances every night Monday thru Staurday), Harness Racing, Tractor Pulling Contest, 4-H and open Class Displays, and Wacky Jackie the Clown.

1970 Fair Featured; Ferlin Husky, Red Sovine Dottie West, Harness Racing, King Kovaz Auto Thrill Show, Demolition Derby, High School Band day

1971 The Fair Featured; Jim Ed Brown, High School Bands, Fair Queen Contest, Demolition Derby, Connie Smith, 4-H and open Class Displays, Tractor Pull.

1972 The Fair Featured; Archie Campbell, Auto Thrill Show, High School Bands, Demolition Derby, Tractor Pulls 4-H and open Class Displays. NO fair queen contest was held this year, the next queen contest was not held till 1978.

1973 The Fair Featured; Hank Snow, Religious Sing Concert, Pee Wee King Show, Variety Show, High School Bands, Demolition Derby, Tractor Pulls 4-H and open Class Displays.

1974 The Fair Featured; Jeannie Seely, Rodeo, Demolition Derby, Rock Band, Auto Dare Devils, Tractor Pulls 4-H and open Class Displays.

1975 The Fair Featured; The Blackwoods Brothers, Rex Allen & Sunday Sharps, High School Bands, Auto & Cycle Thrill Show, Demolition Derby, Tractor Pulls 4-H and open Class Displays.

1976 The Fair Featured; 1976 Bicentennial Parade, The Emeralds, Demolition Derby, High School Bands, Blackwood Brothers, Bob Luman Brenda Pepper and Stone River Band, 4-H and open Class Displays, Motorcycle Rodeo Contest.

1977 Fair Featured; Loretta Lynn, Ritchie Walton Review, Demolition Derby, High School Bands, Tractor Pulls 4-H and open Class Displays, and a Balloon Ascension.



1978 Fair Featured; Tammy Wynette, Conway Twitty, Demolition Derby, Truck and Tractor Pulls, Fair Queen Contest 4-H and open Class Displays, and a Balloon Ascension.

1979 The Flood of 79, came mid week most of the events at the Fairgrounds were canceled due to the flood, some of the events were held at the High School. Here is what was on tap before the rains came. Tom T. Hall, Bob Gallion Show, Truck & Tractor Pulls, Demolition Derby, High School Bands, 4-H and open Class Displays, and Fair Queen Contest.



1980 The Fair Featured; Marty Robbins, Pilgrim Travelers, Truck & Tractor Pulls, Demolition Derby, Fair Queen Contest, Joe Chitwood Auto Thrill Show and Pee Wee King 4-H and open Class Displays.



1981 The Fair Featured; Ronnie Milsap, Pilgrim Travelers, State Fair Balloon Ascension, Jeanne Pruett, Demolition Derby, Truck and Tractor pulls 4-H and open Class Displays.

To the left is Tim Engler and his tractor Mission Impossible preparing for the tractor pull.

1982 The Fair Featured; Ray Price, Pilgrim Travelers, Demolition Derby, Tractor pulls Fair Queen Contest, Mud Wrestlers 4-H and open Class Displays, and the State Fair Balloon Ascension.

1983 The Fair Featured; Jerry Lee Lewis, Death Riders Motor Cycle Thrill Show, Pilgrim Travelers, Demolition Derby, Tractor pulls Fair Queen Contest, 4-H and open Class Displays, and the State Fair Balloon Ascension.



1984 The Fair Featured; John Anderson, Princeton High School Choir Concert, Demolition Derby, Fair Queen Contest, Joie Chitwood Thrill Show, and Tractor Pulls 4-H and open Class Displays. As add covenants this year the fair board added a shuttle bus from the Midway to the live stock barns.



1985 Fair Featured; The Judds, Roy Clark, Gibson Southern High School Jazz Band Chorus Lain And Toubadors, Tractor Pull, Demolition Derby, Motor Cross, Fair Queen Contest, 4-H and open Class Displays, and the State Fair Balloon Ascension.

The 1985 Fair Board Directors were Vernon Witt President, Virgil "Bud" Turpin, Mike McConnell, Big John White, John Kolb, Leon Stone, Paul Heidenreich, Walter Scott, Charles Mauck, Claude Davis, Eric Page, William Sam Redman, Monroe Hunt, Gerald Sermersheim, Russell Stevens, John Johnson, Bill Knowles, and Jack Mauck.

1986 The Fair Featured; Williams and Ree, Johnny Russell and the Doyle Holly Band, Bonnie Nelson, Demolition Derby, Fair Queen Contest, Talent Contest, Farmers Tractor Pull 4-H and open Class Displays.



1987 The Fair Featured; Henry Lee Summers, Bonnie Nelson, Demolition Derby, Fair Queen Contest, Talent Show, Tractor Pull, Hollywood Stunt Show 4-H and open Class Displays.



1988 The Fair Featured; Tri Bar Rodeo, Stone Mill Band, Demolition Derby, Fair Queen Contest, Talent Show, Farmers Tractor Pull, 4-H and open Class Displays, Hollywood Stunt Show, Pig Races, and the Hadi Shrine Funsters were at the fair all week.



1989 The Fair Featured; After being absent from the fair for several years Harness Racing was brought back to the fair, Go-Cart Races, Puttin on the Hits, Demolition Derby, Fair Queen Contest, Talent Contest, Tractor Pull, Lazy C Rodeo 4-H and open Class Displays, and a NASA space exhibit. Amusements and Rides were provided by All American Shows.

1989 4-H GRANDCHAMPIONS

Horse & Pony - Gelding - Rob Singleton
 Horse & Pony - Mare - Ami Proctor
 Models - Shane Stewart
 Model Rocketry - Heath Strickland
 Photography - Jamie Watkins
 Poultry - Commercial Meat

Sheep - Wether - Autumn Jones
 Sheep - Supreme Champion Ewe - Kye Hofman
 Small Engines - Paul Lashbrook
 Soil & Water Conservation - Daniel Besing
 Soybeans - John Silva
 Strawberry - Lisa Pflug
 Swine - Ross Key

Poultry - Commercial Egg - Ty McDaniel Poultry - Exhibition - Alice McDaniel Poultry - Turkey - Heather Dienhart Rabbit - Theresa Anslinger Rugmaking - Janet Schmits	Tractor - Clint Wolfe Weather - Jessica McConnell Wheat - John Kohlmeier Woodworking - Chad Holzmeier Wildlife - Jason Collins
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1990 The Fair Queen Contest, Garden Tractor pull, Farmers Tractor Pull, Mule and Horse Pull, Talent Show, Go-Cart Racing, Luther Lynch Band, Antique Tractor Pull, Saddle Horse Race, Puttin On The Hits, Harness Racing, G Bar Rodeo, 4-H and open Class Displays, and Demolition Derby. Amusements and Rides were provided by All American Shows.

1991 NATP Tractor Pull, Fair Queen Contest, Garden Tractor pull, Farmers Tractor Pull, Mule and Horse Pull, Talent Show, Antique Tractor Pull, Truck Pull, Demolition Derby 4-H and open Class Displays, and Saddle Horse Race. Amusements and Rides were provided by All American Shows.

1992 The Fair featured; Summer Jam “Untouchables” “Critical Mass” and “Fair Warning”, Go-Cart Racing, Fair Queen Contest, Garden Tractor pull, Antique Tractor Pull, Mule and Horse Pull, Talent Show, Antique Tractor Pull, Truck Pull, Demolition Derby, Truck Pull, NATP Tractor Pull, Antique Machinery Displays, 4-H and open Class Displays, and a youth dance Saturday from 8pm till 11pm. Amusements and Rides were provided by All American Shows.

1993 The Headliner was Sh-Boom, Harness Racing, Demolition Derby, Fair Queen Contest, Western Rodeo, Antique Tractor Pull, Mule and Horse Pull, Farmer Truck and Tractor Pull, Gary Dawson Band, monster trucks, NATP tractor pull, antique machinery displays, 4-H and open class displays, amusements and rides were provided by All American Shows.

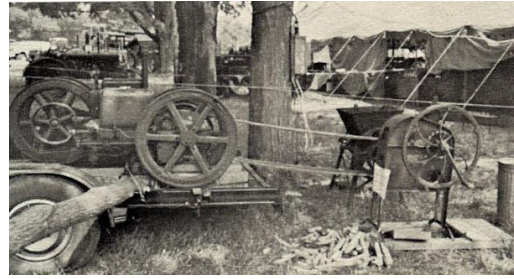
1994 The Fair featured; antique machinery displays, 4-H and open class displays, amusements and rides were provided by All American Shows.

1995 The Fair featured; Harness Racing, Demolition Derby, Fair Queen Contest, Western Rodeo, Antique Tractor Pull, Mule and Horse Pull, Tractor Pull, Team Pinning, ¾ Midget Auto Racing, Monster Trucks, Antique Machinery Displays, 4-H and open Class Displays, Amusements and Rides were provided by All American Shows.

HOME ECONOMICS OPEN CLASS Jeannine Morrison Marilyn Hudson Jean Shoulders Eloise Beauchamp Linda Russell Linda Culligan Marilyn Young Barbara Young Janet Freudenberg Glenda Lee Judy Dossett Norma Jean Engler ART GUILD Kay Abbott GREEN THUMB GARDEN CLUB Kyle Ellis	4-H 1995 GRAND CHAMPIONS Dairy - Sarah Reising Beef Steer - Caleb Smith Beef Heifer - Kristopher Meurer Swine Gilt - Erin Weber Swine Barrow - Chad Watt Horse Gelding - Ami Proctor Horse Mare Marti Spaetti Rabbit - Brianne Loehr Rabbit (Meat Pen) - Jessie Jones Goat Dairy - Molly Heoley Goat Pygmy - Shane Collins Chickens - Vicki Hale Dog - John Paul Douglas Sheep (Market Lamb) Mitchell Jones Sheep (Ewe) - Mitchell Jones Cat - John Thomas
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1996 The Fair featured; Kenny Chesney, J. D. Sumer and the Stamps, Jeff Carson, Gary Dawson Band, Harness Racing, Demolition Derby, Fair Queen Contest, Auto Racing “Dwarf Cars”, Mule and Horse Pull, Motocross Racing, Tractor Pull Antique Machinery Displays, Antique Machinery Displays, 4-H and open Class Displays, Amusements and Rides were provided by All American Shows.

1997 The Fair featured; Comedian Jerry Clower and the Gary Dawson Band, Confederate Railroad, Hollywood Auto Stunt Show, Motocross Racing, Joe's Girls, Demolition Derby, Fair Queen Contest, Antique Tractor Pull, Mule and Horse Pull, Tractor Pull and Harness Racing, Antique Machinery Displays, 4-H and open Class Displays, Amusements and Rides were provided by All American Shows.



1998 The Fair featured; The Vandells was the headliner act this year then came the Demolition Derby, Kentucky Headhunters, Fair Queen Contest, Antique Modified Tractor Pull, Mule and Horse Pull, Motocross Racing, Tractor Pull and Harness Racing, Talent Show, Farmers Tractor Pull, IN & Ill Tractor Pull, and Harness Racing, Bull-A-Roma Rodeo, Antique Machinery Displays, 4-H and open Class Displays, Hot Air Balloon Rides. Amusements and Rides were provided by All American Shows.

At the end of the 1998 fair the Gibson County Fair Board undertook one of the largest building projects in its history completing the new pavilion in time for the 144th fair.

1999 The Fair featured; David Lee Murphy, Fox Brothers, Indiana & Illinois Tractor Pull, Go-Cart Racing, Fair Queen Contest, Kids Day Featured a Circus three big shows, WRAY's Roots of Country, Scott Mason and the Headliners, Antique Modified Tractor Pull, Mule and Horse Pull, Motocross Racing, Farmers Tractor Pull and Harness Racing, Talent Show, Farmers Tractor Pull, IN & Ill Tractor Pull, Hot Air Balloon Rides, Demolition Derby, Antique Machinery Displays, 4-H and open Class Displays, and Amusements and Rides were provided by All American Shows.

2000 The Fair featured; The Band 38 Special, The Van-Dells, ATPA Tractor Pull, Freestyle Cycle Stunt Show, Motocross Racing, Demolition Derby, Talent Contest, Farmers Tractor Pull, Antique Machinery Displays, 4-H and open Class Displays, Antique Tractor Pull, Mule and Horse Pull. Amusements and Rides were provided by All American Shows.

2001 The Fair featured; Trick Pony, Monster Trucks, ATPA Tractor Pull, Motocross Racing, Demolition Derby, Talent Contest, Farmers Tractor Pull, Antique Tractor Pull, Mule and Horse Pull, Antique Machinery Displays, 4-H and open Class Displays, Amusements and Rides were provided by All American Shows.

2002 The Fair featured; The Duke Boys, IN-SYNC, Emerson Drive, ATPA Tractor Pull, Motocross Racing, Demolition Derby, Talent Contest, Farmers Tractor Pull, Antique Machinery Displays, 4-H and open Class Displays, Antique Tractor Pull, Mule and Horse Pull. Amusements and Rides were provided by All American Shows.

2003 The Fair featured; Joe Nichols, Scott Mason, Motocross Racing, Tractor Pull, Harness Racing, Talent Show, Farmers Tractor Pull, Hot Air Balloon Rides, Demolition Derby, Antique Tractor Pull, Mule and Horse Pull, Hot Air Balloon Rides, Antique Machinery Displays, 4-H and open Class Displays, and Amusements and Rides were provided by All American Shows.

2004 The Fair featured; Josh Turner, Farmers Tractor Pull, Talent Show, Scott Mason and the Headliners, Motocross Racing, Demo Derby, Antique Tractor Pull, Mule and Horse Pull, Hot Air Balloon Rides, Fair Queen Contest, Talent Show, Antique Machinery Displays, 4-H and open Class Displays, Amusements and Rides were provided by All American Shows.

2004 Queen with the 2005 Contestants



2005 Was a special year for the fair; it was the 150th Gibson County Fair. Antique Machinery Displays, 4-H and open Class Displays, Amusements and Rides were provided by All American Shows.

Horticultural and Agricultural Society. It is still located on the same grounds as was purchased in 1857. They still own a little over 60 acres. We have the Pioneers of the Great Fair of Gibson County to thank for their devotion to the public and their farsseeing the growth of this county. They saw around

them a rich and fertile country, fast developing under the hands of the agriculturalist and rapidly receiving industrious population.

So what makes a Great Fair?

BY: *Francine Theriac*

The people that exhibit there, the people who work there, the people who prepare the buildings and the grounds, the people who plan the activities and schedule and arrange the programs and events, sellers, the ticket takers, Malones taffy people and (I must mention the Hokey-Pokey man although he has been there for twenty five years), the Balloon man, the operator of the rides - yes, all of these people plus those thousands who attend the fair. It takes many things to make a fair - but to make a great fair, it takes the human element.

Through all the years, the Gibson County Fair has remained true to the first great principles laid down by its organizers, an event where the best that is produced in this and surrounding counties may be exhibited, a time when friends and neighbors may meet to renew friendship, a place where family ties may be again renewed.

The original tract of land lies near the present main entrance and extends westward. Great pride has always been taken in the grounds and they are unequalled in points of beauty with the natural forest of trees which have been preserved, the large exhibit building maintained and in every way the comfort of exhibitors and patrons kept in mind. In the many years the grounds have been maintained, there have been but few accidents.

The grounds have always been the gathering place for many reunions between families, veterans and fraternal societies and many distinguished men and women have passed through the gates. The spirit of keeping alive the county fair idea and making it live into the next generation has always been the first thought of the officers and directors and at the present time the legacy which has been handed down by our forefathers is held in sacred trust.