

Indiana Bicentennial Commission News

April 2014, Vol. 6

Bicentennial BIZ Team 2016's March:

- 6 Team 2016 visits Clay County Chamber.
- 11 Team 2016 attends Eiteljorg Symposium promotion meeting – topic: American Indian Stereotypes.
- 12 Commission member, Steve Ferguson, made it possible for Team 2016 and Congressman Lee Hamilton to address nearly 70 Cook Group officers and key managers.
- 13 Team 2016 visits Carroll County and also Clinton County Retired Teachers Association.
- 14 Team 2016 addresses attendees of the Richard G Lugar Excellence in Public Service Series.
- 15 Team 2016 and Dean Gene Tempel, Lilly School of Philanthropy discuss outreach and funding.
- 18 Greencastle: Team 2016 speaks at school superintendents' district meeting.
- 19 Kokomo: Team 2016 speaks at school superintendents' district meeting.
- 20 Merrillville: Team 2016 speaks at school superintendents' district meeting.
- 21 Kendalville: Team 2016 speaks at school superintendents' district meeting.
- 24 Team 2016 and Becky Schломann, Bicentennial Programs Coordinator, Indiana Historical Society, discuss new history text *Hoosiers and the American Story*.
- 27 Team 2016 visits Fulton County and Starke County.
- 29 **Congratulations** to Chris Jensen and his lovely bride, Julie married in the state house.



The "Crossroads of America": Hoosier transportation



Aerial view shows the U.S. 50 interchange on the east side of Washington, Ind., facing south. Courtesy Indiana Department of Transportation

With the I-69 corridor project moving along in Indiana, Hoosiers are more aware of how road development is still vital to the economy of our state. The south corridor's first three sections are complete. A fourth section from Crane to Bloomington is slated to open by early 2015.

Creating key thoroughfares is a long-time Hoosier priority. The first road commissioned by the Indiana Legislature in 1826 - the Michigan Road - brought in many new settlers to the state. Today, major highway improvements, such as the I-69 expansion, continue to keep Indiana moving – helping to ignite an even more prosperous future.



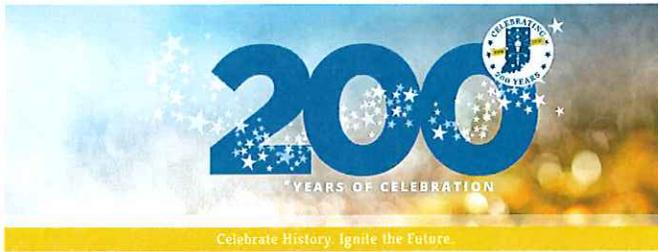
A link in our Hoosier transportation history: The opening of US-31 corridor nearly 40 years ago in Fulton County.

Governor (1972-1980) Otis Bowen and his mother, Pearl Wright Bowen, cut the ribbon to open new U.S. 31 south of Rochester May 25, 1975. His father Vernie Bowen, James Heyde of McMahan O'Connor Construction - the road builder, and Rochester Mayor Wayne Hittle (head partially hidden) stand behind them.

About Governor Otis Bowen

A physician, "Doc" was U.S. Health and Human Services secretary (1985-1988) under President Ronald Reagan. Bowen's ancestor Constant Bowen came to Fulton County in 1836. Otis Bowen was born on a farm in Fulton County February 26, 1918. He died May 4, 2013, and is buried in Bremen.

Photo, details courtesy of Shirley Willard, Fulton County Historian



Spotlight 92: Putnam Co. Q&A with Elaine Peck, Bicentennial County Coordinator

Q: What initial steps has your county taken to roll into bicentennial planning for 2016?

A: Some initial activities: We established co-chairs, initial steering committee members, vision and goals, recruited persons and organizations to provide leadership for different pillars, had an introductory public meeting, presented at Rotary, got permission from county commissioners to have party in the courthouse on December 11, 2016, worked to invite our representatives to attend the party, supported a Bicentennial Nature Trust grant application.

Q: How are you reaching out to garner committee members so that you have a diverse representation on your bicentennial planning committee for your county? (i.e., ethnic, age, social-economic, business)

A: This is a great question. We've been doing so informally, but I think our steering committee would benefit from creating a matrix that will help us to be more strategic in our recruitment efforts. We have a business involved with one of our projects. The Board of Realtors is involved with another project.

Q: How important do you believe it is to include youth and young adults in planning and celebrating the bicentennial?

A: It is vital that we invite youth and young adults to lead and participate in planning and celebrating – not just for the bicentennial but in all areas of community life. Why then when I look around the table do I see so few? We need to work harder and more intentionally to recruit youth and young adults.

Q: What challenges are you addressing?

A: Inspiring others to take up the challenge in a particular area. Co-Chairs cannot do it all.

Q: What resources do you find most helpful?

A: There are a lot. Jill Curry from OCRA is great. We were so glad that Chris was able to make our Bicentennial Public meeting in December 2013. Currently we are looking into the *We The People and Courts in the Classroom* resources for schools.

Q: What goals has the Putnam County committee identified for the 2016 bicentennial?

A: This process has been informative and thought provoking. Putnam County's goals:

1. Bring all corners of the county together in new ways; give different Putnam County communities the "chance to shine."
2. Ignite a renewed passion for and commitment to learning from the past to inform and guide our present and future.
3. Infuse our local holidays and celebrations with greater meaning and connectivity.
4. Create the impetus and inspiration for some significant projects, activities and events that would enrich our community.
5. Highlight different areas of the community: agriculture, religion, education, industry, and business, etc.

Putnam County's bicentennial committee currently has 24 partners, representing many facets of the communities. *Contact Elaine to learn more about strategic partnering. She would like to hear how other groups have involved businesses in a meaningful manner.*
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