Residents Invited to Help Build Digital Collection to Preserve Monroe County's Civil War History

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For Immediate Release

Bloomington, IN (July 20, 2010)--Monroe County Public Library, in collaboration with the Monroe County History Center, has been awarded a $19,705 grant from the Indiana State Library to build a digital collection of documents and photographs to tell the story of Monroe County before, during, and after the Civil War. To reconstruct events, this digital history project is asking area residents to bring in original materials from 1855 to 1875--letters, diaries, school records, photos, etc.--to be scanned for inclusion in the collection. Individuals with items from the time period should contact the Monroe County History Center at 812-332-2517 between July 20 and September 30.

Much of Monroe County's history would have been available in the local newspaper from the Civil War era, but a fire destroyed the newspaper offices in the late 19th century. For this reason, contributions from the community are vitally important.

"The Civil War is a popular and approachable subject for all ages," said Christine Eykholt Friesel, Indiana Room Coordinator and project manager. "We want to know how events shaped Monroe County. People may be holding onto a family document and may not know that it is historically significant to the county's story."

This project, "At War and At Home, 1855--1875," will create a digital archive of historically significant documents and photos of the Civil War era, and make them accessible to all Hoosiers through the *Indiana Memory* website of the Indiana State Library. Additionally, an interactive, web-based timeline of events will be created.

Grant funding is provided by the Institute of Museums and Library Sciences under the Library and Services Technology Act (LSTA) as administered by the Indiana State Library.

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