

The Allegheny House /Spangler Hotel

This is a story of the Bogardus and the Spangler families, both of which arrived in Marshall and Fulton counties in 1855. These two families were joined in marriage.

Their story revolves around a wonderfully built colonial-style building, the Allegheny House/Spangler Hotel. It has been recognized as a County Historical Landmark built in 1855. The honor was presented by the Marshall County Historical Society on April 28, 1983. The historical significance of the building led the present owner, Paul R. Cromley, to make this house his home.

The Bogardus family had a rich heritage before coming to America. An early ancestor, Everardus Bogardus, born in 1607, was a student of literature at the University of Leyden. After graduation he was appointed a comforter, or as one would say today, a chaplain, to the Dutch East Indies Company. When he returned to Holland, he was ordained a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church of Amsterdam. His title became Dominie Bogardus. He wed Anneke Webber Jans.

In 1632, they set sail to the west, to New Amsterdam, on a 20-gun warship accompanied by the director general of New Netherlands.

Dominie Bogardus was assigned to the second church established in New Netherlands on Manhattan Island. The church had been built in 1642 in the form of a blockhouse and protected by the guns of Fort Orange. The church was fortified with three cannons and loopholes for muskets. Surrounding the church was a stockade log fence 10 feet high for protection from the native population. Later it was rebuilt in a safer place in the fort. The church contained pews for the magistrates and the deacons with nine benches for the congregation.

The minister solemnly placed an hourglass on a shelf in the vestibule of the church and hung a spade, a shovel and a pick to remind the worshippers, as they passed out of the sanctuary, of the shortness of time and the certainty of death.

Dominie Bogardus and the governor returned to Holland in 1647. Sadly, the ship went down in the English Channel and the governor and Dominie Everardus Bogardus were lost at sea.

Now a widow, Anneke Webber Jen Bogardus was left to tend the family affairs. Her father,

Wolfert Webber, was descended from original settlers of the Dutch Republic. Her first husband, Roeloff Jansen, had been given 62 acres of the island of New Amsterdam for work he had

accomplished. A nephew purchased more land, leaving it in a will to Anneke. The Bogardus family now owned 192 acres in the southern part of New Amsterdam, on the island of Manhattan.

As Anneke lay dying she made her will stating her four eldest children would inherit this parcel of land. One heir sold the land to Governor Lovelace. The other three heirs refused to sign the document. The matter continued through the court system for many years until New Amsterdam became New York with the Treaty of Westminster of 1674 as the Dutch Republic permanently ceded Manhattan to England.

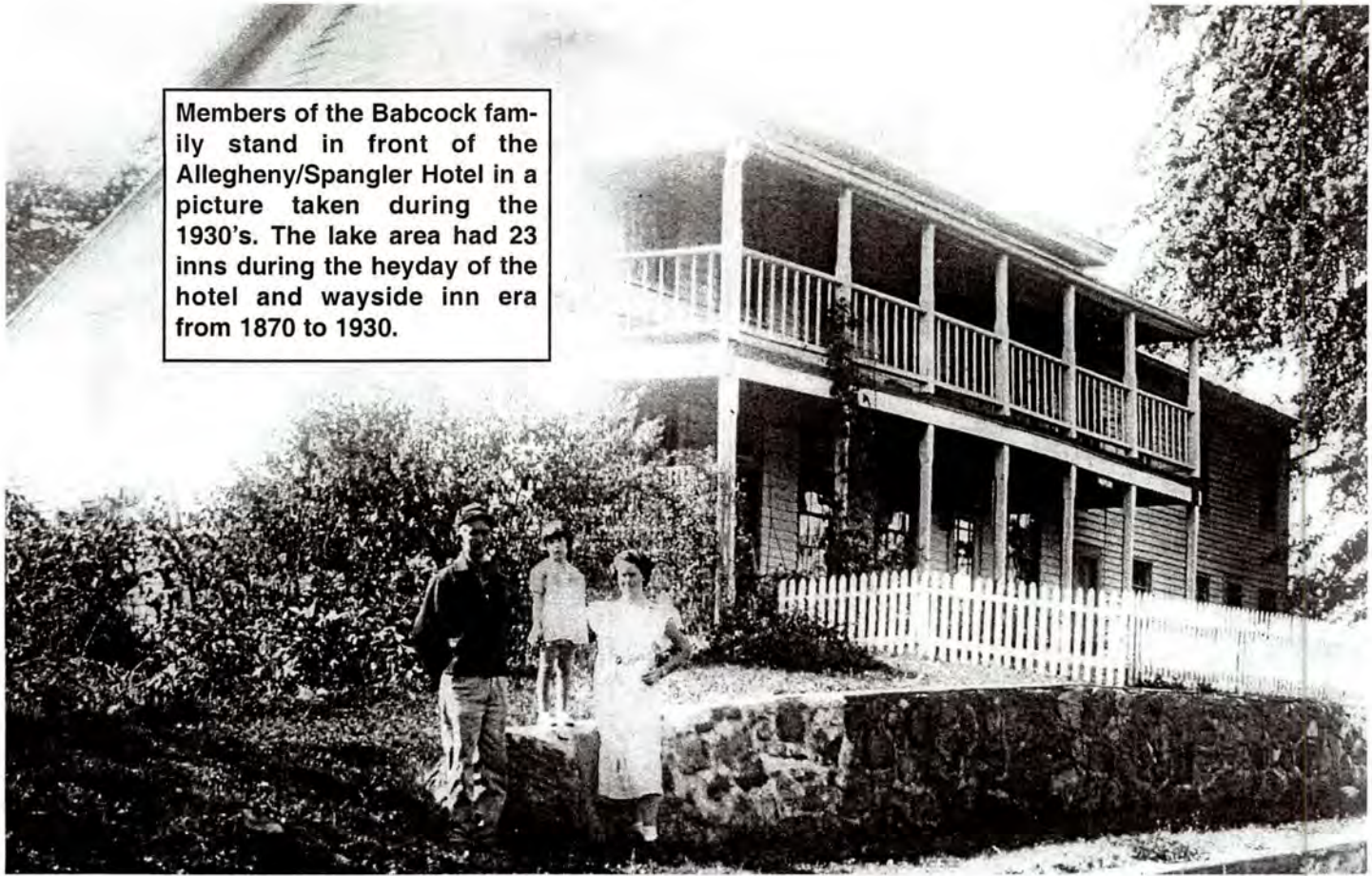
The English government chose to give the deed of the property to Trinity Church. From 1749 on there were numerous court cases, and all were decided in favor of the defendants stating that the property was held wrongly by Trinity Church. In 1895, the courts proclaimed "the heirs are entitled to their share of the vast fortune in the Bank of Holland." This decision was rendered after 200 years of lawsuits. Abram Wicks Bogardus was a direct descendant of Pieter Bogardus, one of the four sons who were to inherit. There was no further action and no fortune distributed.

The Bogardus family remained in the State of New York and settled in Fishkill Landing on the Hudson River, where Abram Wicks Bogardus was born on April 30, 1807. They moved to Ohio, where Abram and Frances Smith Potter met and were married in



GENERAL LEW WALLACE

Members of the Babcock family stand in front of the Allegheny/Spangler Hotel in a picture taken during the 1930's. The lake area had 23 inns during the heyday of the hotel and wayside inn era from 1870 to 1930.



July 1837. In 1855, with their 15-year-old daughter, Harriet Ann, they found their way to Maxinkuckee, Indiana.

So it was on Lake Street (now 18B Road) that Abram and Frances built their house high on a hill, overlooking Lake Maxinkuckee, and named it the Allegheny House as a reminder of Harriet's home state, Pennsylvania.

The two-story colonial-style house was built to be as durable as a barn. The hand-hewn beams for the building were harvested at nearby Wolf Creek. The timber was chosen from 150-year-old white oak trees. The house is 18 by 35 feet supported by huge beams pegged together with 4x4 braces. Wood shingles were used on the siding of the house and the roof.

In remodeling years later, it was found to have at least three fireplaces. The house had upper and lower porches with ample space for comfortable seating for rest and relaxation in the open air.

The Samuel and Rachel Spangler family bought a farm in Fulton County on the banks of the Tippecanoe River, just east of what is now Indiana 17. Peter was 13, the seventh of 11 siblings, when the family settled in Indiana. In 1903, his older sister, Hannah, added to her family by adopting Roland Singleton off the "Orphan Train" from the "New England Home for Little Wanderers."

Peter Spangler and Harriet Bogardus became friends, and Peter hoped for more. His friendship with Harriet was on hold as he left to serve in the military in the Civil War.

Excerpts from a letter Peter wrote to Harriet from Huntsville, Ala., May 6, 1864:

"Most ever kind friend, it is with great pleasure to take this opportunity to drop you a few lines. I received a letter from Parker that said you were very angry with me, yet it is no fault of mine.

"Now, Hattie, I ask you this, have I not been kind to you? You saw me the morning I left there. You know how I felt when we took the parting hard. That moment is before me now.

"I feel calm as the grave yet I am far from you. You have my heart, I call upon God for witness, Hattie. We have no lease on our lives. Death reigns here daily. I know not when I shall be called upon to go. We ought so to live when we are called upon to go we mite go in peace.

"Last night as I stood at my post, I thot of everything that happened between us. Robert Wickizer was with me. He asked me what I would give to have you come to me there. I told him I would give my life. Oh I think that would be the happiest hour I every saw.

"Well, Hattie, I will close my letter for this time hoping when you read these few lines you will think of me as one who loves you.

Ever and true friend
Peter Spangler"

Peter would tell how hungry the boys were, living on a

(Continued on Page 3)

handful of parched corn a day.

On Sept. 3, 1865, Harriet, in her wedding dress of white dotted swiss, became the wife of Peter Spangler, as they stood by the east window in the parlor of the Allegheny House. Their family grew to include two daughters, Laura Ellen, Frances Jeanette, and a son, George Mcquat. The two sisters were always called Ella and Nettie.

As Peter was honorably discharged from the Army, the decision was made to remodel the Allegheny House into a summer hotel. The house needed to be expanded for this purpose. An addition was built on the back of the house, allowing ample space for the dining room and the pantry. Since the house was built on a hill, the floor of the addition was somewhat lower than the parlor. This made it necessary to have steps down into the dining room.

The addition created four guestrooms on the upper story. It required three steps down to enter each of the four guestrooms. There was one guestroom on the first floor with a private entry from the porch.

A two-story addition extended to the west. The lower level was the tavern with an outside entrance. The door between the tavern and the hotel was so narrow that only a very small person could go through it. Above the tavern were guestrooms. This addition was taken down in the 1950s and replaced by a one-story room.

A local historian, Robert Rust, tells us the Spangler Hotel opened in 1870, making this the beginning of the hotel, wayside inn era at Lake Maxinkuckee and in Culver from 1870 to 1930. During that period of time, there were 23 inns made available for guests.



Abram Bogardus and his daughter, Harriet Spangler, wearing her wedding dress, appear as they played for dances in the ballroom. They were both excellent musicians.

The convenience of the coming of the Vandalia trains to Culver in 1883 enabled even more vacationers to enjoy the pleasures of the lake. After the trains came into the railroad station, the vacationers would wait on the piers to be taken by steamboats across the lake. They would then be deposited on the dock nearest their hotel, club or cottage. Many chose to spend their time at the Spangler Hotel.

In the center of this hotel was the parlor, ready for the guests to socialize and get acquainted. There were large windows overlooking Maxinkuckee Village. The main door of the hotel opened into the parlor from the porch. The original door and iron latch remain today.

The dining room was entered through rather low but wide doors from the parlor. Near the cook house, at the foot of the hill, was a flowing spring from which all water was carried to the hotel. Ella and Nettie, the Spangler daughters, called themselves "Jack and Jill," for they were responsible for carrying the spring water to the dining room. The steam, which flowed behind the house, was used for other household needs.

Many of the guests thought of the Spangler Hotel as a fishing lodge. Plank-bottomed boats were ready at the dock. A bell on the roof gave warning to the fisherman to come in from the lake when it was time to eat. The dinner bell is still ready to ring from the uppermost gable of the hotel's roof, if only the pull cord had not given way.

The entire upper level of the main house was the ballroom with access to the upper-story porch. The original stairway to the ballroom has been replaced. The earlier one appears to have been very narrow, probably 24 inches wide. Many dances were held there with Abram and daughter, Harriet, as the musicians. They were said to be excellent, she with the violin and her father playing the cello. Other fiddlers took part as well and created music many times for hours of fun and enjoyment. The last dance was held in 1901.

The room of particular interest, the place where General Lew Wallace wrote part of "Ben Hur," was the southwest corner room, smallest of the four rooms on the second floor. He would have had space only for a single bed, a chair and a small table. The walls of the room have not been altered. The inside wall was just a divider wall with a board for hooks. The room is now called "The Lew Wallace Room."

A check of Lew Wallace's itinerary file shows him fishing on Lake Maxinkuckee on June 7, 1874. He had begun work on "Ben Hur" by then. "The Fair God" was published the previous year. "Ben Hur" was finished at the Governor's Palace in Santa Fe, while he was territorial governor.

Writing about Lake Maxinkuckee in the Chicago American newspaper, Lew Wallace pronounced it "the most beautiful place in the world with an old tavern sitting back from the roadside and looking as if it had stepped out of an English novel." He wrote the chariot race and other chapters of "Ben Hur" there.

It is believed but not verified that Mr. and Mrs. H.H. Culver stayed in the Spangler Hotel for some time after their marriage.

Ella chose to be married to Dr. Issac Babcock in the parlor by the east window overlooking the village of Maxinkuckee in 1882. In 1894, Nettie, the younger daughter, standing in the place where her mother and sister stood, married Hollis Blair. On Christmas Day, 1936, Ella again stood on that same spot and cut up her mother's wedding dress and gave each of the girls who were descendants of Harriet a piece of it as a remembrance.

There was large barn behind the hotel for the horses and livestock. The fencing around the barn was of loose stone, now overgrown with vegetation. They had their own large icehouse. Large blocks of ice would be brought to the icehouse to be cut and stored for the summer ahead. Peter had a team of bay mules called Grant and Chancy that he drove to Plymouth delivering ice.

At a later time, he had a horse named Charley. The family and friends would fly over ice and snow as Charley pulled the bobsled, scaring them about out of their minds. But everyone loved it.

A four-room addition was built on the south side of the house for their son, George, his wife, Margaret, and son, Byron. The family moved to Culver when the property was sold in 1924. George then operated a service station, a taxi service and an ice cream parlor. The addition has been taken down.

Ronald (Budge) and Ida Babcock returned the house with its one and three-quarters acres to family ownership in 1929. Ronald is the son of Issac and Ella Spangler Babcock. He is thought to have been a dairy farmer. Their son, George, and wife, Frances, also lived in the house. In

1943, the house was finally sold outside the family.

Harriet was remembered as a tiny wisp of a woman, frail and delicate for years, an invalid from arthritis in an old-fashioned rocking chair. Even so, she was the manager of the hotel. She did live part time in Plymouth caring for her parents. The Spangler Hotel was in operation until the death of Harriet in 1909.

At the age of 91, Peter Spangler gave an interview about his life on May 14, 1930, three years before his death. He always wore a full beard, was a carpenter and moved houses and barns. He helped to construct many of the buildings for Culver Military Academy as a brick mason.

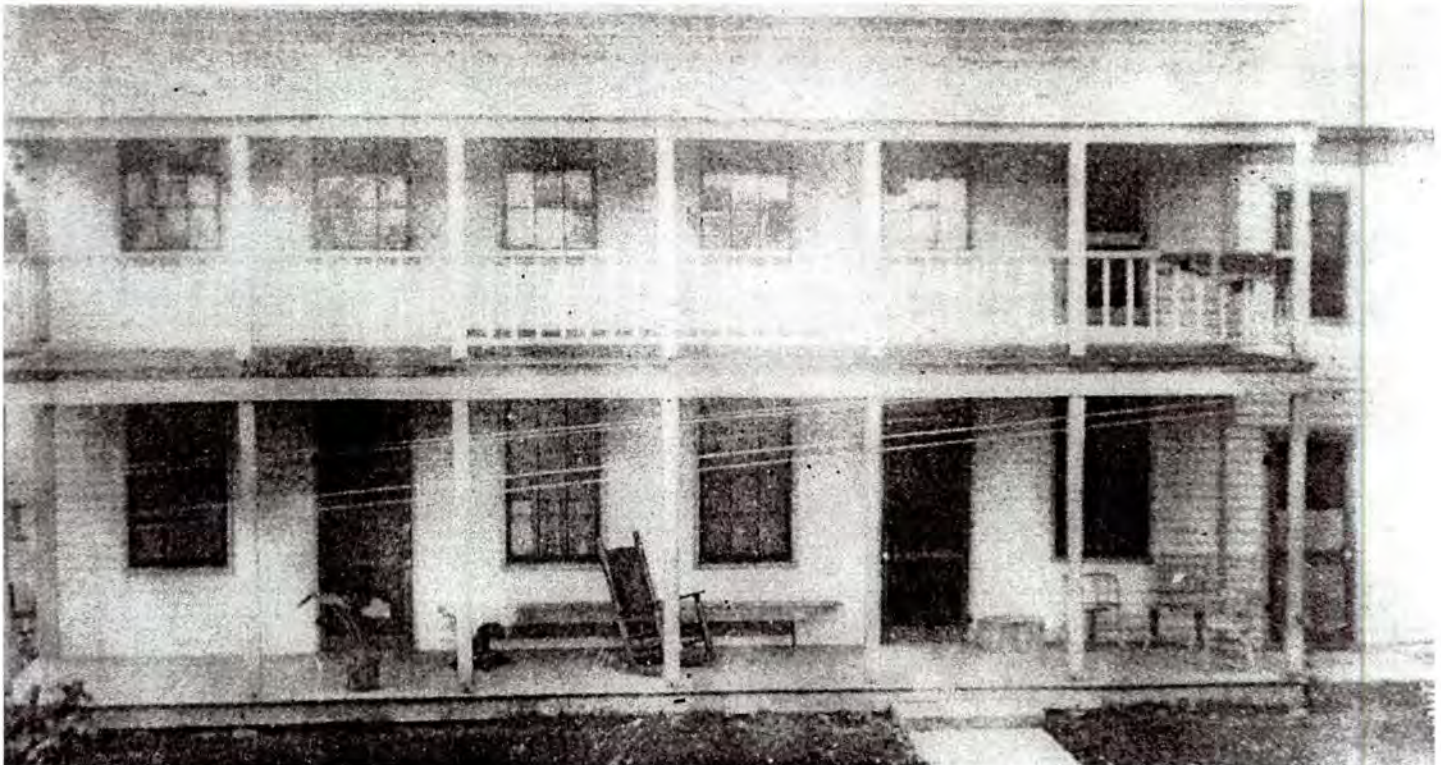
He divulged that he had seen more of Marshall County and its four neighboring counties than any other living man. As he said, "Four stores formed the town, the lake was surrounded by swamp, including where the town of Culver and the Academy are now located."

He declared at that time the village of Maxinkuckee was more promising than other nearby communities as it had industrial prospects in the form of two saw mills.

At the time of the Civil War, he enlisted with his neighbor, Jack Myer, and was in 11 states, covering most of them on foot. One of his choice memories of the war was the march with General Sherman from Atlanta to the sea.

He saw the first railroad built here and witnessed the spreading of steel network in neighboring counties. He helped fill in the swamps around the lake and that have become the most valuable land in this vicinity, although

(Continued on Page 5)



An early view of the Allegheny/Spangler Hotel reveals double porches that were a part of the original building.

you would never have guessed it at the time, chuckled Mr. Spangler.

He also filled the first icehouse on the east side of the lake, which was owned by Holt and Armstrong, during one of the 60 winters he spent harvesting ice.

He took great pride and somewhat of a fatherly interest

Lake Maxinkuckee: Covered Creek and New Boat Ramps

I'm not sure this is a legitimate concern of the Antiquarian and Historical Society, nor do I know for sure that all members will agree that this is a bad thing for the lake, so I am going to make this in the form of a letter to the editor. The following is my personal opinion. A.B.

Dear Editor:

I am writing to protest the construction by the county of a concrete boat ramp at the end of 18B, west of Ind. 117, into Lake Maxinkuckee. This has been a family beach ever since I can remember. There is a small pier, and on hot days it is a very popular place. Pouring concrete into the lake to cover the sandy bottom will make it impossible for small children, or anyone else, for that matter, to wade into the water or jump off of the pier. Not to mention the danger of mixing boat traffic with swimmers. What is the county thinking of?

They have already enclosed the creek which runs along 18B in a metal pipe for at least half the distance from 117 to the lake. This is unthinkable. The county's reasoning is that the creek is squeezed between a wall and the road. Tell that to the frogs and the great blue heron who hunted and lived in the creek before it was covered over. Also, the high fecal count in the creek (another story) was certainly reduced by the natural attenuation and sunlight provided by the vegetation in and alongside the creek.

**Anirate Taxpayer and Voter
AGNES BRAMFELD**

P.S. There is also an application for a boat ramp along 12 feet of the 18-foot frontage, extending approximately 30 feet lakeward of the lake's legal shoreline at the public access site on Sycamore Road, approximately 400 feet north of the Sycamore Road and South Shore Drive intersection. I am not familiar with this site but confidently assume it is a bad idea. A.B.

If you have any comments about the above matters, you can e-mail the DNR at lheller@dnr.IN.gov or call 877-928-3755, referring to Application No. PL 20541 (Sycamore Road) or PL 20542 (18B).

in the growth of the Culver Military Academy as he moved dirt for the start of the initial building.

But there is one man in the community who had seen more of it than he, declared the lively veteran, and to Samuel Osborn he gave all the glory of that title.

He voted for Abraham Lincoln and Herbert Hoover.

— Jo Dugger

Sources:

Paul R. Cromley, present owner of Allegheny House/Spangler Hotel.

Helen Shadle, a descendant of the Bogardus/Spangler family who has compiled genealogical records of her family.

The Culver Citizen.

Robert Rust, record of events.

Daniel McDonald, A Twentieth Century History of Marshall County, Indiana, Volume II.

Edwin R. Corwin, Our Township's Yesterdays.

Culver-Union Township Public Library, Genealogy and History Department.

Indiana Historical Society Press, from the Crawfordsville Evening Journal, June 13, 1874.

Chicago American, 1905.

September Meeting

Our last meeting of 2006 was a wine and cheese get-together at the Bramfeld cottage on September 9.

After the business meeting, the members were captivated by Jeff Kenney's program, with clever, animated pictures of the old hotels around the lake. It was an entertaining and nostalgic finale for an Antiquarian summer at Lake Maxinkuckee.

Antiquarian & Historical Society of Culver Fall 2006 Newsletter
News Editor: Agnes Bramfeld
Feature Editor: Jo Dugger
Production Editor: Fred Karst



Antiquarian and Historical Society
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We All Loved the Party at the Culver Town Park

Let's hope you didn't miss the dedication of the new Culver Lighthouse and the Ice Cream Social in the Culver Town Park on August 12.

Many people, Antiquarian Society members and others, enjoyed the weather, the ice cream and root beer, the music and the happy, friendly atmosphere resulting from the second completion of the handsome structure, strikingly visible both from the lake and from Lake Shore Drive.

The dedication was celebrated with remarks from Chris Chocola, Steve Heim, Jim Peterson and Kelly Young. We can be proud of our participation in this grand project. Our last newsletter listed those friends who donated their time to the planning and construction of the lighthouse.

Now, we really need to thank those hard-working members who labored cheerfully at the park, setting up our booth for "do-it-yourself" root beer floats, and doing what needed to be done, before, during and after the party.

Kudos to Dusty Henricks, Bob Kreuzberger and Frank Stubblefield for planning and coordinating with park Superintendent Kelly Young.

And special thanks to the committee: Rus and Rita Mason, Bruce and Phyllis Munroe, Jim and Marilyn Bartlett, Dick and Terry Brantingham, Jim and Dorothy Peterson, Chris and Carl Landskron, Dick and Jo Dugger,

Leo and Emily Watson, Carol Saft, Fred Karst, Eleanor Pippinger, Jeanne Shaw, Joan Henriks, Becky Kreuzberger, Chris Stubblefield and Agnes Bramfeld.

The old-fashioned root beer was donated by our loyal and generous Francis Ellert. It's an old cliché but nonetheless true, "We couldn't do it without you."

— Agnes Bramfeld

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Send 2006 dues to the Antiquarian and Historical Society, P.O. Box 125, Culver, IN 46511-0125

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