

IMAGES

...THEN AND NOW

From the Indian Hill Historical Society



**Buckingham Lodge
1861**

Buckingham Lodge—The Center for Village History

The yellow two-story farmhouse located at 8650 Road, known as Buckingham Lodge or the Bonnell House, is the office of the Indian Hill Historical Society. Its storied past complements its current day purpose.



In 1832, Aaron Bonnell purchased 180 acres of land along what is now Camargo Road. His granddaughter, Lola Louise Bonnell was born to Florence Buckingham and William James Bonnell in the Civil War era frame house that still stands today. The Bonnell and Buckingham families played a significant role in the nineteenth century development of Indian Hill. Lola resided at the family homestead for her entire lifetime, from 1885 – 1966. She never married and cared for her parents until they died, then devotedly visited their graves in Miamiville's Evergreen Cemetery.

Miss Bonnell called the farm "Bonnie Acres". Indian Hill and her heritage were important to her. She was a loyal member of the

Daughters of the America Revolution, an avid supporter of the Indian Hill Rangers, and a regular attendee at Village Council and Board of Education meetings. Lola was an accomplished horsewoman and gardener. She grew vegetables and flowers and tended poultry in her chicken coop. She was often seen walking the byways of the Village, for she never owned a car. When she died, she gave her house and land to the Village, stipulating that her home be named "Buckingham Lodge" and that her adjacent land (13 acres) be called "Bonnell Park."

For some time, the Village rented the home. By 1988, the house had deteriorated, and it was almost demolished. But a combined effort of the Indian Hill Historical Society, Village Council, and friends in the area saved the structure. Council provided the money initially budgeted to raze the house, and an Historical Society fund drive matched it. Renovations took two years. Once the aluminum siding was removed, black walnut and cypress clapboards were exposed, probably from local forests. The interior and exterior were restored. The original barn burned down, but Lola's chicken coop still remains. Bonnell Park, adjacent to the house site, is managed by the Green Areas Advisory Committee and is popular with trail riders and birdwatchers.

Buckingham Lodge has been the office of the Indian Hill Historical Society since 1990. The front four rooms are decorated in period style, to resemble a turn of the 20th century farmhouse. The archives and offices are in the back of the structure. The Hauck Library and Resource Center, donated in 1998 in honor of IHHS co-founder Andrew C. Hauck, Jr., is the repository of Village history, and has education and preservation as its purpose. In 2010, the Dupree Archive Room was created for records and memorabilia. The office interior has recently been updated, painted, and rearranged.



The newly refreshed Lodge is an active site in Indian Hill. Residents stop by to research such topics as house histories, genealogies, bridle trails, and former schoolmates. Trustees and members frequent the building for meetings and organizational sessions, and the staff attends to the ongoing activities of the Historical Society. Members occasionally rent the Lodge for social gatherings. Historic Buckingham Lodge reflects Indian Hill's heritage while being vital to its citizens.