

Kinmundy Fox Hunter's Association
Fox Hunting in Kinmundy
By Helen (Robb) Garrett

Fox hunting, as a sport, had a big membership here. This was not the kind we have the beautiful prints of, with horses and riders in red coats, caps, hunting boots and pants! Those foxhunters rode beautiful riding horses, jumping fences as they came to them, with the dozens of foxhounds barking in hot pursuit.

Our foxhunters were very proud of their hounds and could "identify" the bark of their own. There were various places the hunters would meet; build a big fire for warmth if needed, and sit around it, listening as the hounds scared up a fox. The hounds chased the fox round and round with no chance of ever catching it. That was not the goal of the chase. That was recognizing the voice of the foxhound in the lead of the chase and claim it as your own! Some of the area hunters were: Virgil Livesay, Clyde Bassett, Mack Robb, Ellsworth Harvey, Thurman Robb, Otis Charlton, Roy Miselbrook, J.B. Maxey, Jack Chance, Lem Ballance, and Gale Sill. Dr. Logan, a Salem doctor, was also a very ardent hunter and sponsored a dinner meeting once a year on Sunday. This was at his farm and timber area several miles east of Kinmundy. He furnished a lot of the food with the rest contributing also.

"The Fox Meet" was organized in 1941 and was held annually from then on in September at Otis Charlton's Grove west of Kinmundy. This was quite an event lasting 3 days and 3 nights. Hunters from all over the State of Illinois gathered there going to a designated area to turn their hounds loose, and the chase was on! There were various food stands and souvenir stands.

The Morton "Tang" Mulvaney family, which was well known in the area for their musical ability, all came and camped there for all 3 days and nights. They each played a musical instrument, as well as singing, and their love of music was evident to all. As the evening wore on, square dancers took the stage, and the musicians played on. Mrs. Shirley Potter was the granddaughter of "Tang" Mulvaney, and at the age of 8, sat on a chair and called the different square dances! The stage was a wooden one, built for the event with long wooden benches set on concrete blocks for the audience to sit on.

There were various contests, which brought lots of laughs during the evening. Among them were: men's jig contest, girl's jig contest, ugliest man, and ladies cow calling. First place winners in each category received \$1, and 2nd place winners received fifty cents. One year, Walter Burkett won the old fiddler's contest and was awarded \$3. Mrs. Kate Keen came in second and received \$2. There were also contests for the dogs from puppies 6 months or younger, male and female; all age dogs, female and male; best dog of foxhound breed of any age, male or female. Some of the names of the winners are: Skipper Stride, Mary Lou, Big Boy Buzzard, Rock, Fly, Dude, and Black Jacket.

The Seventh Annual Kinmundy Fox Hunter's Association Meet was a huge success the year of 1948. The largest crowd was Friday when officials stated that about 2000 people were present at the program. Saturday night followed close behind with about 1500 attending. On Thursday night, the Derby Foxhound chase was held with dogs entered. However, no dogs scored, and no prizes were awarded. In the all age hound chase, 16 dogs were entered, and two dogs were scored with first prize going to "Jim" owned by Luis Adams of Wheatland, Indiana and 2nd prize went to "Jack" owned by Lester Robb of Kinmundy.

Thurman Robb owned a foxhound named "Libby", who by his account, led the pack of hounds almost every time! So raising a litter of pups every summer from "Libby" became a way to make much needed money. Buyers would come from miles around, look them over, pick the one of their choice, and arrange to come back for it later when the pups were weaned.

One day while Thurman was outside doing his farm chores, a familiar hound came racing up the field toward him. He recognized it as belonging to Wiley Campbell, a fellow hunter. This time, however, it lunged at him, bit him on the arm, and kept lunging for his throat. He put his hands around the dog's neck and choked it to death. The dog, of course, was rabid, and no treatment was available in the local area. Thurman took a train to Chicago and stayed with a friend, Ed Green, who was a lawyer there. He stayed for two weeks, taking treatments daily. The rabies treatments, while very severe, were successful.