

Five Fallen Timbers *Students Have Stories* *Published in Book*

April 30, 2009

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MIRROR REPORTER

A pointy-nosed rag man, a freedom fighter in Bangladesh, an electrician aboard the *USS Missouri*, pioneering Ohio woman and a mail clerk on a train are the main characters in a new book – and relatives of five Fallen Timbers Middle school students who are now published authors.

As winners in the Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration, Emily May, Nusaiba Rahman, Kristen Rockwell, John Sullivan and Allison Ulrich will have their stories published in *Grannie Annie, Vol. 4*, a national publication.

The process involved interviewing an older relative – not an easy task, the young authors said. Finding just the right story was tough, especially since the students are not prone to listening to their elders' tales of long ago, they all agreed.

Nusaiba writes regularly and has submitted articles in library competitions, she said. For the Grannie Annie contest, she wrote about her grandfather Moshareff Hossain Shajahan, who formed a group called the Freedom Fighters during the war of 1971 so that East Pakistan could split and become its own country, now named Bangladesh.

“Every day Shajahan would teach the Freedom Fighters how to use guns, rifles and other weapons for war,” she wrote. After West Pakistan was defeated, “no one in Bangladesh will ever forget my grandpa and the Freedom Fighters.”

During World War II, Allison Ulrich's grandfather Raymond Melville Morse worked as a fire-control electrician aboard the “Mighty Mo” – the *USS Missouri*, a battleship that housed over 2,000 sailors and support crew.

“He worked on broken meters, guns and telephones. One of his odd jobs was to go on the fantail, or back of the boat, and operate the movie projector for the other sailors to watch in their downtime. When the sailors finished the movie, he would get on a tender boat and swap movies with other battleships and cruisers,” Allison wrote.

Kristen Rockwell describes how her great-grandmother taught high school science, math and home economics in Dundee, Ohio, for seven years before attending the College of Wooster from 1915-1918, earning her college tuition by selling pots and pans door-to-door. She was among the first women to earn a college degree in 1918 and among the first women in Ohio to vote.

Emily May's great-grandfather, Robert Norman Basen, was a mail clerk on a moving train in Gibsonburg, Ohio. On his first day, he was told to throw the mailbag out of the train and try to land it on a hook.

He was really supposed to grab onto the train-car handle, slowly lean out of the moving train, and hook the heavy brown bag on the hook, Emily described. But on his second day on the job, he threw the bag as instructed and it missed – flying under a moving train and exploding into millions of pieces. That bag contained the miners' paychecks for one month. But somehow he kept his job for 40 years.

John Sullivan hints of a distant relative on his mom's side who “wreaked havoc” with Jesse James. But his winning story tells of a dirty, rag-covered man that his great-great-grandfather Daniel learned was a distant relative in Ireland.

Daniel's father, Jimmy explained that “the rag man” bought rags, pieces of metal and newspapers from people for a low price and sold them for a higher one.

“The rag man is rumored to actually be very rich. It is said that he lives in a very large mansion in Dublin. Some people say he has spent millions of dollars traveling the world and uses his money to help the poor children in many countries. I don't believe any of those stories, as I think he is just a poor man trying to help feed his family,” Jimmy told Daniel.

The story of the rag man has been passed down for generations in his family, John said.

The complete stories by the five authors, as well as honorable mentions by Fallen Timbers students Hailee Gragg, Drake Moore and Haley Redfern, can be viewed at www.TheGrannieAnnie.org.