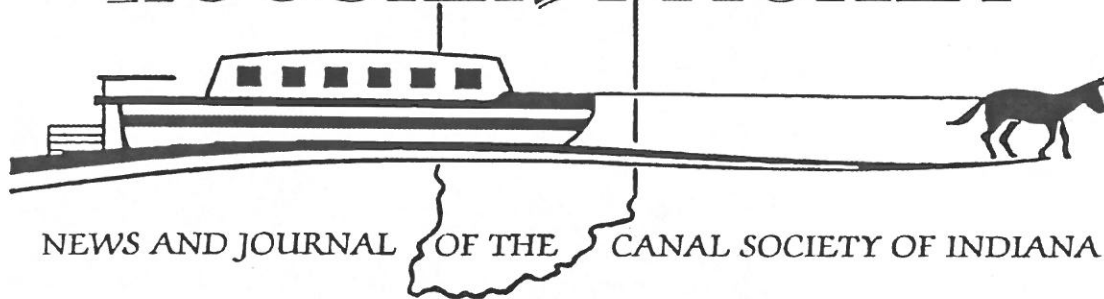


# THE HOOSIER-PACKET



VOL. 1 NO. 5

P.O. BOX 40087 FORT WAYNE, IN 46804

SEPTEMBER 2002

## NATIONAL RECOGNITION



REGISTER  
BY  
**AUGUST 21**  
FOR  
CANAL TOUR  
AT  
CINCINNATI



The remains of the Hubbard and Harley lime kilns in Delphi, IN have been placed on the National Register of Historic Places. They were located on the southeastern bank of the Wabash & Erie Canal, which carried their products to distant markets. Photo by Gene Paschka

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### CANAL SITES ON NATIONAL REGISTER

By Dan McCain

Just released from the Department of Interior and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources is approval for listing three of Delphi's unique canal sites in the National Register of Historic Places. Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register of Historic Places is the official inventory of sites with national, state, or local significance in the development of our nation's cultural heritage. It is a special form of recognition and protection for these historic sites within Delphi's seven mile trail system. The sites include the lime kilns, the Wabash & Erie Canal dam across Deer Creek, and the canal Lock # 33 and nearby 1837-39 Irish canal construction camp.

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## NEWS FROM DELPHI

### CANAL MUSEUM BUILDING FINALLY UNDERWAY

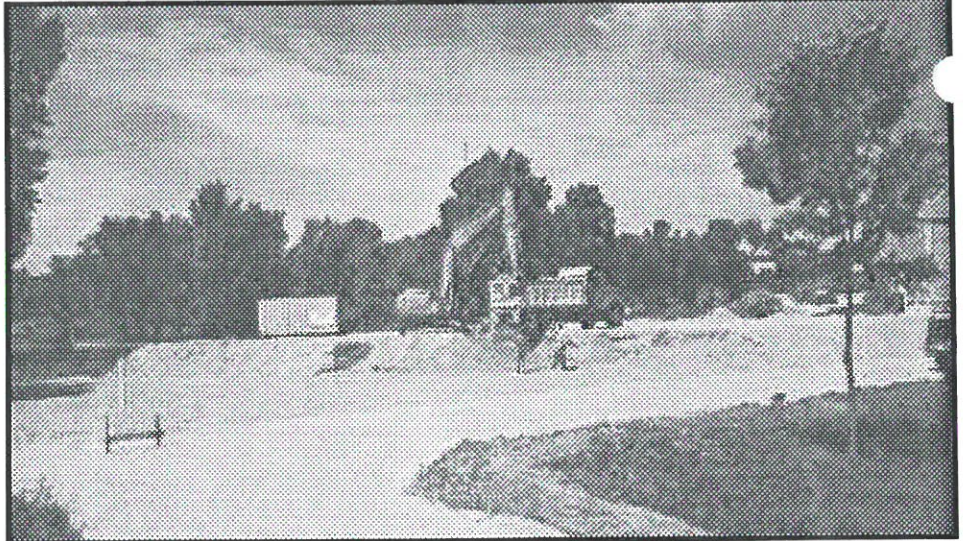
By Dan McCain

When construction on the new Canal Interpretive Center in Canal Park in Delphi, Indiana began this spring, the foundation fill for the building had to have four additional feet of crushed stone placed on top of it for added temporary weight. This was done and left to rest for 90 days to encourage settlement of the sand fill base onto the watery sub-base.

The settlement of the foundation beneath the elevated fill was necessary because water bearing material was left from the glacial period 12-15,000 years ago in this section of the Wabash River Valley. Canal builders in the 1830s had to deal with this water sub-base in their own ways while constructing this section of the interstate waterway. They did it and finally connected the Wabash & Erie Canal all the way from Toledo to Evansville—a 468 mile man made water route.

According to exacting measurements of settlement made by a soil engineering consultant, this process worked. The floor elevations settled an average of nearly three inches.

In mid-July nearly 200 truckloads of the weighting crushed limestone that were donated by the



Top: Removal of the crushed limestone from the Canal Interpretive Center foundation site began in July. The four foot addendum to the foundation was used for the last 90 days as weight.

Center: Approximately two hundred truckloads of this stone were moved to sites in or near the Delphi Historic Trails for later use. The 2,000 cubic yards of stone was donated last March by the Delphi Limestone Company.

Bottom: Over 100 truckloads of the stone were delivered to property donated by Mary Ellen Campbell. This stone will cover trails and an access road back to the high shale bluff overlooking the confluence of Deer Creek and the Wabash River. Photos- D. McCain

Delphi Limestone Company were removed and will be used by the Delphi Historic Trails system. Over one hundred truckloads were delivered to the newest trail site that is to be developed just south of Trailhead Park. This trail will trace the old canal towpath and lead to an overlooking bluff. In the midst of the trail is the 1838-39 slack water dam that was constructed for canal boats to cross Deer Creek near its confluence with the Wabash River.

The view from the bluff is a real treat. Passing by the furthest west portion of the high bluff in 1874 was the last canal boat to travel this portion of the Wabash & Erie Canal. By that time the canal era was near the end for most reaches of the man-made waterway. As the mules approached the spillway of the elevated wooden walkway they broke through the rotting boards. The steersman on the freight boat tried to steer away from the spillway current but the forward momentum was halted and he lost control—ultimately crashing into the 25-year-old rotting spillway. The boat, mules, driver and cargo were all dashed into the Wabash and drowned. The resulting dam failure lowered the water in the canal all the way to Lafayette and beached many other boats. Then the canal became history.

All the happenings of this calamity will be born out by an archaeological survey and ultimately become part of the interpretive signage at several key places along the overlook bluff trail and in the new Interpretive Center being built at Canal Park. Money is needed to complete this extensive study of the dam area; however, now is not a great time to find grants. At least the free crushed stone for the trails is delivered to get them started.

An opening to Indiana 25 and a small parking area has been created on the west side of the highway south of Trailhead Park. It will be used by the public when development

of the trails is completed. Mary Ellen Campbell of Delphi donated 23 acres of land for this phase of trail development last winter. Her gift to the Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc. is a blessing to this community and continues with their tradition of having every foot of a seven mile trail system gifted and deeded to them. How many other communities can claim this kind of donor support?

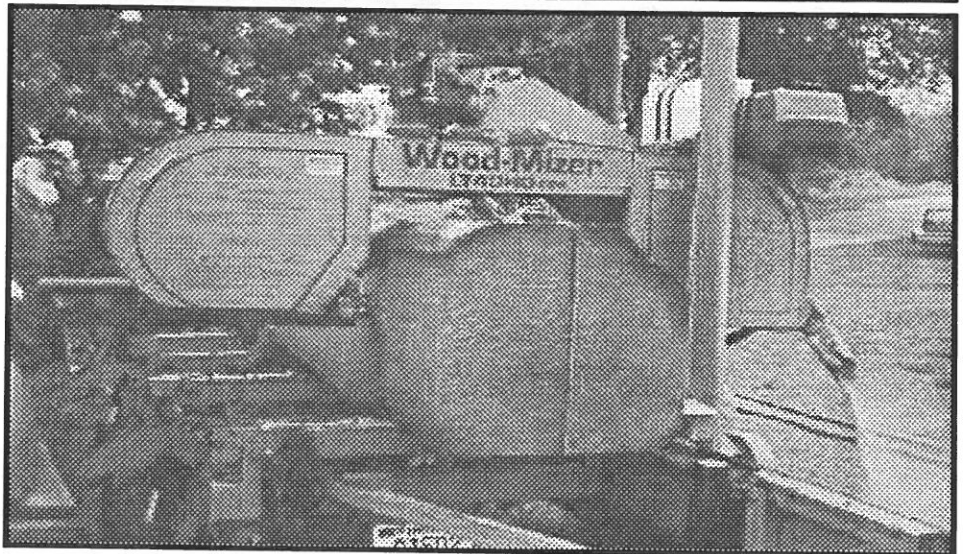
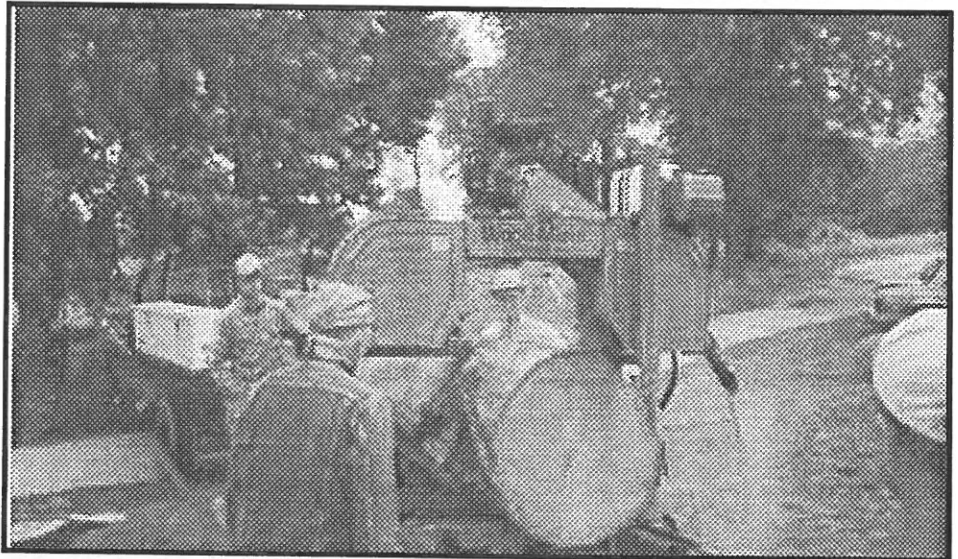
### TIMBERS CUT FOR EXHIBITS

By Dan McCain

Volunteers are working in Canal Park on exhibits for the new

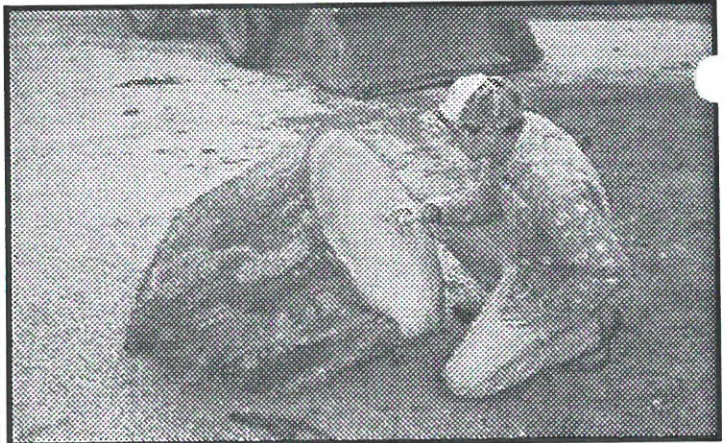
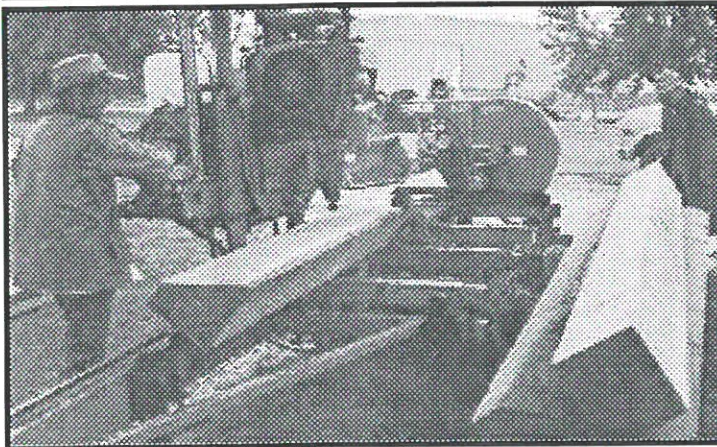
Canal Interpretive Center. Recently Rollin Graybill took his Wood-Mizer portable sawmill to the park and began working on an oak log that has probably been in the canal for the past 150 years. He cut off all four sides of the log in preparation of cutting new timbers for reconstruction of a full scale lock gate. Eventually four heavy timbers and several planks were sawn.

One of the timbers was cut with a 60-degree angle face. It will be used as the miter sill on which the lock gate closes. When the gate is completed it will be on the inside of the museum as part of an interpretive display.



Top: The gasoline powered Wood-Mizer portable sawmill prepares an oak log to be cut into timbers and planks.

Bottom: The Wood-Mizer spews sawdust as a large beam is cut. Photos by Dan McCain



Left: Rollin Graybill cuts an oak timber found while dredging the Wabash & Erie Canal in Delphi into the required dimensions for the canal lock's mitre sill.

Photos by Dan McCain

Right: Counting an old oak log's rings and seeing the remarkable color and quality of the wood was interesting.

### CARP RELEASED IN CANAL

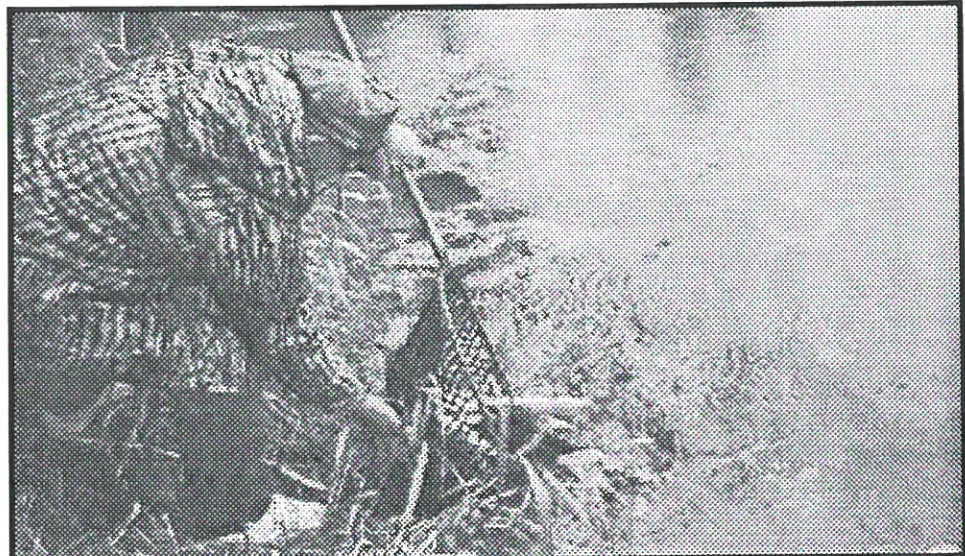
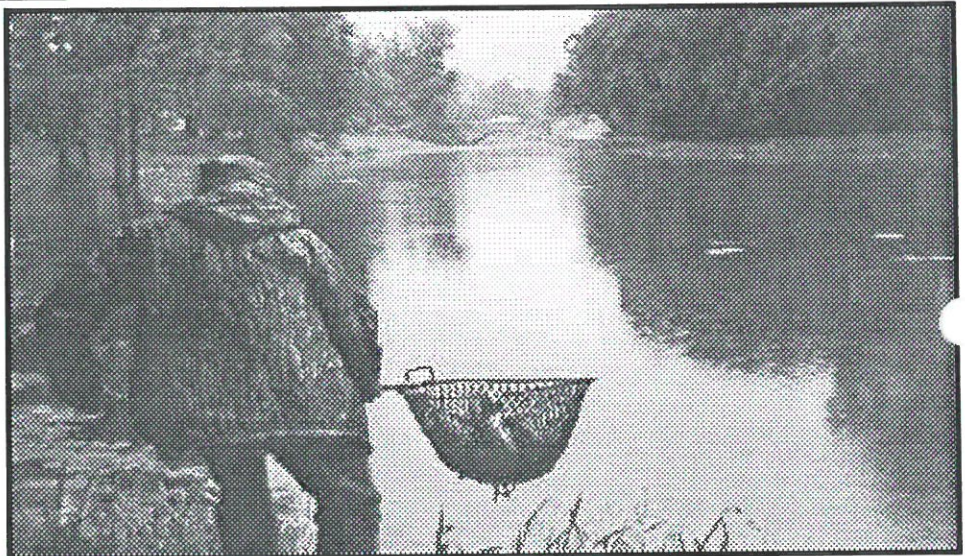
By Dan McCain

Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc. purchased 70 non-reproducing hybrid foot-long grass-eating carp to help with algae and duckweed control in the watered section of the canal. This section of watered canal has three million gallons of water pumped into it daily from a nearby limestone quarry. It is very clear but has lots of phosphorous nutrients in it that promote this plant growth at the surface. Luckily it does not host mosquitos.

The fish arrived in early June. Bill Walters, a volunteer, placed them in the area near the canal boat turn-around in Canal Park Annex. They can swim from the north levee to the south end of Canal Park at the railroad.

Upon delivery, Bill was told not to expect too much for the first year. The fish will grow and begin eating the unwanted vegetation. The larger they get, the cleaner the canal will appear.

As to what will happen if a fisherman tries to catch a fish, these carp are supposed to be uninterested in biting on a line. Therefore, they should remain in the canal and accomplish their purpose.



Center: Seventy "grass eating" Carp arrived in early June. They were placed into the canal to control algae and duckweed.

Bottom: The fish were released to eat and start growing. The larger they become the more effective they should be.

Photos by Dan McCain

**NARRATED HISTORY WALKS  
FEATURE NEW NATIONAL  
REGISTER SITES**

By Dan McCain

Two hikes of historical and archaeological interest were offered in Delphi August 10 and 11. These narrated walking tours were part of the Wabash Walking Weekend in northwest central Indiana. This endeavor by the Banks of the Wabash organization had various walks and talks scheduled throughout six Wabash River counties. Copies of the complete walk schedule were available at the Carroll County Historical Museum in the Court House, Delphi or by calling the Lafayette Convention and Visitors Bureau at 1-800-872-6648.

The first walk featured the Delphi Lime Kiln site and its new National Register status. It was a narrated one mile 1 1/2 hour easy trail walk leaving from the "dock" in Canal Park and proceeded to the entrance of Canal Park Annex. At that point the canal boat "turnaround" and loading docks were explained.

Busy times began in 1857, when the canalside Hubbard & Harley Lime Kilns were constructed. Production of plaster, mortar and whitewash brought industrial fame to this Wabash & Erie Canal town. Shipments of plaster and whitening products from six massive kilns went by canal as far as New York City. This site bears a trailside plaque beside one end of the restored 1873 Paint Creek Iron Bridge. That graceful bowstring-arch wrought-iron structure was moved from Camden in 1999. The lime kilns operated there before the Belt Railroad was built which now forms another part of Delphi's seven-mile trail system.

To the north at Founders Point, the tip of the trail "loop" highlights the entrance of clean water from the nearby Delphi Limestone

Company's diversion pipe. Three million gallons of clear water flow daily to water the canal all the way to Deer creek 2.5 miles below.

The return hike along the towpath side of the canal returns directly to Canal Park. This walk was led by Dan McCain, Delphi Historic Trails Chairman, and was offered at 9 a.m. Saturday, August 10. To reach Canal Park from the Court House traffic light go 12 blocks on North Washington Street to the entrance a block beyond Stone Barn Park.

The second walk was a 1.5 mile 2 hour walk that assembled at the Court House Monument by the traffic light at the corner of Main and Washington streets in Delphic. This street walk highlighted historic points east along Main Street and back on Monroe and Franklin streets. Of special interest were the beautiful homes near downtown, the Opera House, Holt & Rinehart's Hall (a previously accepted National Register site), the Crosby Hotel, and other grand architecture of Delphi's era of development from 1830 through the "Golden Era".

Participants viewed the many historic buildings and learned the interesting lore that made this Carroll County community's fascinating history. This walk was led by C. E. Gerard, Delphi Preservation Society's Historian, and was offered Saturday at 3:30 p.m. during Carroll County's Old Settlers celebration in downtown Delphi.

Then on Sunday at 1 p.m. a walk featuring two very special archaeological discovery sites along the southern trails left Trailhead Park 1-mile southwest of Delphi on Indiana 25. These two sites also have just been accepted into the National Registry and carry the mystique of the canal era. Background information was explained at the individual sites of "Sunset Point" and "Wabash & Erie

Canal Lock #33".

This 1.8 mile long but easy trail walk began by crossing the suspension bridge over Deer Creek and followed the Robbins and VanScoy trails to the confluence of Deer Creek and the scenic Wabash River. Then following the VanScoy Towpath Trail north from Sunset Point they entered the area of the 1837-39 Irish Canal Construction Camp. Many fascinating archaeological discoveries have been confirmed to make this one of the most unique National Register sites along any canal in America.

Then the hike followed the Obear Millrace Trail where canal water was diverted to power mills at the head of this race. The hike visited the Rinehart Paper Mill site and pointed out where a sidecut or "slip" to the foot of Delphi's Main street exited the main canal.

Finally the third New National Register site was interpreted. Lock #33 and the adjacent lockkeeper's home site provided a glimpse of the busy times of the mid 1800s along the canal that opened transportation from the Wabash valley to the eastern and southern coasts. Many important discoveries were made in the nearby lockkeeper's "dump" found by Archaeologist Dr. Wayne Bischoff. Dan McCain W&E Canal Board President narrated this walk.

Although these walk opportunities have already passed, they will be presented at other times throughout the year. Individuals may also pick up maps and take the hikes on their own at any time. A complete listing of scheduled walks was published in the April issue of the CSI Newsletter Vol 16, No. 4. September walks are scheduled on September 14 and 28. For further information check out the CANAL HOTLINE 765-564-6572 or contact Dan McCain at 765-564-6297.



## CANAWLERS AT REST

### ELBRIDGE GERRY VINTON

**b. July 11, 1824**

**d. Dec. 16, 1913**

### VALENTINE

### SELL

**b. Jan. 1819**

**d. Mar. 26, 1902**

### SARAH

### SELL

**b. July 18, 1827**

**d. Mar. 1918**

**By Phyllis Mattheis**

Have you ever walked into an old building and said, "If these walls could only talk"? Let's consider the Vinton House Hotel in downtown Cambridge City:

"If these walls could talk,  
What stories they could tell  
About an innkeeper named Vinton  
And a canal boat captain named Sell."

This story is about two men and their wives who were history makers in east central Indiana.

Let's start with Elbridge Gerry Vinton, who was born at Boston, Mass. on 11 July 1824. When he was a teenager, his parents, Joseph and Sukey Vinton, joined a group of 41 Yankees heading for Iowa. When the colony reached western Wayne County, Indiana, in 1844, it stopped for a few days. The Vintons decided to

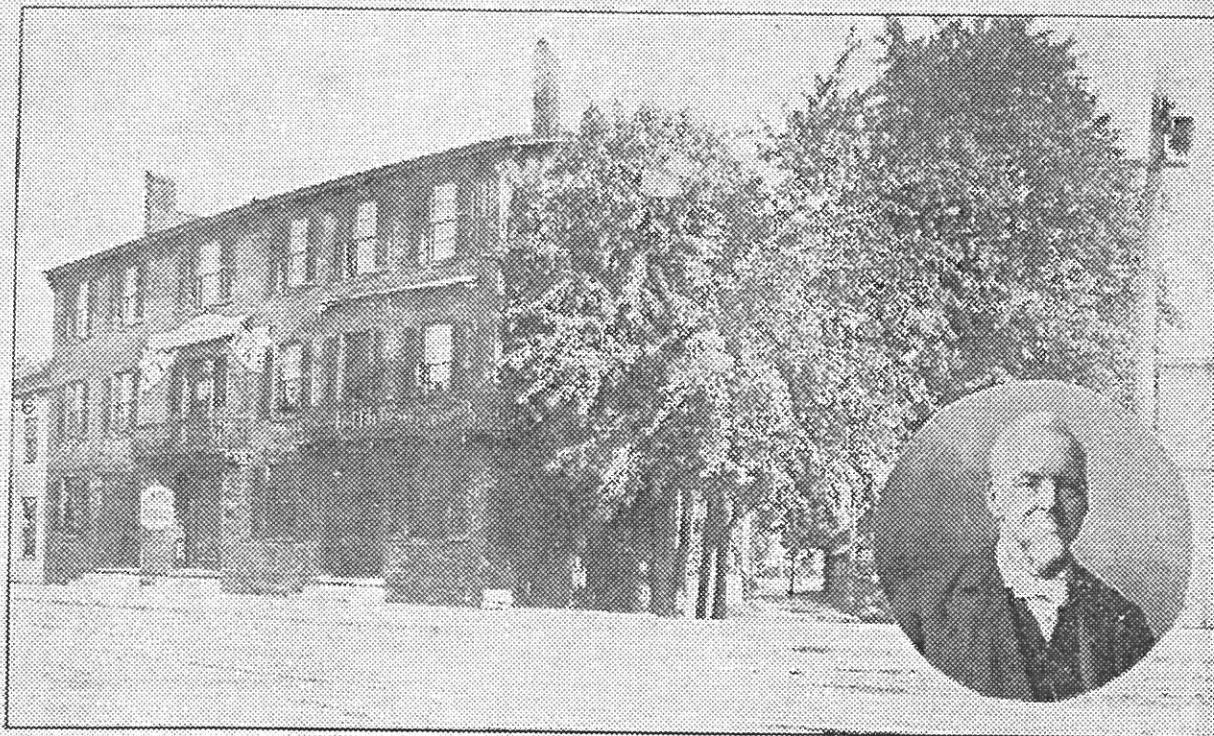
settle on a small farm in the East Germantown area and Elbridge went to work for Solomon Meredith (later to become a Civil War General), who was running the Blue Hall Hotel, located at the southwest corner of Main and Jones Streets in Cambridge City.

These were exciting times in Cambridge City! The first federal road, called the Cumberland or National Road (now U.S. 40), had been surveyed through the area about 1827 and construction was completed across Indiana by about 1834. The National Road connected Indiana to the east across Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Maryland, and brought stagecoaches, Conestoga wagons and gold seekers.

In 1836 the Indiana legislature passed the Mammoth Internal Improvements Act which funded the survey for the White Water Canal to extend about 70 miles north from Lawrenceburg on the Ohio River to the National Road in east central Indiana. Expecting progress and prosperity, businesses began locating at the junction of the two methods of transportation, resulting in the platting in October of 1836 of greater Cambridge City, which included the first 1824 settlement of Vandalia-- just a quarter of a mile north on the east side of the West Fork of the White Water River-- and also the earlier East Cambridge, which had developed about 1830 along the National Road on the east side of the double-lane covered wooden bridge.

By 1839 the canal was completed between Lawrenceburg and Brookville, but construction was halted when the state's funds were depleted. The state was forced to sell the uncompleted canal. In 1842 a private White Water Valley Canal Company headquartered in Connersville was chartered, which resumed work on the canal, much to the joy of Cambridge City merchants. Finally, the canal opened to Cambridge in the fall of 1845, the packet boats bringing settlers and travelers from the Ohio River, and freight boats bringing goods from the east and returning to Lawrenceburg and Cincinnati with products from the fertile farms of the area.

And now Elbridge Vinton enters the scene. On 9 May 1846 twenty-two year old Elbridge married seventeen year old Catharine Johnsonbough, the daughter of Frederick and Elizabeth, who had a dry goods store, plus "fish and groceries, hardware, queensware and the finest liquors." Catharine had been born on 9 April 1830 in Centre County, PA. That same year her parents came west and settled on a farm just south of nearby East Germantown, so they were already here when the Vinton family arrived and decided to become neighbors. At the time of their marriage Vinton was renting Meredith's hotel and took his young wife there to live. Their only son was born on 15 September



D-28

VINTON HOUSE.

ELBRIDGE VINTON.

This postcard of the Vinton House and Elbridge Vinton is courtesy the Cambridge City Library.

1847 but died at the tender age of two years. Then three daughters blessed the marriage.

Seeing opportunity for profit to be made in providing lodging for the waves of people passing through this crossroad, in 1847-48 Aaron Reisor and his father-in-law (or step-father) John Sowers built a grand three story brick United States Hotel on the east bank of the canal on the south side of Main Street, in the middle of the block between Center and Foote Streets on lot 7. This Federal style structure has a trapezoid shape plan with an ell to the rear (south). The unique footprint of the building directly relates to its building site at the intersection of the east-west National Road and the north-south White Water Canal. The front (north) elevation aligns with the National Road and the street grid of the town. The west elevation aligns with the turning basin once immediately adjacent to the building. A later two-story wood frame addition and exterior stair fit between the main building and the ell. The hotel's location made it the center for much activity as settlers moved into Indiana or on west; thus it played a substantial part in America's early transportation history.

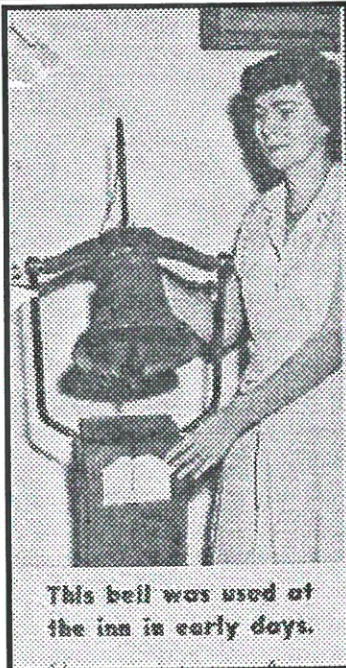
Flooding plagued the White Water canal nearly

from the beginning, yet the Hagerstown Canal Company completed the northernmost eight miles of the canal between the two towns in 1847. The 491 foot drop in the White Water Valley between Cambridge City and Lawrenceburg caused any slight increase in the flow of the river or its tributaries to rush recklessly down the canal, destroying banks and structures. There were four devastating floods in a six year period, and the last boat reached Hagerstown in 1861. The water of the canal continued to serve a number of mills, and the water of the section between Milton and Connersville was used for hydro-electric power for almost a century.

Perhaps the flooding contributed to Aaron Reisor's decision to join the gold seekers in California. On July 4, 1849, he rented his new 36 room hotel to the enterprising young Elbridge Gerry Vinton.

Two daughters were born to the Vintons in 1850 and 1852. Lillie Ore and Florine told of sitting on the hotel's back steps as little girls, watching for the arrival of the canal boat Aetna, operated by Captain Valentine Sell. His wife and boat cook, Sarah, treated the girls to her fresh baked bread with butter and jelly. The canal boats turned around in the basin at the back door of the

Vinton House for the return trip to Cincinnati, or the passengers and boat-men could enter the hotel for a meal or a drink through doors on the west elevation that were at canal level, below street level. The hotel contained an elegant dining room and bar, serving superb food and wines, and a ballroom for the social scene. The boat bell used to call the hotel guests for meals can be seen today in the History Room of the library, just across the street from the Vinton House.



This bell was used at the inn in early days.

The Vinton family was close-knit, warm and affectionate. Catharine was known far and wide as a true friend. People went to her for advice or just to talk.

This clipping of the boat bell on display in the library is courtesy of the Cambridge City Library.

In 1867 she served on a committee of lady citizens that began the drive for a better cemetery to replace the old Capitol Hill Cemetery, poorly located south of the railroad. Located about a half mile north of the National Road, Riverside Cemetery opened in the fall of 1868, the same year that Elbridge became the owner of the hotel and changed the name to the Vinton House. County records show that title was transferred from William and George Sowers to Vinton for lots 7 and 12 in Block 3.

Married for 41 years, Catharine died on 1 June 1888 at the relatively young age of 58 after a brain tumor operation in December, which for a time appeared to be successful. Catharine had been in ill health for a couple of years, but her death was a severe blow to the Vintons. Lillie and Flo, who were bright and delightful belles, put away some of their finery and cared for their grieving father. It's written that the two girls' names appeared in the social columns of the papers for years and that they often set forth in their carriage with ruffled, flowered and beribboned dresses for a ride about town, with a Negro coachman standing behind and another driving. These two daughters never married but helped their father in the hotel business and carried it on from the time he "suffered paralysis" in 1902 and after he died more than ten years later. Wisely, Elbridge transferred ownership of the property to his two daughters in December of 1907.

Their older sister, Ida, was married to George Stoddard and lived in Ohio, but the five year old son of

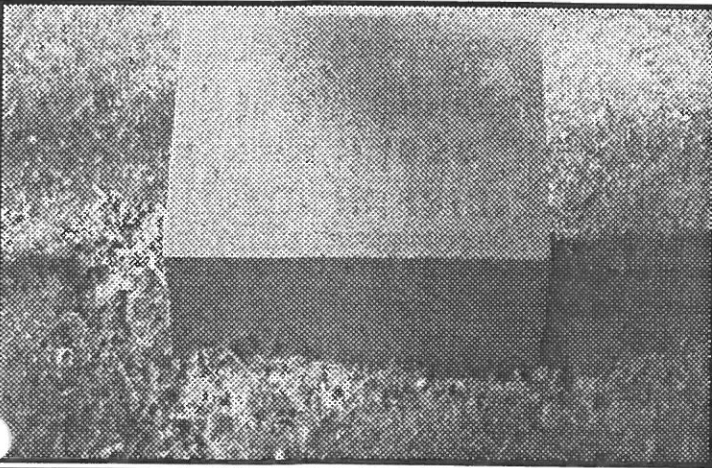
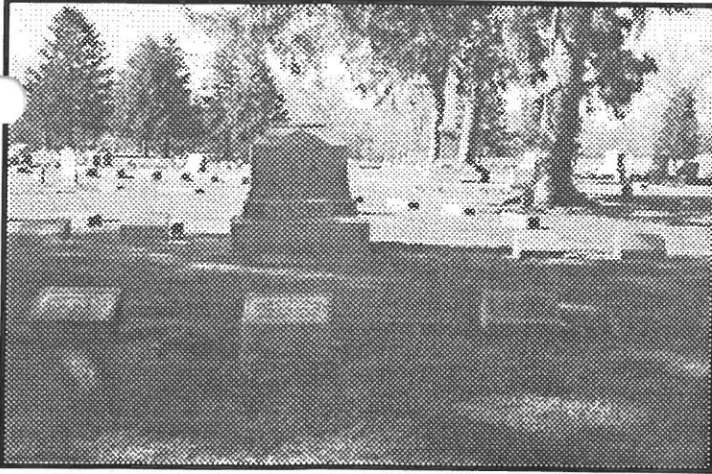
this couple, Thomas Vinton Stoddard, died on 11 January 1875, and is buried in the family plot at Riverside in Cambridge City. Ida and George must be buried in another location.

Obituaries of the time are long and flowing. Catherine's tell us that she was "a woman whose aims were always high and whose services great in helping those who needed her assistance and wise counsel. As a wife she was loving, faithful, true and helpful. As a mother she was an ideal and to her children has imparted her native grace of mind, her inherent culture, her scrupulous neatness and her unexampled thrift and industry. As a friend she knew fully what friendship meant and displayed in her character the conviction of her conception. She was always willing to inconvenience herself for the advantage of others who were finding life a hard battle. Always considerate, always kind, always tender with no word of reproach or accrimious criticism against one who had fallen by the wayside. Her conception of life was to be happy herself and to make others happy, and that her life was a success is evidenced by the hundreds of friends who feel aggrieved as though her death were a personal loss. It is the death of such a person that creates new ties between earth and heaven and brings them nearer together. Whatever is excellent is enduring and though her heart will become dust, yet the kindly influence it shed in life will endure as long as grateful memories."

Vinton operated the Vinton House hotel for more than 64 years and "gave the Vinton House a name as widespread as the United States." No doubt Vinton was the best known hotel keeper in Indiana, since his house was the rendezvous for all the traveling salesmen. Many of the construction contractors for the Pennsylvania railroad boarded there when the railroad was built to Indianapolis. The newspaper reported when redecorating took place and when new furniture was purchased to "maintain the spirit of elegance". The enterprising hotel man also was the agent for the stage-coach, telegraph company and U.S. Mail. Over the years he catered to travelers on every method of transportation: road, canal, railroad, bicycle, auto, bus, train, plane. The local newspaper carried reports on Vinton's health over the years. "He never held or sought political office and was not active in church or lodge life, but spent his time and efforts at keeping a creditable hotel". Vinton died 16 December 1913 at the grand old age of 89, after living 69 years in western Wayne County, Indiana. "His cheery smile, his general intelligence, his good citizenship, his companionship at home and abroad, his wide acquaintance, his courtesy and gentlemanly bearing, all had a part in our town life."







Elbridge Gerry Vinton's grave in section 6 of Riverside Cemetery has a small footstone with a larger monument to the Vinton family in the center of the plot. Photos by Bob Schmidt

she married John Gonzales and had one son, Enoch Gonzales. After her husband's death, Sarah began working on a packet boat on the Miami Canal, meeting her second love, Valentine. After their marriage, Sarah became the stewardess and worked for five years, cooking for the crew and also standing her trick at the tiller. It's written that there was no better steers(wo)man on the canal! She said in a newspaper interview that she was on the last boat that ran on the canal, operated by her husband.. She also declared that the canal here was not kept up and there were many breaks in the bank.

In 1865 the Civil War ended and the White Water Canal property was sold to the railroad for nearly \$150,000. Valentine continued to run his boat only to Connersville, but finally sold it and quit the business to become a dealer of horses.

Railroads brought about the decline of both the canal and the National Road. Rails were laid on the old north-south tow path and others parralled the east-west National Road, soon criss-crossing the state and the country, carrying travelers and freight at far greater speeds year-round. However, today visitors can have a taste of canal life by touring the village of Metamora and taking a boat ride on part of the 15 miles of waterway that have been preserved at this state memorial. The restored wooden aqueduct over Duck Creek is the only one in the nation.

Val's boat was caught in the basin here by the Indiana Central railroad bridge and shut off from going south. For this reason his boat was purchased by the railroad company. He then purchased the Grey Eagle livery stable, in the rear of a furniture store. Later Val purchased a barn and occupied it as a livery or training barn. For more than twenty years he was engaged in the retail liquor business and at the same time he was an extensive dealer in high class light harness horses, developing some fast race horses, which gave him a national reputation. "He was a good husband and an honorable citizen, dealing fair at all times in his business methods and commanding the respect of all who had dealings with him. His religion was morality, honesty, fair dealing, always speaking in the best terms of those he knew, paying strict attention to his own business and respecting the opinion of his neighbors." Val died unexpectedly on 26 March 1902 at the age of 83. He'd been feeling fine and had worked about his house, then went to his training stable. His death was sudden and happened while seated at his training barn chatting with friends, according to his obituary.

And now let's meet our boat captain, Valentine Sell, born in Pottsville, PA in January of 1819, with his boyhood days spent on a farm. First he worked on a Pennsylvania canal between Altoona and Holidaysburg, then came to the Miami Canal of Ohio between Dayton and Cincinnati, where he worked on a boat owned by the Dittenhaver family. He fell in love with a young woman cook on the canal but hadn't the means to marry. So he came to the White Water Canal late in the 40's to work. In a few years he became master of the Aetna and sent for Sarah. They married in 1861 (the year the Civil War began) when Val was 42 and Sarah 34.

The Aetna ran between Cambridge City and Cincinnati in two-week round trips. Almost 20,000 barrels of flour and over a million pounds of pork were shipped from Cambridge City to Cincinnati up to the 1860s.

Sarah had been born on 18 July 1827 in Newark, New Jersey to Mr. and Mrs. John Vroom, natives of Holland. When she was five years old, they came west and settled at a little village just north of Cincinnati. Here

In August of the year of Val's death, the Indianapolis News interviewed Sarah when she was 75 years old. In telling of her early life she said that she had followed her twin sister, Mrs. Henry Dittenhaver, to the

Miami Canal to become a cook. She said the boats would race occasionally but there was no fighting on the White Water, like on other canals.

After the canal ceased to be used, boats were stripped of their useable timbers. Sarah said that the skeleton of the Aetna sat between the river and the canal for several years. Town records show that boat skeletons were buried in the basin, which was filled in to make the wide east-west Church Street one block south of the National Road. In 1956 when sewer work was under way, a four foot solid oak section of a boat keel was dug up at the intersection of Church and Center Streets. This heavy remnant of canal days is in the Wayne County Historical Museum in Richmond.

Sarah was known as Aunt Sally and lived in town for many years. She was seen walking to the Vinton House almost every day to reminisce with the Vinton sisters. She passed away at the age of 91 in March of 1918. Her obituary tells us that "Mr. Sell left her a competence to guard against the evil days that too often come in the sunset of life. She lived alone a long while, although she was urged to make her home with her son at Hamilton, Ohio. But she liked Cambridge City, and its people and its churches...she lived here so long that she became a part of the town's history, since it covered almost 60 years."

Sarah was survived by her son, two grandsons and one great granddaughter. She and Valentine are buried in the same section at Riverside as the Vintons. Their gray obelisk stone with a ball on the top of the pyramid has only their names and birth and death years, but footstones tell us that Valentine was known as Volly. And behind them is buried Sarah's twin sister, Margaret Dittenhaver, who died the year after Val, in 1903.

And so our two "history making" couples with White Water Canal connections died in Cambridge City during the thirty years between 1888-1918 after the canal had closed to traffic. First, Catherine Vinton in 1888, then Valentine Sell in 1902, followed by Elbridge Vinton in 1913, and lastly Sarah Sell in 1918. They are all buried at Riverside Cemetery in round Section 6, where the vault building is located.

But what became of Lillie Ore and Florine? Lillie's obituary says that in the fall of 1920 they went to the Home Lawn sanitarium at Martinsville to recuperate their health. "The Misses Vinton assisted in an amateur entertainment at the home less than a week before Lillie's death and were apparently in improved health. Miss Lillie, however, who had practically been a shut-in for several years past from a broken limb, was frail from her long sickness, and when her heart failed she was unable to build her strength and quietly passed away."

Lillie was 70 years of age.

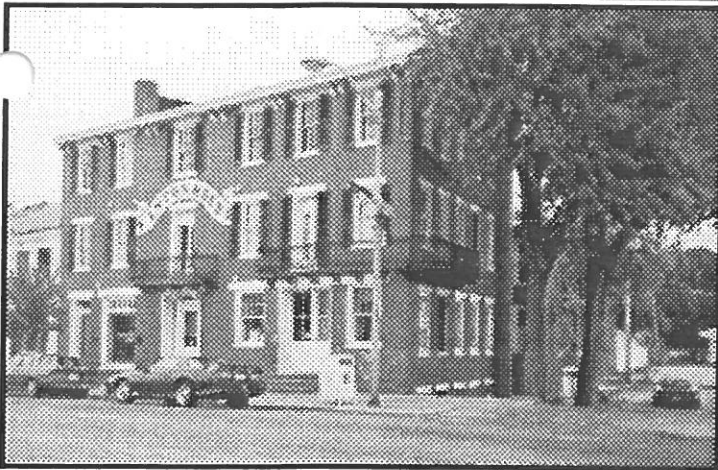
Can we assume that the sisters had continued operating the hotel until they went to Martinsville? They were 63 and 61 when their father died. Florine was 68 when her dear older sister passed away on 14 November 1920.... could she have handled the guests and also taken care of her sister up until that time? Lillie's obituary tells us that their brother in law, George Stoddard, came from St. Louis for her funeral, which was held in the Vinton House with many friends in attendance.

In 1926 the National Road became U.S. 40 with two paved lanes, and the increasing popularity of the automobile brought travelers to the front door of the Vinton House again, especially folks driving to the Indianapolis 500 Race. The grand old hotel was sold in 1929 to Ernest McGraw. Florine died on 18 February 1936 at age 83. No obituary was found in the local paper. The city has a record that her ashes were interred in the family plot at Riverside...the end of the colorful story of two pioneer families in the life of our town.

The Vinton family plot is marked with a large red granite marker, and nine smaller red granite individual markers, the earliest being little son Charlie in 1849, who likely was originally buried in the old Capitol Hill cemetery. Many of those burials were moved to Riverside by 1908. Vinton's young grandson Thomas and father Joseph both died in January of 1875. Catharine is next in 1888, her mother-in-law Sukey in 1889, then our innkeeper in 1913 and his two daughters Lillie Ore in 1920 and Florine in 1936. Catharine's parents, the Johnsonboughs, her brother John and sister Elizabeth are on the adjoining lot. Interestingly, Frederick Johnsonbaugh is recorded in 1848 as an owner with John P. Sowers of Lot 12, Block 3, on the east side of the same block as the Vinton House..

But wait...here is a puzzle! In the Vinton plot is a ninth red stone with the name Elbridge Vinton House, born 29 August 1878, died 21 January 1879. Who is this infant named after our innkeeper, with the last name of House??

The Vinton House Hotel was owned by Elmer and Esther Schwegman from November to December 1989, only the second owners after the Vintons. They raised their family of five children on the second floor while renting out rooms on the third floor. A grocery store, telegraph office, tax service and bus stop were on the first floor. Then the building at 22 West Main Street had a checkered history but was rescued by Western Wayne Heritage, Inc. when the non-profit preservation group purchased it in December 1998 with the plan to stabilize it enough for an investor. This brick building is



Above: The Vinton House today is being restored by Western Wayne Heritage  
Photo by Bob Schmidt

one of the few still standing that provided food and lodging to those using or working on the canals, the National Road, and the railroads. The local owners have great pride in what they've accomplished and would reluctantly relinquish it to only a person of great vision toward the future of Cambridge City and the National Road.

ources: Cambridge City Public Library, History Room and microfilm, City Building, Riverside Cemetery, Wayne County Health Office and Courthouse, Morrison-Reeves Library in Richmond.

AQUEDUCTS  
BARLEY FIELDS  
BASINS  
BEER GARDENS  
BREWERIES  
CANAL TUNNEL  
FEEDER CANALS  
HYDRAULIC CANALS  
ICE PONDS  
INCLINES  
LOCKS  
MILLS  
OVERFLOWS  
SUBWAY



TOUR OF  
THESE  
SITES

## CANAL BALL INVITATION FOUND

John Belongie recently found an invitation to a ball in an old leather bound album containing Civil War photos and families in "turn of the century Victorian dress." The invitation is a hand written document in ink on a folded note card that measures 3.75 inches wide by 5.5 inches tall. The edges of the card have an embossed design. There is some light foxing which resembles a small brown stain, common on old paper. The foxing is a spot on the back and lighter on the front right corner no bigger than 1/4 inch and very light in the front. He hopes to sell it for \$45. The invitation reads as follows with those parts that were difficult to read in quotation marks:

### *May Day Ball*

*You are respectfully invited  
by the  
Contractors &  
"Offices or Officers"  
of the  
Wabash & Erie Canal  
to attend a  
Ball  
to be given at the  
Mansion House  
in Princeton  
on Fri-day Evening  
April 30th.*

*"DR Hosemun" "Jo. Nelson"  
"LW Wattns" "LS Hutehinson"  
"W Ragan" "RB Lawnnce"  
"J Gallaghn" "Chas Slayback"*

## Those Arabs and Their Wabash & Erie Canal Connections

In last month's issue of *The Hoosier Packet* Charles Davis wrote a history of an area in Wabash township, Parke County, Indiana known by the locals as Arabia. The following pictures complement that article and are shown in the order they were mentioned within it.

Photos by Charles Davis

Top left: Arabia Cemetery on Arabia Hill southwest of Midway, Parke County, IN

Top right: Grave marker of Abner, son of Andrew Chew, and Susan Wasson Chew in Arabia Cemetery.

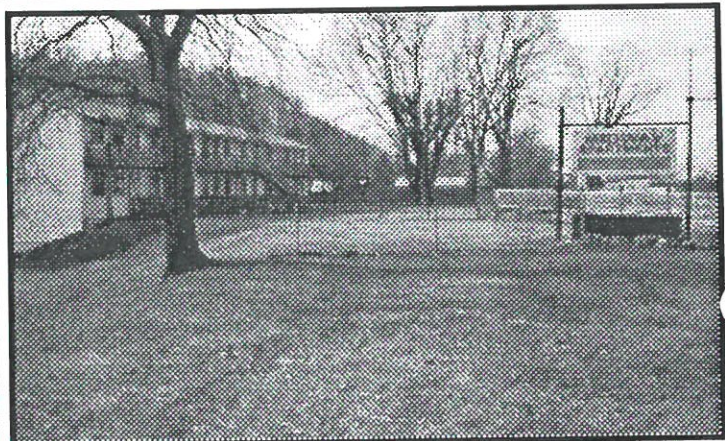
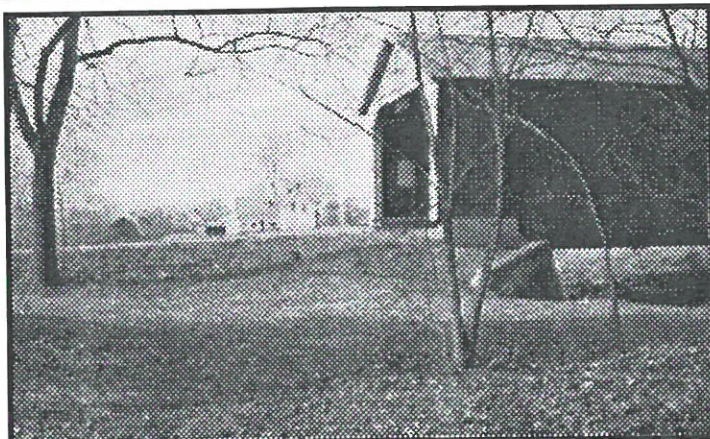
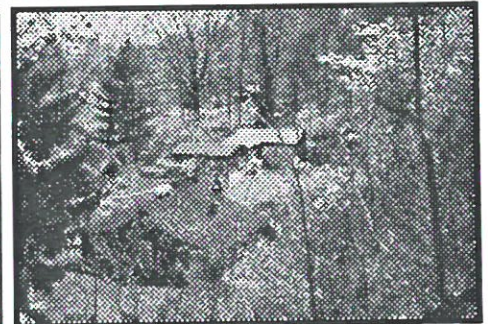
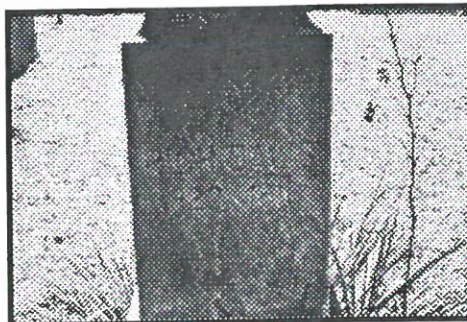
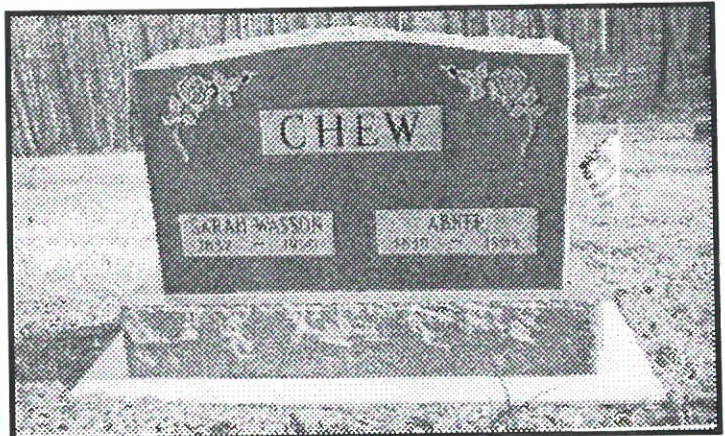
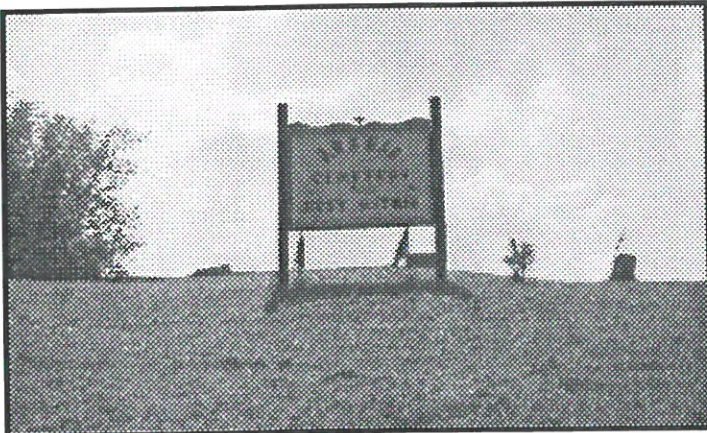
Mid left: Headstone for Rich Davis, who operated a sawmill at "Glendale" Midway that cut timbers for the #12 aqueduct of the Wabash & Erie Canal over Big Raccoon Creek at Armiesburg, the Arabia church and the old plank road (U.S. 36).

Mid center: Hedge row planted in the 1800s by Rich Davis on Sec. 8 & 9 line. His home site was a little west of the north end of the hedge row.

Mid right: "Wildman's Hollow" on road 350W in Parke County shows the old house of Frances Davis and the home of Charles & Linda Davis.

Bottom left: The Benjamin Phillips home is seen beyond the Phillips covered bridge over Rocky Run Creek near Arabia Cemetery just southwest of Midway in Wabash township Parke county.

Bottom right: "Glendale," now referred to as Midway, located between Rockville and Montezuma on U.S. 36 was the site of the sawmill where Rich Davis cut timber for Aqueduct #12 in the 1840s, the Rockville to Montezuma Plank Road in the 1850s, and the Glendale schoolhouse in the 1870s that closed in 1922. The school is on a hill opposite the Midway apartments north of U. S. 36.

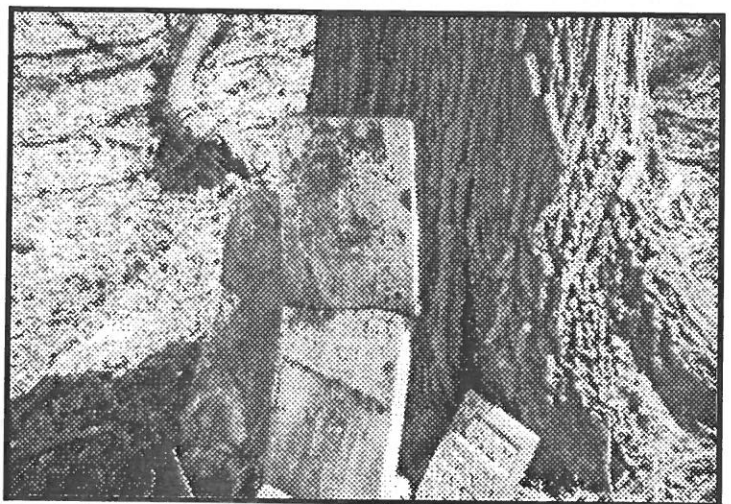
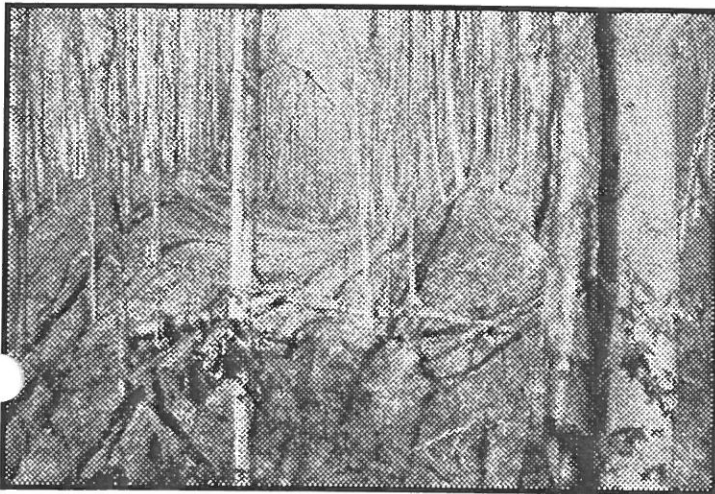


At the time I (Charles Davis) wrote "Those Arabs and Their Wabash & Erie Canal Connections" I could not find the name of the author for a three page history of Arabia, which I found at the Indianapolis Library, to include in the references at the end of the article. Through more research I came upon an article in the Rockville Tribune on March 2, 1921 entitled "Parke County Historical Society's Valuable Papers," which lists the stories and said they may be found at the Indianapolis Library. It also lists many other stories that it

said were in the possession of the Parke County Historical Society. "Arabia" is listed as written by Michael G. Hixon. Hixon was one of the Rockville town board members responsible for the building of the Rockville Courthouse. He deeded to the trustees of Wabash township land for the Hixon Cemetery on January 22, 1850. His home was about one mile northeast of Mecca and qualifies him for the Arabia story.

I also found out that the "bell" that was in my article "The Big

Sleigh Ride" in Indiana Canals Winter 2002 and originally hung in the Predestinarian Baptist Church in Rockville, a brick structure built in 1834 and located on lot 44, was removed when the society dissolved and put in the New Discovery Baptist Church in section 26 of Adams township in Parke county. In 2002 the owners of that church removed the bell once again. I am currently investigating what is the new home of the bell so I can get a picture of the "moving" bell.



Left: The low grade in this photo was built for the Indianapolis & Springfield Railroad in 1876 on the property of Wm. S. Hall in section 4 Wabash township Parke county, Indiana. The track was never laid on it. It was then the old Indiana Urban Road at Coloma, IN. The hill on the left is the James Watts Cemetery. Right: Today stones rest against a tree in the cemetery. Photos



Charles Davis, author of many articles about people and places in Parke county and their connections with the Wabash & Erie Canal found in previous CSI publications, displays three huge morel mushrooms and a sack filled with more mushrooms totaling 7 pounds in all. He found them around an elm tree on the "Rich Davis" farm in "Arabia" Wabash township Parke county in May 2002. The mushrooms averaged 7-10 inches in height. He is pictured at his home in Wildman's Hollow in "Arabia." At the price of these mushrooms today he can say "There's gold in them thar hills."



## Speakers Bureau

Cincinnati, OH

Mike Morthorst, CSI board member and president of the Canal Society of Ohio, recorded a one-half hour program with former Representative Bob Shuler talking about canals. It aired on the local ICRC Community Cable Access channel for 4 weeks in May and June. Mike also plugged his book "The Miami Canal in Hamilton and Butler Counties, Ohio" that will be received by those attending the "Pigs, Paper & Pilsner" tour. Anyone else wishing to receive a copy of the book may order it on [abebooks.com](http://abebooks.com).

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

CSI welcomes aboard the following new members who have joined at the member rate unless otherwise noted.

Jim & Cheryl Keating - Carmel, IN  
Robert & Phyllis Farley Rippey - Macomb, IL

### MAUMEE VALLEY HERITAGE CORRIDOR PRODUCES MAP

The Maumee Valley Heritage Corridor, Inc., a not for profit 501 (c) 3 organization of volunteers, has just published a beautiful map/brochure of The Maumee River and The Maumee Valley Heritage Corridor: History, Attractions and Map. It not only shows pictures of and describes 26 sites within the valley and nearby streams, but also gives the history of the glacial period; the Great Black Swamp; the Native Americans in the

valley; the armies of the French, British, Indians, and Americans; the agriculture and industrial periods; and the canal and railroad eras. It also tells what is available in the valley in the way of sports; parks and recreation; scenic roads and byways; and higher educational institutions. It lists the facts about the Maumee River. It also tells how to obtain visitor information from the counties within the valley from Ft. Wayne, IN to Toledo, OH.

CSI is mailing each member a copy of this informative map. Please keep it for future reference or share it with a friend. Members of the Maumee Valley Heritage Corridor hope to see you in the "valley" soon. Check out the MVHC website at: [www.maumeevalleyheritagecorridor.org](http://www.maumeevalleyheritagecorridor.org)

Better still:

Become a member, receive the newsletter and participate in events.

The annual dinner meeting will be November 8, 2002 at Ohio Gateway Museum, Ft. Meigs, Perrysburg, Ohio at 6 p.m.

IN THE NEWS



December 4, 1999 - Cumberland, MD

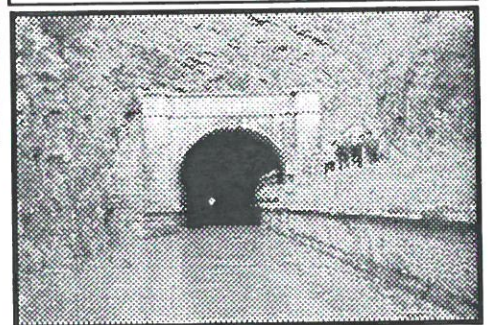
"Canal Park (Not Akron's) Is Link To Early U. S." was the title of an article in the Akron Beacon Journal about the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal. The article gives the history of the 184.5-mile-long Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park that runs along the canal and the Potomac River from Cumberland on the east to Washington D.C. on the east. George Washington thought a canal linking Chesapeake Bay with the Ohio River would be a good idea, but it was John Quincy Adams during his term as president who presided over the groundbreaking for the canal on July 4, 1828 near

Washington, D. C. It was to be 365 miles long but after 22 years had reached only as far as Cumberland. It was 6 feet deep and 60 feet wide. It operated from 1828-1924 with 550 boats hauling coal and grain at its peak in the 1870s.

William O. Douglas, former U. S. Supreme Court Justice rallied support to save the canal. In 1961 it was proclaimed a national monument and in 1971 a national historical park.

There were plenty of canal structures to save - 74 locks, 10 aqueducts (there were 11 at one time), and 1,300 related structures such as lock tenders homes. It was interesting to note that in the eastern portion of the canal the houses were built of stone, the middle portion of brick and the western portion of wood because the federal government was running out of funds. The 3,118-foot-long Pawpaw Tunnel and the Great Falls of the Potomac are highlights of the park.

The Pawpaw Tunnel is a major highlight of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal in Maryland. Photo by Bob Schmidt



Today visitors to the park will see about 30 miles of watered canal where in the summer mosquitoes can become a problem, but they are not as big a problem as the floods in 1996 that did over \$23 million in damages by washing out the towpath. Today most of the damage is repaired an about 4 million visitors use the park each year. The park has canal boat rides at Great Falls overnight campgrounds, boat ramps, bike rental, shuttle buses, and allows canoeing. Lloyd Davis, CSI, Evansville, IN

December 23, 2001 - Akron, OH

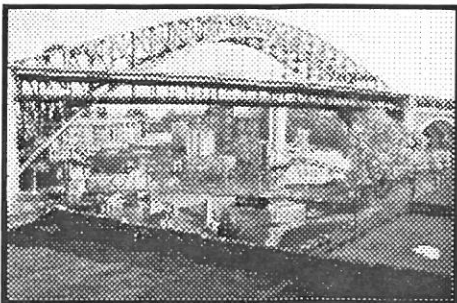
The Akron Beacon Journal article "Construction Steps Up Along Towpath" said that the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail is growing with the addition of a 1-mile section in Clinton, a 3.6 mile section through Massillon in Stark county, and a 1.7 mile section in Cuyahoga county. This hiking/biking trail is a "key element" in the development of the Ohio & Erie National Heritage Corridor between Cleveland to New Philadelphia. Of the 101 planned miles of trail, 65 have been completed.

At the site where the canal originally entered the Cuyahoga river, they plan to construct Canal Basin Park with a visitor center. It is undetermined when the trail and center will be finished.

The article says land is being acquired, plans developed, grants sought, and construction started. It gives the price tag for various sections of the trail and tells how the money for each section is being obtained.

Lloyd Davis, CSI member, Evansville, IN

The Ohio & Erie Canal entered the Cuyahoga river at this point where a visitors center is located in Canal Basin Park. Photo by Bob Schmidt



July 7, 2002 Scotland

"Just One Wheel Replaces 11 Locks in Scotland" was the title of an article that was run by the New York Times. It said that as part of a \$127 million Millennium Link project designed to restore their waterways, the Falkirk Wheel will replace 11

locks along the 68-mile-long waterway between Glasgow and Edinburgh that connects the Forth & Clyde and the Union canals. The wheel, much like a "Ferris Wheel," is an 115-foot-high rotating boat lift that carries up to four boats at a time from a holding basin to an elevated aqueduct. It also improves the locking time from almost a day to fifteen minutes. Boats carrying 40 persons enter a water-filled caisson. The door closes forming a watertight seal. The wheel rotates and as the passengers ascend or descend they view the Ochi Hills.

At the top of the wheel the boats exit the chamber to travel along a 330-foot aqueduct that passes through a 475-foot tunnel beneath the Antonine Wall. They return via the wheel to a new visitor center at the site that has a glass front overlooking a 330-foot-wide basin. There visitors may eat in a cafe, shop, or watch the boats traveling on the wheel from a viewing area.

Admission to the visitor center is free, but boat trips must be booked in advance. Next spring amphibious buses will also take visitors through the wheel and then return by road.

After paraphrasing this article your editor went to the web and found more information, good diagrams of the wheel and even static and panning web cams. One said that the wheel is "35 meters in diameter and weighs (including water) 1800 tonnes. Rotation is by a geared axle with an operating cycle of approximately 15 minutes."

Access the following sites:

[www.scottishcanals.co.uk/html/l\\_waterways/](http://www.scottishcanals.co.uk/html/l_waterways/)

[1-3-9\\_wheel/1-3-9-1-2\\_leftnav.htm](http://1-3-9_wheel/1-3-9-1-2_leftnav.htm)

[www.lusas.com/case/bridge/falkirk.html](http://www.lusas.com/case/bridge/falkirk.html)

[www.falkirk-wheel.com/webcam.htm](http://www.falkirk-wheel.com/webcam.htm)

Chuck Huppert, CSI vice-president, Indianapolis

July 13, 2002 - Logansport

The Logansport Pharos-Tribune article "Amos Kistler: A

Royal Center Farmer Who Came Via Canal" contained information from the Cass County Historical archives. It said that many pioneer farming families came to America, settled on the East Coast and gradually moved their families westward. They had little but their "strength of body and character" being of strong minds and a determined to better themselves.

Amos Kistler's family is a prime example of this drive. Henry Kistler, his great-grandfather, came from Germany before the Revolutionary War. The family moved to Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Later they moved to Fairfield County, Ohio where Amos was born to George and Lydia Fultz Kistler. He was one of eight children: Elizabeth, Lydia, Amos, Mary, Elias, David, Eva and Margaret.

In 1849 his family, along with other relatives, moved into Cass County by way of the Wabash & Erie Canal.. Amos was thirteen years old at the time, about the same age as the canal in that area.

Amos worked on the farm until the Corps of Engineers, who were surveying a route for the Pennsylvania Railroad to pass through Royal Center, gave him his first job. Before long he met Ann E. Schlegelmilch and they were married when he was 22.

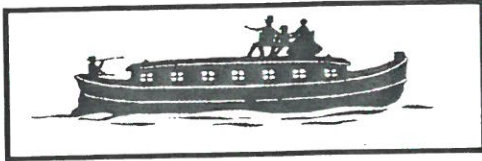
Ann's father came to Boone Township from Pennsylvania. There he grew grapes and produced wine for the locals. He and his family then moved to Jefferson Township where they bought a 106-acre farm and became farmers.

Amos and Ann settled on another farm near her parents. Later they moved to a farm in Boone Township just one and a half miles west of Royal Center. This farm had 240 acres under cultivation and provided a good place to raise their ten children: Jennie, Effie, Martha, George, John, Lena, Carrie, Laura,

Augusta and Mable. During his farming years Amos read and studied. He eventually gained a good education.

In 1892 Amos decided to quit farming and moved to Royal Center where he opened a store. In it he sold hardware, harnesses for horses and mules and farm implements. In 1909, at age 64, Amos passed away.

Ann, using an old Schlegel-milch family recipe brought from Germany, made homemade cough syrup. She became well known in Boone Township for this remedy.  
Annetta Baker, CSI member, Winamac, IN



July 18, 2002 - Colchester, Vt.

"Archaeological Study Of Sloop Island Canalboat Announced By Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, Green Mountain Power And The EPA" was the title of a press release on the internet. It said that a shipwreck of what they call a canal boat (actually a barge canal boat) has been found on the floor of Lake Champlain near Sloop Island. It is 97-foot long, 17.5-foot wide and is completely intact with its cargo. It is in a moderate depth of water and will be archaeologically studied with extensive documentation and conservation of its artifacts.

The artifacts will be available for the public to see at the Conservation Laboratory at Basin Harbor. There will have public lectures this summer and over the next few years.

Study began on the lake bottom in 1996 with the zebra mussel infestation. The Maritime Research Institute has located 60 shipwrecks in the 240 square miles it has surveyed. This "canalboat" will help us to understand shipbuilding

technology of the nineteenth century.

Five similar canal boats were previously discovered in the Barge Canal. These boats when abandoned were stripped of their cargo, materials and artifacts before they were sunk. The canal and basin in which they rest is being covered with two feet of sand to contain contaminated sediments located there. This will make them inaccessible for further study.

The \$150,000 Sloop Island wreck will yield valuable information that will be relevant to "Nautical and industrial archaeology, naval architecture, archaeological conservation, cultural anthropology, and economic and nineteenth century American history."

July-August 2002 - Akron-Cleveland

Travel Holiday magazine ran a picture of Brandywine Falls in Ohio and an article about the 38-mile stretch of the "Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail" between Akron and Cleveland. This portion of the canal was built between 1825-32. It said the trail on the former towpath is well maintained, open year-round, has bicycle rentals, offers hostel-like lodging in a farmhouse (1830) in Peninsula, has galleries, shops and restaurants, and has many restored canal-era buildings and trailside exhibits. There is a canal-boat-building museum in the old Boston Store (1836), a wrought-iron truss bridge (1881), a Federal-style house (1826), an aqueduct (1905), a Canal Visitors Center in a tavern (1820s) located on the north end of the section, a grist mill (19th century), and the Hale Farm & Village (1848), which includes glassblowers and blacksmiths, located at the south end of the section.

David Baker, Ft. Wayne, IN

July 2002 - Ft. Wayne, IN

The newsletter for ARCH: Architecture & Community Heritage

contained an article entitled "Rockhill-Tyler House Update." Those CSI members who attended the "Canalabration" Tour last spring will remember seeing this small brick house that was built for Mary Tyler Rockhill by her father at 918 Van Buren Street. Through a grant from the Historic Preservation Fund of the National Park Service, which is administered by the Indiana Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology, restoration continues on the home. Plaster is being stabilized on the first floor. Restoration of the stairway is finished. By the end of August a permanent heating system should be in place. More information has been found about the wallpaper and interior paint and trim that will help develop the plan for restoring the rest of the interior. When finished it will be used to tell about Ft. Wayne's canal era as well as other things.

## CSI ARCHIVES

CSI thanks Tom Castaldi, CSI advisory council member from Fort Wayne, Indiana, for contributing his second revised edition of **Wabash & Erie Canal Notebook I: Allen and Huntington Counties**. Tom has added many pictures and pages of information about canal structures that have been unearthed since the last publication of the book.

CSI also thanks CSI member Mary Kelley from Fries, Virginia, for contributing her back issues of the **CSI Newsletter** Dec. 1997-Dec. 1999 and **Indiana Canals** Sept. 1997-Fall 1999. There are a total of 40 issues. The newsletters have been punched for insertion into a three ring binder. All of these publications will be resold together for \$20 including shipping and handling to any member who joined after they were published to add to his or her collection. Proceed will be used toward the purchase of canal markers. Check to CSI, P.O. Box 40087, Ft. Wayne, IN 46804.