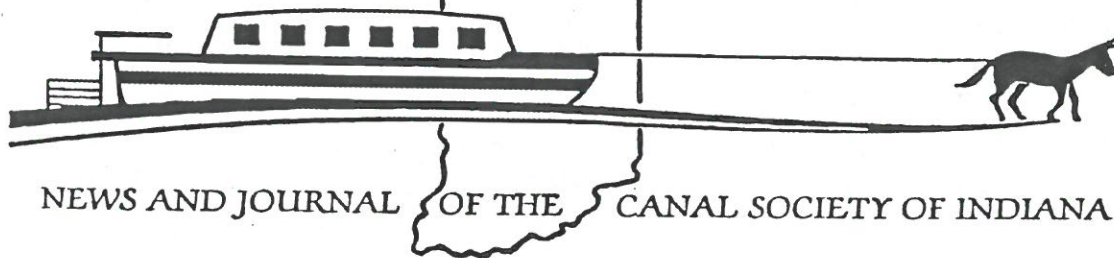


# THE HOOSIER-PACKET



NEWS AND JOURNAL OF THE CANAL SOCIETY OF INDIANA

VOL. 2 NO. 7

P.O. BOX 40087 FORT WAYNE, IN 46804

JULY 2003

## RILEY LOCK NO. 47



Lock 47 of the Wabash and Erie Canal was built in 1838 near Riley, IN. Lynn Bower is seen at the far left center looking at the remaining western wall with one of the cap stones missing. All that remains of the eastern wall are a few stones. About 5 feet of sediment fill the chamber. Photo by John Bower, Studio Indiana, Bloomington, IN

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### TURN RIGHT AT THE DIP

By Lynn Bower, Bloomington, IN

I was thrilled to learn, not very long ago, that "the Riley dip" was where the Wabash and Erie Canal cut across Indiana State Road 46. Like many CSI members, I've been fascinated by canals most of my life. As a young girl, my favorite elementary school song was "The Erie Canal" whose lyrics warned, "Low bridge! Everybody down!" I used to closely study the accompanying illustration of a passenger packet, pulled by mule, nearing a low-stone arch. How I wanted to be in the boat, be the steersman, or drive the mule, or all three.

Why this song and its drawing captivated me, I

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don't really know. I didn't grow up around canals. Instead, until I went to college, I lived in suburban Detroit - just a block from Lake Saint Clair. Back then (in the 1950s and 1960s), I would often scan along the string of distant channel buoys nearly paralleling the Michigan/Ontario international border. That's where the big Great Lakes freighters could safely transverse the notoriously shallow waters of the lake. Every day, rain or shine, until ice called a halt to the shipping season, the big freighters were out there. Of course, spotting a freighter was always fun, but it was no Erie Canal boat

Time passed and in 1972, I came to Kendallville (in northwestern Indiana) as a new teacher. By Thanksgiving, my team teacher, who was also new, fell in love with me and I with him, and we were married. John was from Lafayette, on the opposite side of the state. As we drove the first time to his hometown, he mentioned that the ditch by the side of the highway was part of the Wabash and Erie Canal. I was dumbstruck - "THE canal" - after all these years! As a Michigander, I had never known of Indiana's elaborate canal system, let alone one named Erie.

Soon, I was reading what I could about the W & E. On occasion, we explored old lock sites along the route, such as Lockport and Logansport. As a special gift, John bought me a large book about canals in America. In no time, I began spouting interesting facts, at least to me, about the Irish ditch diggers, the numbers of laborers that succumbed in the canal's construction, the demise and abandonment of sections of the canals, etc. I couldn't figure out why everyone in my newly adopted state wasn't knowledgeable, or at least somewhat enthralled about such a monumental, historical wonder in their midst.

The years past, and we moved often. I didn't think too often

of Indiana's canals anymore. I guess I was becoming one of the unimpressed, uninterested silent majority. Then, John and I heard a speaker from the Canal Society of Indiana give a presentation at the Monroe County Public Library, and I joined the organization myself. The canal bug was alive again.

Not long after, we visited the Vigo County Historical Museum. It was from a kindly woman there that I first heard of "the Riley Dip." Although we had driven through this unassuming depression in State Rd. 46 on the way to and from Terre Haute (only a few miles further west) we hadn't known of it's origin, or it's significance. Now we knew and I was delighted. But that wasn't all the good news. If you're coming from Bloomington, turn right at the dip, and you'll come across the Riley Lock. It was an invitation we could not pass up.

Unfortunately, whenever we happened to be in the vicinity and went lock hunting, the foliage was so green and dense, we could never find it. Then, in early April of this year, we decided we simply had to go to Riley now. We were going to see the lock this Spring, before the buds turned into camouflaging leaves.

Expectantly, we drove from our rural Monroe County home to "the dip" and turned right. Despite the relatively clear view (some trees and shrubs were just beginning to leaf here), we could not see anything that looked like a canal lock. Where was it? After driving up and down the road several times, a helpful farmer on an open-cab tractor pulled up to our car. According to him, it was just a couple hundred feet ahead. So near, yet so far!

We parked our SUV and stepped out to explore. The day was dreary, windy, and very cold. One thing was for sure, we would not suffer from overheating or sunstroke. With each of us draped with various

camera equipment, we hiked over to where we could make out stonework. It soon became evident, however, that to reach our goal, we would have to twice cross a rushing stream.

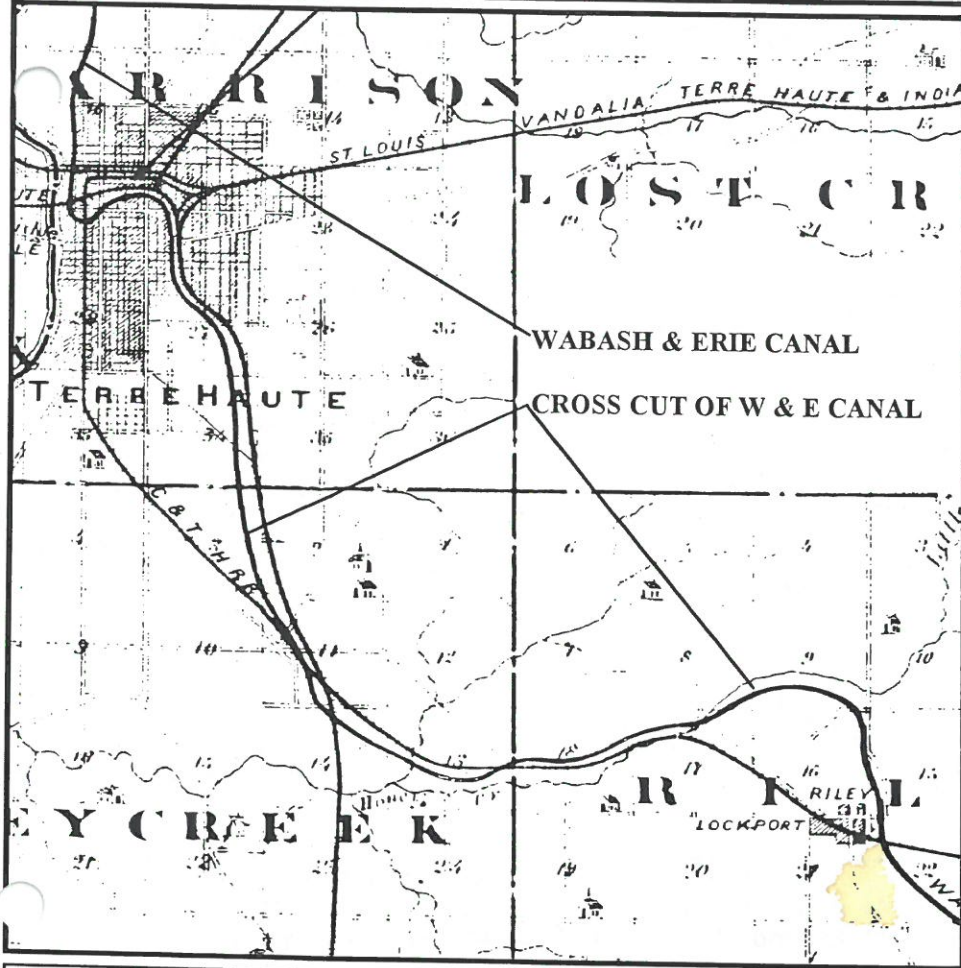
John, as usual for him, was undaunted. He climbed up on a large, fallen sycamore and sauntered over the first stretch of water like a seasoned tightrope walker. Less skilled and with a poorer sense of balance, I sat down on the barkless trunk and scooted my way across. Not an elegant nor graceful passage, but I made it. The second crossing proved even more arduous - a loosely packed log and brush jam. Even with a large, heavy camera bag and tripod, John picked his way across with ease. I followed on all fours.

Once on the other side, we were greeted by a long, tall wall of finely cut tan stone. A yellow-green blanket of moss covered much of it, yet the evidence of pride in workmanship and materials was evident in the vertical beveled edges and the curved sections of the imposing structure. The opposite stone wall appeared very short, perhaps only a course or two high. Looking at the beautiful ruin, now filled in with silt and long abandoned, it was still possible for me to imagine the water, packets, mules, and people who once passed through this now nearly forgotten site.

After taking a number of photographs, we made our way back across the stream, and went on to Terre Haute for lunch. As we drove through "the Riley Dip" and down the highway, not surprisingly, I found myself humming the chorus of "The Erie Canal."

Lock 47 was one of the few stone locks built on the 468-mile-long Wabash & Erie Canal. A \$400,000 state grant was awarded to Vigo county in Sept. 2002 to develop a county park at the Riley Lock site. The county must raise \$80,000 as their required match.





**A PORTION OF VIGO COUNTY, INDIANA  
SHOWING THE TOWN OF RILEY AND PART OF THE CROSS CUT OF  
THE WABASH & ERIE CANAL, WHICH BEGINS AT TERRE HAUTE AND  
EXTENDS TO WORTHINGTON.** 1876 Atlas Baskin, Forster & Co.

**PHYSICIANS TOUR** Front Row: Dr. Kurt Maddock, Ed Borter D. V.M., Jeff Koehler  
Back Row: Dr. Dan Combs, Dr. Jay Tuttle, Dr. Bill Vaughn, Dr. Jerry Melchoir,  
Norman Klass  
Photo courtesy Dr. Ed Borter



**PHYSICIANS TOUR  
WABASH & ERIE CANAL**  
By Dr. Ed Borter

On April 21, 2003, a group of physicians and other canal society members met at Riley, IN. Dr. Dan Combs, a canal enthusiast, organized this group and a tour down the Wabash and Erie Canal.

Canal Society of Indiana members Jeff Koehler of Center Point, IN and Norman Klass of Clay City, IN guided the tour in the Riley and Clay City area. The remains of several Locks were visited noting the difference in construction. The elaborate dams and reservoir sites also were visited, along with the elaborate feeder canals. Feed water could be directed upstream or downstream from these sites. This area was part of the Crosscut Canal from the Wabash valley to the Eel and White River valley. An area called the summit was pointed out and was thought to be the highest elevation of the cross over. Boats locked in and out of this area. It was necessary to enable water to be fed up or down the canal.

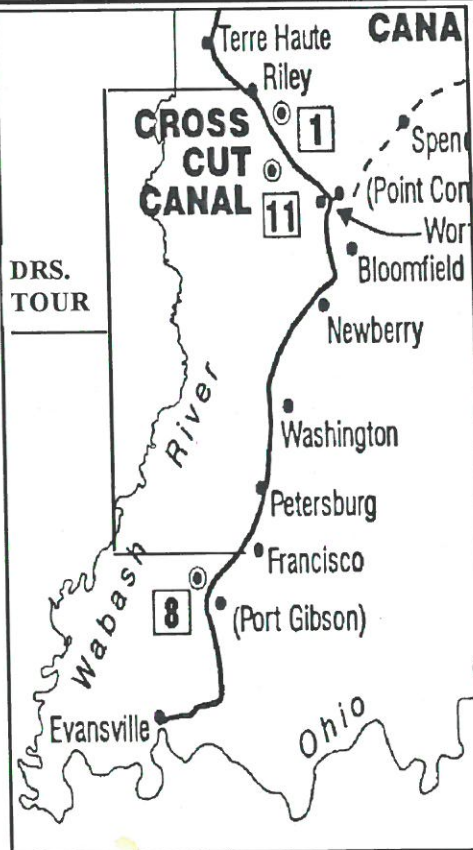
Jeff and Norm explained that dams were unpopular in this area and probably in other areas. The group stood on the famous dam where Clay county raiders continually damaged the structure with dynamite. State troops guarded the dam for a period of time, but after they left the Clay county villains blew it up again. The group of medical experts discussed the possible cause of construction workers deaths. It was suspected that the droves of mosquitoes and biting insects spread malaria and diseases that weakened the immune system of the workers. This, along with diet and sanitation, led to an epidemic of different dysenteries. It was reported that heavy doses of quinine and calomel were used to treat sick workers, probably with little effect. It has been said that if all the dead were lined up head to toe it



would form a line the entire 468 miles of the canal. The tour continued down the canal where possible to Johnstown in northern Greene county. It was noted that from this location on south the abandoned railroad beds were on the towpath and that the towpath was usually between the canal and the river to help prevent flooding of the canal.

Dr. Ed Borter, veterinarian, Newberry native, and CSI member from Odon, IN, guided the tour down the canal through Greene county. The group followed the canal down Canal street through Worthington and then, where possible, followed the canal to south of the Plummer area. Here the group walked down the abandoned railroad grade located on the towpath to White river. The dams in the Clay county area fed water to this location. With the expertise of Jeff and Norm Lock #58 was located. Remains of Lock #59 were observed a short distance away where boats locked in and out of White river. By studying the engineering reports it was determined the boats crossed the river here. We walked the towpath along White river for four or more miles to the great dam at Newberry. Were the mules and horses changed here or were they ferried across the river? This question may never be answered.

River erosion is presently destroying Lock #59. A log jam above the lock on the abandoned railroad trussel and abutment is directing the river directly at the lock. The railroad took care of the jams before they closed the line several years ago. It seems like this lock deserves to be saved from destruction. The group could tell that the lock was of combined construction of stone and wood. At this location, the original undisturbed towpath was visible for about 100 yards. The narrow gage railroad bed built about 1880 and the wide gage tract built in 1903 were visible for a short distance until they merged on top of the towpath.



At a later date, Dr. Borter was able to find the undisturbed towpath across the river that was used to travel to and from Newberry. The tour continued to Newberry where the remains of the great feeder dam could be seen. This dam backed White river up for many miles and fed the canal south. The boats locked in and out of the river at this location. Newberry was a special shipping location since the boats traveled in, up and across the river. It has been reported that a piece of furniture has been seen with "shipped via Wabash and Erie canal to Newberry then by wagon to Bloomfield" written on the back.

After dining at the Newberry Cafe the group drove down the abandoned railroad tract on the towpath for two miles. The canal is still filled with water in this location with plenty of turtles, lilies, button bush, fish and wildlife. The canal continues to serve as a stream for drainage in some areas. The locals still use the canal for fishing, hunting and trapping like it undoubtedly has

been used since closing 140 years ago.

The physicians under Dr. Combs direction continued down the canal where possible, through Elnora, Plainville, Washington, Petersburg, Patoka and Francisco before returning to Vincennes.

*Dr. Borter has traveled the Wabash and Erie Canal through Green county to Washington, IN for forty years. He grew up on the river at Newberry. As a kid he swam below the dam and fished and dived off a portion of it in the center of the river. No one ever pointed out to him what the big dam was. He says that sixty years ago a lot more of it was intact.*

### AMERICA WAS BEAUTIFUL

By Jack M. Miller

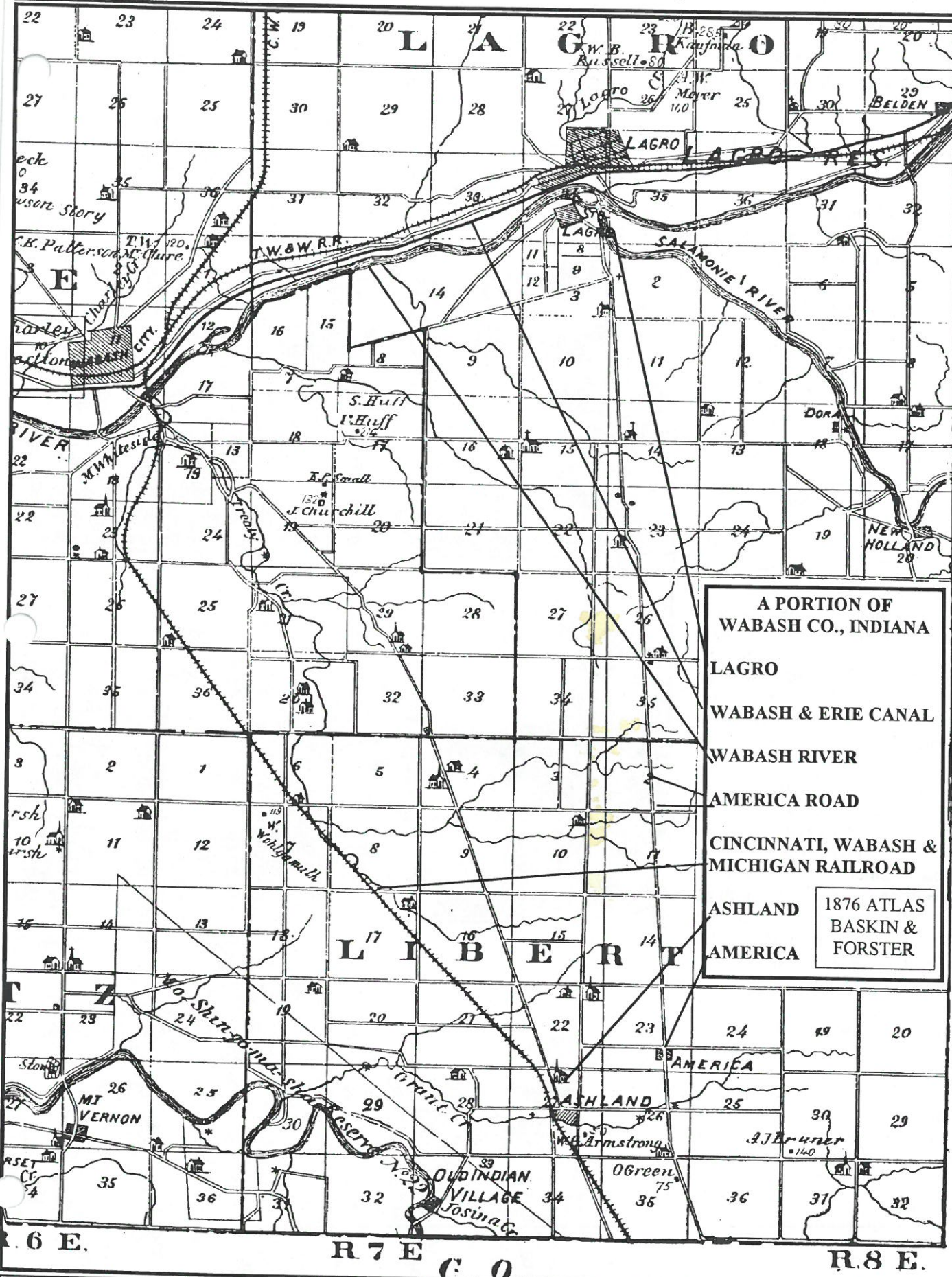
When you travel the America Road between Lagro (IN) and Marion (IN), you travel on a real chunk of Wabash (county) history. All of the twists and turns of the original road are in place, especially when you get into Grant county.

I don't know when the original cart-way was blazed through the dense forest and bogs, but there is no doubt, it was cleared to connect Lagro and Marion. I am sure it was before 1836, as that road gave birth to a new little village from whom the road gets its name: AMERICA.

Was it pure luck or was it forehand thinking? The digging of the Wabash and Erie Canal had just been completed late that summer to Lagro. Again was it pure luck or forehand knowledge that it was a two day travel with a load of wheat from Marion to that canal in Lagro?

America was half way between those two destinations—the logical place for the first night's stop. The horses needed rest and food just as the teamsters needed food and shelter.





HUNTINGTON

A PORTION OF  
 WABASH CO., INDIANA

LAGRO

WABASH & ERIE CANAL

WABASH RIVER

AMERICA ROAD

CINCINNATI, WABASH & MICHIGAN RAILROAD

ASHLAND

AMERICA

1876 ATLAS  
 BASKIN &  
 FORSTER



America really started growing in 1837 with first a store and a blacksmith to repair any wagon or shoe for working horses. By 1840, a hotel had been built and several stores lined the road for three city blocks.

By 1845, they had a post office, hotel, steam grist mill, and 40 to 50 dwellings. Think of this! They were bringing wheat and grain from as far south as Anderson to ship out on the canal at Lagro. Why? simple. Grain was worth twice as much in the Toledo-Buffalo Market as in the Midwest, if you could sell it in the Midwest at all. As many as 100 wagons would pass through America on any given day during the harvest season. Things were good for the little town in the 1840s and 1850s.

Then in the 1860s, it started to slow down. Railroads were being built through central Indiana and they were carrying grain to the eastern markets. The last canal boat left Lagro for Toledo in the summer of 1871. The Wabash Railroad arrived in 1856 in Lagro. America was slowly shrinking. Then the death blow fell in the little village.

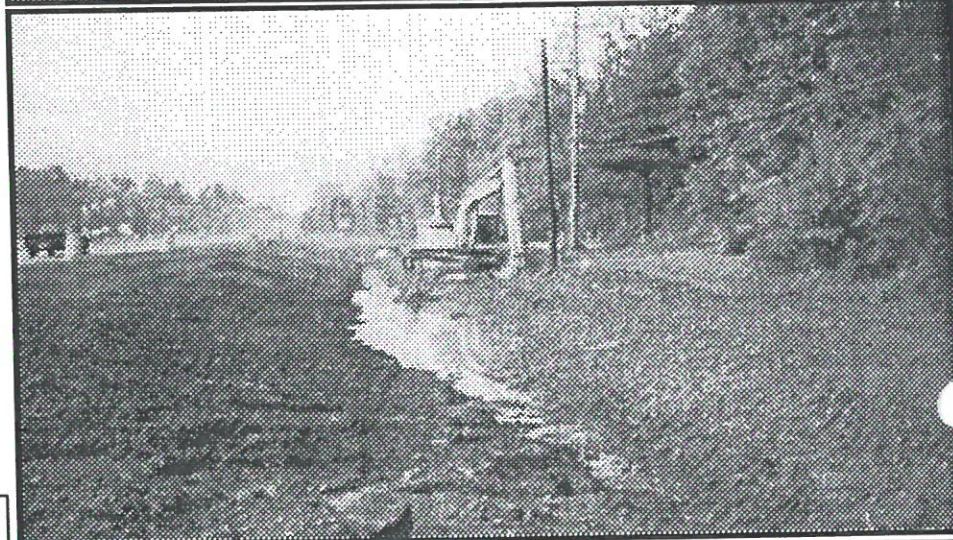
That little settlement about 5 miles southwest—a place originally called Wolf Trap, then Grant's Land—now called themselves Ashland. A new railroad—Cincinnati, Wabash & Michigan Railroad being built south of Wabash to Anderson—reached Ashland. It was the end of the America Road. The town of Ashland became LaFontaine in 1873.

**America Was Beautiful !!!!**

*This article was written for the Wabash Historical Newsletter by CSI member Jack Miller of Wabash. It appeared in the Second Quarter 2003 issue of that publication and was sent to CSI by Mary Sholty of Lafayette. Jack gave CSI permission to reprint it in The Hoosier Packet.*

## OHIO & ERIE CANAL VANISHING ON ROUTE 40

The Ohio & Erie Canal prism is being filled for the widening of Route 79 in the Newark-Heath-Hebron, OH area of the Licking Summit just north of Buckeye Lake. Linn Loomis, CSI member from Newcomerstown, OH took pictures on Apr. 30 and May 9, 2003. He wrote the state legislature about the impact to Beaver Run Culvert, Hebron Culvert, & Lake Run Aqueduct.



Ohio & Erie Canal photos by Linn Loomis



# CANAWLERS AT REST

## FRANCIS COMPARET

**b. Oct. 12, 1796**

**d. Feb. 20, 1845**

By Cynthia Powers

Painting courtesy of Allen County-Fort Wayne  
Historical Society



Francis Comparet, a French Canadian who arrived in Fort Wayne in 1820, had his fingers in almost every "pie" in the growing community. His first terprise was establishing, with A. Coquillard and Benjamin Kercheval, a fur trading post for John Jacob Astor's American Fur Co.

As "county agent" in 1830 he was directed to purchase, at \$1.25 per acre, 20 acres of the old Fort property, using money borrowed by Henry Rudisill. The lots were then sold for home building. The next year he was directed by the board of commissioners to contract for "the cutting off of the brush and stumps from the public square" preparing for the building of the first Court House. That building was so poorly built that it was only used for 10 years and torn down.

In 1834, one of the ads in the Fort Wayne Sentinel was for "good strong beer" brewed by Comparet and Coquillard.

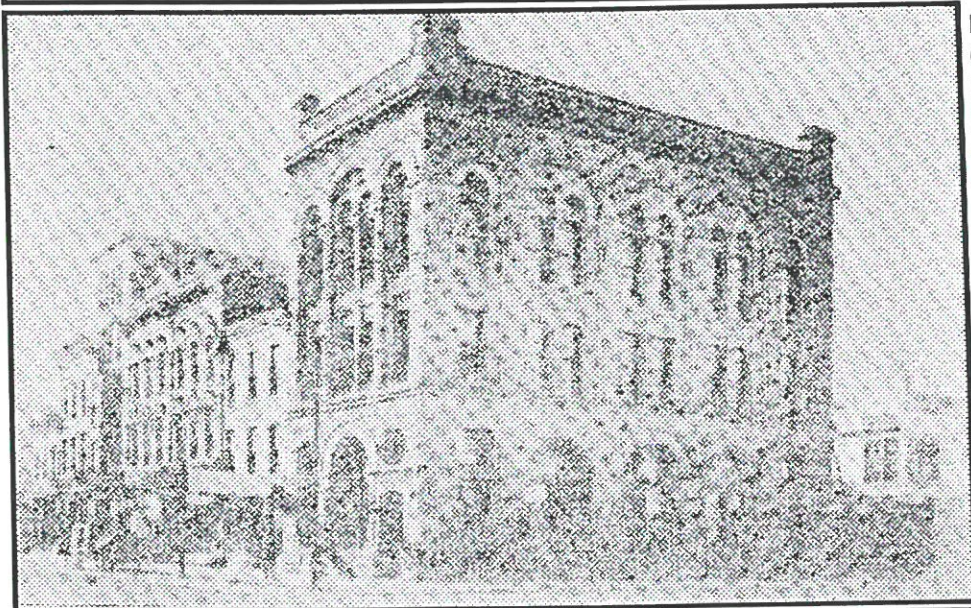
In July 1835 Mr. Comparet was on the committee which went to Huntington (then known as Flint Springs) to greet the first three boats which came from Fort Wayne, on the brand new Wabash and Erie Canal. He then built a canal boat, the "Chief Richardville," which was owned by the four Mahon brothers. (They also owned the "Indiana," the "Clyde," and the "Wabash," and operated a canal port just west of Roanoke, where Mahon Road now joins US 24 near the Econoasis gas station.) Also in 1835 a new steam sawmill was opened on the Archer farm; after three

years it was sold to David Archer (who owned the land) and Mr. Comparet.

1835 was a busy year for Mr. Comparet, for in November his home, a small brick building on the south side of Columbia Street west of Clinton, was the site of the first bank organized in Fort Wayne. It was a branch of the State Bank of Indiana, and was unusual for that time in that its charter required it to redeem its notes in "specie," that is, in coins. In fact if at any time it refused to do this, its charter was to be forfeited. This put it in a class with the best banks in history, and distinguished it from so-called "wildcat" banks that were becoming common in the surrounding states. In Mr. Comparet's house were stored "kegs of specie" worth \$20,000. The coins were stored in a large oak chest with padlocks, but the overflow was kept lying on a table. For security reasons, Oliver Jefferds was employed to sleep there during the winter of 1835.

History does not record Mrs. Comparet's reaction to sharing her home, which by that time included three small children, with a bank! At least the bank paid the Comparets \$200 a year in rent. (The back rooms and garden were rented for \$5 per month to Smallwood Noel, a justice of the peace.) Luckily by 1837 a new building was built for the bank, which had living quarters for its manager, Hugh McCullough. (This new career for Mr. McCullough was a life-changing event for him, as he later became Secretary of the Treasury under Presidents Lincoln and Johnson.) The bank survived several reorganizations but finally went out of business





Masonic Hall, before any Catholic Church was built. But later, when Fr. Badin ordered some religious books to help with his teaching, Mr. Comparet was "outraged at the cost and threatened to send them back." Eventually Fr. Badin paid for them himself. Later, after Fr. Badin had left, Mr. Comparet wrote to the bishop in Vincennes that there had been no mass in Fort Wayne for seven months, and pleaded for a priest who spoke German as well as English. This resulted in the arrival of Fr. Simon Lalumiere in 1835—just in time to help deal with the "Irish War" in Lagro, IN.

The bank started in Comparet's home in 1835 as a branch of the State Bank of Indiana moved to this new bank building in 1837. Several reorganizations took place and finally collapsed during the Great Depression as The Old National Bank.

Photo courtesy the Fort Wayne News-Sentinel

In 1838 Mr. Comparet laid out the village of Northport, near Rome City. For a short time it had a tannery, a tavern and two stores. Now its site is marked by the old Northport Cemetery, to be found just east of Indiana Highway 9, on County Road

in the Great Depression under the name of the Old National Bank.

300 East, 0.2 miles north of Northport Road. Several accounts credit Mr. Comparet with building the dam at Rome City which created Sylvan Lake. This was to be a reservoir for a canal planned to connect the Wabash and Erie with Lake Michigan; however this canal was never built.

Later Mr. Comparet operated a hotel, the "American House," on Columbia Street, which had been built in 1836. And he was one of a series of owners of a flour mill on the Maumee, near the present Hanover St., which was destroyed by fire in 1879.

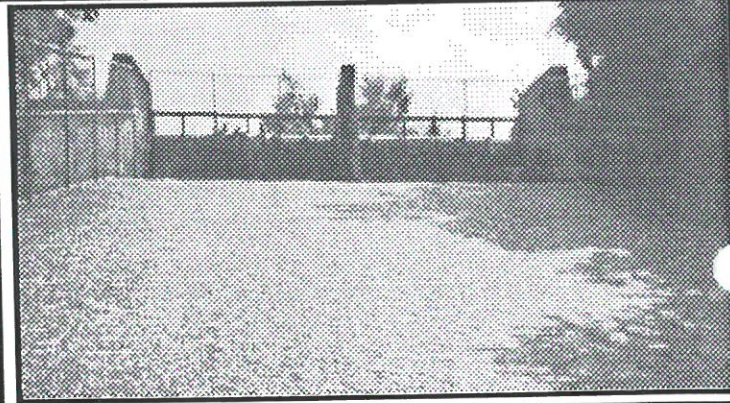
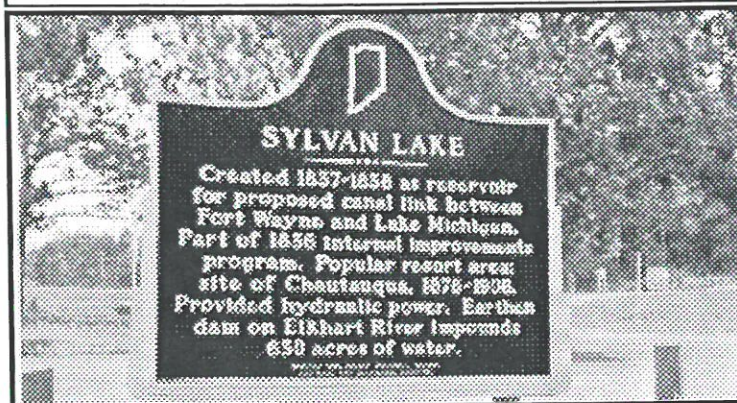
According to the Old Fort News, vol. 42 no. 4 (1979), Mr. Comparet was born in Monroe, Michigan October 12, 1798, the son of Xavier Comparet, an Indian trader. Records of the Catholic Cemetery say he was born in 1796, and his tombstone seems to say that he was 49. So it would seem that 1796 is correct.

The first fire company in Fort Wayne was organized in 1839. It included Francis Comparet as one of its members along with many other prominent citizens.

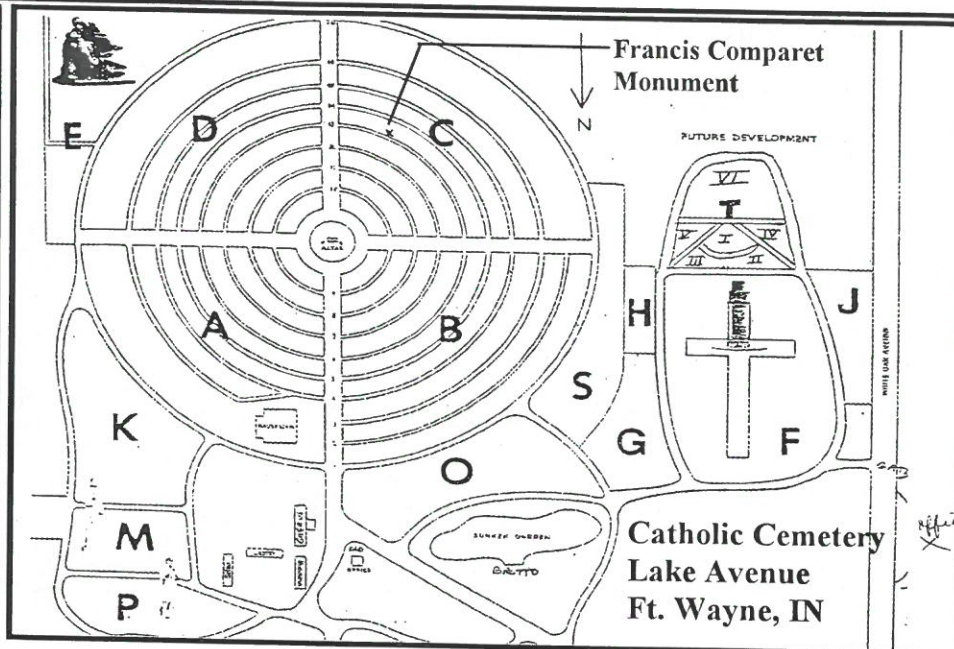
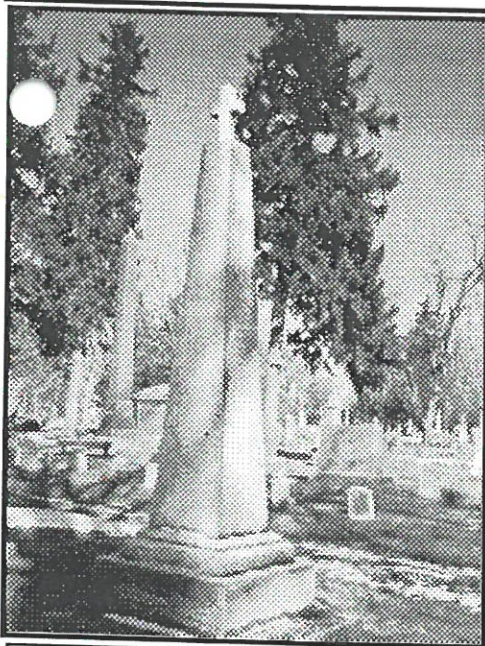
Mr. Comparet was Catholic, and hosted Fr. Stephen Badin on the occasion of his first visit to Fort Wayne in 1830. Since Mr. Comparet was a member of the Masonic Order (despite official Catholic disapproval), he was able to arrange for Fr. Badin to preach in the

Mr. Comparet died on February 20, 1845 and is buried in Catholic Cemetery, Section C, Lot 148. His tall monument can be approached by entering in the farthest east gate off Lake Avenue, closest to Coliseum Boulevard, and driving up the hill past the mausoleums,

Francis Comparet built the dam and this spillway for Sylvan Lake at Rome City. It was replaced in the late 1990s. Photos-Bob Schmidt







The Comparet monument in Catholic Cemetery, Section C Lot 148 off of Lane 13 reads as follows:

North side: Elenore 1800-1853

Francis 1796-1845

(his age is 49 but looks like 19)

South side: Frances O. 1820-21

East side: Harriet b. 1818 d. 1818

West side top: Francis A. 1856-1876

West side bottom: Anthony X. 1822-23

Photo by Cynthia Powers

going halfway around the Breen altar, and locating Driveway 13 on the right. Francis' wife, Elenore Guin Comparet, is buried there too. Her dates are 1800-1853. They were married in

and describes Francis as follows: "Hardy pioneer, he was amongst the first settlers of Fort Wayne, and for industry, ability, perseverance, and fortitude under the severest trails and the most unexpected reverses of fortune but few will bear a comparison with him. He was truly charitable. Having the substance of this world he could not see his brother in need and shut his bowels from him. His departure hence, while we hope it is his gain, will nevertheless be severely felt by the Poor, the widow, the fatherless and the community at large.....may he rest in peace."

Sources:

Directions in Catholic Cemetery, by the staff there.

Griswold, B.J. Pictorial History of Fort Wayne, Indiana. Chicago, IL: Robert O. Law Co./Chicago, 1917.

Isenhour, Dick. Undated article from the Fort Wayne News-Sentinel, entitled "In Early Years, City's First Bank Went Through Change (and Dollars, Too).

Mather, George. Frontier Faith. Fort Wayne, IN: Allen County Fort Wayne Historical Society, 1992.

Poinsatte, Charles. Fort Wayne During the Canal Era 1828-1855. Indianapolis, IN: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1969.

Old Fort News Vol. 42 No. 4 (1979) published by the Allen County-Fort Wayne Historical Society. See pp. 106-107.

*Elenore's birth date is given as 1811, which must be an error. It also refers to her as Francis' third wife. I did not find any other source which confirms that.*

Old Fort News. Vol. 53 No. 2. Ft. Wayne, IN: Allen County Fort Wayne Historical Society. 1990, p. 18.

Taylor Stevens, Ponder and Brockman. Indiana: A New Historical Guide. Indianapolis, IN: Indiana Historical Society, 1989. p 30.

Valley of the Upper Maumee River published in 1974 as a reprint of the 1889 edition published by Brant and Fuller of Madison, WI. Thanks to Barbara Gorney for locating this source for me.

Monroe, Michigan in 1819, and were the parents of six children. A book called Valley of the Upper Maumee River, first published in 1889 and reprinted in 1974, lists their children as: Joseph, born 1825, living in Washington Territory; David, born in 1831, living in Fort Wayne; Alexander, born 1833, living in Hicksville, OH; Theodore, born 1835, living in Washington, D.C.; John M., born 1837, living in Blanco, Texas; and Louis, born 1840, living in Des Moines, Iowa. This partly agrees with those listed in David's obituary; it gives John M., Alex, and L. G. From the records in Catholic Cemetery. I think there may have been at least two children who died as babies: Anthony X., 1822-1823 and Frances O., 1820-21. If I am correct, the early married years of Francis and Elenore were full of sadness. Visiting a pioneer cemetery is always a sobering experience. However, a mystery remains: who were the other Comparets buried in the family plot? Harriet C., who died in 1818 at age 10 months 22 days; and Mary E., who died in 1879 at age 4 months?

An obituary for Francis was found in the Fort Wayne Times and People's Press for 2-22-1845, p. 3, col. 1. It does not list his survivors by name. It gives the cause of death as "severe inflammation of the lungs,"



## NEWS FROM DELPHI

### CANAL CONFERENCE AND INTERPRETIVE CENTER By Dan McCain

Delphi's beautiful new Canal Conference & Interpretive Center is progressing nicely. The blacktop drive and parking lots are down. Final outside grading was completed and ready for landscaping by the Canal Association's volunteers at their May 17th workday. Logansport contractor Leo Brown Construction should have the 12,000 square foot \$2 million dollar building completed on time.

Carpet was installed and painting finished. That is great for the building, which is being funded primarily by INDOT / IDNR through the City of Delphi, but that leaves lots of challenging work for the completion of exhibits and graphics inside the Interpretive Center that are also grant funded by IDNR. In the current economy these grants might be unavailable but this money was secured 2-3 years ago at a time when the Carroll County Community Foundation had access to major Lilly Endowment funding. Thanks to all it is working now in the completion of this long-term dream.

Two specialty firms are under contract to produce the complicated displays that cannot be constructed by our crafty crew of volunteers. First is Blue Rhino Studio from Bloomington, Minnesota, who is working on the model of the canal that features real working lock gates and moving water for children of all ages to get their hands wet at mastering. Blue Rhino will also be constructing a three dimensional slice of earth (resin model) as though the canal was just slashed out of the



The black top drive and parking lots for the Canal Conference and Interpretive Center in Delphi, IN are finished and the building nears completion. Photos courtesy of Dan McCain

earth by the Irish workmen. This goes with a special mural background -- and a (bend over to see) "snakepit".

Many other graphic items, cabinets, etc. are being constructed by another specialty firm -- ICON Exhibits from Fort Wayne, IN. This firm will be giving a glimmer into the past on gallery walls and in displays depicting the canal era (1832-1876) with all its early glory and later public displeasure. The "big ditch" at the end in the 1870s was not loved anymore -- railroads were the next wave of glory.

Opening day for the public will be July 4th with a mighty Canal Days Festival "hip-hip-hooray", but it is unlikely all the exhibits and graphics will be fully completed. The museum area will be a "work in progress" with our volunteers continuing to explore more ways to illustrate the largest project in the US at that time -- The Wabash and Erie Canal. It was 468 miles long from Toledo to Evansville and was over 100 miles longer than its better known and more successful rival -- the Erie Canal in New York State.



CUTTING TIMBERS

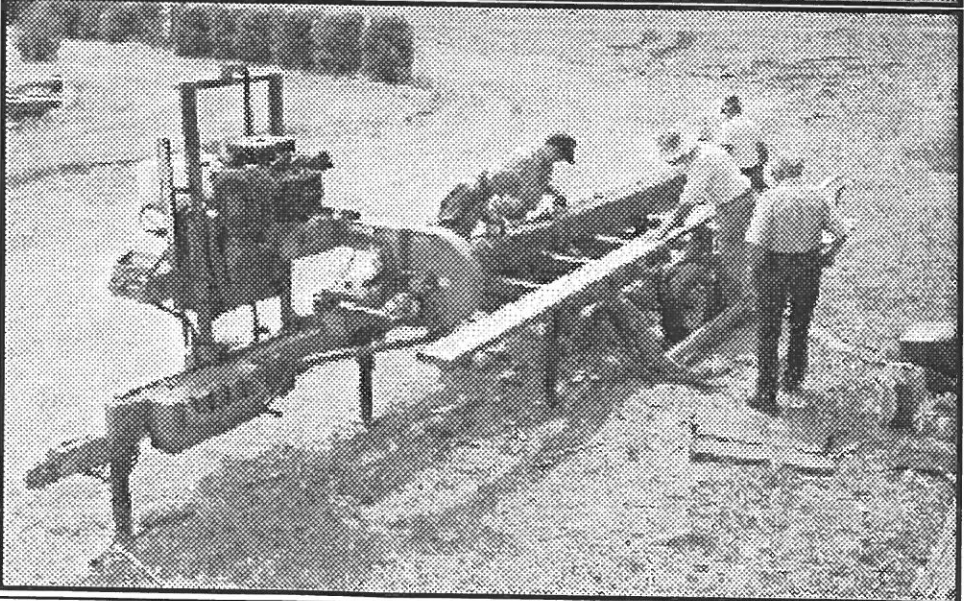
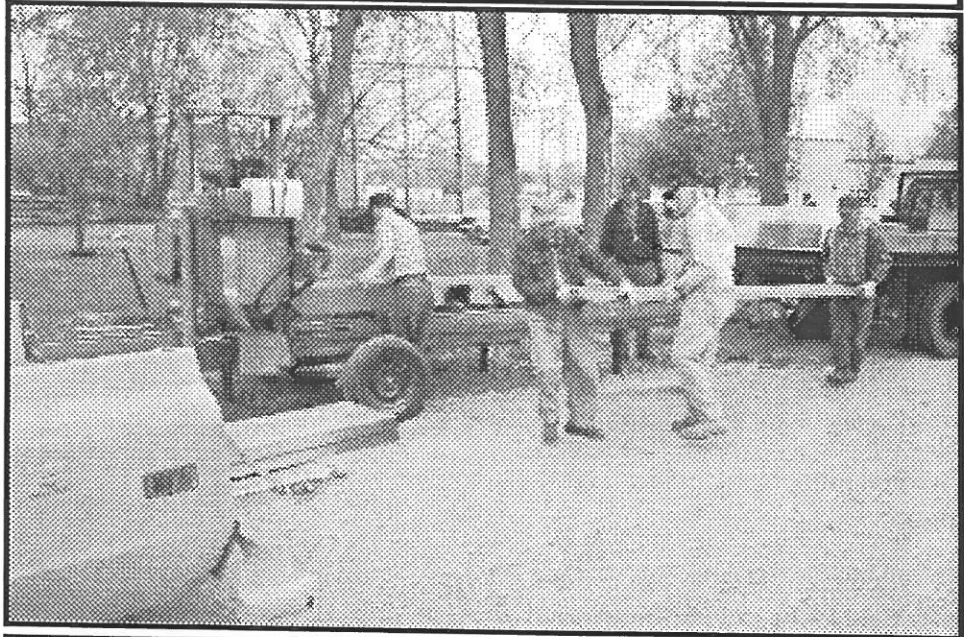
By Dan McCain

Wednesday April 30 was a day to cut dimensional stock from some of the old 1840s canal timbers received last year from the Forks of the Wabash at Huntington. Most of these timbers were outdoors and needed to be utilized or they will eventually deteriorate.

Inside the new Canal Interpretive Center volunteers making exhibits needed many dimensional planks and trim boards that could represent the heyday of the Wabash & Erie Canal. One such use is the "lock pocket" in a gallery where the lock gate and miter sill reside. Needed were planks cut 11 feet long, one foot wide and 2 inches thick to represent how the 9 feet tall sides of a wooden lock would appear.

Also wall mounted graphic panels will be bordered by trim boards representing the bold sturdy class of these original timbers. This bordering with native hardwood will show that much of this material buried for 160 years is still pretty stout. The outside surface is checked and weathered gray/brown but only a half inch inside most oak, walnut and hickory timbers one can find beautiful "new looking" wood.

Sawyer Rollin Graybill and seven volunteers easily handled the task of cutting a selection of timbers within a full day of work. Rollin's WoodMizer band saw was perfect for this mission. Earlier the WoodMizer Company donated extra blades to the Canal Association for this operation. As expected the old style square cut blacksmith made nails were sometimes buried and difficult to see until the sawmill clipped off the nail and several of the blades teeth. Thanks to the gift of extra blades and the sawyer's donation of his day, we got



Rollin Graybill's WoodMizer was used to cut dimensional lumber from Huntington's flood gate timbers. Photos courtesy D. McCain



the task done at no expense.

Timbers for the Canal Interpretive Center were cut during the morning. In the afternoon planks and square timbers were cut for the TCHA (Tippecanoe County Historical Association) new "historical transportation exhibit." Going back to the "Railroad Relocation" days a few years ago in Lafayette, IN, this endeavor is intended to display those archaeological finds of the downtown canal docks. The new display will be in the Historic Fowler House in Lafayette.

Between the services from Delphi volunteers, materials donated by the Forks of the Wabash to Delphi last year, and the saw blades from the WoodMizer Company, this day was meant as a "trade" between the two museums for the use of a number of graphic items. Delphi therefore benefits from parts of the vast collection that TCHA owns.

**ROCK CREEK WALK**  
By Dan McCain

Since the Wildflower Hike along Rock Creek was rained out, land-owner Terry Lacy offered the event again on May 8 at 6:30 p.m. The beautiful wooded escarpment borders the area where Rock Creek enters the Wabash River valley. It was one of the most scenic walks of the year.

**MAY DAY  
CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS**  
By Dan McCain

On Saturday, May 10, the public was invited to Canal Park in Delphi to celebrate May Day. It is hoped that this will become a permanent "Beginning of Spring" tradition with a mini-festival that attracts youth and adults, who love to work and play outdoors.

A volunteer training session was held at the Reed Case House. Karen Bradshaw and Susan Yoder



Note the treenails in this timber from the flood gate that was removed in the U.S. 24 expansion program several years ago. Photo courtesy Dan McCain

coordinated this endeavor for men and women of all ages. Many different skills are being put to use at Canal Park and in the new Interpretive Center. The Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc has been an all volunteer operation since 1971 and hopes that more volunteers will emerge now to fill the spots needed to keep this marvelous new community facility open with regular hours.

Karen and Susan list the following areas of need:

- Construction and maintenance
- Educational programs
- Festival activities
- Gardening
- Gift shop operation
- Historic clothing and furnishings
- Hosts and guides
- Housekeeping
- Music
- Natural history
- Public relations
- Receptionist and scheduling
- Trail or park construction and repair

To become a volunteer call Karen at 574-686-2346 for a volunteer application form. You too can have fun as a volunteer -- there

Areas needing volunteer staffing will peak when the Center opens July 4-5 during Canal Days Festival. The strength of this group is measured by all the talents of the many, many volunteers already involved.

Currently a cadre of 6-8 volunteers gather about every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 8 a.m. to construct many of the exhibits and displays being created for the Canal Museum. Some of the skills already utilized in this endeavor are: carpentry, clothing, decorating, landscaping, metal working, and stone masonry.

Volunteers came May 10 with their tools and some even brought annual and perennial plants. During the month of May they concentrated on improving the appearance of the buildings and grounds. Flower planting and various landscaping activities were followed with a real "old fashioned May Pole" for fun near the end of the morning. Those who wished to participate helped build a low wall of limestone that acts as an edge to the parking



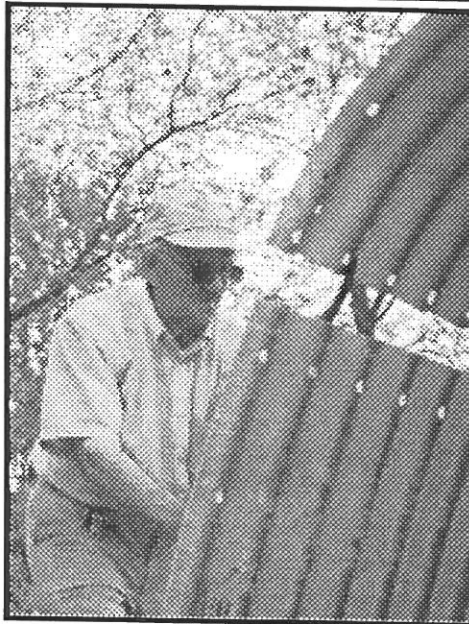
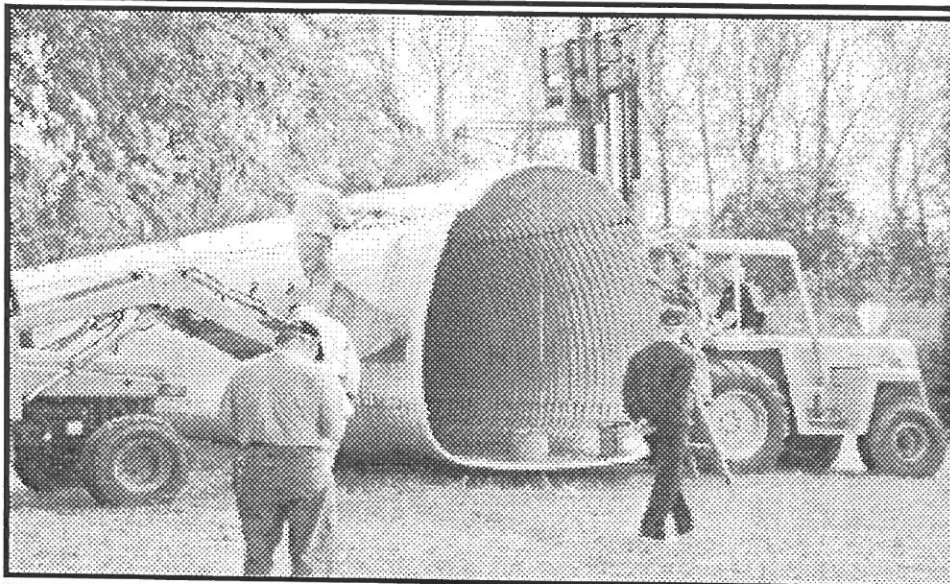
lot. The stone they used was native stone that was removed last fall during the installation of the gas and water utilities for the new Canal Interpretive Center. A tour inside the new nearly finished building highlighted the morning.

Right now people are needed who like to paint walls, frame doorways, install graphics, construct display cabinets, etc. Come out if you like to work with some of the world's finest volunteers -- the rewards come back to you in your heart. For more information call Dan McCain at 765-564-6297.

**A WALKING MEDITATION OFFERED**  
By Dan McCain

On Saturday May 10 the Delphi Historic Trails volunteers offered a new experience. David McCain led the scheduled "walking meditation" for the public. This was an easy stroll along the Wabash River in the southern trails section.

Starting at 10 a.m. David McCain guided a 90 minute experience of connecting mind and body in tranquility. He has been a movement therapist and a meditator for nearly 40 years. David teaches Tai Chi and Yoga at West Lafayette's Morton Center and at Purdue University. This event also included a demonstration of Tai Chi, which is often described as a moving meditation.



Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal volunteers assemble a metal culvert for placement under an existing railroad track to connect two already completed sections of the Underhill Towpath Trail in Delphi, IN.  
Photos courtesy of Dan McCain

**PIPE UNDERPASS WILL SOON CONNECT DELPHI TRAILS**  
By Dan McCain

At the end of May Wabash & Erie Canal volunteers took a break from current construction of the new canal museum exhibits. As usual these men have fun doing a variety of jobs -- this time the work of assembling an 8 foot tall multi-arch plate pipe. Needed on site was a 60 foot long "egg shape" culvert to pass

the towpath trail southwest from made waterway to the Canal Association. This is now part of a seven mile Delphi Historic Trails system.

made waterway to the Canal Association. This is now part of a seven mile Delphi Historic Trails system.

Funds for the underpass came from the last of a trail development grant provided by the Department of Natural Resources. The pipe underpass connects two completed portions of the Underhill Towpath Trail. Several years ago Gerry and Faye Underhill donated the land along the 160 year old man-

Technical service and advice was offered by Jason LaCroix from the Indianapolis office of Contech Construction Products Company. To the pleasure of local leaders this pipe sale came with exceptionally good engineering assistance and professional services from LaCroix. A meeting with Stone Company, City of Delphi, Canal Association volunteers



and Jason provided the impetus to start assembly.

The pipe will be placed under the spur line railroad sometime this summer or fall by contractor Jack Cohee, the City and the Canal Association. Extra care will be taken to properly install and compact the fill beside the new pipe so locomotives will safely pass this site where mules once towed canal boats along the Wabash & Erie Canal in west Delphi. Work will be coordinated and checked by a Louisville railroad track specialty firm.

project were encouraged to bring gardening tools. Pat Draper was coordinator of this effort.

The new Center still needs more volunteer carpenters, painters and craftsmen as the exhibit space is being created. Opening of the center to the public is set for July 4-5th during Canal Days Festival. Although the museum portion will not be fully completed, there will be free tours of the galleries throughout the two day festival. After July 5th it will be open on weekends until the full museum is completed later this year.

#### NATIONAL TRAILS DAY

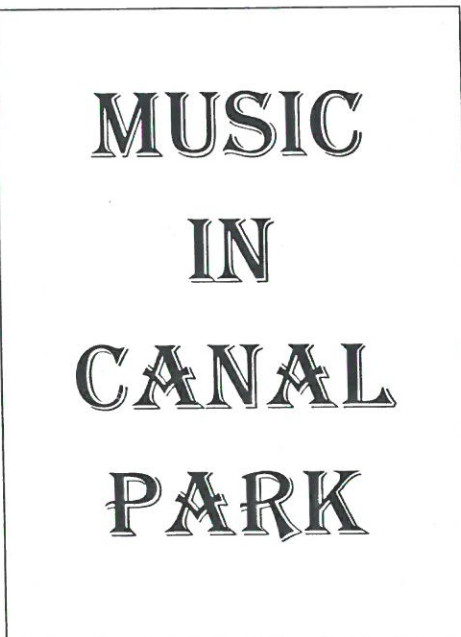
National Trails Day was celebrated on June 7th in Canal Park. Delphi Historic Trails volunteers were honored for their boundless energy and work accomplishments over the past few years.

#### CANAL PARK 'SPRUCE UP' DAY

"June is bustin' out all over" - its time to landscape, freshen up the grounds and enjoy the fellowship" said Dan McCain, President of the Wabash & Erie Canal Association. He invited everyone to Canal Park 11 blocks north of the Court House stoplight in Delphi to become part of a growing contingent of volunteers helping to make this Carroll County community better.

Beginning at 9 a.m. on June 14 the group planted mostly annual flowers in the park and worked on building a low native limestone retainer wall along the parking lot. The growing cadre of volunteers had fun helping the Park look more complete now that the Canal Conference and Interpretive Center building is nearly finished.

Annually Austin's Nursery northwest of Delphi has provided Canal Park abundant flats of flowers at the end of the selling season. Others that cared to donate flowers or just help with the beautification



#### CANAL PARK SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

Sundays throughout the summer will bring back the popular "Summer Concert Series" to Canal Park. Concerts will be given every Sunday now through September 14th from 2-4 p.m. Bring your lawn chair and enjoy a variety of live music by regional artists. On June 15 Hunt and Gail Wiley performed "Traditional Irish" music. Those who attend are asked for a freewill offering to support these efforts. Volunteer coordinator Sharon McKnight, a Lafayette artist herself, has filled the slate for the summer. Come one, come all!

# Don't Miss Delphi's Canal Days Festival

July 4-5

9 A.M. to 5 P.M.

See Canal Interpretive  
Center & Museum  
Tour Canal Park  
buildings

Watch craftsmen  
at work

Sample a variety of  
sandwiches, ice  
cream, homemade  
pies, pop, lemonade,  
curly fries, etc.

Music in the park

Crafts for kids

Oxen rides

Towpath walks

and

A Special Patriotic  
Multimedia Program

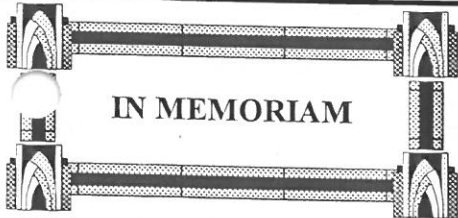
## We Americans

By

Brian Migliore

Saturday Afternoon





**Roseland McCain**



Roseland McCain demonstrated the use of an old fashioned hearing aid at the Case House in Delphi's Canal Park.  
Photo by Bette Lockhart

Roseland McCain, who was born August 14, 1912 in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, died at 5:25 p.m. on Friday, May 23, 2003, in Home Hospital, in Lafayette, IN. She was 90 years old.

Roseland graduated from North Liberty (IN) High School. She earned her lifetime teaching license at Indiana University and her bachelor's and master's degrees from Purdue University.

She married Thomas C. McCain on December 31, 1935 in Delphi and moved to a home near the Wabash & Erie Canal where she spent 67 years of her life. This home was a busy place. She brought up their three sons in it and started Delphi's first kindergarten program there in 1950. Its walls displayed her original paintings and its bookcases held both her scrapbooks, which were filled with the newspaper articles she wrote about the canal and her efforts to create a canal park,

and the books she read. She was an avid reader, read thousands of books in her lifetime, and maintained a reading habit of almost a book a day in her later years. When Tom died in 1988 she continued to live in the home and over time was joined there by her sons Dan and David.

Roseland also taught first and second grades. During these years she and Tom traveled extensively in the US and the world. She retired from teaching in 1970. After Tom's death, she and her son Dan traveled and camped in the mountains of the west.

She was a founder and charter member of the Wabash & Erie Canal Association in Delphi, which is now known as the Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc. She was extremely interested in the development of Canal Park and Delphi Historic Trails. She created a first person character "Mrs. Sarah Spoonagle," a widow traveling on the waterways. Many audiences heard her vivid descriptions of the 1850 trip via canal boat from New York to Delphi to visit her sister. Her lifetime dream was coming true with the building of the new Canal Interpretive Center. If you wish to make a memorial contribution to this center, send it to: Wabash & Erie Canal, Ed Gruber treasurer, 12252 West Indiana 18, Delphi, IN 46923

She was also a member of Delta Kappa Gamma, Delphi Oracle Club, Delphi Art Club, American Humanist Association, Indiana Historical Society and Indiana Retired Teachers Association. She was an associate member of Kappa Kappa Kappa sorority and a life member of Purdue Alumni Association.

A couple of years ago Roseland wrote her memoirs "All Ready for the Treat." They are now in printed form.

Roseland is survived by her three sons, Douglas C. McCain of Hattiesburg, Miss., Daniel McCain and David R. McCain, both of Delphi; and a brother Alfred Amm of Michigan City.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, May 27th at 10:30 a.m. at



Roseland McCain was at the dedication of the refurbished bridge placed over the W & E Canal in Delphi. Photo by Bob Schmidt

Davidson's Home in Delphi followed by interment in Odd Fellows Cemetery. About 75 family and friends gathered at the McCain home for a lunch and celebration of her life in a perfect sunny afternoon.

Roseland was a charter member of the Canal Society of Indiana, served on the board of directors during its formative years 1983-1988, and has been on the advisory council since 1996. She attended many CSI tours and won the "Kicks and Kapers" award on the Central Canal tour in 1993. She will be missed.

Friends and family gathered for a celebration of Roseland's life in the backyard of her home. Photo by Dan McCain





## ARRIVAL OF PLANET AT LODI

*The following article was found after the article "Lodi and Its Wabash & Erie Canal Connections Revisited" by Charles Davis was published in last month's The Hoosier Packet. It appeared in the Fort Wayne Times and Press on Thursday November 11, 1847 and the Fort Wayne Sentinel on November 20, 1847. The article was published earlier in the Terre Haute Express.*

WABASH AND ERIE CANAL.—We are gratified in stating that navigation on the Wabash and Erie canal, has been opened as far south as Lodi—the mouth of Coal creek, on this great State work. The canal boat, Planet, reached Lodi from Toledo, on the 27th ult., and marks another era in the history of the progress of this Canal. This lower division of the Canal, from Covington to Coal creek, making fourteen miles, has been finished and brought into use since the Canal passed into the hands and under the charge of the Board of Trustees, and brings Canal navigation to a point only thirty-six miles north of this place, and from that point to Terre-Haute, the whole line is under contract, and the work in progress. In this connection we may state, that a large number of additional laborers could find work on this line during the ensuing winter, at fair wages and prompt cash payments.

Jesse L. Williams, esq. authorizes us to state, for the information of Produce Shippers, that they may safely rely upon having four feet water throughout the Canal from Lodi to the lakes, on the opening of navigation next spring.

We notice from the Perrysville Eagle, that the arrival of the Planet at Lodi, was made the occasion of general rejoicing along the lower part of the line. Citizens from Perrysville—Eugene &c., were on board—a handsome dinner was prepared, which was partaken of by the ladies and gentlemen, and the

day passed away in general festivity. We hope the same spirit will be kept up as every section of the Canal is brought into use, until one grand army may meet to celebrate the union of the waters of the lake with those of the Ohio.

The winter stocks of merchandise intended for this place, which have been bought in New York, are all arriving by the Canal route, which must considerably increase its tolls, and as every mile is finished, more business will be added to the Canal; and when shipments from this part of the country are made both ways, the State will then feel the immense value of this great western work, and producers will realize a profit from their tolls, to which they are now strangers.

## STREET WIDENING UNEARTHED CANAL REMAINS IN LOGANSPORT

*"Ford tractors and equipment help REBUILD DOWNTOWN STREETS OF AN INDIANA CITY: Project recalls colorful days of the old Wabash-Erie Canal" by C.J. Rash appeared in Ford Industrial Tractor Power Vol. 7, No. 3, 1962. Darrell Bakken, CSI member, Indianapolis, IN*

A brief history of the Wabash & Erie Canal said that from 1832-1847 it "contributed increasingly to the prosperity of the Maumee and Upper Wabash valleys." The railroads were its demise. The canal was brought back to mind when Logansport, IN moved three Ford

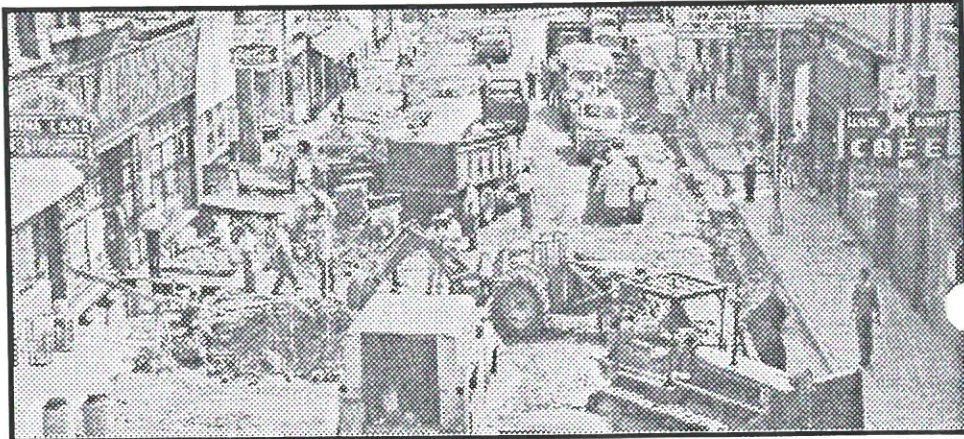
tractors, equipped with backhoes and front loaders, to Market street to replace sidewalks, repair underground facilities, and widen the business section on this street. The crews started working in June, 1961, and found problems below the surface. Since the canal engineers had left no maps, the crews had no way of knowing where the old mains were. They found 'weeps' built to keep the canal seepage away from the buildings. They even discovered a wooden plug in one of the old mains and an all-marble sidewalk.

An even greater problem was that "Much of Logansport sits on bedrock and where there's no bedrock, we have boulders as big as basketballs...After tearing through the limestone—and the marble sidewalk—the operators had to maneuver their buckets down between high pressure gas and water mains so as not to take out the sides. They had to undercut the lines, reach over and dig back in. Not knowing location of the old mains, finding them was strictly hit-and-miss. We had to depend entirely on the ability of the operators to actually 'feel' them with their buckets..."

The crews worked six days a week with lots of overtime hours. They completed the project in eight weeks.

*The canal crossed Market Street at the junction of Erie Avenue and 5th Street before crossing the Eel River aqueduct.*

Photo courtesy Public Works Magazine





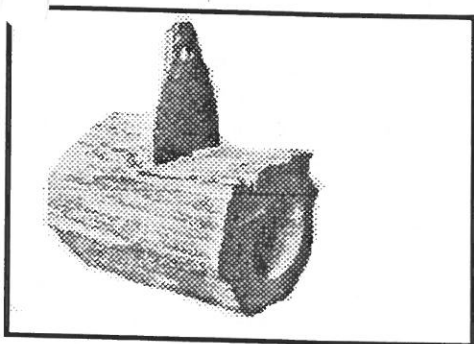
## EARLY GATE VALVE

*The previous article mentions "a wooden plug in one of the mains." A short description of a main with a plug was found in *The Meter Setter*, the newsletter of the Ford Meter Box Company of Wabash, IN. September, 1970.*

*Darrell Bakken, CSI member, Indianapolis, IN*

"Almost a century before eels were strained out of the water in San Antonio, the first faltering steps toward public water distribution were being taken in New York City. Wooden logs were bored out to serve as mains to deliver water to public tanks, from which it could be dipped and carried as needed by the thirsty and dirty."

"This picture shows a section of wooden pipe with a crude iron plate which would be driven in or pulled out to control the water flow. The pipe was installed about 1800 by the Manhattan Water Company."



## US 24 PROJECT NEW HAVEN TO DEFIANCE

CSI headquarters has recently received Section 106 Consulting Party Coordination Summary of Section 106 Investigations. The Ohio Department of Transportation sent this book to all consulting parties for the proposed section of US 24 from New Haven, IN to Defiance, OH.. You may recall that CSI worked with archaeologists at Gar Creek to identify the Wabash & Erie Canal culvert structure located there. Timbers and sheet planking from the culvert still remain in the creek bed.

The project is developed in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act and with associated authorities and regulations including the National Historic Preservation Act. The document provides an overview of the investigations completed for the project.

Preliminary background research indicated that there were 475 previously recorded historic sites with the initial 500 square-mile study area defined in the project. The majority of these sites represent residential properties clustered in small villages and towns. Other historic resources include bridges, canal-related structures, cemeteries, ghost towns, and Indian villages.

Archaeological investigations were completed for the project to determine if any significant archaeological resources are present within the study area that could be impacted by the project. Four historic canal-related sites were surveyed on the preferred alternative route. They were all determined not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

In Paulding County, OH the Six-Mile Reservoir, 1840-1887, is located within the area of potential effect and was found to be eligible for NRHP. Reservoir remnants including embankments that retained water for the Wabash and Erie Canal are found south of C-180 in Crane Township, Paulding County, OH. They are eligible under Criterion A for association with the Wabash and Erie Canal. The reservoir will be only impacted visually by its proximity to the proposed road. The property will not be partially or totally taken as in some cases.

The Meyer/Gallmeyer Farm located near the Gar Creek culvert is also eligible for NRHP listing. It is considered significant for its 150-year association with the Meyer/Gallmeyer family, a family that

established one of the successful early farmsteads in the area. A map of the property shows the preferred Alternative route for U.S. 24 and an Alternative D-1 route. One of these routes would probably destroy the remains of Gar Creek Culvert. The other appears to be far enough south to keep the culvert intact.

## RAN LAST CANAL BOAT

*Charles Davis, CSI member from Rockville, IN, found the following article in the Kingman Star of 6/21/1912.*

A tramp, who recently appeared at the home of Dan Yount in Attica and at his request to be permitted to earn the price of a nights lodging, was allowed to mow the lawn at the Yount home and while he was resting the old fellow told an interesting tale to the effect that he drove the last canal boat that operated officially through Attica on the old Wabash ad Erie canal. He said it was in 1875 or '76 but several old residents who were later asked about the matter declared that he was wrong or else he had his dates mixed. Reference to an old history, however, establishes the fact that the last canal boat that cleared from the port of Covington was the "Goodman" which was en route from Lodi to Lafayette. The date was Nov. 12, 1875. This quite agrees with the man's story, for he asserted that the canal froze up the night after they reached Lafayette and traffic was never reopened. He also said that the boat was operating only between Lafayette and Lodi.

The man gave his name as Fulton and claimed to have a son living somewhere in this county.

According to the history the last boat that made the through trip from Lodi to Toledo was the "Rocky Mountain" which departed from Covington, Oct. 25, 1872, in charge of David Webb, "collector of toll." Old residents recall that for several years after this, however, the canal boats lay tied up to the banks along the canal and were occasionally employed by crowds of young people to make picnic trips to Black Rock or Portland but they were not operated on any schedule and usually a teamster furnished the horses to tow the boat.





**Speakers  
Bureau**

**February 13 - Ft. Wayne, IN**

Bob Schmidt, CSI President, and Carolyn Schmidt, CSI Editor, represented the society at a special program presented by Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation entitled "Armchair History of Fort Wayne." It was held at the Community Center on West Main Street at 12:30 p.m.. It was designed to give a quick overview and introduction to the prehistory, establishment, and continuing development of the city and its surrounding area. The idea was to later have a series of talks by local historians and personalities. There were twelve presenters speaking on the following topics:

*Preview of www.fwhistory.com  
Glaciers, Mastodons, and Beavers*

John Weddell - CSI member

*Trappers and Traders*

Don Werling

*Uprising and Rebellion*

Matt Jones

*Wabash and Erie Canal*

Bob & Carolyn Schmidt - CSI

*Railroads in the Age of Steam*

"Skip" Sassmannhausen

*Black Experience in Early Allen Co.*

Hana Stith

*State's Rights and Separatism in the  
Midwest*

Pierre & Marian Mathieu

*Battle for Corydon, Morgan's  
Raiders, & Camp Allen*

Marshall Brinkman

*The Other Main Street; Development  
of Calhoun St.*

Ralph Violette

*InterUrban and Trolleys; Rail's  
Electric Period*

Charles Willer

*Quick History of Headwaters Park*

Geoff Paddock

Bob and Carolyn were in period dress. They were allowed a

short period to answer questions from the floor following their fifteen minute presentation.

Although the concept of the program was great, the presentations interesting, and handouts and visuals good (a Civil War cannon was actually brought by the Union reenactor), the attendance of others, not directly linked to the program, was slim. There were about 28 people present.

**April 10 - North Manchester, IN**

Rev. Jay Taylor, CSI member from North Manchester, IN, shared his presentation on "The Canals of Indiana" at the *Timely Topics* session of the Peabody Retirement Community, where he lives. There were about 45 persons there that Thursday morning. Jay was told this was a remarkable attendance.

During the question and answer period one of the residents remembered that the brother-in-law of her grandmother drove the hoses on a packet boat between Huntington and Fort Wayne. Another man had explored the locks at Lagro and asked their names. Hugh McKnown, former resident of Lagro and former CSI member, lives in the Village and said the Peabody Library had a copy of V. Friederika Van Buskirk's *The Wabash - Erie Canal* published by the Wabash County Historical Society that would give the names of the Lagro locks. (They were named for the lock tenders: James McDonald, Curley Hayes, James Kerr, James Ditton) Several members expressed interest in information about CSI for themselves or their grandchildren.

**April 17 - Cambridge City, IN**

Fifteen members of the Daughters of the American Revolution were treated to a talk by Phyllis Mattheis, CSI member from Cambridge City, on April 17, 2003 at the Cambridge City library. She

used posters she and her husband Jerry made to tell about the history of canals in the US and particularly of the Whitewater Canal. Her talk was well received.

**April 28 - Hagerstown, IN**

Phyllis Mattheis repeated the same talk she gave to the DAR to her History Club of 25 members in Hagerstown on April 28, 2003. She made another smaller poster of just the Whitewater Canal with a line drawing, facts and figures, which she passed around. She also showed a picture she took early this spring of a section of the towpath of the Hagerstown canal\* that turned out well. In the field north of the picture, the prism has all been plowed over. Everyone seemed interested in learning more about the canal.

*\*The extension of the Whitewater Canal from Cambridge City to Hagerstown was paid for by Hagerstown businessmen and is sometimes referred to as the Hagerstown Canal.*

**April 29 - Lawrenceburg, IN**

Charles (Chuck) Whiting, CSI Advisory Council from Lawrenceburg, IN gave a first person presentation of George Dunn in 1842 to 22 attendees of the Lawrenceburg Library History Series, which is given at noon on each month that has a fifth Tuesday. He encouraged the audience to buy stock. They were surprised that stockholders were assessed \$5 a share. If they didn't pay they lost their stock.

The second part of his presentation told the history of the Whitewater Canal. He talked for about one half hour and then took questions from the floor.

One lady said she had slides taken in the 60s of the canal. Chuck looked at them and found they were mostly from the Metamora area. He is having prints made of her Laural Dam slide. It shows the woode apron on the downstream side of the dam.



While researching George Dunn, Chuck found that the local t loaned Noah Noble \$6000 when other projects were stopped to finish the basin by the river and the tow-bridge at Harrison. Chuck asks if anyone has further information about the tow-bridge. Does that mean 1) the mules walked across the bridge while towing the boat, 2) the boat was towed across by a device on the side of the bridge such as that on the Wabash & Erie at Carrollton, or 3) the boats were poled across the slackwater? Usually, if the boats were poled, the bridge was called a mule bridge to get the mules from one side of the river to the other.

May 4 - Fort Wayne, IN

Bob and Carolyn Schmidt spoke to 78 members of St. Paul's Lutheran Church mothers and daughters at their annual spring tea. Both were in period dress. Bob sang "From Buffalo to Troy" and "Simon Cook" getting everyone in the canal mood. He then pointed out the route of the Wabash & Erie Canal on a map of Indiana's and Ohio's canals and gave a brief history of Indiana's canals before blowing the boat horn to announce the arrival of Miss Caroline.

Carolyn Schmidt once again portrayed Miss Caroline, a husband-hunting spinster who came from Toledo, OH aboard the Silver Bell. She talked about the structures she saw en route, the things she learned about how the canal operated and its rules. She and Bob demonstrated how canal boats passed when going in opposite directions.

During the question and answer period Ellen Lazenby from New Haven said as a child she heard about a little girl running into her home and trying to get her mothers attention. She wanted her mother (Mrs. Kohart) to "come quick" because her sisters had fallen into the canal. The little girl was known for trying to get her mother's attention.

Her mother scolded her and told her to quit making up stories, because someday no one would believe her when there really was danger. The mother went about her work. Her two other daughters drowned in the canal. This happened near the Little Auglaize River on the Miami and Erie Canal in Paulding County, OH south of present day Oakwood.

Questions were asked about the Gronauer Lock, the canal display in the Indiana State Museum, and what will happen to the rest of the timbers of the lock. A committee has been set up to address what is to become of the remaining timbers.

May 27 - Cambridge City, IN

One hundred third graders visited the Overbeck House owned by Jerry and Phyllis Mattheis in Cambridge City. Jerry took them aboard the trolley he recently purchased from the city of Lafayette. On it he showed them his canal posters and gave them a ten minute talk about the Whitewater Canal. The children were also shown the kiln in which the Overbeck sisters fired their pottery and the garden pools on the home's grounds. Phyllis said their visit was lots of fun.



Metamora - Cambridge City

Phyllis Mattheis went to Metamora with her History Club and sent the following observations:

Traveling from Cambridge City by car, the group passed through Brookville on the way down to Metamora and returned through Laurel. The poor old canal boat on the Whitewater Canal in Metamora is looking pretty tacky, but the state

employees said they'll be painting it this year. The east end of the canal beyond the aqueduct has been dredged, as the boat was "dragging bottom" last year. The ducklings were cute along the banks and in the water! We saw at least 3 dozen of them.

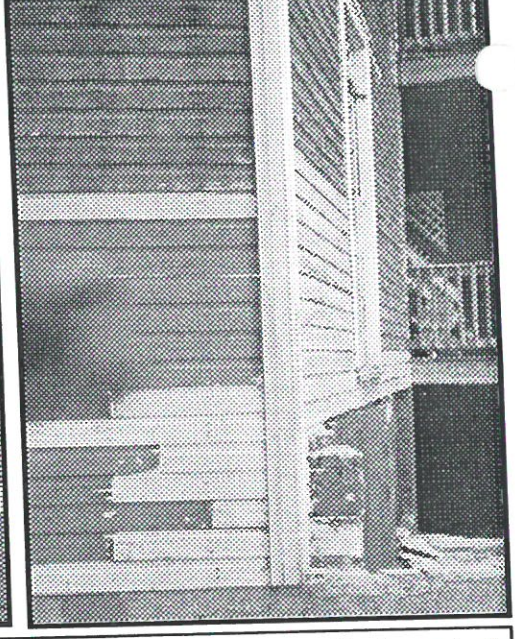
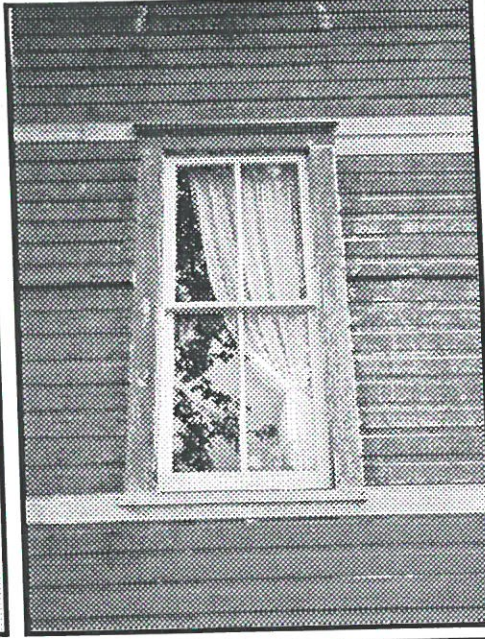
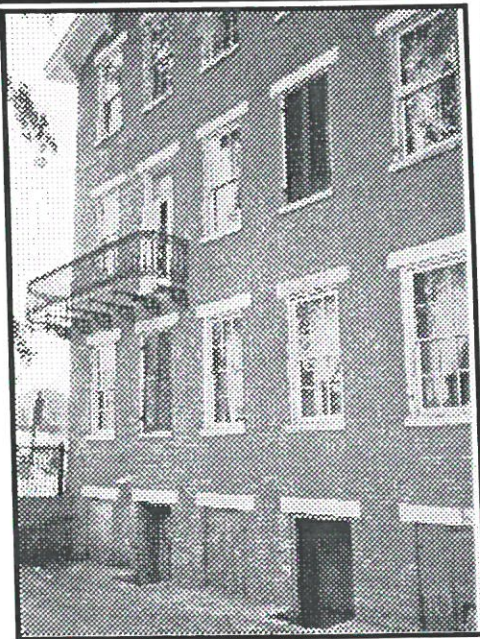
At Laurel we visited the dam on the Whitewater River that feeds the Whitewater Canal. That area looks like it had lots of flooding this spring! Great piles of sand and dirt have been pushed to each end of that open area where you walk up and over the railroad track. Lots of trees and branches are caught in the dam. The grass was not mowed yet. The water was muddy.

Western Wayne Heritage is still in the talking stage about the mural toward which CSI has given a donation. It will probably show the canal basin by the Vinton House in Cambridge City. The antique vendors are doing pretty well in the Vinton House, but April was a slow month. Its basement is being made into a wine cellar. The building's siding has been repaired in places. A new porch was built toward the back of the building.

After reading in The Hoosier Packet about the book Valley Belle, which Cynthia Powers found, I ordered the book thru interlibrary loan. It came from Fort Wayne. It is a good story! I did find one error. The author said they all walked to the courthouse when the race ended in Cambridge City. As you know, the courthouse is in Richmond. They may have walked to the school house....the Central School lot is just 2 blocks east.

I took the book to the Western Wayne Heritage meeting on Tuesday evening and they were all fascinated with it. I also have a novel called Canal Town by Samuel Hopkins Adams, published in 1944, about the Erie Canal. I've not finished reading it.





The Vinton House, an inn on the Whitewater Canal and National Road in Cambridge City, is now an antique mall. A new back porch has been added. Siding has been repaired. New windows have been installed with funds from CSI. Photos by Bob Schmidt

**Cambridge City**

On May 19 Bob and Carolyn Schmidt stopped in Cambridge City to visit the Vinton House, which now is an antique mall with vendors. Being Monday it was not open. They did notice changes to the building. A new back porch replaces the crumbling old one. Sections of bad siding have been removed and replaced. The basement is being turned into a wine cellar shop.

The building was built in 1847-48 by Reisor and Sowers as the United States Hotel. Elbridge Gerry Vinton operated it for 64 years calling it the Vinton House. It was located at the junction of the National Road and Whitewater Canal. The west side of the building was built at an angle alongside what was the basin. There canal boats unloaded passengers and produce. Today much of the basin has been filled so that the basement windows are partially underground.

After various uses the Vinton House sat vacant for many years. Vagrants busted out its windows and slept inside. Western Wayne Heritage purchased it, repaired the roof, took

out tons of debris, replaced the windows with funding from CSI, installed a new heating system, painted rooms and hung curtains. There is still work to be done inside and outside of the building, but it is once again back in use and an asset to the community.

To date CSI has contributed \$7,500.00 toward saving this building. Western Wayne Heritage is considering painting a mural to depict the Vinton House, canal basin, canal boats, etc. with some of this money

**CSI ARCHIVES**

CSI wishes to thank the following members for contributions to the archives:

Linn Loomis: "A Northeastern Ohio Forest Giant" A notebook and photos of a 400-500-year-old Red Oak Tree located 68 miles east of Cleveland, OH and 29 miles west of Erie, PA. near Conneaut, OH. Its circumference is 323 inches and its height is 106 feet.

Linn Loomis: Photos and text

showing the widening of Route 79 in Ohio on the Licking Summit and its impact on the Ohio

Dr. Neil Sowards: A CD of canal & Erie Canal related postcards seen on E-bay, copies of photos from glass negatives, and information and photograph of Savannah/Ogeechee Canal in Georgia.

Photographs from the "Crossing Waters" tour of Logansport to Delphi: Jim Ellis, Chuck Huppert, Gene Paschka, Cynthia Powers, Bob Schmidt, Sue Simerman, Tom Smith, Chuck Whiting

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

The following people have joined at the \$22 membership level unless otherwise noted:

Dr. Daniel & Katherine Combs - Vincennes, IN \$50 Patron

William & Mary McKinney - Rome City, IN