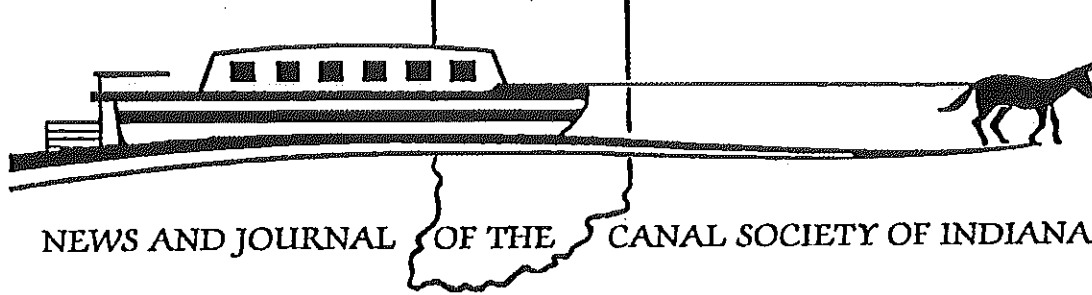


THE
HOOSIER-PACKET

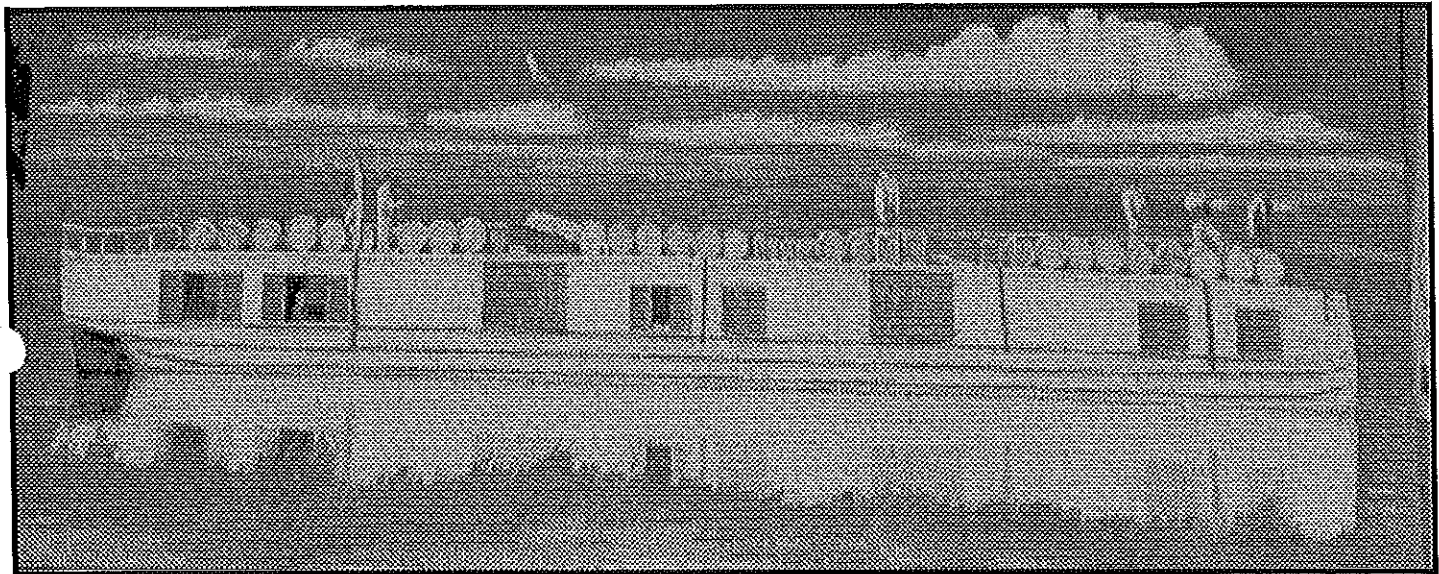


VOL. 3 NO. 11

P.O. BOX 40087 FORT WAYNE, IN 46804

NOVEMBER 2004

STONE ARCH CULVERTS FAILING



This new Speece Canal Boat mural now hangs in the Wabash & Erie Canal Conference and Interpretive Center lobby in Canal Park in Delphi, Indiana. It was painted by Terry Lacy and was funded by Beta Chapter of Psi Iota Xi sorority.

Photo by Tom Castaldi

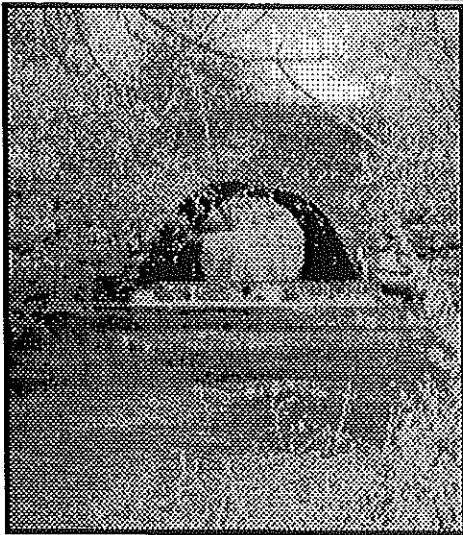
Features

1. Burnett's Creek Arch To Be Preserved
2. 1842 Diary Excerpt, Utica, IL: I&M Canal
3. Canal Boat Travel
5. The Blue Creek Canal
6. From Ohio To Huntington By Canal Boat: Emory Slusser
7. Canawlers At Rest: Thomas Coleman
10. News From Delphi: New Mural In Lobby, Donation Received, Grant Request, Center Sells Canal Books, Attendance Up At Canal Days Festival, Project Enhances Fourth Grade Visits, Crafters Schedule, Canalendar, A String Of Pearls, Students Serve Community
13. Prairie Creek Arch Endangered, CSI Board Meeting
14. Whitewater Canal News: Ball State Students Tour Canal, Whitewater Canal Brochure, Overbeck Pottery Gallery Opens, Whitewater Canal Committee
16. Let's Take A Trip: James River & Kanawha Canal
19. Speakers Bureau: Ft. Wayne
19. In The News: Vermilyea House, Columbia Street Landing

BURNETT'S CREEK ARCH TO BE PRESERVED

The old stone arch culvert that once carried boats over Burnett's Creek on the Wabash & Erie Canal in Carroll County has received a \$500,000 grant from the State of Indiana to have concrete injected into its base. This will help to preserve the culvert, which was originally built of stone laid without mortar in 1838 by canal laborers. The stones are held in place by the keystone and the shape of the structure. After the canal era ended, Towpath Road was built atop the culvert. It is still in use as a black-topped county road today.

Over time the arch has slowly been falling apart. The south side of the arch that is toward the Wabash



BURNETT'S CREEK ARCH

Photo by Bob Schmidt

River already has a new concrete facade, but the arch has dropped between 8 and 10 inches over the years and needs to be shored up. Restoring the arch before it gives out will be less expensive than rebuilding it. The settling problem will be addressed by the grant. This should save both an historic structure and a county road.

1842 DIARY EXCERPT, UTICA, IL: I&M CANAL

"June 15. Tues. 10 P.M.

Fine day. Cate, Mary and the baby went with me to town. The canal sales commenced at 1 o'clock. I got 170 Dols. in (canal) script from J. J. Hill at 25 cents per dollar. I could not get my business done so I left it in the hands of Brother Sizdr. My land cost me about 201. dols."

Gerald Hulslander, CSI member, Marseilles, IL

The Illinois & Michigan Canal runs through Utica, IL. and was probably the canal mentioned in this diary. The story of this canal is an interesting one.

The State of Illinois received the right-of-way to about one hundred miles of public lands from Lake Michigan to LaSalle in 1822 to use for canal purposes. In 1823 the Illinois state legislature passed the

Canal Bill. Then in 1827 the state was donated a quantity of land "equal to one-half of five sections in width on each side of the canal. Each alternate section was reserved for the United States along this route. This laid the foundation on which to build the Illinois & Michigan Canal.

Ground was broken at Lockport and at Bridgeport on July 4, 1836 for what was to become a 97-mile-long canal that followed a long-standing Indian portage route extending from the Chicago River near Lake Michigan to the Illinois River at Peru, Illinois. (The Fourth of July was a common ground-breaking date for many United States canals such as the Erie Canal in 1817, Ohio & Erie Canal in 1825, and Chesapeake & Ohio Canal in 1828.)

Building of the I&M was stopped for several years due to a state fiscal crisis. Although the Canal Commission had a grant of 284,000 acres of federal land, which it sold at \$1.25 per acre to finance the construction, more money had to be borrowed from investors in the eastern U.S. and England to complete the canal.

When the canal opened in 1848, goods and passengers could be transported by boat from the Great Lakes to the Mississippi River to the Gulf of Mexico. This had been an American dream for over 200 years. Illinois was ready. The Canal Commissioners were men of vision. They laid out a canal port at Chicago (stinking onion) that would grow into a transportation hub for the United States before railroads were built in the area and a great metropolis where agricultural and industrial innovations were patented. Chicago became the heartland's greatest city and the richest economic zone in the world.

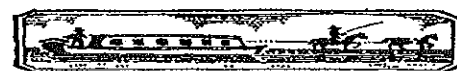
The Illinois & Michigan Canal cost \$6,170,226.00 to build. It was 60 feet wide and six feet deep. A towpath was constructed along the

edge to permit mules to be harnessed to barges along the canal. Towns were spaced at intervals along the canal corresponding to the length that the mules could haul the barges before fresh ones were needed. It had fifteen locks and one aqueduct to cover the 140 foot elevation change between the Illinois and Chicago Rivers.

The canal was a popular passenger route from 1848 until 1854 when a railroad was constructed parallel to the canal that drained off the passenger trade. When the Army Corps of Engineers reversed the flow of the Chicago River, it resulted in much of the city's sewage flowing into the canal rather than into Lake Michigan. Something had to be done. In 1865 the Chicago city council set aside \$2,500,00 to deepen the canal increasing its current and disposing of the city's sewage. It was completed in 1871. After the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, the Illinois state legislature refunded the money for this deepening to the city.

The Illinois & Michigan Canal continued to carry heavy freight. Its peak shipping year was 1882. It remained in use until after World War I. In 1933 it was replaced by the Sanitary and Ship Canal, which is still in use today.

With the establishment of the Illinois & Michigan Canal Corridor, the revitalized canal land became a long, thin park that runs through a rural and wooded landscape linking the towns of Willow Springs, Lemont, Lockport, Joliet, Channahon and Morris, IL. that were laid out by the original Canal Commission. There one can canoe the canal or hike/bike the 61-mile-long trail constructed along the mule tow paths. The Canal Corridor is a living history museum with historical canal buildings and museums containing exhibits about the canal and its related industries.



CANAL BOAT TRAVEL

Submitted by Charles Davis

This article was printed in the Rockville Republican, Thursday, Dec. 17, 1925.

Rockville, Montezuma and Indianapolis in 1853

In the "Hoosier Listening Post" column of the Indianapolis Star last week there appeared two old letters in which reference is made to former Rockville people whom few now living here can recall. "Mat" was

later the wife of Capt. George Harvey who was killed in the battle of Shiloh, and "Gert" was her sister--Miss Gertrude Thompson, a school teacher if the writer is not mistaken. In publishing the letters Mrs. Kate Miller Raab, editor of the column says:

Recent mention of canals in this column reminds Mrs. David Strouse of Danville, Ind., that a canal boat journey was mentioned in two letters which she recently found. The letters were written in 1853 by "Rachel," "a very young girl at this time," says Mrs. Strouse, "and decidedly romantic." The letters are a girl's chatter on her intimate circle to her "dear cousins, Mat and Gert," and because of their informality give a delightful little picture of the girls and the times.

The first letter is dated Indianapolis, May 8, 1853. She began:

Dear cousins, Mat and Gert

After you left us we felt bad enough, I assure you, but we soon became acquainted with the young lady of the boat (canal boat), from Toledo, O. who was going to Terre Haute to see her sister. She was quite an agreeable girl. We remained on the boat until after supper and were detained until 9 or 10 o'clock on account of a break in the canal. An omnibus came for us about 9 o'clock. After we had all got in and had gone some distance, we were passing over the canal bridge, the omnibus ran near the edge of the bridge, which came near upsetting. We all got out. I never was more frightened in my life. We stopped long enough to fix the front horses that broke from the other horses. We had quite an adventure, indeed.

I must tell you something about the gentleman I became acquainted with on the canal boat; his name is Thomas H. He told me he went sleighing with you one winter at Brainbridge, that is, with my cousin Mat; perhaps you will remember him. Oh, Mat and Gert, I became dreadfully in love with him. I have no doubt but he will visit me soon. He lives in Montezuma. There was another young fellow I thought some. It was a Mr. H. of Terre Haute. He told me he expected visiting Indianapolis in a few weeks and would call and see me. I told him he would find our residence on Market street. After our arrival here we found the family all well and everything about the house quite clean. Charlie had planted pine and cedar trees in the front yard. It look very pretty.

I must tell you something about the governor. He was very kind to Cousin Rachel and the children." ("cousin Rachel", says Mrs. Strouse, "was my aunt, a pretty young widow with two little girls who was going home to spend some months at her home in Indianapolis.") if it had not been for him we would not have fared so well. After we got to Terre Haute he had a fire made up in our room to dry our feet. Was not this very kind in Governor Wright?

He told Cousin Rachel that she was just the size of his first wife. Don't you think this was coming to the point in some degree? He told cousin Rachel that his sister would call and see her, but she has not done so as yet.

Our city has made considerable improvement since I left, a great many new buildings have gone up and many more are still building. This will ere long be a city of some note, termed the railroad city. It is quite healthy here at present.

Oh! I most forgot to ask you how Aborigines comes on after her caper the morning we left Rockville. I laugh every time I think of it. I found Thomas Ann still alive. He gets plenty of milk. But enough about the animal tribe lest you think me crazy.

Give my love to Rosa Meacham, Mary Beadle, Mary Seaman and Luis, Lizzie Coats; don't forget to give my compliments to A. Ticnor when you see him and also Charley Adamson. How do you and Gert get along with Dave S. I did not have any tears to send him. Tell him to be a good boy and learn his book. Tell Sara and Indiana Varner I have not forgotten them and give them my love together with Mary Pruitt, Charlotte and Louisa. I will now close by requesting you to write soon. Now don't forget me. I will be so lonely after cousin R. leaves. Write, both of you, and tell me about the boys and girls of Rockville. Is the writing master there yet?

"Pug" has not been well since we came home. She appears lonely. She sends a kiss to Grandpa and Grandma. Elie is as sweet as ever.

This inquiry after the "writing master" recalls a letter to this column from the late Dr. John N. Hurty a few years ago, in which he described some of the writing masters of early days and mentioned the fact that they were almost always great beaux and showed much attention to the younger women of the community. Evidently this was one of that kind, since the young girl inquires after him.

"I wondered at first," adds Mrs. Strouse, "how they got to Indianapolis from Rockville by boat, but found that they took the Wabash and Erie canal at Montezuma to Terre Haute and from there probably took the Terre Haute & Richmond railroad."

Dec. 25, 1925

CANAL BOAT TRAVEL.

A bit of interesting

Local History Few Remember

Last week under the above heading The Republican copied from the "Listening Post" column, Indianapolis Star was a letter written to former Rockville People. A second letter by the same sprightly correspondent follows and was addressed to the same cousins, "Mat and Gert":

Mat and Gert

I have been looking for a letter from you this long time but have not as yet received a line. Why have you not written? I am so anxious to hear from you all. I suppose you and Gertrude are going to school. How have you enjoyed yourselves all summer? I have been from home all summer visiting Salem and New Albany at Mr. Williams' and Mr. Coffin's. I came home the first of September. Martha and Mr. Coffin came with me. She has four children two sons and two daughters. Mr. Coffin sold his farm and household furniture at public sale. He has been sick ever since he came to Indianapolis. He was taken with conjunctive (her spelling) fever; he now has the chills but is much better; about to be up some. I expect he will if he recovers start out west in a few weeks to look at the county thru Illinois and Iowa. Papa thinks he will go with him when he returns home. He is now in Owensboro. They are visiting Sallie and the rest of our relatives in the Green River country. He has been gone two weeks. Charley went with him. If he don't come home this week we will think he is sick or going to get married.

I am at a loss to know what to write about that would be interesting to you. There is not much news at present, only Barnum's museum was here Saturday. There will be a panorama on Monday evening exhibiting scenery in Ireland. Mary Frances is begging her Mah to go, so perhaps we will if Charley gets home. I have not been over to Mrs. McNeely's since I came home. Mrs. McNeely was here once. Mr. Goode's family has moved to Richmond. I have not seen Aunt Betsy Lawrence to speak to her since she was at our house before I left home. She inquired about Aunt Rachel and Uncle James and said she would like to visit in Rockville if it was convenient.

How are the young ladies and gentlemen in Rockville prospering since I left, especially Rose Meacham and A.P.T., and also Mary Beadle? Tell Mary and Rosa to write to me. Has Indiana V. returned yet? If so, give her and Sarah together with her kind mother my best respects.

Have you heard anything more about Mr. H.? (This is the young gentleman from Montezuma whom she met on the canal boat.)

I received one letter from him. Don't tell any one please. Have you heard from cousin Rachel lately? Papa received a letter in September but has not heard since. Tell Aunt Rachel I have looked for the second volume of Mrs. Hemans until my eyes are weary; perhaps it may be in Greencastle. If not, I will give up all hopes of getting it. Has B. been to see you this summer? I have been looking for him out to Indianapolis, but he has never made his appearance yet. I have given you all the news of importance at this time. Martha and Mrs. Coffin join in love to you together with Aunt Rachel and Uncle James and Gertrude.

Write soon, very soon, and let me know if you are coming to see us this fall. Martha says she would like to visit Rockville if she could; she will stay all winter in Indianapolis. I almost forgot to tell you Duck Wright and her old man have been on to New York to see the world's fair. They will be back this week. I once more close by requesting you to write soon; love to all inquiring friends.

I remain as ever your affectionate cousin,
Rachel.

Rufus Dooley's Comments.

A few days later R. Dooley of Rockville wrote the "Listening Post," explaining some references made in the letters and giving information concerning a Rockville man forgotten by many present day Rockville folks or of whom they never heard. Mr. Dooley says:

"She (the writer of the two letters) speaks of going from Rockville to Indianapolis in a canal boat in 1853. This she could not have done. The canal at that time was in full operation and Montezuma was the best and most active business point in the county, about sixty-five miles west of Indianapolis. The Wabash and Erie Canal was not finished at that time, in fact, I think it was never fully completed, but it was a very active shipping line for Parke county at that time, and for some years later, until the railroads knocked it out. There was never any canal communication between Rockville and Indianapolis. (See Mrs. Strouse's explanation on previous page for traveling to Indianapolis by canal boat and train. Also the Wabash & Erie Canal was completed from Toledo, OH to Evansville, IN in 1853.)

"Rosa Meacham," says Mr. Dooley "was a very active girl and later a very active woman in this town. While serving as a nurse during the Civil war, she met a soldier, William Bruce, an Englishman in a hospital and their hospital acquaintance terminated in their marriage when the war was over. Mr. Bruce had some literary ability and I am enclosing one of his poems, 'Rathlin,'"

Mrs. Raab of the Star says: "Rathlin, is a little cloth-bound volume which bears on the title page the words "Rathlin, a poem, by W. A. Bruce, Rockville, Ind., Patriot Publishing House," and the once familiar quotation beginning "Truth crushed to earth will rise again." It was copyrighted by Mr. Bruce in 1871. Another page bears the inscription, "To the soldiers' friend, and benefactress, Mary Lowell Putnam of Boston, Mass., this poem is respectfully and gratefully inscribed by 'Bruce,' National Asylum for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, Dayton, O.," respectfully inscribed to the donatrix by 'Bruce.' This is the most elaborated acrostic I have ever seen, for the usual once popular acrostic consisted of a poem, the first of each line of which spelled the name of the person to whom the poem was "dedicated." (Dedications in these days were as popular as were acrostics. And how quaint and far away seems these words "benefactress" and "donatrix" and "acroatical address"!) A direction in a footnote explains how to find the name in this poem; the first letter of the first line, the second letter of the second line, and so on. As there are 16 lines, the finding of the name becomes quite a puzzle, but it turns out to be the name of the "benefactress" and "donatrix."

An introduction tells the story of "Rathlin," which is said to be "an interesting and picturesque island, situated directly north of Antrim county, Ireland, opposite what is known as the "Giant's Causeway" on the Irish coast. It was at one time a bone of contention between the inhabitants of the opposite coasts of Scotland and Ireland; and a dreadful massacre was once perpetrated there by the Campbells. Robert Bruce once sought shelter in a fortress on this island--it was in this castle that he saw the encouraging spider! The subject of this poem is the horrible massacre of Scotch and Irish refugees on this island in 1573, an event discovered by Froude, an event what says the author, "adds fresh fuel to the bitter hate which animates a portion of the subjects of the British crown against an Iron-handed despotism which has bound one of the fairest of lands deep into the dust of affliction for centuries and scattered her stalwart sons over the whole world."

Long narrative poems were quite the fashion in the seventies--I am sure that most every household in Indiana which boasted any books had copies of either "Katherine" or "Bitter Sweet" or "The Mistress of the Manse"--American poems which they considered equal in merit to the popular favorite, "Lucille," and Sir Walter Scott's narrative poems were also much read. It is interesting, therefore to find an adopted Hoosier attempting this style. Delightfully naive is the concluding sentence of his introduction: With the faint hope that the following pages may prove interesting as well as instructive to the general reader and at the same time that the knight, Criticism, in the bright list of literature may generously smite the author's shield with the butt of his keen-pointed lance, the undersigned makes his best bow for the first time to a discriminating public, and with many fears presents his maiden efforts --Rathlin."

THE BLUE CREEK CANAL

Reifel, August J. History of Franklin County Indiana: Her People, Industries and Institutions. Indianapolis, IN: B. F. Bowen & Co., Inc. 1915.

A meeting was called to assemble at the court house in Brookville (IN) at two o'clock P.M. December 25, 1834, to consider the propriety for constructing a canal from the forks of Blue creek to its mouth. It was proposed to connect with the White Water canal near the mouth of the creek, and it was thought that Congress would donate contiguous land. The call closes with the following postscript: "While we are borrowing money to build the White Water canal, let's borrow a little more to build the Blue Creek." This was done by the opponents of the White Water, as the proposed canal would only have been three or four miles in length. On January 6, 1835, the engineer reported the survey completed.

This short canal was never built.

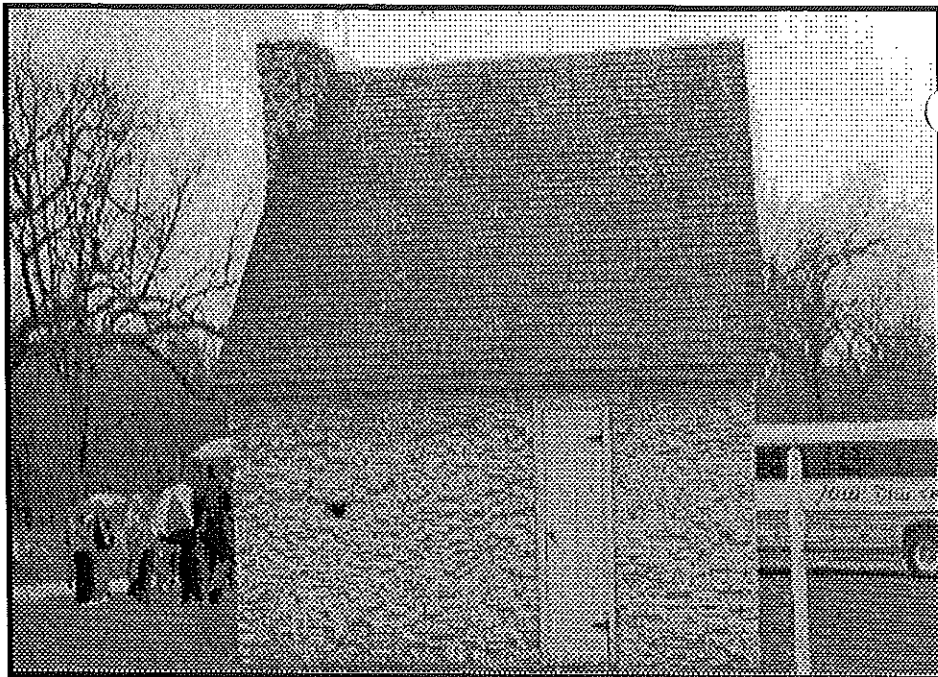
FROM OHIO TO HUNTINGTON
BY CANAL BOAT:
THE REMINISCENCES OF
EMORY SLUSSER

By F. S. Bash
Huntington Herald-Press
August 11, 1930

Emory Slusser is one of the very few remaining inhabitants, who migrated with his parents to this county (Huntington county, Indiana), making the entire trip by water. Embarking on a canal boat in Stark Co. Ohio, and proceeding to Cleveland (on the Ohio & Erie Canal), embarkation was there changed to a large steamer and the voyage continued to Toledo, where a canal boat was depended on for the remainder of the tedious voyage to Huntington (via the Wabash & Erie Canal). He is likewise one of the few old people who distinctly remember incidents that happened when they were but three years old. ...

"When we moved out here in 1851, on the barge between Toledo and Huntington there was a colored family on the boat. To us they were a curiosity. Colored people in the South at that time were slaves and where we came from in Ohio the sentiment was bitter against slavery. A little pickaninny girl in that family was just my age and we played together on the boat. My mother told me afterward that the little colored girl was dressed neatly and was so cute that she attracted much attention. My mother also stated that I not only played with her but fairly idolized her to the extent of hugging and kissing her and loving her with all the devotion possible for a three year old."

"A few years ago, when I was spending the winter in Florida," explained Mr. Slusser, "I attended a service held by colored people and the minister called on me to say something. I gave a little talk and among other things I mentioned was the incident of seeing the colored



This slave jail is located on Park Drive across the street from the old limestone quarry sunken gardens in Huntington, Indiana. Canal boats carried lime on the canal, which was located along the tree line in this photo taken on the CSI tour there in April 1996. Food was passed through the hole in the wall to the slaves.

Photo by Bob Schmidt

family on the canal boat when I was an infant, and at that time the race was still in bondage. I told them that was the reason I voted for Abraham Lincoln to help get them their freedom, but I feared they were still under more or less bondage. Next day I met the pastor on the street and he said his people were helped by my talk."

Emory Howenstine Slusser was born on June 12, 1848 in Pike Co., Stark Co., Ohio. He died on May 25, 1939 in Whitley Co., Indiana.

The article doesn't say if the black family were slaves or free blacks. Just the year before the Slusser family moved to Indiana, the Fugitive Slave Act was passed by Congress on September 18, 1850. According to the act, a Negro fugitive in the North—even if he had lived there fifteen or twenty years—could be seized on the presentation of the affidavit of a Southern slaveholder. He could not testify or summon witnesses or have a jury trial. His fate

was decided by a federal commissioner from whom there was no appeal. Enforcement lay in the hands of federal marshals. They and their deputies were subject to a similar fine plus civil damages plus a possible jail sentence of six months.

One result of the Fugitive Slave Act was the expansion of the Underground Railroad, which had been formed in Ohio around 1817. The slaves often followed the canal towpath during the night when attempting to escape to Canada.

A slave jail was built in Huntington, Indiana to house any runaways. It is located between Park Street and the Wabash & Erie Canal across from the old limestone quarry sunken gardens in Huntington.

It would be interesting to know if the black family had any problems with the law when they reached Huntington?

Cynthia Powers
CSI Board of Directors
Roanoke, IN

CANAWLERS AT REST

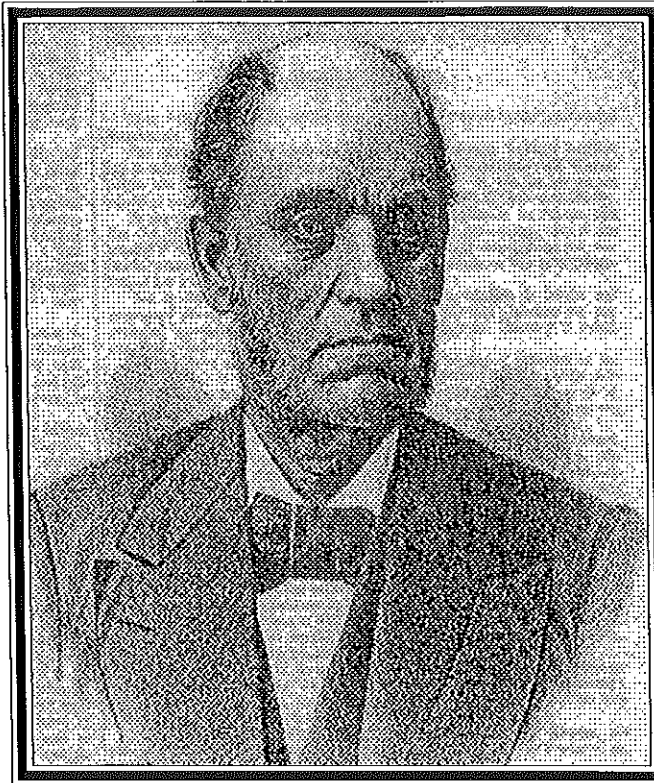
THOMAS COLEMAN

b. August 2, 1818

d. September 18, 1887

By Carolyn I. Schmidt

Picture from: Combined Atlas Map
of Tippecanoe County, Indiana



Thomas Coleman was born on August 2, 1818 in Jefferson County, Ohio, to Cephas and Rossana Ellis Coleman. This pioneer family had nine children, was poor and Thomas' education was attained by attending a county school three months each year. He learned to read and write by the age of sixteen and decided to leave home to start his life's voyage. Even though he had no money or influential friend to help him, he was determined to rise from poverty, obscurity and the ignorance that surrounded him.

His first employment was that of driver on the Ohio & Erie Canal between Cleveland and Portsmouth. The pay was poor, but his industrious and thrifty ways paid off. By 1841, after seven years of hard work, he had saved enough money to become part owner of the canal boat and was its captain. Canaling was good business. By 1845, he, along with Mr. Standort of Cleveland, bought five canal boats and put them on the Miami & Erie Canal. The following year they bought six more boats and sold them at a good profit. During this time Coleman sought other employment during the winters when the canal froze and navigation halted. For six winters he purchased and shipped horses from the neighborhood of New Philadelphia, Ohio, to the Baltimore market, over the mountains.

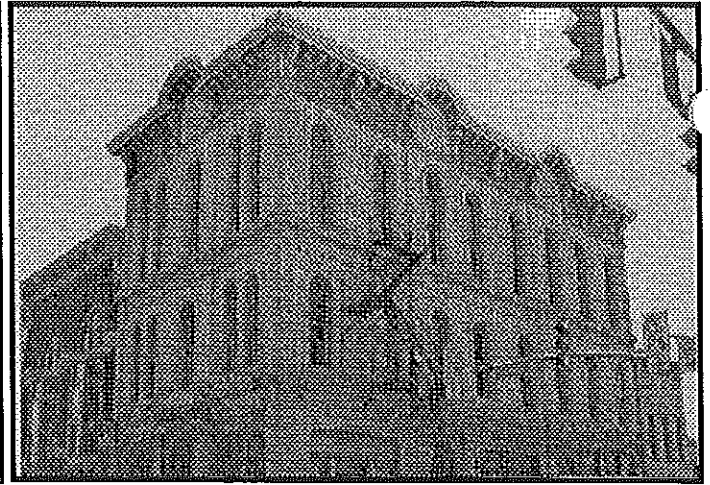
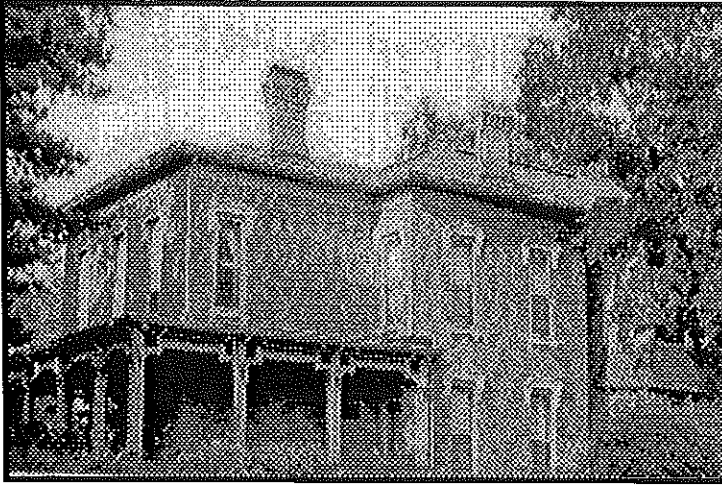
In 1847, Coleman sold his boating business and bought a farm and a warehouse in Lagro, Wabash County, Indiana. For five years he shipped grain on his own boats to Toledo on the Wabash & Erie Canal.

While in Lagro, Coleman met Julia Wheeler and married her. They eventually had nine children. Three of these children - Julia, Walker and Dickie - died under the age of 2. In the 1860 census, the children listed for Thomas and Julia Coleman were: Ellen-8, Sarah-7, George-6, Adeline-2; also living in the household was Dewit Wheeler-21. In the 1870 census their children were: Alice (Ellen)-18, Sallie (Sarah)-17, George-16, Adie (Adeline)-12, Kathe-8 and Harry-5. In the 1880 census their children listed were Adeline-22, Kate-18 and Harry-15.

In 1852, Coleman sold his Lagro property, made a huge profit over the purchase price and moved to Tippecanoe County where he bought the Ben Eastborn farm of 420 acres for \$5,000. For two years he farmed and was in the stock business. He then sold the farm for \$10,500.

Coleman moved to Lafayette. He went into the broker's business handling stock, buying notes and mortgages, and lending money. His success in handling money attracted the attention of John L. Reynolds, a banker and capitalist. In 1857 they formed a partnership called Coleman and Co. that lasted until 1861. For six years Coleman continued the business alone. He also bought and sold real estate.

In 1858, Coleman bought the Reuben Steely farm, which consisted of 240 acres and was in the suburbs of Lafayette. He kept buying land until he had over 500 acres. He built a mansion in appearance and



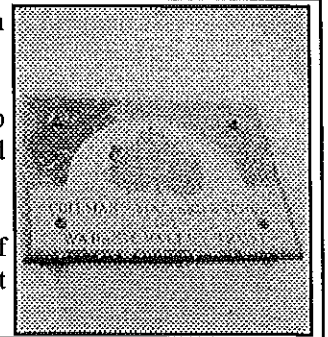
Left: The Thomas Coleman residence on a hill at the head of Main Street and Perrin Avenue in Lafayette was one the largest homes at the time. A marker in front of the home reads;

PERRIN HISTORIC DISTRICT

Platted in 1873, this district was Lafayette's first planned residential area which conformed to geographic contours. It was developed by James J. Perrin, Margaret Cason Perrin, Edward Asher, and Consider Tinkler. Listed in National Register of Historic Places, 1979.

Right: Thomas Coleman built the Coleman Block for the Farmers' Bank on the southeast corner of Third & Columbia Streets on Lafayette's courthouse square. Today the building bears a plaque that reads: Wabash Valley Trust, 1872, Coleman - Stallard & Schuh

Photos by Bob Schmidt



surroundings for a country home. His city residence located at the head of Main Street and Perrin Avenue was one of the largest and most beautiful in the city at that time. In 1906 William G. and Anna Wagner Gude purchased the city home. William was the cashier for the Merchants' National Bank.

In 1867 Coleman formed a partnership with T. G. Rainey* and organized the Farmers' Bank of Lafayette. He was the capitalist and Rainey received a part of the profits as pay for his services.

Five years later Coleman erected the handsome Coleman Block on the southeast corner of Third and Columbia streets in Lafayette to accommodate the Farmers' Bank. Coleman and Rainey's partnership lasted for ten years until Coleman's constantly changing procedures got on Rainey's nerves. In 1877 Coleman began doing business alone once again. That same year Edgar H. Andress and Thomas Wood, under the firm name of Andress & Wood, conducted a private bank in the east room of the Coleman Bank building. It never grew to be a large institution and closed after a short

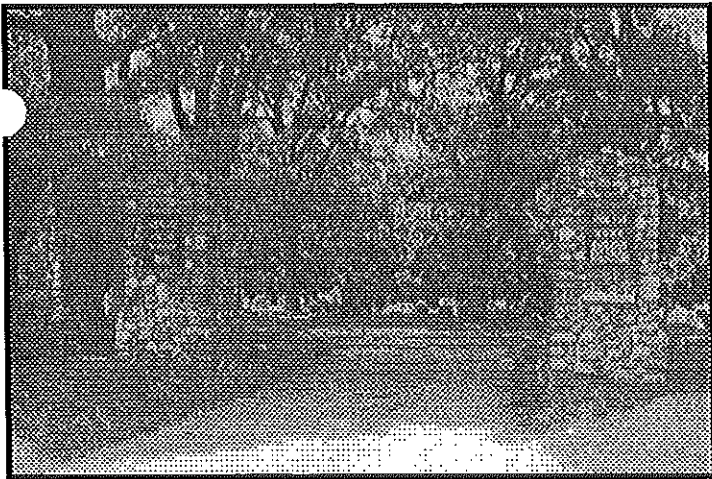
time. The Farmers' Bank finally closed about 1880. On May 1, 1901, the Farmers and Traders' Bank was incorporated under state charter and occupied the building Coleman built for his Farmers' Bank.

By the age of 60, Coleman was a millionaire. He had substantial property in Indiana and valuable investments in Kansas, Colorado, and other western states.

Thomas Coleman, a familiar figure in Lafayette banking circles in the sixties and seventies, is described in *Past & Present of Tippecanoe County, Indiana* as "a rough diamond. Under a brusque and to some forbidding exterior, he carried a kind heart; never very generous to delinquent debtors, perhaps, but very generous to his family, and in spots to his near friends and any public enterprise or charity that happened to strike his fancy. He was a keen, shrewd, level-headed man of business, and a pronounced success both as a farmer and a banker."

Coleman's success is credited to making the best

* Thomas G. Rainey had a long career in connection with Lafayette banks. In 1850 he moved to Lafayette from Pennsylvania. He was in his early twenties. He was employed by the Lafayette Insurance Company, which also did a banking business. From 1852-1858 he was cashier of the Commercial Bank, the progenitor of the First National Bank, and then was employed by Mr. Fowler at the Bank of the State, which became the National State Bank and then the National Fowler Bank. There he was a paying teller until he resigned to go into partnership with Coleman. Their partnership was dissolved because Coleman was too erratic and unique and Rainey was steady-going. Rainey continued on as an employee for a short time thereafter before going into the Lafayette Savings Bank as a teller. He served the latter for over thirty years.



Above left: Entrance to Springdale Cemetery, Lafayette, IN.

Above right: Head stone for Thomas Coleman

Right: **COLEMAN MARKER**

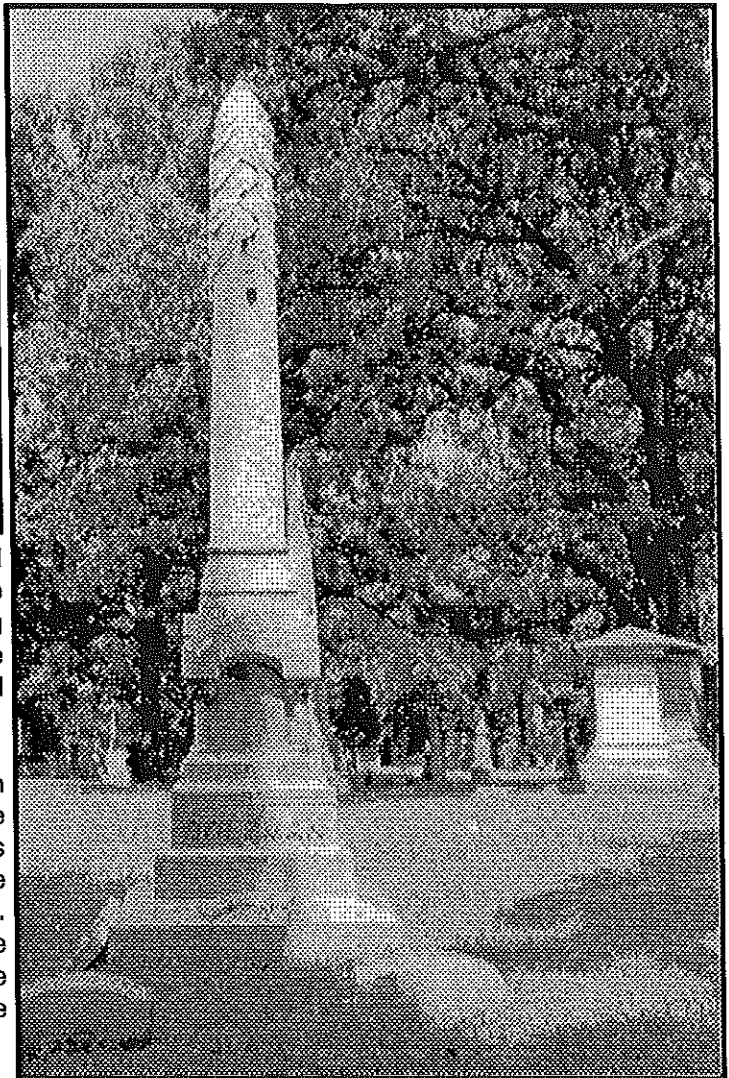
Two headstone are placed before the Coleman marker. The one of the left is for Thomas Coleman, Born Aug. 2, 1818 Died Sept. 18, 1887. The one on the right is for Julia Coleman, Born Sept. 17, 1825, Died Aug. 30, 1905. Three small head stones lean at the base on the left side of the monument. They read:

Julia, Daughter of Thomas & Julia Coleman, Died Sept. 26, 1867, Aged 1 Yr 1 Mo 13 D. How shall we miss our darling

Walker, Son of Thoas & Julia Coleman, Died Oct 5, 1864, Aged 1 Yr 19 D, How fondly we loved him

Our Little Dickie, Son of Thomas & Julia Coleman, Died Jan. 22, 1862, Aged 4 Mo 17 D, Herein lies one of our own dear precious

Photos B. Schmidt



of what he had on hand and giving it his undivided attention. He also gave to things that benefited the public. He subscribed to railroad stock, assisted in raising money to equip the soldiers in the Civil War, and gave the city a town clock at his own expense. He made sure all his children had a good education.

Thomas Coleman died at Lafayette, Indiana, on September 18, 1887. He is buried in Springdale Cemetery, in Lafayette, Tippecanoe County, Indiana. His will is in Tippecanoe County Will Book 5, page 035. The cemetery is on S.R. 25 north of its junction with U.S. 52 at 2580 S.R. 25 N. When entering Springdale Cemetery take the main road and follow the signs to the cemetery office. Turn right onto the road across from the office. His stone is to your left in Section 23, Lot 227.

Sources:

Biographical Record and Pictorial Album of Tippecanoe County, Indiana. Chicago, IL / The Lewis Publishing Company, 1888.

Combined Atlas Map of Tippecanoe County, Indiana. Kingman Bros. 1878,

DeHart, Gen. R. P. Past and Present of Tippecanoe County, Indiana. Indianapolis, IN/B. F. Bowen & Co. Publishers. 1909.

NEWS FROM DELPHI

scenes along the 468-mile Wabash & Erie Canal from Toledo to Evansville spanning three walls of the lobby. We are looking for more sponsors like the Beta Chapter of Psi Iota Xi Sorority here in Delphi who sponsored this painting.

Any CSI members who would like to invest in the ultimate beauty of the Canal Interpretive Center and get their name on a plaque can support one or more of the rest of the murals needed. Lets help finish this mural project.

DONATION TO CENTER RECEIVED

By Dan McCain

The W&E Canal Association just received \$25,000+ from the estate of William and Evelyn Kerlin. A smaller amount will be received in a year when the final estate settlement is made thanks to the Kerlin's will directing Bank One to deliver this to us after their death. They had only one son and he departed life over a decade ago. Soon it will be declared what special facade, room or gallery in the Canal Center will carry their names.

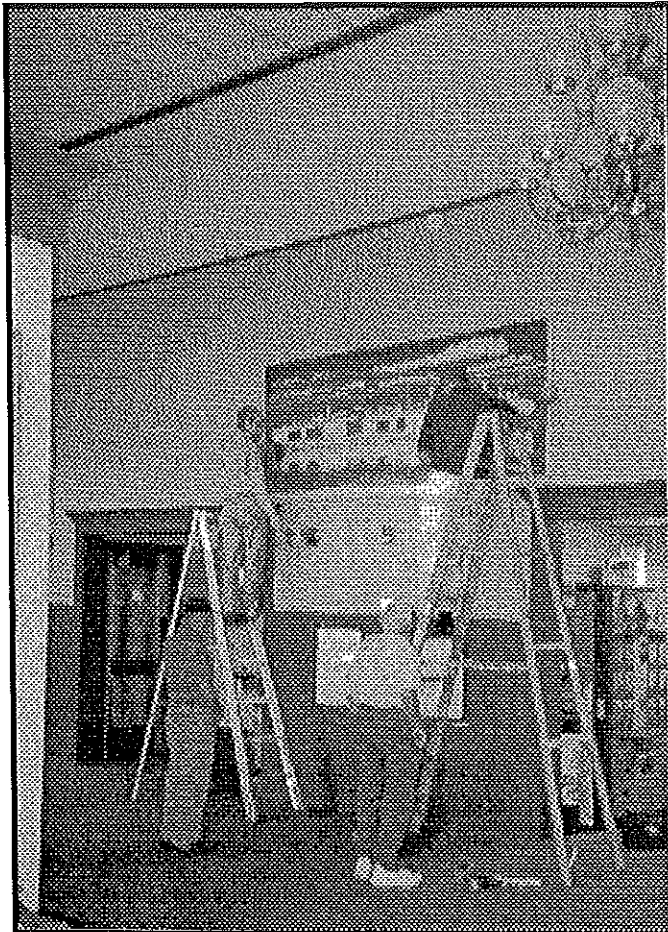
The Kerlin family name is historically significant in Delphi as they were in the grain and feed business that went back to just about the time Spears, Case and Company had to move their unsavory slaughter house that was at the "foot of Main Street" only 3 blocks from the Court House. The Center currently has the real front facade of the feed mill office leaning up behind the blacksmith shop in Canal Park, but it needs attention. It will probably be placed somewhere in amongst the buildings in the old part of Canal Park. It was removed just before McDonalds located in their site.

Presently McDonalds and CVS are located where where the elevator once stood. Earlier the slip or sidecut off the main line of the Wabash & Erie Canal came up to this site. Many boats would have tied up along this section as it was where the Paper Mills operated. A plaque sets on the VanScoy Towpath Trail at this junction as a reminder of what an industrial corridor this was during the canal era.

GRANT REQUEST

By Dan McCain

Another grant request was made for support of engineering and marketing studies in support of our canal boat planning for Canal Park and the Interpretive Center. The granting agency is the Rural Development Council. Whoever gets this money will be named by the Governor before the election. Keep your fingers crossed as we are still in contention for the bigger money from INDOT's



The Speece Canal Boat mural is hung in the lobby of the Wabash & Erie Canal Conference and Interpretive Center by Terry Lacy (l) and Dan McCain (r) on the ladders and Ed Gruber (l) and Bill Draper (r) on the floor.

NEW MURAL IN LOBBY

By Dan McCain

The new Speece Canal Boat mural now hangs in the lobby sponsored by the Canal Society of Indiana in the Wabash & Erie Canal Conference and Interpretive Center in Delphi, IN. CSI can be proud of this work of art by Terry Lacy. Lacy's painting depicts the Speece canal boat. He used the only known photo of a canal boat in Delphi as a reference. It was painted in oil on a three-foot by nine-foot canvas that is now centered on the wall opposite the main entrance so that it is plainly visible to everyone entering.

The mural now needs companions. Our plans call for additional paintings to hang on either side of this central one, making as many as seven in all, depicting

TEA-21 Transportation Enhancement money. This would be for the boat, lock and warehouse itself. Some communities will be lucky and get to divide \$17 million sometime in the near future.

A Canal Boat Fund has been established to which interested members and organizations may donate. Just mark your check "Canal Boat" and send to Treasurer Ed Gruber, 12252 West State Road 18, Delphi, IN 46923.

CENTER TO SELL CANAL BOOKS

The Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc. has just published two brand new books and offer them for sale at the Canal Center. They can be purchased separately for \$8 each or as companion pieces, since they complement one another, for \$12.

Faces Behind the Facades by Susan Yoder, of Indianapolis, with research from Charles Gerard and Mark Smith, is a 24-page soft cover book that describes the building fronts of 1850s Delphi that were used to design the façade of the new Canal Center. The new construction echoes the architecture of the original Courthouse Square buildings as closely as possible to give the Center an authentic historic appearance. Biographical sketches of the men who built those buildings in the 1800s and the businesses they established in them fill this colorful book.

The companion book by Tom Castaldi, a canal historian from Ft. Wayne, is titled *Wabash & Erie Canal Journey*. It describes the Canal Center's interpretive museum, its interactive displays and the historical significance of the Wabash & Erie Canal. The scope of the museum is covered from "Why a Canal?" to "Canal Towns and Shops." Tom supplied much of the historic information for the Interpretive

Center exhibits, and he presents a wealth of canal history in this book.

Other books that history and canal buffs will find interesting are Dora Thomas Mayhill's book, *Old Wabash & Erie Canal in Carroll County and Pre-Canal History of the Wabash River*. Originally published in 1953, these are limited reprints. *Into the Old Northwest - A Journey with Charles Titus* by Dr. George P. Clark of Louisville is based on an old diary of a canal trip. *Vermilyea House* by Tom Castaldi is about a canal contractor's home and life. *Now That Time Has Had Its Say* by Darrell Bakken of Indianapolis is the history of Indiana's Central Canal. *Trails West* by Homer Overlay touches on Carroll County sites.

ATTENDANCE UP AT CANAL DAYS FESTIVAL

The good weather on July 3 and 4 and the popularity of the nearly completed Canal Interpretive Center brought more visitors to the 2004 Canal Days Festival. Visitors came from 45 different Indiana cities and from 10 additional states, resulting in the largest attendance since 1997.

Featured were pioneer crafts, games, narrated towpath walks, and lots of good food. The performances of "Our Town" by the Delphi Library's Red Brick Theatre group were "standing room only" successes. Many visitors found Charles Gerards narration of the Canal Center's historic exteriors interesting. The 1800s rendezvous encampment stayed at Canal Park the entire week through the Fourth of July.

Next year the festival will be one day only, Monday, July 4, to coincide with Delphi's traditional Fourth of July parade. The rendezvous encampment will be at Canal Park all week.

PROJECT TO ENHANCE FOURTH GRADE VISITS

Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc. has proposed creating a pilot I-Step project for the bus loads of fourth grade pupils and their teachers who come to the Canal Center. The plan is to provide hands-on games based on canal-era life that will enhance the children's learning experience. The games will mix language arts, social studies, history and math. They will be fun for all but will also help those students not passing I-Step. By using the games in small groups, the busloads of children will be better organized for staggered tours through the museum itself. A grant application for funding has been prepared by Cecily Schneider with the help of her husband W. Michael Schneider, Jim French, Mark Smith and Dan McCain.

Crafters Schedule

The Canal Interpretive Center has various experts demonstrate their pioneer crafts. This fall two special exhibits are scheduled for the craft room ("Livery") at the Center: September 25 - Civil War Clothing October 2 - Plaster Molding

CANALENDER

Third Saturdays —work days at Canal Park

December 12 — "Christmas at the Canal."

October 6-7— Dan McCain spoke at the Governor's Conference on Volunteerism in Indianapolis. He was the only speaker focused on using volunteers in rural counties.

See our web page

www.wabashanderlecanal.org

and the companion page

www.StayAnotherDay.com

where we are linked to neighboring rural counties.

Begin

This "string" begins at Delphi's Canal Park where the local Canal Association has many buildings and the beautiful new 12,000 square foot Canal Interpretive Center.

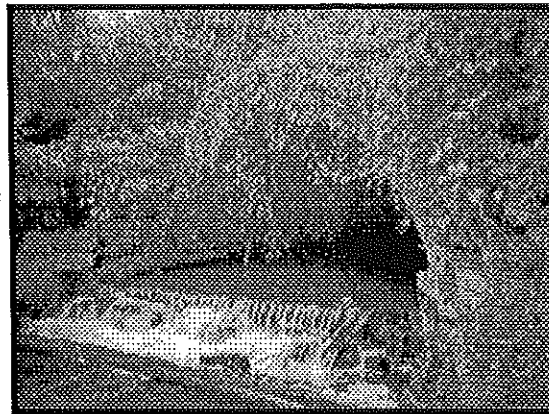
The Carroll County Economic Development Commission presented an award for this "outstanding new building" on September 16, 2004.

Just above Lockport is the site of Burnetts Creek Arch. This "pearl" will soon shine even brighter with INDOT's historic transportation funding for restoration and visitor interpretive facilities. Approval of the T-21 grant was announced by Governor Kernan for the stabilization work much needed after the July 2003 flood. A diversion will be built to take the pressure off future flooding. The cut stone arch will be brought back to near its original specifications.

At Lockport large grain storage facilities kept the canal busy shipping grain to eastern markets.

Visitors also may see the following sites nearby along the canal trails that have been placed on the National Register

The Irish Construction Camp at Sunset Point



Burnett's Creek Arch

Photo by Bob Schmidt

Following the "string" a little farther northeast is Rattlesnake Creek where the canal crossed over a wooden culvert as it did over many smaller streams. Here the "Trail of Death" passed by where Indians were forced to march endless days on their removal to Kansas.

A STRING OF PEARLS

Indiana's oldest bridge happens to be in Carroll County and it's still considered a "keeper." Several other bridges nearby the Wabash and Erie Canal route north of Delphi also happen to have historic status as well. These relics of the past have caught the eyes of historians and the touring public. More important, however, they are a part of a "string of pearls" that show off their integrity and usefulness.

Dan McCain

The Locktender's house and Lock #33 site

Carrollton Bridge itself was recently placed on the National Register of Historic Structures.

The 1857 Harley and Hubbard Lime Kiln site

Another pearl is 4 miles north of Delphi by the Carrollton bridge where recent archaeological digs found evidence of a wooden hull of a post Civil War canal boat in the chamber of Lock No. 31. At this point the 468-mile-long Wabash & Erie Canal crossed the Wabash River.

Locks No. 31 and 32 raised/ lowered canal boats into the slackwater created by a dam across the Wabash at Pittsburgh.

STUDENTS SERVING THEIR COMMUNITY

By Dan McCain

A productive half day cleaning of Delphi's southern trails was spent with fourteen High School Juniors and Seniors Thursday, September 23. These young adults had the day off from I-Step testing because they had previously passed their tests. Delphi Community School Principal Keith Brakel gave them an

important option. They could have were volunteers. Activities were the day off or they could spend it carried out along the southern trails: doing community service. Brakel Campbell Ridge, VanScoy, Obear Mill calls this program SHOCK (Students Race and Robbins Trails. Helping Our Community and Kids). Overhanging limbs, brush and debris were removed.

These ambitious students took the work option and accomplished trail maintenance duties under the supervision of Canal Association board members Dan McCain, Bill Draper, Ken Kavanaugh and skid loader operator Daniel Boone. Students and adults alike

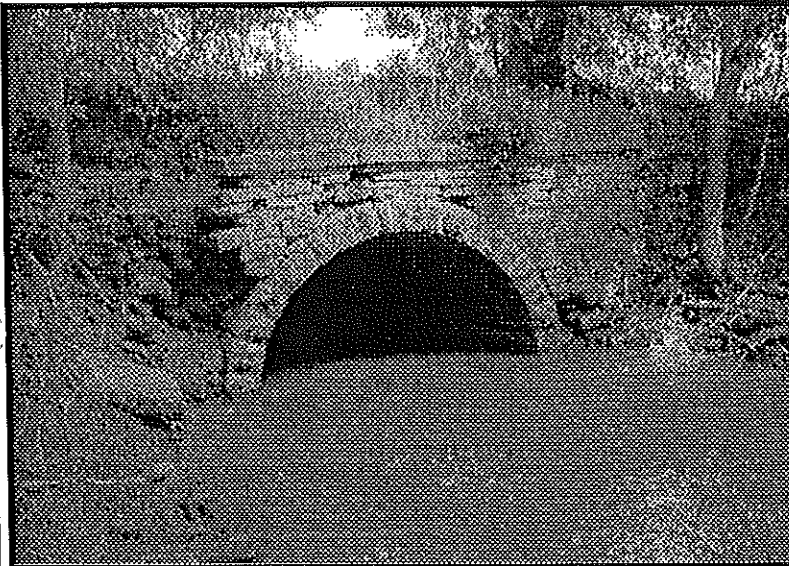
These type of duties are often needed to keep up the 8 miles of Delphi Historic Trails. Third Saturday workdays often bring out other adult volunteers interested in helping with maintenance.

PRAIRIE CREEK ARCH ENDANGERED

Time, weather and human activity have led to the decline of Prairie Creek Arch that once carried the Wabash & Erie Canal over Prairie Creek in Miami County, Indiana. Kreig Adkins, CSI Board of Directors and Miami County Historian, reports that the County recently cleared snags out of Prairie Creek on the north side of old stone arch. In doing so they pulled 3 timbers from the floor of the creek and left them in a pile on the bank. When he visited the site he took pictures to show the endangered arch, which he says is falling a part in a hurry.

Kreig contacted the State Historic Preservation Office asking what could be done to save the arch. They said that if the land owner agreed to its restoration then the county or an historical group could restore it.

Kreig has talked with the new land owner and he would like to see it restored. Kreig is seeking expert volunteers to help with this project. We will discuss the role CSI might play in helping restore the arch at the annual CSI Board of Directors Meeting.



Prairie Creek Arch in Miami County has deteriorated over time. These pictures show its condition and the timbers that were recently removed.

Photos by Kreig Adkins

**CSI
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETING**

November 6, 2004
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Cambridge City Christian Church
106 W. Church Street
Hosts: Jerry & Phyllis Mattheis



**WHITEWATER
CANAL
NEWS**

**BALL STATE STUDENTS
TOUR WHITEWATER CANAL**

By Phyllis Mattheis

Jerry and I were asked by CSI to help with a request from Ball State University professor Ron Morris to give a tour of the Whitewater Canal for his historic preservation class. We agreed, made the necessary arrangements with Ron and had a fun day with the class on August 26.

Jerry and I met Ron, his class and a history teacher and his friend from Lincoln High School at 9 a.m. at the Hagerstown Museum where they browsed around, looked at the canal exhibit, saw the posters Jerry had made, and looked at the three past CSI tour books about the Whitewater Canal. We explained to them how much they could learn about Indiana's canals by joining CSI while I quickly showed them my album of tour pictures.

We then got into six cars and visited the canal sites in Hagerstown and Cambridge City. They toured the history room at the Cambridge City library seeing the old canal boat keel and bell. By then their eyes were beginning to glaze over and tummies were growling, so we drove through the sites in Milton and on to Connersville to the fast food places.

On the road south at Connersville we stopped at the Roots building (Furniture Factory) to show them the race for the canal through the building. We made a quick stop at Nulldown International, stopped at the Berlin lock and saw one of the new signs erected by the Whitewater Valley Railroad, and made it into

Metamora for the 3 p.m. canal boat ride and a chance to browse around the town. The docent on the boat had a good canal spiel, but some of the students went to sleep on that warm day gliding along on the quiet water. A few students looked at Paul Baudendistel's canal boat that sits in a yard along one of Metamora's streets, but Paul was not around at the time.

We should have insisted on seeing the Milton culvert and lock on the way down the canal, because Ron Morris was the only one left by the time we came back north to see it on the way home. The others went their separate ways. The tour was exhausting but fun.....

Ron was excited about our expertise and says he'll have us up to critique what the students put together. He said he'd bring the students back another day to see the stone arch culvert and stone lock at Milton. The Ferris family, who have a mobile home at the site, had run a bush hog down along the field so that we could more easily get to the lock. We could not have gotten through otherwise. The family said they have plans to build a house where the trailer is located.

The Lincoln High history teacher borrowed our blue tour guide for a week and expressed interest in joining CSI. He currently is only interested in the Whitewater Canal.

**WHITEWATER CANAL
BROCHURE**

By Phyllis Mattheis

Western Wayne Heritage has been wanting something to hand out at the Vinton House, an Old National Road and Whitewater Canal inn in Cambridge City, to tell about Whitewater Canal sites. Although Jerry and I had hoped to have it done in time for the Ball State tour, we didn't get it finished until the end of August. Enclosed is a copy for you.

**NEW GALLERY OF
OVERBECK POTTERY OPENS
IN NORTHERN INDIANA**

A special event took place in Elkhart, IN on Sunday, August 15. A new gallery of Overbeck Pottery, paintings and memorabilia was opened with a reception for about 200 patrons.

Long-time collector Douglas Grant of Syracuse donated about 300 items relating to the Overbeck Art Pottery of Cambridge City, "so that Hoosiers in northern Indiana could see and appreciate the art works of the famous sisters" from Wayne County. The Museum of American Art installed the permanent exhibit in a new gallery on the second floor.

Jerry and Phyllis Mattheis, current owners of the Overbeck House in Cambridge City where the art work was done, were invited to the grand opening. This new gallery compliments the Overbeck Pottery Museum at the Cambridge City Public Library.

The art pottery is displayed in glass wall cases along three walls of the gallery. The fourth wall has paintings, designs, letters, photos, etc. Included are two larger vases that were previously owned by Cambridge City residents. A lovely tall vase with trailing blossoms was in the Lotus Miller home for many years. Martha Hutchison Ervin owned the tall green incised vase. The collection includes many figurines, some of which depict local residents; such as Dick Ulerick, the postman; Fred Jahne, Lincoln High School band director; George Morgan, who resided in the Overbeck House and did gardening; and a local bartender.

Some Overbeck students' work is also included, as well as some shards with designs and a small hand-pressed kiln post. The reprint of Kathleen Postle's book The

Chronicle of Overbeck Pottery is available in the gift shop at the museum. First published in 1978 by the Indiana Historical Society, the book was reprinted 20 years later in 1998 by Western Wayne Heritage, Inc. of Cambridge City.

The museum is located in downtown Elkhart in a neo-classical bank building at 429 South Main Street. Hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, 1 to 4 p.m. on weekends. Sundays admission is free. www.MIDWESTMUSEUM.US.

The Federal-style frame Overbeck house was built in the 1830s by Ira Lackey, one of the founders of Cambridge City. From 1844-49, the property was owned by the Whitewater Canal Company. Lot Bloomfield was president of the town board in 1845 and also is referred to as an owner elsewhere in the abstract. It was during this time that the big flood, which spelled disaster for the Whitewater Canal Company, occurred on January 1, 1847.

After John and Sarah Overbeck died, four of the six Overbeck sisters started the pottery studio. The pottery remained in the Overbeck family until 1965 when it was purchased by an industrialist. It was saved from the industrialist's wrecking crew shortly before it was to be destroyed.

In 1973 the property reverted to private ownership and a restoration of the house was begun. The portable Revelation kiln used by the sisters was repurchased and moved back into the small square kiln house near the southwest corner of the dwelling. The frame kiln house has a fish-scale-design stamped metal roof in pyramidal shape, topped by the smoke stack.

Careful restoration of the house and purchases of Overbeck Pottery and art works by the Mattheis's have the home furnished similar to the way it was while the

Overbeck sisters lived there. It is on the National Register of Historic Places.

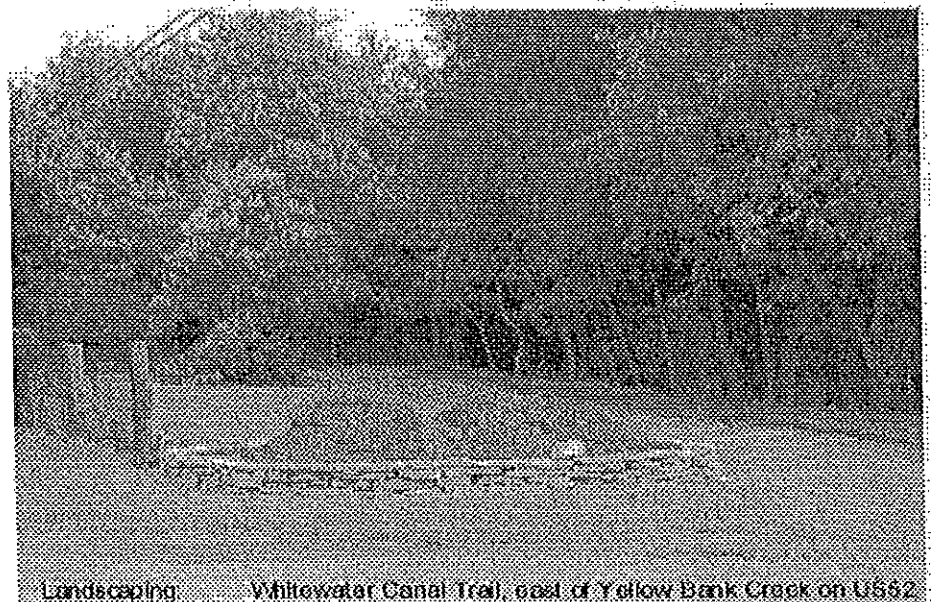
In 1972 Arthur and Kathleen Postle presented their Overbeck collection towards the establishment of the Overbeck Museum in the Cambridge City public library. In 1983 the basement received lighted glass cases to display the works of the Overbeck sisters, which range from oil paintings to fabrics, pottery to jewelry.

WHITewater CANAL COMMITTEE

The Whitewater Canal Committee has spent several weekends constructing a trail along the canal near Metamora, IN. The photos below show Conner Campground before and after their landscaping efforts. Note the trail along the tree line in the lower photograph.

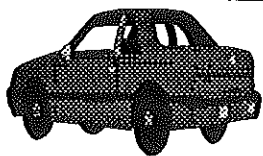


Conner Campground before landscaping



Landscaping Whitewater Canal Trail, east of Yellow Bank Creek on US62

LET'S
TAKE
A
TRIP



THE JAMES RIVER & KANAWHA CANAL

By Carolyn Schmidt

Many canals in the United States, like that at the Falls of the Ohio, were built to overcome obstacles in rivers. Such was the case of the James River & Kanawha Canal in Richmond, Virginia. The James River, which flows through Virginia to the Chesapeake Bay, has strong rapids at this fall line between the Piedmont and Tidewater regions. Kanawha comes from the Iroquoian word "Kanawa," which means "the rapids."

In 1770, 1772 and 1774 George Washington, who had been granted 20,000 acres of land in the Ohio and Kanawha River valleys for his participation and leadership in the French and Indian War and had acquired an additional 30,000 acres along them, was looking for a water connection to the Eastern seaboard. He surveyed much of the land for the proposed James River and Kanawha River Canal (JR & K Canal) and was the inspiration behind building this canal. Others sought a southern canal route to the Ohio River.

John Ballentine wanted to build a foundry on the James River with a canal to reach it. He borrowed 5000 pounds from Virginia's Convention to purchase 300 acres of timber in Buckingham County. There he built a foundry, burned the timber for charcoal, and smelted the ore making pig iron, which was boated to the foundry via the canal. He was loaned more money to complete the canal to Richmond. He never built more than one-twentieth of the canal. The foundry was destroyed by Benedict Arnold's troops on January 5, 1781.

Richmond was incorporated as city in 1782. A few years later in 1785 the James River Company was formed by the State of Virginia with George Washington as its honorary president. Its acting president was Edmund Randolph. The company was supposed to build locks around Richmond to provide safe freight and passenger transport outside the river hazards to open the upper portions of the James River for trade and commerce. The initial subscription was \$100,000 (500 shares of \$200 each) with the state buying half of the subscriptions. All 500 shares were subscribed by August 1785. But by July 1876 the James River Company was in financial trouble due to insufficient capital and slow progress. Subscribers were not "paying up."

The James River Company had built seven miles of the canal, which was divided into an Upper and Lower Canal, from Richmond to Westham by September 29, 1789. Since this canal was 30 feet wide and 3 feet deep, its locks eighty-feet long and 16 feet wide, and boats could draw no more than 1 foot of water, it was soon seen that the canal needed to be widened and deepened.

Should the canal be continued? The railroads were encroaching and the canal company was in deep trouble. Joseph Cabell rallied supporters and championed the need for enlarging the canal and extending it up the James River. He hoped he had Judge Benjamin Wright's support at the legislative session. Wright had worked on the Erie Canal.

The State of Virginia revoked the earlier charter and the company was re-chartered in 1832 as the James River and Kanawha Company. Work on this 50-foot-wide and 5-foot-deep canal was not started until 1835 after sufficient funds were raised. A 146-mile-stretch was opened between Richmond and

Lynchburg in November of 1840. The first boat through was the William Henry Harrison.

At its zenith, the canal reached 197 miles westward from Richmond to Buchanan. It was one of a few canals that operated year round.

Most of the James River & Kanawha Canal is still intact. In 1999 property owners joined forces with state and local governments to redevelop the historic Haxall and James River & Kanawha canals to attract new residents and businesses, to bring cultural activity to the waterfront, and to provide opportunities for historic tours and scenic canal boat rides. A 1.25-mile-long beautifully landscaped walkway meanders along the downtown riverfront. It is called Canal Walk. Richmond's history is related along the walk in medallions and banners. It starts at the Bell Isle footbridge and extends down to 17th street. At the end of the Canal Walk is the Great Ship Lock.

The Great Ship Lock, which connects the canal and Richmond's dock to the James River, was built between 1850-1854. It was the terminus for the canal. It is located on Dock and Pear Streets. A kiosk located there provides the following information:

The Great Ship Lock connected the navigable part of the James River with the Richmond city dock, which extended for ten blocks to the west. Ocean-going vessels were raised up from sea level to the level of the city dock which accommodated ships as large as 180 feet long by 35 feet wide. The Great Ship Lock was completed along with other canal improvements in 1854, although earlier ship locks were located in the same location.

The Tidewater Connection of the James River and Kanawha Canal linked Richmond's industries and the city dock with ocean-going trade. On the bustling city docks, flour, iron goods, tobacco and other products were loaded onto ships on the way to Atlantic ports and Central and South America. White and black stevedores emptied the cargo from

incoming ships laden with coffee, fertilizer, dry goods and other imports. At the Great Ship Lock, vessels were moved from sea level of the canal through a canal lock.

Up the canal is Pumphouse-3 Mile Lock Park. A pumphouse and dance hall built in 1883 were constructed upon the stone walls of the James River & Kanawha Canal's 3-mile lock. Adjacent to the lock is an original bateau canal completed in 1789. It is located North of the Boulevard Bridge Toll Booth on Pumphouse Drive.

A 35-minute canal boat ride is provided by Richmond Canal Cruises along the Canal Walk. The historically narrated tour is open April through November with seasonal hours of operation. The boat dock is located on the canal at 5th street.

The entire James River Park System includes more than the Canal Walk. Other things to see or do are:
Huguenot Flat Water - kayaking, canoeing, John-boating and fishing

Riverside Meadows - hike/bike walk in
Pony Pasture Rapids - swimming, sunbathing, changing facilities

The Wetlands - environmental outdoor classroom of river's ecosystem

Main Area - Boulevard Bridge to Lee Bridge, Riverside Drive to James River -foot bridges, rock hopping, wading in river, explore Paw Paw, Sawmill, & Goat islands, mountain bike Buttermilk Trail, see Netherwood Quarry, stroll or cross-country ski trail along the river

Manchester Wall - climb an 1838 granite-block bridge abutment and piers of Richmond & Petersburg Railroad burned by Confederates in 1865

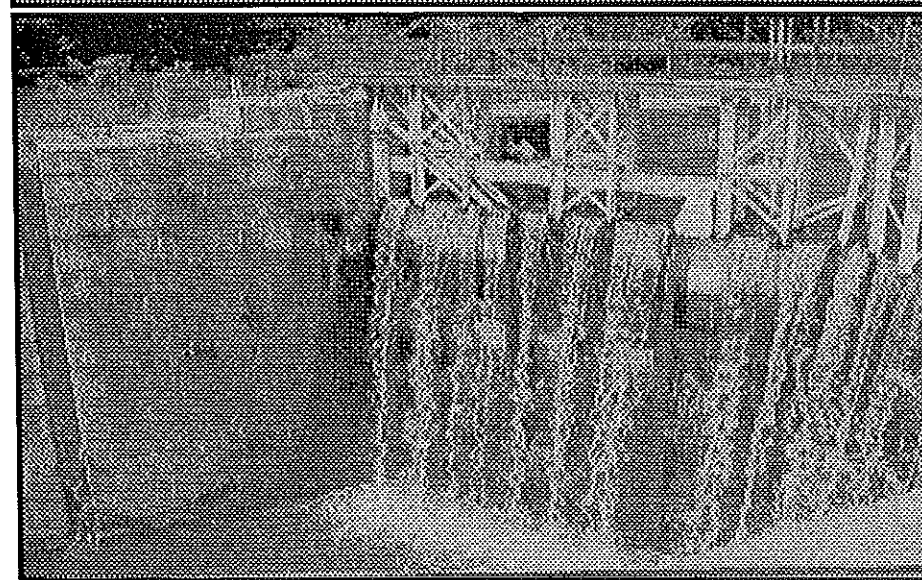
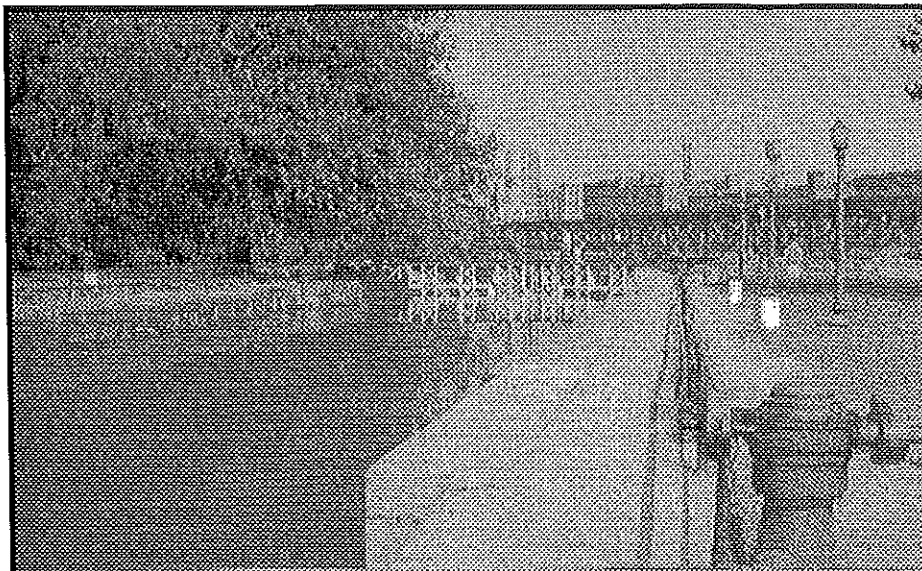
Ancarrow's Landing - motorboat launch-ramp, fishing tournaments, wharf was hub for slaves brought to Richmond for sale or export, Slave Trail from docks to slave jails

North Bank Park - Texas Beach - pedestrian bridge over canal and CSX tracks to sandy beach for swimming, snorkeling, fishing

Belle Isle - 65-acres granite rock with ruins of rolling, slitting and nail mill, hydroelectric plant, granite quarry, Civil War prison camp

Tredegar Beach - Civil War Visitor Center in Tredegar Ironworks' old pattern building, boat ramp, sandy beach, head gate for the Haxall Canal

Brown's Island - Sites of old Dixie and Albemarle Paper Companies, John Jasper's first church, current concerts and entertainment events, river overlook



Top: The Great Ship Lock looking up the JR & K Canal to Richmond.
 Center: Water pours over the huge gate of the Great Ship Lock at the James River.
 Bottom: A railroad bridge crosses over the JR & K Canal just above the lock.

Photos by Bob Schmidt

When Bob and Carolyn Schmidt were there on August 26, 2004 the sun was shining, the canal gently flowed, and the Canal Walk looked similar to that of the Central Canal in Indianapolis, IN except for the many road and railroad bridges that crossed overhead.

Then Tropical Storm Gaston hit four days later on August 30. It dumped 14 inches of rain in less than eight hours. Most of Richmond is on a hill with a flood wall along the river. The rushing waters were kept within the floodwalls, washed away hillsides, streets collapsed, whole walls of some historic buildings disintegrated, the historic neighborhood was flooded with up to ten feet of water, people were marooned, and the Shockoe Bottom area between 14th to 18th Street and Canal to Broad Street looked like a war zone. Cars sat on top of cars in parking lots or floated down streets to smash into buildings. A total of eight people were reported dead within the following days. Damage estimates of \$15-30 million with \$5-10 million for Richmond's roads, utilities and drains were reported.

You might want to wait a year or so to visit this area. We hope it will be cleaned up and restored.

Sources:

Richmond Metropolitan Convention & Visitors Bureau website:
www.richmondva.org/HTML/About_Richmond/History.laeso

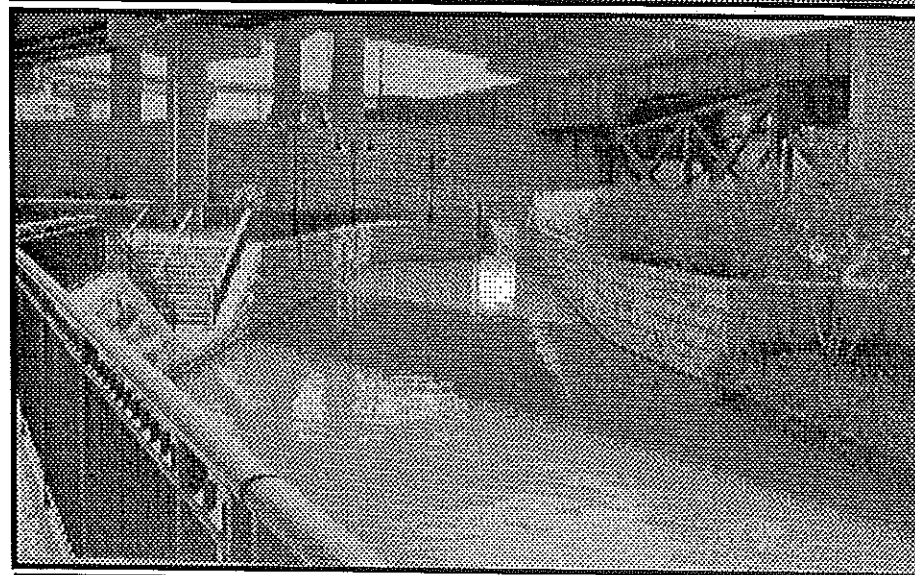
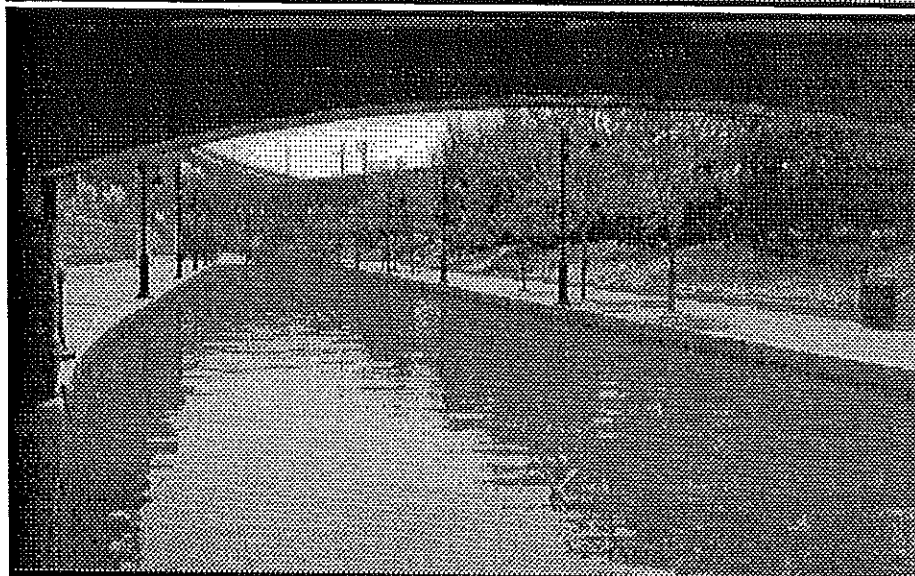
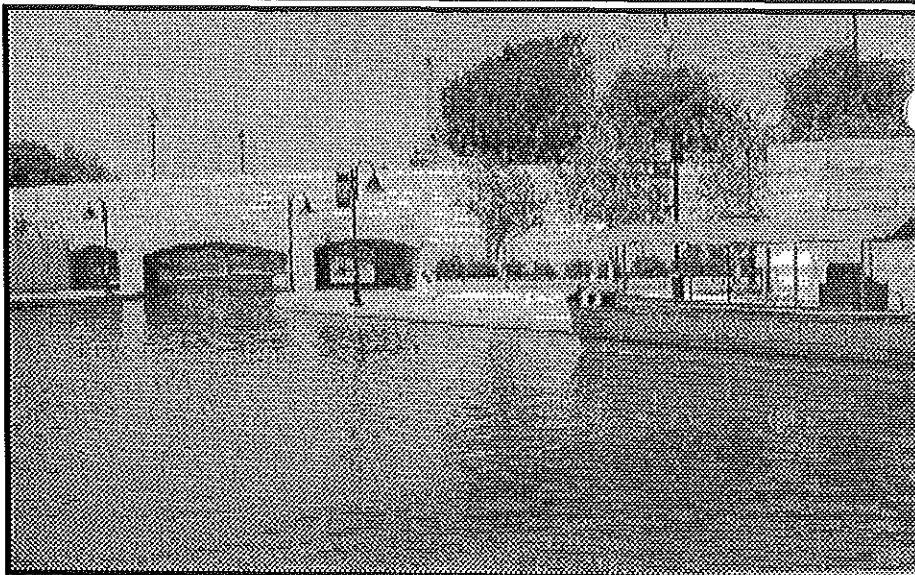
Richmond, Virginia website:
www.ci.richmond.va.us/department/parks_rec/james.asp

Drago, Henry Sinclair. *Canal Days In America*. New York, NY: Bramhall Publishers, 1972.

Gibson, Langhorne Jr. *Cabell's Canal: The Story of the James River and Kanawha*. Richmond, VA: The Commodore Press. 2000.

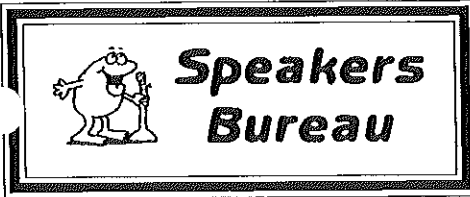
Mayo, Robert S. "George Washington: Canal Builder." *The Best From American Canals No. 1*. York, PA: The American Canal and Transportation Center, 1980.

The James River Park System Complimentary Guide. *The Richmond Guide*. Richmond, VA: Cape Fear Publishing Company, Inc. 2004.



Top: This canal boat gives 35-minute cruises along the restored canal.
 Center: The Canal Walk passes under many bridges, is lighted and landscaped.
 Bottom: Here the canal narrows to pass under the bridges.

Photos by Bob Schmidt



September 14 - Fort Wayne

Bob Schmidt, president of CSI from Fort Wayne, spoke about Indiana Canals to 34 junior and senior students in Northrup High School's elective Fort Wayne History Class. He met with them for 45 minutes at 1:30 p.m. The students and teachers were given maps of Indiana and Ohio Canals and illustrations to use in the classroom.

Bob emphasized the Wabash & Erie Canal and how it affected Fort Wayne when very few people remained at or around the fort. He said the canal brought in settlers and the supplies they needed and provided a way to sell their products out East thus bringing new life to the area and creating a growing economy. He pointed out that many of the canal workers were about the same age as they were and that Jesse Lynch Williams was only 25 years old when he became Chief Engineer of the canal.

Bob was amazed by how little any of the students, the teacher or the student teacher knew about the canal. Questions like "Were there canals in other states?", "How did a lock operate?", "How large were the boats?" and "What did the boats look like?" show the need for much more canal education.

September 15 - Fort Wayne

The Voyagers, the senior group at Christ Church at Georgetown in Fort Wayne, held their luncheon and program at 12 noon in the church's hall. Following a beef stew lunch, Bob and Carolyn Schmidt, CSI editor, dressed in canal era garb gave first person presentations as Captain Columbia

and Miss Caroline to the 56 members present. The one hour presentation including a question and answer time addressed why canals were built, the importance of the Wabash and Erie Canal to the Fort Wayne area, why canals were built alongside rivers, how canal structures were built, and what it was like traveling by canal boat. When Bob sang "Simon Slick," a song about Simon's mule, the audience laughed when he said "He's just the mule to have around to tame your mother-in-law."

Maps of Indiana and Ohio's Canals and the CSI brochure were given those in attendance. There were several questions as to the fate of the Gronauer Lock.

September 15 - Marion

Bob and Carolyn Schmidt spoke to the Grant County Historical Society at their monthly meeting in the Marion County Library at 7 p.m. There were 20 members present, 4 of which were members of the Canal Society of Indiana - Sally Bancroft, Red and Bette Lockhart, Charlotte May. Everyone received a canal map and a CSI brochure from Bette Lockhart, who was at the registration desk.

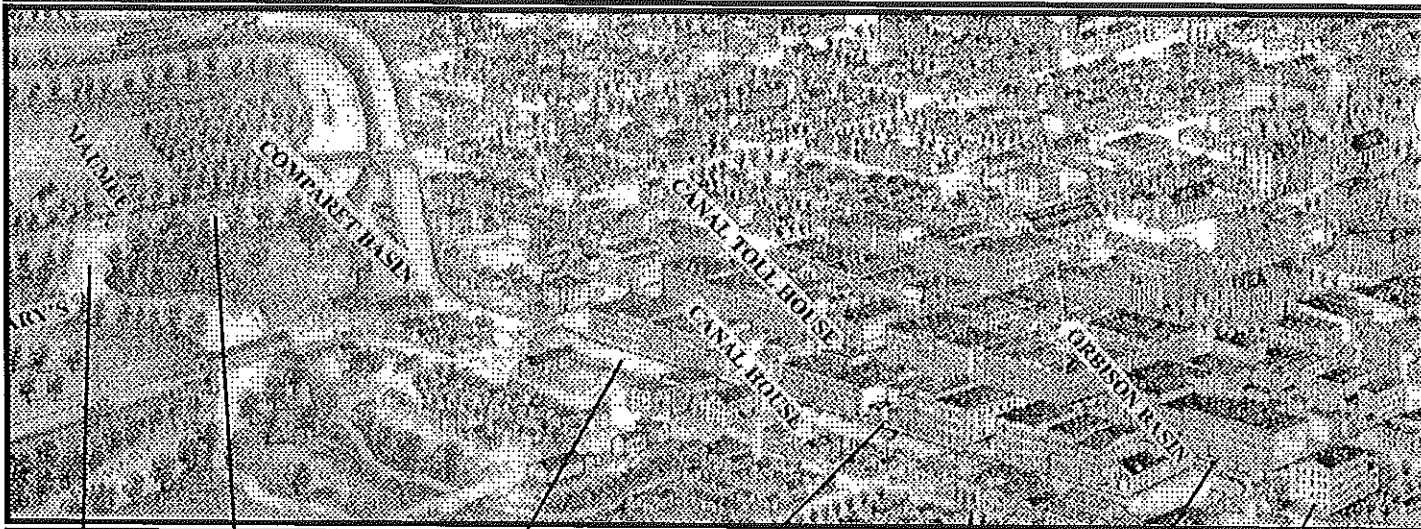
The Schmidts were dressed in canal era clothing. Bob spoke about how the Central Canal was proposed to have followed the Mississinewa River just outside of Marion and that Marion would probably have had docks and centered around the canal if it had been built. He said the Central Canal was to have intersected the Wabash and Erie Canal a little upriver from the Peru dam across the Wabash that fed the W & E Canal. Since this portion of the canal was not built, Marion had to take products to Wabash or Peru, Indiana to ship via the W & E Canal. He said the Mammoth Improvement Bill was actually a good engineering plan, but the young state did not have the funds to back it up.

Miss Caroline, an 1847 canal traveler, looked for a husband among those in the audience. She told of her trip from Toledo to Fort Wayne telling about her experiences aboard the "Silver Bill," the finest boat on the canal. She said the canal contractors were proud of their labors and one even erected a monument to himself and his men at Texas, Ohio. She talked about how the canal structures were built and how they operated. The audience chuckled at the description of the canal cook and how water was taken from the canal for coffee shortly after her helper had emptied the chamber pot into the canal. Passing through the Great Black Swamp during the night and sleeping on the canvas berth while swatting mosquitos was discussed. Some time was spent on Lock No. 2, located in New Haven, Indiana, and its locktender Joseph Gronauer, his general store, and his home. A short period of questions followed.



September 7 & 12 - Ft. Wayne, IN

Two articles "It's All Aboite History" and "3 Area Sites Nominated For Historic Register" ran in the Fort Wayne Journal Gazette that concerned canal contractor Jesse Vermilyea's home. The first was about an area southwest of Fort Wayne known as Aboite, its Indian inhabitants and 1830s settlers, and the Vermilyea house that served as a post office for the Maryland settlement located nearby. The mail came by canal boat on the Wabash & Erie Canal located in front of the house. The second article said that this year ARCH, a local preservation group under the direction of Angie Quinn, hopes to nominate the old Vermilyea House and remnants of the Wabash and Erie Canal to the National Register of Historic Places.



St. Marys River Maumee River Wabash & Erie Canal Dock Street The Landing & Columbia Street Randall Hotel
The Wabash & Erie Canal through a portion of downtown Fort Wayne, IN as seen in an 1880 panoramic view of the city

May/June 2004

Fort Wayne magazine carried an article by CSI member and Allen County historian, Tom Castaldi, entitled "The Landing and Columbia Street." Tom said that "The Landing" located on the western most block of Columbia Street in Fort Wayne, was designated a historic district in 1965 thus saving it from destruction. The oldest commercial area in town, it developed along an unplanned road that led from the U. S. fort at the junction of St. Mary's, St. Joseph and Maumee Rivers westward toward the Wabash portage.

Columbia Street was named for Dana Columbia, who came to Fort Wayne prior to the building of the Wabash & Erie Canal. He and his brothers operated a wagon factory in which they later produced a fleet of pirogues. Furs were loaded on the pirogues in the spring and carried down river to Toledo by the river's up to 10 miles-per-hour current. In Perrysburg, OH, they reloaded with foodstuffs and poled back to Fort Wayne taking several weeks to make the return trip. Once the canal was in operation, the pirogues fleet was made obsolete and Dana Columbia became a canal boat captain. He also built and operated a 22 room log hotel, "The Columbia," on the waterfront in 1831. It was replaced

by the American House in 1836 that was followed by a series of hotels that sat on the site. Dana's home was south of Columbia Street on Clinton. In later life he moved to Junction, OH where the Wabash & Erie joined the Miami & Erie Canal to flow on to Toledo, OH.

Columbia Street was the pioneer community's main thoroughfare for more than a half century. It was home to an estimated 2,500 businesses over the years. Warehouses, wholesale houses, banks and hotels sprang up next to the Wabash & Erie Canal. Local farmers patronized the harness shops, blacksmith shops, hardware dealers and shoe stores. The saloons were the favorites of all the traders being numerous and conveniently located. They offered a free counter lunch if the customer would purchase a 5-cent glass of beer or a 10-cent slug of whiskey. The men met to discuss business or to visit after their crops were sold and their purchases made. Often their horses were shod and their wagons repaired while they waited. Columbia Street street was the busiest in town.

The businesses on the north side of Columbia Street had their front doors on the docks of the canal during canal time with their back doors on Columbia Street. Probably

as much business was done on the dock side as on the muddy street side. The dock was like a boardwalk and was the city's most fashionable promenade.

The Landing during the canal era was known as "The Docks" and at its west end was located the large Orbison Basin where canal boats could dock and turn around. It was a crescent shaped basin named for a miller, Alexander M. Orbison. The basin was lined with hotels and grain mills. The Hill and Orbison Mill was the first located on the basin. Also located there was the Randall Hotel at the west end of Columbia Street. It was originally known as the Robinson House when built in 1856. It had a canal boat landing where boat passengers could step right off the boat and enter the hotel.

In 1864 Thomas Edison lived above a business at the corner of Columbia and Calhoun Streets and worked as a telegraph operator for the railroad. In the same building Joseph and Cornelius Hoagland with Thomas Biddle developed the formula for Royal Baking Powder.

By the 1870s the railroad had taken the place of the canal boat. It bought the canal right-of-way for its tracks. Columbia Street then served as a commercial depot.