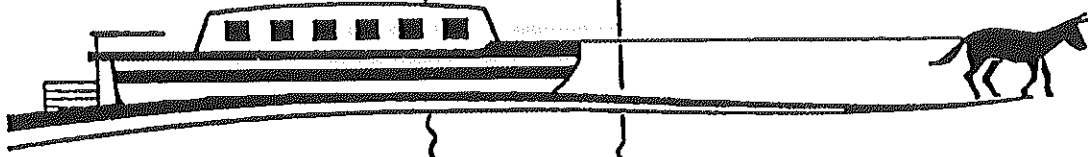


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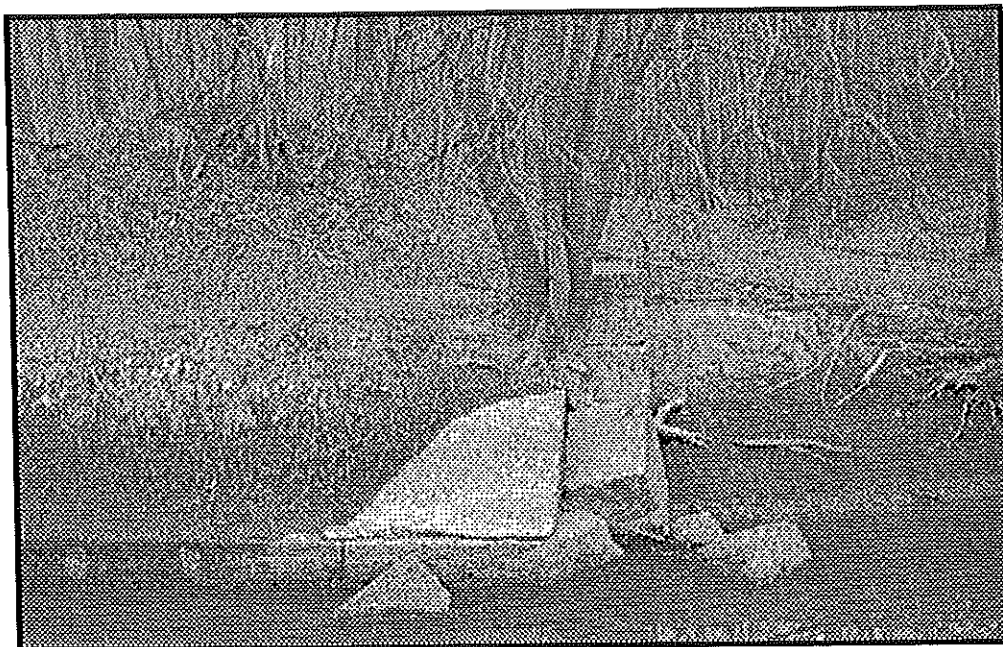
NEWS AND JOURNAL OF THE CANAL SOCIETY OF INDIANA

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MAY 2004

MYSTERY AT LAGOON CREEK



Why was this massive concrete structure built around the towpath of the abandoned Wabash & Erie Canal at Lagoon Creek in Greene County, Indiana?

Photo by Rick Herrington

Features

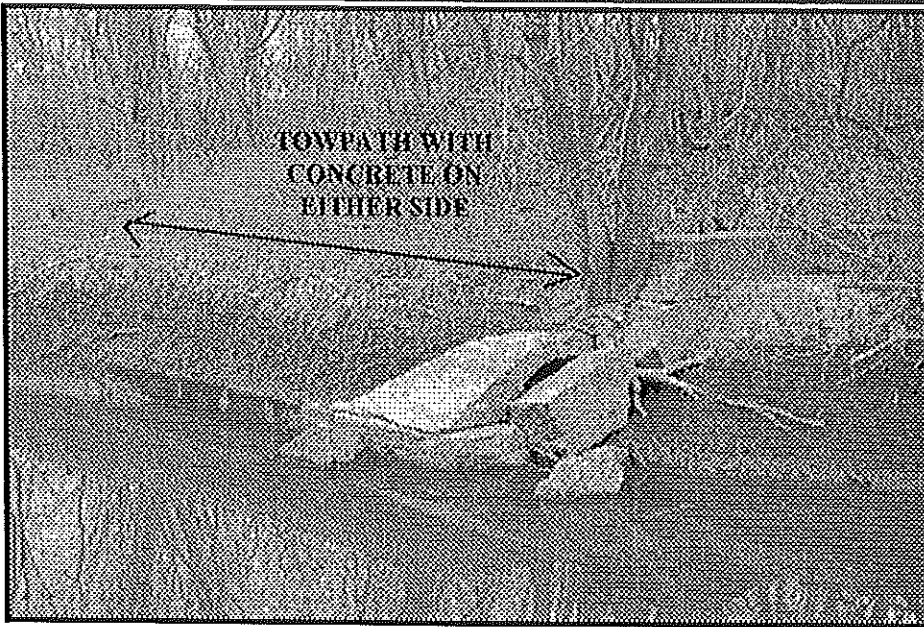
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WHAT IS IT?

By Jeff Koehler, Clay County Historian

Rick Herrington of Wright Implement Company has a great interest in history and is an avid hunter. He spends a great deal of time exploring areas in Greene county. He has a boat and makes regular trips on the White and Eel Rivers. Several years ago he and myself made a trip down the White River and took pictures of Lock # 59 at its junction with the river.

This March Rick decided to explore the remains of the Wabash & Erie Canal in Greene County. He found an old concrete structure and was puzzled. He called me and asked what the structure was that was in the "Cross Cut" part of the Wabash & Erie Canal prism at Lagoon Creek.



portion is Lagoon Creek and the towpath is coming directly over the top of the cement. There are two winged cement dams so to speak on each side of the towpath berm. It does not span the whole width of the canal as a culvert would do - just the towpath. The canal prism is easily seen with a cement wall running parallel to its towpath and berm banks. A drainage tile-like system appears to have carried away water.

We have several structures on the canal that we can't explain. Another is located near Terre Haute by the canal and the Wabash River. They all appear to have been built after the canal was abandoned.

Jeff Koehler of Center Point, IN is the County Historian for Clay County and is on the board of directors for the Canal Society of Indiana. Jeff also located W & E culvert #162 on this trip.



IN MEMORIAM

Charles F. Willer
(Sept. 8, 1954 - Jan. 27, 2004)

Charles Franklin Willer, 49, died at home in Fort Wayne, IN, on January 27, 2004, after a battle with cancer. He is survived by his wife, Kate, and two daughters, Elizabeth and Katrina. Other survivors include his parents, Paul and Dorothy Willer; a brother Lynn; and a sister Dianne Willer-Sly. Charlie had many interests both professionally and as an avocation. He owned and operated Audio Architect, an audio production company; entertained many people as Chuckles the Juggling Clown; on radio he was Charlie Franklin and many knew him as "Choo Choo Charlie." He was interested in historical research and made many presentations to interested groups about northeast Indiana railroads, interurbans and street car operations. In pursuing doing so he became interested in the Wabash & Erie Canal and researched it as the predecessor of the railroads and interurbans.

Concrete structure found in W & E Canal at Lagoon Creek. Photos by Rick Herrington

When he said it was built with concrete, I told him it was not built during the canal era. I was unaware of the structure and told him I would go and see it for myself. Several days later I found this massive cement structure that was located in the middle of nowhere. It appeared that some work had been done in the area of the cement structure. The towpath seemed to have been raised a few feet higher than its original placement. Part of the woods around the area was made up of younger trees - 50 years old or less.

My best guess without more research is that the structure was built during the WPA or CCC era. It seems to have been some kind of flood control/drainage structure, which probably was bypassed when the last work in the area was done 20 to 30 years ago. The structure has been dug around. It also looks somewhat like a road or railroad crossing that was put in at a later date than the canal.

Rick took these pictures of the structure and sent them to CSI headquarters. Note the watered

DAGENET MARKER ARRIVES

Charles Davis, CSI member from Rockville, IN who has researched Parke county, applied for an Indiana State Format Marker to honor Christmas (Noel) Dagenet in January 2001. Anyone who has ever applied for one of these markers knows how much work is involved and how anxiously one awaits the arrival of the marker. The excitement ran high in Parke county when this marker arrived as can be seen in a letter Charlie sent to CSI headquarters:

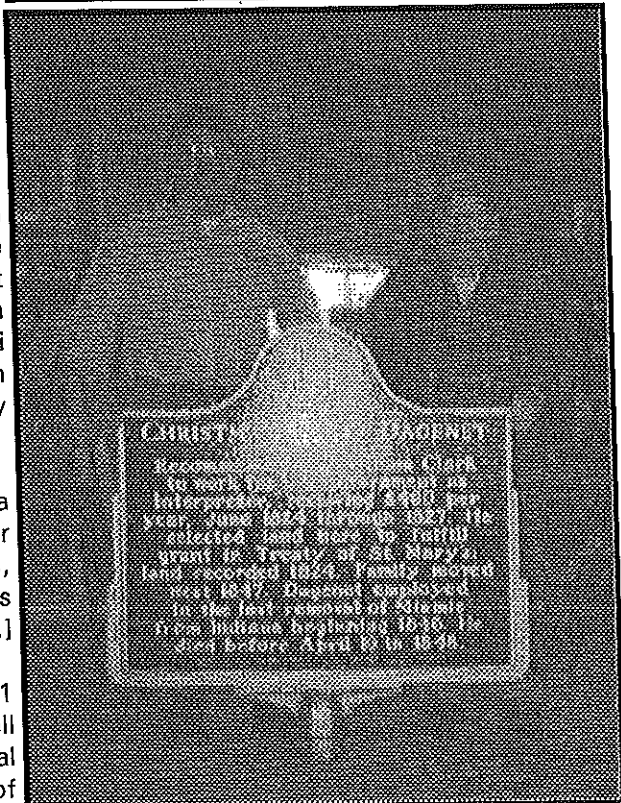
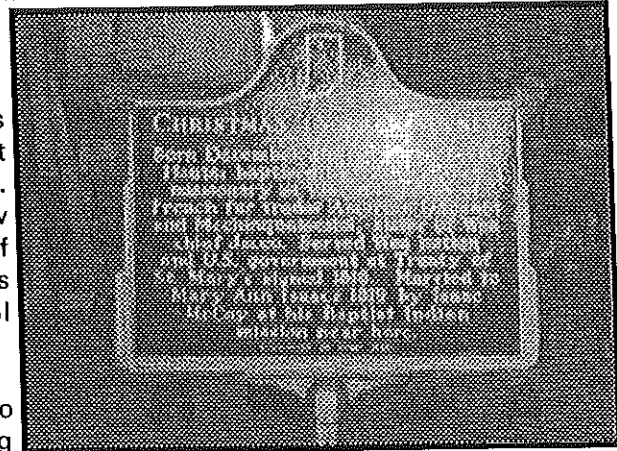
"The marker arrived Jan. 28, 2004 by special delivery to James "Mike" Myers, at the present brick home on Armiesburg road—home site of Dagenet. Mike's brother Joe tried to call me that afternoon to let me know the marker had come but couldn't reach me until 7:41 P.M. Joe and Mike were as excited as I was when I found out. The expected date for arrival was around March 8, 2004.

"I wrote a letter to Ken E. Dagenett, great-great-grandson of Christmas and broke the news to him. Ken called me on the telephone at 7:52 P.M. the 13th of February. He informed me that he and all his family are also excited that the marker has been completed and delivered. He also advised me that the Miami Nation is very interested (in its dedication), so it will be an historical event when the formal unveiling is performed. Many Miami are expected to come to the event.

"February 16, 2004, I wrote to Judy Rippel of the Indiana Historical Bureau, to see if I can get June 5, 2004 (Saturday) for the official date of the unveiling. I plan to call newspapers, television stations, etc. to cover the dedication of which all of us are anxious." Charlie [The dedication is set for June 12, 2004.]

Dagenet was the Indian Agent at Ft. Harrison from 1821 to 1825. In 1824 he was appointed interpreter. He was well educated by the Catholics and spoke English, French and several Indian dialects. He acted as interpreter at the "Articles of Convention" on June 18, 1824 where he witnessed and signed the document as Noel Dashney. He was superintendent of the Wabash Miamis, whom he conducted westward in several migrations We know he led the removals to Missouri and Kansas in 1827, 1832, and 1846 (part by canal boat). It is speculated that he participated in as many as six or eight of these removals.

We hope to see many CSI members at the marker dedication on June 12, 2004. More information to follow in next publication.



A marker honoring Christmas (Noel) Dagenet arrived January 28, 2004 at the Dagenet home site. James "Mike" Myers of P.M. Cable Company on the left and Joe Myers, his brother, on the right were brought up in the present brick home where Dagenet's home once stood. The two-sided marker has different text on either side. Photos by Charles Davis

CHRISTMAS (NOEL) DAGENET

Born December 25, 1799 near Terre Haute; baptized by Father Rivet, missionary at Vincennes. Son of French fur trader Ambrose Dagenet and Mechinquamesha, sister of Wea chief Jacob. Served Wea nation and U.S. government at Treaty of St. Mary's signed 1818. Married to Mary Ann Isaacs 1819 by Isaac McCoy at his Baptist Indian mission near here.

CHRISTMAS (NOEL) DAGENET

Recommended by William Clark to work for U.S. government as Interpreter, receiving \$400 per year, June 1824 through 1827. He selected land here to fulfill grant in Treaty of St. Mary's: land recorded 1824. Family moved west 1847. Dagenet employed in the last removal of Miamis from Indiana beginning 1846. He died before April 10 in 1848.

CANAWLERS AT REST

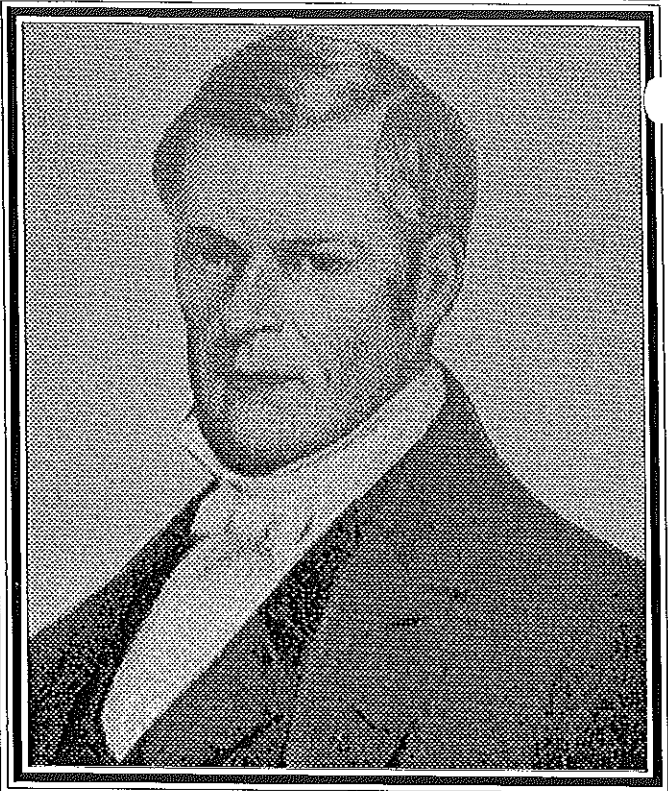
JAMES BROWN RAY

b. February 19, 1794

d. August 4, 1848

By Charles Whiting, Jr.

Portrait from Indiana 1930. Indianapolis, In/The Board of Public Printing



James Brown Ray, the 4th governor of Indiana was born in Jefferson County, Kentucky, to William and Phebe Ann Brown Ray. He was one of eleven children. As a young man his father, William, escaped from a prison in Ireland and came to the United States where he later served in the Continental Army.

Ray "had little formal education. He read law in the office of John S. Gano in Cincinnati and served for a time as deputy clerk of Hamilton County. In 1818 he moved to Brookville, Indiana, and was admitted to the practice of law at the September term of the Franklin County Circuit Court. ...In 1821 he was elected to the lower house of the Indiana General Assembly which then sat in the old Corydon Capitol. Jonathan Jennings was serving his second term as governor and Ratliff Boon was lieutenant governor. The next year Ray was elected to the sixteen-member state Senate for three years. On January 30, 1824, when Boon resigned as lieutenant governor to go to Congress, Ray was elected president pro tem of the Senate, and was re-elected the next year. When Governor Hendricks resigned upon his election to the U. S. Senate, Ray assumed the governorship. He was elected to the office in August, 1825, and again in 1828." Messages and Papers James Brown Ray

"Ray's strong pro-public improvements sentiment was responsible for his election to his first term as governor over Isaac Blackford an Indiana supreme court judge." McCormick He served as Indiana's governor from 1825 to 1831. During these terms he advocated reforming Indiana's educational and penal

systems and building roads. He did not agree with the supporters of the Wabash & Erie Canal pointing out the advantages of the railroad.

Ray ran into trouble when he was appointed a federal commissioner to negotiate a treaty with the Miami and Potawatomie Indians because Indiana's constitution prevented the Governor from holding any other office of honor or profit under the government of the United States. The treaty was successfully negotiated by General Lewis Cass and General John Tipton, but a resolution was presented in the House saying Ray had forfeited his right to continue as Governor.

He also fell into disfavor for not re-appointing Judges Scott and Holman in 1830 while he re-appointed Judge Blackford. It is thought that these two men had earlier refused to support him when he was seeking the office of Senator.

Ray's second term was calm the first year but in the last two years his feuds with members of the legislature became outstanding. He was overly sensitive to criticism and became increasingly belligerent. He resorted to lobbying personally and became a frequent visitor to the legislative halls. The two chief battles during this time centered around Ray's attempt to prepare a revised code for Indiana, which was not successful, and Ray's appointment of new members to Indiana's Supreme Court. His appointments were eventually confirmed. One of his chief antagonists was

Noah Noble who succeeded him as governor.

"Such a rapid rise to the highest political office in a state is remarkable even on the frontier where young men were often elevated to positions of responsibility. The surviving historical sources of the period do not give us a very satisfactory explanation for it. From the material available Ray emerges as a vigorous young man, confident almost to a point of cockiness, ambitious, well meaning, endowed with a sense of the dramatic, motivated by both patriotism and personal political aspirations. He was a tall man, carried himself well. He had a powerful voice and was able to catch and hold the attention of an audience. But early in his career there were those who judged him 'inferior in weight of character and qualifications to many gentlemen' of the Senate, and who described him as being without 'that characteristic modesty which is ever the concomitant of real merit.' Time was to prove that these estimates had some truth, for Ray's rapid political rise was offset only by an equally rapid political decline. His career as a public figure was indeed short-lived. After he left the governor's seat, still in his middle thirties, he was unable to win another elective office." Messages and Papers: James Brown Ray

While he was campaigning for governor, he built a home at 210 E. 10th Street in Brookville. He had a Palladian (arched) window put in the second story on the south side of the house and a fanlight over the front door. This almost caused his defeat. A picture of the window was published in an Indianapolis newspaper and Ray's opponents said Ray was a man of extravagant habits. He loved to make a display. It is said that when he signed hotel registers he wrote "J. Brown Ray, Governor of Indiana and Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy thereof."

In January 1826, the Indiana legislature incorporated the Whitewater Canal Company. Ray expected the company would raise the money for the project. In a letter to the surveyor, who was sent by the federal government, he recommended that the Wabash Canal be surveyed first. He misspelled words.

James Shriver Esqr.
U.S. Asst. Civil. Engr.
Winchester, Randolph County, Indiana

INDIANAPOLIS July 10th 1826

SIR, Permit me to assure you that I received your very kind communication of the 4th Inst. dated at Brookville which is now before me; and read its contents with much satisfaction; in which you state that at the request of the Whitewater Canal Company, you attended a meeting with them on the 1st inst. and had a full understanding as to their views and opinions in relation to the surveys which have been intrusted to your care in

this state; and that you find it will be accordance with their views, and incline to believe it will also meet the wishes of the people of that section of the state, to have the first examinations on Whitewater &c.—You also desire that I should express my opinion &c.

I would do injustice to my own feelings, Sir, if I did not, before I proceeded to answer your letter, congratulate you upon your arrival within the state of Indiana, with your replete powers and enlightened views, to lay the foundation of an enterprise, which will be hailed by an intelligent community with the most undivided applause. I most heartily wish you success in every step you take, and hope for the ultimate consummation of the people's wishes, as to every movement which is made to improve this country.

You are the first regular Engineer, Sir, that has ever operated in this state; and you find us in the midst of a wilderness. By the time you shall have finished your labour with us, you will say that artificial aid is essential to our greatness, whilst you must admit that nature has been prodigal of her bounties and wise regulations.

I much regret that the pressure of your duties did not allow you time to visit our new metropolis. I should have been equally delighted in having an interview with you: And although my inexperience in the affairs of your station, might not have been of much service to you, yet I would willingly have seized every opportunity to give you any information within my power, that would in the least have tended to facilitate your mission, and make your services prosperous and beneficial.

As for my own part, I have no special predilections in favour of either of the contemplated canals, which you are authorized to survey in this state. I think that the projects of connecting the waters of the Wabash with the Mamee of the Lake, and of making the waters of the Wabash mingle with those of the Ohio, through the valley of Whitewater, by artificial channels, noble designs; and deserving the patronage of the offices of the state and federal governments. But whilst I express this opinion as to the general utility of both projects, I cannot with candour withhold from you my belief that the Wabash canal is more completely within the present means and resources of the state than the Whitewater canal. Whilst there is a prospect of having the Wabash canal, commenced under the auspices an aid of both the state and general governments, as a work of national importance, it is too probably, that the other, will be forced to rely upon corporate enterprize for its final success.

As there is a company incorporated to devise ways & means for the Whitewater canal, I would respectfully submit to your consideration the propriety of progressing in that work as you have commenced, until you ascertain the *practicability* or *impracticability* of the project, and when that is done, leave it for the present season, and repair to the Wabash country to commence operations there.

It would unquestionably be gratifying to the people in that part of the state, and perhaps of general interest to the state to have the survey & estimates made of that rout this season, if time will permit. But one solid objection presents itself to my mind, which is, that the Indian title to the lands through which the rout would pass is not yet extinguished, yet I am inclined to believe they

would not object. I think that your chance for health will be as good near the Wabash in the fall, as in the Eastern part of the state.

My knowledge of your business will not justify me in laying down to you who are so well acquainted with it, a general plan of operations; but at your request I have ventured some opinions which may be useful to the state over which I have the honor to preside.

It would certainly give me much pleasure, Sir, to visit your camp, which I hope to do, before you terminate your labours. And if you conclude to visit the Wabash country this summer it will be expected that you will certainly visit our young Emporium.

I shall be pleased to correspond with you on any subject that may be serviceable or agreeable.

I have the honor to be Sir very respectfully your most obt. servt.

JAMES B. RAY

Allow me, Sir, to remark further, that there is to be a treaty with the Indians this fall. I think in September, and if your operations in the Wabash country could be suspended until after that time, it might have a salutary influence upon that negotiation.

In an address to the General Assembly of Indiana on December 4, 1827, Ray made a lengthy, wordy speech. The portion pertaining to the Wabash & Erie Canal follows:

At no period since the organization of our state government, have topics arisen of such vast concern and deep interest for legislative deliberation, as those upon which the members of the present session will be called upon to act. Questions of such great moment, and involving so much difficulty, responsibility and perplexity, as those alluded to, require the most calm, disinterested and intense reflection. The public eye is fixed upon the proceedings of this General Assembly, and it is expected that each member will do his duty, laying aside every extrinsic consideration.

Within the space of the last fifteen months, public lands have been granted to the state of Indiana, through the instrumentality of her public functionaries, estimated to be worth about one million, two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, free of cost, for special purposes. The objects and terms of those immense grants, may be seen by a reference to the two treaties made in the fall of the year 1826, with the Miami and Potawatamie nations of Indians; and two acts of the last Congress of the United States, now in the Secretary's office, which will be laid before you. It is believed that the most sanguine politician, will be unable to point to any combination of circumstances, which will again place under the control of the state, in

the same time, and perhaps not for half a century—perhaps never, such extensive and valuable resources, for prosecuting a grand system of internal improvement to a successful termination, and for the ultimate production of a revenue that shall relieve our fellow citizens from taxation. Legislatures that have formerly sat, have been engaged in theoretical disquisitions into the expediency of making considerable commercial improvements in the interior of the state; but not having the means within their grasp, which alone can give vitality and certainty to such gigantic undertakings as were conceived, no decisive step has yet been taken. What has been said and done, having but little other effect than to invite discussion, and enliven the public mind to its best interests, the honor seems to have been reserved to the representatives of the people, now present, to act efficiently in relation to those public works, of which the highest expectations are entertained.

A tract of land, five miles in width, and in length the whole distance of a survey now making by a brigade of United States' engineers, commencing at the mouth of Tippecanoe river, and running northeast along the valley of the Wabash and its tributaries, to Fort Wayne; thence down the Maumee of the Lake, to the mouth of the Auglaize river, or lower, a distance of about one hundred and sixty miles, is granted to this state for the purpose of making a *Canal*, to connect the waters of the Wabash with Lake Erie—and the Miami treaty provides for its location through *all* the Indian reservations. Potawatamie Indians, during the fall of 1826, and since ratified by the Senate, equal to one section of *good land*, for each mile of the *whole* distance, from Lake Michigan to some convenient point on the Ohio river, to *make a turnpike road*. These two grants are placed under the absolute control of the Indiana Legislature, for the purposes above mentioned. The road grant is without condition. The canal grant, though subject to certain conditions presents nothing in them that ought reasonable to make your body hesitate to adopt that course, which will most certainly secure it from the contingencies, which the lapse of time, unimproved, must attach to it.

Since the recent survey and examination of this long contemplated line of internal communication, to connect the waters of the Lakes and the Wabash leave no doubt of its practicability; and it being in our power to avail ourselves of the splendid donation which has been proffered to us by the liberal hand of the General Government, the success of such a very valuable facility, should not be looked upon as any longer problem[at]ical. By a letter from Mr. Moore the engineer, engaged in this business, which will be submitted, you will perceive that the whole of this survey, will not be completed this fall, in consequence of sickness. The distance from the *summit* near Fort Wayne to the mouth of the Tippecanoe

river, that part of the survey which is completed, is one hundred and three and an half miles. The lockage, two hundred and twenty two feet.

This may be all the estimate we shall have before us at this session. No data is furnished as to the cost. But, most of the enterprizes for inland navigation in the U.S. finding their origin in the New York Canals, we may look to their successful execution and demonstrated utility, for information and reasons to sustain us in making the adventure, which we are now called upon imperiously to make. Estimates of Canals have been made for a variety of widths and depths, and on almost every kind of surface, both in Europe and in America; so that the Legislator may form an idea of the expense of almost any imaginary route. The profits of Canal stocks, judiciously invested in England, doubtlessly suggested to the Americans, the transportation of whose products constitute their greatest burthen, the idea of a similar policy. In deciding upon these great undertakings, it will not do to test them by a too penurious calculation of dollars and cents. Should the expense of our Wabash Canal exceed a million of dollars, it must be recollected, that we have under our controul means to that amount. If the profits of the Canal, when finished, shall produce the interest of whatever additional sum is required, and enough besides to extinguish that principal gradually, the credit of the state must remain unshaken by a loan. It is said by the most confidential writers, that all of the three hundred British Canals, have given satisfaction to the public and the stockholders. Ought we not then to seize upon this opportunity to furnish a memorable demonstration, that we know when and how to act for the general welfare when the occasion demands it? Prompt and descicive [decisive] steps toward the commencement of this work on your part, will furnish the most unequivocal evidence that you are not indifferent to the great *agricultural, manufacturing and commercial interests* which constitute the bone and sinew of society. Public men must be brave, and not suffer intimidation by the *probable* consequences that may arise out of 'the chapter of accidents.'

If you conclude to accept of this grant, as you certainly ought, the principal question which must next arise, will be: When and how shall it be disposed of? How appropriated, and to what objects?

The first proposition resolves into two others, as follows: Is it better to sell the land now or at a subsequent time? Shall it be sold for cash in hand or on a credit? After examining this subject carefully, I have become satisfied that it would be impolitic to require a sale of these lands, at any period prior to the completion of whatever improvement may be agreed upon. And that when the auspicious time arrives for selling, that the door to future difficulties should be closed, by requiring

prompt payment. Were you to authorize a sale on a credit before the Canal is completed, with the view of raising the necessary means, many years must elapse, and much of the peoples money will be expended, in legislating on relief applications, in addition to the expense of a land office, before a fund will be raised, adequate to the proposed undertaking. Besides, retarding the work, is jeopardizing the grant, for the time is limited for its completion. Were you to offer the land for ready money, it would be inevitably subjected to a wasteful sacrifice; so great, in all probability, as to defeat the project altogether, by its not producing the sum of money *required or expected*. Hence, it follows, that a loan, should be resorted to as the least doubtful expedient, or, if that would not be acceptable, you might authorize an issue of paper, redeemable in the land at a minimum price, after it shall have been offered for sale.

When it is considered, that this land lies upon each side of the proposed Canal, you surely cannot remain long unpenetrated with the belief, that the difference in the amount of sales *before and after* its completion, will not greatly exceed any sum of interest, which may accrue on a borrowed principal. Interest ought to to be paid more than two years, which would be ten per centum on a given sum, whilst the presumption is strong, that the land would be increased in value, by the commercial advantages which would append to it, at the finishing of the work, more than an hundred per cent. The most solemn acts of legislation, will not supply the place of imposing reality; for the alarming idea of uncertainty will have its influence until active operations are commenced on the channel.

The treasury is the proper depository of the public money, requiring an additional bond of its officer. No question, however, can now arise, as to the safe keeping of the *proceed*, except you dispose of the land very differently, from what I believe you will.

U. S. Engineer Asa Moore finally completed the survey for a canal through the Whitewater Valley to unite "the waters of the St. Marys, St. Josephs' and Wabash rivers" with the Ohio. He reported that such a canal route was "impracticable." *Indiana House Journal*, 1829-20.

Ohio was not co-operating in completing the Wabash & Erie through her state. Railroads were favored by the Senate committee and others. Ray's message to the General Assembly on December 7, 1830 points this out. The portion pertaining to canals follows:

...Now is surely the time, whilst our State councils are undivided by implacable animosities or sectional jealousies, and whilst the spirit of improvement is in the land, whilst damages for privileges of way are

nominal, and improvements unmade in many places, for the State to mark out to the public eye those essential lines of intercourse, which must by us, or by our successors, be made the objects of special consideration; and which, cannot in the common course of events, remain unimproved by a wise commonwealth. Our Wabash and Erie Canal, (or its substitute, a Rail Road, less expensive and equally valuable) on account of its utility, and the provision already accessible for its advancement, deserves to occupy the foreground in the progress of a more enlarged plan for internal improvement or navigation. This infant arm of our commercial prosperity and of hopeful promise to the farmer, has already become the subject of a lively and general solicitude. Such are the public expectations and the delicate relations growing out of late fiduciary engagements, between the State and the land purchaser, that either a *forced* or *voluntary* suspension of this work, must be the curse of much public and private murmuring, besides the imposition of onerous responsibilities upon the State, not to be desired. The State would be unworthy of her franchises, to give up this enterprise *now* with one hand upon the donation of lands already made; and the rich Miami reservation with the *reach* of the *other*. If the State of Ohio shall blindly refuse the undoubted advantages and donations of land tendered to her by the treaty of 1829, between her and Indiana, she will impose, through too much reliance upon her enterprise and magnanimity, consequences upon us, not less grievous, than ruinous to herself. It will be regretted, if the absurd idea of canal rivalry, shall so successfully obtrude itself into the calculations of our sister State, as to form even an item of objection to the ratification of the compact. A refusal to unite with us, on this, or any other ground, however, to make the canal, will only leave her without the tendered bounty, and drive up to other expedients, not less sure, tho' more expensive. The canal route may be changed, so as to run through the Michigan territory, and north of Ohio, to Lake Erie. This furnishes us with *one* alternative, under the pressure of necessity, altogether possible in itself. Another is, that the ordinance of Congress of 1787, declares all navigable waters leading into the St. Lawrence, common highways, and that the Maumee is a navigable water course, and leads towards the St. Lawrence. Hence, it is free to all to navigate, and susceptible of improvement under authority from the U.S. This would be given, as a necessary consequence of the grant already made. So *here*, we have another. And it either of these designs should be found not to answer the end in view, we may *then*, as a *dernier* resort, but full of promise, in virtue of an act of Congress changing the terms of the canal grant, construct with its *products*, applicable to the whole line of survey, a *single Rail way* from the Detroit river, across the peninsula, to the Southern bend of Lake Michigan, thence to the Wabash river, thence to Indianapolis, thence to the Ohio

river. By means of such a facility an outlet would be opened for the State, including the Wabash country, to the *northern* and eastern lakes, and the cities of New York and New Orleans, or the Gulph of Mexico and the Atlantic ocean.

The Kentucky Rail Road, terminating at Louisville, would seem to mark out the falls of the Ohio river, as the point of termination of the one through Indiana. Thus it may be seen, that the states of Kentucky and Indiana, and the territory of Michigan, may be united directly, in interest, upon a scheme of mutual benefit, which, by its truly national bearing, might calculate largely upon any amount of national funds, or lands, which might be found wanting, after the application of the proceeds of the lands already granted, to carry on the work. It might be calculated with some certainty, that by offering to the territory of Michigan, the same immense *boon*, which is now offered to Ohio, that she will complete that *part* of said road, which runs through her territory Indiana, with her grants, might complete what would be in her limits. Kentucky, Tennessee, and other States south of them, would doubtless do their duty, until they way should reach the Atlantic. An *egress* and *ingress* from and to the lakes and seas, would be secured to us. The southern and northern Markets, and productions would both be thrown open to our trade. Whatever may be thought of this *ulterior* project, whilst the canal is *possible*, it must after *that* insist upon its strong claims to favor by its national character, and the prospect of uniting several large States in its support, to secure to it the ample means of the General Government, after the payment of their debt. It follows from the above picture, that the non-ratification, of the treaty, by Ohio, will only *cripple* us.

The canal lands, sold in September, averaged \$1.70 per acre, creating a capital stock of \$75,000.00. It is understood, that the terms of selecting the balance of the lands, have been adjusted with the United States, by the commissioners. It is also under stood, that the canal commissioners, have had an Engineer employed this summer upon the summit level section of the canal. You are referred to their report for particulars. I will here add, that semi-annual sales of the canal lands will hereafter take place, by the existing law, unless the course Ohio may take with the treaty, shall make it necessary to suspend the sales, further up the Wabash, until we shall have concluded upon *other* and *further* operations.

At the end of his term as governor, Ray delivered a farewell message to the General Assembly on December 6, 1831. The part of that speech concerning canals follows:

The topics of a general nature, for your consideration, at this session, are not very numerous. After mingling your regrets together, with me, that the state of Ohio is about to withhold from us her assistance and co-operation in the construction of the Wabash and Erie canal, and then surveying the obstacles in the way of the accomplishment of our wishes without such aid, or consent, you may be inclined to deliberate upon some of the alternatives which experience has substitutes in place of the canal, with undoubted success. Preferring the canal, however, on the route it is located, as long as there is a ray of hope for its continuation to the Maumee bay, merely out of pure regard for the preservation of good faith between the state and the purchaser[s] of the lands sold under constructive pledges to apply their consideration to a work of that kind, yet when this prospect becomes hopeless, let it be answerable if possible, which is the best faith, the constructive of a Rail-way with the consent of Congress and the land owner, or the suffering an entire failure of the grant" Where they are in other respects equal, the majority of the American people, at this day, give the preference to the Rail-way over the canal; the former being altogether the cheapest and best.

The abandonment, however, of the Wabash and Erie canal, bound as we are by the most solemn pledge to construct it, by several legislative acts, cannot in good faith be justified now, for any substitute however imposing, unless driven to such course by *unavoidable necessity*. Subject to this qualification, the legislature is most earnestly solicited, by the priceless honor of the state, to take the responsibility fearlessly upon her, of making an energetic and speedy commencement of this work. Justice and the public voice call for this canal, and sanctioned by the growing resources of the state, it ought to be promptly commenced, without further delay. Convinced that you will be sustained by the magnanimous population of Indiana, in furthering this enduring and useful line of commerce, my opinion as to the obligation which rests upon you to make it, is respectfully given.

In later life Ray ran unsuccessfully for representative to Congress in 1833, commissioner of the Wabash & Erie Canal in 1834, clerk of Marion County in 1835, and a second time for Congress in 1835. He opened a law office in Indianapolis and, briefly entered the newspaper business in Greencastle in 1833 publishing *The Hoosier*. On September 13, 1836 he spoke at the ground-breaking for the Whitewater Canal and also established an office to buy and sell land in Marion county that year. He went into the dry goods and grocery business in Centerville in 1837. Two years later, he and his nephew opened a branch store in Cambridge City. He sold that business and went back to law in

Indianapolis in 1846.

For some years he was very eccentric and was considered by many deranged especially when he predicted that Indianapolis would become a railroad center. He was arrested one time for threatening to kill his wife. At that time he wrote letters in the air with his cane. Paul Fatout in his book *Indiana Canals* said that Ray had a "Fondness for display and theatrical mannerisms....Once he pardoned a condemned murderer by waiting until the noose had been adjusted and the victim about to be swung off, then rushing forward in the nick of time to reprieve the man in a speech reported thus: 'There are but two powers known to the law that can save you from hanging...one is the great God of the Universe, the other, J. Brown Ray, Governor of Indiana. The latter stands before you. You are pardoned.' "

Ray was the governor during a period of transition and of personal politics. "The people continued to look to individuals and to be influenced by personalities rather than to place their confidence in organizations with defined programs." Messages and Papers James Brown Ray

James Brown Ray became ill while returning from a trip to Wisconsin via the Ohio river. He died in Cincinnati, August 4, 1848, at the house of a relative reportedly of cholera and was buried the next day in Spring Grove Cemetery. The cemetery had been established three years earlier by the Cincinnati Horticulture Society partially as a result of re-occurring cholera epidemics and today encompasses 733 acres. Spring Grove records state that he died of congestive fever, which was the name used for malaria. He left property holdings of considerable value.

Ray was married twice. In 1818 he married Mary Riddle, who died in 1823 leaving two children, James G. and Mary Ann. He married Ester Booker of Centerville after becoming governor in 1825. They had five children, Indiana, Eliza Jane, Virginia, Sarah and John W.

A notice of Ray's death was published in a Cincinnati paper, but no obituary was found.

The Cincinnati Gazette August 5, 1848

Died

At the residence of Mrs. Gillespie, on John Street, in this city, at 2 o'clock, Friday morning, James B. Ray, late Governor of Indiana, in the 54th year of his age. He returned a few days since from a tour of the South - on his way home to Indiana, laboring under severe illness of which he died.

His funeral will take place this morning, (Saturday) at 10 o'clock, A.M. From the residence of Mrs. Gillespie, on John Street. The friends are requested to attend.

RAY, James Brown No. 450

Place of Birth: Near Louisville, Ky.

Place of Residence: Indiana (Waynes) *former Governor of Indiana*

Age—Birth Date: 1794 *January* Date of Death: Aug. 4, 1848

Public Vault: Burial: Aug. 5, 1848

Disease: Congestive fever

Parents' Names:

Lot Owner: *Wm. R. Morris* Sec. 52 Lot 112

Site and Kind of Grave:

Material: Rust

Graveside:

Place of Death:

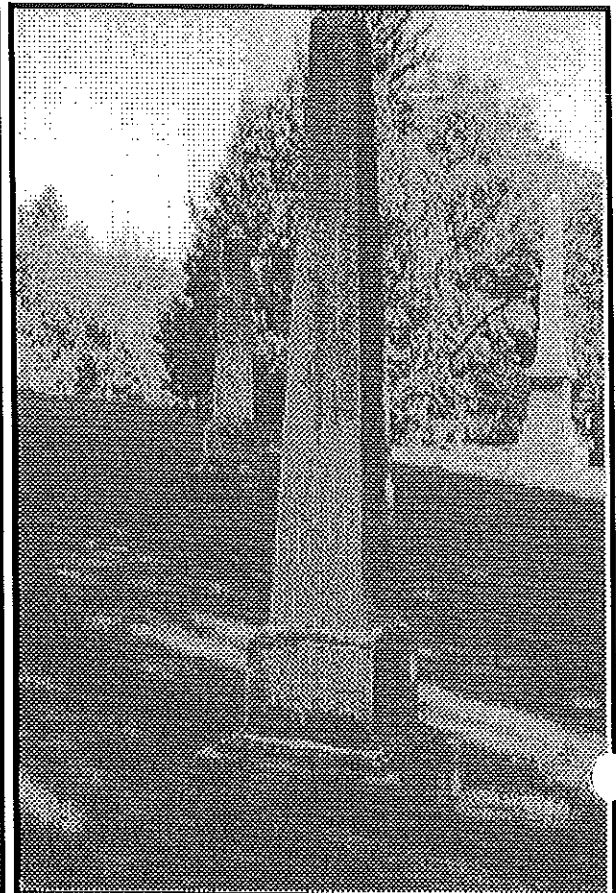
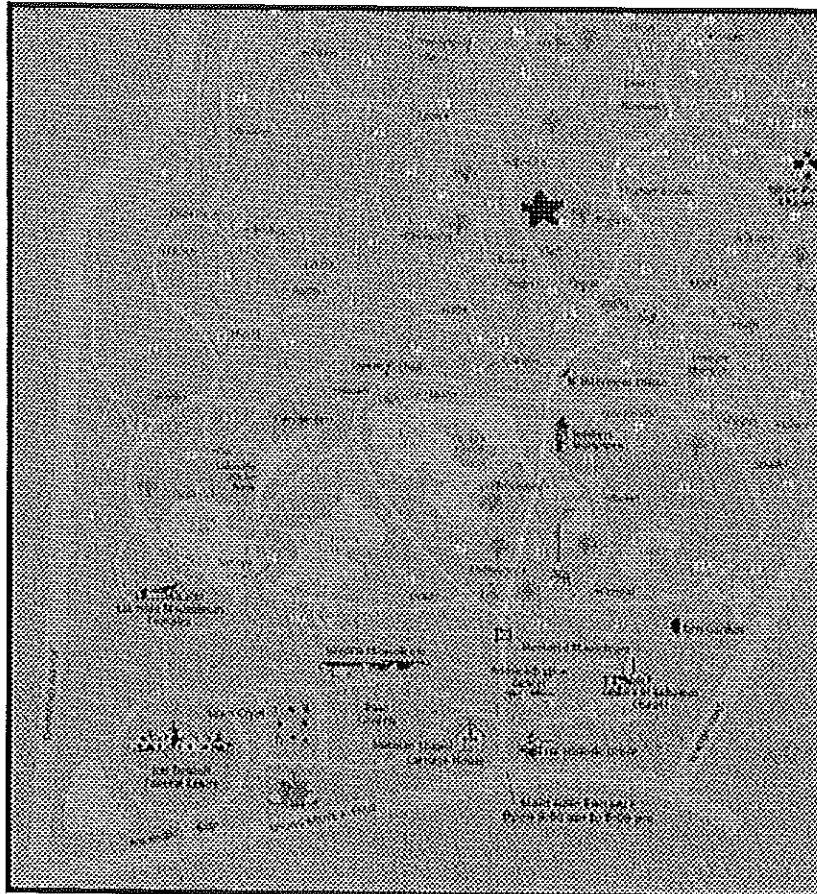
Single—Married—Widowed—Relation to Owner:

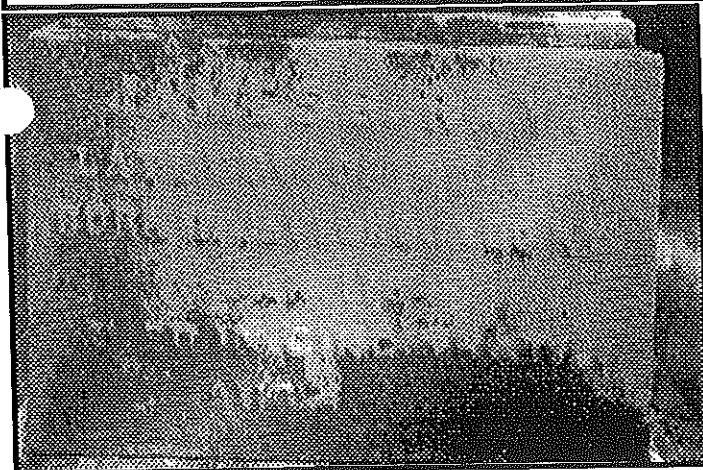
Charges:

Remarks:

This Spring Grove Cemetery record and his grave marker show that Ray was born in January 1794 yet his birth date is given as February 19, 1794 in his biographies. This record says he died of congestive fever while his biography says he died of cholera.

Governor James Brown Ray is buried in Section 52 Lot 112 in Spring Grove Cemetery, 4521 Spring Grove Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio. Grave marker photos by Chuck Whiting





JAMES B. RAY,
LATE GOVERNOR OF INDIANA
BORN IN JEFFERSON CO. KY.,
JAN. 1794,
DIED IN CINCINNATI, OH,
AUG. 1848

Photo by Chuck Whiting

Sources:

Cincinnati Gazette. August 5, 1848.

Fatout, Paul. **Indiana Canals.**

Indiana House Journal. 1829-1830.

Indiana 1930. Indianapolis, IN, The Board of Public Printing

Jacob Cox, <http://www.statelib.lib.in.us/www/ihb/govportraits/coxray.html>

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McCormick, Michael. **Terre Haute Through the Canal Era.**

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Riker, Dorothy and Gayle Thornbrough, **Messages and Papers Relating to the Administration of James Brown Ray, Governor Indiana 1825-1831.** Indianapolis, IN: Indiana

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Spring Grove Cemetery & Arboretum - Files



ALLEN COUNTY / FORT WAYNE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

TRIP TO

DELPHI CANAL MUSEUM

By Tom Castaldi, Allen County Historian

Chief Little Turtle described it as that "Glorious Gate" where the words of the Miami fathers were passed over the generations. Hidden in a milieu of rich cultural and natural landscape are jewels that are worth examining and celebrating as part of the western slope of the Maumee-Wabash river systems' continental divide.

One of the newly polished jewels of the Wabash Valley is the Wabash & Erie Canal Museum at Delphi where the Allen County-Fort Wayne Historical Society will travel on **May 1, 2004.**

Canal enthusiasts have long explored the route between Fort Wayne and Delphi so there will be much to see and hear about both from the past and from the dreams of the Wabash Valley Heritage Corridor. Traveling down old U.S. 24 provides a scenic route to explore through a rich valley.

The trip will begin by gathering at **Bob Evans' restaurant at U.S. 24 and I-69 from 7:30-8:30 A.M.** leaving promptly at 8:45 A.M. Members of the Canal Society of Indiana interested are encouraged to organize their own **car pools** and all will receive maps and designated gathering spots along the way.

Cost of a lunch and the museum entrance fee is included in a base fee of **\$15.00 per person.** Reservations have been encouraging, and if attendance continues to grow and larger vehicle accommodations found necessary, the base fee will be adjusted accordingly.

For more information, call the History Center on Tuesday through Friday at 260-426-2882, extension 307 and ask for Beth.

**NEWS FROM
DELPHI**

**Duncan Speaker At
Annual Meeting**

Esther Colleen Duncan will portray Mary (Polly) Bratton, wife of Pvt. William Bratton, a member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition at the Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal Association's annual meeting at the new Canal Interpretive Center on Tuesday, April 20th at 7 p.m. preceded at 6:30 p.m. by a free dessert bar provided by the Canal Board of Directors. This is the first opportunity to hold the Annual Meeting in the New Canal Conference Center, so there will be ample space for members and visitors to come and enjoy the free program. The short business session will include election of directors and recognition of donors.

Duncan, who recently spoke at the Canal Society of Indiana's annual meeting at Turkey Run Inn, was featured in an article that appeared in the *Lafayette Journal and Courier*, June 20, 2003, by Kevin Cullen entitled "Expedition Member's Monument Receives Polished Look."

"Thanks to Esther Duncan of rural Veedersburg, folks will see a beautifully restored memorial for Pvt. William Bratton. Bratton was a member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, which is marking its bicentennial celebration through 2006. Of the expedition members who completed the epic 8000-mile trek across the Louisiana Purchase and back, Bratton is the only authenticated one to be buried in Indiana...

"In 2002, Duncan, historian/researcher, led an effort to get an Indiana Historical Bureau marker put

up at Old Pioneer Cemetery, Waynetown, Indiana, telling the Bratton story and designating his burial place. Duncan, a Fountain County farmer and educator with a degree in history, has been fascinated by the Lewis and Clark story nearly all her life and spent many years researching it.

"In restoration of Bratton's memorial, Duncan called in a restoration expert. 'Restoration of the memorial was a job that needed to be done,' she said. The obelisk and limestone base had settled and it leaned precariously. In addition, Duncan had the weathered inscription, '...West with Lewis and Clark to Rocky Mountains.' cast onto a plaque so that the original tombstone inscription is preserved."

Duncan has retraced the most difficult part of the expedition's route on horseback in the same way the expedition portaged this part of the trail through the Bitterroot Mountains in 1805. She has traversed other parts of the trail and hopes some day to connect it all by reaching Fort Clatsop on the Pacific coast.

Her presentation will be a first person narrative in authentic costume and will make William's story come to life. She tells of his adventures as well as his wife's experience in raising 10 children on the Indiana frontier. The program will appeal to a wide range of audiences. The public is invited.

Come and hear Duncan's talk. To reach the Canal Interpretive Center come to the Court House in Delphi, go north 11 blocks on Washington Street and turn into Canal Park on your left.



**We Have the Water -
Just Add a Boat!**

You've heard it many times - for a quick meal, a pitcher of orange juice - Just Add Water. Well, we have the water. Now we need to Just Add a Boat! For years, visitors to Canal Park in Delphi have asked if we have a canal boat or plan to have one soon. What an exciting prospect - to offer the lure of a ride on the Wabash & Erie Canal to bring even more visitors to the Park.

With the Canal Conference and Interpretive Center attracting more and more visitors, it is time to turn attention to the dream of having a canal boat. We have the opportunity to apply for a grant from the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT). Funding comes to INDOT from federal gasoline tax receipts, and is to be used for transportation enhancements including "historic transportation museums."

A grant proposal has been prepared and was submitted by the end of January 2004, in cooperation with the City of Delphi. It outlines in detail the proposed plans for a canal boat, a storage warehouse near the Rotary shelter house, and a dock beside the Canal Center.

Cruising the Canal Waters

In the watered section of canal in Delphi the two-thirds size canal boat replica would pass under two historic bridges - the Paint Creek iron bridge and the Washington Street stone arch bridge. In the Canal Park section, the boat could be towed by mules or horses during festivals or at other special times, providing an authentic experience for travelers. There is an adequate treeless towpath right beside the canal for the animals that are hitched to the towline. When the boat passes to the north of Washington Street it will need to be propelled by a

concealed motor since there is no continuous towpath for that half mile portion to Founders Point. On weekdays and for tour groups the boat will be propelled by the hidden inboard motor.

A proposed special storage facility fashioned as an 1850s canal-side warehouse will house the boat. It will add to the realism of the original turning basin site by creating the illusion that this building featured a top-loading cargo facility, just like the historic Speece Warehouse did in the 1850s.

The opportunity for the public to experience this historic transportation mode is not available within 150 miles. In Indiana, only the Metamora site on the Whitewater Canal offers a short boat ride. Several authentic boats are located in Ohio, and one is being built in Illinois.

If the Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal Association is fortunate in its grant application, the next task will be to raise matching funds and to provide volunteer hours for all of the extra work involved.

Canal Dredging Nearing Completion

Winter weather has hampered dredging work on the Canal, but the Canal Association is anticipating completion of the last section along highway 421/39. Next will be installation of a walk-through pipe connecting the Underhill Towpath Trail, allowing hikers easy access from Canal Park to the southern trail sections.

For several years progress was stalled as we waited for the installation of the City's new water system. Then two years ago the canal section through Canal Park was completed.

The current work was made possible by a generous donation by John and Mary McCormick of Delphi.

All the canal land through Delphi has been donated. Gerry and Faye Underhill donated the section where work is being done currently.

Items Needed to Complete Exhibits

Mary Crary is looking for the following items to complete the Dry Goods Store: clothing, fabric, hat pins, bobbins, fans, hat boxes, jewelry, hosiery, shoes and other items that would be sold in a dry goods shop of 1850s. She must be able to document the age of the article, or it can be a replica of an original if she can date it to the right time period, 1832 through 1876. Call her at 765-564-4661.

The Canal Association is still looking for connections with people having family ties to the active canal era of the mid 1800s. Delphi was a bustling community with many businesses and industries. A connection to these families and locating documents and artifacts of the era are important to the success of displays.

Visitors Come From All Corners

Visitors arriving at the Canal Conference and Interpretive Center to tour the museum are asked to sign the register so that we know how far they have come to see us. Recently we reviewed those registrations and were astounded at the results.

Since opening the Canal Center in July, the records show that we have had visitors from 123 Indiana cities and towns. Adding to our pleasure is the fact that we hosted visitors from 25 other states in addition to Indiana, and four countries outside the United States!

Our center attracts visitors to Delphi that would not otherwise come. They spend money at the local businesses. Research by the

Department of Commerce shows that money spent by travelers turns over seven times before it leaves town. This is a win win situation.

If we add a canal boat to our waters, the park and trails should attract even more visitors from all corners of the country - and beyond.

Upcoming Events

April 24 - Narrated hike from Riley Park to High Bridge on Deer Creek 1 p.m., with Charles Gerard

April 24 - A Walking Meditation along Wabash from Trailhead Park, 10 a.m., with David McCain

April 25 - Odd Fellows Cemetery Walk, 2 p.m., north on Carrollton Road, with Mark Smith.

May 5 -- Spring Nature Walk along Rock Creek, 6:30 p.m. with land owner Terry Lacy.

May 13-15 - "Enjoy Indiana" The Interpretive Center will be open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. all three days. Trails are open from dawn to dusk.

May 15 - May Day Celebration at Canal Park, work day in a.m., play time and walk at 1 p.m.

May 27 (Rain Date-May 28) - Pioneer Day for Delphi Community School fourth graders.

June 5 - NATIONAL TRAILS DAY CELEBRATION Two different walks from Canal Park at 11 a.m. & 1 p.m.

June 13 - Paper Mill Tour and paper-making demonstration, from Canal Park 1 p.m., with Mark Smith and Terry Lacy.

June 17 - State-wide Trails Construction and Maintenance Workshop sponsored by the Indiana Parks and Recreation Association in the Canal Center, Delphi.

July 3 - 4 CANAL DAYS FESTIVAL

Demonstrations At Canal Interpretive Center

Artisans are scheduled to demonstrate their particular pioneer skills in the Livery Stable, which serves as the craft room in the museum portion of the Center. In good weather, the demonstrations can be viewed from inside or outside the building. Entrance to the museum is free, and the public is invited during regular open hours 10-4 on Saturdays and 1-4 on Sundays.

April 24 - Barb Roller, Basketry

May 15 - Carol Trapp and Team, Spinning and Weaving

May 22 - Frank Rouse Broom-binding

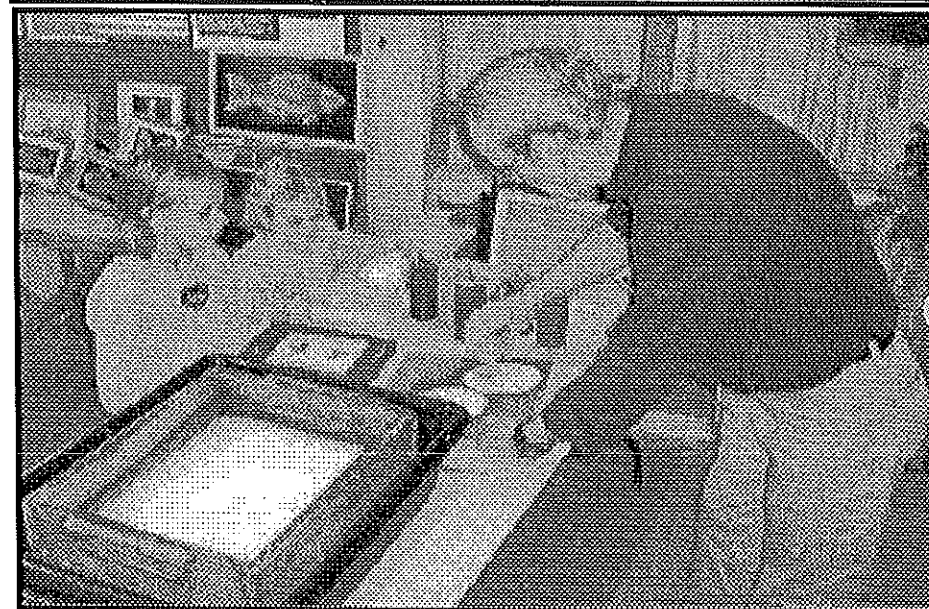
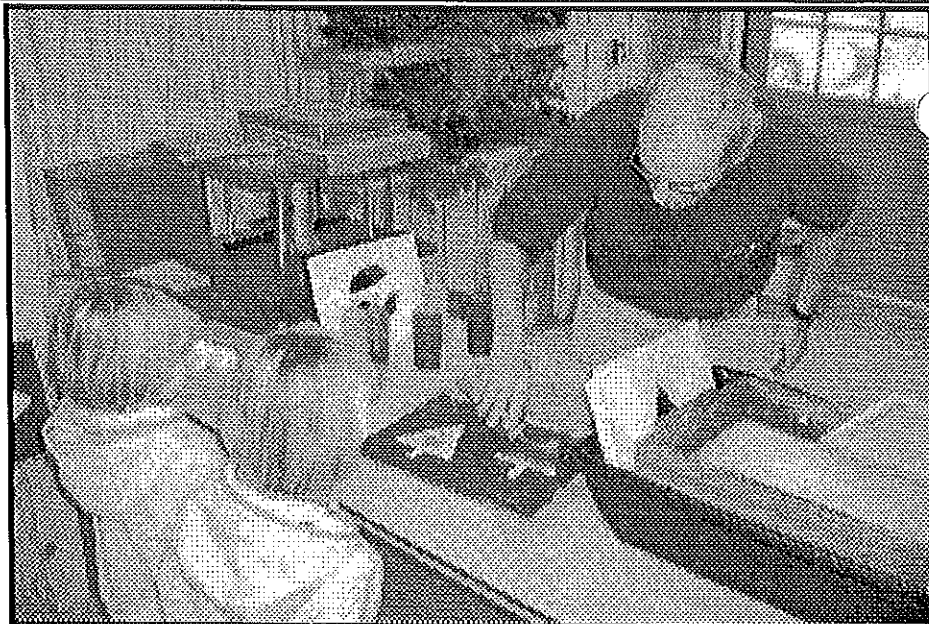
June 5 & 6 - Susan Ransom, Pottery

June 12 - Ed Moser, Flint-knapping

June 13 - Terry Lacy, Paper-making (in connection with a walk to Paper Mill sites with Mark Smith)

Burnett's Creek Arch By Dan McCain

In last month's The Hoosier Packet we questioned the planning for Burnett's Creek bridge restoration. The plan has the diversion of the creek set so that normally water in the creek is running all the time, as it has been, through the arch (to keep the timbers wet) and only when there is excessive runoff does the diversion take any water. Also the diversion goes west of the lock site so it shouldn't impact this structure although I cautioned the engineering firm that they must do an archaeological survey to determine the exact location of the lock. It seems that the plan is adequate at this preliminary time. It will be wonderful if it gets constructed and leaves land available to park and walk.



The LIVERY STABLE (craft room) is one of a dozen Canal Interpretive Center galleries. Terry Lacy recently spent the afternoon demonstrating paper-making the old fashioned way. Come and see 1850s period skills. Visit Saturdays 10a.m.-4 p.m. or Sundays 1-4 p.m. for specific events. The Canal Association is proud to present volunteer craftsmen and artisans such as these. If you are interested in demonstrating the making of buggy wheels, harness, barrels, pottery, tinware, clothing or any other 1850s items that can be constructed on site and offered for sale, contact Mark Smith, Livery coordinator at 765-563-3349. Photos by Dan McCain

Plan Your Celebration At Canal Center

No matter what type of get-together you are planning, chances are the Canal Conference Center can provide an ideal location. The Center

is available by reservation for bridal showers, dances, family parties, meetings, receptions, reunions, training sessions, weddings, and a multitude of similar events.

To reserve the Center please call Judy Stirm at (765) 564-6378.

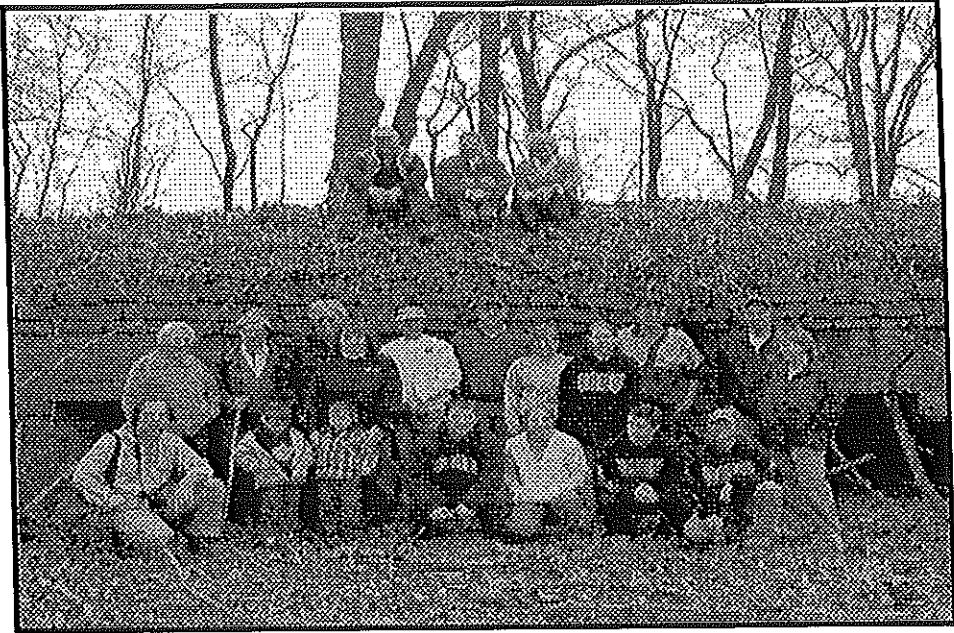
**VERMILYEA
HOUSE
TOUR**

ARCH, the Allen County historical preservation organization is presenting "Vermilyea House...A Return to Splendor" on May 22, 2004, from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM. A tour of the popular Wabash & Erie Canal inn will explore the brick mansion built in 1839 by canal contractor Jesse Vermilyea and his wife Maria.

Bricks for the structure were fired on the property. Most of the woodwork throughout the house is black walnut except for the master's bedroom on the second floor where "white walnut" or butternut trims the space. Vermilyea became the first postmaster for the township and his letter desk remains in place adjacent to the marble-faced fireplace and matches another fireplace in an adjoining parlor. Visitors can see the spent lead bullet embedded in the door that has been left undisturbed as part of its historic past.

The Vermilyea house faced a Wabash & Erie Canal landing that served guests coming and going. Nearby stood the Aboite River Aqueduct No. 2. Its abutments and foundation timbers can be viewed. CSI (Canal Society of Indiana) representatives will be on hand to interpret the canal for interested visitors.

The Vermilyea house has been returned to its splendor by its new owners Todd and Kathy Freeland. The oval restroom with its canal mural is a "must see" for those attending the event. Cost of admission including refreshments and entertainment is \$50.00 for adults 18 years and over. Proceeds go to ARCH.



This group walked a portion of the proposed Laurel-Brookville Canal Trail one Saturday in early March. Photo by Paul Baudendistel

Laurel-Brookville Canal Trail

A group of citizens are hoping to establish a trail along the Whitewater Canal from Laurel to Brookville in southeastern Indiana. They have had several trail walks trying to increase interest in such a project. Mick Wilz can be contacted at mick@sur-seal.com if you wish to be notified of future hikes.

On Sunday March 21 they met at CVS at 1 P.M., made 2 or 3 stops and took a short ¼ mile walk at each stop. On an earlier Saturday walk they heard the following story from a land owner. Paul Baudendistel, CSI Advisory Council, put it into text form.

Boundary Hill Folklore

The scene is a strip of land along the old railroad / canal towpath trail just west of the Boundary Hill cut. In the vicinity of the Jim Cox property and overlooking the canal is a group of old pine trees, which mark the site of an early grave yard. (Warne Cemetery). We thought this story seemed real appropriate for a point of interest along the Whitewater Canal Trail.

The man who owns this farm told Mick about a small cemetery on his property, how the gravestones were settled there under the pine trees and how George Washington was buried there.

In the time when immigrants were traveling through this country a party of travelers chose this neighborhood to set up camp for the night. One family, which was camping with this party, lost their small son during the night, and they searched for him for several days but could not find him. In time the party moved on and, after a couple of weeks, the family of the missing boy gave up and left him behind not knowing his fate. Time passed. Then one day the boy weakly returned. Although he survived this period of total panic and confusion, it was too late. It proved impossible to relocate his parents.

As was the practice in that time, the boy was raised by the neighborhood and given the name George Washington. So it came to pass that upon his death George Washington was buried in that small pioneer graveyard under the pines at the west end of Boundary Hill Ridge.

**Canal Marker Text
For Rockhill Park**

Tom Castaldi, CSI Advisory Council and Allen County Historian, has written the following texts for two Heritage Trail markers to be placed in Rockhill Park in Fort Wayne. There portions of the canal prism remain. Shortly, the River Greenway Trail will be directed through Rockhill Park and the thought is that one marker will be placed at the Greenway entrance to the Park and the other on the old Canal levee. The city is placing the markers.

The first marker covers the story of the Wabash & Erie Canal towpath levee that is a remaining artifact that passes across the park. The sign replaces a long-lost marker that was first posted in 1964.

(picture of canal boat)

Caption: Wabash & Erie Canal freighter Col. Humphrey. Named for Colonel George Humphrey, born in Scotland in 1825, he came to Fort Wayne and was engaged in manufacturing. Humphrey served in the Mexican War and when the Civil War erupted, organized a company of volunteers. Rising to the rank of Colonel, first with the 88th Indiana Regiment, he later was assigned to the 139th Indiana Volunteers. Returning to Ft. Wayne after the war, he became a contractor in the firm of Cochrane and Humphrey. Canal boats such as this could be as long as 80 feet and as wide as 14 feet.

Wabash & Erie Canal

Stretching across Rockhill Park this long embankment served as the levee and towpath for the Wabash & Erie Canal, built by Irish and German

immigrants who came to clear the forests and to dig the channel that was a major force in opening the west to early settlement. Horses or mules walking on the towpath were harnessed by rope to a canal boat to tow it forward. As a levee, it protected the canal water from St. Mary's River flood damage.

Ground was broken for the canal on February 22, 1832, and by July 4, 1843, the Wabash & Erie Canal linked Toledo, Ohio with Lafayette, Indiana. Completed to Evansville, Indiana, on the Ohio River, in 1853, the 468-mile long Wabash & Erie became the longest canal in the Western Hemisphere.

Fort Wayne was the high point on the man-made water route and soon was nicknamed "Summit City." Abandoned in 1874, the canal was sold in 1877, and its path through Fort Wayne purchased by the Nickel Plate Railroad in 1881 for its roadbed.

The last boat was seen on the canal in 1882.

The second marker relates to the Park and William Rockhill's involvement as a canal contractor and public official.

(picture of William Rockhill)

Caption: William Rockhill: born February 10, 1793 - died January 15, 1865.

Rockhill Park

William Rockhill was born in New Jersey in 1793. Attracted by local land sales, he moved to Fort Wayne in 1823 and acquired

a large track of land, part of which is now this park. In the following year, he became County commissioner and after Fort Wayne incorporated in 1829 he was a member of the first Council.

Rockhill contracted to build the middle division of the Wabash & Erie Canal, Captain Asa Fairfield piloting his canal boat Indiana through the completed section on July 3, 1835, signaling the opening of the first section of the canal connecting Fort Wayne with Huntington, Indiana. In 1838 to serve boat travelers, William Rockhill built an inn 1½ miles to the northeast on the canal that he called Rockhill House, which later became the nucleus of St. Joseph Hospital.

During the 1840s Rockhill served first in the Indiana Legislature then was elected to Congress. William Rockhill died in 1865, but the old Rockhill farm property remained until 1908 when it was donated to the City by the Fort Wayne Commercial Improvement Company to become Rockhill Park. A transfer of 16 acres formed an addition to the Park in 1937.

**CANAL SOCIETIES OF
INDIANA AND OHIO
FALL TOUR**

FALLS OF THE OHIO

October 1-3, 2004

Jeffersonville, IN

IN THE NEWS

February - Wabash, IN

The-Paper, a weekly publication in Wabash, IN ran an article entitled "The 'Rising Sun' and Lagro" written by Jack Miller, CSI member from Wabash and former curator of the Wabash County Historical Museum. In it Jack says that a conflict between the towns of Wabash and Lagro began over the location of the county seat. Indian Agent Colonel John Tipton selected Lagro for that honor since it had the first road county to be cleared in 1826 that ran from Logansport to the mouth of the Salamonie River where in the early 1800s a trading post had been established for trade with the Indians. However, Tipton was so busy traveling back and forth between Fort Wayne and Logansport with his Indian affairs that Hanna and Burr beat him to the punch. These two sneaky characters from the small settlement located downstream around the "Treaty Grounds" made Wabash the county seat. From then on people in Lagro distrusted anyone from Wabash.

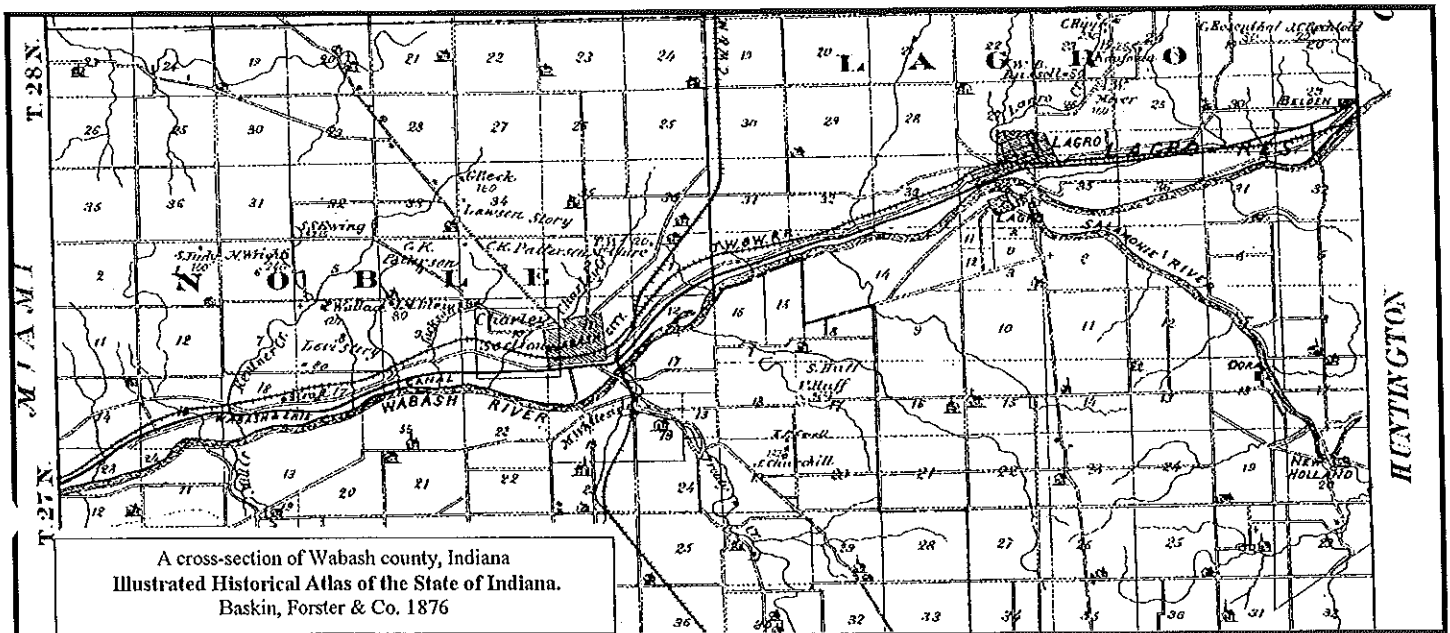
Not to be out-smarted again, at the end of the canal era Lagro fooled the Toledo, Wabash and St. Louis Railroad. When the Wabash & Erie Canal reached Lagro in 1836, the shrewd and enterprising men, who once traded with men in canoes on the river, now had canal boats passing through their town. Farmers from Liberty Mills, Marion, North Manchester, and miles around raised corn, wheat and hogs and shipped them to far away eastern markets. Granaries and warehouses were built along the canal that ran between the town and the Wabash river. Although Wabash was the county seat, Lagro collected canal tolls, became the trading hub of the county and thought it had beaten Wabash.

The coming of the Toledo, Wabash & St. Louis Railroad in 1856 took its toll on the canal. It paralleled the canal between Fort Wayne and Lafayette, IN. Enoch McClure, owner of the packet "Rising Sun," which carried passengers and freight between these two cities, soon found his passengers taking the faster train. He was left with bulk materials such as grain and lumber to ship. Other boats faced the same dilemma. In the 1860s Enoch tied up the "Rising Sun" in the canal turning basin on Lagro's west side where she later sank.

Then the T.W. & S.L. railroad built its own granary on top of the hill and proceeded to steal this last canal business. Even though the canal grain elevators were closing one at a time, this was not fast enough for the railroad. It levied a one-cent-per-bushel fee on all grain shipped to Toledo, OH that was brought up from the canal granaries.

By 1871 the neglected canal was out of business due to low traffic. The James Ditton, James Kerr, Curly Hayes and James McDonald locks were opened and left unattended in Lagro. Water flowed freely down the canal much like an open drainage ditch.

In 1873 the owner of an elevator on the canal got really angry about the one-cent-per-bushel fee he was being charged by the railroad. The winter before, the Cincinnati, Wabash and Michigan Railroad had just reached Wabash from North Manchester. He wondered if there was a way to get this grain to the new railroad via the canal. The canal between Lagro and Wabash still carried water to the Sumpter Mill in Wabash for power. He thought the grain could be loaded from a canal boat to rail-cars at the east side of Wabash where the canal and railroad paralleled each other.



Captain Enoch was asked if he could pull the "Rising Sun" from the mud. The elevator owner agreed to furnish him a new tow rope and a horse and pay an established amount for each round trip if the "Rising Sun" could deliver the grain to Wabash. Enoch was up to the challenge. He pulled the boat out of the canal basin, caulked its seams, and made a trial run to show it could be done. The "Rising Sun" made two trips daily for six weeks in 1873 delivering the grain to the rail-cars in Wabash. Thus the elevator owner thumbed his nose at the local railroad and proceeded to get a two-cent premium over the Toledo market at Buffalo, NY.

The return of the "Rising Sun" was short lived. It once again was tied up in the Lagro canal basin and eventually rotted away.

February 12 - Peru, IN

The Peru Tribune ran an article entitled "Historic Building To Serve Area Youth" that concerned the old locktender's home along the Wabash & Erie Canal in Peru. You will recall that the building was owned by the Miami County Historical Society. It was burned badly on the inside and one of the corners of the building was sinking. CSI donated \$500 in 1992 to replace the second story floor. Unfortunately a narrow board floor was put in that resembled a gymnasium floor rather than being made of wide boards.

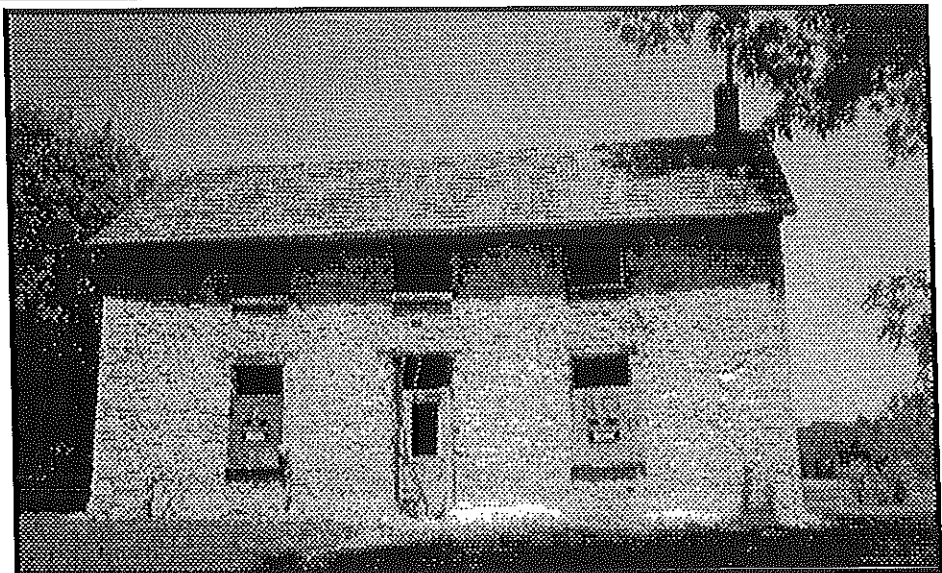
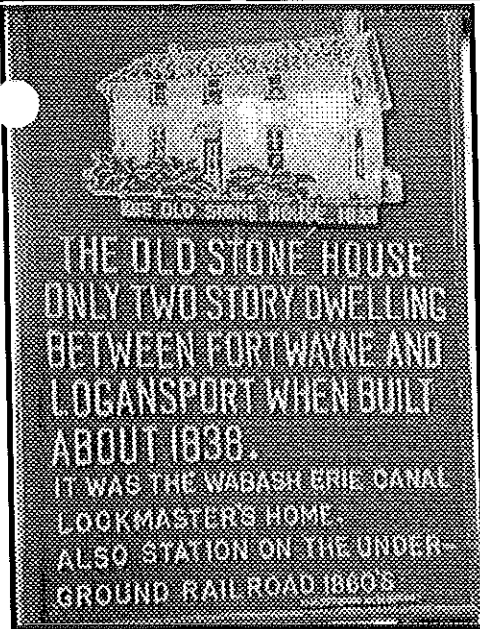
The Historical Society applied for an ISTE A grant in 1992-1993 and were enthusiastic about restoring the building. The delay in receiving the funds saw society members grow older and lose some of their zeal. They were unable to finish the work in time to retain the funding.

The society contacted CSI and wanted to know if we wished to purchase the building. Since we are a statewide group we don't have funds or enough members around Peru to renovate or keep up buildings. We

Comparative Statement of Articles transported on the Wabash and Erie Canal, which arrived and cleared at Lagro, from the commencement to the close of navigation, in 1851 and 1852.

ARTICLES.	ARRIVED.		CLEARED.	
	1852.	1851.	1852.	1851.
BARRELS.				
Ale and beer	114	85	3	12
Beef	7	1	1,618	653
Older	17	1		240
Cranberries			153	
Fish, fresh water	787	475	4	3
Fish, salt water	56	100		
Flour	2	2	1,104	925
Green apples	74	30		18
Lime	63	40		7
Oil	124	61		
Tork			2,129	2,040
Salt fine	8,000	4,947	10	
Salt coarse	1,235	162	1	50
Tar	62	68		0
Whisky	90	322	2,794	127
Spirits, domestic	65	61	10	27
Vinegar	190	178	2	3
BUSHELS.				
Barley	433			
Coal	428	1,650		200
Coke	300	400		200
Corn			29,719	195,010
Oats				1,000
Potatoes	11	16		220
Rye	24	50	1,340	144
Seeds				220
Wheat			456,685	225,327
POUNDS.				
Animals, other than live hogs	24,657	700	1,600	
Agricultural implements	41,603		1,377	
Butter			17,457	16,371
Baggage and furniture	150,890	140,022	41,697	27,357
Bacon and pork			537,348	720,390
Cheese	20,036	12,858		240
Coffee	412,064	282,424	3,025	2,840
Cordage	3,014	6,232		
Cotton yarns	8,313	12,440		300
Crockery	112,733	83,115		810
Candles	9,187	14,425		
Clocks			82	
Dye stuffs		491		
Eggs			9,317	17,690
Dried fruit	9,415	10,008		120
Furs and peltries			5,387	1,752
Leathers			8,120	134
Lensing and other roots			2,737	2,244
Glass and glassware	88,664	82,158	3,050	9,179
Grindstones	28,754	26,941		
Gypsum		1,500		
Grease			654	
Hides and skins			80,193	20,549
Hair			2,775	
Hemp			156	
Hogs, live			173,800	10,250
Iron, pig	18,106	22,880		
Iron, cast	425,211	298,967	2,250	32,779
Iron, bar	224,031	122,269	1,248	16,334
Lard		308	292,401	320,268
Leather	21,123	44,473	1,629	211
Lead	76,129	168,090	3,222	4,000
Machinery				
Mill-stones	12,212			
POUNDS.				
Molasses	518,112	266,200	2,500	1,400
Merchandise	1,252,127	1,116,291	22,210	10,022
Marble, wrought	4,215	150	3,245	
Nails and spikes	227,770	198,415	4,219	8,427
Nuts	1,079	5,720	5,575	2,510
Pottery ware	10,078	6,325		1,272
Powder	3,750	7,122	3,550	610
Pot and pearl ash	14,506		21,958	10,365
Paper	2,170	10,437		3,800
Rags			17,752	17,437
Rice	44,400	24,445		1,240
Saleratus	11,409	18,787	500	1,034
Shol	1,107	892		
Soap	1,189	2,310	59	
Sugar	375,156	193,445	4,910	7,770
Tallow	93		30,631	11,763
Tobacco	118,023	92,820	41,643	39,419
Wool	70		1,010	1,463
Wool-ware	20,026	13,283		
West India fruits	2,064		150	
Wagons	20,467	7,451	3,300	1,100
White lead	41,923	27,142	125	
Miscellaneous	290,322	160,032	10,939	20,461
MISCELLANEOUS.				
Barrels, empty, number	127	359	300	1,168
Brooms, number	864	722		
Hoop-poles, number				
Shingles, number	24,500	80,000	33,100	43,400
Staves and headings, number			24,000	2,500
Stubs, number	18,000			22,000
Stone, perches			10,000	
Lumber, feet			4	156
Timber, feet	14,210	31,720	905,218	841,558
Shingle bolts, cords			1,450	1,230

Annual Report of the Resident Engineer Wm. J. Ball 12-6-1852 to J.L. Williams



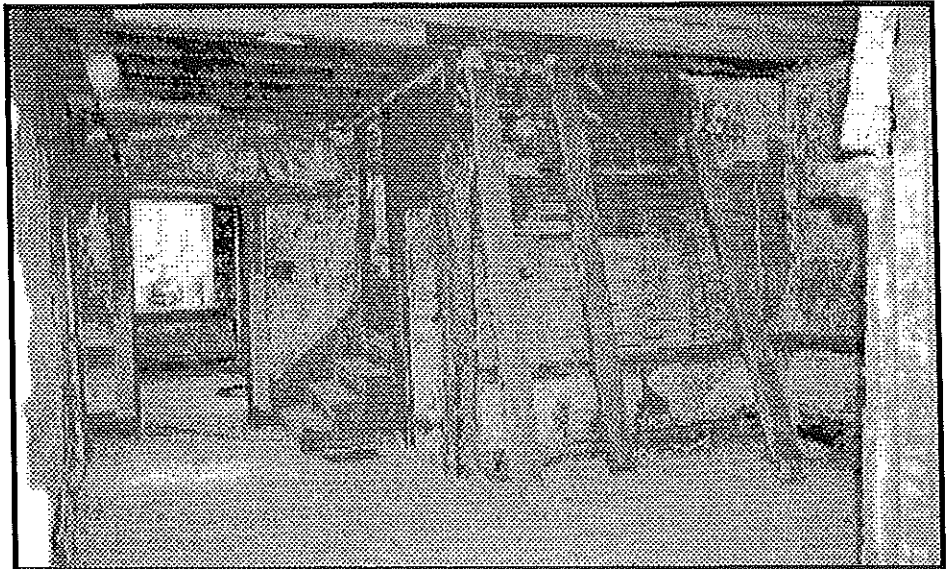
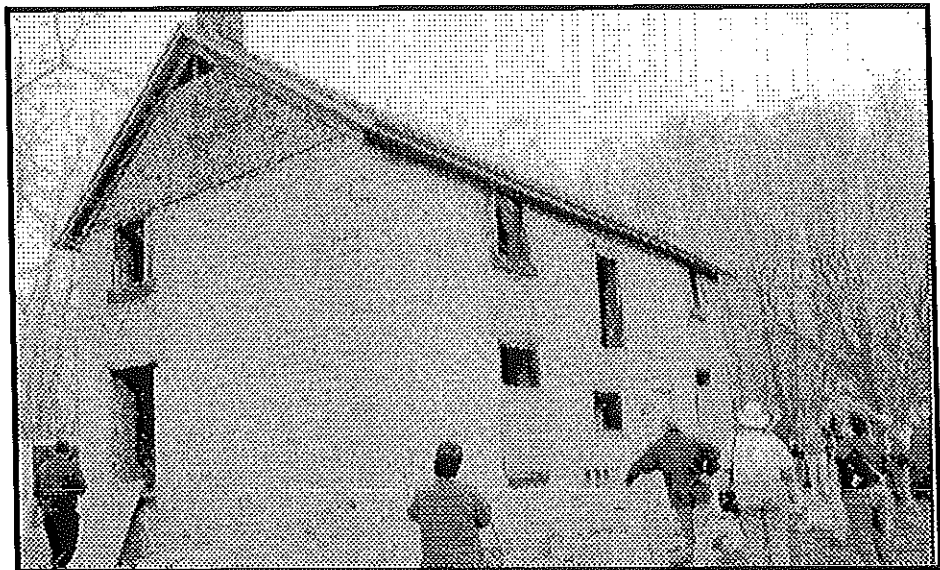
declined. They approached other organizations and individuals. Eventually the building was sold to Christian Life Fellowship in August 2000.

The article said that the building has been a locktender's home, a trading post for Native Americans, a family home and may have been a station of the Underground Railroad. It is one of Miami county's oldest buildings.

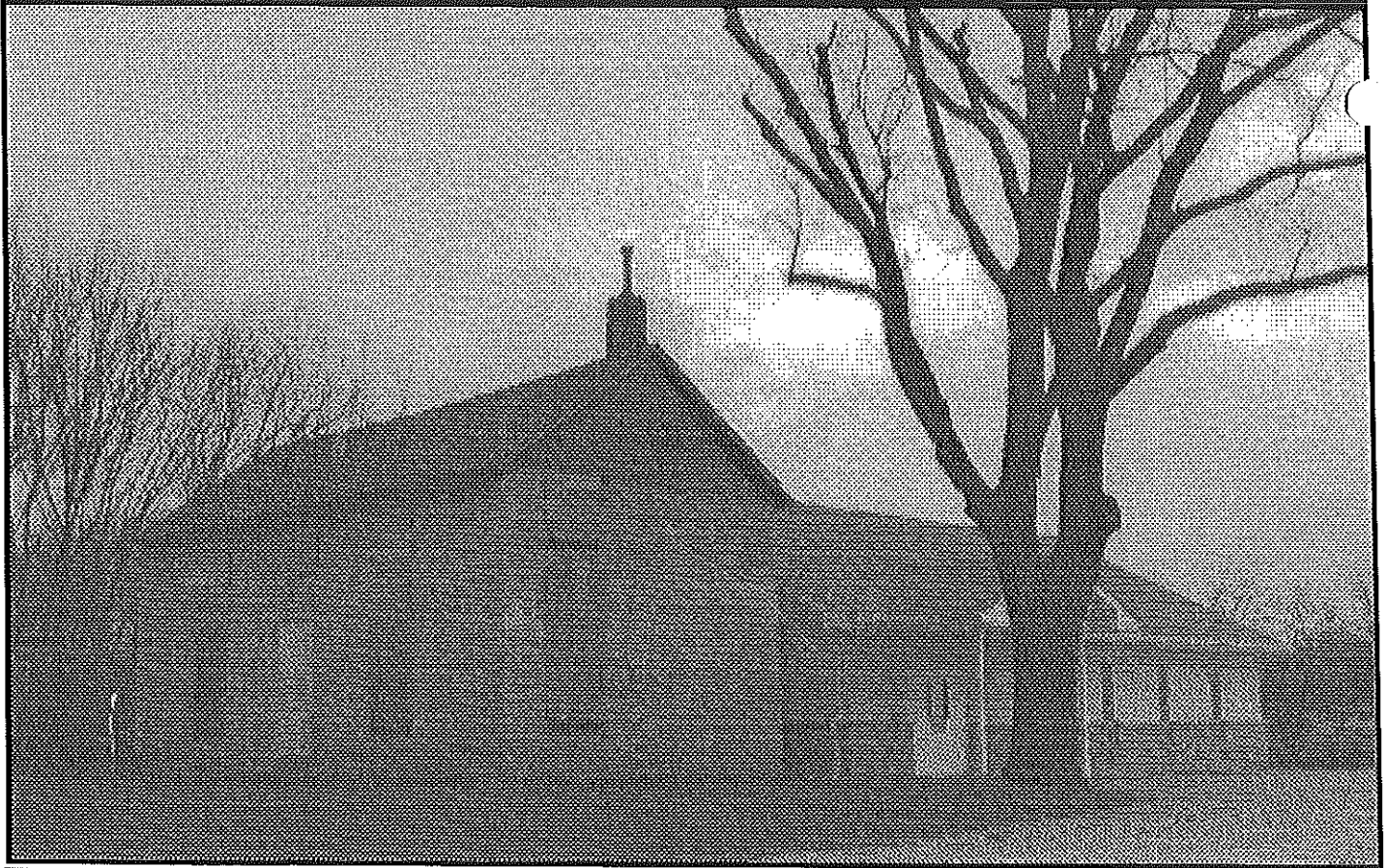
A new fellowship hall has been constructed behind the existing structure. The lower portion of its facade is covered in the same type of stone used in the stone house. The upper portion is made of yellow split-face concrete block. Services began in the new hall in early January.

The members are eager to begin renovation of the Stone House. When completed it will be used as a youth facility, have youth programs and other church-related activities. It will also be open to the public for those wishing to visit it.

Located north of the Wabash River, the Wabash and Erie Canal and Towpath Road west of Peru, the building was last used in 1990 when it was damaged by fire. A lot of cleanup and debris removal must take



Peru Stone House as it appeared on the "Passage Thru Peru" trip. The interior must be torn out and replaced. CSI gave money to have the second story floor repaired in 1992. Photos by Bob Schmidt and Lynette Kross



The Peru Stone House has an addition in which services for Christian Life Fellowship began in January 2004. The old building will be renovated as a youth facility.

Photo by Bob Schmidt

place before renovation can begin. The pastor hopes that history buffs who have previously shown interest in the house will maintain their interest and help. He has been contacted by the great-great-granddaughter of the original owners regarding the project. The family had moved from Pennsylvania to the area in the 1830s and purchased an 119-acre lot.

Armstrong hopes to bring the building back as close as possible to its original looks. That will be a challenge since there are no pictures or complete records of its original interior. The approximately 170 year old building was the only house between Logansport and Fort Wayne to have a staircase at that time. Sometime the three story home with a basement was reduced to a story and a half. Christian Life plans to restore the building to two stories or

possibly three. That is yet to be determined. Since the building is on the historic register, the front cannot be altered.

So far a master carpenter and a mason have been contacted regarding the building's restoration. Some excavation work has been done.

Armstrong said the original mortar was clay, which has deteriorated over the years. Members are redoing mortar joints all around the building. The back corner, which has settled, is of major concern. Then beside cleaning, mortar work, and putting on a new roof, restoration must be done on three original fireplaces and a new floor and staircase must be installed. Anyone interested in helping restore the building call (765) 472-1846 or (765) 472-7349.

Sharon Anderson, CSI member, Mexico, IN

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We welcome aboard the following new members who have joined at the \$22 membership level unless otherwise noted.

Terry & Ann Bodine - Covington, IN

Guy & Mary Ann Filchak - Clinton, IN \$30

Richard & Donna Fontaine - Attica, IN

William Harris - Evansville, IN \$25

Patricia Stamm - St. Louis, MO \$47

Carol Stephens - Ft. Wayne, IN

