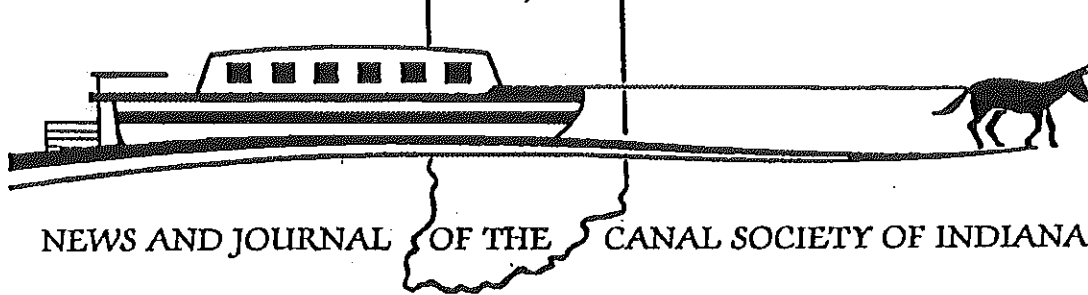


THE  
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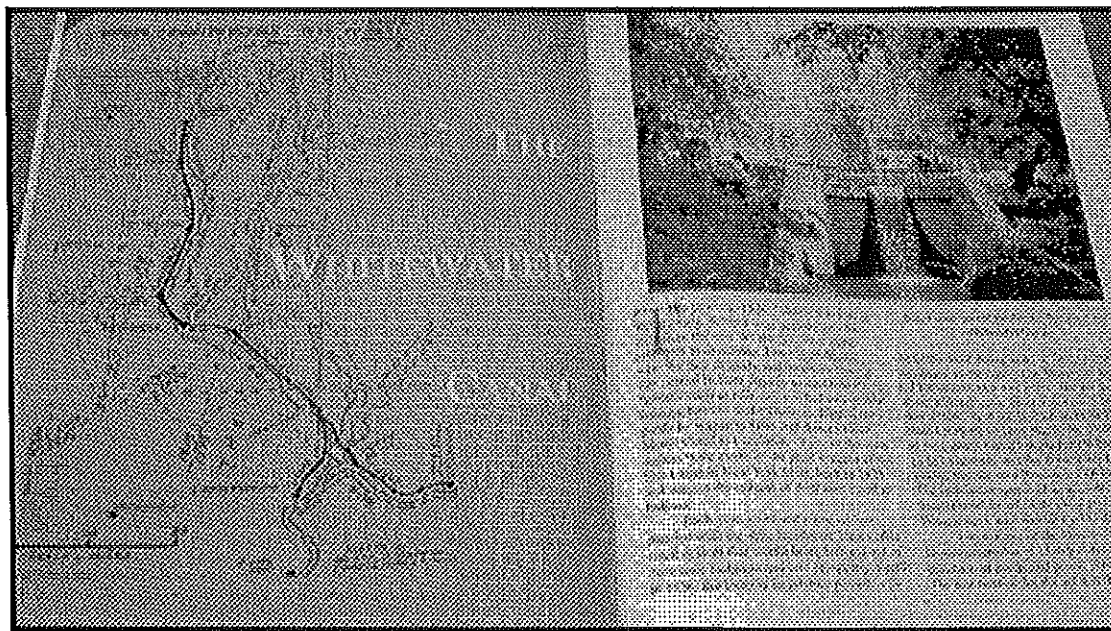


VOL. 4 NO. 2

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FEBRUARY 2005

## WAYNE COUNTY'S RICH HERITAGE



The Whitewater Canal was one of five topics covered in this catalogue entitled "Traces and Trails: Intersections of Wayne County. It looked like it was professionally produced and contained slick pages with multicolored pictures and articles written by Ball State students for their heritage project. Photo by Bob Schmidt

### *Features*

1. Wayne County's Heritage Subject Of Study
5. Clay County W & E Canal And The Feeder Dam
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9. News From Delphi: Suspension Bridge Ribbon Cut, Narrated Towpath Hike To Lime Kilns, Canal Christmas, Boat Sailing Along, Previous Canal Center Events, Three Murals For Center Lobby, Grant For Education Program
12. Boyhood Days In Parke County: Part I
15. Let's Take A Trip: Savannah-Ogeechee Canal
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### **WAYNE COUNTY'S HERITAGE SUBJECT OF STUDY**

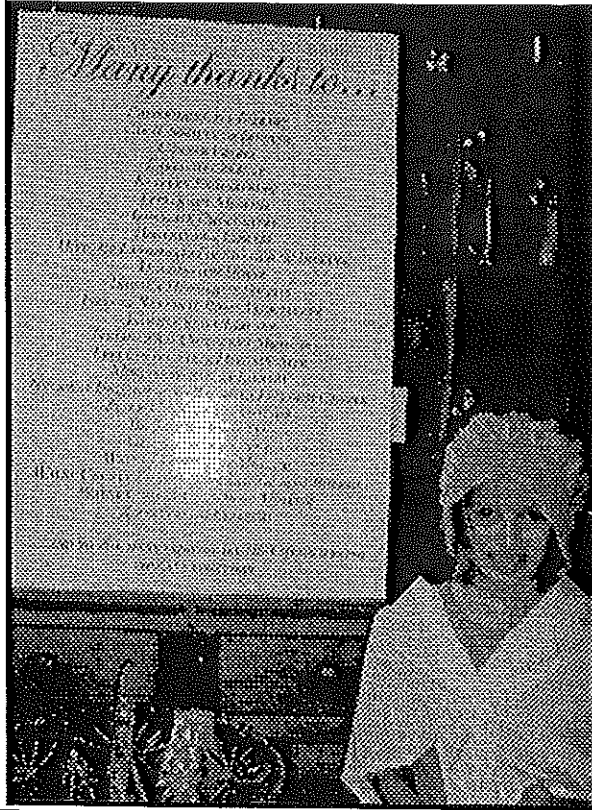
On Friday night, November 19, 2004, fourteen Ball State University students under the direction Dr. Ron Morris, opened a new museum exhibit at the Wayne County Historical Museum in Richmond, IN. It was created in association with the Virginia B. Ball Center for Creative Inquiry at Ball State. The students have lived and breathed Wayne County history for the past few months for this heritage project. They took no other classes during this time and concentrated all their efforts in producing information about five areas that were of great importance to the development of Wayne County. These were the Quaker Trace, the Underground Railroad, the National

EDITOR: CAROLYN SCHMIDT

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Road, the Whitewater Canal and the Formation of the Young Republican Party. This special class for which students received college credit was funded by a grant and in kind contributions from groups such as the Canal Society of Indiana (CSI). They provided consultation time, resources, mentoring and evaluation of the final products.



CSI was second on this list posted above the punch bowl. It thanked the groups and individuals that helped the students bring this project together. All photo by Bob Schmidt

The event opened in the front part of the museum, which was originally a Friends meeting house. There was an educational preview from 5-6 p.m. During this time visitors viewed the contents of the five subject area trunks that the students prepared to loan to area school history classes. Objects from the Whitewater Canal trunk included pictures of canal sites that had been mounted on wood and cut into jig-saw puzzles, farm animals that were carried on canal boats, the CSI Whitewater Canal tour guide, Indiana Canals, photographs, laminated documents for bulletin board displays, etc. These along with teacher guides will be placed in a large blue plastic bin and sent from school to school.

While viewing the trunks, visitors were treated to a delicious buffet of raw vegetables and dip, finger sandwiches, cheeses and fruit, assorted fine chocolates, punch and a choice of espresso, latte, etc. made by a very busy young man behind his coffee machine.

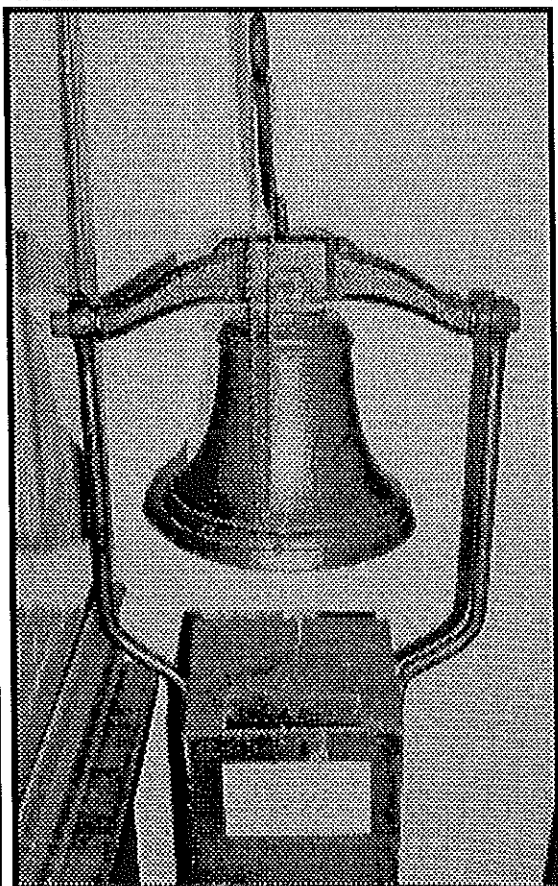
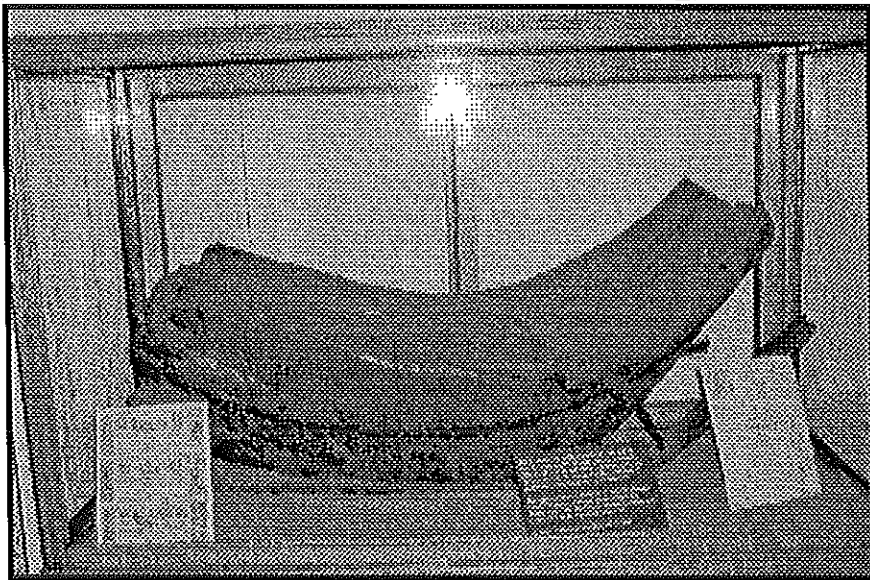
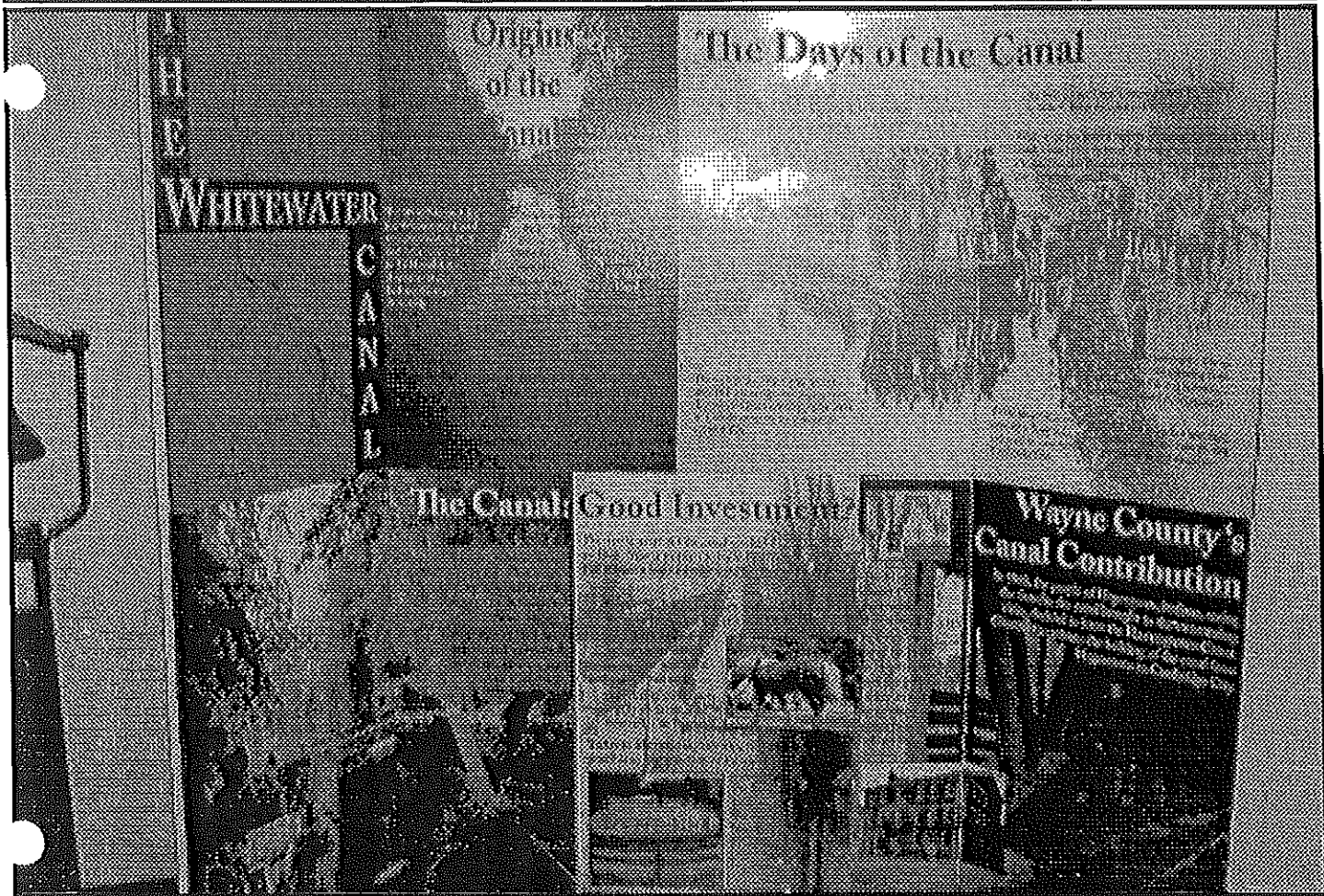


Above: Visitors were welcomed by the Ball State team and Dr. Ron Morris on the left. Photo by Bob Schmidt  
Below: Students cut the ribbon to the exhibit area.



Students then gave a short introduction to their project and Dr. Morris had a few comments before the ribbon was cut and visitors were allowed entrance into a room filled with 5 large display boards the students had built. Each board was actually a triptych and stood alone. Each display carried the title in large letters, historic pictures, and visuals such as time lines, graphs, etc. These were of museum quality. Also around the room were artifacts that pertained to the subject.

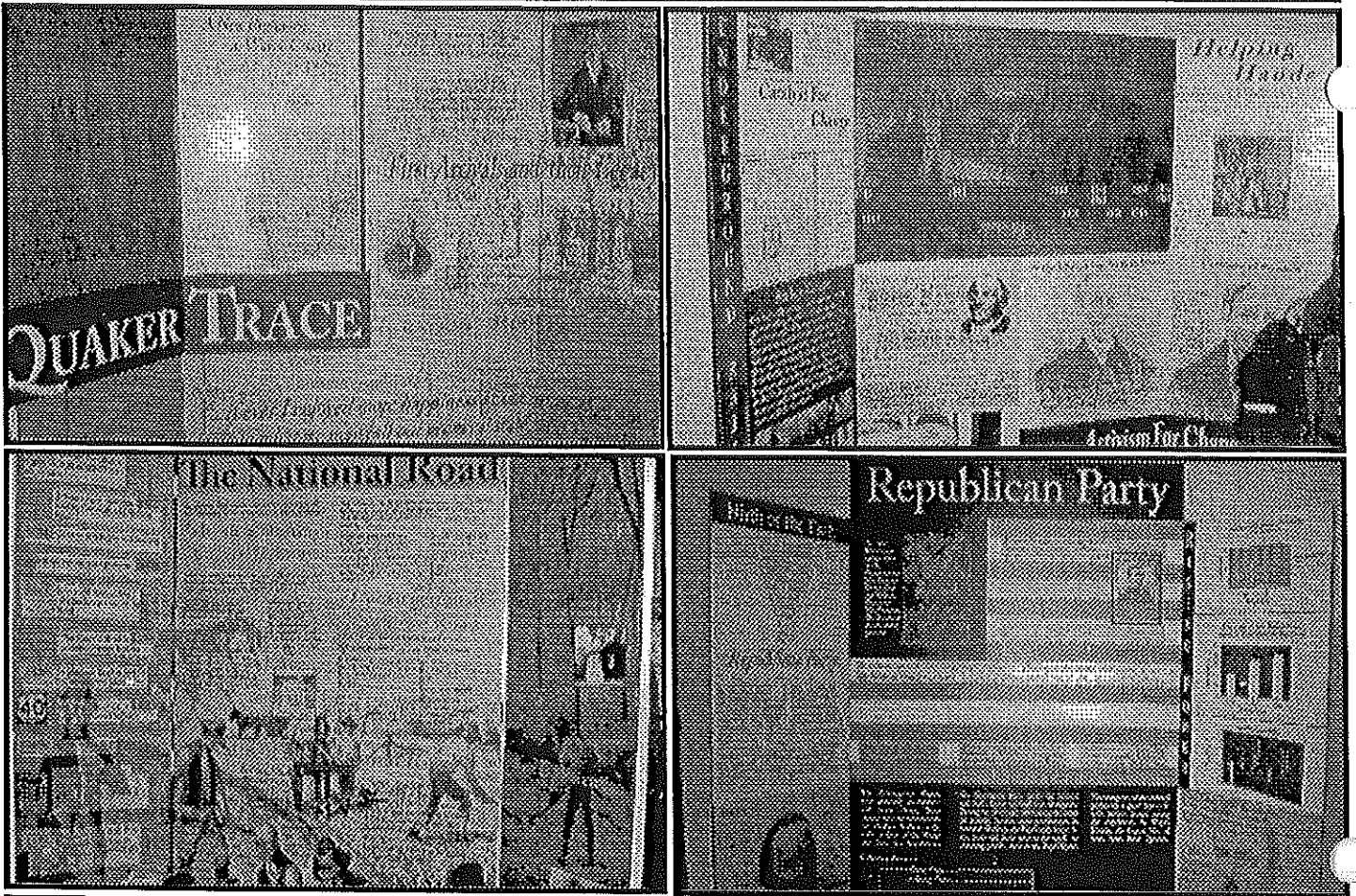
The Whitewater Canal exhibit covered the Origins of the Canal, The Canal: Good Investment? Wayne County's Canal Contribution, and The Days of the Canal, which had text superimposed on a picture of the Attica canal boat wedding on the Wabash & Erie Canal. Canal boat pictures on the Whitewater Canal are very limited. Other visuals included a map of the canal, a picture of the watered canal today, pictures of the Ben Franklin III, a tow horse, a waste weir, the Vinton House Inn, the Connersville hydraulic canal, and Scout lake, built for a canal reservoir. A canal boat bell and keel were on loan from Cambridge City.



The Whitewater Canal triptych, which the Ball State students built, designed and displayed at the Wayne County Historical Museum, is seen above. The case with the canal boat keel was on loan and also contained Cincinnati & Whitewater Canal dollars and a canal document. The bell from the canal boat "Etna" stood alongside the triptych. Phyllis Mattheis brought it from the public library at Cambridge City.

All photos by Bob Schmidt





Above: The Quaker Trace, The Underground Railroad, The National Road, The Republican Party Below: Julian Dalrymple and Sarah Jones produced five videos. Phyllis & Jerry Mattheis, Julian & Sarah, Carolyn & Bob Schmidt made videos.

Around the room were long narrow boxes that were filled with: 1. tree stumps to show how at first the trees were cut down and wagons rolled over them, 2. trees laid side by side in the mud to form a corduroy road, 3. broken stones with a binder for a macadamized road, 4. asphalt for today's highway. These showed how the National Road was improved from time to time.

Near the Underground Railroad triptych was a picture of a slave with huge welts on his back that were made by whips. Below it was a box that one put his hands in and felt how raised these welts actually were. Other hands-on objects added to the impact of the exhibits.

Although the fourteen students worked together, they had

various responsibilities. Besides the trunks and display boards, they had a team that produced five videos. There videos were shown in another room of the museum where their producers Julian Dalrymple and Sarah Jones, who are studying Telecommunications and Film, made comments about each subject.

The canal documentary contained comments about the history and value of the Whitewater Canal from interviews with CSI members Jerry & Phyllis Mattheis

and Bob & Carolyn Schmidt and with DNR Whitewater Canal Historic Site manager Jay Dishman. The video was well done. CSI is to receive a DVD of all the videos in the future.

Another team produced a slick paged catalogue with multi-colored pictures and text about the history of each theme. CSI was asked for help with facts and proofreading of the text. We also furnished what few photographs the society has concerning the Whitewater Canal.



**CLAY COUNTY, W & E  
CANAL  
AND THE FEEDER DAM**

By Jeff Koehler  
Clay County Historian

Lawless bands burned and pillaged structure in Clay County—a headline from today's newspaper? Hardly, these acts took place 150 years ago. Clay County was a hotbed of rebellion against the two large reservoirs built to supply water to the Wabash and Erie Canal, so the saboteurs took aim at just anything connect with the canal system. One of their prime targets was the Feeder Dam on Eel River.

Eleven short years after the forming of Clay County (in 1825) and the moving of our state government to the growing town of Indianapolis, the state government took on the very large and expensive task of internal improvements. The Internal Improvement Act of 1836 directed funds to turnpikes, railroads, and canals with the majority of the moneys going to canals—this was a direct result of the recent overwhelming success of the Erie Canal in New York State. Originally, this act had planned for the canal system to cover the entire state of Indiana so that every area would benefit economically.

The Wabash & Erie Canal was started with a ground-breaking on the anniversary of George Washington's birthday in 1832. After the passage of the Internal Improvement Act, work started on several large projects throughout the state. Even though the canal had not been opened to Lafayette, work started on the Feeder Dam located on the Eel River in Clay County, Indiana, in 1837. It was completed in two years. Other projects that were started in our area, by way of this disconnected mode of progress, were the Side-cut Canal, Birch Creek Aqueduct (1838), and two stone locks in the Riley area (Lockport). The

Feeder Dam was completed by 1839. It had a length of 180 feet with a stone abutment on the east end and a cut stone guard lock on the west end. It had a height of 16½ feet from low water and was said to be one of the most extensive structures on the whole line. Due to the depression of the Panic of 1837, the crushing effect of the huge debt the state had incurred while building its internal improvements, and a state-level scandal that would rival Enron, all work ceased on the canal and Feeder Dam. The work stopped on the canal as suddenly as it had begun.

By now, this article reads like a history of the Wabash & Erie Canal; however, there is more history to the area known to us as the Feeder Dam. Eel River was an early transportation route, so naturally the first settlers chose this land for their homesteads because they knew the river property would benefit them commercially. Eel River is relatively flat in its course through Clay County, falling an average of only 17 inches per mile, which is ideal for transportation but not so good for mill building. However, some mills were constructed and some were built in the Feeder Dam area. Sometime around 1843 or 1844 the Wyant brothers of Terre Haute built a large flouring mill at Anguilla. The mill stood 200 yards below the dam. This mill was reported to have been successful. Schinstein, a German miller, who was fondly known to his patrons as "Layover," ran the Anguilla Mill. The mill stood just a few years because it washed away in the river in the Great Flood of 1847. A short time after this tragedy, a water-powered saw mill was erected in the area. It was operated several years by Jesse Al Pearce then by W. F. T. McKee up until the Civil War. Many board feet of timber were shipped out from this mill over the canal to the East.

A ferry was operated at the Feeder Dam for a number of years. It

started operation around the same time as the opening of the canal in 1859. The ferry had several proprietors starting with William F. T. McKee, then Levi Huffman and later Jesse A. Allee up until the opening of the first bridge in 1879.

The original bridge was a wooden structure presumed to have been a covered bridge, for in July 1893 the bridge burned, the handy work of an arsonist. A contract was let to build a new bridge on the abutment in September of 1894 for \$5,000. Petitions were filed with the commissioners to have the bridge moved downstream near the railroad crossing. The Clay County Court stayed the course leaving the bridge at its original location. The second bridge is the iron bridge that remains at this location today.

With the prospects of navigation on the Wabash & Erie Canal and its feeders, a young energetic lawyer named Samuel Howe Smydth from Bowling Green, Indiana, had visions of moving the county seat to a more central location. Smydth, whose visions may have been dollar signs, had acquired real estate on the west bank of the Eel River at the Feeder Dam. He proceeded to lay the town of New Amsterdam, later Anguilla. Having just been elected to the Lower House of the State Legislature in 1838, he intended to press for a change in the county seat on the river and canal. Shortly after this, Mr. Smydth became ill and abandoned his visionary project. He then traveled to Europe hoping to recover; however, he died there.

With all of the activity at the Feeder Dam in anticipation of the opening of the canal, the delay in its opening caused much distress not only to locals in the Feeder Dam area but also to others in the proposed canal towns throughout the state as well. Consequently, there was a big push to complete the mammoth project or at least a large portion of

it. Work resumed on the canal in 1847. Having been neglected for eight years, the Feeder Dam and other structures on the canal were in varying states of disrepair. Eel River had cut around the west side of the dam completely destroying the cut stone guard lock. To repair this, the dam had to be lengthened 82 feet and a new timber crib guard lock built.

By 1850 the canal was ready to open, and the water was let into the channel. On May 1, water from the Eel River reached Terre Haute. On May 13, an attempt was made to travel on the canal from Terre Haute to Bowling Green. This trip was premature because the boat, with a small party and a cannon, ran aground a short distance after departing. After waiting for more water sometime after the first of June, the party departed for Clay County sounding the cannon at every gathering along the way. Eighteen years after the ground-breaking in Fort Wayne, the serpentine waterway with all of its fanfare had reached Clay County.

With the canal open and regular traffic between Terre Haute and points beyond, Anguilla was a growing community hosting several businesses and a post office, which operated there for several years. The business firm of Jesse Fuller, John Milton, and Joseph Kennedy built a rude towboat that towed the canal boats from the Feeder Dam up the Eel River to their warehouse in Bowling Green. In 1851 Oliver Cromwell, Sr. led a group in hopes of building a little steamer to pull canal boats upstream. This project was later abandoned.

All seemed to be going well with the canal operations until the summer dry season of 1853 when the Eel River's water level fell causing the canal to dry up. Thus, the canal engineers were faced with building another reservoir in Clay County. This decision was met with much

objection from local residents. However, these protests were ignored and plans to build the Birch Creek Reservoir proceeded. This led to the Clay County Regulators, who came out in force destroying canal structures, which included burning the Feeder Dam to the water's edge.

A meeting was held at the Feeder Dam in July 1854 with 200 people in attendance to discuss the Birch Creek Reservoir. At this time some of the protest was due to the fact that people feared that the rotting timber in the water was responsible for spreading malaria, so at the meeting a compromise was reached that included cutting the timber in the reservoir. The state hoped that this agreement would appease the rebels. With the timber cut, at a cost of \$10,000 and the loss of one life, the Clay County Regulators returned as before with terrorists' acts, which were similar to those of today's terrorists. The governor offered a reward of \$500 for the apprehension of the offenders, which was advertised locally by posters. However, Governor Wright's reward seemed to have little affect on the local terrorists because they simply tore down his posters replacing them with their own posters declaring a \$500 reward for the capture of "Old Joe Wright." They continued burning and destroying canal structures until the works were abandoned in 1860 or 1861, and, according to Paul Fatout in *Indiana Canals*, "making life dull for Clay County militants by depriving them of their annual fete of arson and destruction."

So with the passing of the canal, the area surrounding the Feeder Dam faded into history. Today the town of Anguilla no longer exists. The only remnants of this town are rumored to be a well, located in a field, and a recently found town plat. Parts of the old Feeder Dam can be seen in the riverbed during low water. In this author's opinion, part of the levy system that stretches east

along the Eel River was straightened and bypassed the dam. Much of the old crib structure is still buried.

Other businesses that operated in Anguilla during the twentieth century included a skating rink with a hardwood floor, which was located on the south side of the road east of the old iron bridge. It is not known when this establishment was opened; however, in 1937 it was still in business offering entertainment intermittently and one local resident recalls that her parents did not allow her to frequent the skating rink as a girl because they did not feel that it was a proper place for their young daughter. One unique feature of the skating rink was that the structure was built around a large tree. A circle foundation still exists at this site today. In addition, a tavern once stood on the west side of the old iron bridge and the south side of the road; however, not much more is known about this old watering hole.

In 1955 a new state highway bridge was built at the east end of the old Feeder Dam. The new road straightened the old route and bypassed the old iron bridge, which had served travelers for over fifty years.

Today little visible evidence remains of the dreams once held by the settlers of the Feeder Dam area—an iron bridge, an old foundation, a well, a few old stones and timbers. However, with a good imagination, an avid historian can still envision what Anguilla and the Feeder Dam must have looked like in its prime.

Sources:  
Travis. *A History of Clay County, Indiana* 1909  
Blanchard. *History of Clay County, Indiana* 1884  
Fatout. *Indiana Canals* 1972



# CANAWLERS AT REST

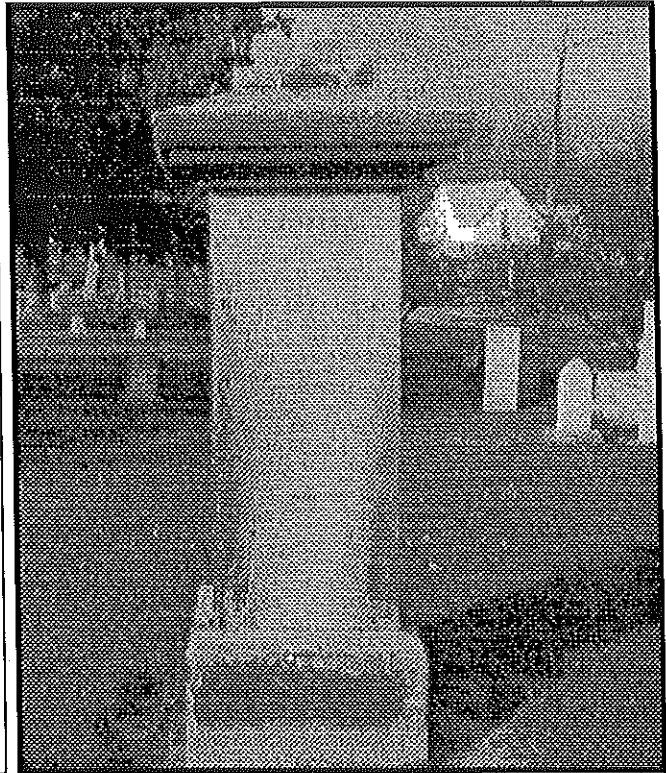
## ROBERT STUART

**b. February 19, 1802**

**d. October 23, 1842**

By Carolyn I. Schmidt

Photo by Betty Clawson



Robert Stuart, a Scottish immigrant, was born on February 19, 1802. Little is known of his early life. He became one of four contractors on the Wabash & Erie Canal in Fountain County, Indiana. The other three were named Winn, H. Winn and H. Stuart (sometimes spelled Stewart).

The work on the canal progressed slowly. The work on it was unsteady and the men of the vicinity volunteered to help complete the culvert\* at Attica, which took about six months to construct.

Workers often perished from cholera, accidents, snake bites, and rough and tumble fights between the imported Irishmen. There were many Irish stonemasons employed to build the keystone arches and the massive stone locks. Life was made tolerable by the jigger boss, who distributed three jiggers of whiskey or brandy per day and, in wet weather, six jiggers a day to each worker. Their pay was little and often they died in debt.

The workers, who were under contractor Robert Stuart, thought highly of him. When he died on October 23, 1842, his body was carried on a bier to the old Oak Grove Cemetery in Covington, Fountain County, IN, located on Liberty Street. An immense crowd attended his funeral according to an old article.

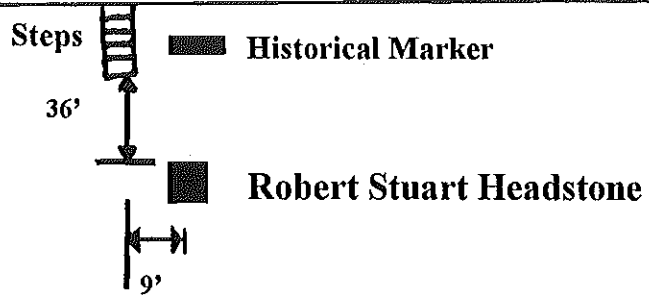
A stone carver named Hayes, who worked on the project, asked the canal boss James McMannomy for a large stone to carve a monument for Stuart's grave. McMannomy agreed to the request and dragged a thick

shaft of tawny sandstone to the cemetery. Hayes began carving it. He'd work on the canal about two weeks and alternated this with carving the stone until he ran out of money, but he never completed his project. What remains today is a six foot tall stone among anonymous heaps of broken headstones that date back to the 1830s. It looks like a gatepost. Most of the inscription is weathered and unreadable. It stands as a lasting memento of the affection of two friends and keeps alive Stuart's name when the names of most of the men who worked on the canal have been lost to today's generation.

The Wabash & Erie Canal reached Covington, IN, in 1846 and was open to Toledo, OH. It brought trade and money to towns such as Lafayette, Attica and Covington for a period short time and the towns grew. But floods, droughts, ice, costly repairs and the coming of the railroads soon killed it. Boats, locks, warehouses, mills, woolen factories, packing houses, breweries, or anything that depended upon the canal trade fell into disuse. The last packet boat to visit Covington was the "Goodman." In November 1875 it traveled the canal from Lodi to Lafayette.

*\*The culvert mentioned in the Covington Friend at Attica was probably the aqueduct south of Attica on Shawnee Creek. Two culverts No. 128 & 129 were located at stone quarry branch and in Attica. Both were of wood and were comparatively small. It is doubtful that they took six months to construct. However, Aqueduct No. 9, over Shawnee creek was one span of 80 feet clear. The*

LIBERTY STREET



OAK GROVE CEMETERY

COVINGTON, INDIANA

Map by Betty Clawson, CSI member Attica, In

trunk and superstructure were of the same plan as Aqueduct No. 1 over the St. Marys River in Ft. Wayne. Abutments were of cut stone masonry, the whole work appeared to have been well constructed and was considered permanent, except for the trunk that needed renewal once in 10 years according to the Chief Engineer's Report of 1847. It also stated that the chords on which the whole structure depended were insufficient in strength and they should add a strong iron chain or bar extending the length of the chord, and attaching to each foot of the arch. The expense was estimated to be \$300 and would be paid as an 1848 expenditure.

Sources.

Cullen, Kevin. "Headstone Lasting Marker Of Life Along Wabash & Erie Canal Route." Lafayette Journal and Courier.

Covington Friend. Jan. 8, 1904

1847 Indiana House Documentary Journal. 1847 Chief Engineers Report to the Indiana General Assembly concerning the condition of the Wabash & Erie Canal mechanical structures as of July 1, 1847.

HISTORIC INDIANA LANDMARKS

Indiana Preservationist, a publication of Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, reported on several structures of interest to canawlers in its Nov.-Dec. 2004 issue. The home of Captain Marcus Sherwood, who was featured in last month's Canawlers At Rest column in the Hoosier Packet, was built in 1867 in Evansville, Indiana, and is up for sale for \$469,000 dollars.

Cottrell Village in Attica, Indiana, seen on a canal tour was featured in an article entitled "Attica Residents Take Nothing For Granted." It said, "Platted in 1825, Attica prospered with the arrival of the Wabash and Erie Canal in 1847 and later the railroad." It credits John

Cottrell for restoring a complex of mid-nineteenth century buildings and adds that there are many more buildings of importance in Attica.

Another article, "Swinney Homestead Remains Neighborhood Anchor," relates the importance of the Thomas Swinney home built in 1875 to Fort Wayne's West Central neighborhood. The grand celebration for the opening of the W&E Canal from Lafayette to Toledo took place on the property on July 4, 1843.

Cambridge City's Huddleston Farmhouse, seen on a canal tour, hosted End of Winter suppers like those served in the 1840-60s and Evansville's Reitz home and Willard Library will be part of a members tour on March 11. Both were seen on CSI's "Great Expectations" tour.



**NEWS FROM  
DELPHI**

**A BANNER DAY  
FOR DELPHI TRAILS**  
By Dan McCain

The third Saturday in November was a glorious day in Delphi as the labor of volunteers brightened the otherwise dark and misty weather. Many months of labor on the Riley Park suspension bridge by a diligent crew of craftsmen saw recognition by the Mayor and three cheers from the public.

A ribbon was cut by Mary Ives, treasurer and volunteer organizer, and Dick Bradshaw, construction coordinator, as Bob Conner, Park Board President, and Mayor Lee Hoard looked on. There were dozens of volunteers who came together on many weekends to piece together this masterpiece. Ken Walton, another volunteer who inspired the design, was unable to be at the celebration. About \$10,000 in donations were collected to purchase materials for the bridge.

This is the fourth suspension Bridge at this site dating back to 1911. The first, called a "swinging bridge" was recorded in photographs and looked attractive but was much too close to the level of Deer Creek. It didn't survive flooding. The second was built in 1988 just off side of the first's banisters and also didn't survive the flood of 1998. Then replacing it on the same piers another foot bridge was built by volunteers and dedicated just six years ago. The mother of all floods began on July 4th of 2003 and it so thoroughly wiped out the third bridge that pieces of the massive "A frame" were found over one mile downstream in a huge pile of debris that choked the lower trails along Deer Creek near the confluence with the Wabash River.



The Riley Park suspension bridge was opened by a ribbon cutting ceremony. The bridge leads to one of Delphi's historic trails. Photos by Dan McCain

This was a flood record and caused considerable damage to homes in the Delphi area.

The newest suspension bridge sits on piers three and a half feet higher and is made more sturdy by the way it is constructed. The new elevation sets off the structure as its 130 feet of length proudly crosses beautiful Deer Creek and once again reconnects popular trails.

On the same day as the ribbon cutting another crew reported in at noon. They had just finished the brush clearing of the 0.7 mile long section of the old Monon line that went to High Bridge east of town. This latest trail will become one of the most scenic as it brushes by the high north bank of Deer Creek in the area of Indiana's newest Rural Historic District.

When completed the Delphi Historic Trail system will embrace over 10 miles of hiking surface. The trails range from canal towpaths to stream borders, connect parks to the local Interurban route the Monon High Bridge Rail Trail. Volunteers

made this happen.

**CANAL TOWPATHS AND LIME  
KILNS NARRATED HIKE**  
By Dan McCain

The Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal hosted an hour long historic trail walk that left from the new Interpretive Center Museum in Canal Park at 1 p.m. on November 27. They hiked on an easy nearly level stone trail going north along the beautiful watered section of Delphi's 19th century manmade waterway, the Wabash & Erie Canal.

Narrator Dan McCain explained the hustle and bustle of canal boat travel at various historic locations along the three-quarter mile walk. At one point a wide-water or boat turning basin and loading docks was explained. Busy times for this site began in 1857, when the canal-side Hubbard & Harley Lime Kilns were constructed. Shipments of plaster and whitening products from six massive lime kilns went by boats as far east as New York City. This site is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Further to the north at Founders Point the tip of the trail "loop" was the entrance of millions of gallons of fresh water from the Delphi Limestone Company's diversion pipe. This scenic spot commemorates the vision shared by the canal group's "founders" in 1971.

Returning along the canal towpath the hikers stopped and admired the restored ornate 1874 Paint Creek Iron Bridge. Nearly 100 volunteers worked for over a year to place this centerpiece in Canal Park Annex.

### A CANAL CHRISTMAS TOOK ONE BACK IN TIME

By Annadell Lamb

On Saturday, December 11, the Wabash & Erie Canal Interpretive Center in Delphi, IN, sparkled with dozens of lighted trees. Many visitors enjoyed the lights and the wonderful canal museum.

The following day Canal Park was decked out in old-fashioned holiday spirit, ready to welcome visitors to a pioneer Hoosier Christmas experience. All buildings at the Park were open from noon until 4:00 p.m., and the Bowen Cabin Crafts Gift Shoppe was also open for holiday shopping. It featured unique handmade gifts such as cashmere items, potpourri for simmering, note cards, books, woodcrafts, hand-painted gourds, handmade paper items, candles, woven rugs and placemats, pottery, hand spun and knitted items, needle felted folk Santas and tree ornaments, American folk toys, Whetstone woodenware, and Bittersweet and Briers CDs of traditional music. Artists demonstrated crafts such as spinning and weaving, needlework and basket-making while the air was filled with Christmas music.

In the restored 1844 Reed Case house Christmas punch and cookies were served to the many visitors. Cookies to take home could

be purchased in the Kuns Cabin. Also new this year were the fresh-baked apple dumplings at the Canal Center. They could be eaten there with ice cream while listening to Christmas music or taken home frozen to bake at a later time. Proceeds support the Canal Association.

At 2:00 p.m. five local school children, who were declared winners in the art project conducted by artist Rena Brouwer, who spent a week-long residency at Delphi schools, were honored. A continuous video program about the project showed the students and their paintings of the Canal Park area.

### "BOAT PROJECT" SAILING RIGHT ALONG

By Annadell Lamb & Dan McCain

Although they are not exactly what the Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc. had in mind when they said they wanted to have a canal boat at Canal Park to give visitors the experience of canal transportation in the 1850s, they now have three boats! The appeal that went out in October for a pontoon boat to help in clearing algae and duck weed from the canal's surface received such a response that now they have three donated boats!

One of the boats will be reserved as a "work boat" for cleaning the canal. The other two have promise as passenger boats, especially if they can be refurbished to look something like a passenger "packet" that might have been used by canal travelers of the 1800s.

Ed Gruber was at the helm when the first boat was given its trial run on the canal in November. Volunteers report that Ed made the ride quite exciting since the motor was way too powerful and noisy for the canal. The view from the water was very different and rewarding.

Work has begun on the boats, which need quieter electric trolling motors to replace the old gasoline engines. Canal volunteers will do the work over the winter, and the boats could be available during festivals and special times for "outings" on the canal.

The second pontoon was launched just before Thanksgiving. This time it had a brand new husky electric motor. That was great. There was no noise, it was maneuverable and it ran at the speed of a canal boat. This boat will be re-decked with plank floor and perhaps something will be done with the sides to make it look more like a canal boat.

The first pontoon tested on the canal already has a very good deck and might not get the planks. Canal park has "two for the money (for passengers) and number three to go" (after algae).

The rides will be free. The board hopes that visitors will contribute freely toward a real replica boat. This policy has worked very well in the Interpretive Center for those who enter the museum.

The ultimate plan remains: Acquiring funds - in the form of grants and donations - to build an authentic replica of a canal boat that will re-create for visitors the experience of travel on the Wabash & Erie Canal. For that purpose a Canal Boat Fund has been set up and donations can be sent to: "Canal Boat Fund." Wabash & Erie Canal Treasurer, 12252 West State Road 18, Delphi, IN 46923.

### PAST CANAL CENTER EVENTS NOT PREVIOUSLY REPORTED

1. The "second annual" Ladies Tea Party took place at the Canal Center October 10. Judy Berkshire spoke about tea, its many flavors and proper brewing methods. There was an award for the best hat, and an unexpected "guest" from South

Carolina gave the ladies a lot to think about!

2. The Canal Association hosted a community Halloween again this year, setting earlier hours for the young "spooks" who came for games, prizes and hot dogs.

3. School children's water color paintings of canal scenes were on display November 4, a culmination of the artist-in-residence project in Delphi Community Schools.

### SPONSORS STEP FORWARD FOR THREE MORE MURALS

By Annadell Lamb & Dan McCain

Three canal-related murals will be added to the walls of the lobby, which was sponsored by the Canal Society of Indiana, of the Wabash & Erie Canal Conference & Interpretive Center in Delphi, Indiana, thanks to generous sponsors. They will join the central mural featuring the Speece canal boat, painted from the only known photo of a Delphi-based canal boat. It was sponsored by Beta Psi chapter of Psi Iota Xi.

Research was done on the subject matter for the three new murals before painting began. The second completed mural now hangs to the left of the first one. Pictured is a Tippecanoe County, Lafayette scene. The water shown is a sidecut or "slip" and the building is the slaughterhouse/warehouse of Henry Sample & Sons. The painting was completed by Terry Lacy and sponsored by Jim & Francie French. Jim served as the Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc. president for 10 years ending in 1998 and Francie is currently the secretary of the association.

Soon painting of another mural will begin. It is sponsored by Cathy Smith, past secretary of the board, and will depict Lockport, Indiana's Burnetts Creek Arch in operation complete with a wood and stone lock plus a canal boat.



The Henry Sample & Sons warehouse is pictured in this canal scene at Lafayette, Indiana, painted by Terry Lacy. The mural was sponsored by Jim and Francie French and hangs in the lobby of the Canal Interpretive Center in Delphi, Indiana. P- Dan McCain

A third mural will be selected for some patriotic event reminiscent of canal lore. It is sponsored by the American Legion Post No. 75 in memory of local businessman William Kerlin, a former member of the Post.

Now that the pattern is set for murals on the walls of the lobby a total of nine paintings will eventually adorn three sides of the lobby. Pictures from the 1832-74 Wabash & Erie Canal era will geographically move from Evansville, IN on the left to Toledo, OH on the right. A distance of 468 miles between these two cities makes this historic waterway the longest man made "ditch" in the northern hemisphere and second longest in the world.

Delphi, located midway along the canal, began to prosper when the canal initially connected to Fort Wayne by 1840. Three years later the Wabash & Erie was completed east to Toledo. At this point in history trade was possible using water transportation all the way to New York's harbor. Transit required taking a canal boat on the W&E Canal to Toledo, a steamer across Lake Erie, a canal boat again across New

York state on the better known Erie Canal and finally a steam ship down the Hudson River to New York City.

To sponsor a mural call 765-564-8297

### EDUCATION EXPANSION PROGRAM RECEIVES GRANT

By Annadell Lamb

The canal-related educational project for fourth grade pupils and their teachers has received the blessing of the Carroll County Community Foundation in the form of a \$1,500 grant. The program will provide hands-on games based on canal-era life, emphasizing learning in language arts, social studies, history and math.

Michael and Cecily Schneider were instrumental in outlining the program, and have been working with others in the community and the Canal Board to develop specific programs geared to the fourth-grade level. Teaching aids also will be an important part of the program, providing instructional material that can be used in the classroom before a class visits the Canal Interpretive Center.

**BOYHOOD DAYS IN PARKE COUNTY  
AND THEIR WABASH & ERIE CANAL  
CONNECTIONS**

**By Charles Davis**

*While looking through microfilm I found the following series of an article entitled "Sketches for the Tribune's Boys and Girls by a Seventy-Year Old Boy" that was written by William Henry Harrison Beadle. He wrote them while living in Madison, South Dakota in 1909 and sent them to the editor of the Rockville Tribune, who published them a few weeks later in this Parke county, Indiana newspaper. They are quoted in their entirety from that paper. They will be published in three installments: Flatboating, the Wabash & Erie Canal, and Boyhood Memories of W. H. H. Beadle in The Hoosier Packet.*

Rockville Tribune February 24, 1909

When new settlers came into Liberty township, and probably elsewhere, they sought to rent or buy a little tract of land with a cabin and some cleared land. They purchased public land at the Crawfordsville land office. Personal narrative can be excused when it illustrates a condition.

My father, arriving early in March 1837, went to Crawfordsville to make cash entry of some land. That fearful panic of 1837 was on. It had already cost many sacrifices. Now he was told he must pay the price in specie, which he did not have, but was told that he could purchase it at the "land" next door. There he was charged four per cent premium for specie and therewith paid for the tract he wanted. Very many did the same thing.

The receiver of the land office and the "banker" had a good understanding. The specie was passed under the counter back to the banker, was sold again and brought around through the doors. It did not require a great stock of specie to buy much land, but the banker was extremely careful about the kind of paper money he accepted, and all of it was promptly shipped to the East where, in the main, full face value was credited for it and the proceeds were paid over to the U.S. treasurer. The "Specie Circular" by Jackson was all right and a necessity, but the officers and the bank had a fine "rake off."

**FLATBOATING**

Those were the unquestionably hard times. Men labored hard for small wages and got low prices for produce. There were no railroads, no good highways, no bridges, the only market was New Orleans. Somebody

would build a flatboat and buy from neighbors enough to load it and then float down to that wonderful, far away city near the mouth of the Mississippi.

In 1838 father built and loaded a boat at the Thomas landing, near Lodi, [Indiana], then sold boat and cargo for a small advance. In 1839 he built and loaded another boat and took it to New Orleans. The cargo was of corn (then very low in price), wheat, live hogs, chickens, eggs and potatoes. He made money on the trip. He had made like voyages from near Louisville, was a master with the broad axe and boat building and in steering. But, observe the dangers. He had been sick in New Orleans. Moses Henry, of Rosedale, [Indiana], stayed with him till he could travel. They came to Evansville [Indiana] by steamer to Rosedale by stage, when father rode home on a horse he borrowed. By previous appointment he met many at Howard (then Westport) to settle for groceries he had brought up for them, which left a considerable sum of money in his possession. Friends saw danger and urged him not to go home that night, which was about two and a half miles east of north on the west bluff of Mill creek. Mother was fearful and dreamed that he was waylaid and killed. She blew a horn, the night danger signal. Mr. and Mrs. Guy came over and he walked to Howard at 2 o'clock a.m. Mother's health was broken down. The persons who had waited to waylay him were well known. One of the two had killed Luke Mead, between the Miller school house and Lodi.

In 1840 and every year including 1849 father took one or more boats to New Orleans. On every trip but one he made some money. In the spring of 1841, after returning from New Orleans he commenced to keep a store at Howard, working hard on the farm till noon and at the store till in the night. Made money; the canal construction was under way."

B. [Beadle] Madison, S.D., Feb. 17, 1909

Cont. in Tribune March 3, 1909.

The old flatboat days were too important to the people of the times to pass without further notice. We had no cities of much consequence then, no home markets worth while, and produce of all kinds must be sold somewhere. There was only one big market and the highway to it was the Mississippi river and its tributaries.



**WM. HENRY HARRISON  
BEADLE**



It was wonderful what the men could do with a few tools and the great poplar trees that towered so high above all their fellows of the forest. The best trees were spotted and from year to year they fell to make the big "gunnels" of these boats. A man would hold an axe swinging free by the tip of the handle and look level at the foot of the tree by the upper side of the axe and by the two foot mark on the handle at the first big limb and by proportion learn the length of gunnel he could cut from the tree. The tree was scored and hewed, leaving the stick about 18 inches thick and as broad as the trees permitted. Swung upon the forward truck and hung under the rear truck of a high wheeled wagon several teams hauled them to the river banks. For small boats "gunnels" from single trees were used, sixty to eighty feet long; for the larger boats they were spliced securely, the boats sometimes, though rarely, reaching 120 feet in length. They were from 16 to 28 feet wide. These big gunwales were placed the required distance apart upon logs and upon the upper edges the heavy oak planks were fastened strongly for the bottom of the boat. The joints were caulked with tarred tow, driven down compactly with mallet and caulking iron. This strong inverted box was then slid down upon skids till the lower edge was at the water. Then it was "everybody lend a hand to help turn the boat," and there it floated right side up on the water. Into these "gunnels" posts were set, strong siding put on and a roof of curved boards. Upon strongly braced frames at the middle sides and at the forward end were oar swings.

At the forward end was reserved a little cabin where men cooked and slept. A false bottom was over all the boat and back of the cabin the whole was packed full of produce, mainly salt pork and lard. When all was ready, the boat was pushed and rowed out into the current, all the men aboard stood along the center of the cover, waved their hats, cheered and were off. A man who had been "down river" three or four times, was strong, and a good swimmer, was a desirable "hand" for the trip.

Turner Bright was a famous swimmer. He was the best hand with a seine in all that region and was sent for to dive in Sugar Creek and search for the body of Dr. Cannon (father of the speaker, Uncle Joe) when he was drowned in that stream. [Joe Cannon was Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives. His father, Dr. Horace Cannon, drowned while attempting to reach a patient on the other side of the creek.]

Life and accident insurance were little known in the forties, but a "friend," who had interest in a cargo, feared the water greatly. Really not half of adult mankind can save themselves by swimming. He lived near Sylvania and offered Turner a five dollar pair of boots to take him ashore in case of accident. The trip was without

risk till coming up river on the steamer *Alex Scott*, a snag made a hole in the bow. There was excitement among all and the passengers rushed for life preservers, for valuables and clothing. Turner was active in like manner and as he went up and down the stairway the friend, whom we will call the "insured," hung to his coat tails and often repeated: "Turner, do not forget me. Thee knows what thee promised." But old Captain Shellcross and Tom, his faithful pilot, ran the boat upon the lower end of a "towhead," as the sandy, willow islands were called, saving all but the sugar down in the hold. Abundant sole leather mended the break and the *Alex Scott* was after that known as "old leatherhead."

In a stormy, black night on the lower Ohio, Captain Shellcross frequently came out and called to the pilot, "Hello! Tom; can you see the trees?" "No captain! I'm runnin' by the stars." "Stop her!" was the prompt command.

Boats from nearby points, sometimes ran all the way in close company; an inexperienced crew liked to have the advice and example of skilled men. Down on the lower river spring storms are often severe and endanger a flatboat. From the southwest, up a long stretch of river at high water, a fierce thunder and wind storm suddenly came. The water was up in the timber and willows on the left. The leading boat sent out its skiff with the cable, which they fastened to a big cottonwood, and the captain began to check the boat by holding the line around the strong snubbing post. The captain on the other boat, who did not know when "to double reef his binnacle," just followed suit. That skiff with the line and two men passed across the line of the first when the snubbing caused the cable to swish up out of the water and fall again as the cable slipped on the post. The skiff men and line were sent topsy-turvey. One man swam after the skiff, the other grabbed the fastened cable and was doused up and down in the water as the line seesawed. The original skiff pulled to their help, caught their skiff and line and helped them land a half mile farther down stream.

Floating quietly along in the early evening and sitting on the deck they passed a planter's large house where there were bright lights, music and dancing. In less than an hour they passed another place where like festivities prevailed. But when in another hour they came to a similar scene the captain cried, "all hands to the oars! We are floating around an eddy." Such were the stories told after every trip.

Cont. in Tribune, March 10, 1909

The Wabash and Erie Canal was the leading interest, prospective and real, in Liberty township and through the western counties of the State from 1838 till

1848. The surveys began in the former year and the project was not fully completed till the latter year.

People of the present day can hardly realize the important place held by the enterprise during these and many subsequent years. There have been three periods of progress; the first depended upon the river and the flatboats, with an occasional steamboat; the second saw the advance of traffic by the canal and the decline of the river navigation; in the third the railroad almost wholly displaced both the others.

To the early settlers the flat boat was almost the sole means by which markets could be reached for produce of all kinds such as pork, corn, wheat, live hogs, chickens and eggs. I know of a single boat that had all this variety for its cargo. Potatoes were sometimes important.

From 1839 to 1849 inclusive my father "ran the river" with one and sometimes two boats. So there was little a boy did not see or hear about the flatboat from its construction and landing to the sale of cargo and boat at New Orleans, which was the far away wonderland of the earth to our minds. Sometimes a late summer trip would be made by wagons to Chicago and packed butter, feathers, dried fruit, ample sugar and other items were hauled to that metropolis. But the great trip was to New Orleans in the early spring.

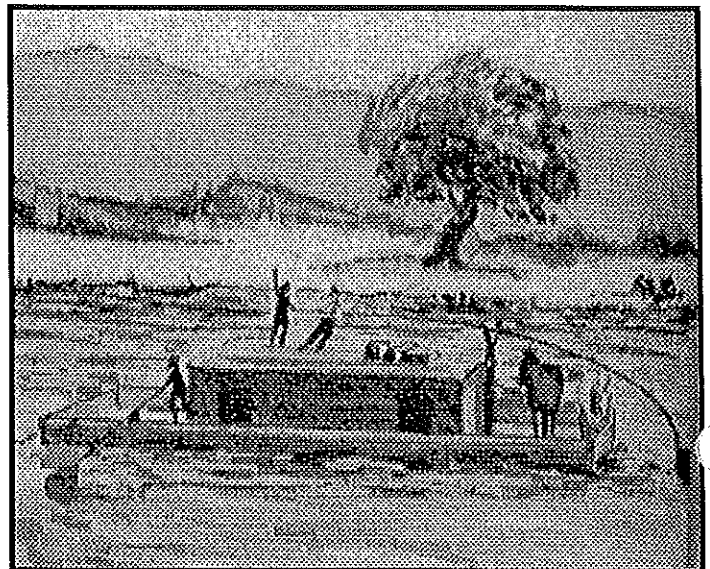
The river in those days had but one rise or flood in the year when the snows melted, the ice broke up and the boats were ready and loaded. Individuals or firms would plan to run a boat and would purchase for prompt delivery, when notified about the middle of March, of pork and other produce. The hauling had to be done before the bottom roads broke up or the river receded too much. Such boats would be run from points all along the river where the landings were good or the mouths of larger creeks afforded a safe place for the river ice. Good river men who could steer or handle a boat, put strong shoulders to oars and the ever reliable were in demand and for the time being were deemed very important and sometimes the heroes of the neighborhood.

When they returned in May or June they were centers of interest till their experiences and strings of stories were fully published. They came back dressed in spring styles of the extreme type and vest and neckties of such fierce colors as to suggest even then that observers would need to wear cotton in their ears. They were unlike the present remarkable tones [those dressed in style or in vogue], but not a whit less stunning. They also brought home the latest songs that they caught in the concert halls down there and such classics as "Nellie Gray" and others came into Liberty first by that route.

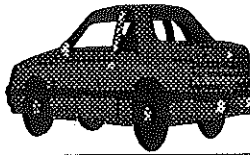
It was a vivid scene too they painted of the receipt by the swift dispatch boat at New Orleans of the news of Taylor's victories at Palo Alto and Tesaca de la Palma, the first battles of the Mexican war. One day at noon came the news that his army was surrounded and likely to be annihilated. It was 24 hours before another boat could arrive. Before noon the next day a tall staff was erected at the foot of Canal street and a man was at the top with field glasses to watch across the big bend of the river for the message her flag might carry of the result. Soon he cried that he could see her smoke, black and heavy, as she swiftly steamed. A vast crowd filled the levee and streets. Intervening low timber made the boat look low and the outlook called down that he flag seemed at half mast. Great sensation roused the people. The boat passed the timber into full view and he shouted, "Her flag is at the top!" Then all cheered the assured victory. As she came around the bend from the northeast she ran up other flags and as she steamed swiftly up toward the landing a small gun on her bow was fired and the crowd was wild with enthusiasm. Before she landed the police formed a lane through the crowd and men on horse back stood at the wharf. When she touched a clerk sprang off and handed dispatches to the mounted men, who galloped rapidly up Canal street.

One set of dispatches was for the government and was sent over the recently completed telegraph to Washington. The others were for newspapers and, before the crowd had reached the newspaper offices, boys were selling for five cents each the little slips on which was printed the news of the two victories. Such stories were many times retold with undiminished interest.

Some boatmen did not return. They had gone to be soldiers under Taylor.  
B. Madison, S. D., March 3, 1909



LET'S  
TAKE  
A  
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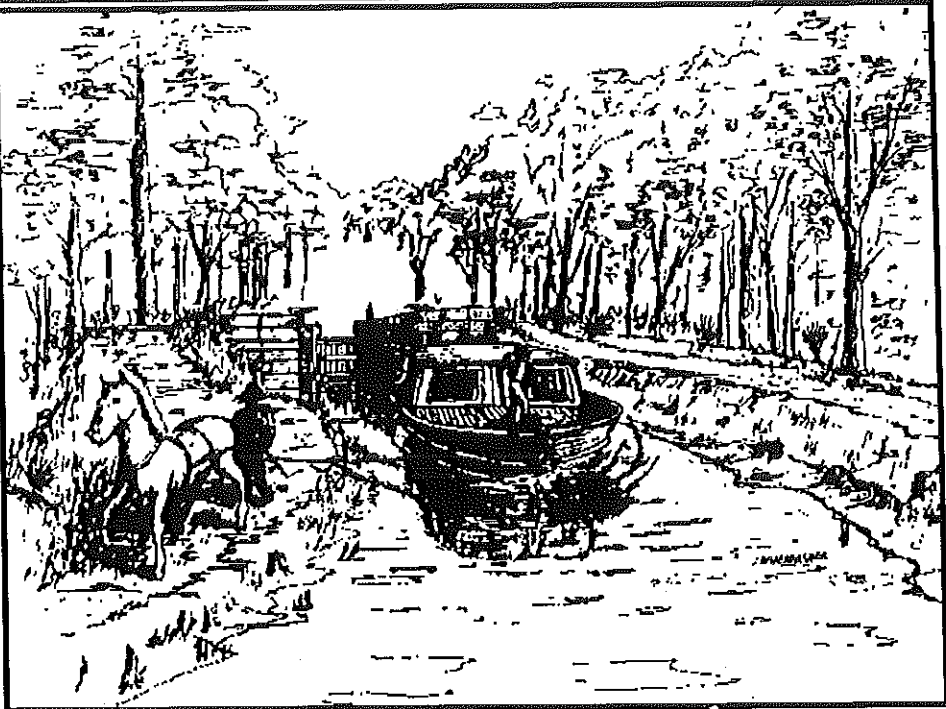


## SAVANNAH-OGEECHEE CANAL

By Carolyn Schmidt

Whenever Bob & I travel we try to stop at a canal site. While passing through Georgia we decided to visit the Savannah-Ogeechee Canal, which is just outside of Savannah at 681 Fort Argyle Road, and check on the progress being made at the canal park. We arrived close to 4 p.m. and discovered there was to be a sunset hike within minutes. We hurriedly looked at and took pictures of the exhibits in the museum, grabbed a cup of hot coffee in the pavilion, and followed guide Chicka Arndt, site interpreter, on an interesting and informative 1.6 mile hike. We immediately noted that the Canal Society volunteers had improved the trails with new plank bridges and boardwalks and cleared the locks of plant growth presenting a much better impression of the canal than the last time we visited it. The loop we took passed by Locks 5 & 6, which were part of a 16.5 mile long canal that has a tidal lock at the Savannah River, four lift locks, and another tidal lock at the Ogeechee River.

The Savannah Ogeechee Canal was chartered in 1824 by Ebenezer Jenks, who started construction but progressed slowly. In December 1826 a second charter was given to a group of Savannah merchants and planters and Jenks had to surrender all his rights to the new company. The canal was to be free of taxes forever and was promised a State loan of \$50,000 with \$700,000 of capital stock authorized. The canal was widened. The canal was finally completed by December 1830. Through traffic began in 1831.



This representation of a barge being towed by a mule through the Savannah-Ogeechee Barge Canal in 1845 is from a tourist rack card.

The canal was 48 feet wide at the water line and 33 feet wide at the bottom. It was 5 feet deep. There were three lift locks built of wood that lifted canal boats a total of 29 feet. The "First Lock" was located near Savannah, under a mile further was "Gays Lock" and about 200 feet from the Ogeechee River was the "Ogeechee River Lock." The dimensions of the locks were 18 feet wide by 90 feet long.

The canal ran from the Savannah River, just above the city wharves along Bay Street, went due south for a few hundred yards, then southwest to the Ogeechee and entered the river about 19 miles from Ossabaw Sound. It crossed swamp ponds and small streams. It transported lumber from one of the nation's largest sawmills located along the canal's basin, cotton, rice, bricks, guano, naval stores, peaches and other goods.

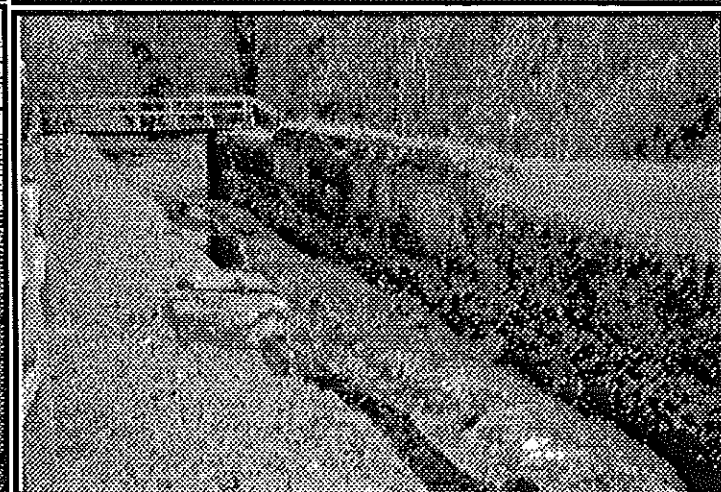
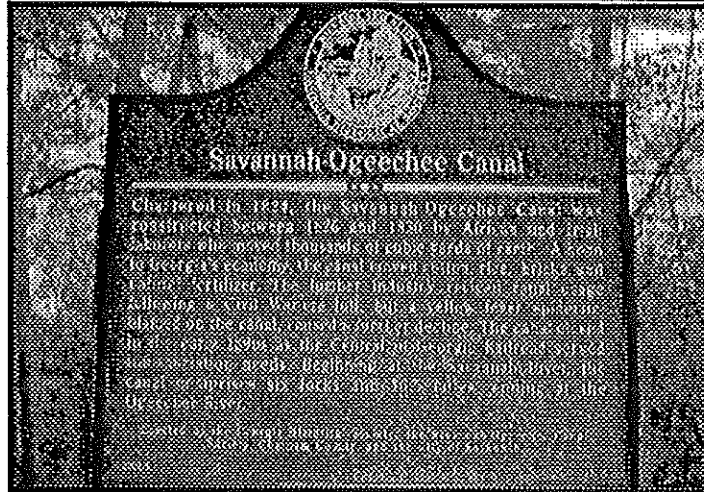
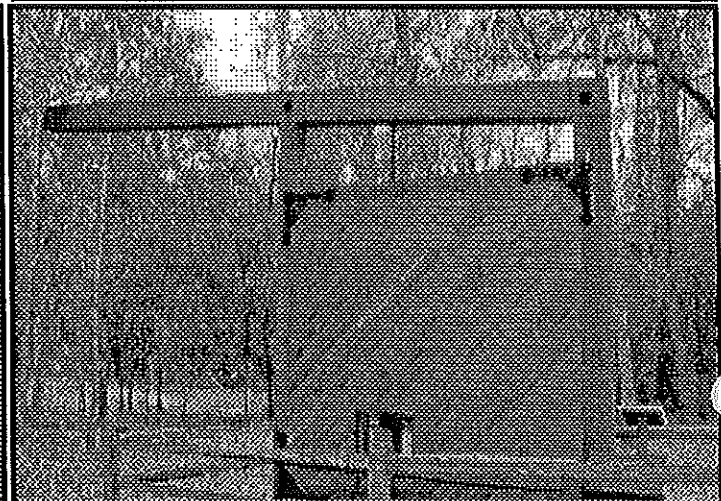
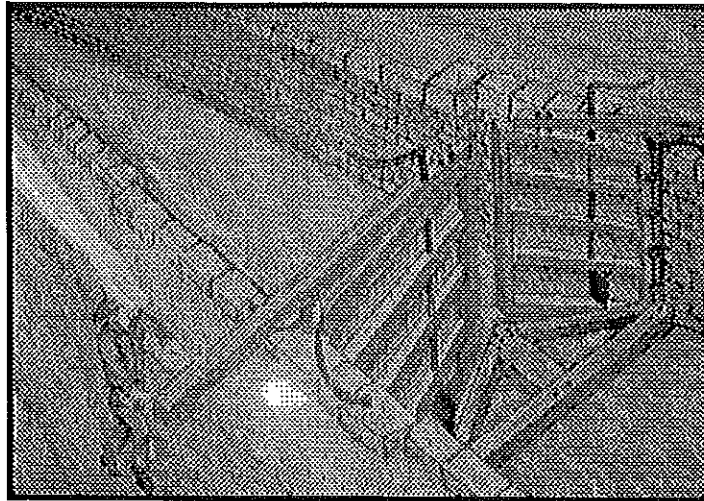
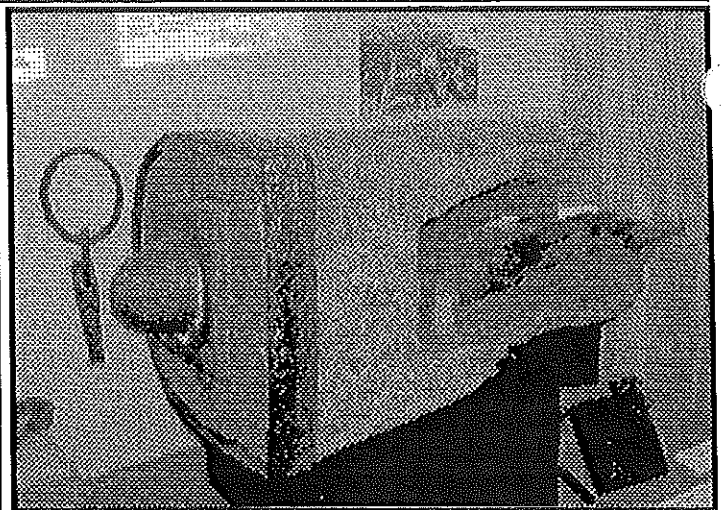
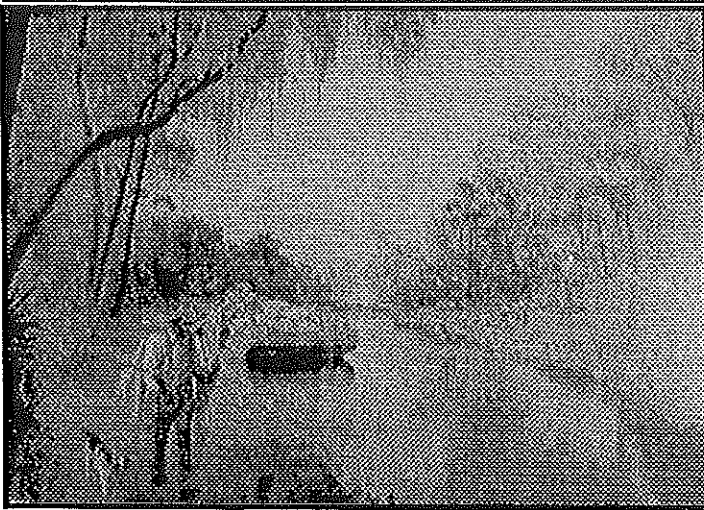
As usual, decaying wooden locks and canal bank erosion plagued the canal and hindered traffic. By 1836 the company declared bankruptcy. Reports showed that

\$246,693 had been spent. The canal company was re-organized, new capital obtained and a repair program started by new management. This time the locks were rebuilt with brick. The canal began to make money. By 1860 a dividend of 20% was announced.

In December 1864, William Tecumseh Sherman and sixty thousand of his men spent a night where the Ogeechee River meets the Savannah-Ogeechee Canal. Some stayed behind while the main body of men assaulted Fort McAllister located a few miles east of the canal.

The canal was seriously damaged by heavy rains in June of 1876. That year there was also a yellow fever epidemic, which was fatal to over 1,000 people. The canal was once again bankrupt. By the 1890s, the canal was no longer used to transport goods or people. The railroad bought wharves, warehouses and properties fronting on the canal.

The Savannah and Ogeechee Canal Society was formed in 1992 and has been working diligently to

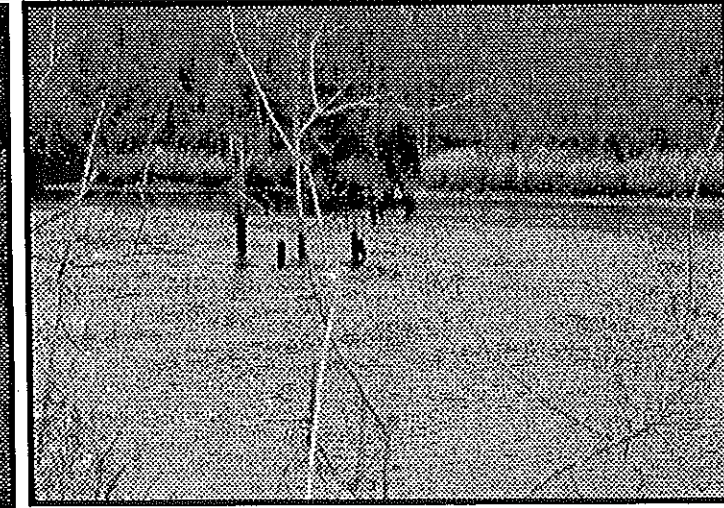
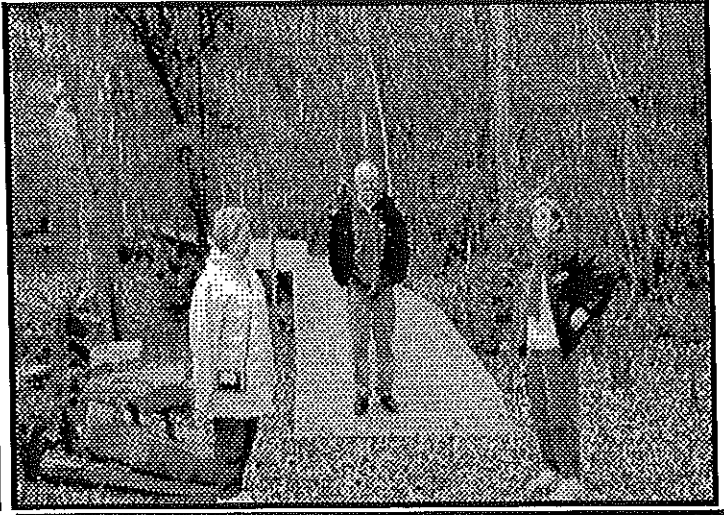
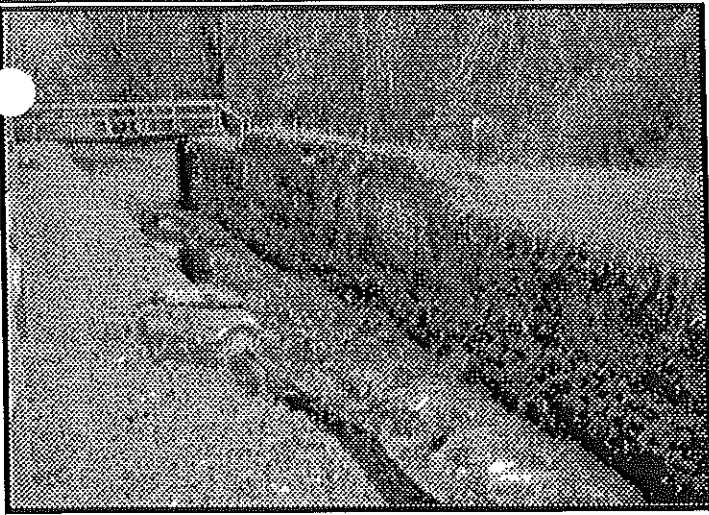


Top: This painting of the Savannah-Ogeechee Canal hangs in the museum, which sells copies it.  
 Center: A diagram of a canal lock gate with wickets, the mitre sill, the balance beam, the locks walls and lock tender.

Top: The pivot pin on the bottom of the quoin helped the gate rotate.  
 Center: Volunteers erected a replica of half of a lock gate.  
 Bottom: Lock 5 is a brick lock and is marked as follows:

Bottom: Savannah-Ogeechee Canal - Chartered in 1821, the Savannah Ogeechee Canal was constructed between 1826 and 1830 by African and Irish laborers who moved thousands of cubic yards of earth. A boon to Georgia's economy, the canal moved cotton, rice, bricks, and natural fertilizer. The lumber industry revived the canal usage following a Civil War-era lull, but a yellow fever epidemic, blamed on the canal, caused a further decline. The canal closed in the early 1890s as the Central of Georgia Railroad served transportation needs. Beginning at the Savannah Brier, the canal comprises six locks and 16.5 miles, ending at the Ogeechee River.





Top: Brick Lock 5 is located near the Canal museum. Its mitre sill is still in the bottom at its upper end.  
 Center.: This view of the Savannah-Ogeechee Canal is seen from Lock 5 looking toward Lock 6 and the Ogeechee River in the background. The towpath is on the left and the berm on the right.  
 Bottom: Chicka Arndt stands atop a brick wall of Lock 6 and tells the history of the Savannah-Ogeechee Canal to Carolyn Schmidt. She carried a lantern to help guide the group back to the museum after sunset.

Top: A new board walk built by volunteers makes it easy to cross swampy areas alongside the canal. Chunks of stone with metal on them behind Carolyn Schmidt are relics from the canal.  
 Center: Lock 6 was a guard lock at the Ogeechee River, which is seen in the background.  
 Bottom: Piers remain on an old bridge across the Ogeechee River near where the Savannah-Ogeechee Canal enters the river. Another bridge upstream was burnt during the Civil War and Sherman's March to the Sea. Photos by Bob Schmidt

create a museum, canal park and hiking trails. Visitors can see a replica of half of a canal gate complete with a wicket, a canal lock model, artifacts found in the canal, an interpretive sign near Lock 5, cypress trees along the canal banks, the wide towpath and narrower berm bank where slaves ran the canal prior to 1865 keeping the mules pulling the heavy canal barges, a wildlife river marsh with pelicans and other birds, piers of an old bridge and a gazebo that was built by scouts for an Eagle project.

We were to watch the sunset at the gazebo, but a cold wind hastened us along the trail that was lighted with luminaires. We stopped for a short time near a dying fire that the volunteers had built to burn brush. It felt good, but we had more plank bridges to cross and more trail to hike before we reached the museum.

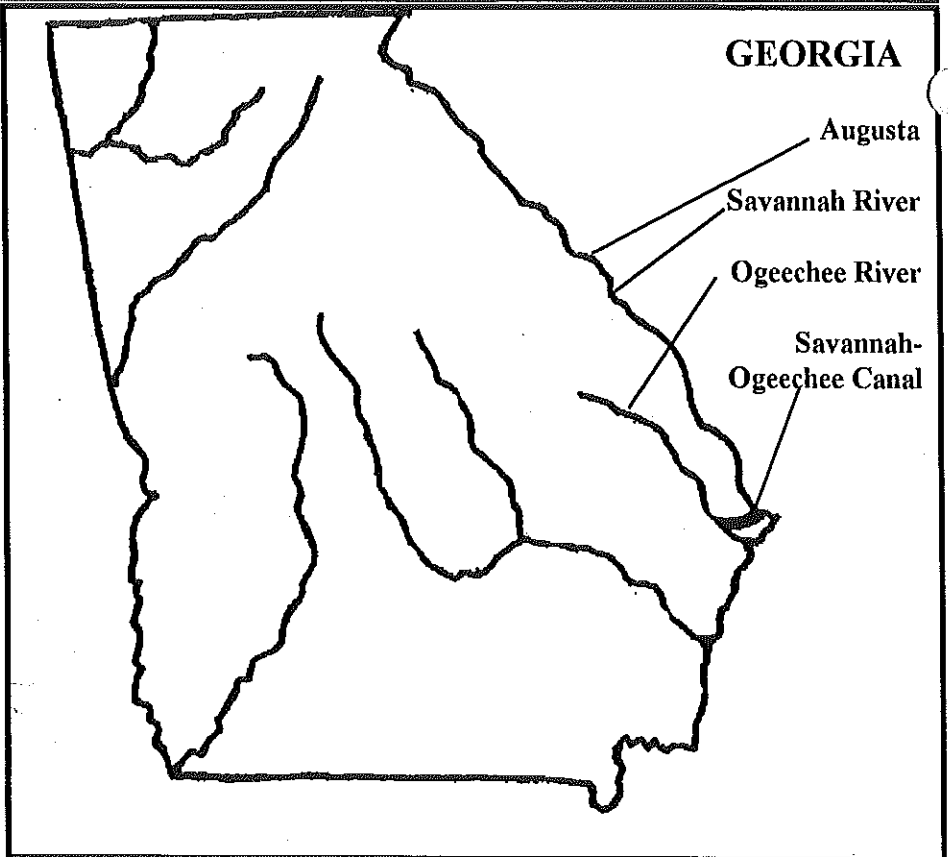
The Savannah - Ogeechee Canal Museum and Nature Center consists of 184 acres of river swamp, pine flats, a diverse group of migratory birds, the gopher tortoise, and other reptiles and animals. It is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. seven days a week. Although Civil War history and a naturalist program are offered, the brick locks alone are worth a stop.

At the park we were given the following information about nature and the Civil War.

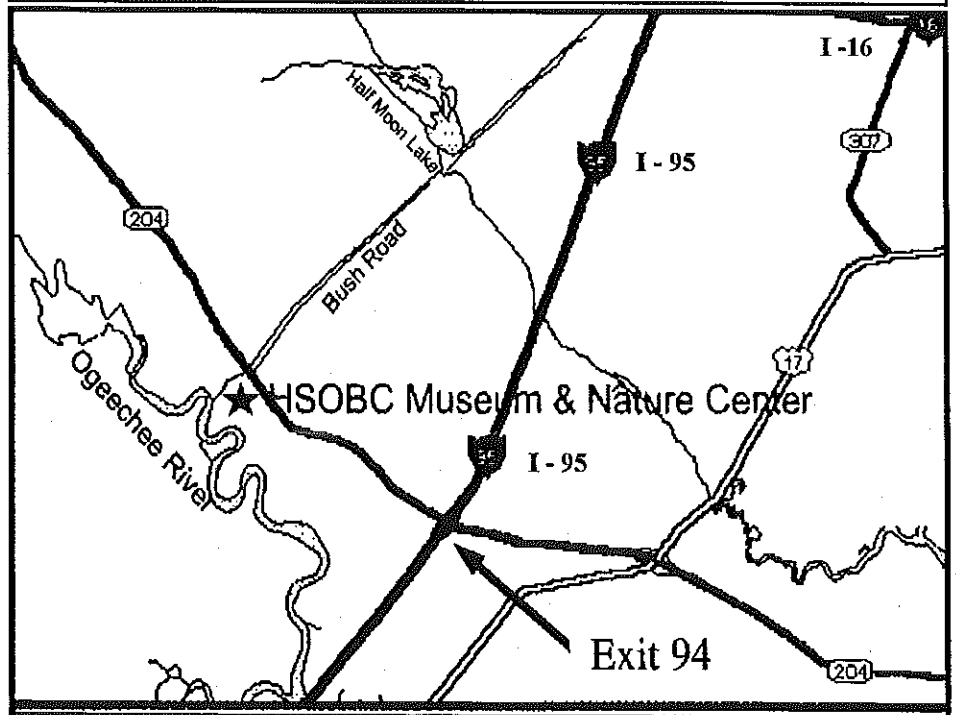
**Winter at the Savannah-Ogeechee Canal**

Savannah's winters are mild, although night temperatures can drop into the 20s or even teens. Snow is rare, only occurring about once in ten years on average.

Reptiles will hibernate for several months during the winter, although they may be seen sunning themselves on unseasonably warm days. Gopher tortoises will usually stay underground if the temperature



The Savannah & Ogeechee Canal connected the port of Savannah to the heartland of Georgia. It was built in 1826-1830 by Irish immigrants and African-American slaves at a cost of \$189,566.37. It operated from 1830 through 1890.



is in the 50s.

Insects generally will not survive the cold weather. They lay their eggs,

which hatch out in the spring. Golden Silk and Crab Spiders can be seen along the towpath on warm days in the fall. They, as well as mosquitos,

gnats, red bugs and ticks are gone after the first frost, usually in November.

Bird species are not as numerous as in the migratory seasons of spring and fall. Year round residents, such as woodpeckers, hawks and an occasional eagle can be seen. Barred owls are often heard, especially in late afternoon. On warm days, herons and similar wading birds can be seen feeding in the canal on frogs and other aquatic life.

Plants will generally die back. Except for evergreen species, trees and shrubs will lose their leaves. The canal has a large number of evergreens, including hollies, live oaks, magnolias, wax myrtles and pines. Interestingly, the cypress trees (a pine) shed their needles in November.

**Civil War Action on the Savannah-Ogeechee Canal**

As Sherman's March to the Sea neared Savannah, his left wing, consisting of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Corps approached the Ogeechee River. Of these, the 15<sup>th</sup> Corp. under Maj. Gen. P. J. Osterhaus was the most active in this area. His Division commanders were Corse, Wood, Smith and Hazen. The 14<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Corps also took part in action along the canal.

December 6 Corse's Division crossed the Ogeechee River at Jenck's Bridge (present Rt. 80 crossing at Blycton). Meanwhile, Gen. William Hardee, in charge of the defense of Savannah, sent 600 men and 2 guns to fortify the intersection of Ogeechee Rd. (Route 17) and Ft. Argyle Rd. (near the present Bamboo Farm) with a line of earthworks.

December 7 Wood's Division camped at Ft. Argyle, site of an old Colonial period fort on the west bank of the Ogeechee, about a mile north of the canal. The troops prepared a pontoon bridge crossing at Ft. Argyle at Dillon's Ferry and rebuilt the

charred remains of Dillon's Bridge over the Ogeechee at the mouth of the canal, which had previously been set on fire by Confederate troops.

December 8 Corse's division, traveling down the east bank of the Ogeechee River, was halted by a burning bridge over the canal near Lock 5. The troops rebuilt the bridge and camped for the night.

December 9 Corse's division continued south from the canal to Ogeechee Rd. They skirmished with the Confederate force which was entrenched (near the present Bamboo Farm) and drove them back toward Savannah and the Confederate line on the east bank of Salt Creek. The Savannah-Ogeechee Canal and rice field dikes had been breached by the Confederates to flood the already low lying area.

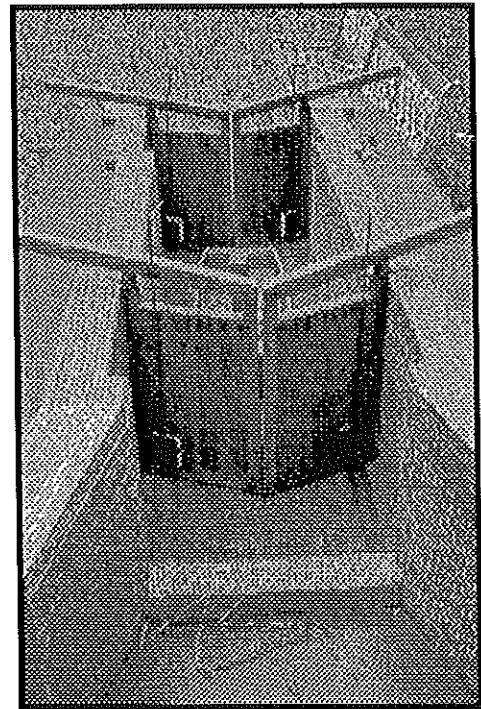
December 10-12 Corse's, Wood's and Smith's Divisions were positioned on the west side of Salt Creek (near the present Dean Forest Rd.) facing the Confederate line on the east side. At the Ogeechee Road, they faced Battery Jones manned by the Terrell, GA Artillery, which halted their advance.

They were joined on the left by some of the 14<sup>th</sup> Corp troops which had crossed the newly repaired Dillon's Bridge and moved up the canal to Salt Creek. These troops attempted to cross Shaw's Bridge and Dam at the canal during the nights of the 10<sup>th</sup> through the 12<sup>th</sup>, but were repulsed in fierce fighting. This portion of the Confederate line was commanded by Gen. McLaws with 3700 troops.

December 13 Hazen's division of the 15<sup>th</sup> Corp crossed the Ogeechee at King's Bridge on Ogeechee Rd., and marched to Ft. McAllister. After a short battle, Major Anderson's force of only 230 men was defeated. Federal warships were then able to navigate the Ogeechee and begin to re-supply the Union troops. A wharf

was built at King's Bridge by the 17<sup>th</sup> Corps to handle cargo and the heavy siege guns needed to take Savannah.

December 20 General Hardee successfully evacuated approximately 10,000 Confederate troops from Savannah, including those on the Confederate line. During the night they crossed the Savannah River from the city into South Carolina on a pontoon bridge made of several hundred rice barges. The following morning on the 21st the city of Savannah was surrendered by the Mayor, Dr. Richard Arnold, to the Union Army.



This model of a brick lock is on display outside in the Savannah-Ogeechee Canal Park. Photo by Bob Schmidt

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

CSI welcomes aboard the following new members who have joined at the membership level unless otherwise noted:

Michael & Cecily Schneider - Lafayette, IN

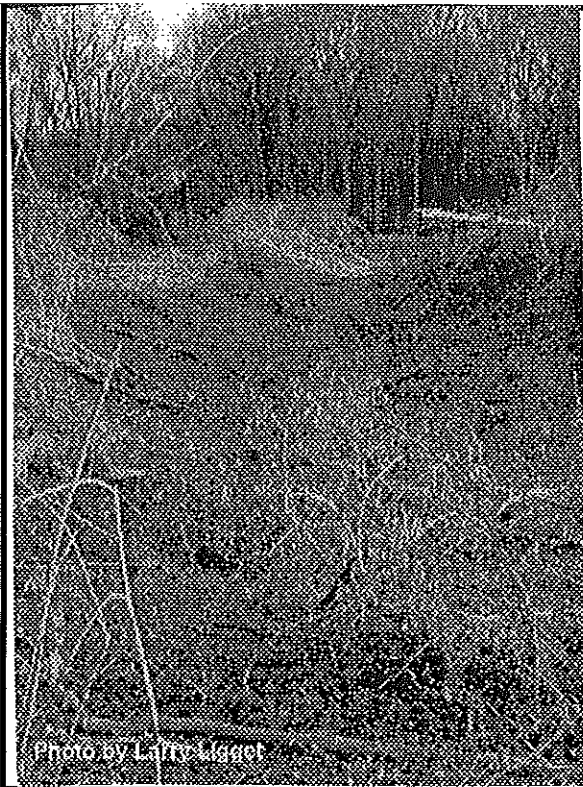


Photo by Larry Ligget

**CANAL BED IN DANGER?**

Sam Ligget, CSI member from Terre Haute, informs us that work has begun on extending the golf course at the Fort Harrison County Club. He and his brother Larry Ligget, also of Terre Haute, took pictures of the Wabash & Erie Canal bed that runs through the lower part of the property and is endangered by the expansion.  
P - Larry Ligget



Photo by Larry Ligget

**IN THE NEWS**



**July 19 - Middletown, OH**

The Journal News of Hamilton, Ohio, carried an article entitled "Society Protects History," which said that Port Middletown would be dedicated on July 21, 2004, at 11 a.m. The Middletown Historical Society donated \$50,000 toward the project. Bonds were floated for \$400,000 to remove City Centre Mall before the project could be completed.

Port Middletown consists of a long outdoor stainless steel trough with running water across 3 bars that create shallow pools (representing three working locks) and has pumping equipment in an underground vault. A series of 6-8 granite etchings located along the sides of the trough depict

scenes from the Miami & Erie Canal and the port's history. There is also a replica of a lift bridge, benches, lights, and landscaping.

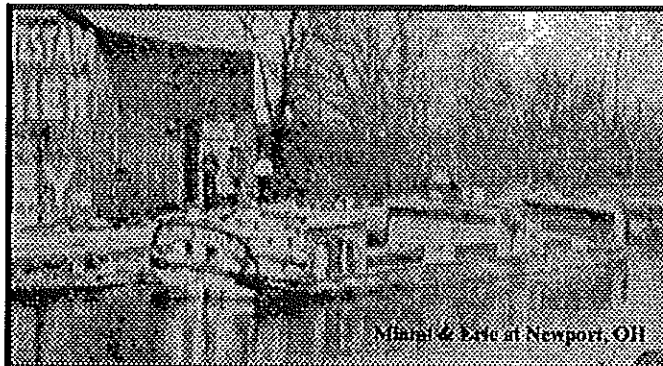
Port Middletown attempts to preserve the history of Middletown, where the first earth was turned on July 21, 1825 for the Miami & Erie Canal, and to show the impact the canal had on the town then and today. From that eventful day 179 years ago at the corner of what is now Verity Parkway and Yankee Road, the canal eventually stretched from the Ohio River to Lake Erie taking over part of the Wabash & Erie Canal from Junction to Toledo, OH.

Middletown, a small little town on the river, exploded into a

prominent city at that time with canalers bringing goods and different lifestyles into the area. Boat workers frequented the hotels and saloons that sprang up along the waterway. They often drank too much and became roudy. Wealthy families enjoyed day or longer trips on packet boats to Cincinnati and elsewhere receiving meals and sleeping accommodations for a few dollars. Within time paper companies dominated the landscape.

The railroad in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century soon offered faster and more regular transportation than the canal, which imposed a 3 MPH speed limit on boats to keep them from eroding the canal's banks and shut down for several months during the winter. The canal at Middletown closed in 1929 and was filled in during the next few years.

About 100 people attended the Port Middletown dedication. John Geyer says canalers will find it well worth a trip. John Geyer, CSI member, Hamilton, OH



Miami & Erie at Newport, OH