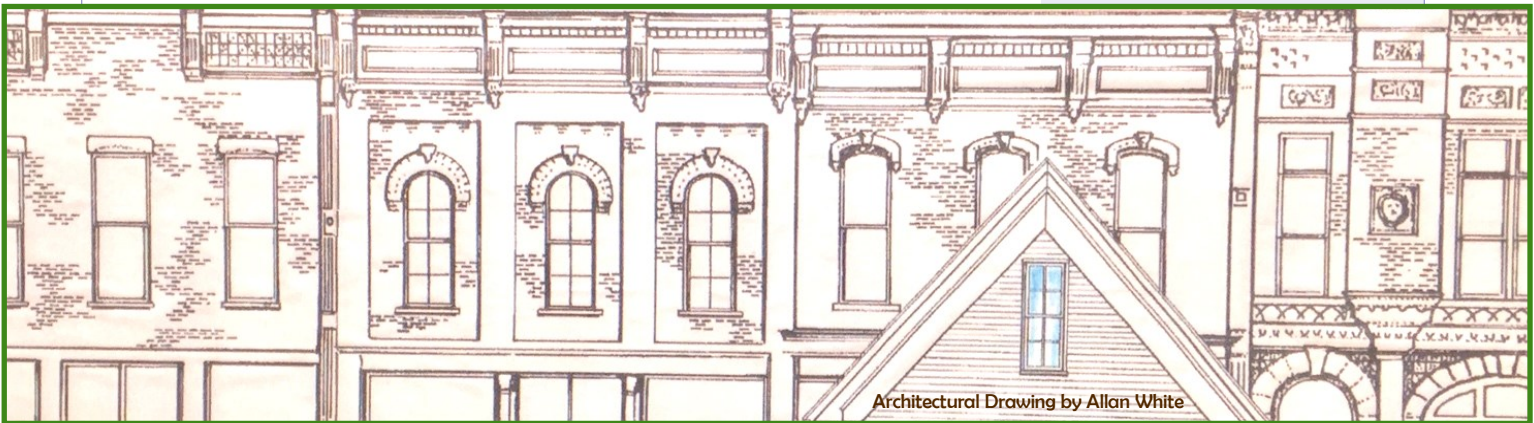


Winter

2022

North Manchester HISTORY

*Interpreting the History
of North Manchester
and the Eel River Valley*



Architectural Drawing by Allan White



Property North Manchester Center for History

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

From the Archives	2
J.H. Huffman	3
Bachelors' Crowd.....	4
Maurice Place.....	5
A Great Finish	6
From the Director.....	7

From our collection dated 1915. Addressed to Miss Katherine Hoover from Uncle Myron and Aunt Nellie.

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The Center for History
122 East Main Street

Tuesday through Friday, Mar—Dec

10:00a—4:00p

Saturday 10:00a—2:00p

Visit Thomas Marshall House

409 North Market Street

First Saturday Apr—Dec

1:00p—4:00p

From the Archives



This sleigh, lap robe and strap of bells were donated to us by the Heckman family over 30 years ago. In a recent visit daughter Kay reminisced about riding in the sleigh with her father Paul. The sound of authentic sleigh bells brings back happy memories for many of us. She recalled that the horse's name was Queen and that her father had taught her to pull. Below is an excerpt from a letter Kay found from her father addressed to her grandparents in January 1959.

Saturday noon

Dear Dad & Mom,

...I just got Dads swell letter. I believe it's the longest one you've ever written me. Everyone here sure keeps asking about you both. Well, as I was saying, it snowed all day yesterday. I was afraid it might all melt so I took the afternoon off and got my sleigh downstairs. French stopped in while he was out on his truck and got the harness all assembled and on the horse for me.

I took off first by myself and had no trouble. What a wonderful horse. Everyone just raves about her disposition. Then I picked up Sara [wife] and we drove out to Schutz's to show off the sleigh. It surely is beautiful against the white snow. I brought her back and then put the bells on and hauled a bunch of kids, including Steve, of course.

People came to doors and windows of every house we passed when we put the bells on, and kids followed us all over town. Last night the calls started coming from everyone who wanted rides. I had the horse out till 9:30 o'clock and put a lantern on and we were all over town.

Just got back from hauling kids and Sara wants to go at 2 o'clock. It isn't too cold but enough that the snow isn't melting and it looks like it will last awhile cause we have about 8 inches of it...

With love, your son,

Paul



Above: Queen hauling a group of North Manchester youngsters with Paul Heckman driving the sleigh. Pictured left to right: Deena (Long) Miller, Kay (Heckman) Hervey, Kathy (Kester) Kretzer, Laura (Nelson) Stutts and Paul Heckman.

(photo courtesy of Kay Heckman Hervey)

Officer Huffman in Predicament

Night Officer J.H. Huffman knows now how the old Puritans must have felt when they were locked in stocks. And while he was not a prisoner behind bars, he knows now the helpless feeling of a prisoner. Wednesday night his arm caught in a descending elevator at the Northern Indiana Power Company. He was held fast, and it being near eleven o'clock, no one heard his outcries. As a last resort he fired his revolver three times through a basement window. Doyle Roberts, who works at one of the theatres, heard the shots and finally located Mr. Huffman.

Huffman looks after the furnace fire for the Northern Indiana Power Company and was using the elevator instead of the back stairway to go to the basement. As he started the elevator, he remembered he had not turned on the basement light. He reached for the switch, and the descending elevator caught his arm between a brace rod and the floor. The forearm was badly sprained and bruised but the injury is not serious. Had he not had help, he might have been held fast all night.

From the North Manchester Journal, December 16, 1937

(The Northern Indiana Power Company building is now the west gallery of the Center for History)

The Bachelors' Crowd

The Bachelors' Crowd has long been one of the features of the Hotel Sheller. Sometime after the war Ernest Ebbinghouse stopped in front of what is now the Hotel Sheller. Workmen were putting down the floor in the office, but from the kitchen came the odor of good eating and Ernest stopped. The eating continued good and Ernest couldn't tear himself away. David Whisler and James Taylor added their presence and their interests. This was the start of the Bachelors' Table. The original three, there gathered around the festive board three times a day a hungry crowd which included Otto Steffins, Dayton Abbott, John K. Wise , W.E. Billings, Peter Ahrends, Rev. L.C. Douglas, G.A. Buswell and C. E. Bechtol.

Then Dayton Abbott heard of a good job in Ft. Wayne and the place knew him no more. But in the spring of 1903 the influence of women began to be felt in the crowd. Attorney Lon D. Fleming came into the crowd, and besides being a jovial, jolly fellow, he was a married man. Peter Ahrends went away one Saturday night and when he returned Monday he brought with him a woman dressed in red, and introduced her as "not particularly good to look upon, but all mine."

John Wise then began to have a forgetful way, and got interested in the price of residential properties. Orange blossoms, wedding bells and a month's vacation followed in quick succession, and when he came back, he took his meals in another corner of the dining room. Mr. Fleming was then joined by Mrs. Fleming, and the custom of eating potatoes with a knife was abolished, while the reign of the fork and napkin was inaugurated.

At this junction the Saturday evening absence of David Whisler was noticed, then came the purchase of two tickets to South Bend, more orange blossoms, and when he came back it was to a residence property. The other bachelors looked on in wonder but extended no sympathy.

Mr. & Mrs. Taber and their son Bayard were the next arrivals, and this family adding its influence to that of the Flemings, has put refining touches here and there until the crowd is as orderly and decorous as a bunch of Sunday school delegates in a strange town. Thus has the influence of women been felt among the invincible, and with weakened defenses, the faithful ones are almost disheartened, and are taking events in a resigned manner which will make them easy to catch.

W.E. Billings, Journal, 1903, edited



At left, a photo of the Sheller Hotel as it appeared in 1958. Photographer, Leigh B. Freed.

The façade would have been almost identical in 1903.

In 2023, our *Art on the Bricks* series will include a program by Dr. Jay Perry focusing on the Civil War. One of North Manchester's strongest links to the war was our participation in the Underground Railroad. Below is an excerpt from an article "Recollections of the Campaign of 1856", first printed in the **Indiana Magazine of History**, March 1920. Collected by Wilbert H. Siebert.

Underground Railroad Operations of Maurice Place

In the years 1848 and '49, my cousin Maurice Place often brought carriage loads of colored people from North Manchester, Wabash County, to my father's house, six miles west of Manchester on the Rochester road. He was a plain old Friend, had a large old fashioned carriage, and always came with the curtains down. We would keep (the colored people) until some time in the night, then my father would go to Avery Brace's, a man from the state of New York who owned a large farm and had plenty of horses. He lived three miles from us, farther north through the woods. He took them in his large wagon seven miles still farther north to Chauncey Hurlburt's in Kosciusko County. There were several families of Hurlburts living near each other. They took them twelve miles further north to Warsaw, to a man by the name of Gordon and he took them on to Dr. Matchett's in Elkhart County. They had friends there to help them to Michigan. We would often hear of them along the line (in a private way) after they had obtained work in Michigan. One family I remember distinctly. There eight of them father, mother, the wife's sister, and five children, all from Kentucky. They were neatly dressed and seemed quite intelligent. The most of them had been house servants and left their master for fear they would be sold, and sent to the rice swamps. We heard that they profited by their freedom after their arrival in Michigan. There six more colored people came, five men and one woman. My father, William Hayward, walked over with them very early in the morning to Avery Brace's home. Quite a number came after we moved to Kosciusko County. Then the law was much more stringent (between 1850 and 1856) and they had to come after dark and go away before daybreak.

What a great finish to 2022!



Highlights from the Director

Happy Holidays to all,

The year end is here, whether we're ready or not! It has been a *very* busy year at the Center for History. We introduced new programs: *Art on the Bricks* and the Kaleidoscope Gallery, and with help from our friends, have expanded and improved our summer camp. Also, we now host a quarterly lecture series giving everyone an additional reason to visit the museum. We were delighted our friends at **Visit Wabash County** shared another successful trolley tour with us this summer and have already included us in their *Taste the Love* tour in February.

Looking forward to 2023, we are excited to have been awarded a Heritage Support Grant from the **Indiana Historical Society** to make many anticipated upgrades to our restroom facilities. There will be surprises when we reopen in March with projects in our newly designated children's section, *Tommy's Place*, and new signage for the Kaleidoscope Gallery. Three new artists are already lined up to share their talents with us in the gallery. Naturally, plans for *Art on the Bricks* are well underway, and we plan to host several additional events on "The Bricks" next year.

As members of the NM Historical Society, you have first access to all events as well as advance access to our travel series. This Wednesday we travel to South Bend for our third trip this year. We can't wait to see where Bernie and Vicki take us in 2023!

Recently, we hosted a workshop with staff from several Northeast Indiana museums. They were very complimentary in regards to our facility, location, amenities and exhibits (and the awesome lunch our volunteers provided). The question that touched me the most was, "How do you get so many people to volunteer?" They were in awe of the number of hours we are staffed and open to the public, primarily because of volunteers. I explained, we continue to maintain 10,000 square feet of exhibits because of volunteers, and, we have the resources we do because you, our donors, willingly support us every year. In that moment I was so proud of what each of you has done to make this a great museum. You, too, should be proud. Thank you!

Laura Rager
Director

The Annual Fund Campaign continues through the end of the year—your support matters!

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North Manchester Center for History

Mission Statement

The North Manchester Center for History of the North Manchester Historical Society serves to promote the Society's mission as a nonprofit educational association that collects, preserves, and interprets the history of North Manchester and northern Indiana (the area of the Eel River Basin) from the arrival of the first Native Americans in the region to the present day through the collecting and preserving of books, documents, artifacts and other cultural objects. The Center interprets its collection to the public by means of a museum facility, educational programs, lectures, public events and publications and encourages others to help collect, preserve and interpret the history of North Manchester area.

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Memberships expire 12.31.22 Renew now!