

Collection #
SC 1567

WHITEWATER CANAL ASSOCIATION RECORDS, 1939–1964

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Processed by
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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 8 folders

COLLECTION DATES: 1939-1964

PROVENANCE: James P. Mullin, Brookville, Indiana, 8 May 1978;
William J. Baudenstiel, Brookville, Indiana, unknown

RESTRICTIONS: None

REPRODUCTION RIGHTS: Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the Indiana Historical Society

ALTERNATE FORMATS: None

OTHER FINDING AIDS: None

RELATED HOLDINGS: M 115 Goodwin Family, Boxes 5-7

ACCESSION NUMBERS: 1978.0514, 1994.0574x

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The Whitewater Canal was one of the projects contained in the Mammoth Internal Improvements Act passed by the Indiana legislature in 1836. In addition to the Whitewater Canal, connecting the National Road with the Ohio River, this act envisioned a railroad from Madison to Indianapolis, a Wabash and Erie Canal connecting Terre Haute with Lafayette, a Central Canal through Indianapolis, and a macadamized highway from New Albany to Vincennes. Before much progress had been made on any of these projects, the state went bankrupt. Construction of the Whitewater Canal was turned over to a private company, which completed the canal to Brookville in 1843, to Connersville in 1845, and to Cambridge City in 1846. Continuing problems with low water, floods, deteriorating banks, and rotting locks kept the canal from operating at a profit, and it was made obsolete by the Whitewater Valley Railroad, to which its right of way was sold in 1865.

For nearly eighty years the canal fell into desuetude, its banks sometimes planted with flowers as at Connersville. At Metamora it provided a setting for the studios of Indiana artists J. Ottis Adams, T. C. Steele, William Forsyth, and Otto Stark.

A movement to restore the canal at its southern end began about 1940. The Whitewater Canal Association was formed in 1941, under the leadership of John P. Goodwin of Brookville and Cornelius O'Brien of Lawrenceburg. Parallel efforts were made to raise money to reconstruct the canal, from a feeder dam at Laurel to Brookville; to secure title to the land from the Big Four railroad; and to interest the State of Indiana in taking over a section of the canal as an historic site and park. Twenty years later these efforts had been crowned with success, and the canal, centering on Metamora, has become a thriving tourist attraction.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection, filling eight folders, contains minutes, correspondence, financial records, and clippings, dated 1939-1964. It is arranged by category.

In Folder 1 are articles of association of the Whitewater Canal Association, and minutes for the years 1941-1946. In Folder 2 are lists of donors in campaigns 1942-1945. Folders 3-4 contain correspondence 1941-1962, and in Folder 5 is material about a canoe race held on the canal in 1964.

Folder 6 contains financial material, bills and check stubs, and in Folder 7 are clippings and historical material.

In Folder 8 are apparently unrelated items about the Franklin Manufacturing Company in Brookville, 1939-1941.

One blueprint, dated 1945, of a proposed Whitewater Canal Memorial, is stored with maps in Print Collections (G 440 .W591 1945)

FOLDER LISTING

FOLDER

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Articles; minutes 1941-1946 |
| 2 | Donations 1942-1945 |
| 3 | Correspondence-- 1941-1943 |
| 4 | Correspondence -- 1944-1962 |
| 5 | Canoe race 1964 |
| 6 | Tax returns, bills, check stubs |
| 7 | Historical, clippings |
| 8 | Franklin Manufacturing Co. 1939-1941 |

CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://157.91.92.2/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, SC 1567).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.