



HERITAGE IN BROWN COUNTY

A Report Prepared for
Peaceful Valley Heritage, Inc.

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I. Executive Summary

In December, 2014, Peaceful Valley Heritage, Inc. hired James Glass of Historic Preservation and Heritage Consulting LLC to conduct a study of heritage in Brown County. The study was to be based on three sources: (a) interviews with residents who were knowledgeable about local heritage, (b) historical research, and (c) a field survey of existing properties of potential historical importance. It was also to include an assessment of the design characteristics of Old Town Nashville.

This report brings together the results of the study. The first part summarizes findings about seven heritage themes in Brown County history: (1) Pioneer/Settler Heritage, (2) Town Heritage, (3) Art Colony Heritage, (4) Tourism Heritage, (5) Crafts Heritage, (6) Musical Heritage, and (7) Natural Heritage. The second part presents the results of a windshield survey conducted of the principal roads in the county to identify some of the surviving potentially significant properties in each of the four townships and in Nashville and to assess some of the losses that have occurred in the last twenty years. The survey used as a guide the 1995 *Brown County Interim Report, Indiana Survey of Historic Sites and Structures*. The third part of the report presents findings regarding the design characteristics of Old Town Nashville, including the design review and design guidelines in use by the Town of Nashville. There is also an analysis of the Village Green intersection and what improvements might be made to it for festivals and special events.

In the first part of the report, a discussion is provided concerning the settlement of the county by pioneers from the Upland South. Many built log houses and farmed in the valleys and near the streams found in the heavily wooded and hilly terrain. Towns quickly developed wherever there were opportunities for trade. Besides Nashville, the county seat, other towns of the 19th century included Georgetown (Bean Blossom), Story, Gnaw Bone, Spearsville, Peoga, Cottonwood, Stonehead, Pike's Peak, New Bellsville, Belmont, and Elkinsville. They were joined at the beginning of the 20th century by Helmsburg. The Brown County Art Colony was founded principally by artists from Chicago who discovered the natural beauty and people of Brown County and gradually settled with houses and studios there. Two generations of primarily landscape painters drew public interest and eventually established the Brown County Art Gallery and Brown County Art Guild. Along the way, photographer Frank Hohenberger came to the county and documented the people who lived there, the artists, and natural scenes.

Tourism became the largest heritage theme during the 20th century, as a combination of the Art Colony, cartoonist Kin Hubbard and his Abe Martin characters based in Brown County, and above all the advent of the automobile and improved roads brought thousands of visitors to the county. Tourists wanted to see the natural beauty, experience the culture, and peruse the shops of Nashville. Establishment of Brown County State Park in 1929-40 helped solidify the appeal of the county for tourism. Crafts were a part of

Brown County life from the beginning, including weaving, leather products, basket-making, and pottery. Those items have continued to be produced and have found a ready market in the shops of Nashville, joined since World War II by stained glass, new glazed pottery objects, and a host of other collectible objects. Music was an integral part of pioneer/settler life, as residents played fiddles, guitars, mandolins and other acoustic instruments. These traditions led in the 1940s to the establishment of the Brown County Jamboree in Bean Blossom, which under the ownership of the “Father of Bluegrass Music,” Bill Monroe, became the site of the world famous Bill Monroe’s Bluegrass Festival. Musicians playing traditional music abound in varied venues throughout the county today. The natural heritage consists of the wooded landscape which provides Brown County with some of the most forested area of any county in the state. Today, there are over 67,000 acres of public lands in the county—Brown County State Park, Yellowwood and Morgan-Monroe State Forests, and Hoosier National Forest. In the state park, conservation fosters preservation of the re-forested hills and ravines and several endangered wildlife species.

The field survey found that a majority of the properties identified by the 1995 Interim Report as having potential significance or interest have survived, but there have also been some important losses. Several pre-Civil War frame houses remain, some of them badly deteriorated, such as Pinehurst and the Neff House in Hamblen Township, and several notable brick houses, such as the Cullen-Anderson House in Jackson Township and the Parmerlee House in Hamblen. There are curious place names, such as Stonehead and Pike’s Peak, and unusual objects, such as the Stonehead road marker sculpted by Henry Cross in Van Buren Township. An unusually fine assortment of one-room churches with belfries exists in most parts of the counties, many with adjacent cemeteries. The headstones of the cemeteries have many finely carved headstones, some of which date to before the Civil War. Especially notable is the work of Henry Cross. There are many frame houses and churches that have features drawn from the folk architecture tradition, such as the so-called I-house plan (consisting of an oblong front section joined at the rear by an ell), facades with two front doors, and the use of central gables.

There are a few steel truss bridges remaining in the county, such as Kirks Ford Bridge in Van Buren Township. Out of 76 one-room schools that existed in the county during the first part of the 20th century, less than five remain. There are several potentially significant summer camps that were created during the 20th century, such as Gnaw Bone Camp in Van Buren Township and the former Wesleyan Church Camp in Gnawbone. One town in the county, Story, retains a substantial degree of its historical identity and includes several restored buildings and houses, such as the Story Inn. Other towns outside Nashville have lost population and many of their 19th and early 20th century buildings.

Nashville retains the largest concentration of potentially significant properties in the county, and the potential historic properties include houses from all periods of the town's history. Especially notable architecturally are the Banner Brummet House, Judge Hester House, Brown County Courthouse, Old Log Jail, Taggart-Miller Building, Ferguson House, Bartley House, Calvin House, and the Brown County Presbyterian Fellowship. There are also houses and studios of the Art Colony; landmarks of tourism, such as the Nashville House and Old Country Store; buildings representing the crafts traditions, such as the Brown County Pottery Building; and venues for traditional music, such as the Muddy Boots Café. At the edge of town is the house of Fred Hetherington, where Colonel Richard Lieber first discussed creation of a state park system.

The study found that the Development Review Commission of the Town of Nashville and its design guidelines for the Old Town Nashville area appear to have been effective in preserving the character of the historic buildings, guiding construction of harmonious additions to such buildings, and in fostering new construction that is compatible with the old. The sidewalks and streetscape in the Arts Village area have developed different identities in specific blocks, as is evident along the two sides of S. Van Buren, W. Franklin Street, W. Main Street, and Jefferson Street. The original 1836 plat for Nashville included a circular park and rectangular town square at the Village Green intersection of Jefferson and Main. This could be used as a guide for creating a circular park for festivals, or the Town could choose to retain the existing four corners with their landscaping and structures.

The report offers 15 conclusions. It notes that the *Comprehensive Plan for Brown County, Indiana* officially recognizes the importance of Brown County's heritage. It concludes that significant buildings, structures, objects, and sites representing all periods of county history and heritage themes have survived, but there have been some significant losses. Several important early buildings are in danger of being lost through deterioration or abandonment. The design guidelines and Development Review Commission approvals appear to have encouraged a high degree of preservation and sensitive additions and new construction in Old Town Nashville and discouraged additional demolition of historic buildings. The 1995 Interim report needs to be updated; a new survey could provide valuable information for planning, for property owners, and for Peaceful Valley Heritage. As of 2012, there were only seven listings of properties or districts in the National Register of Historic Places. Listing of additional properties would contribute to heritage tourism and offer financial benefits for some owners to rehabilitate their buildings. There are many institutions and businesses in Nashville that already provide interpretations of heritage in their properties. Examples are the Brown County History Center, Brown County Public Library, Brown County Art Gallery, and Brown County Art Guild. There is relatively little interpretive information available outside Nashville; an exception is the interpretation provided for the superb collection of buildings and art at the T.C. Steele State Historic Site near Belmont.

There appears to be a need for updated and new walking and driving tours of Nashville and Brown County. Many visitors do not know the natural history of the county, especially the loss of the original forest and the re-forestation program of the 20th century. Some Brown County historic structures, such as the stone stairway between Abe Martin Lodge and the Lower Shelter House, need rehabilitation. There is currently only one state historical marker in the county; more historical markers are needed. There are already in place several crucial elements for a successful heritage tourism program, including the work of the Brown County Convention and Visitors Bureau, several restaurants, and beds and breakfasts and inns.

Finally, the report offers recommendations to Peaceful Valley Heritage for both short-term goals and strategies and for long-term goals and strategies. Short-term goals could include (a) creating public awareness of its mission, goals, and strategies, (b) fostering more public awareness of notable historic places, and (c) engaging in some initial historic preservation and heritage projects coinciding with the Indiana Bicentennial. Short-term strategies could include (1) developing a Peaceful Valley Heritage website, (2) rehabilitating several buildings in the Pioneer Village, Nashville, (3) developing walking and driving tours of heritage in the county, (4) nominating an initial group of properties to the National Register, (5) applying for a Bicentennial state historical marker, (6) starting a county historical marker program, and (7) collaborating on a rehabilitation project with Brown County State Park.

Long-term goals could include (a) leading efforts to construct a more permanent “infrastructure” for heritage conservation, education, and enjoyment for Brown County, (b) collaborating with other organizations and agencies to develop a cultural heritage tourism program for the county, and (c) expanding programs for recognition and interpretation of historic properties. Long-term strategies could include (1) sponsoring a re-survey of historic properties in Brown County, (2) nominating a second group of properties to the National Register, (3) continuing the county/local historical marker program, (4) investigating the feasibility of creating a Brown County Preservation Revolving Fund, (5) establishing a cooperative preservation enhancement program, (6) collaborating on a cultural heritage tourism program for Brown County, and (7) sponsoring a cooperative oral history program for Brown County.

II. Introduction

Heritage in Brown County pervades all of its parts. To a degree uncommon in other counties of Indiana, residents of Brown County can enjoy a multiplicity of types of heritage—pioneer/settlement, town, artistic, tourism, crafts, musical, and natural. Each type of heritage is embodied in both contemporary life and in buildings, structures, objects, sites, and landscapes associated with human activities over the past 180 years. At the same time, heritage in the county has not always been acknowledged as a key factor that helps define the identity of the county. Although cultural traditions and older buildings, structures, and objects are part of what attracts visitors to the county and what residents enjoy about living there, significant losses of heritage have occurred. Changes to accommodate the new have sometimes led to destruction of historic properties in both the rural townships and the county seat, Nashville.

A sense of past losses and an appreciation for the positive contributions that heritage in Brown County can make to the lives of residents and visitors led to the organization of Peaceful Valley Heritage, Inc. in December, 2014. Peaceful Valley Heritage's mission is

"To foster, preserve and promote the rich history of Brown County Indiana

- by encouraging an interest in local history,
- by identifying significant historical sites and items found within the county
- by providing documentation and records of said significant locations/items.

To promote and encourage an interest in Brown County history on the local, national
and international levels, benefiting citizens and visitors, alike;

To appreciate the impact which the arts, crafts, music and the natural beauty, inspired
by Brown County, nurtured the creative spirit and how each of these continues to
be part of our rich history;

To educate and inspire a lifelong interest in Brown County history in
persons of all ages; and

To aid in the protection of the historical, cultural, and natural assets of Brown County.

To share with the members of the Peaceful Valley Heritage, Inc. and all interested parties,
all matters historic found within Brown County."

Also in December, 2014, Peaceful Valley Heritage, Inc. hired James A. Glass of Historic Preservation & Heritage Consulting LLC to

conduct a study of heritage in Brown County in all of its forms—architectural, artistic, crafts, musical, and natural—and to make recommendations for short-term and long-term goals and strategies for Peaceful Valley Heritage to pursue. In conducting the study, the consultant interviewed people in the county who were knowledgeable about the many different types of heritage, conducted historical research at the Brown County Public Library and Brown County History Center, and undertook a windshield survey of as many surviving historic places as possible in Nashville and the four rural townships in the county.

Interviews. Between January 15 and March 12, 2015, the consultant conducted 36 interviews with a range of people in Brown County who are knowledgeable about many aspects of Brown County heritage. Those interviewed represented many organizations and agencies. In addition, individuals knowledgeable about the history of the county or specific townships were interviewed. The interviews were all extremely helpful in providing orientation and guidance to the consultant about the various themes of heritage investigated by this study and much specific information about history and heritage in the county.

The interviews with Vivian Wolff, Max Scrougham, Denzil and Don Ford, Steve Arnold, Judy Roscoe, and Dr. Carol Walker—all of whom represent families who settled early in Hamblen Township—provided a valuable introduction to the history of the township and the changes that have occurred in the lives of the residents in Brown County over the past 100 years. The interviews with President Ivan Lancaster, board members Alice Lorenz and Pete Bullard, and Curator Barbara Livesey of the Brown County Historical Society shed light on the possibilities for interpreting history in the new Brown County History Center and Pioneer Village in Nashville and on the extensive primary source collections in the center’s archives. The interviews with Peaceful Valley Heritage members Nina Leggett and Dorothy Babcock shed light on historic buildings in Nashville. The interviews with Dr. Jon Kay, Director of Traditional Arts Indiana at Indiana University; County Historian Diana Biddle; and Nashville Town Council President Charles (Buzz) King provided important insights into the history of the early families in the county, the history of Nashville, and the importance of crafts, music, and artistic, and tourism heritage in defining the county today. Curator Natalie Sumpter of the Bill Monroe Bluegrass Museum in Bean Blossom pointed to the many national figures in Bluegrass and Country music who have performed at the annual bluegrass festival. Naturalist Jim Eagleman of Brown County State Park provided valuable historical interpretation of the impact of human settlement and exploitation of the land on the natural landscape of the county over the past 180 years.

Kathy Sparks of Peaceful Valley Heritage provided valuable perspective on the crafts traditions of the county and newer types of craft activities. Syd Nickels of Peaceful Valley provided a tour of the early brick Parmerlee House and explanation of the restaurant that she and her husband Mike operate there. Town Manager Scott Rudd, Main Street President Brenda Young, and Peaceful Valley Heritage board member Jim Schultz provided perspectives on economic development and streetscape improvements and planning for

Nashville. Laura Renwick of Indiana Landmarks explained how the design review process works with the Nashville Development Review Commission. Jane Ellis, Executive Director of the Brown County Convention and Visitors Bureau, explained existing heritage tourism programming and offered ideas for additional creative enterprises that would emphasize heritage in multiple forms. Brown County Community Foundation President Larry Pejeau offered his perspective on how heritage could be a common interest on which many people could cooperate. Chamber President Michael Stieglitz and Chamber board member and historic inn owner Nancy Crocker gave insights into how economic development can best be enhanced. County Commissioner President Dave Anderson related stories about past residents from older families and how their lives had changed with the times.

With respect to the Brown County Art Colony and the role of art in Brown County today, the interviews with President Lyn Letsinger-Miller of the Brown County Art Gallery, Executive Director Scott Hutchinson and Gallery Manager Roberta Chirko of the Brown County Art Guild, Indiana art historian Rachel Perry, arts magazine publisher Cindy Steele, and T.C. Steele State Historic Site Manager Andrea de Tarnowsky all helped explain the statewide and regional importance of both the Art Colony and art today in Brown County. Finally, providing overall perspective on the inter-connection of all types of heritage and its importance to the quality of life was Dr. Ruth Reichmann of Peaceful Valley Heritage.

All of the background furnished through the interviews served as guides for the field investigation of heritage remaining since the 1995 Interim Report prepared on historic sites and structures in Brown County, for picking out key themes of Brown County heritage, and for developing potential strategies for conservation and enjoyment of such heritage.

Historical Research. In order to become familiar with written sources about the county's history, the consultant reviewed past guides to the county, articles on varied subjects in the history of the county, and reviewed newspaper articles in some of the extensive vertical files of the Brown County Library. He also read historical booklets published by the Brown County Historical Society and a book by Ernie Pyle about the county and articles concerning cartoonist Kin Hubbard. The consultant reviewed books and guidebooks published on the artistic heritage of the county and several books on photographer Frank Hohenberger. In particular, the book *The Artists of Brown County*, with essays by Lyn Leitsinger-Miller and Rachel Perry, was helpful, as was an article by Jon Kay, "A Picture of an Old Country Store: the Construction of Folklore in Everyday Life." A valuable source on the natural history and heritage of the county was James P. Eagleman's Master's thesis, "Washington Township: the Brown County Forest Story from 1780 to 1980." Curator Barbara Livesey of the Brown County Historical Society shared several old published and unpublished accounts of county history and the photographic scrapbook of Mary Grupe.

Field Survey. To assess the extent of loss in the county's historic properties since the 1995 *Brown County Interim Report* was published, the consultant conducted a partial field survey of the four rural townships and Nashville. He drove as many primary roads as possible and photographed buildings, structures, and landscapes that appeared to be significant to the heritage of the county. He also walked all of the primary streets in the old town of Nashville. It was not possible for the survey to be comprehensive, but it did allow some preliminary conclusions to be made about the nature of loss and additional heritage that appears to have become significant since 1995.

With the information gleaned from these three primary sources of information, the consultant prepared the following report. There are three principal parts: (1) a historical review of the seven major themes in Brown County's heritage, (2) a summary of findings on properties of potential significance and on losses since 1995 in the townships and Nashville itself, and (3) a special section on the design characteristics of historic Nashville. Conclusions are then presented, followed by recommendations for consideration by Peaceful Valley Heritage, Inc. regarding short-term and long-term goals and strategies that they might pursue.

III. Themes in Brown County's Heritage

Based on the interviews, suggestions from Peaceful Valley Heritage, historical research, and the field survey, seven major themes of heritage were identified in history of Brown County. The following discussion outlines how each theme took shape and its role in shaping the landscape, buildings, and people of the county since about 1830.

A. 19th Century/Settler Heritage

Brown County was later in being formed than its neighbors. Lying in terrain composed largely of hills and ravines and covered by a nearly impassable old-growth forest, the area between Monroe and Bartholomew Counties was slow to attract settlers. Finally enough established themselves in the intervening region for the Indiana General Assembly to create Brown County in 1836. Most of the newcomers came from the same Upland South territory as much of the residents of Southern Indiana—the mountains of Kentucky, Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee. They, like the pioneers of most of Central and Southern Indiana, faced a densely grown forest of deciduous trees that had been centuries in the making. The species in the Brown County forests—oak, black walnut, beech, hickory, ash, yellowwood, poplar, cherry, maple, etc.—averaged from 120 to 150 feet in height and towered over a thick undergrowth that made passage difficult. The only open areas were occasional meadows and stream beds. The newcomers, almost all of whom

were farmers, faced years of battling the immense forest to clear land for fields. In addition, the section of the new county south of what is now Bean Blossom was covered with steep hills divided by deep ravines. The prehistoric glacier that covered the northern two-thirds of the state had stopped in northern Brown County. Except for the bottomland along the several creeks, the soil on the slopes was not very fertile and would require hard work to cultivate.¹

The settlers spent much of their time fighting the forest—girdling the immense trunks, burning them, and then bringing down the trees once their trunks had been reduced in size. The forest seemed endless and hostile to the goals and lifestyle of the new arrivals. With no roads and limited capacity for water transport, Brown County offered no means to ship timber to outside markets. The farmers instead burned the wood they could not use—which amounted to most of the trees cut down in the period before the Civil War. The limited timber that the farmers could use was hewn into square logs and fashioned into log cabins and simple barns and outbuildings. Most of the settlers preferred to live on the ridge tops or upper slopes of the hills in Brown County; they feared the ravines and creek beds for the potential for malaria and other illnesses that were believed to reside in low elevations.²

Gradually, access to markets for timber became possible, first through flatboats being loaded with logs and floated down creeks and then rivers when water was running high in the spring. In the 1850s, with the advent of the railroad in the neighboring counties, Brown County residents could transport their immense pieces of timber by wagon and oxen to the nearest rail station. As the original forests in the Northeastern United States were depleted, demand for the fine hardwoods of the Midwest rapidly increased. Saw mills became fixtures at regular junctures of the county, and the landowners found that they could look upon the slowly diminishing forest as a cash crop.³

¹ James P. Eagleman, "Washington Township: The Brown County Forest Story from 1780 to 1980" (Greencastle: DePauw University Master's thesis, 1981), pp. 14, 15, 29, and 48.

² Ibid., pp. 20-26.

³ Ibid., pp. 30, 33-35.



Figure 1. Settlers raising a log house, undated. *Source: Brown County Historical Society*

As timber sales became more lucrative, the tiny initial settlements grew larger and attracted limited numbers of retailers, lawyers, and doctors. The largest town was the county seat, Nashville, with about 220 residents in 1860, followed after the Civil War by Georgetown, which was re-named Bean Blossom by the U.S. Post Office. The slow growth in prosperity was symbolized by the construction of a brick courthouse in Nashville in 1853 and reconstruction of the courthouse, also in brick in 1873, after a fire. Brick was rarely used in a county where timber was so plentiful, and brick required more labor and expense.⁴

The county's population reached 10,308 in 1880. Several times, business and political leaders tried to bring a railroad through the county, to increase the potential for exporting timber and commercial growth, but two efforts failed. By the 1890s, the once dense forest cover was substantially depleted, and the timber-based economy began to slacken. The landowners in the four townships of Washington, Hamblen, Jackson, Van Buren, and Johnson, mostly still farmers, at first tried to compensate by tilling more of the

⁴ Weston A. Goodspeed, "History of Brown County," in Charles Blanchard (ed.), *Counties of Morgan, Monroe and Brown, Indiana* (Chicago: F.A. Battey and Co., 1884), pp. 687, 727.

denuded hills. They grew corn, wheat, sorghum, and tobacco. With the removal of the trees, the thick humus ground cover, and the plowing of the grass-covered sod, erosion became pronounced on the hillsides. The thin topsoil slid into the creeks. By the early 20th century, farming was becoming unprofitable, and many of the county's rural residents began to leave. Those who remained continued as subsistence farmers, growing all of their needs in the form of crops and livestock.⁵

Unlike nearly every other county in the state, many of Brown County's farmers continued to live in the log cabins constructed by their grandparents or great-grandparents. Roads were dirt and narrow. Travel on many involved fording streams or driving wagons along creek beds. People traveled on horse, wagon, or on foot. The rural folk outside Nashville lived isolated lives. Some never had been outside their county and often, had not been outside their township. The isolation preserved the dialect and customs of the farmers' ancestors in the Appalachians and originally in England and Scotland. A smaller number of farmers found prosperity in the timbering days or through working more fertile soil and were able to build fashionable wood frame houses with more than one story. These could be versions of the so-called "I" house, with a rectangular front joined by an ell at the rear or the central gable house, in which the second story was punctuated above the entry by a gable and window. Few houses in the Italianate or Queen Anne styles seem to have appeared in the rural sections of the county.

As the 20th century opened, the rural landscape of Brown County became dotted with one-room schools and one-room churches with cemeteries. In an age in which travel was by horse or on foot, schools located close to the children was essential. In the early 20th century, there were 76 one-room schools in the county. Figure 2 shows their locations. Likewise, farming families worshipped in churches a short distance from their homes and buried their dead nearby.

⁵ Ibid., p. 688; Eagleman, pp. 65-76.

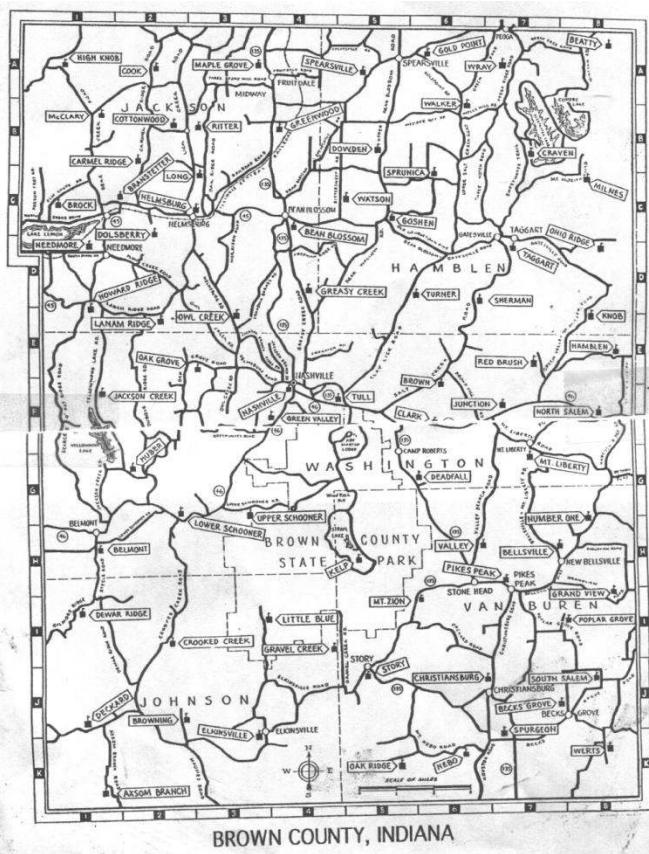


Figure 2. Map of 76 One-Room Schools in Brown County, early 20th century.

Source: Steve Arnold

B. Town Heritage

Life in the towns of the county contrasted somewhat to that of the farmers. In Nashville, the county seat, founded in 1836, the first residents were drawn by the possibilities of selling necessities to settlers, lodging visitors, and operating the new county government. The original town plat, or plan, of 1836, showed a town square with a circular park at center laid out at the intersection of Jefferson

and Main Streets. The town founders were providing for a civic center, providing a potential place for public gatherings and perhaps for stores and businesses to locate. Banner Brummet, the agent appointed to have the town surveyed and laid out, built a log dwelling on what is now Johnson Street in the 1830s. W.S. Roberts built a double log cabin and opened a store in 1836.⁶

As the population of the county slowly grew, the town became more established, a few lawyers and physicians came, and more substantial dwellings were constructed. The Judge Hester House on N. Jefferson Street, built in 1853, is an elegant two-story wood frame house, built in the fashionable Greek Revival style. The Joshua Bond House at Jefferson and Mound, dating perhaps from the 1840s, was built of brick. At the center of town, in 1873, the substantial new courthouse, constructed of brick with ornate cast-iron stairways on the exterior, bespoke of increased county revenues and the prosperity of the timber-selling boom. In the years after the Civil War, fraternal lodges built permanent buildings and stopped renting rooms. The Independent Order of Odd Fellows constructed a frame Italianate style lodge building on Main Street west of Jefferson. The Knights of Pythias constructed a frame building before 1900, and after it burned, joined forces with the Nashville Masonic Lodge and built in 1910 the largest private brick structure in the county on West Main Street. It contained two lodge rooms on the third floor, offices on the second, and retail space on the street level. In the 1870s, a large wood frame hotel in the Italianate style was constructed on the southeast corner of Van Buren and Main; it eventually became the Nashville House in the 1920s, an established town institution. On Van Buren Street, south of Franklin, William Pittman and his wife opened the Pittman Inn and Sanitarium by 1900, with spacious verandas on two levels for visitors. Around the corner, on W. Franklin Street, Allie Ferguson and her sister opened a boarding house featuring her home cooking. The Ferguson House, constructed in 1873, was a large wood frame residence, with ell-shaped wing to the rear. Just to the east was the Bartley House, which also on occasion took in boarders. It was another substantial two-story residence with steeply pitched gables.⁷

There were several wood frame general stores in town, one—later called the Star Store, was located on the northwest corner of Van Buren and Main. Across the street, on the southwest corner, stood the Taggart General Store, which was an imposing two-story wood frame building constructed in 1873. There was the county poor farm on East Main Street, livery stables and blacksmiths, barbers, and a county medical society, which met briefly in the late 1870s and early 1880s. A grade school and high school were located near the center of town, and a substantial brick high school building was constructed east of Van Buren Street in the early 20th century.

⁶ Goodspeed, pp. 723-724; copy of original 1836 town plat for Nashville, Brown County Recorder's Office.

⁷ *A History of Brown County Masonry, 1851-1962* (Nashville, 1962), pp. 19-20; "Brown County Art and Artists" (Brown County Art Gallery Association, Brown County Art Guild, Inc.; published by Psi Iota Xi Sorority, 1971), pp. [10-11]; H.L. Engle, "The Hills O' Brown" (copy of manuscript, undated, in vertical file, "Art History of Brown County," Brown County Public Library), pp. 11-12.



Figure 3. Nashville seen from south, 1934. *Source: Frank Hohenberger photo, Brown County Historical Society*

A host of other towns sprang up before and after the Civil War across Brown County. Some lasted a short time; others put down roots and survived well into the 20th century. They were typically located where early residents anticipated opportunities for trade, often near a creek or the juncture of two roads. A 1940 map of Brown County (Figure 4) shows the towns that had become established enough to attract several stores, often a church, and possibly a post office: Bean Blossom (Georgetown), Spearsville, Taggart, Peoga, Gnaw Bone, Mt. Liberty, New Bellsville, Christiansburg, Pike's Peak, Stone Head, Story, Elkinsville, Youno, Belmont, Needmore, Trevlac, Helmsburg, Cottonwood, and Fruitdale.

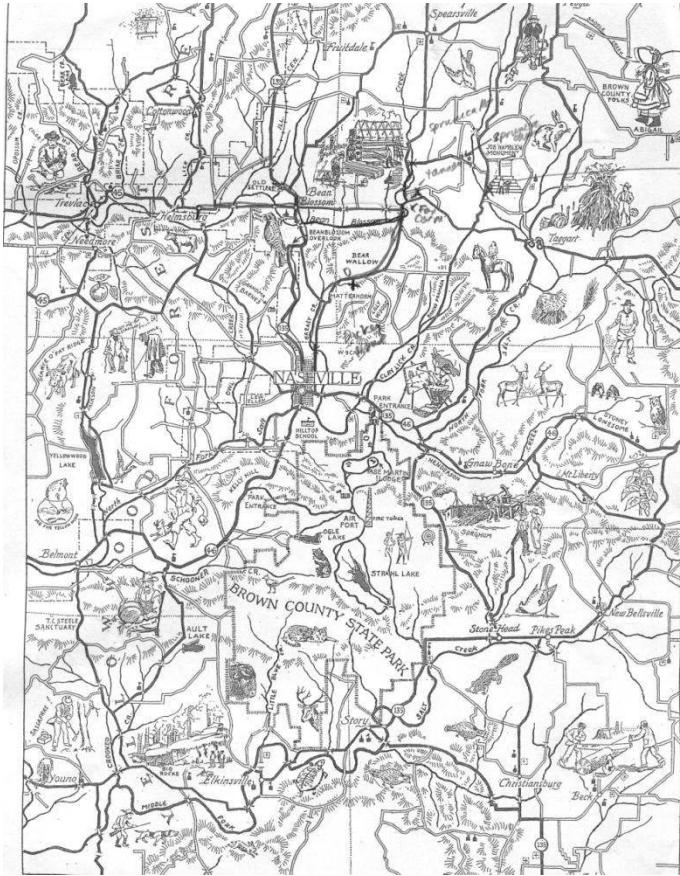


Figure 4. Map of Points of Interest to Tourists in Brown County, 1940. Source: L.O. Griffith, Artist, "Brown County Indiana" brochure, 1940, Indiana State Library

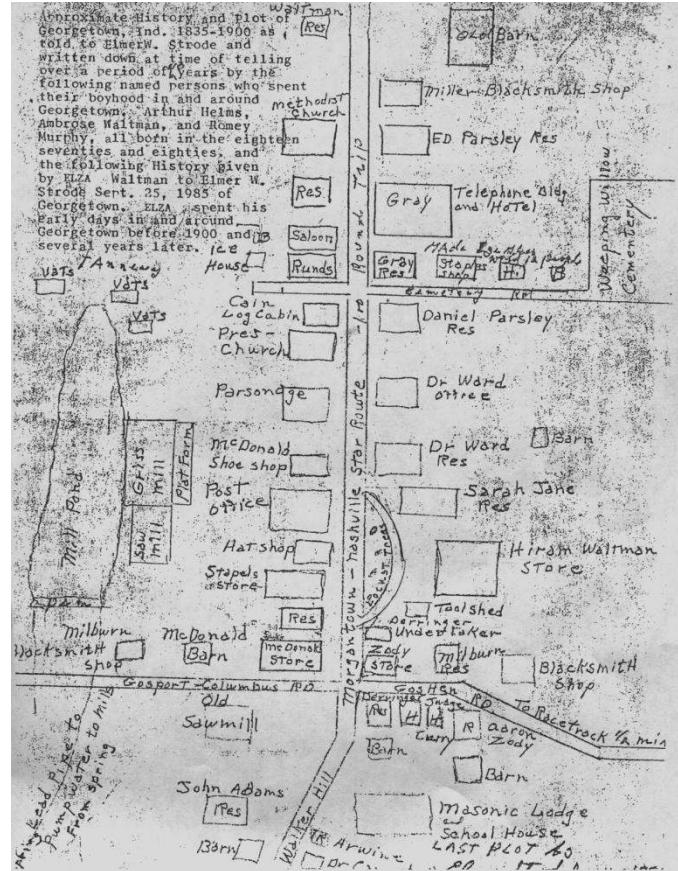


Figure 5. Sketch Map of Bean Blossom (Georgetown), c.1900
Source: Sketched by Elmer W. Strode, 1985. Syd Nickels, Nashville

Bean Blossom by the 1870s was the second largest town in the county. It had one of the largest tanneries in the state, a jewelry factory, grist mills, several churches, and a newspaper. In 1875 its population had reached 100 people, compared to Nashville's 260.

It had grown enough that Masons residing in Jackson Township formed their own lodge in Bean Blossom in 1875.⁸ A sketch plan of Bean Blossom as it appeared about 1900 (Figure 5) shows along what is now S.R. 135 a Presbyterian and a Methodist Church, post office, McDonald's general store, Stapel's Store, a hat shop, shoe shop, Rund's Store, saloon, miller and blacksmith's shop, hotel, doctor's office, Hiram Waltman's Store, Derringer's Undertaker, the Zody Store, and a combined Masonic lodge and school. Twelve residences were located along the road. West of the main part of town stood the tanner, a grist mill, and a saw mill.

Helmsburg became a rival to Bean Blossom after the Illinois Central Railroad was constructed in 1906 through the northwest corner of Brown County. The railroad's main depot was established at a location due west of Bean Blossom, and local property owners were quick to plat a new town, Helmsburg. It soon had hotels, a doctor's office, church, stores, and new residences on either side of the tracks. By the 1920s, Bean Blossom had declined in commercial activity and population, as outside traffic was funneled through Helmsburg. The Bean Blossom Masonic Lodge responded by moving to the rival town to the west and building a three-story brick lodge building there.⁹

C. Art Colony Heritage

Just as the timber industry was fading, and Brown County faced an uncertain economic future, a wave of newcomers made their appearance. The arrival of a colony of artists led to a fundamental transformation in the lives of long-time residents and opened the door to tourism, which became the new basis of the economy during the 20th century. The first known artist to discover Brown County was William McKendree Snyder, who visited in the 1870s. In the 1890s, the dean of Indiana artists, T.C. Steele, made his first trips to the county, drawn by reports of the beauty in the natural landscape of hills, ravines, and remaining forest. He returned with his wife, Selma, in 1907 and purchased 211 acres on a remote hill south of the town of Belmont, at the west edge of the county. The Steeles constructed a house in the so-called Rustic style and eventually several studio buildings. Steele was free to shift his focus from portrait painting, which had long supported him, to his first love, Impressionistic landscape paintings. A short time later, in 1900, Adolph Shulz, an established artist in Chicago, made a trip to Brown County. He was entranced by the natural beauty, but discouraged by the remoteness and difficulty of transportation. When the railroad arrived in Helmsburg, the situation changed. Shulz was attracted back for a summer visit in 1906. He enjoyed his time and began to spread word of his enthusiasm among fellow artists in Chicago. Artists H.L. Engle, Louis O. Griffith, and Wilson Irvine traveled down to the county and had a similar rhapsodic

⁸ *A History of Brown County Masonry*, pp. 16-17.

⁹ *Peaceful Valley: From the Scrapbook of Mary Grupe* (Nashville: Brown County Historical Society, undated), p. 4; "Happenings in Brown County Old Time and New" (Nashville: Brown County Historical Society, 1968), p. 8; *A History of Brown County Masonry*, p. 23.

experience. In short order, a whole group of mainly Chicago-based artists, most of them associated with the prestigious Art Institute of Chicago, began to create a colony in Nashville. At first, part-time residents, some—like Adolph Shulz, his wife, artist Ada Walter Schulz, Gustave Baumann, Will Vawter, Fred Hetherington, L.O. Griffith, and E.K. Williams—eventually lived in the county full-time.¹⁰



Figure 6. Adolph Shulz, Will Vawter, Angus MacDonall, William W. Riddell And John Hafen in Nashville, c. 1909. Source: *Peaceful Valley: from the Scrapbook of Mary Grupe*, p. 6.

They were part of a larger movement in the early 20th century, mainly in the Northeastern United States and West Coast of urban artists seeking to escape the congestion, clamor, and pollution of cities and rediscover the beauties of unspoiled nature. In the

¹⁰ Adolph Shulz, "The Story of the Brown County Art Colony," in M. Joanne Nesbit (ed.), *Brown County's Art Colony: The Early Years* (Nashville: Nana's Books, 1993), pp. 22-28.

Midwest, Brown County's group of artists became one of the best known of these artistic colonies. They painted mainly the natural landscapes in all of its variety and seasons, but also were drawn by the rural people who still lived in log houses and maintained their traditional culture. Although the colony became known for landscape paintings, some of their number portrayed parts of traditional agriculture—hay fields, sorghum harvesting, barns, and farm houses. A second generation of artists joined the original group by the 1920s—including Marie Goth, her sister Genevieve, Carl Graf, V.J. Cariani, Dale Bessire, C. Curry Bohm, George LaChance and Anthony Buchta. For the most part, they continued the landscape theme, presented with realism, and avoided the abstract art that was reigning in major art centers.¹¹

Most of the Art Colony members built or acquired houses and studios near Nashville. Many were of log construction, imitating the traditional architecture of rural Brown County. Northwest of downtown, on Jefferson Street, Adolph Schulz and his first wife Ada built their Rustic-style house and studio. North on what became S.R. 135, portrait painter Marie Goth lived in a log structure, while her close friend V.J. Cariani, constructed his home and studio. Northeast of downtown, Will Vawter, Adolph Shulz and his second wife Alberta, and Griffith built studios. On Town Hill, south of town, another group of artists worked in studios that afforded wide vistas of the town and the landscape of the Salt Creek valley below. Will Vawter and Carey McCloud lived there.

An influential figure related to the Art Colony, but separate, was photographer Frank Hohenberger. A former newspaperman and printer, Hohenberger had heard about the scenic beauty of Brown County and the people who lived there. In 1917 he moved to Nashville and took up residence in a series of boarding houses, while setting up his studio in the upper story of the Odd Fellows Building and then in the second floor of the Taggart Building (eventually Miller's Drug Store). Hohenberger had both an artistic side and a commercial side. He spent great time and effort composing photographs as works of art, but also made his living selling photos to individuals, newspapers, and magazines. He had traveled widely in the United States and Indiana, taking photographs of many downtowns and historic places. In Brown County, he was drawn by the descendants of the original rural families, who retained their subsistence way of life in their family houses and kept alive their dialect, music, and traditional crafts and husbandry. His photographs became iconic records of Brown County's people and culture before they were transformed by modernity. He also captured much of the essence of life in the townships and Nashville through an Indianapolis Star column, "Down in the Hills O' Brown County," which he wrote between 1923 and 1954.

¹¹ Rachel Perry, "Introduction: An American Art Colony," in Lyn Letsinger-Miller, *The Artists of Brown County* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1994), pp. xvii-xx.



Figure 7. Frank M. Hohenberger
Self portrait in 1929. *Source: Frank
Hohenberger Collection, Lilly Library,
Indiana University*



Figure 8. Ellen Petro at her cabin, undated
*Source: Frank Hohenberger Collection, Lilly
Library, Indiana University*

Hohenberger was also intrigued by the artists and photographed them at work at their easels in nature or socializing in groups. He left an enduring record of the Art Colony and its activities. Hohenberger's columns also roused the curiosity of a large number of readers all over Central Indiana about the quaintness of Brown County folkways and the work of the Art Colony.¹²

D. Tourism Heritage

The desire to experience natural beauty was one sweeping the nation at the beginning of the 20th century. The national parks were taking shape in the West, and the urban parks movement was stressing the value of natural oases of trees, flowers, lawns, and

¹² Cecil K. Byrd, *Frank M. Hohenberger's Indiana Photographs* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), pp. 1-5.

recreation facilities for city dwellers to escape the din and dirt of their lives. The artists in Brown Colony helped spread word in Chicago of the scenic qualities and restful setting of their adopted home, and feature stories in Indiana newspapers helped create public interest. At first visitors had to take the train to Helmsburg and then hire a “hack” (horse-drawn vehicle) to take them to Nashville. Roads were passable only during certain time of the year. Tourism in its modern form only took shape when the State of Indiana began to build a paved highway system throughout the state. For the first time, the new form of mass transportation, the automobile, could be driven safely and reasonably quickly into Brown County on what became State Roads 135 and 46.¹³

A second powerful influence on many Hoosiers to visit Brown County was the cartoons and captions created by Indianapolis cartoonist and satirist Kin Hubbard. Beginning in 1905, Hubbard produced daily cartoons in the *Indianapolis News* featuring the satirical observations of a fictional Brown County resident, Abe Martin. Although the humor and the biting observations about people and their foibles were universal in their appeal and derived by Hubbard from much travel in rural America, he set Martin and a host of other characters with unlikely names in Brown County, with each character speaking a version of Hoosier dialect. The readers of the daily Abe Martin cartoon and of the multiple volumes of collected Hubbard wisdom felt drawn to the locale where the characters supposedly lived, so that they could meet some of the townspeople and farmers with the connection to Indiana’s rural past. For years, visitors would ogle local residents in Nashville and other parts of the county, waiting for Abe Martin witticisms in broad dialect. Although the increased business brought by the tourists was welcome, the old families resented often what they viewed as rude comments by urban dwellers. Hubbard, although he lived in Indianapolis, gained a national audience, with his cartoons syndicated to more than 300 newspapers after 1910. He was considered an Indiana equivalent of Will Rogers, who became his friend and admirer.¹⁴

¹³ Perry, pp. viii, xxii.

¹⁴ Herbert R. Hill, “More Brown County Cabins,” *Outdoor Indiana* (undated; c. 1960s) [in “History” vertical file, Brown County Public Library], pp. 6-10.



Figure 9. Kin Hubbard and “Abe Martin” of Brown Colony

Source: Herbert R. Hill, “More Brown County Cabins,” Outdoor Indiana, Undated, “History” File, Brown County Public Library

The other major catalyst for tourism, based on the natural allure of the county, came from establishment of Brown County State Park in 1929. The idea for such a state park system in Indiana germinated in a 1910 discussion between Colonel Richard Lieber, a conservation leader in Indiana, and Fred Hetherington, an artist, photographer, and Indianapolis manufacturer. They met in Hetherington’s log house on what is now Jackson Branch Road, west of Nashville. Six years later, the first Indiana state parks were created at Turkey Run and McCormick’s Creek. In the mid-1920s, Lieber, by then the first Director of the Indiana Department of Conservation, was persuaded by Brown County resident Lee Bright to take steps to create the state park in Brown County, center around the highest point in the county, Weed Patch Hill. A game preserve was acquired first by the department south of Weed Patch, centered around the former town of Kelp. A lodge in the Rustic style, incorporating both old-growth hewn logs and native Brown County sandstone was constructed by Lieber on a ridge top south of the north entrance to the park and named in honor of Abe Martin.

The Department of Conservation accentuated the appeal of visiting the park by building frame cabins near the lodge named after all of the main character in Kin Hubbard's cartoons.¹⁵

Enough visitors took an interest in the Brown County Art Colony that its members organized the Brown County Art Gallery Association in 1926 and took quarters in a rented building on Main Street. The gallery could keep regular hours, hang the art of members, and sell paintings. The artists could devote more of their time to painting and visits to their studios by those wishing to see their art and make purchases.¹⁶

As crowds increased during the spring, summer, and autumn, more accommodations for tourists developed in Nashville and outside. In the county seat itself, three men saw business opportunities in tourism and took steps to adapt the town to its new role as a destination. Fred Bates Johnson, a lawyer and newspaperman from Indianapolis, local businessman A.J. (Jack) Rogers, and artist Dale Bessire entered into a partnership about 1915 and began buying forested land, orchards, and buildings in town. One of their big initial projects in 1926 was to expand the historic Nashville House at the center of town and add a large Colonial style portico. The Nashville House featured sleeping rooms with hot and cold running water, a dining room known for its good food, a lobby with a giant sandstone fireplace, and a gift shop offering locally made pottery and other items made by local artisans and craftspeople. The three men also began to build rustic log cabins for the wave of people from Indianapolis or Bloomington who wanted to live in Brown County during the summers. It was fashionable to want a retreat that resembled the log houses of the rural families of the county. Some of the vacation cabins were remodeled historic cabins. Others involved incorporating hewn logs from old cabins in new houses. Still others were rustic in feeling, but wood frame. By 1940, Hoosier newspaper columnist Ernie Pyle reported that there were 250 or 300 log cabins that had been re-built as summer houses in Brown County. This established a powerful symbol of Brown County culture in the popular mind that became a nearly universal motif in the county after World War II.¹⁷

The largest crowds came to Brown County during the time of autumn colors during October. Already in 1940, Pyle observed

Always, the highways to Brown County are heavily traveled. But in the fall, when the leaves turn red and golden and yellow, Brown County seems to become a shrine for all the Midwest, and the local people have to stay at home, for its impossible for them to get

¹⁵ Eagleman, pp. 78-99.

¹⁶ Martin Northway (ed.), *The Artists of Brown County and Where to Find 'Em!* (Nashville: Northway & Reinwaldt Associates, 1979), p. 11.

¹⁷ Ernie Pyle, *Images of Brown County* (Indianapolis: Indiana State Museum, 1980), pp. 14-16.

anywhere. On autumn weekends, cars stand lined motionless in traffic jams for miles and miles—they extend all the way from the State Park a few miles away clear down into Nashville, and they become an almost immovable mass, choking the streets.¹⁸

The evidence of pre-World War II tourism is most obvious in Brown County State Park, where the Abe Martin Lodge and cabins stand and where park shelters, stairways, and look-out structures for visitors to enjoy were constructed by teams of young men working for the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) during the New Deal years of the 1930s. It is also obvious on S.R. 135, where pre-war Rustic-style log cabins occupy choice sites along the ridge top along which the highway runs north of Nashville.

After World War II, tourism became without doubt the single greatest factor in the local economy. A close second was the increasing numbers of new year-round residents, drawn by the presence of nature and scenery and by the thriving artistic and crafts stores and musical venues in Nashville. Responding to the presence of hundreds of thousands of annual visitors, local business owners constructed shops and stores and built hotels and restaurants. When the original Nashville House was destroyed by fire in 1943, owner Jack Rogers planned to rebuild. In 1948, with the help of Indianapolis architect Edward D. James, he constructed a new Nashville House on the same site, at the center of Nashville. The new structure was not a hotel, but consisted of a sandstone and concrete wing containing a traditional style dining room and a wood frame section containing an Old Country Store. The dining room featured traditional Brown County dishes, deep-fried rolls, apple butter, and sassafras tea brewed from Brown County trees. There were two sandstone fireplaces and a series of painted panels depicting the pioneer era. On the walls hung landscape paintings, including one by V.J. Cariani and a portrait of James Whitcomb Riley by Marie Goth. The Old Country Store offered traditional foods and products for purchase, with another stone fireplace at one end and on the opposite a wall on which Frank Hohenberger hung portraits of many of the Brown County residents whom he had photographed in the 1920s. The new Nashville House was designed to appeal to visitors' interest in Brown County's past and nostalgia for a vanished period and has become one of the best known visitation points in the county since the late 1940s.¹⁹

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁹ Jon Kay, "A Picture of an Old Country Store: The Construction of Folklore in Everyday Life," *Museum Anthropology Review* (2010), pp. 144-52.



Figure 10. View of Old Country Store, 1950. *Source: Frank M. Hohenberger Collection, Lilly Library, Indiana University*

Across the street, Jack Rogers' son F.A. (Andy) Rogers in the 1960s established the Brown County Playhouse in cooperation with Indiana University, and summer stock theatrical productions were staged. Eventually, a 200-seat permanent theater was constructed in back of the street entrance and became an integral part of a week-end visit to Nashville. Andy Rogers also purchased several historic buildings, such as the 1840s former Methodist parsonage on Van Buren Street, and constructed new shops on the principal shopping streets of Van Buren, Main Street, and Jefferson.²⁰

²⁰ Interview with Larry Pejeau, January 27, 2015.

E. Crafts Heritage

Crafts can be both an art form and a practical trade. The rural people of Brown County from the time of settlement in the 19th century practiced self-sufficiency. They raised cattle and sheep, created tanneries and cured leather, harvested wool and wove cloth, mastered carpentry, and made pots and essential household tools. These skills and the beauty of many of the objects and materials produced were still being practiced when Frank Hohenberger took his box camera and plates out to farmsteads and recorded people at work. An example is the Bohall family, who became known for their baskets, made from hard wood strips fashioned into attractive containers. As tourism increased in the first half of the 20th century, stores in Nashville began to offer locally made crafts for sale, such as the pottery on display at the old Nashville House.²¹

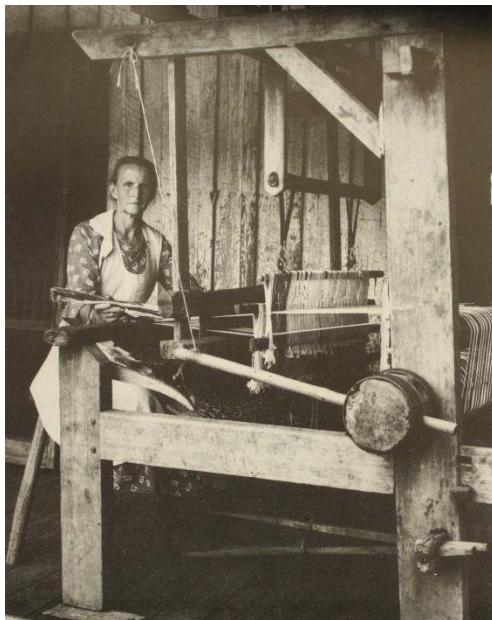


Figure 11. Iva Lucas, Weaver.
Source: *Frank Hohenberger Collection, Lilly Library*



Figure 12. Mrs. Ambrose Bartley, skilled quilt maker of Nashville. Source: *Hohenberger Collection, Lilly Library*

²¹ Interview with Kathy Sparks, January 29, 2015; A.J. Rogers, "Brown County Indiana: The Rolling, Hilly Country of Scenic Southern Indiana" [brochure](Nashville, 1940)[copy at Indiana State Library, Indianapolis.

After World War II, as many new artists moved to Brown County in response to the reputation established by the original Art Colony, crafts people from the outside also located in Nashville and the surrounding region. Some practiced traditional crafts from the county, such as baskets, woolen garments, and quilts; others introduced new forms, such as blown and stained glass, new versions of glazed pottery, and jewelry.

F. Musical Heritage

Like traditional crafts, music was part of the lives of the rural pioneers who settled in Brown County from the beginning. People sang old songs that had been passed from generation to generation among mountain people for hundreds of years. Musicians played guitars, mandolins, and fiddles, learning traditional themes or accompanying the singers. Churches played a central role in the lives of county residents, and in church, hymns and gospel music became staples also of everyday life.²²

Traditional music became popular nationally during the 1920s and 1930s through radio broadcasts of the Grand Old Opry in Nashville, Tennessee and barn dance programs broadcast by clear-channel radio stations in Chicago, Cincinnati, and other major cities. In Brown County, business owners in Bean Blossom organized the Brown County Jamboree in the 1940s and provided a venue for local and regional musicians and singers performing traditional music with traditional instruments. Francis Rund, a grocer of Johnson County and Bean Blossom, had been purchasing property as an investment on the east side of State Road 135 in Bean Blossom. In 1941 he arranged for performances of Indiana and nationally known singers and instrumentalists every Sunday night. The first season and those that followed lasted from March through October or November. Performances offered as part of the Brown County Jamboree were held in a wood frame barn constructed by the Runds between 1942 and 1944.²³

²² Interview with Jon Kay, January 27, 2015.

²³ Thomas A. Adler, *Bean Blossom: The Brown County Jamboree and Bill Monroe's Bluegrass Festivals* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2011), pp. 8-45.



Figure 13-15. Hickory Ranch Ramblers, Brown County Jamboree, early 1940s; Bill Monroe, “The Father of Bluegrass”; and Bill Monroe and Bluegrass Boys performing at Bill Monroe’s Bluegrass Festival. Sources: Tom Adler, *Bean Blossom*, p. 122; Google Search Photos; and Terry Bateman photo, *175 Years of Brown County*.

In 1951, Bill Monroe, a mandolin artist widely known for his hit songs with a group he called the Bluegrass Boys, purchased the Bean Blossom grounds. With the help of his brother Birch, Monroe operated the Brown County Jamboree in the old barn every week through the 1950s and into the 1960s. During the 1950s, Monroe’s style of music, drawn from the traditional music of the mountains in his native Kentucky became known as a new genre of music—bluegrass, and he was acclaimed as the “Father of Bluegrass.” In 1967, Bill Monroe launched one of the first bluegrass festivals in the country at Bean Blossom, and within three years was attracting

15,000 fans over a five day period. Today, the Bill Monroe Bluegrass Festival is the oldest continuously operating such festival in the country and has known as a mecca for aspiring blue grass musicians.²⁴

The spotlight placed on traditional music by the Bill Monroe Festival undoubtedly spurred interest among local musicians in bluegrass and stimulated musicians from the outside to locate in Brown County and to perform. This has led to rich assortment of “jam sessions” and paid performances in restaurants, bars, and at the Bean Blossom Jamboree grounds.

Bluegrass music has also served to increase tourism to Brown County and create national awareness of the tiny town of Bean Blossom.

G. Natural Heritage

The natural landscape in Brown County has undergone at least two major transformations since the first settlers arrived in the 1820s and 1830s. The first, as already noted, occurred during the late 19th century, as the original old-growth forest was almost completely cut down as part of the timber industry. This left the hills of the county largely devoid of trees. The landscape was transformed from one of almost complete tree cover to one in which most of it was devoted to agriculture—fields for crops and pastures. As indicated above, T.C. Steele and the Art Colony found the landscapes with clear vistas of points many miles away part of the allure for painting. The result of tilling the hillsides was badly eroded top soil and increasingly lower yields for crops.²⁵

The second transformation occurred beginning in the 1920s, as the State of Indiana created the Brown County Game Preserve and State Park southeast of Nashville and eventually established Yellowwood State Forest and Morgan-Monroe State Forest. In the inter-war period, the U.S. government assembled the land necessary to create the Hoosier National Forest, which included land in Brown County. Through the 16,000 acre park, which assumed its current form about 1940, and through the state and national forests, which comprised an additional 51,000 acres, a substantial portion of the county’s land area was placed under governmental stewardship. A policy of re-forestation was launched. In 1928, 25,000 spruce and pine trees were planted in what became Brown County State Park. An additional 33,000 evergreen trees were planted in 1929. The coniferous trees could sustain themselves in the depleted soil and help slow further erosion. Gradually, the original deciduous trees of white oak, sugar maple, chestnut, white ash, sassafras, beech,

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 48-114.

²⁵ Eagleman, pp. 69-75; interview with Rachel Perry, February 24, 2015.



Figure 16. View of denuded landscape from Weed Patch Hill (now in Brown County State Park), 1924. *Source: Mabel Sturtevant, Picturesque Brown County, p. 22.*

and hickory began to re-establish themselves in the park and in the state and national forests. After approximately 90 years of conservation and re-forestation, the hillsides and ravines of the state and federal properties are again covered with forests. There are also substantial stands of trees on private lands in the county. Managed timber harvests are made in the state and national forests and on private lands, but the possibility of wholesale timber removal is not likely again.²⁶

Additional acreage of forests where preservation is practiced is contained in several nature preserves and land trust properties. These are owned by the Nature Conservancy, the Division of Nature Preserves of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, and by private land trusts. Altogether, the conservation policy practiced over a majority of the county territory has resulted in the most solid tree coverage of any county in Indiana. Wildlife species have also experienced a resurgence in the county, with several endangered species of birds, rattlesnakes, and bats protected in the state park.²⁷

²⁶ Eagleman, pp. 91, 94, 118; "Happenings in Brown County Old Time & New," p. 5.

²⁷ Interview with Jim Eagleman, February 5, 2015.

Although the forests of today are quite different than the dense primeval forest of 200 years ago, the natural heritage of the county is gradually being reclaimed and can be enjoyed by visitors.

IV. Survey of Heritage in Brown County

In order to gain a sense of the current properties associated with the various forms of heritage in Brown County, a windshield survey was conducted of most of the principal roads in the four townships in the county. A walking survey was conducted in the old town of Nashville itself. As a guide to where to look for pre-1950s properties with some historical or architectural significance, the 1995 *Brown County Interim Report, Indiana Survey of Historic Sites and Structures* was used. There was not time to search for all of the properties listed in the report, but enough territory was covered to provide a basis for some preliminary observations about the extent of pre-1950 heritage remaining. Properties with possible significance that were not included in the interim report were also noted. Each of the following summaries about the townships and Nashville provides (1) a discussion of extant properties with potential historic value and (2) comments on the losses that have occurred. A map of each township and Nashville illustrates the locations of both existing and demolished properties.²⁸

²⁸ Unless otherwise noted, all current photographs in this report were taken by James A. Glass in July, 2014 or between January 15 and March 31, 2015.

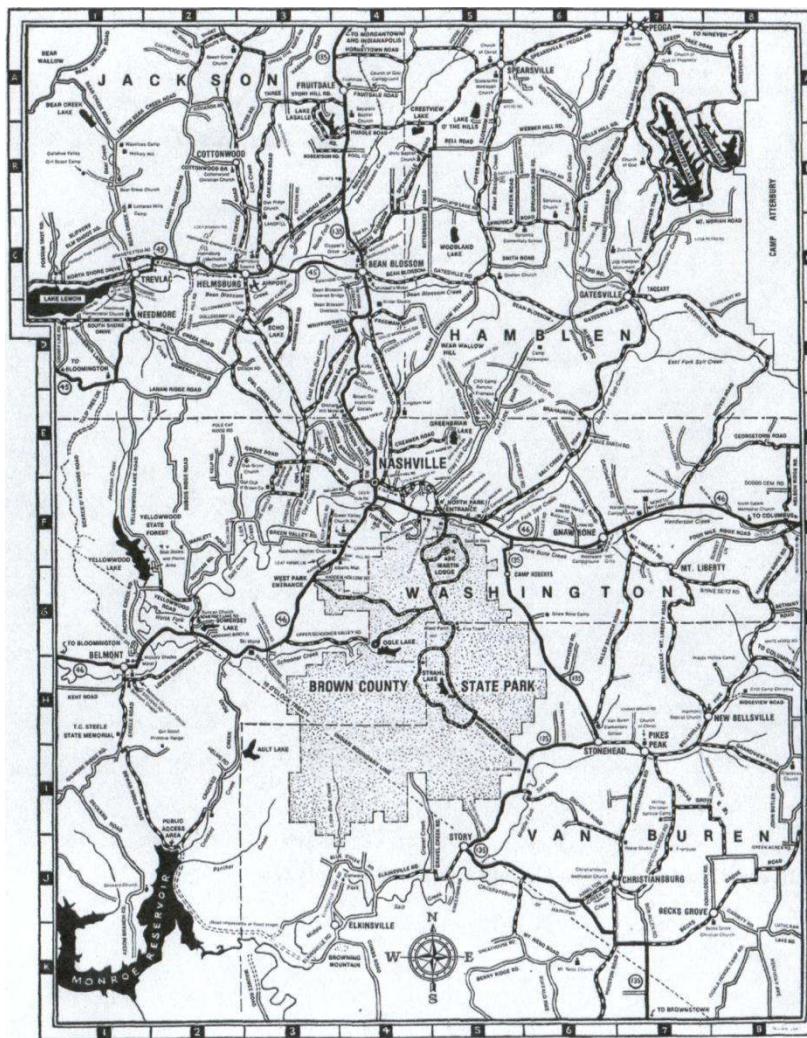


Figure 17. Map of Brown County, 1995. Source: *Interim Report of Brown County, 1995*.

A. Hamblen Township

Hamblen Township, in the northeast corner of the county, was in the 19th and early 20th centuries considered the most prosperous of the four current townships.²⁹ It contains farms and lush pastures near its center, which is located north of the southernmost boundary of the prehistoric glacier. The principal creeks, which have defined locations for farming and some of the settlement, are Bean Blossom and Salt Creek. The township was settled by families before the Civil War whose names still are common among today's residents: Fords, Parmerlees, Scroughams, Taggarts, Parsleys, etc.

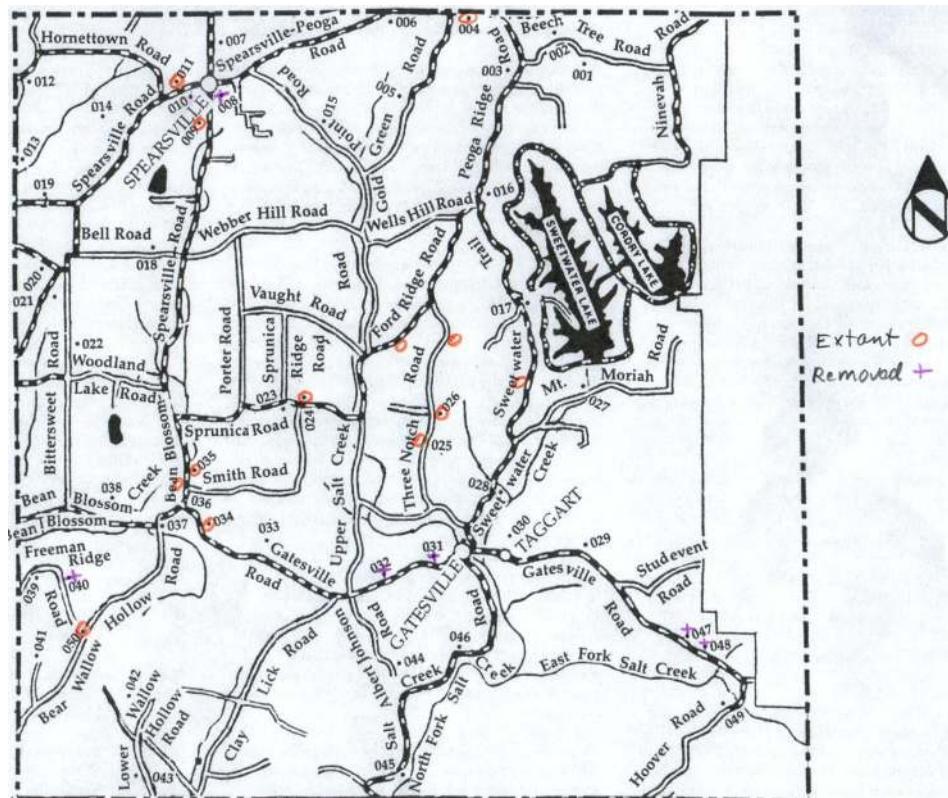


Figure 18. Hamblen Township: Potentially significant properties and losses since 1995

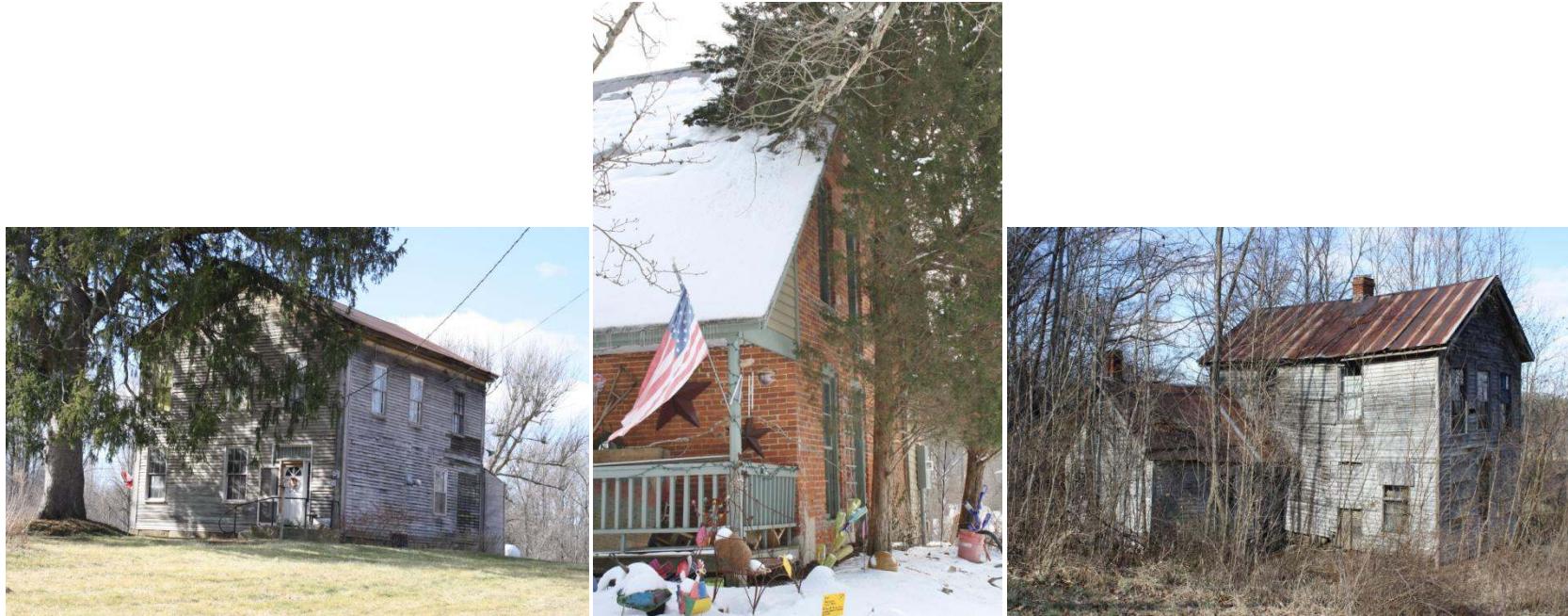
²⁹ Goodspeed, p. 739.

a. Extant Properties with Potential Significance

Hamblen Township is fortunate to have some of the oldest frame and brick houses surviving in the county. The former Pinehurst Stagecoach Stop, 5434(?) Three Notch Road, is a notable example of Greek Revival architecture, a wood frame residence with a corner pilasters and in-turning trim on the gables suggesting the pediment of a temple. It could easily date to 1850 or earlier. It is a testament to the possibility of early residents gaining prosperity in the wilderness and being able to construct a large frame building with dimensioned lumber and the latest architectural detail. It is believed to have served in its early history, perhaps into the 20th century as a stage coach stop on Three Notch Road, then part of the principal north-south road running through the county. It is rare for such a building to survive in the county, and the house appears to be in poor condition on its exterior.

On Bean Blossom Road, just north of Gatesville Road are two other pre-Civil War houses with substantial architectural character. The Parmerlee House, now the Farm House Café and Tea Room, is perhaps the only 19th century brick house in the township. It appears to have been built before 1860, perhaps as early as 1850. The house was constructed for James C. Parmerlee, who founded what became one of the largest tanneries in the county in the 1840s nearby.³⁰ The Parmerlee House is 1 ½ stories and has a front-facing gable with doors at the center of the two gables. The brick of the exterior walls is laid in a variation of English Garden Wall Bond (5 courses of stretchers, followed by one course of headers) and the windows have both flat and segmental arches. Flat arches especially suggest a date prior to 1860.

³⁰ Historical research on Parmerlee House in possession of Syd Nickels, Nashville.



Figures 19-21. Pinehurst (c. 1850), James Parmerlee House (c. 1850-60), and Neff House (c. 1850)

Just to the south and across the road stands a notable wood frame house, also probably dating to before the Civil War. The Neff House consists of two parts: a two-story section with a gable facing the road and a one-story wing meeting the rear of the main section at right angles. The two story section is without ornamental detailing, but all of the windows are six panes over six panes sash, which usually indicates a date before the 1860s. It is possible that the one story wing was the original house, and the two-story wing is a later, more polished addition. There are some later farm outbuildings behind the house. The residence is abandoned and in poor condition, but it is potentially one of the most significant 19th century buildings remaining in the township. The Neff associated with property may have worked in the Parmerlee Tannery.

Of particular interest in Hamblen Township are the single-room churches with cemeteries that survive in most parts, a reflection of similar collections in the other townships. Among the churches dating from the late 19th or early 20th centuries are the Sprunica Christian Church on Sprunica Road, the Zion Church on Three Notch Road, the Goshen Church on Gatesville Road, the Spearsville Church of Christ on Spearsville Road, the Spearsville Wesleyan Church on Bean Blossom Road, and the Mount Olive Family of Hope

(originally Methodist Episcopal) Church on Peoga Road. Most of these churches are still in use by congregations and appear to be in good condition. The churches are invariably white, rectangular buildings and nearly all have bell towers at one end, rising above the entrance to the church. The Sprunica Church, constructed in 1875, is an unusual situation. The church was in poor condition and was rescued in 2002 by Vivian Wolff and her husband, together with two other families who acted as trustees for the property. They put on a new roof, replaced the warped floors inside, installed a furnace, and restored the interior. Pews were found, and the church is now open for worship and prayer seven days a week. Vivian, as the sole remaining trustee, still cares for the church and the surrounding cemetery. The Zion Church and cemetery is cared for by Denzil Ford and his family, who live close by. The church building has been vacant for some time and is in poor condition, but the family plans to patch the roof and secure it from further water damage.



Figures 22-23. Sprunica Christian Church—rehabilitated exterior and interior (c. 1870)



Figures 24-25. Zion Church (c. 1870) and grave marker of Uriah Ford, patriarch of Ford family

Most of these churches stand next to cemeteries that contain the graves of former parishioners. The earliest graves date to before the Civil War. The monuments and head stones are varied in style and materials. The oldest are often simple slabs with the names and life dates of the deceased engraved on the stone. The tops are either squared or rounded in shape. More substantial are square shafts with beveled tops. Much of the stone used for the 19th century grave markers is local and blue-gray colored. A few are limestone and are sculpted tree stumps symbolizing the truncation of life. An example of the tree stump marker is the gravestone of Uriah Ford in the Zion Cemetery. Ford was the patriarch of the extensive Ford family in Hamblen Township and served in an Indiana regiment during the Civil War. Occasionally, wrought iron fences surround a particular family plot in many of the cemeteries.

At the top of Bear Wallow Hill, on Bear Wallow Hill Road, stands one of the most significant early 20th century houses in the township and county. Constructed by Marcus Dickey in 1906, the house he called “Heart of the Highlands” stands on the west side of the road running along the ridge top of the hill. Dickey served as secretary to Hoosier Poet James Whitcomb Riley and organized the reading tours that the poet made all over the United States. Dickey built the house on what was then a remote location with a spectacular view, to have “quiet, undisturbed surroundings” in which to write books. One such volume was a biography of Riley. Across the road is a cleared field where a previous owner set out 13 Norway Spruce trees in 1876, the nation’s centennial year, to

symbolize the original thirteen colonies. After Dickey arrived, he constructed a look-out tower across the road where the public could gain unobstructed vistas of the county. This also became a favorite spot for artists. The bear wallow, from which the hill takes its name, was located in front of what is now the Dickey home and was drained in 1913. In the 1920s, philanthropist J.K. Lilly, Sr. purchased a stand of old-growth trees near Bear Wallow Hill. In 1942, the Lilly family donated the 550-acre area to Indiana University to be used as a botanical and artistic preserve, and it is now known as Lilly-Dickey Woods.³¹



Figure 26. Marcus Dickey House (1906)

b. Losses Since 1995

Most of the potential historic structures lost since the 1995 interim report was compiled appear to be 19th century log or frame houses constructed by the original settlers of the township. A comprehensive survey was not possible, but the following houses noted in 1995 appear to be gone: Baker-Lucas House (1840/1940), Bean Blossom-Gatesville Road; Jasper Parsley House (c. 1850), Gatesville Road; Columbus Parsley House (c. 1850), Gatesville Road; Benjamin Hitz House (c. 1850), Freeman Ridge Road; and Hitz-Johnson

³¹ Mabel E. Sturtevant, *Picturesque Brown County, Indiana* (Indianapolis: The Indiana League of Counties, 1924), p. 19; "Lilly-Dickey Woods" website, Indiana University, accessed February 26, 2015: www.indiana.edu/~preserve/ldw.shtml

House (c. 1860), Freeman Ridge Road. In addition, the c. 1880 Spearsville Post Office and Doctor's Office, Upper Bean Blossom Road, and the c. 1910 Cravens School, Sweetwater Trial, have been removed. One of the factors in loss of the 19th century houses has been abandonment; another has been the construction of new homes along the ridge tops of the township, where many of the early houses were constructed, and displacement of some of the older structures.

B. Jackson Township

Jackson Township, in the northwest corner of the county, has a similar topography to Hamblen Township: many hills and ravines, ridge top roads, and valleys affording pasture and crop land for farming. The principal towns are Bean Blossom and Helmsburg. Smaller communities include Fruitdale, Trevlac, and Needmore. The main creeks in the township are Bean Blossom, Lick, and Bear Creeks.

1. Bean Blossom.

Bean Blossom, originally Georgetown, as already discussed, was the second largest town in Brown County in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The c. 1900 sketch plan of Bean Blossom in Figure 5 shows the thriving nature of the town just before 1900, with multiple stores, hotel, factories, Masonic hall, and several churches. Of the buildings shown in Figure 5, just a handful remains.

a. Extant Properties with Potential Significance

Along the west side of State Road 135, there are a one-story Greek Revival frame house built before the Civil War; the George Snyder House, a two-story frame Italianate style residence; and the former McDonald Grocery, a one story frame building constructed about 1900. Along the east side of S.R. 135 is located the McCrory-Gwin House, a log structure that may date to the mid-19th century; the former Derringer Undertaker Building (also known as the Georgetown Funeral Parlor), dating from c. 1880; and the former Aaron Zody Grocery, dating from about 1900. The former Methodist Episcopal Church of 1900 has been remodeled and expanded in recent years for the Bean Blossom Mennonite Church. Next to the original McDonald Grocery building stands the McDonald Shopworth supermarket, constructed in 1963 and one of few remaining Modern style supermarkets from the early 1960s in the region.³²

³² Interview with Diana Biddle, February 19, 2015.

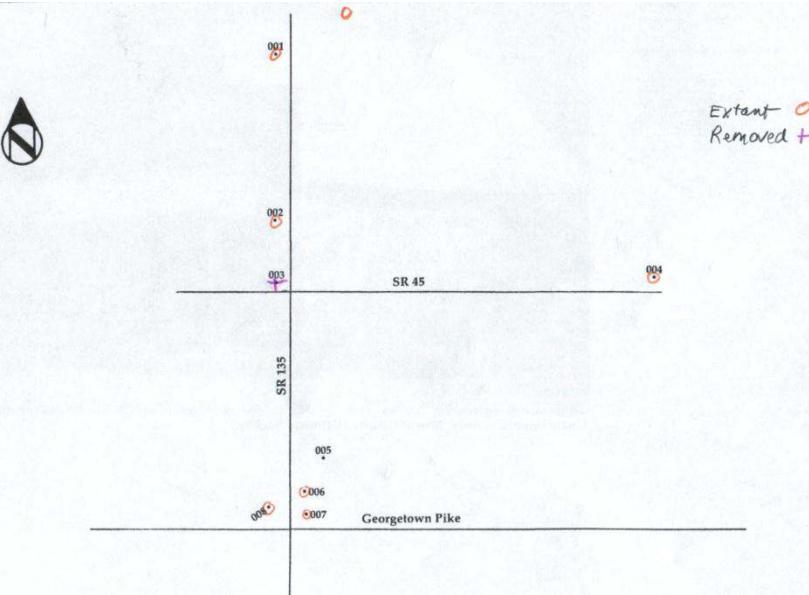


Figure 27. Bean Blossom: Potentially significant properties and losses since 1995

At the northeast side of Bean Blossom is Bill Monroe's Memorial Music Park and Campground. The grounds have been continuously in use for the Brown County Jamboree since the early 1940s and are a landmark for Bluegrass music nationally. The museum, the stage, amphitheatre seating, and other amenities date from the late 1960s through early 1990s. Stores serving visitors to the multiple events at the Jamboree grounds have been built along State Road 135 since the 1960s.

North of the center of Bean Blossom, on the west side of State Road 135 is the Brown County Old Settler's Grounds, where for over 100 years, the descendants of the original settlers of the county met once a year for a reunion and celebration of family history. The reunion is not held on the grounds any longer, but the main shelter for activities still stands at the west end of the property.



Figures 28-29. Georgetown Funeral Parlor (c. 1880) and Original McDonald Grocery (c. 1895 and c. 1930)



Figure 30. Bill Monroe's Memorial Music Park Campground, Home of the Brown County Jamboree (1951-Present)

b. Losses Since 1995

There has been only one potential property of significance—the Rund store—removed since the 1995 interim report. Since 1900, approximately seven houses, a church, hotel, doctor's office, post office, hotel, and three stores have been removed and replaced with newer structures or vacant lots.

2. Helmsburg

Helmsburg is a much newer town than the others in Brown County. It was founded after the Illinois Central Railroad was constructed in 1906 through the northwest corner of the county and facilitated access by visitors to Nashville and other points of interest. The principal passenger depot for the railroad in the county was at Helmsburg. A high school and grade school was constructed at the edge of town, and most of the children in the northern part of Brown County attended high school in Helmsburg. Businesses located along Main Street, located just north of the tracks, and in 1922, the Bean Blossom Masonic Lodge moved from Bean Blossom and constructed a two-story brick building just south of the depot. For about 25 years, the new town competed with Nashville for commerce and then, with the advent of the automobile and paved highways, the town began to decline.

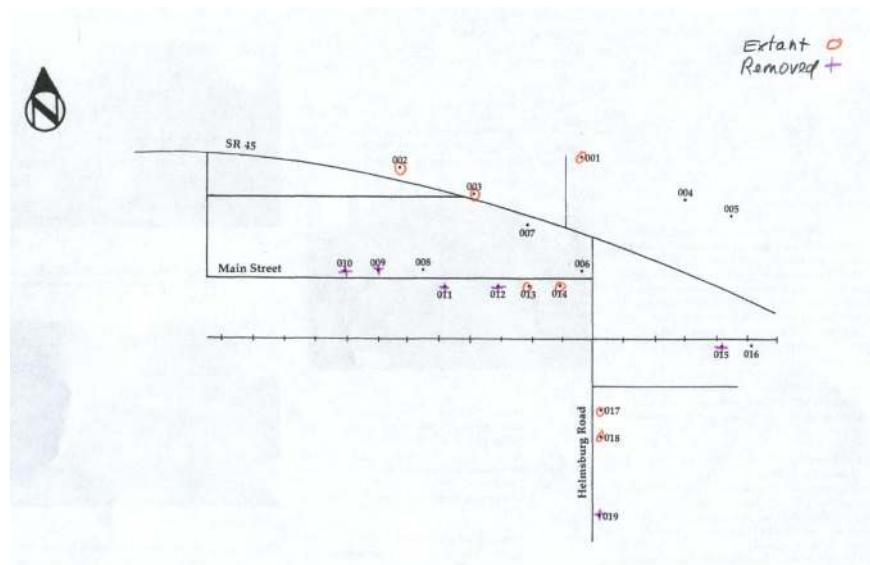


Figure 31. Helmsburg: Potentially significant properties and losses since 1995

a. Extant Properties with Potential Significance

The most substantial building in the town from its early history is the former Bean Blossom Masonic Lodge No. 527 at 4865 Helmsburg Road. It is a simply detailed, yet dignified, brick and concrete structure rehabilitated within the last 15 years to house the Figtree Gallery and Café. The gallery and café have since closed, and the building awaits a new use. Next door, at 4883 Helmsburg Road stands the former Shelton Wade Hardware Store (c. 1908; 1949), now an antique store, which is a one-story frame structure now covered with corrugated metal siding. On Main Street, only the former Helmsburg Methodist Episcopal Church of 1916, now the Brown County Community Church (remodeled and expanded since 1995); Dr. Selfridge's Office, and the Henderson House remain from the early 20th century. Dr. Selfridge's office (later Goldie Yoder's Restaurant) consists of two parts—a frame one-story house with gable roof at the rear and extending forward to the street, the frame doctor's office. Unfortunately, the building is collapsing and may not be capable of being rehabilitated. The Henderson House is a simple two-story frame dwelling with its gable end facing the street and dating to about 1910. Two other early 20th century houses—the Yoder House and the Swisher House, survive on the north side of State Road 45 north of Main Street.



Figures 32-33. Henderson House (c. 1910) and former Bean Blossom Masonic Lodge No. 527 (1922)

b. Losses Since 1995

The steady decline of Helmsburg's railroad-based economy after World War II is seen in the town's significant loss of population and closing of businesses. Since 1995, Helmsburg's Main Street has lost a majority of its remaining early 20th century buildings. The post office, Chitwood's Hardware store, the Rains Hotel, the Walker House, and possibly several other residences have all been removed and most of their sites are vacant.

3. Other Towns

Trevlac and Fruitdale also owed their existence to the Illinois Central Railroad, which made regular stops at both locations. A Colonel Calvert built a hotel, cottages, bath house, and clubhouse at Trevlac, located west of Helmsburg on State Road 45. Fruitdale, on State Road 135 north of Bean Blossom became the site of a cannery and was surrounded by fruit orchards.³³

Little appears to remain of Calvert's hotel or resort buildings at Trevlac. Fruitdale retains several houses from the pre-1940 period and a couple of structures that may have been used in the fruit industry.

4. Rural Jackson Township

a. Extant Properties with Potential Significance

The most substantial 19th century building remaining in the township probably is the Allen Storer Anderson-Cullen House at 7120 State Road 135, south of Fruitdale. Built between 1861 and 1864 by County Surveyor Allen Anderson, the house bespoke of the owner's success in life. The two-story rectangular building has the unusual feature of a two-level porch recessed into the south half of the structure. The details derive from the Greek Revival style just then passing from the scene: in-turning trim on the gables, side lights and transom enframing the entrance. Also typical of the period are the six over six sashes in the windows and the flat arches over the window openings, similar to the Parmerlee House in Hamblen Township. The bricks were fired in Anderson's kiln nearby. About 1980, the house was restored and additions made to the rear.³⁴

³³ *Brown County Interim Report*, p. 9.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

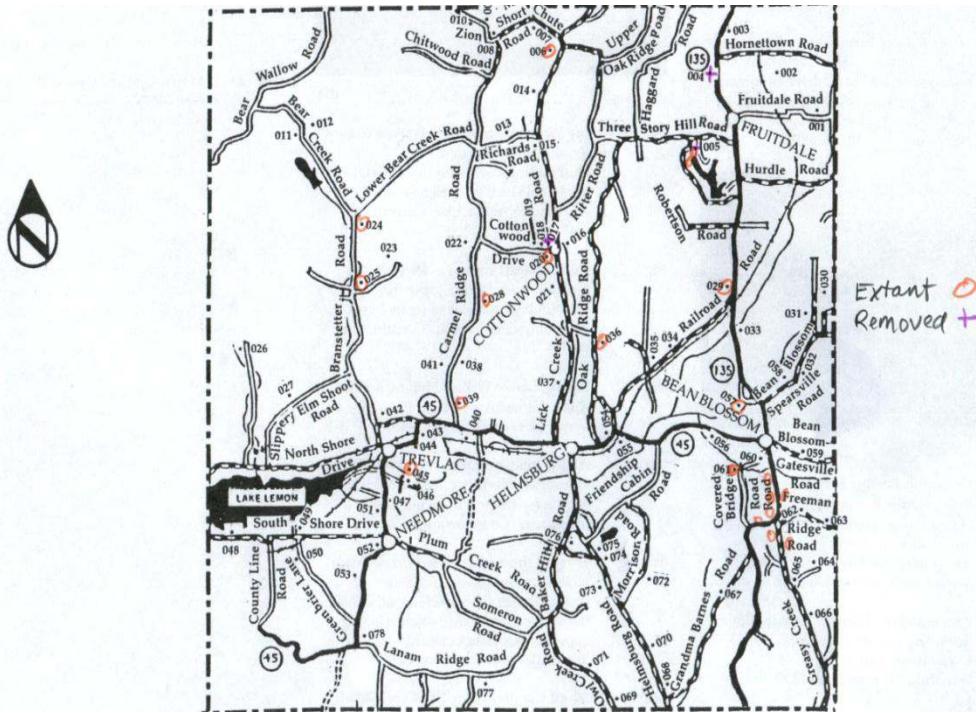


Figure 34. Rural Jackson Township: Potentially significant properties and losses since 1995

One large frame farm house dating from the 1870s or 1880s stands on the top of a hill overlooking the fields, just north of State Road 45 on Carmel Ridge Road. This may be Sarah and Oscar Worford House noted in the 1995 report. The house is a one-store vernacular house in the I-house tradition, with the central gable sometimes called “Carpenter Gothic.” There are two front doors, which also comes from the vernacular tradition of Virginia and North Carolina. In addition, there is a door located in the gable, which may have had a balcony originally. The house appears to be occupied and in good condition.

The most substantial early 20th century house in the township undoubtedly is the former Steinheiser House on Bear Creek Road north of the Bear Creek Church. The two-story residence, constructed about 1910, is a two-story frame structure with projecting gables supported by large brackets in the Craftsman style. The two porches match the main house in projecting gables and brackets. The Rustic style is incorporated into the design through the use of field stones for the chimney and porch foundations and balustrades. The house is now the centerpiece of the Episcopal Waycross Camp.



Figures 35-36. Anderson-Cullen House (1861-64) and Sarah and Oscar Worford House(?) (c. 1870s)

South of Bean Blossom, on Covered Bridge Road, is the only wooden covered bridge at its original site in the county. The bridge, which is constructed using the King truss system, was built about 1880. It has been restored and has long been a popular subject for artists.

Like Hamblen Township, one of the arresting sights on the landscape is one-room churches with bell towers, many with adjacent cemeteries. The Cottonwood Christian Church on Cottonwood Road north of Helmsburg is all that remains of the former town of Cottonwood. The building, constructed in 1892, is one room, with a small belfry perched on the gable above the entrance. The structure is in excellent condition and retains its wooden siding and original sandstone foundation. An unusual feature is the twin front doors on the gable front. On Bear Creek Road north of Trevlac stand the Bear Creek Church and its cemetery. The church was established and the original building constructed in 1917. Its shape and bell tower appear as though they may be original; the church was remodeled or re-built in 1990. The cemetery, situated on the hillside above the church, provides a commanding view of the landscape to the west. The Oak Ridge Baptist Church on Oak Ridge Road, north of Helmsburg (not visited) appears to be extant and is a one story, gabled structure without belfry. One former church has been converted to a residence: the former Beech Grove Church on upper Lick Creek Road, built in 1924, is a one-room concrete block structure in good condition. There are also a number

of cemeteries without churches in the township. One visited is the Carmel Ridge Cemetery on Carmel Ridge Road. There are several of the squared blue-gray stone markers with beveled or square tops, with one capped by a ball.



Figures 37-38. Cottonwood Christian Church (1892) and former Beech Grove Church (1924)

a. Losses Since 1995

There was not time to drive all the roads in the township, so the following is not a comprehensive statement. The other two surviving buildings in 1995 from the town of Cottonwood, besides the Cottonwood Church, have been removed—the Cottonwood one-room school (c. 1900) and the Hughes Grocery Store (c. 1900), both on Cottonwood Road.

b. Rustic Houses on State Road 135

Immediately south of Bean Blossom, in the southeast corner of Jackson Township, State Road 135 rises abruptly and winds along the top of a long north-south ridge, on its way to Nashville. There are clusters of Rustic-style cabins and houses located on both sides of the highway along the ridge. Many were built before World War II and are part of the movement of city people to construct summer houses in the Log Cabin Style in Brown County to which Fred Bates Johnson, Jack Rogers, and Dale Bessire responded with their

purchase of timbered sites and reconstruction (and construction of) log houses (see Section I-D, above).³⁵ A majority of the houses north and south of Grandma Barnes Road are of hewn log construction. It is not clear how many of these, if any, were originally settler cabins. Probably many involved incorporation of old hewn timbers into a new structure. Most have wood frame gables and frame additions. The Rustic style popular from about 1915 to 1940 is seen in the shed dormer windows projecting from most of the roofs. The pre-1940 houses that conserve their original appearance appear to be significant as part of the architecture that evolved specifically to evoke Brown County's 19th century past.



Figures 39-40. Rustic Style houses on State Road 135 south of Bean Blossom Overlook (c. 1920-40)

C. Washington Township

Washington Township originally was a narrow rectangle, crossing the entire county at the middle. After Monroe Reservoir was built in the 1960s, the southwest Johnson Township was abolished and its west half added to Washington Township. Excluding Nashville and its immediate surroundings and considering the rural remainder of the township, there are three main areas: (1) the section north and south of State Road 46 east of Nashville, (2) the section west of Nashville and centered on Yellowwood State Forest, and (3) the southwest section, formerly part of Johnson Township. There are two towns in the township besides Nashville. Gnawbone, the

³⁵ Pyle, pp. 14-15.

larger, is well known for its name and for its shops. Belmont, at the west edge of the county, has shrunken in size since World War II.

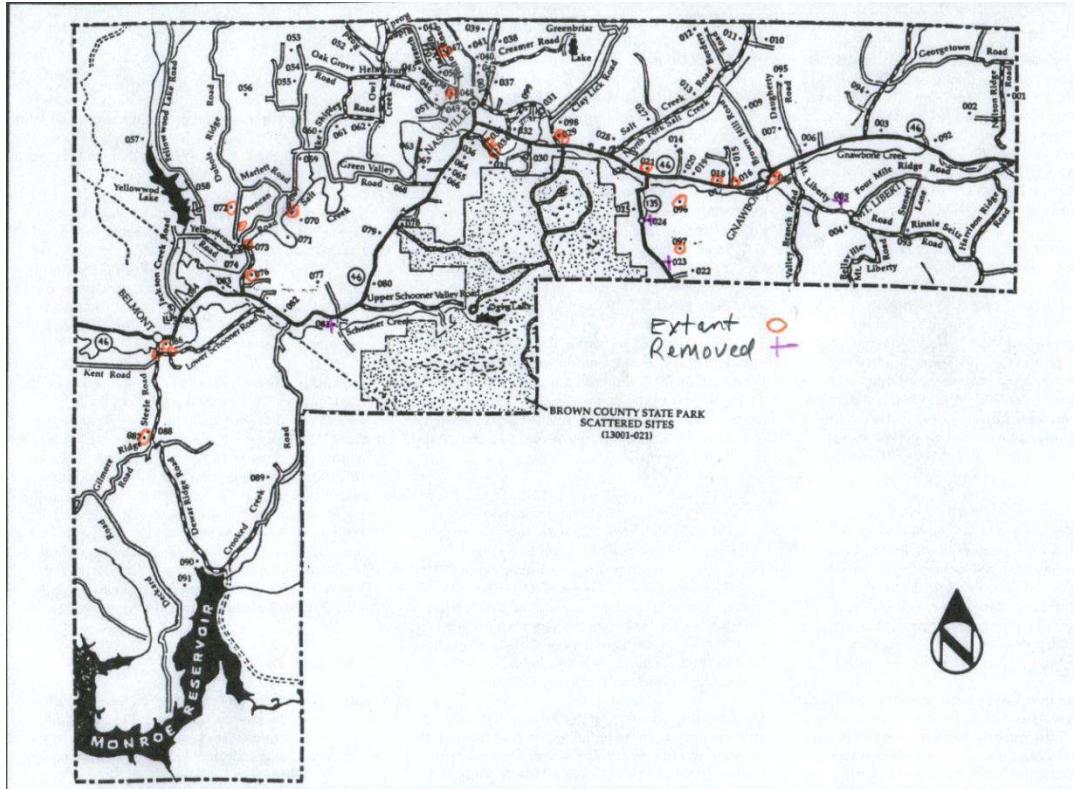


Figure 41. Washington Township: Potentially significant properties and losses since 1995

a. Extant Properties with Potential Significance

In the eastern section, State Road 46 follows for the most part an old east-west road that connected Bloomington, Nashville, and Columbus. Along the current highway, there are several late 19th century cottages that were probably originally farm houses in the relatively fertile valley along Gnaw Bone Creek. The Hesper Seitz House (rated Notable in 1995), just west of Gnaw Bone, is a T-

shaped cottage retaining its two porches with turned post and wood lace decorations. It dates to about 1900. The Charles Seitz House (now the Homestead Bed and Breakfast), just to the west, is an ell-shaped cottage with original porch, bargeboard, and fish-scale shingles. The Mackey House (c. 1895), located opposite the intersection of State Roads 135 and 46, is a third cottage with a central pyramidal roof, multiple gables, and large verandah (c. 1895).



Figures 42-43. Hesper Seitz House (c. 1900) and Mackay House (c. 1895)

Further west on State Road 46, just across from the north entrance to Brown County State Park, stand two log houses in poor condition that appear to date at least to the early 20th century. Both have substantial hewn timbers that may be old-growth in origin, with frame gables and additions.

In Gnaw Bone, there are a few early 20th century houses and the Brown County Holiness Camp grounds. Originally the Gnaw Bone Wesleyan Church Camp, the grounds appear to retain its pre-1960s buildings and character. There is a central dining hall and small one-room cabins clustered around the hall. A separate building may have been a tabernacle or meeting hall.



Figure 44-45. Former Gnaw Bone Wesleyan Church Camp (now Brown County Holiness Camp) (c. 1920's-1960s)

In the second section of the township, west of Nashville, there are several overlooks from State Road 46 that provide sweeping vistas of the rolling landscape. On Yellowwood Road north of State Road 46, the Duncan Community Church appears to date to the 1950s or early 1960s and continues the architectural tradition in the county of a one-room church with belfry over the entrance. It is constructed of concrete block and the gables and belfry are frame. On the hill beside the church are two cemeteries—the Schooner of 1885 and the Duncan, founded in 1943. Together, they form one of the largest rural cemeteries in the county. The oldest headstones follow the vernacular tradition already found of flat, narrow slabs with rounded or squared tops and squared shafts with beveled caps.

The road winds through the fields in the valley of the North Fork of Salt Creek and crosses the creek with two bridges. The newer one is a replacement to the steel truss bridge to the side, which retains its trusses, although it is missing its deck. As the road winds along the edge of Yellowwood State Forest, there are several houses in the Rustic style. One is the Dorothy Miller-Cagle House, 4644 W. Yellowwood Road, dating to 1937 and c. 1950.³⁶ A farm house, the Floyd-Cagle House, at 4687 W. Yellowwood Road, dates to

³⁶ Email from Monique Cagle, February 4, 2015.

about 1880 and retains its livestock barn, corncrib, and summer kitchen. The house has the distinctive central gable of the vernacular tradition seen already in the rural farmhouse on Carmel Ridge Road in Jackson Township.



Figures 46-47. Steel truss bridge on Yellowwood Road (c. 1910-20) and Stewart-Cagle House (1937; c. 1950)

A metal-truss bridge, listed in the National Register of Historic Places and believed to be extant, is County Bridge No. 36, on Bond Cemetery Road (1904). Just south of State Road 46 and Belmont is an early 20th century steel truss bridge, still in use on Steele Road.

The single most historically significant property in the township and one of the most important in the county is the T.C. Steele House and Studio State Historic Site, located on the top of a hill south of the old town of Belmont, at the west edge of Washington Township. There the Dean of Indiana Artists indulged in his love of painting landscapes and constructed “the House of the Singing Winds,” his main studio, and several outbuildings. Fortunately, his widow Selma bequeathed the entire property to the State of Indiana, with the stipulations that the buildings and grounds be conserved as she and T.C. Steele had left them. Of great significance, Selma also left a sizeable collection of her husband’s paintings—landscapes and portraits representing most of the periods in his career. Almost alone out of all the studios and homes of nationally known painters in American history, the T.C. Steele State Historic Site offers both the

authentic house with all of its original furnishings, plus the paintings of the master, providing the visitor with a richer experience and affording an opportunity to see the largest collection of Steele paintings on public display.³⁷



Figures 48-49. T.C. Steele House and Studio, T.C. Steele State Historic Site (1907; c. 1915)

b. Losses Since 1995

Among the losses in the township outside Nashville since 1995 are several houses, a church, and a bridge. A county bridge with Pratt pony trusses over State Road 135 south of State Road 46 is gone, as is apparently the Frank Hoover House at 1815 S. State Road 135, built about 1880. On State Road 46 near Gnaw Bone, the Pleasant Valley Church, a c. 1870 one-room church with a belfry, has been removed.

D. Van Buren Township

Van Buren Township was one of the earliest places in Brown County to be settled, being adjacent to areas of previous settlement in Jackson and Bartholomew Counties. It contains more farmland than the other townships in the county, and the landscape is more

³⁷ Interview with Andrea de Tarnowsky, Site Manager, T.C. Steele State Historic Site, February 19, 2015.

varied, with hills and ravines to the north and pasture and crop land to the south and east. Most of the towns that flourished during the 19th and early 20th century in the township have shrunk or disappeared, but the place names remain and are strong as points of reference for residents. Some are unusual and carry intriguing stories about their origins, such as Stonehead and Pike's Peak. Story has both an interesting explanation for its name and also, alone out of the small towns in Brown County, retains much of its core character.

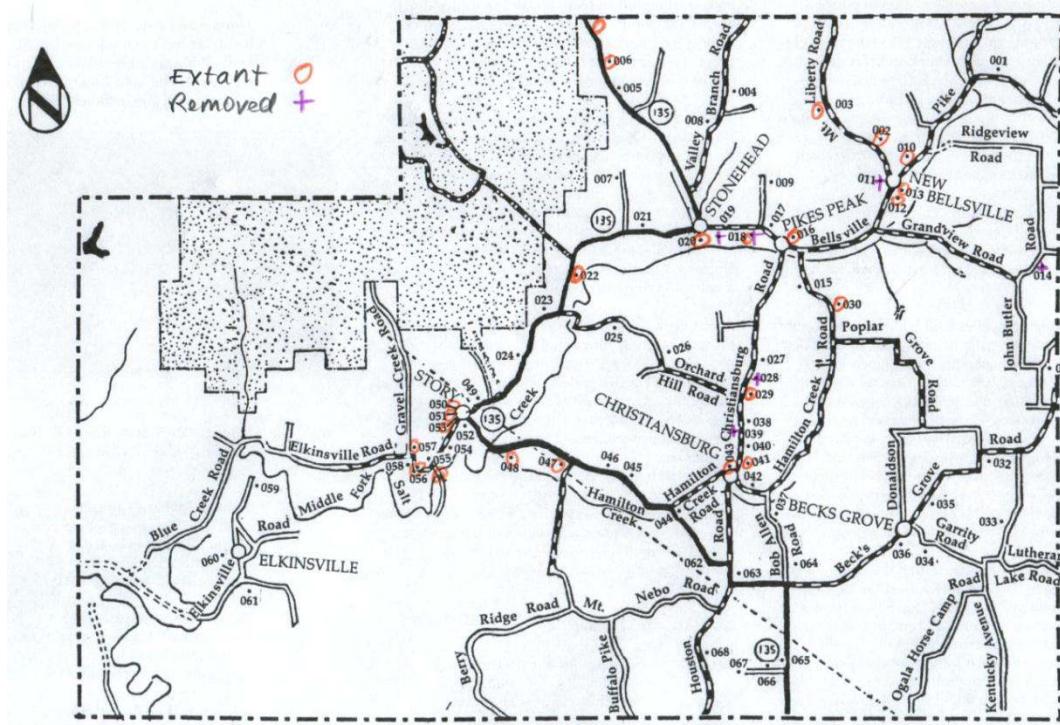
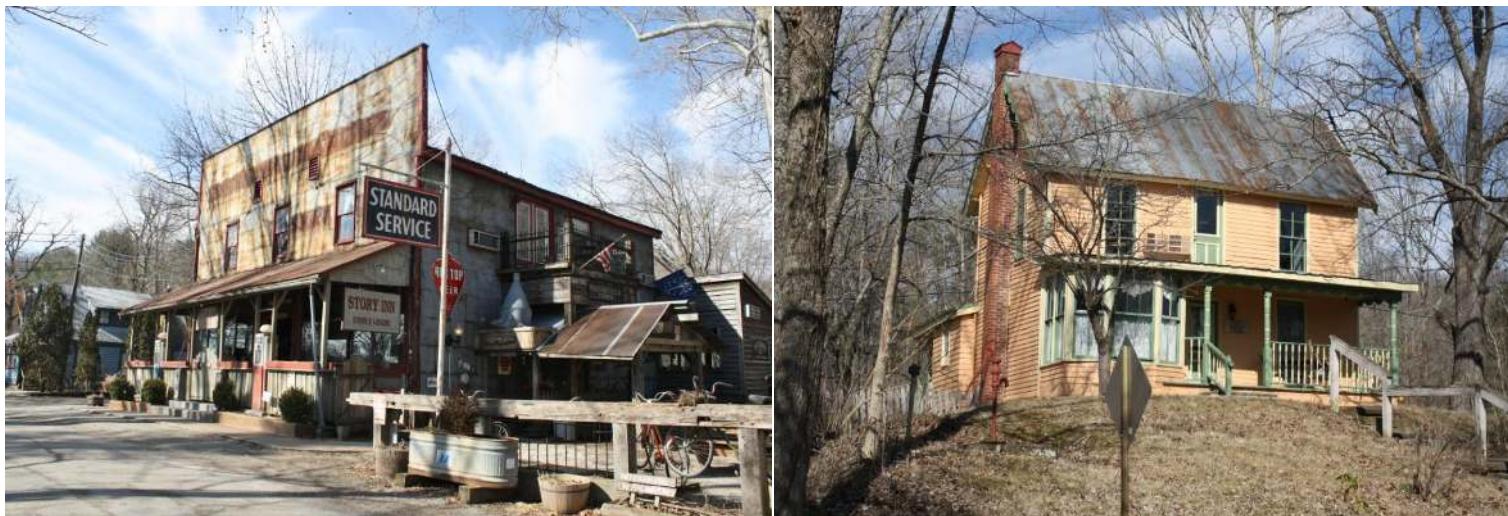


Figure 50. Van Buren Township: Potentially significant properties and losses since 1995

a. Extant Properties with Potential Significance

Story, located at the juncture of State Road 135 and Elkinsville Road, is the single most significant small town in the county because its core has been preserved and restored. It was founded by Dr. George Story in 1851 and given his name. The doctor provided medical services from the town and lived in a large two-story I-house on a hill west of town. The house has been restored, and Rick Hofstetter, the current owner of the town, lives there. At the center of the community stood a general store, which was originally built in about the 1890s and re-built in 1916 after a fire. That general store, operated by Alra Wheeler for many years, was the social center of the community and operated for about 60 years. Story thrived as a trading point in southern Brown County from about 1880 to 1929. After the latter year, it began to fade. Fortunately, in the early 1980s, Benjamin and Cynthia Schultz purchased the general store and restored it, creating a bed and breakfast. This brought many visitors to the reviving town. In 1999, Rick Hofstetter purchased the entire town and now operates a gourmet restaurant in the former general store and overnight lodging in houses nearby. Next to the store stands the town's former grist mill, which has also been rehabilitated. Remarkably, the general store retains its rusted metal siding on its façade and on the roof of the front porch. "Story, Ind." can still be seen painted in fading letters on the façade.³⁸



Figures 51-52. Story Inn (originally Wheeler General Store) (c. 1915-16) and Dr. George Story House (c. 1875)

³⁸ Rick Hofstetter and Jane Ammeson, *Brown County* (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2010), pp. 27-40.

A key landmark in the township is not a building or structure, but a sculpted object: the Stonehead marker in front of the former Thomas A. Hendricks House at the junction of State Road 135 and Bellsville Pike. The Stonehead (Figure 53) consists of a sculpted man's head and a base on which are engraved distances to Columbus, Fairfax, Indianapolis, and Sparkesferrie. The sculptor, Henry Cross created the figure in 1851 as part of his obligation to provide assistance in maintaining roads in the county. Cross was a skilled, self-taught sculptor of grave markers, and his artistry can be seen on grave stones from the 1850s and early 1860s in the Melott, New Bellsville, Mt. Zion, and Christiansburg Cemeteries in Van Buren Township and in the Harmony Burial Ground in Bartholomew County. The most frequent motifs in Cross' bas relief sculptures are stylized weeping willow trees, stages with curtains parted on either side of a funeral urn, and three budding flowers. The Hendricks House, a vernacular two-story frame house with a T-shaped plan and symmetrical design, was constructed in 1891 by Thomas Hendricks, a prosperous operator of first a saw mill and then a grist mill nearby. There was a small community at Stonehead until the early 20th century, consisting of about five or six houses, the grist mill, and a general store. In the 1990s, an orthodontist from Indianapolis, Mike Kelley, purchased the Hendricks House and restored it. It is now a vacation rental property. The house and Stonehead monument are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, one of few such listings in the county.³⁹

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 41-54.



Figures 53-54. Stonehead road marker by Henry Cross (1851) and headstone of Jemima Clark by Cross, Melott Cemetery (1854)

The former town of New Bellsville, east of Stonehead and Pike's Peak on Bellsville Pike, contains two residences surviving from its existence as a community a hundred years ago. The more notable of the two is the former residence of Dr. Alfred J. Ralphy, who practiced medicine in Brown County for nearly fifty years, from the 1870s to 1928. The one-story frame house, constructed about 1870, comes from the vernacular tradition, with two front doors and a shed roof on rear of the roof. There are pediment-shaped moldings over the front windows, and the house retains its original wood siding and four over four sash windows, typical of the 1870s. Dr. Ralphy bought the house in 1891 and built his office next door in 1898. The office is now part of the Pioneer Village in Nashville. A short distance to the west is the George Anthony House, dating to about 1900, also in the vernacular tradition, with a T-shaped plan, two stories, and a verandah with Tuscan columns that wraps around the east side.

North of New Bellsville about $\frac{1}{4}$ miles stands one of the last one-room schools of the 76 that was in use in the county a century ago. The wood frame Bellsville School, 3847 S. Mt. Liberty Road, was constructed about the late 1870s and retains much of the integrity of its original exterior—wooden siding, four over four sash windows, and sandstone foundation. A porch was added in the 20th century, probably after the school closed. The school has been adaptively used by Ron Schuster, a stained glass and hot glass artist, for his studio.



Figures 55-56. Dr. Alfred Ralphy House (1870) and former Bellsville School (now Schuster Studio) (c. late 1870s)

There are several other notable 19th century houses in the township that are found in the windshield survey. A house that may date to 1860 stands on Christiansburg Road, north of Christiansburg. The James Mabe-Craig House may have a log structure, with siding and a verandah added in the 20th century. Its elongated façade, with three front doors, is unusual. Brick chimneys appear at each end of the house, and it sits on a sandstone foundation. An impressive farm house in the I-house tradition stands at 7064 S. State Road 135, east of Story. The Isaac Tabor House (c. 1890s) is one of the largest I-houses surviving in the county, with an unusually long ell wing extending to the rear of the main rectangular front section. There is a central gable on the façade, two front entrances, and a gable at the center of the east side of the rear wing. A plain porch with turned posts and flat roof shelters to the two front doors.



Figures 57-58. Isaac Tabor House (c. 1890s) and Hedrick House (c. 1890s)

A house also in the I-house tradition, but with an atypical rear ell is farm house on the former Hedrick Farm, located at the corner of Elkinsville and Gravel Creek Roads, west of Story. The rectangular front section is one-room deep, has two front doors with a porch, and a central brick chimney. The rear ell is very wide and covers much of the north side of the main house, with a sweeping shed roof. The house, dating to about the 1890s, is abandoned and in poor condition.

Van Buren Township, like Hamblen and Jackson Townships, is known for its one-room churches. One example is the Pike's Peak Church of Christ, the principal landmark remaining from the town of Pike's Peak, founded in the 1850s. The frame church, built in 1891, has a front-facing gable and belfry on the ridge of the gable. It stands on a sandstone foundation. The Christiansburg Methodist Episcopal Church, one of the oldest extant churches in the county, was built in 1866. It is the only obvious building remaining from the town of Christiansburg, located south of Pike's Peak and east of Story. The church retains its wooden siding and its windows are unusual—with pointed heads, rather than rectangular, perhaps suggesting the Gothic style. The wooden sash—two over two have been retained. The belfry sits on the front gable, above the entrance; a vestibule has been added to the façade.



Figures 59-60. Pike's Peak Church of Christ (1891) and Christiansburg Methodist Episcopal Church (1866)

There are several large cemeteries without churches. The Melott, New Bellsville, and Christiansburg are three of the most notable. There are still a few 19th and early 20th century barns left in the township. Examples of gambrel roofed barns stand on Bellsville Pike, just west of Pike's Peak, and on Elkinsville Road west of Story. In a county without many iron or steel truss bridges, there is one from the early 20th century still in use on Kirk's Ford Road, over the Middle Fork of Salt Creek. The bridge is a simple span with side trusses, resting on concrete footings.



Figures 61-62. Steel truss bridge on Kirk's Ford Road (c. 1910) and Dining Hall, Gnaw Bone Camp (1951)

One of the places that has emerged with potential significance since the 1995 interim report is the Gnaw Bone Camp, an example of a rustic summer camp founded in 1943 and operated since as a recreational experience for first boys, and now girls, with two camps each summer. Founded by Fred Lorenz and his family, the camp continues to be operated by the Lorenz family. The camp consists of a core area with a log dining hall and log residence and office, a frame recreation building, a Western town with hotel, stables, and store, a miniature covered bridge constructed of wooden poles, a one-room school, and cabins for the campers. The structures date from 1951 to the 1970s. The camp contains 1620 acres and offers miles of trails in a heavily wooden tract located on State Road 135, at the north edge of Van Buren Township. There are log structures also on some of the trails, among them several once owned by Chief Eagle Feather, a Native American who lived in Brown County.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Interviews with Alice Lorenz, February 3 and March 10, 2015.

a. Losses Since 1995

Among the losses in the township since 1995 is the Grandview Church, an 1892 one-room structure with belfry over the front gable. The church was destroyed by fire. The Christiansburg School—Van Buren High School of c. 1915 and 1958 on Christiansburg Road north of Christiansburg Road has been removed. What appears to be the Dr. Samuel Wilson House, in the 6200 block of Christiansburg Road, has been recently gutted by fire and retains only its exterior hewn log walls. The house dated as early as 1860. There may have been other losses, but it was not possible to visit all of the locations listed in the interim report.



Figures 63. Dr. Samuel Wilson House (c. 1860; gutted by fire 2015)

E. Brown County State Park

The 1995 interim report inventoried buildings and structures in Brown County State Park that dated before about 1950. All of those resources appear to be extant and nearly all are in good condition. They fall into two main categories: (1) Rustic style log houses built by the Indiana Department of Conservation in the 1920s and 1930s to serve as residences for staff and (2) sandstone and timber buildings and structures intended to serve visitors.

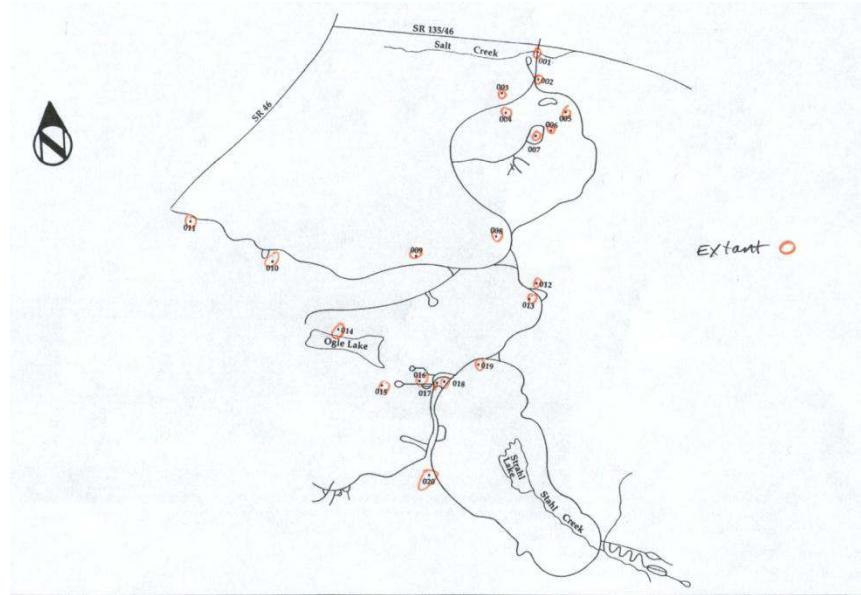


Figure 64. Brown County State Park: Potentially significant properties and losses since 1995

The covered bridge that crosses Gnaw Bone Creek near the north entrance to the park falls into neither category. It was originally constructed in 1838 by bridge builder Henry Wolfe in Putnam County. It was relocated in 1932 to the new state park in Brown County, when it was threatened by demolition by a highway project. It is the oldest covered bridge in the state, the only double-tunneled such bridge, and only one of four double-tunneled covered bridges in the United States.⁴¹ South of the covered bridge is one of the two Rustic-style gatehouses and the Lower and Upper Shelter houses, both built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s. The Lower Shelterhouse is a massive, two-story structure constructed of rough-faced local sandstone, with a frame roof. Large square stone piers at the lower level support a terrace above. There are sandstone stairways on either side of the Shelterhouse leading up to second level. The Upper Shelterhouse, located on the west side of the main park road, on the hill above the Lower Shelterhouse, is smaller. It is one-story, with a pyramidal roof and sandstone and timber walls. The saddle barn, a short distance from the Lower Shelterhouse, also dates from the 1930s era, as does one of the most impressive creations of the CCC teams: a

⁴¹ *Brown County Interim Report*, p. 35.

sandstone stairway up the lower portion of the hillside leading up the Abe Martin Lodge from the Lower Shelterhouse. The sandstone slabs, of massive size, were hauled by men and horses up to the hill side and set in place without mortar. The stairway consists of five flights with side walls of sandstone flanking the stairs. The stairway is in poor condition currently, with the walls and steps pulling about and sliding, due to water and insufficient footings.



Figures 65-66. Upper and Lower Shelter Houses, c. 1934-40

The original section of the Abe Martin Lodge was constructed between 1929 and 1931 and faces east. It was constructed in a Brown County Rustic style with heavy hewn timbers forming the gables and sandstone laid for the walls and piers. Inside, the main lodge room of the 1931 building, originally the park commissary, is constructed with sandstone walls and timber trusses, with two stone fireplaces. The rental cabins named after characters in Kin Hubbard's cartoons have been rebuilt since the 1930s, but retain a similar character. Inside the newer portion of the lodge is an interpretive exhibit on Hubbard's life and appraisals of his humor and standing by contemporaries, such as Will Rogers.



Figures 67-68. Original Abe Martin Lodge and main lodge room (1929-31)

The Rustic style cabins constructed as residences for employees are distributed along the main north-south road of the park. The Aynes House, built as a residence for the superintendent of the park, possibly in the 1920s, was constructed out of old-grown hewn logs and has an ell-shaped plan. The characteristic shed dormer window appears on the slope of the gable roof. The house has served as a retreat for Governors of Indiana at intervals for some time. At the highest point in the park and county, Weed Patch Hill, the town of Kelp once stood. The Hoosier's Nest is a log house that appears to pre-date the park and now serves as a historical artifact open to the public. The steel look-out tower dates back to the 1930s and was originally used to spot fires in the forest; it is now available for taking in the vista. At least two log houses built in the Rustic style are found near the Buffalo Ridge Campground.⁴²

⁴² Interview with Jim Eagleman; *Happenings in Brown County Old Time & New*, p. 26.



Figure 69. Aynes House (c. 1920s)

The West Lookout Tower and North Lookout Towers, built by the CCC teams in the 1930s, are constructed of logs and sandstone. At least one has been re-built in more recent years in the same style as the original. The Hesitation Point, located on the north side of the road leading into the park from the west entrance, offers a sweeping view of the Brown County hills and the forest cover. It also has importance as an early venue where Brown County artists painted.

F. Nashville

The original platted area of the Town of Nashville and the surrounding area within its limits contain perhaps the largest concentration of potentially significant historic properties in the county. These properties are mostly of individual importance; few are clustered in sufficient quantities to constitute a potential historic district for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or Indiana Register of Historic Sites and Structures. Most of the buildings noted in the 1995 interim report have survived; the losses, for the most part are located along the peripheries of the center of town and the Arts Village. The properties of potential interest fall generally into one of the themes of Brown County heritage discussed in Section III: Early 19th Century/Settler, Town, Art Colony, Tourism, Crafts, Musical, and Natural.

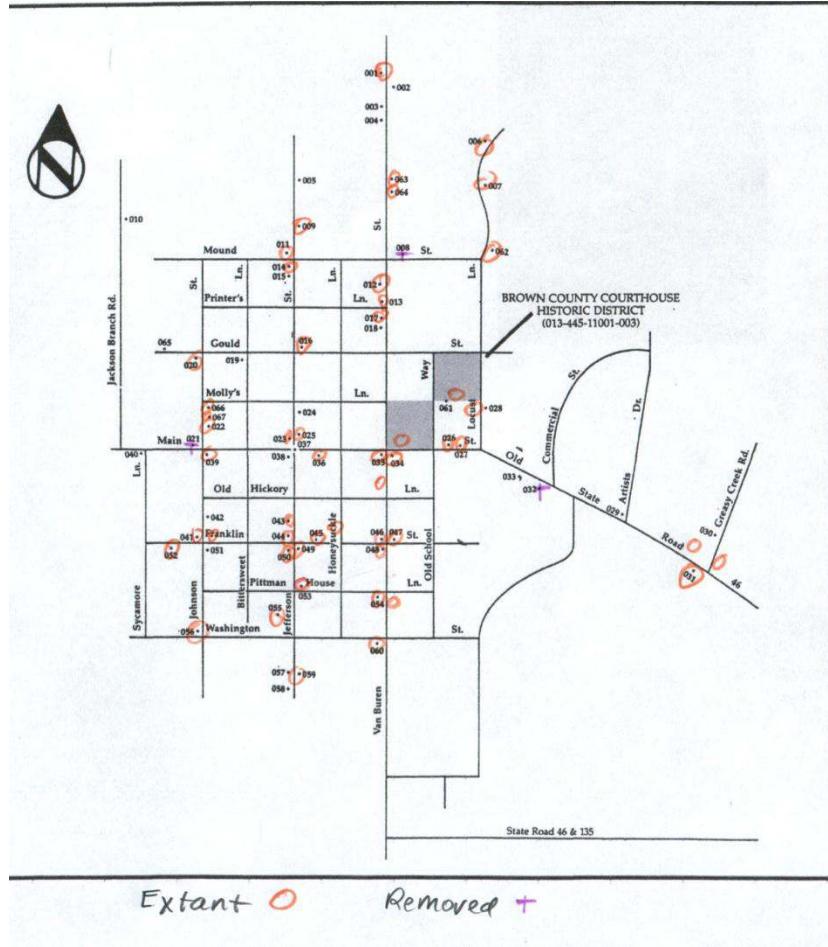


Figure 70. Nashville: Potentially significant properties and losses since 1995

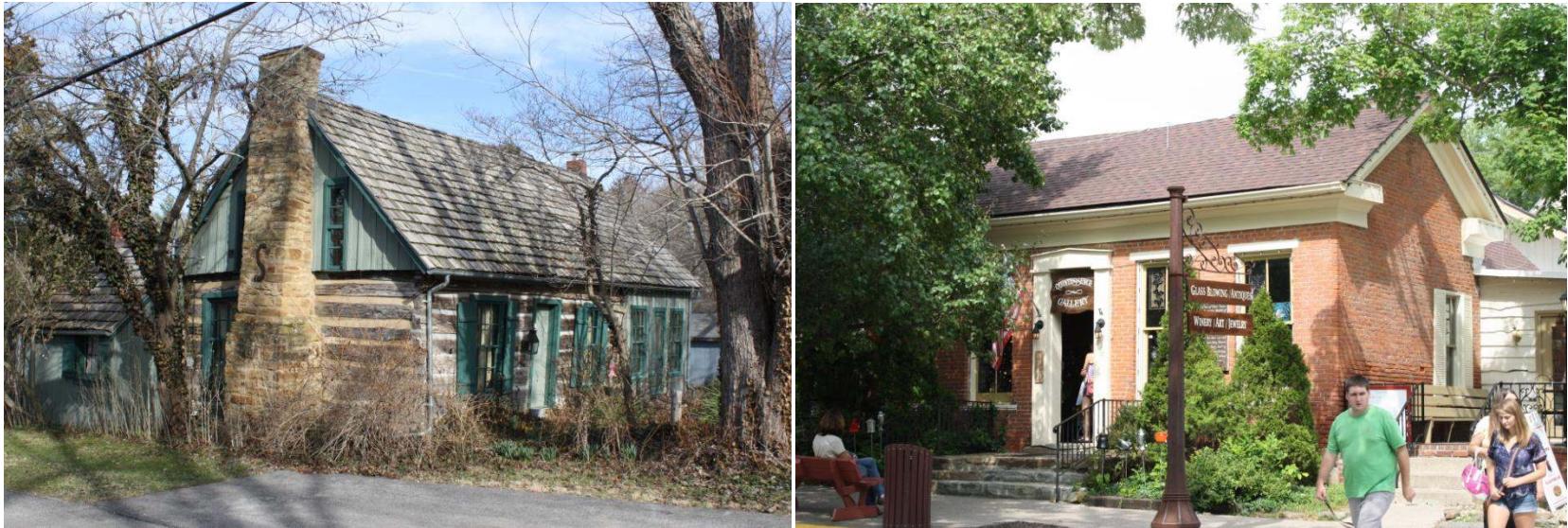
a. Extant Properties with Potential Significance

1. Early 19th Century/Settler Heritage, 1830 to 1860

There are several houses that survive from the pre-Civil War period in Nashville. The oldest, constructed possibly even before the town was incorporated in 1836 is the Banner Brummet House, on Johnson Street just south of Gould. Brummet was the agent appointed to lay out the town plan. The single-pen log house is built with hewn timbers and had 4-inch square holes in its façade, which may have been gun ports. The house was remodeled and expanded in 1871 with a frame addition to the north covered with boards and battens. In 1971 Troy Frame restored the house to its current appearance. The windows are six over six sash and probably date to before the Civil War. On the northwest corner of Jefferson and Mound Streets stands the Joshua Bond-Joe Pryor-Olive Anderson House, which may date to as early as 1840. It served as a toll house during part of its history for the private toll road that ran up Jefferson Street and north of Nashville. Originally a simple one-room dwelling, the house was built of brick and may have been one of the first brick structures in town. The window openings have flat wooden lintels and six over six sashes, both of which are characteristic of pre-Civil War buildings in Indiana.⁴³

A second brick building dating to about 1840 is found on the northeast corner of Van Buren and Franklin Streets. It has served as a Methodist parsonage, residence of weaver Mary Bissell, and as a boarding house for teachers, before becoming a shop. It is a one story structure with Greek Revival details, including in-turning trim on the gables, pilasters flanking the central entrance, and a pointed pediment molding over the entry. An imposing residence with fully developed Greek Revival details stands on the southwest corner of Jefferson and Mound. The Judge Hester House, dating to 1853, may have been one of the town's first two story residences. It has the rectangular shape and one-room depth of the vernacular I-house tradition from Virginia and North Carolina, but the builder evidently had access to the latest pattern books and applied a two-story Greek portico with pediment to the façade.

⁴³ Miriam Sturgeon, *Artists' Sketchbook Nashville Brown County, Indiana* (Nashville: Brown County Chamber of Commerce, 1972), p. 16; *Happenings in Brown County*, pp. 7-8.



Figures 71-72. Banner Brummet House (c. 1830) and Methodist Parsonage-Mary Bissell House (c. 1840)



Figures 73-74. Brown County Courthouse (1873) and Old Log Jail (1879)

There are considerably more buildings remaining that date to the period from 1865 to 1900. The most substantial is the 1873 brick Brown County Courthouse at Van Buren and Main Streets, which was constructed with Greek Revival details, including in-turning trim suggesting a pediment in its gable and pilasters on the façade. On the gable-fronted façade, elaborate cast-iron stairways were constructed to afford access to the courtroom and jury rooms. A frame belfry was constructed on the ridge of the gable roof, much as in the tradition of the rural churches. A short distance to the northwest is the Old Log Jail, one of the only surviving county jails constructed of logs in the State. It stands on its original foundation and was constructed in 1879 to replace an 1837 jail of similar design. The jail is nearly square, constructed of large hewn timbers and has one cell above and one below. There are two walls and an intermediary space filled with planks to preclude escape. The jail is part of the Pioneer Village. To the southwest of the jail is the Community Building, constructed as a barn in Jackson County, but moved to the current location in 1927 by the Community Club of Nashville. Some of the logs in the façade are 60 feet long.⁴⁴ The Courthouse, jail, and Community Building are listed in the National Register as the Brown County Courthouse District.

2. Town Heritage, 1865 to 1950

Representing the growing prosperity of the timber industry period after the Civil War is a group of large residences and commercial buildings. The Bill and Allie Ferguson House on Franklin Street west of Van Buren, was constructed in 1873. It is an imposing example of the vernacular I-house tradition similar to several farmhouses found in Van Buren Township. It is frame, with five bays (windows) across the façade and an ell to the rear. It retains its wood siding and two over two window sashes. The Ferguson House as a boarding house became a favorite place for lodging and dining by several members of the Brown County Art Colony. A few doors away, on the northwest corner of Van Buren and Franklin is the c. 1875-80 Bartley-Gibson-Hohenberger House, an unusual two story frame house with two intersecting gabled wings. The gables are very steeply pitched, and the surrounds of the windows have pointed moldings. The house retains its wooden siding and two over two sash windows. It was one of the houses where photographer Frank Hohenberger lived.

On Jefferson Street north of Main are two imposing houses built by leading citizens. The Tilton House at 23 N. Jefferson, built about 1875, is a Nashville example of the central gable frame house popular in the 1850s through 1870s. The Tilton House is two stories and has a rear wing. The wooden siding has been conserved, along with the two over two window sashes. Across the street is the James Taggart House at 24 N. Jefferson Street, one of the only Italianate style houses surviving in the county. Constructed by one of the founders of the county about 1880, the house has a rectangular main section facing the street and a wing with five facets that

⁴⁴ A bronze plaque placed in 1960 on the Community Building states that it was “erected by the Community Club of Nashville, Ind. In 1927 from native logs.”

projects south from the rear. The features of the Italianate style are in place—projecting cornice supported by carved brackets (supplemented by dentils) and a hipped roof. There are pointed moldings on the heads of the windows and a projecting roof supported by brackets over the entrance. The house has been restored and now is occupied by offices. At 90 S. Jefferson Street stands the Allison House, a two story frame cottage constructed probably in the 1880s or early 1890s and now the Allison House Inn. The house has a T-shaped plan and beveled corners of the first story on the front gable. The heads of the window frames have pointed moldings, typical of several houses of the 1870s in Nashville.



Figures 75-76. James Taggart House (c. 1875-80) and Allison House (c. 1885-1895)



Figures 77-78. Bartley-Gibson-Hohenberger House (c. 1875-80) and Tilton House (c. 1875)

At the corner of Van Buren and Main is the principal commercial building remaining in Nashville from the 19th century—the Taggart-Miller Building, constructed about 1873. The two-story, simply-detailed frame structure retains both its exterior and interior character. Outside, it retains its wood siding, four over four sash windows, and original storefront. Inside, the Hob Nob Restaurant has retained the ceiling height, finishes, flooring and spatial feeling of what was first Taggart's General Store and later Miller's Drug Store. The building is one of the few buildings listed on the National Register in the county. In the upper story, noted photographer Frank Hohenberger rented a studio during part of his residency in Nashville. On 357 East Main Street, on a site then at the edge of town, the County constructed in 1870 the principal building of the Brown County Poor Farm. The substantial frame structure, erected by builder William Waltman, features the massing and hipped roof of the Italianate style, but also has the in-turning trim on its front gable of the Greek Revival style.⁴⁵ It stands on a rock-faced, sandstone foundation. It has been rehabilitated by the Brown County School Corporation and is now occupied by their administrative offices.

⁴⁵ *Brown County Interim Report*, p. 31.



Figures 79-80. Taggart-Miller Building (1873) and T.D. Calvin House (c. 1880-85)

The continuing prosperity of the late 19th century is represented by two houses on Franklin Street---the T.D. Calvin House at Van Buren and Franklin, and the Sarah-Jones House at 52 W. Franklin. The Calvin House, which has been restored, is an elaborate example of Eastlake and Queen Anne details popular in the 1880s and 1890s. The house, which dates probably to the 1880s, has a T-shaped plan, perhaps from the vernacular tradition. The three projecting wings are detailed with Eastlake-type bargeboards on the gables, fan lights, exposed framing, and bay windows. There are verandas on either side of the main wing and a pavilion with a conical roof projecting from the first floor porch. The Sarah-Jones House, dating also probably to the 1880s, has a projecting gable wing projecting from a wing parallel to the street; there is a third wing projecting from the rear. The house has the exposed framing and bargeboard with turned wooden knobs found in the Eastlake style, and fish scale shingles. At 145 S. Jefferson Street stands a frame cottage dating from about the early 1880s. The George Long-Sylvenous Schrock House (now Abe's Corner Shop), ell-shaped in plan, illustrates a residence for a family with more modest means than the Calvins or Fergusons, but still prosperous enough to build a frame house with bay windows, carved brackets, and a porch with turned posts. It retains its wood siding, and two over two sash windows.

There are a number of buildings that date to the early 20th century, as prosperity continued in Nashville with the coming of the railroad in Helmburg. The most significant building constructed during the period just before World War I was the combined Knights of Pythias and Masonic Lodge Hall Building, now called the Village Green Building. Located on W. Main Street between Van Buren and Jefferson, the three-story, brick structure was the largest building to be constructed in the county in the early 20th century and was designed for multiple uses: two lodge rooms on the top story, offices on the second, and retail shops on the first. Both its exterior and interiors enjoy excellent integrity with the façade, interior stairways and corridors, offices, and lodge areas retaining their character. The Ferrer Art Gallery and Barb Brook Textile Studio occupy the central second floor space; an art studios and River Light Yoga occupy the old lodge rooms; the Harvest Preserve and Candy Dish shops occupy the ground floor.



Figures 81-82. George Long-Sylvenous Schrock House (c. 1880-90) and Lodge (now Village Green) Building (1910)

On S. Jefferson Street, there are two buildings from the early 20th century associated with undertakers and funeral homes: the Richard Coffey House and Funeral Home—Bond Funeral Home at 168 S. Jefferson and the Bond House-Bond Funeral Home at 213 S. Jefferson. The central part of the Richard Coffey House may date much earlier, possibly to the 1860s. It has an entrance with side lights and transom and six over six sash windows, both typical of the 1860s or before. To the north is an early 20th century addition with a large shed dormer band of windows. The Coffey House, converted later to the Bond Funeral Home, is now used by the

Salvation Army. The other former Bond Funeral Home, constructed by the Bond family for their residence about 1912, has undergone a metamorphosis and through the restoration efforts of Nancy Crocker, is now the Olde Magnolia House Inn, open for lodging and housing also the 4th Sister Vintage Store. The frame house has twin front gables and a wrap-around porch with Tuscan-style posts.



Figures 83-84. Bond House (now Olde Magnolia Inn)(1912), former Farmer's State Bank (1906), and Dr. Ray Tilton's Office (c. 1910)

On East Main Street, just east of the Courthouse, stand two similar commercial buildings—the former Farmer's Trust Bank at 66 E. Main and next door, the former office of Dr. Ray Tilton, later the Nashville Post Office. The first was constructed in 1906 for one of the early banks in the county, and the second as a doctor's office. Both are constructed of concrete blocks, with the blocks given a rusticated (beveled edge) and rock-face treatment. Both have a high, stepped parapet on their facades. The former bank building retains its vault and the name “State Bank” and flower petals in upraised letter on a tablet above the entrance. The two buildings have been adapted to shops—the Boutique Village and Primitives and Pinecones.

On Jefferson and Johnson Streets and on Van Buren north of Gould are several smaller houses constructed for town residents of more modest means between about 1900 and 1930. These are constructed in the cottage and bungalow styles.

Two churches are associated with town life before 1950: the Nashville Christian Church on S. Van Buren and the former St. Agnes Catholic Church (now the Brown County Presbyterian Fellowship), located on State Road 135 just north of the old town. The current sanctuary of the Christian Church was constructed in the Georgian, or Colonial Revival style in 1932, after the previous frame church burned. The tower and spire are inspired by Georgian churches of the 18th century in the American colonies. The original St. Agnes Catholic Church was the first Catholic house of worship in Brown County and was constructed in 1940 in the Rustic log style that had been established for many houses in the county in the 1920s and 1930s. The original building is constructed of large, hewn timbers and has diamond-paned windows. There is a sandstone chimney sited at the center of the long side of the nave. A substantial educational wing has been added to the rear in a compatible style and carefully scaled massing.



Figures 85-86. Nashville Christian Church (1932; 1962) and former St. Agnes Catholic Church (now Brown County Presbyterian Fellowship (1940)

3. Art Colony Heritage

There is an overlap between places of potential significance from the Town Heritage theme and the Art Colony theme. Many of the members of the first two generations of the Brown County Art Colony lodged in boarding houses, such as Allie Ferguson's or housed their studios in such buildings as the Taggart-Miller. Later, colony members built or purchased homes and studios that contributed to the town's architecture.

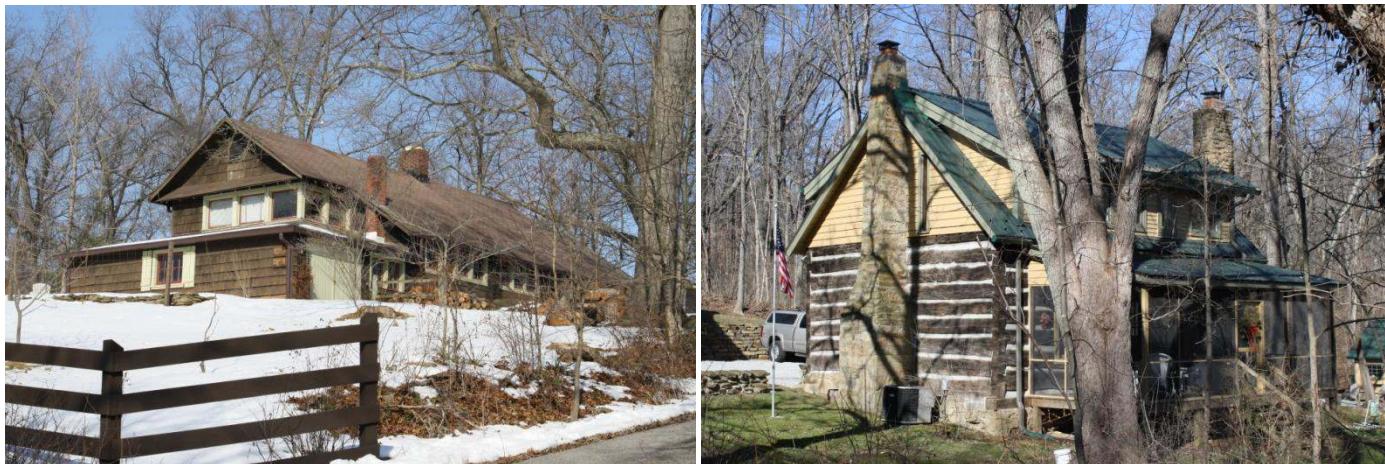
One of the most important of the early houses related to the Art Colony is the log cabin acquired by Fred Hetherington, one of the first artists and photographers to discover Brown County and a firm part of the Art Colony group. The log house, built by Harrison Lucas about 1865,⁴⁶ stands at 1072 N. Jackson Branch Road, immediately west of Nashville. The two-story house is constructed of hewn timbers and a frame partial upper story. There is a lean-two frame section to the rear that may be original. The whole is constructed on a sandstone foundation, with the stones randomly-coursed.

The original home of the founder of the Brown County Art Colony, Adolph Shulz, and his first wife, artist Ada Walter Shulz, stands on the east side of Jefferson Street, north of Mound Street. Constructed in 1917, the house is an original interpretation of the Rustic style emerging in Brown County in the second decade of the 20th century—a sweeping shed roof on the south side, wooden shingles on the exterior, and shed dormer window on the north slope of the roof. The expansive windows on the north side of the house denote the location of the Shulz studio. On another hill east of Van Buren and north of Mound Street is a cluster of houses and studios also associated with the Art Colony. On Locust Lane, just north of the Brown County Public Library stands the house and studio of Will Vawter, another of the original generation of the Art Colony. The house, a simple frame bungalow, was constructed about 1915. A little further north on Locust Lane is located the house and studio of L.O. Griffith, another of the original generation. Griffith was one of the first Chicago artists to come down to Brown County. This house, dating to the late 1910s probably, is loosely based on the Cape Cod style popular in those years—simple rectilinear layout, flat wooden shake siding and Colonial style windows. Close by is the final studio of Adolph Shulz, which he shared with his second wife, Alberta. The small structure (c. 1920s?), barely more than a room, is also clad in the flat wooden shake shingles. The north side is almost completely devoted to the north windows for painting. The Shulzs' house is a short distance to the west.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Email to author from Wayne O'Hara, April 20, 2015.

⁴⁷ "A Self-Guided Tour—Historic Sites of Artists' Studios, Nashville, Indiana," in "Artist Studio Tours" file, Brown County Public Library.

At 379 N. State Road 135, on the east side of Van Buren Street as it ascends the hill north of the old town stands the log house and studio of one of the leaders of the second generation of the Art Colony—noted portraitist Marie Goth. The house, dating to about 1915, is constructed of hewn timbers, with a frame second story in the Rustic style. Sweeping shed dormers containing the upper windows are found in both the south and north slopes of the gable roof. The original screened porch adjoins the house to the south. To the southeast of the Goth House is the house and studio of her close friend and fellow second generation artist, V.J. Cariani. The original house (c. 1930s?) consists of two gabled sections. The separate studio building is a small frame structure with a standing seam metal roof and large window in the north gable.⁴⁸



Figures 87-88. Adolph and Ada Walter Shulz House (1917) and Marie Goth House (c. 1915)

On the east side of Van Buren, south of Franklin Street, stands the studio of two members of the Art Colony—E.K. Williams and Anthony Buchta. Williams, one of the original generation of Chicago artists who made his way to Brown County, located permanently to Nashville in 1926 and made this building his studio. Later, second generation artist Buchta used the studio. He first painted in Brown County in 1929 and later was a member of the Brown County Art Guild. The building is designed in the Rustic

⁴⁸ Ibid.

style and has a board and batten exterior. A large bank of windows projecting from a shed dormer provided natural light for the studio. The building now houses Bear Wallow Gifts.⁴⁹

Since the 1960s, the work of the Brown County Art Colony has been on display at two spacious gallery buildings. The Brown County Art Gallery, founded by the original generation of the colony in 1926, constructed their current Modern and Rustic style building in 1968. The building on East Main Street houses two spaces where the Art Gallery displays its permanent collection—the Hinshaw and Klein Galleries. In the Hinshaw Gallery are shown on a rotating basis the works of T.C. Steele, Glen Cooper Hinshaw, Gustave Baumann, Adolph Shulz, Lucie Hartrath, Carl Graf, and many others. The work of Baumann, nationally known for his multi-print block works is an especially rich ensemble. There are also historical exhibits on the story of the Brown County Art Colony. New paintings in the county's landscape tradition are exhibited regularly for sale by Indiana Heritage Arts, Inc. In the annual Collector's Showcase, paintings of the major figures of the Art Colony from private collections are displayed and draw in the public. The annual Family Treasure Sale offers master works from private owners for sale. The annual Mabel B. Annis Student Art Competition offers scholarship to young artists from schools in Brown and surrounding counties. A major expansion of the facility is currently underway and will afford more space for exhibition and for an art education studio.⁵⁰

On Van Buren Street, just south of Main, stands a second major gallery for the work of the Art Colony and for the art of emerging painters. The Brown County Art Guild was founded in 1954 by several artists in the second generation of the Art Colony—Marie Goth, V.J. Cariani, Carl Graf, Genevieve Goth Graf, Curry Bohm, Dale Bessire, George LaChance, and others. After its founding, the Guild occupied the Civil War era Minor House, which was rebuilt by architect Steve Miller in its current configuration in 1976. Thanks to a major bequest from Marie Goth, the Guild possesses a permanent collection of several thousand works of Goth, Carl Graf, Genevieve Graf, V.J. Cariani. There are two permanent galleries at the Guild where works of the Art Colony are displayed on a rotating basis. Especially prominent are the portraits of Marie Goth, one of the top portrait artists of her generation. The Guild has two juried annual shows of current painting in its galleries. Education, exhibition of art, and affording a venue for its members to sell their work are the mission of the Art Guild. A special effort is made with visitors to provide tours with explanatory comments about the permanent and current exhibitions.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Northway, p. 11; interview with Lyn Letsinger-Miller, March 4, 2015.

⁵¹ Northway, p. 12; interviews with Doug Hutchinson and Roberta Chirko, February 19 and March 4, 2015.

4. Tourism Heritage

The history of tourism in Nashville and perhaps Brown County is symbolized by the current Nashville House, located at Van Buren and Main Streets, at the heart of the town. Two men—Jack Rogers and his son Andy Rogers—have had a vision of how tourism based on the history of the county could become a powerful draw for visitors and boost the local economy. The elder Rogers and his partners Fred Bates Johnson and Dale Bessire began in 1926 by acquiring and updating the historic Nashville House, first built in the 1870s. They remodeled it and established a comfortable hotel, with a Rustic style dining room and a gift shop. They attracted people curious about the pioneer heritage of the county and desirous of spending time immersed in its atmosphere. After the original building was destroyed by fire in 1943, Jack Rogers began plans for rebuilding. In 1948, aided by Indianapolis architect Edward D. James, he built a new Nashville House, using dressed sandstone blocks from local quarries for part of the walls, wood for the upper story, and cement scored like stone for one of the wings. The revived Nashville House was not a hotel, but a place where visitors could dine in a Rustic style dining room and indulge in traditional country dishes, accompanied by fried rolls, locally-made apple butter, and sassafras tea. The dining room had two large sandstone fireplaces, a three panel painting of the lives of pioneers, and several paintings on the wall created by members of the Brown County Art Colony. Next door was Rogers' nostalgic tribute to the general store in Americana, which he called "The Old Country Store." It was constructed of wood, with another stone fireplace and lofty ceiling. Apple butter, sassafras tea, and a host of traditional items were for sale, and on the south wall, Rogers hired Frank Hohenberger to print some of the most classic of his photographic portraits of the rural people of Brown County in the 1920s and hang them in a representative assortment. Since 1959, Andy Rogers has operated the Nashville House and maintained its traditions. Generations of Hoosiers and visitors from other states and countries have visited the Nashville House and remembered its evocations of Brown County history and traditions. It has spurred tourism and commerce in countless ways and is truly a landmark of post-World War II history in the county.⁵²

⁵² Kay, pp. 145-47; interview with Jon Kay, January 27, 2015; "Legend of The Nashville House," summary of history, not dated, Nashville House, Nashville, Indiana.



Figures 89-90. Nashville House exterior and Dining Room (1948)



Figure 91. Old Country Store (1948)

Andy Rogers has expanded the initial conception of tourism in Nashville to include many shops offering a variety of crafts and gifts throughout the center of town and owns multiple properties, including the 1840 Methodist parsonage and Bissell House at Van Buren and Franklin. On the west side of Van Buren, he had the vision of a playhouse presenting dramatic works to visitors every summer

and constructed the Brown County Play House in the 1960s and 1970s, where for many years Indiana University students presented plays. The play house is now operated by the Brown County Management Group, a non-profit, which presents drama, movies, and concerts. Rogers has also built and operated several hotels and restaurants in response to the ever growing volume of tourists.⁵³



Figure 92. Brown County Playhouse (c. 1960s-1970s)

5. Crafts Heritage

Certain crafts objects have been produced in Brown County since the 19th century and have become part of its heritage. Woven fabric, basket-making, and pottery have long lineages, and some of the Frank Hohenberger photographs document their making during the 1920s. This part of the folk art tradition has found appeal among modern audiences. Since World War II, new craftspeople have located in Brown County to produce traditional crafts and have introduced new crafts and arts, such as stained glass objects and new types of glazed pottery. The Arts Village created by the Brown County Art and Entertainment Commission has created a system of

⁵³ Interview with Larry Pejeau.

leaf signs to denote studios and galleries, historic sites, entertainment, and wineries and breweries. The orange leaf on the outside of one of the 200 stores and shops in the village indicates to the visitor that locally-made art and craft objects are offered in this shop.⁵⁴



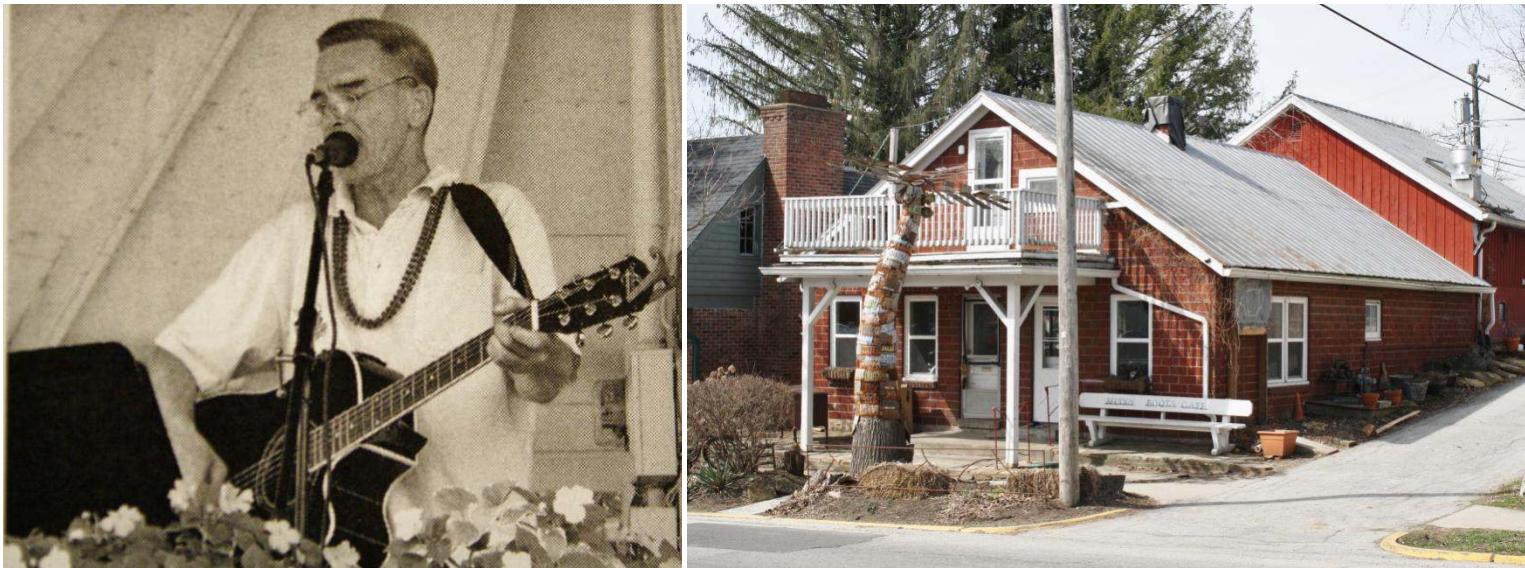
Figure 93. Map of shops in Arts Village, Nashville

6. Musical Heritage

Like crafts, music has been a part of the lives of Brown County residents from the earliest days of settlement. Hohenberger photographs also show both farmers and townspeople playing fiddles and guitars. The tunes and songs played and sung by people drew from long traditions alive in the mountains of the Virginias and Carolinas from whence many of the settlers came. In the 20th century, the Bluegrass genre popularized by Bill Monroe at the Bean Blossom festivals has merged with the county's own traditions. Today, many restaurants and bars in Nashville offer venues for local musicians to play their instruments and sing. That has become

⁵⁴ Interview with Jane Ellis, February 26, 2015.

part of the ambience that draws visitors, just as much as nature, recreation, fine art, crafts, and dining. Specific places are particularly associated with “jam” sessions by residents and visitors, among them the Muddy Boots Café, a one-story building constructed of roughly finished tile on N. Van Buren Street.



Figures 94-95. Musician Don Ford performing and Muddy Boots Café (c. 1925) *Source for first photo: Doug Hineline photographer, 175 Years of Brown County.*

7. Natural Heritage

The natural setting is all around Nashville, and there are spectacular vistas of hills, ravines, and creeks emerge on the fills surrounding the old town. There are also a couple of properties associated with the preservation of the county's natural heritage. The Fred Hetherington House already discussed as part of the artistic heritage also has considerable historical significance because of a 1910 discussion that occurred in it involving Hetherington and visiting Colonel Richard Lieber. The colonel first articulated his vision for “a state park system for Indiana to preserve spots of scenic beauty and historical interest in our state.” A marker denoting the event and containing a bas relief sculpture of Lieber stands at the edge of the property, placed by the Indiana District of Kiwanis International.

A short distance to the north, at 1281 N. Jackson Branch Road, stands the home of Colonel Lieber himself, on a hill above Jackson Creek. The large log structure in the Rustic style is three stories. A veranda on sandstone piers wraps around two sides of the second level. As the former home of the Father of the Indiana State Parks system and what is now the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, the house has historical significance.



Figures 96-97. Fred Hetherington House (c. 1865) and bas relief sculpture of Col. Richard Lieber on marker at site.

V. Design Characteristics of Old Town Nashville

A. Analysis and Evaluation

The original town area of Nashville, as has been shown, retains many elements of historic character and identity. As part of this report, an assessment was made of the role of the Town of Nashville's design review of alterations to properties in the old town area.

In 2002 the Town Council of Nashville adopted an ordinance to establish design review authority and general design regulations for the B1, B2, and B3 zoning districts in the town. One of the objectives of the ordinance was to “preserve distinctive examples of existing architecture that have contributed to the historic development of Nashville, Indiana’s unique village character.” The ordinance also sought to provide guidelines for the design of new buildings and additions to existing structures. A Development Review Commission was created to review and approve

- (1) All exterior site, building design, lighting, landscaping, color and material changes in all business districts.
- (2) All site and building design changes as specified within designated specific plan areas.
- (3) All exterior changes to buildings, lighting, and landscaping in all business districts.
- (4) All fences, walls, and other incidental improvements in all business districts.⁵⁵

In 2004, the Town hired Laura Renwick, Community Preservation Specialist at the Southern Regional Office of Indiana Landmarks, to provide staff support for the Development Review Commission, and the Commission adopted design guidelines for changes in the three business districts and an application process for certificates of appropriateness. The design guidelines covered new construction and additions; modifications to existing buildings; treatment of masonry walls; treatment of siding and trims on the walls of frame buildings; paint colors; treatment of windows; treatment of doors; treatment of storefronts; signage; provision for drives, parking, and circulation in the town; landscape treatments; lighting; surface water drainage; utilities; demolition of historic buildings; and relocation of a historic building. Most of the design guidelines are oriented to the rehabilitation of historic buildings in the old town of Nashville. Certificates of appropriateness are required for all covered owner actions except for demolition or relocation of historic buildings. In the latter cases, the guidelines provide for owners consulting with the Development Review Commission to identify alternatives to demolition.⁵⁶

Much of the design guidelines appear to be drawn from well-established guidance in the historic preservation field for the rehabilitation of historic buildings, structures, objects, and sites, such as the “Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings.”

⁵⁵ Ordinance No. 2002-07—“An Ordinance of the Town of Nashville Establishing Design Review Authority and General Design Regulations,” Town Hall, Nashville.

⁵⁶ “Design Guidelines. Town of Nashville—Development Review Commission,” Town Hall, Nashville; interview with Laura Renwick, February 25, 2015.



Figures 98-99. Judge Hester House (1853) restored with period detail preserved and appropriate colors and Allie and Bill Ferguson House (1873) restored with appropriate addition and colors



Figures 100-101. Compatible additions made to Banner Brummet House and to rear of Fred Hetherington House

A visual survey of the old town area of Nashville was conducted to assess the conservation of the character of potentially historically and architecturally significant buildings and the traditional streetscape and review the design of new construction and additions to potential historic buildings. Generally, the work of the Design Review Commission and the design guidelines seem to have been quite successful. Rehabilitations of the pre-1950 houses, commercial buildings, and public buildings in the old town have resulted in conservation of the historic character of the buildings or restoring features that have been removed or modified. Figures 98 and 99 illustrate two houses that have been rehabilitated in ways that have conserved and strengthened their historic character. In addition, the additions that have been made to properties cited in the 1995 Interim Report for Nashville have been very well designed to pay deference to and harmonize the original buildings. Figures 100 and 101 show two examples of well designed additions.

The designs of new houses and buildings since 2004 in the old town also seem to have followed the design guidelines well. For example, the one-story office building at 138 S. Jefferson Street pays deference to the residential scale, silhouette, materials, and set back of the pre-1940 houses in the vicinity. Next door, at the corner of Jefferson and Franklin, the office building has incorporated the gable silhouettes, frame materials, and scale of early 20th century residences, as well as native sandstone (see Figure 102).

B. Public Rights-of-Way and Sidewalks.

The public rights of way and sidewalks are also key parts of the character of the old town of Nashville and of its image for visitors. The sidewalks, planting areas, and street lighting vary according to the street and the block involved. To some extent, the varied treatment individualizes the character of each block and each section of shops in the Arts Village area. For example, on Van Buren Street between Main and Franklin Street, the sidewalk is somewhat narrower than that on the east side, to permit planting sections and trees. The treatment of the plantings varies along the block. On the north side of Franklin Street, between Van Buren and Jefferson, the sidewalk changes in its shape and the arrangement of plantings varies along the street. There is also a significant level change negotiated by steps at the west edge of the Ferguson House property. On the south side of Main Street west of Van Buren, the level changes occurs immediately after passing the Taggart-Miller Building, and one descends several steps. On the south side of Franklin and north side of W. Main, ramps have been incorporated to negotiate the change in grade. The sidewalk in front of the Village Green Building incorporates colored concrete sections along the curb. Some of streets adjacent to the Arts Village have conventional concrete walks with grassy planting strips and curbs, such as Jefferson Street. Others further west of Jefferson and north of Main have no sidewalks.



Figure 102. Harmoniously designed new office building echoes designs of neighboring historic buildings

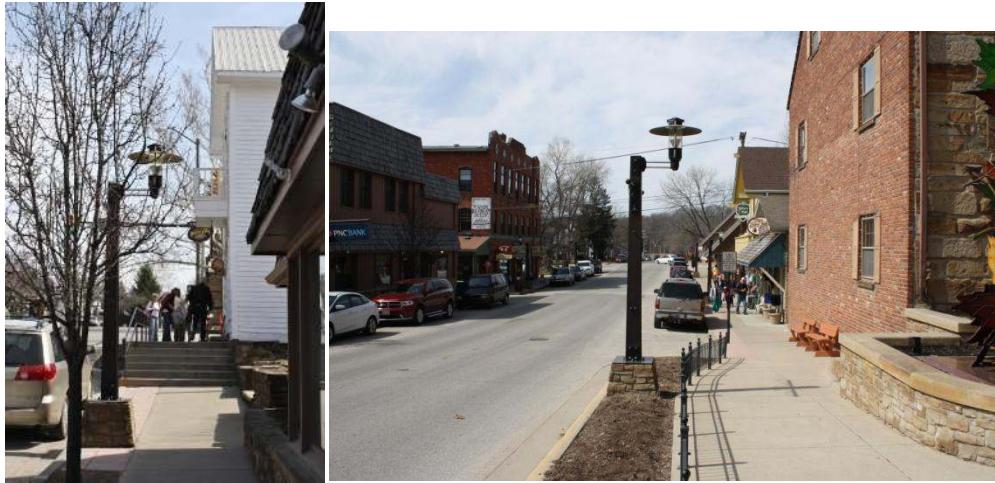


Figures 103-4. Varied sidewalk and right-of-way treatments on west and east sides of S. Van Buren Street

Two north-south streets—Honeysuckle Lane and Maiden’s Lane—run through the blocks immediately west and east of Van Buren were originally alleys and retain the narrow width of such passages. On Maiden Lane, there have been shops built along part of the street. There have been proposals recently to widen these two streets to relieve congestion of traffic along Van Buren during especially busy seasons of the year. However, a review of the widths of the two streets and the building footprints along them would seem to indicate that a widening proposal might require demolition or moving of several existing buildings.



Figures 105-6. Varied streetscape treatments on north side of W. Franklin Street and in front of Michael's Flowers on N. Jefferson Street.



Figures 107-8. Streetscape treatments on south and north sides of W. Main Street, with access for disabled provided on the north side.



Figures 109-10. Maiden Lane and Honeysuckle Lane: narrow streets with buildings standing close to rights-of-way

The Nashville Main Street Program, working with the Town of Nashville, has raised funds for and commissioned a distinctive design for street lights in the Arts Village, and the lights now appear along West Main, Jefferson, and Franklin Streets. The light poles are of contemporary design, but use Brown County materials—sandstone and timber. The light standards seem an attractive and compatible way to link visually the blocks of the Arts Village.

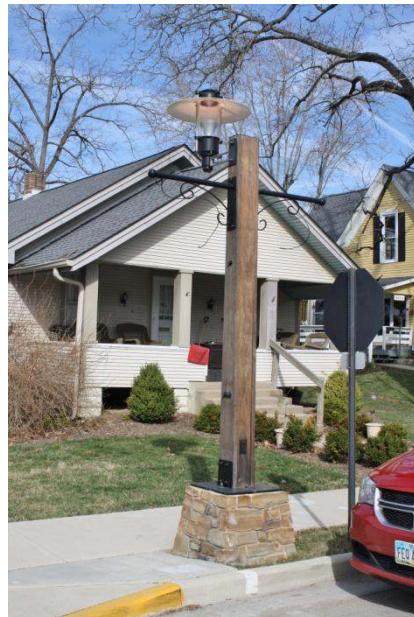
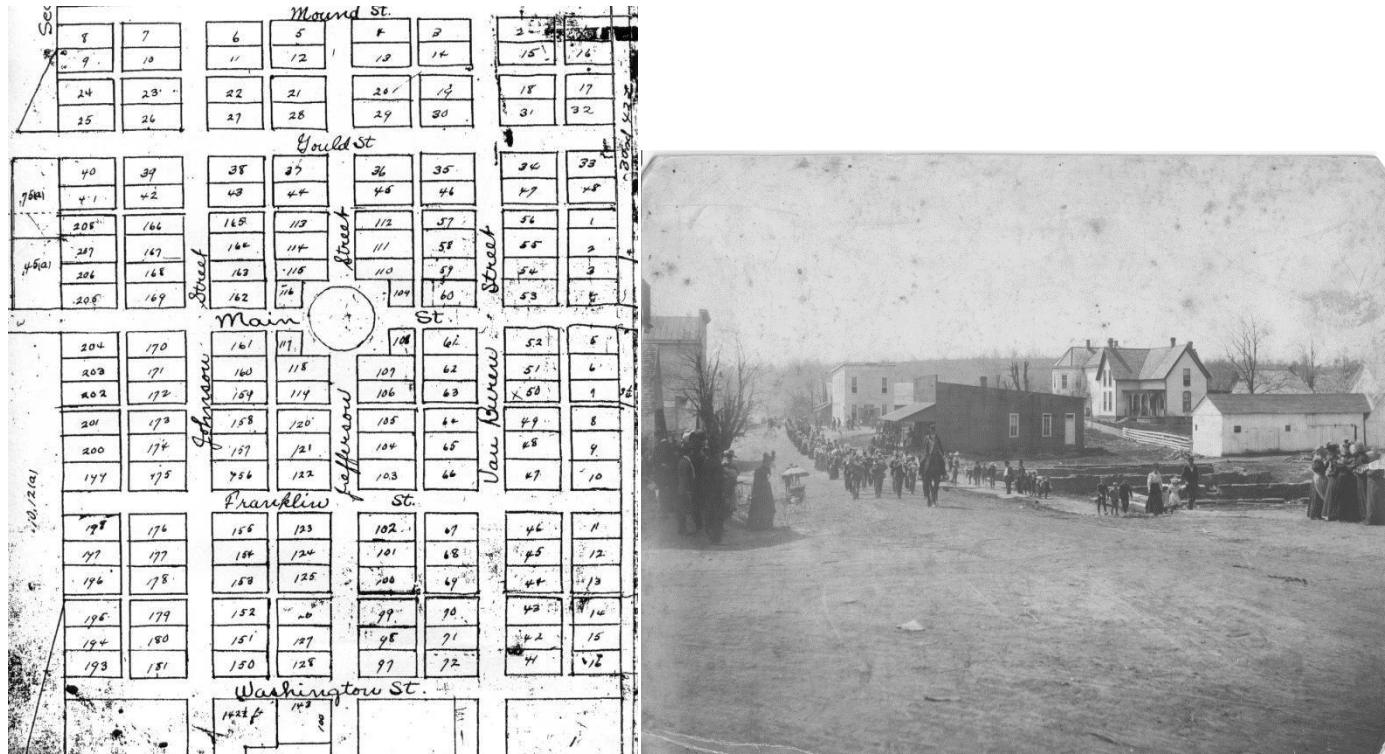


Figure 111. Distinctive light standards placed by Nashville Main Street and Town of Nashville along W. Main, Jefferson, and W. Franklin Streets

C. Village Green Enhancements.

At the request of Town Manager Scott Rudd, an assessment was also made of ways in which the Village Green at the intersection of Main and Jefferson Streets might be enhanced in keeping with its history and the character of the adjacent blocks. The intersection, treated as a large square with a circular plot or park at center was designated as the central civic place in the new town by the 1836 plat for Nashville (Figure 112). There was some logic in the 19th century for the intersection to become the town square. The toll

road leading north from Nashville originally ran along Jefferson Street and met the principal east-west road between Bloomington and Columbus at Main Street.



Figures 112-13. Original 1836 plat of Town of Nashville and c. 1900 photo looking west on Main Street from Van Buren toward intersection of Main and Jefferson. Sources: *Brown County Recorder's Office* and *Brown County Historical Society*.

As already indicated, there is no evidence that the enlarged square and circular center were ever laid out. Historical photographs provided by the Brown County Historical Society indicate that the intersection of the two streets was used on occasion for festivals or the starting points for parades. The historical photos available also seem to indicate that none of the four corners was ever occupied by a building. On the southeast corner, was located the town pump, where townspeople could obtain well water before a town water system was constructed. The Town held a ceremony in the late 1940s, at which the old town pump was given a funeral procession,

after the new water system became available. Some time since 1970, a wood structure was constructed over the location of the town pump, and an interpretive sign placed to tell its history. The Town of Nashville is interested in restoring the original pump to its original location.⁵⁷



Figures 114-15. Southeast corner of the Village Green with Town Well shelter and northwest corner with pavilion.

One option for enhancing the character of the Village Green as a central gathering place might be to re-design the intersection of Main and Jefferson Streets along the lines suggested by the 1836 plat. The four corners are now all owned by the Town and could be redesigned to incorporate curb lines of the 1836 square. The circular center envisioned by the plat could be laid out at center. Perhaps traffic could be routed around it as in a round-about. There could be a band shell at center and plantings to denote the importance of the square. Festivals and public ceremonies could be held in the expanded public space. A second option would be to retain the current, attractive configuration of the four corners, which have been landscaped and have amenities already installed, for festivals and close the intersection on those occasions.

⁵⁷ Interview with Scott Rudd, February 12, 2015.

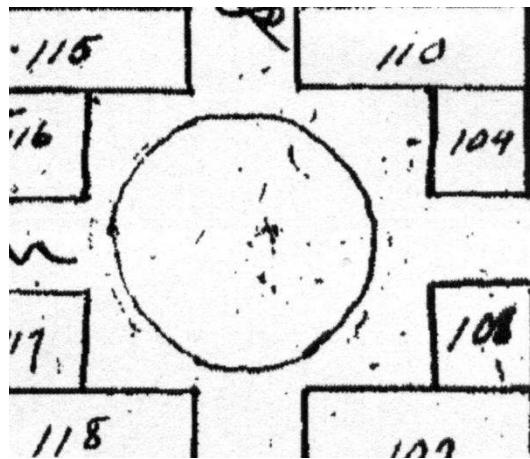


Figure 116. Detail of possible Village Green design based on circle and square of original Town plat.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

This report has considered a wide range of heritage themes that define the human-made and natural landscape of Brown County. There is a concentration of properties and experiences representing these themes in Nashville, the county seat, but heritage is present in its many forms throughout the county and in all four of the townships. Based on 36 interviews with persons knowledgeable about Brown County heritage, research regarding county history, and field windshield surveys and photography in all townships and Nashville, the following conclusions are presented:

- A. There is official recognition of the importance of Brown County's heritage. The *Comprehensive Plan for Brown County, Indiana*, as revised in 2011, states that "The real wealth of Brown County is its unique and abundant physical features and cultural characteristics." Growth or economic development activities "must take place with careful regard to conserving the county's natural and cultural heritage." Among the overall goals of the plan is to "encourage the preservation of Brown County's rural and scenic atmosphere." Encouraged as a supporting policy for land uses is "restoration or rehabilitation of existing structures." One of the goals for both commercial and industrial development is "to encourage ...development that

takes into consideration the county's environment and culture." One of the objectives for open space and public recreation areas is "to encourage open space and public recreation uses in locations such as historic areas, 100-year-flood hazard areas, waterways, environmentally significant and scenic areas." Finally, the plan encourages as a supporting policy for roads and transportation "preservation of scenic roads and bridges."⁵⁸

- B. Significant buildings, structures, objects, and sites representing each of the county's periods of history and types of heritage have survived, both in the townships and Nashville.
- C. Significant losses have also occurred since the 1995 Brown County Interim Report was published. It appears as if especially 19th century log houses, one-room schools, and buildings making up the cores of many small towns have been removed during the last 20 years. In addition, several steel truss bridges have been removed in the process of replacement by concrete spans. Finally, fire, always an enemy of older buildings in the county's history, has destroyed several churches and schools since 1995.
- D. Several important early buildings are in danger of being lost through abandonment and deterioration. Examples in rural sections include the pre-Civil War Neff House on Bean Blossom Road in Hamblen Township and the Hedrick House on Elkinsville Road in Van Buren Township. In addition, some significant rural buildings are still occupied or are receiving some care, but have experienced substantial deterioration, such as the Zion Church and Pinehurst House on Three Notch Road in Hamblen Township. In several towns, potentially important stores or houses are vacant and deteriorating. Examples include two frame former store buildings in Bean Blossom and the former Dr. Selfridge's office and house in Helmsburg.
- E. Although many 19th and early 20th century buildings were removed in Nashville before 1995, there appears to have been only a couple of potentially significant structures demolished since that year. Adoption of the 2002 Development Review ordinance by the Town of Nashville, creation of the Development Review Commission, and use of the 2004 design review guidelines appear to have discouraged additional demolitions of potentially significant buildings. The design review has encouraged sympathetic rehabilitations of existing buildings and their sites and design of compatible new buildings in the old town area of Nashville.

⁵⁸ "Comprehensive Plan for Brown County, Indiana (2011 Revisions), accessed March 31, 2015: <http://browncounty-in.gov/Portals/0/forms/GeneralInfo/8.16.13.pdf>.

- F. The 1995 Interim Report is very helpful in identifying pre-1950 potentially significant properties in the county and Nashville, but it is now out-of-date. The county survey, if it could be updated, would provide more current information on historic properties for planning purposes and would assist property owners and Peaceful Valley Heritage in making assessments of what is potentially historic and priorities for preservation efforts.
- G. As of 2012, there were only seven historic properties or districts in Brown County listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and one of those listings, the Grandview Church near New Bellsville, appears to have been destroyed by fire. In the 1995 Interim Report, there were 64 properties rated either Outstanding or Notable, meaning that there was potential for each to be nominated to the National Register. National Register listing provides several benefits to owners of listed properties and to organizations, such as Peaceful Valley Heritage, Inc., who are seeking to encourage preservation of such properties:
 - 1. It provides official recognition by the U.S. government and the State of Indiana that the property is significant historically or architecturally in the history of the county, state, or nation.
 - 2. Listings in the National Register can be used as a heritage tourism tool in promoting travel in the county to visitors who are especially interested in seeing historic places.
 - 3. Listing in the National Register qualifies owners if they are local governments or non-profit organizations to apply for matching restoration grants (Acquisition and Development Grants) through the Indiana Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology
 - 4. Listing qualifies owners of properties that are income producing and used for commercial purposes for applying to obtain a federal historic rehabilitation income tax credit (20% of the certified rehabilitation cost) through the Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology and National Park Service
 - 5. Listing in the Indiana Register of Historic Sites and Structures (which occurs automatically for most properties listed in the National Register) qualifies homeowners who live in a listed historic house to apply for a state residential historic rehabilitation tax credit (20% of the certified rehabilitation cost) through the Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology.

Listing does NOT mean that approval by the federal or state governments is required to approve any alterations or demolitions to a historic property. If a property is eligible for the National Register and the owner receives federal funds to alter or

rehabilitate it, a review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act is required through the Indiana Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology and the U.S. Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. That review is required whether the property is listed in the National Register or not.

- H. There are already many institutions and businesses in Nashville that provide interpretations for both residents and visitors of the varied themes of heritage in the town and county. The Brown County Historical Society operates the Pioneer Village that presents the lives of the settlers and other subjects in county heritage, such as Dr. Alfred Ralphy's Office. The Society's new History Center presents regular educational programs on history and will host regular exhibits on varied subjects. The Brown County Public Library has a permanent exhibit on Frank Hohenberger and his photographs of people residing in the county and excerpts about each from his diary. The Brown County Art Guild and the Brown County Art Gallery both have interpretive exhibits on the major figures of the Art Colony and samplings of their paintings. The Nashville House has signs on its exterior explaining its history and a historical summary that is available with meals. Across the street, the Hob Nob Restaurant provides a history of the Taggart-Miller Building and offers customers views of additional Hohenberger photos on the wall. Other shop or building owners in the Art Village also provide some historical explanations through signs. However, there are several historically important buildings and places in the town where there are currently no interpretive sign or other information available.
- I. There is relatively little interpretive information available to visitors who travel through the rest of the county. An exception is the T.C. Steele State Historic Site near Belmont.
- J. There have been several walking tour and driving tours developed in the past for the studios of the Art Colony in Nashville and for other themes of historical or scenic interest. However, there appears to be a need for up-dated and additional tours for residents or visitors to the heritage of the county.
- K. Although Brown County State Park provides authoritative information and programs explaining the natural history and heritage of the county, many residents and visitors do not know the story of the 19th century cutting of most of the original old-growth forest, the denuded phase of the early 20th century, and the re-forestation programs since the 1930s.

- L. Brown County State Park has notable buildings and structures built in the 1920s and 1930s in the Rustic-state park style, many by the Civilian Conservation Corps. A few of these structures badly need rehabilitation to continue in use, such as the massive stone stairway between the Abe Martin Lodge and the Lower Shelter House.
- M. There is currently only one State Historical Marker in Brown County—commemorating the importance of T.C. Steele and his home and studio and located in Belmont. State Historical Markers identify for visitors places of statewide historical importance and summarize the history and significance of a place that is marked. According to the Indiana Historical Bureau, there are several places in Brown County that would potentially qualify for state historical markers. Examples include the role of Frank Hohenberger in documenting pioneer families and artists and their homes in the county; the importance of the Brown County Art Colony as a gathering of artists who left a notable legacy of artistic achievement in the state; and the national importance of Bill Monroe’s Bluegrass Festival in Bean Blossom.
- N. Many more historical markers are needed in Nashville and the four townships to designate and interpret places of special historical or architectural importance for residents and visitors alike.
- O. There are already in place several crucial elements for a successful heritage tourism program for Brown County. The Brown County Convention and Visitors Bureau promotes regular and special events involving the history of the county and the heritage associated with art, crafts, music, and nature. The Bureau is open to ideas for interpreting more history through tours, exhibits, and electronic media. There are restaurants and lodging options that emphasize different themes in Brown County heritage, such as the Nashville House, Hob Nob Restaurant, Story Inn, and Abe Martin Lodge, and the beds and breakfasts and inns located in Nashville and in several parts of the county that are located in historic houses.

VII. Recommendations for Conserving and Promoting Heritage in Brown County

To assist Peaceful Valley Heritage, Inc. in deciding on its course, the following recommendations are offered on possible goals and strategies, both short-term and long-term.

A. Short-Term Goals

For short-term goals, Peaceful Valley might consider (a) creating public awareness of its mission, goals, and strategies, (b) fostering more public awareness of notable historic places in Brown County, and (c) engaging in some initial historic preservation and heritage projects coinciding with the Indiana Bicentennial.

B. Long-Term Goals

For long-term goals, Peaceful Valley could consider (a) leading efforts to construct a more permanent “infrastructure” for heritage conservation, education, and enjoyment for Brown County, (b) collaborating with other organizations and agencies to develop a cultural-heritage tourism program for the county, (c) extending programs for recognition and interpretation of historic properties.

C. Short-Term Strategies

The following strategies could assist Peaceful Valley Heritage in reaching its short term goals.

1. **Develop a Peaceful Valley Heritage Website.**

Create a website with information on Peaceful Valley Heritage as an organization—its mission, goals, and strategies—and also provide information, as short-term and long-term strategies are carried out, on Brown County heritage, its preservation, and ways in which the public can get involved.

2. **Rehabilitate Buildings in Pioneer Village**

In collaboration with the Brown County Historical Society, seek funds to rehabilitate the Old Log Jail and other buildings in the Pioneer Village of Nashville requiring repair or restoration.

3. Develop Walking Tours and Driving Tours for Heritage

In collaboration with the Brown County Historical Society, the Brown County Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Brown County Art Guild, and other interested organizations and agencies, develop walking tour brochures for historic places in Nashville and a driving tour of notable historic places in Brown County. The themes of the initial Nashville walking tours could be Pioneer/Early Settlement Heritage of Nashville and Heritage of the Brown County Art Colony in Nashville. The initial driving tour could take as its theme One Room Churches and Cemeteries in Brown County or Historic Houses in Brown County. Each tour could be provided both electronically via smart phone apps and through attractive brochures.

4. Nominate Initial Group of Properties to the National Register of Historic Places

Prepare nominations over the next two years (2015-2017) to list an initial group of properties in both Nashville and in the county outside Nashville that are individually eligible for the National Register in the National Register and the Indiana Register of Historic Sites and Structures. Nine (9) initial properties could include the Banner Brummet House, 60 N. Johnson Street (c. 1830); Judge Hester House, 190 N. Jefferson Street (1853); T.D. Calvin House, 102 S. Van Buren Street (c. 1880); Allie and Bill Ferguson House, 78 W. Franklin Street (1873); the Jimmy-Dr. Frank Tilton House, 23 N. Jefferson Street (c. 1875); the Bartley-Gibson House, 96 S. Van Buren Street (c. 1886); and Frank Taggart House, 24 N. Jefferson Street (c. 1880) in Nashville. In Jackson Township, the Anderson-Cullen House, 7120 N. State Road 135 (1861-64) and in Hamblen Township, the Marcus Dickey House on Bear Wallow Hill Road (1906) could be nominated. Before proceeding with nominations, the approval of all the owners would need to be secured. The eligibility of the Brummet House, Anderson-Cullen House, and the Dickey House would need to be confirmed with the Indiana Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology.

5. Apply for a Bicentennial State Historical Marker

The Indiana Historical Bureau has informally indicated that one of the following subjects might be considered as a candidate for a State Historical Marker during the Bicentennial Year, 2016: (a) the Brown County Art Colony, (b) Frank Hohenberger's documentation of the artists and established families of Brown County through his photographs, and (c) Bill Monroe's Bluegrass Festival in Bean Blossom. The process for approval of a marker to mark each subject would be first, to request permission from the bureau to apply for a state historical marker by April 30, 2015. If permission is granted, the second step would be to submit a full application by early August, 2015. If the application is approved by the bureau, the

sponsors would need to fund the cost of the marker and installation (approximately \$2200 per marker). The bureau would approve no more than one marker per year.

6. Start a County Historical Marker Program

Peaceful Valley Heritage could collaborate with Brown County Historian Diana Biddle and the Brown County Historical Society on beginning a Brown County Historical Marker Program. County markers could mark historic properties and historical events of local importance and could be an effective way of providing authoritative historical information about a number of places. The design of the markers can be decided by the sponsors and could incorporate a special logo. Perhaps over a two year period, 3-4 markers could be placed to mark important events/themes in Brown County history, both in Nashville and in other locations in the county.

7. Collaborate on Rehabilitation Project with Brown County State Park

If Peaceful Valley Heritage and other organizations in the county wanted to collaborate with Brown County State Park on a State Bicentennial Project related to the park's heritage, a possible project would be the reconstruction of the massive stone stairway that provides access to the Lower Shelterhouse from the Abe Martin Lodge. The stairway was constructed during the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and is an impressive work of engineering and construction. There may be other, smaller restoration projects that could be undertaken.

D. Long Term Strategies

1. Sponsor Re-Survey of Historic Properties in Brown County

A new survey of historic properties in Brown County would be helpful in identifying both properties that have become significant since 1995 and those that no longer exist. An updated survey could be used to substantiate the historical or architectural significance of specific properties, locate properties that are potentially eligible for the National Register, and provide a source of more current information on possible historic properties. However, an official State of Indiana re-survey may not be feasible for some time, according to the Indiana Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology. With its limited funding, the division is targeting the counties with the oldest surveys first for re-survey, and there are 22 counties that were last surveyed before 1990. Possibly Peaceful Valley could consider collaborating with Brown County government and the Town of Nashville in raising funds and commissioning an unofficial interim survey of the county to

meet planning needs for the next ten years. Such a survey would also be helpful for the Development Review Commission in Nashville to use as an aid in identifying historic properties within the old town for design review.

2. Nominate Second Group of Properties to the National Register

Over a longer period of time, perhaps the next three to six years, Peaceful Valley and other organizations could sponsor nomination of additional eligible properties in Nashville and the county at large to the National Register and Indiana Register. Examples of other properties that might be nominated in Nashville include the former Brown County Poor Farm Building (now Brown County Schools headquarters), 357 E. Main Street (1870); Fred Hetherington House, 1072 N. Jackson Branch Road (c. 1865); Col. Richard Lieber House, 1281 N. Jackson Branch Road (c. 1915); the former Masonic and Knights of Pythias Lodge (Village Green) Building, 65 W. Main Street (1910); the Brown County Pottery Building, 44 W. Franklin Street (c. 1920); Adolph and Ada Walter Shulz House, 301(?) N. Jefferson Street (1917); Marie Goth House, 379 N. State Road 135 (c. 1915); the Nashville House Restaurant and Old Country Store, Van Buren and Main Streets (1948); and the former St. Agnes Catholic Church (now Brown County Presbyterian Fellowship), N. State Road 135 (1940). In the four townships outside Nashville, candidates could be the surviving buildings of the Town of Story as a potential National Register historic district; Pinehurst, 5434(?), Three Notch Road, Hamblen Township (c. 1850); a possible Bean Blossom Commercial Historic District, including the former Georgetown Funeral Parlor (c. 1880), former McDonald Grocery (c. 1900; 1930), and former Aaron Zody Grocery (c. 1910), all at the intersection of N. State Road 135 and 45, Bean Blossom (c. 1900); the Isaac Tabor House, 7064 S. State Road 135 (c. 1880); the Melott Cemetery, Poplar Grove Road, Van Buren Township (founded c. 1840); Cottonwood Christian Church, Lick Creek Road, Jackson Township (1892); and the former Masonic Lodge No. 527, 4865 Helmsburg Road, Helmsburg (1922).

The potential eligibility of all of the above would need to be confirmed by the Indiana Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology. There are many other properties listed in the 1995 Interim Report that are potentially eligible.

3. Continue County/Local Historical Marker Program. Peaceful Valley Heritage could continue to collaborate with Brown County Historian Diana Biddle and the Brown County Historical Society on a Brown County Historical Marker Program. In three to six years, an additional 6-10 markers could be placed.

4. Investigate Feasibility of Creating a Brown County Preservation Revolving Fund

Some local non-profit historic preservation organizations, such as Bloomington Restorations, have established revolving funds to help preserve endangered historic properties. If Peaceful Valley Heritage decided to go this direction, they would need to raise the corpus of a fund and recruit volunteers who would operate it. Organizations with revolving funds purchase a deteriorated, often vacant property, and then do sufficient rehabilitation to halt the deterioration and improve its appearance. They then market it to a buyer who will complete the rehabilitation and give the property a new use. Indiana Landmarks, which has operated revolving funds for many years, and Bloomington Restorations attach protective covenants to the sale of properties acquired through their revolving funds. The covenants, which run with sale of the land, require the new owner to complete the rehabilitation within a specified time and to maintain the property. A revolving fund needs to have sufficient funds to cover both purchase and some rehabilitation of a property. Revolving funds tend to "revolve downward," meaning that re-sale income will not cover all of the costs incurred over time. Indiana Landmarks and Bloomington Restorations could provide further advice on establishing and operating such a fund.

Local preservation organizations who are rehabilitating endangered historic properties can qualify for low interest loans from Indiana Landmarks' Endangered Places Loans. Indiana Landmarks also has an Efroymson Family Endangered Places Grant Fund, to which organizations can apply for up to \$2500 matching grants for architectural and engineering feasibility studies that evaluate the possibilities for preservation and provide estimates of the rehabilitation costs for an endangered property.

5. Establish a Cooperative Preservation Easement Program

Peaceful Valley Heritage could also establish a preservation easement programs for historic properties in Brown County. Such a program could be done cooperatively with Indiana Landmarks or done as a local program. An easement program offers the owner of a historic property a way to assure that the buildings, structures, objects, or landscape features of the property will not be demolished or altered by future owners. The owner grants an easement to a qualified easement nonprofit organization, such as Indiana Landmarks. Demolitions or alterations must be approved by the easement holder. If the property is listed on the National Register of Historic Places--either individually or as a contributing part of a district--the owner may qualify for a federal income tax deduction, if it can be demonstrated that the easement has resulted in diminishing the market value of the property.

6. Collaborate on Cultural Heritage Tourism Program for Brown County

As seen in this report, Brown County has a rich heritage and a multitude of cultural activities. Many of the elements of a successful cultural/heritage tourism program are already in place—regular arts and crafts events, special festivals, interpretive and educational exhibits, and several museums showcasing local heritage. The National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Cultural Heritage Tourism Program provides guidelines for establishing a successful local program. The key initial elements are collaboration among all of the organizations and agencies who operate parts of the cultural and heritage offerings and creation of a coordinating committee to define a mission, set goals, and lay out specific objectives.

Participants in a cultural/heritage tourism program could include the following organizations. The Brown County Convention and Visitors Bureau, which has as its central purpose to stimulate tourism, would be a natural base for a cultural heritage tourism program. Peaceful Valley Heritage, the Brown County Historical Society, and the Brown County Historian have expertise on the history and heritage of the county and on specific historic places that visitors will want to see. The League of Women Voters of Brown County has held several community conversations recently that pointed to the desirability of a cultural heritage tourism effort in the county. The County Chamber of Commerce has as its mission to promote economic development and commerce, of which tourism is a large portion in the county. The Town of Nashville and the Brown County Commissioners are interested in stimulating the local economy, enhancing the income of residents, and increasing local sales and income tax revenues. The Brown County Art Guild and Brown County Art Gallery offer popular visitor experiences related to current art and the art of the Brown County Art Colony. Many of the businesses in the Arts Village in Nashville provide visitors with locally made crafts and art. In Bean Blossom, the Bill Monroe Bluegrass Museum affords visitors with an immersion in the history of bluegrass and country music in Brown County. The town of Story offers dining and lodging in an authentic historic atmosphere. In other parts of the county, multiple beds and breakfasts and inns provide lodging in historic houses and several restaurants operate in old buildings.

The Brown County Convention and Visitors Bureau and Brown County Community Foundation could act as catalysts in developing a Brown County Cultural Heritage Tourism Program. Specific elements of such a program could include regular tours of historic places in the county not normally open to visitors. These could be developed with themes, such as log cabins of the pioneer/settler era, Rustic style houses of Brown County, folk (vernacular) architecture tour, and historic artist studios/home tours. There could be festivals and workshops organized to showcase crafts made in Brown County, with special highlights for those items continuously produced in the county since the pioneer era. There already are many

special events spotlighting fine art in the county; the concentration of artists and artistic creations is unique to Brown County and could be promoted within a cultural-heritage tourism marketing effort. Music in the bluegrass or traditional veins is performed in many venues, year round. Such events could also be included in the cultural/heritage tourism program. Perhaps one of Brown County's most appealing aspects is the combination of natural and cultural landscapes, such as agricultural fields and pastures in the midst of forested land, the Marcus Dickey House situated in a clearing on the top of Bear Wallow Hill, or the Civilian Conservation Corps buildings and structures in Brown County State Park, surrounded by natural beauty. This combination of human and natural heritage can be a strong theme for cultural heritage tourism.

A Columbus-Brown County-Bloomington Heritage Trail could be established to help visitors reach and enjoy specific destinations associated year-round with Brown County heritage and culture. Each such destination tells a story that can be experienced through a visit along a designated route. Artist studios will attract those who want to see art being made and perhaps make purchases. Galleries exhibit historic and current art. The scenic vistas and landscapes in the county and in Brown County State Park invite people to visit them. The historic places, be they homes of studios of the original Art Colony; structures containing businesses, such as the Village Green (Lodge) Building; or restaurants, like the Hob Nob, the Nashville House, or the Little Gem Restaurant in the Abe Martin Lodge, attract those wanting to sample local cuisine. What could be more "Brown County" than apple butter and deep fried biscuits? The many historic buildings around the county and in Nashville, beginning with the Courthouse Historic District and the Pioneer Village with the venerable Old Log Jail, take the visitor back to the 19th century and the earliest period in local history.

Brown County's rich history and heritage and its many assets—cultural, natural, and historic—beckon to be explored. As a first step, Peaceful Valley Heritage and the League of Women Voters of Brown County could convene a Community Conversation to initiate identifying the sites and places and the stories associated with them. A second step would be to develop a heritage trail through Brown County along State Road 46 and link it with continuations to the west and east into Bloomington and Columbus. Those cities could decide on their own sites to emphasize. The three-county heritage trail could become part of a Southern Indiana Cultural Trail, different, yet similar in design and execution, to the Heritage Driving Tour in Northern Indiana.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation has developed a Seven Steps to Plan a Heritage Trail, which would be helpful in planning a three-county trail: <http://blog.preservationnation.org/2014/04/22/preservation-tips-tools-seven-steps-plan-heritage-trail/#.VR8nrOE8t2B>

A guide already available to the many attractions and special experiences involving heritage, arts, crafts, nature, recreation, and wellness in Brown County has been compiled by Dan Snow of the Nashville Redevelopment Commission and has been published by the town of Nashville. It is available to visitors for free at <https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/473734>. This e-book includes material adapted from “An Assessment and Inventory of Brown County’s Rich Heritage: Natural, Historic, and Cultural,” published by the League of Women Voters of Brown County in 2013.

7. Sponsor Cooperative Oral History Program for Brown County

In conducting interviews for this study, the consultant was struck by the wealth of memories, insights, and valuable information about the past that older residents of Brown County can provide. There have been valuable compilations of recollections compiled previously, such as “Brown County Remembers” of 1986, but as the years pass, a new generation of senior citizens should be interviewed to record their own memories of more recent times. The Brown County Historical Society has a radio studio in the new Brown County History Center that perhaps could be used to make video recorded interviews, and perhaps the society could archive and transcribe the interviews. Peaceful Valley Heritage could collaborate on an interview program and possibly conduct interviews also.

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