

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

- Preserving a Monument to the Past
- Is it True?
- Wayne County Historical Museum 's new building
- New Photos of Board Members



**SPECIAL DATES OF INTEREST:**

- February 5– INRA Committee Meetings
- April 12– Greenfield HNR Panel Dedication
- March 12– INRA Board of Directors Meeting
- May 5– INRA Annual Meeting

An E-publication of:  
**INDIANA NATIONAL ROAD ASSOCIATION**  
*Preserve, protect and promote*  
 PO Box 284  
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# Roadwork

**MAKE HISTORY, DRIVE IT.**

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## Preserving a Monument to the Past

By: LeRoy F. Eastes

**Cumberland-** If you take trip down US Highway 40 in Indiana, it's like traveling through history. This Historic National Road, sometimes known as the Cumberland Road, was our Nation's first federally funded interstate highway, connect the eastern seaboard in Maryland to the western interior in Illinois. It was conceived by George Washington and finally became a reality in 1806 when Congress passed legislation during Thomas Jefferson's administration. For over 175 years and for over 824 miles, this glorious road of ours stretches across 6 states. It is the evidence of our history that remains visible to all.

The road reached Indiana in 1827, and the 156-mile stretch, across the state through eight counties from Richmond to Terre Haute, was completed in 1834. Even though the Federal government did nothing more than clear a dirt path with trees cut just low enough for Conestoga wagons to clear, the National Road still brought thousands of travelers to Indiana every year. In the more than 175 years that have followed, the road has been through many phases of construction and reconstruction, railroads were built, automobiles were invented and I-70 was constructed. Through it all, the National Road has remained one of Indiana's Main Streets and primary transportation corridors. The road passes through Hancock County just east of Indianapolis. Along this highway, many of the original log cabins have been restored. The following story is about the discovery and restoration of one of these original cabins.

In 1989, Ron Sanders and his Father Alva Sanders purchased a piece of land one half mile west of Cumberland, Indiana on the south side of the National Highway.

On 26 April 200, the house caught fire. The fire was subdued, but caused extensive internal structural damage and the house had to be torn down. As the rubble was removed, it was discovered that the house had been built around an old log cabin. In late August 2001, restoration was started. On the back side of the cabin, there were that had opened into two bedrooms. A fireplace was installed where the doors were located. The chimney and fireplace was built using the famous Brown County, Indiana Stone. At one time the cabin was rented as a guitar shop and the proprietor held concerts on the porch. The cabin has also been rented as a mortgage broker's office.

Upon the discovery of the cabin, Ron Sanders began an extensive search for the previous owners and residents. The earliest record is a copy of the Abstract on the 80 acre property where it

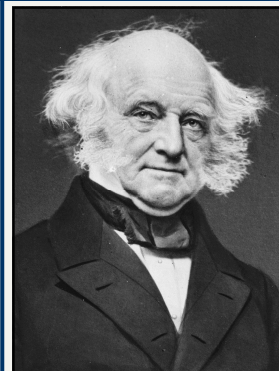
was patented to Powell Scott on February 4, 1834. In November of 1831, Mr. Scott sells the land to William and Jane Harvey. There is some discrepancy as to when this sale took place. Dates on the property abstract are inconsistent.

There is a mystery concerning who built the cabin and who lived there over the years. The Road existed before the oldest date on the abstract (1831) and it is estimated the cabin was built about 1820. There is a story that says Henry Ward Beecher once stayed there. Henry was a preacher in Indianapolis and later in Brooklyn, New York. He was an outspoken abolitionist and a brother to Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of the famous novel, "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

It is not known if William and Jane Harvey ever lived in this cabin since most, if not all, of their married life was spent in Franklin County. It is possible that some of their children may have lived in the cabin at one time. However, the abstract shows the property belonged to William Harvey for several years. Some time after his death, it passed to his nine children. In 1865, they in turn sold the property. Jane Harvey, William's wife, lived near Cumberland somewhere close to the property, with her son Milton until her death in 1888. Historic documents of Sugar Creek Township state that in 1832 John Eastes opened a little grocery along the National Road in the Western part of the township. John Eastes was Jane Harvey's brother.



Above: House fire that revealed cabin structure. Below: Ron Sander's restored log cabin



Left: Martin Van Buren was our nation's eighth President. His term was from 1837-1841. During which he cut funding for the National Road. He was succeeded by, former Indiana Governor, William Henry Harrison, who died 32 days into his term.

## IS IT TRUE?

By: Joe Skvarenina (INRA Board Member)

**Greenfield-** After Mr. Van Buren's defeat for the presidency he made a tour of the west in 1843, following the route of the National Road which is Main Street in Greenfield. His visit was a great occasion and local Democrats made extensive preparations to entertain him. The journey was made by stage and almost all the stage drivers Whigs.

During the Van Buren administration he had vetoed a bill for an appropriation for the National Road. The west was very unhappy with his action for the road in many places were almost impassable. The stage drivers planned to give Mr. Van Buren an opportunity to count the mud along the road. Near Greenfield there was a steep hill and at a signal the driver pulled the horses to the side and the famous traveler was thrown into the mud. When Mr. Van Buren arrived in Greenfield he was in a deplorable condition and new clothed had to be provided.

The hill Mr. Buren was dumped was called straw board hill and is the location of Apple Street and Main Street, Route 40 in Greenfield today.

So the story goes. This story appeared in the program for the "Rooster Plaque" dedication in Greenfield. This was october11, 1966 with Governor Roger Branigin as speaker. I have heard it repeated in several other places. Is it true? You be the judge.

### NEW PHOTOS OF BOARD MEMBERS

**Cumberland-** Ron Sanders graciously hosted the January meeting of the INRA Board of Directors at his log cabin. In addition to hosting the meeting, Ron offered to take high quality photos of each board member.

Each board member who was present received a few professional quality photos. The plan is to upload these onto our website with a short bio. This is a great opportunity to let everyone know who we are. If you have not sent your photo and bio to Joe Frost, please do. He will get everything organized and ready for the website. Keep an eye on the website for the new additions. Thank you Ron for the photos and use of the Cabin!

### WAYNE COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM'S NEW BUILDING

**Richmond-**The Wayne County Historical Museum is entering a new phase. Recently, the museum constructed a new building. The Barn, as it is called, serves to fulfill four goals for the museum; a space to display a collection of agricultural items, a community room for events, and storage for an extensive textile collection, and establish an outside display area.

The construction of the new building was made possible by two bequests that became available. The funds were ample enough to tear down an old apartment building and construct the new building. The museum is seeking continued support to finish the project and reach the organization's goals.



Above: The Barn at the Wayne County Historical Museum.

Become a member or donate today!

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