

Rush County City Tour

#1 Hackleman Cabin

Address: North of Park Road W and East 13th Street

Built: 1808 Style: Horizontal Log

This cabin was built in Franklin County in 1808 for the Hackleman family. Born in 1814, Pleasant A. Hackleman studied law in Brookville and became a lawyer in 1837. He moved his family to Rush County that same year. Though Hackleman joined the 16th Regiment of Indiana Volunteers during the Civil War, he continued to serve on several political committees, including one in Washington, D.C. that attempted to end the war. Killed in battle by gunshot, he cried, "I am dying, but I am dying for my country." He was the only General from Indiana killed during the Civil War. Prior to the war, he started the *Rushville Republican* newspaper.



The horizontal-log structure was built using hand-hewn timber and local stone for the foundation and chimney. Much of the north elevation is constructed in limestone, not commonly found in log structure walls.

In 1923, this cabin was brought to Rushville to honor his memory. The Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) were instrumental in the achievement of this move.

#2 Memorial Gymnasium

Address: Lions' Path and 11th Street

Built 1925-26

The building was originally named in memory of those who served in World War I. No tax money was used to build the gym. It was financed primarily through fund raising and gate receipts. The first basketball game on February 5, 1926 was played here against Greensburg. Rushville overcame a twelve-point deficit to win 32 to 31. The lion statues in front of the gym were imported from Italy. They are metal and once were part of an outdoor garden at the Innis-Pearce Furniture Company. The gym addition was added in



1984. The main gym was renovated in 1989.

On January 9, 2016 the gymnasium floor was named for Cinda Brown, former basketball coach of the Rushville Lady Lions. From the New Salem area of Rush County and a graduate of Indiana University, Cinda coached three teams to the Girls' Indiana State Finals. At one point her teams won eighteen straight sectional titles.

#3 Rush County Independent Chautauqua

Located in South Memorial Park (east corner)

Modeled after the activities of the Chautauqua Institution of Western New York, the Association of Rush County Chautauqua was formed in 1909. Lectures, short plays, poetry readings, singing, instrumental music, and comedy were presented here in a larger tent. Later a coliseum was built at this location for 2,500 people.

Each summer educators and entertainers were brought to Rushville for a full week of performances. Among the participants were William Jennings Bryan, James E. Watson, Helen Keller, and Jess Pugh.



#4 Cullen-Mauzy-Willkie Home

Address: 601 N. Harrison

Built: c. 1874 Style: Italianate

This stately home was built in 1874 for William A. Cullen, a judge who served as Lieutenant Colonel of the 123rd Regiment during the Civil War, and was elected as both a State Representative and Senator in the 1860's. In 1940, during Wendell Willkie's U.S. Presidential Campaign, the owner, Lillian Mauzy, invited the Willkie family to occupy her home—an offer they accepted. Mrs. Mauzy temporarily moved in next door with her son Hugh. Mrs. Mauzy later sold the house to Wendell Willkie for the sum of \$5,000. It is still owned by the Willkie family.



This asymmetrical home's widely overhanging eaves, decorative brackets and arched window crowns make it an excellent example of the Italianate style.



#5 Rushville Public Library

Address: 130 W. 3rd Street

Style: Collegiate Gothic

The Rushville Library was opened on January 16, 1931. It was built of Bedford limestone. Oak furniture to compliment the paneling and beams in the Gothic structure was designed by library board member Roy Waggener and produced at the Park Furniture Company of Rushville. The DAR (Daughters of the

American Revolution) were very instrumental in promoting the local library movement.

The library originally contained 12,000 books, and the librarian was Miss Mary Sleeth. She later became Wendell Willkie's farm manager.

Miss Sleeth donated the addition of a second floor room at the Rush County Historical Society Museum for displaying Willkie memorabilia.

#6 Indianapolis and Cincinnati Traction Company Interurban Car Barns, Power Plant, and Offices

Location: Offices at the corner of Third and Morgan Streets (where the library is located now)

On January 2, 1905, the first two electric-powered passenger cars of the I and C were delivered to Rushville and by February 20, 1905, runs were being made every two hours to Indianapolis. The cars were painted dark red and hauled passengers and some freight at the speed of 60 miles per hour. The I and C tracks ran parallel to the railroad tracks between Rushville and Indianapolis.

The car barns and power plant were located on the east side of Rushville. On January 1, 1932, the I and C ceased operating because of the popularity of the automobile.





#7 Melodeon Hall

Address: 132-8 W. 2nd Street (above Green's Photography)

Built: 1872 Style: Italianate

Melodeon Hall, 1872, provided an early source of entertainment for Rushville's citizens. In addition to the second-floor stage and scenery, the first floor storefronts housed several businesses: including the Poe Family Jewelry, a saloon, bakery, meat market, Todd's Furniture and Kroger Grocery Store. Famously, the building was used by Safronia (Rose) and Ray Evans, prominent African-Americans, for their beauty shop and podiatry business for at least forty years.

Brackets along the cornice divide this Italianate block into four storefronts. The Italianate character is derived from its tall and narrow arcaded windows, the window hoods, and its cornice.

#8 Carr House-Durbin Hotel

Address: Corner of Morgan and Second Streets

Built: c. 1855, c 1950 Style: Neoclassical

As one of the Rushville's oldest structures, the c. 1855 Durbin Hotel building had always been a hotel. First known as the Carr House, it was followed by the Capp House, the Windsor Hotel (1877), Hotel Lollis (1924), and finally the Durbin Hotel. In 1940, U.S. Presidential Candidate Wendell Willkie, a Hoosier, used the Durbin as his campaign headquarters.

Two Durbin sons rose to prominence in the hotel world. Jim Durbin was president of Marriott Hotels and Bob Durbin was vice-president of the Sheraton chain. When the Durbin Hotel closed it was made into an apartment building. The structure was completely renovated by the city of Rushville from 2017-2019.



#9 Dr. William B. Laughlin Gravesite

Lower Graveyard

Location: South end of Jackson Street (west side of street)

Dr. Laughlin was one the area's first settlers in 1821. He gave 75 acres for the town of Rushville. He named the town after Dr. Benjamin Rush, his former teacher in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Rush was a signer of the Declaration of Independence.

Dr. Laughlin was a teacher, a lawyer, state legislator, doctor, surveyor, and farmer. He built the first school, the first academy, and the first mill in town. A Presbyterian, Dr. Laughlin also donated money to the first church in Rushville.

Laughlin's wife Ruth is also buried here. They were the parents of fifteen children, nine girls and six boys. Dr. Laughlin died in 1836, and Ruth died in 1851.



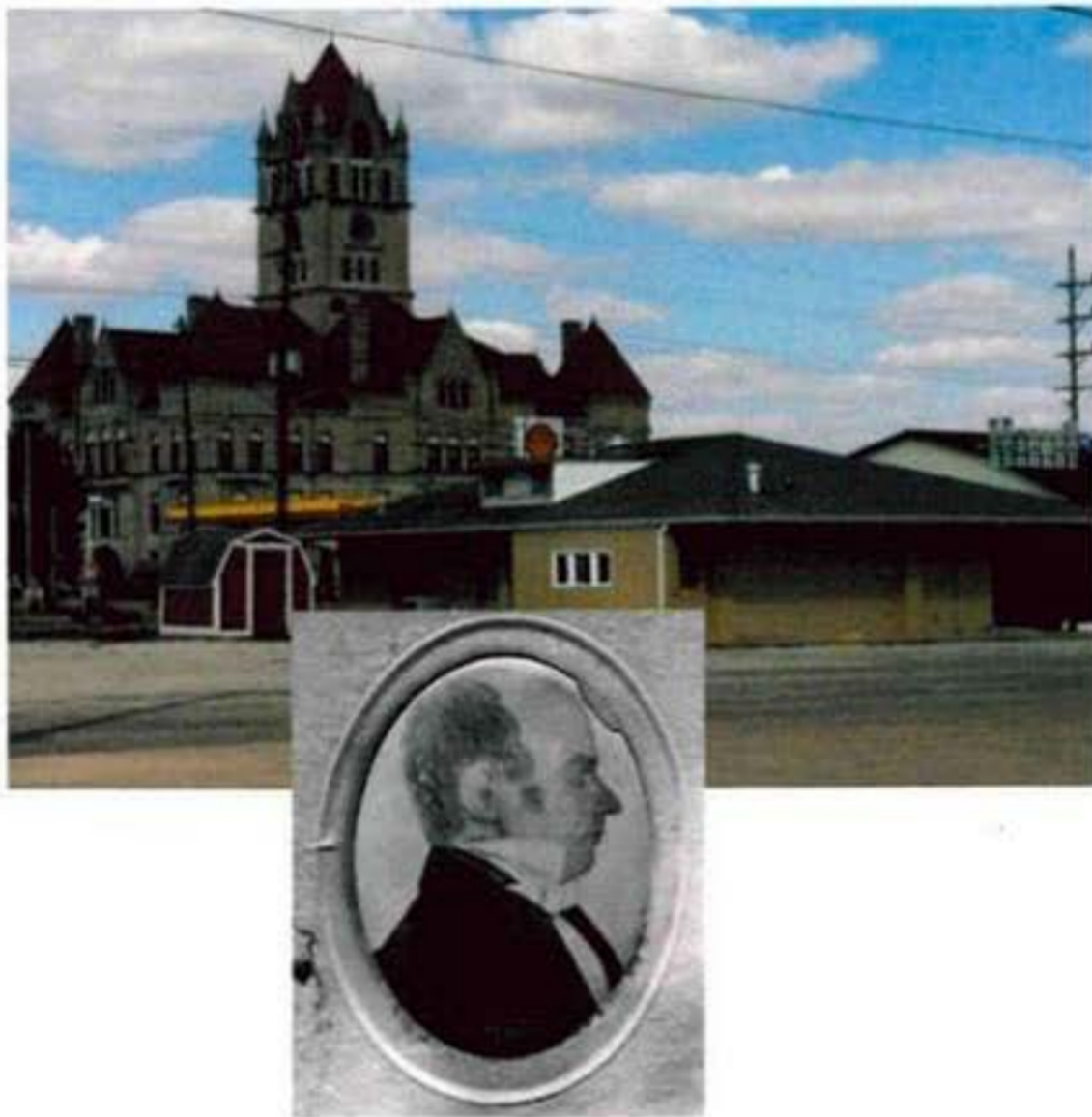
#10 Riverside Park Amphitheatre

Address: South of South Main and West Water Streets

In 1890, William Jones (who owned the Windsor Hotel) built a horseracing track called Riverside Park to appease the residents' horse racing demands. It was a regulation mile track, 60 feet wide. Originally, there was an ornate judging stand, and a nearby pedestrian swinging bridge (at the end of Morgan Street) to make crossing the river easier. In addition, the park had large grand stands for the people and stables to accommodate at least four hundred horses. The track was bisected when the course of the Flat Rock River was straightened in the 1930s by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The racetrack often flooded.



The current modern shelter attracts visitors to this historic landscape, while simultaneously alluding to Rush County's celebrated covered bridges. Several free concerts are held here each summer.



#11 Dr. William B. Laughlin Cabin Site

Location: South Main Street

The founder of Rushville built a double log cabin near the Flat Rock River where Mr. Freshie's Doughnuts was. (See Dr. William B. Laughlin gravesite information.)

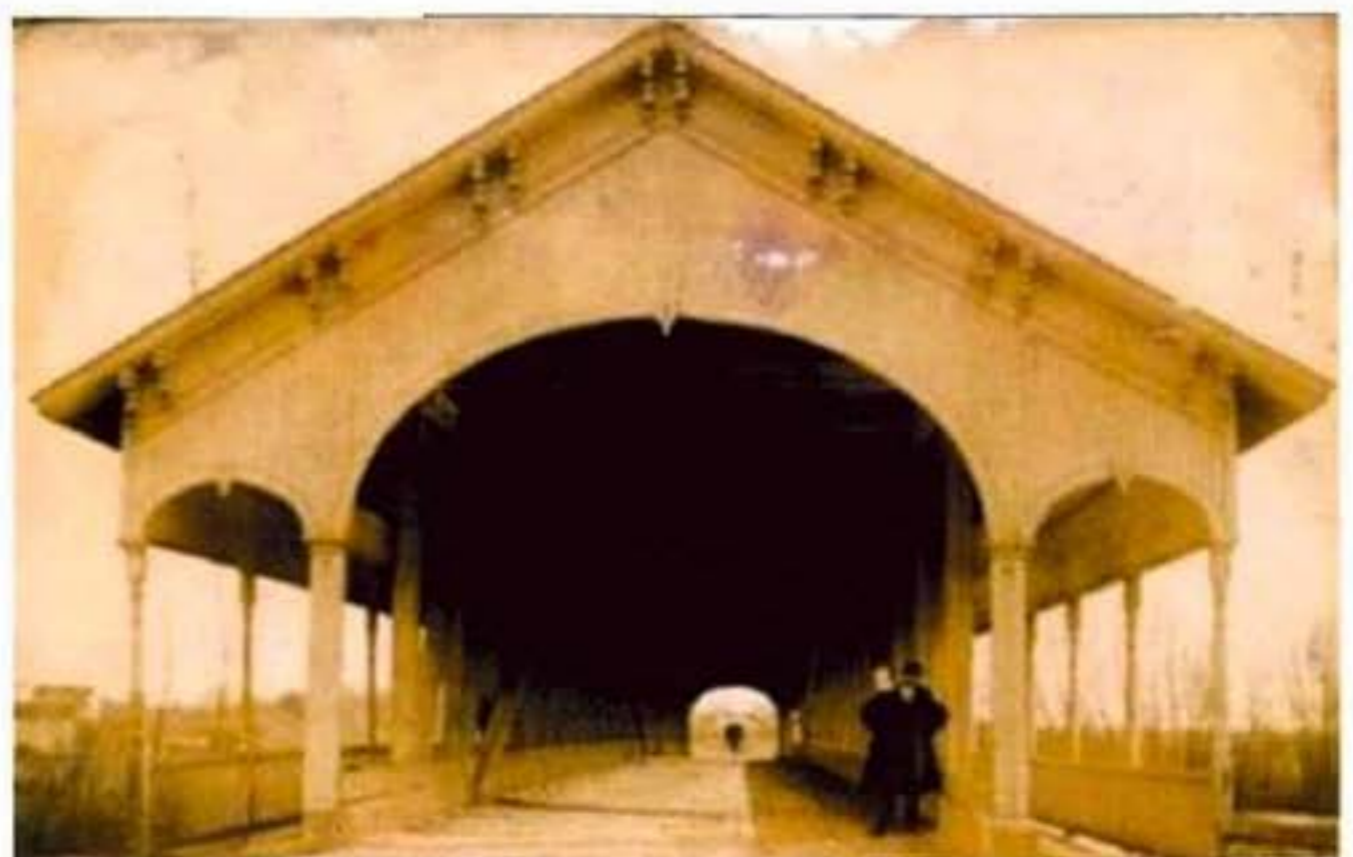
Laughlin's water mill was on the south side of the river. He would walk across the log dam to reach his mill.

#12 Bridge Over Flat Rock River

Location: South Main Street

The present bridge was built east of the old covered bridge (built by the Kennedy family). Some of the base of the covered bridge can still be seen by looking over the west side of the present bridge.

The bridge was renamed the Col. Joseph Cotton Bridge. Cotton was a well known test pilot from Manilla, Indiana. (Also note how straight the river is.)



#13 Water Street

Location: south end of Main Street (Mr. Freshie, BP & Admiral gas stations, & Hardees on the corners)

Water Street was a "mill race" before it was abandoned and filled in. The "race" ran parallel to the Flat Rock River over to a mill at the south end of Morgan Street. The race originated where the river was diverted to form it east of Rushville along Fort Wayne Road.



#14 Rush County Courthouse

Address: 114 N. Main Street

Built: 1896 Style: Romanesque Revival

The current Rush County Courthouse is actually the third courthouse to occupy this site. The second courthouse (1847-48) was torn down in the 1890s to make way for the current 1896-1898 A.W. Rush & Company (Grand Rapids, MI) design. Due to economic hard times, the courthouse was opposed by some because of its expense. Two of the county commissioners wanted the new courthouse. Their faces are carved on the west side by the door: William Innis with mustache ("Big Bill") from Milroy is on the left side; while Allen Hinchman (chin whiskers) from Glenwood is on the right.

The third commissioner, Calvin Jones, was against the construction. That could be the reason his face is not carved on the building.

The construction contract was let to P.H. McCormack & Co. of Columbus, IN. Philip Wilk, father of Edith Willkie (wife of Wendell Willkie), was a foreman in charge of courthouse construction. The final cost, plus some remodeling to the jail, was \$257,385.38.

The north side cornerstone was laid in 1896. Items inside include newspapers, money (from the time), and lists of church memberships. It is carved with the symbols of Rush County--corn and wheat. There are two stalks of corn with two ears on each stalk to represent the richness of Rush County soil. When the courthouse stone was laid, a railroad track was constructed on First Street to bring the stone to the courthouse yard. Then the stone was lifted with a steam engine powered boom-pole. The belfry tower completed the project. (A sledge hammer hits the ball to make the clock strike.)

After the courthouse was completed, daredevil performers would climb to the clock tower. The "Human Fly" climbed on the outside and entered the inside at the clock. Alex McKay climbed in 1899, and "Joe, the Toehanger" climbed and hung by his toes. His sister beat the drum during his act to collect money. (TODAY SUCH DANGEROUS ACTIVITIES ARE ILLEGAL AND SUBJECT TO ARREST!)

Also on the north side of the courthouse square is a large stone and plaque honoring Dr. William B. Laughlin, founder of Rushville.

Built from coursed-rubble Indiana limestone, this Romanesque Revival building rises 196 feet above ground. Its features include limestone bands, pilaster, dentil-lined cornices, and corner towers. Inside, original marble and mosaic floors, fireplaces, gold and oak trim and light fixtures, and oak furniture grace the building. The Indiana State Seal is on the second floor's west wall. It overlooks the proceedings of the Rush County Circuit Court. Originally located in the ceiling, the seal was imported from Italy. Also note the lists of Rush County war veterans on the first floor walls.

#15 Phoenix Lodge #62-Princess Theatre

Address: 318-322 N. Main Street

Built: 1914 Style: 20th Century Functional

Built in 1914 when the previous Masonic Hall burned down, this structure was designed to hold the new Lodge, the town's post office on the south, the Princess Theatre in the center, and a bowling alley on the north side. After the building's dedication, Walter Easley leased the theatre and brought movie entertainment to Rushville. The venture was sold to Harrold and Pell in the late 1920s, who also



operated the Castle Theatre. After being vacant for many years, a group of interested citizens worked to restore the building. During the process, a ticket for the original local showing of *Gone with the Wind* was found. The ticket is now on display in the mayor's office. IVY TECH has leased part of the building. The second floor has become city offices. The original marquee for the theatre will be restored and will hang over the theatre's doors.

This massive example of the 20th Century Functional style is flanked by two projecting corners. The central row of windows and the decorative brickwork are common in this style. Multi-colored brick masonry at the top of the building forms a criss-cross pattern that intersects with Mason's symbolic terracotta tiles.

#16 Sexton House

Address: 506 Main Street

Build: 1851 Style: Greek Revival

Marshall Sexton, who practiced medicine from 1844 to 1889, built this house on property he purchased from his father Horatio, also a doctor, in 1851. In 1893, John, Marshall's son, another doctor, built one of southeastern Indiana's first surgical hospitals, a sanitarium, east of the family house. The home remained in the Sexton family until the mid -1940s; shortly thereafter, it was converted into apartments. It has now been returned to a single-family dwelling. In recent years, a former owner constructed a detached garage on the south side.



This high-style Greek Revival building has a central-hall plan with fireplace on either end. The heavy, unornamented cornice has wide frieze, and wraps continuously around the house. Triangular pediments are defining characteristics over the entrance and in each end gable. The entrance is flanked by two columns, common in this style that mimics classic temples.



#17 Case House

Address: 525 N. Main Street

Built: 1920 Style: Prairie

Jasper D. Case, who built this house in 1920, owned a hardwood lumber yard in Rushville. In 1938, Warder and Harry Wyatt, sons of George C. Wyatt, a cabinet maker and undertaker, purchased the Case Mansion to serve as a home and as the Wyatt Memorial Mortuary. The family business went to John Wyatt Moore in 1954, and later became the Wyatt-Moore-

Milam Mortuary. Today the house is again a private residence.

Horizontal lines are common in this Prairie style home, which features two side wings, a long flat porch, and a low-pitched hipped roof. Long flat building stones and bands of three windows add to the Case House's linear qualities.

#18 James E. Watson Home

Address: 805 N. Main Street

Style: Tudor

James Eli Watson was a U.S. Representative and U.S. Senator from Indiana. He was born November 2, 1864, in Winchester, IN. He graduated from DePauw University. Watson moved to Rushville in 1893 and established a law practice.

During his political career, he served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1895-1897 and 1899-1909. Later he served in the U.S. Senate from 1916-1933 (Republican Majority Leader 1929-1933).



He was an outstanding speaker and enthusiastic storyteller. He is credited with originating the saying, "If you can't lick 'em, join 'em." When Wendell Willkie ran for U.S. President in 1946, Watson did not endorse the former Democrat. Watson died in 1948 at the age of 83 and is buried in Suitland, Maryland, near Washington, D.C.

This house was Todd's Funeral Home for several years, and today is a private residence.

#19 Rush Memorial Hospital

1950 Original Structure

1971 Addition



1997 Addition

2006 Addition

Address: 1310 N. Main Street

After World War II, Rush County was in need of a newer, larger hospital. The Post-War Planning Commission had several plans for after the war including a junior college, a county park system, and the hospital.

Rush Memorial Hospital was what the citizens wanted. It was paid for with a government grant, a bond issue, and private donations. Completed in the spring of 1950, the hospital cost \$900,000.

The hospital has expanded over the years and now includes the Sheehan Cancer Center, conference and meeting rooms, surgical units, nuclear medicine, women's health issues, as well as facilities for visiting specialists. The hospital also has provided helicopter and ambulance services.

#20 Gowdy House (now the Rush County Historical Society Museum)

Address: 619 N. Perkins Street

Built: c. 1888 Style: Queen Anne

This house originally belonged to Captain John Gowdy, who, at the turn of the century, was appointed by President McKinley as the Consul General to Paris. Gowdy had been the Republican State Chairman, served two terms as Rush County sheriff, and once as the county auditor. His wife, Eva Gowdy and her daughter Fannie Mansfield, continued living at the house until the 1930s. In 1940 Clark Offutt, a nephew, gave the property to the Rush County Historical Society.

This house has several elements that are typical of the Queen Anne style, including its irregular shape, tiered roofline, cross gables, and wrap-porch.



#21 Wolfe House

Address: 629 N. Perkins Street

Built: c. 1869 Style: Italianate originally

Colonel E.H. Wolfe built this house in 1869, when he returned from serving with the Union forces during the Civil War.

Later, Wolfe was twice elected as County Auditor, and once as Indiana State Auditor (1881-83). Wolfe was also a 33-degree Mason. Shortly, thereafter, the home was modified to its current appearance and is a private residence. This Victorian brick home embodies characteristic elements from the Italianate style.



#22 Booker T. Washington School

Address: 527 E. 7th Street

Built: 1904-05 Style: Vernacular Romanesque

Morris Winship built the Booker T. Washington School between 1904 and 1905 to serve the African-American population. With its large upstairs room, the building also served as a community center for the neighborhood. After it was closed in 1932, it served various purposes and eventually fell into disrepair. A countywide, national award-winning volunteer effort led to its restoration. It currently serves once again as a center for social services and a preschool, as well as for community gatherings.



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This vernacular school has some Romanesque Revival characteristics, but it's primarily categorized by the T-Plan shape. The projecting portion of the T contains three bays and the central entrance, which is recessed behind a brick, three-course round arch. A rectangular transom window tops the wood-paneled double doors.

#23 Corduroy Roads

Corduroy roads were the first improved roads. They were made by laying tree logs side by side.

The first road going to East Hill Cemetery from Rushville was a corduroy road. Also the road going south out of Rushville was corduroy.

#24 East Hill Cemetery

Address: 700 block of State Road 44 East of Rushville

Following Rush County's organization in 1822 most burials were on family farms. The first public burial ground in this area was called the Lower Cemetery (sometimes called the Laughlin Cemetery in honor of Dr. Laughlin). In the 1830s a second cemetery named the Upper Cemetery was established on old Ft. Wayne Road. During a June 18, 1859 meeting, a committee was formed to locate new grounds for the proposed East Hill Cemetery.



The Cemetery Company secured the design services of Mr. Leo Wertz of Wilmington, Ohio. In 1859 he came to Rushville as architect of East Hill, devoting several months to the task of laying off avenues and platting the grounds, which resulted in this beautiful cemetery. He planned six irregularly shaped sections and winding roadways, as well as the planting of many trees. After the initial designing of the cemetery, Mr. Wertz returned several times to oversee drainage plans and other necessary improvements of East Hill.

The grounds of East Hill Cemetery were dedicated September 25, 1860. The original 19 acres have grown to 69 acres, which includes a house for the Superintendent, storage buildings for equipment, an office space for the Superintendent and Secretary-Treasurer.

One of the additions to the cemetery was the iron fence placed across the frontage in 1877. A Gothic Chapel constructed in 1900 was used for funeral services and for temporary placement of bodies when inclement weather prevented immediate burial until it was removed in 1946 - 1947. In 1901 the stone arch and gateway at the entrance were added. The north mausoleum was built in 1935 and contains 144 crypts. Six small family mausoleums are also in the cemetery. A columbarium has been added south of the south mausoleum.

The irrevocable Perpetual Care Fund of the East Hill Cemetery Company was created in 1965 to fund all future care of the cemetery.

Among the thousands of graves are those of Knowles Shaw, John Arnold and son Dr. John Arnold, Archibald and Emmett Kennedy, P.A. Hackleman, Joel Wolfe, and Wendell Willkie.

There are a variety of impressive monuments located in East Hill including the limestone memorial to the Civil War veterans and another for Wendell Willkie, Republican candidate for U.S. President in 1940 and author of *One World*.

Probably the best known monument was designed by Tony Schrichte and made by the family's Rushville business to honor the Civil War veterans. The Grand Army of the Republic Joel Wolfe Post raised the initial funds. The six foot copper soldier atop the monument was stolen in a daring robbery on August 19, 1987, and so far no trace has been found. The limestone soldier is a replacement paid for by community contributions.

5/16 mws

The Calvary Catholic Cemetery is located on the north edge of Rushville on Fort Wayne Road.