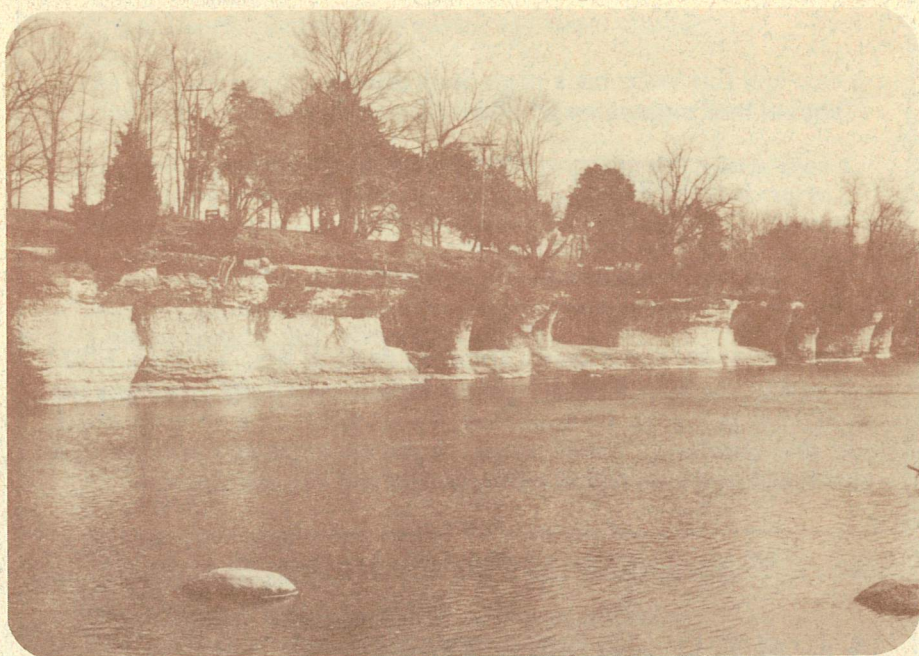




Quarterly

Summer - 1992
Volume XXXI No. 3



Seven Pillars

This issue of the **Quarterly** focuses mainly on our exciting, new project at the Seven Pillars Landmark Area. You may recall the article and interesting panoramic photograph in the Spring **Quarterly**. We hope you take in the field trip to this area on August 16 (details on page 3) and can help secure it by digging a little deeper into that cookie jar or old sock stuffed under the mattress. It is quite an opportunity to preserve a unique bit of northeastern Indiana. Read on and enjoy!

Community Chest

GO TO BACK PAGE
Go Directly to BACK PAGE

DO NOT PASS GO

DO NOT COLLECT \$200



Once you flip to the back page, **look closely** at your mailing label. It should look something like this one below.

Exp. 6/92
Mr. and Mrs. George Bush
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

The date at the top is your expiration date! If it says, "**Exp. 6/92**" (or earlier, heaven forbid!) please **renew now!** If you have renewed for this year, it should say, "**Exp. 6/93**". Or, if your check and this **Quarterly** have crossed in the mail, please disregard this notice and continue reading your newsletter! Thank you.

ACRES on the Radio!

ACRES, Inc. is pleased to announce that we are cosponsoring a short, radio bit called, "**Birdwatch**" on local radio station **WBNI, FM 89.1**. This one-minute spot can be heard every weekday at 10:05am. Different organizations sponsor the program each day. ACRES sponsors "**Birdwatch**" on Wednesdays. It is one more way we can bring the teachings of nature to many more people and spread the word of the good work of ACRES. Tune in and enjoy!

About the Cover - ACRES board member Bob Weber visited the Seven Pillars area this past winter and captured this scene from across the Mississinewa River.

Field Trips & Special Events

July 5 Wing Haven Nature Preserve Open House (1pm to 5pm).

July 11 Vandolah Nature Preserve Hike.

Enjoy the summer woodlands in one of ACRES' newest preserves.

Where: Meet at the Preserve.

When: 10:00am.

Bring: Lunch, camera, field guides, and insect repellent.

Contact Person: Else Matott (745-7877)

August 2 Wing Haven Nature Preserve Open House (1pm to 5pm).

August 16 Tour New Area at Seven Pillars Along the Mississinewa.

Explore this new area being featured in this issue of the **Quarterly**.

When: 2:00pm at the Preserve (described on page 6) or 12:30pm at carpool site.

Where: Meet to carpool at Amoco station on US #24 and I-69.

Bring: Picnic supper, camera, and insect repellent.

Contact Person: Bob Weber (747-6030)

September 6 Wing Haven Nature Preserve Open House (1pm to 5pm).

September 12 Detering Nature Preserve Hike.

Visit this old farm site that stretches down to Round Lake, just east of Kendallville.

When: 10:00am

Where: At the Preserve, located northeast of Kendallville at U.S. 6 and CR 700 North.

Bring: Lunch, hiking equipment, and insect repellent.

Contact Person: Else Matott (745-7877)

October 4 Wing Haven Nature Preserve Open House (1pm to 5pm).

For those interested in hiking the Hoosier National Forest in southern Indiana for a weekend "backpack" trip in October, contact Art or Else Matott, 745-7877.

October 27-30 Annual Natural Areas Conference. Contact Indiana Division of Nature Preserves for details (317-232-4052).

November 1 Wing Haven Nature Preserve Open House (1pm to 5pm).

November 6 Annual Fall Dinner Meeting.
Details to come in Autumn **Quarterly**.

To learn about special work days, contact Bob Weber at 747-6030.

Editor's Note - The following article originally appeared in the winter 1983 ACRES Quarterly. It was written by board member Carolyn McNagy and captures some of the fascinating human history of this intriguing area of the Wabash and Mississinewa Rivers.

The Seven Pillars

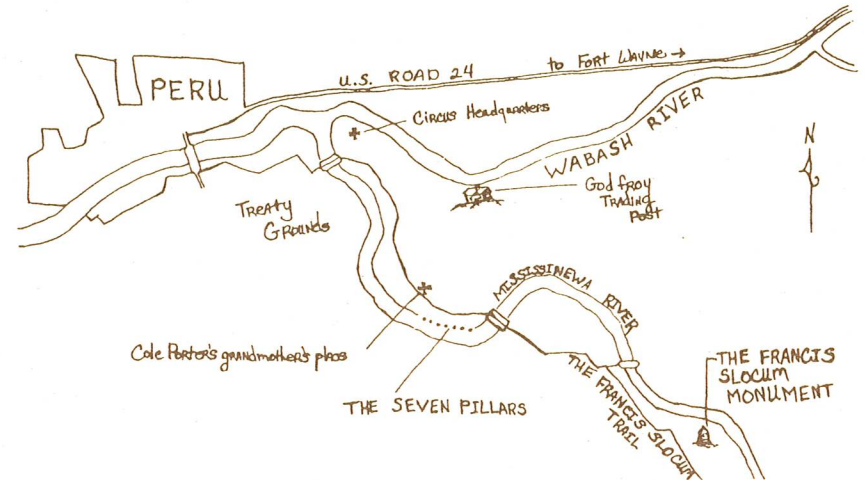
On December 14, 1983, ACRES President, Ted Heemstra, Judy Esterline, and Carolyn McNagy accepted as a gift to ACRES "The Seven Pillars", beautiful bluffs that rise above the Mississinewa River near Peru, Indiana. Edward G. Iddings and his sisters, Mary Gype and Carol Mae Joy, donated the 1.076 acres in memory of their parents, Sam and Caroline Iddings. When the Iddings' offer of the site to the Miami County Historical Society was declined, ACRES was contacted and agreed to manage and protect "The Seven Pillars". Heemstra said that ACRES "would be good stewards" towards the preservation of the bluffs, and that ACRES isn't exclusively plants and animals, but also protects interesting geologic features, such as Hanging Rock in Wabash County.

In order to reach "The Seven Pillars", one must travel along the Frances Slocum Trail. This trail is flanked by landmarks of local and state-wide significance.



The Frances Slocum Trail received its name from the famed Indian-raised white woman. In Pennsylvania, in 1778, at the age of 5, Frances Slocum was taken from her Quaker home and was found in 1837 living among the Miami Indians. Frances was identified by her brother from a scar on her left hand. Because she was so strong, Frances' Indian name was Maconsquah, meaning "Little Bear Woman". She married Shepoconnah, a war chief of the Miamis. When he became deaf he resigned, and Francis Godfroy became war chief. Godfroy was the last active Miami war chief and a wealthy trader.

Francis Godfroy's homesite is near the Frances Slocum Trail, about one mile outside of Peru. Godfroy ran a trading post known throughout northern Indiana. White pioneers brought their furs to exchange for goods and Godfroy shipped his furs to New York City. In 1840, when he died, the New York City merchants owed him \$15,000 for purchased merchandise.



Coming out of Peru, the trail passes the treaty grounds of the Miamis. Here Tecumseh met Chief Little Turtle to sign the Treaty of Greenville in 1795. Through a long series of wars and treaties, the Miamis ceded 6,853,020 acres to the U.S. government. All but a few chiefs and influential Indians were resettled west, first to Kansas, then to Oklahoma.

The trail winds past huge farms, with white fences lining the road. The circus headquarters, with the old elephant barn, sits on the hill. Peru served for sixty years as winter headquarters for many major American circuses. It all started with Ben Wallace and a broken down circus. The circus became "The Great Wallace Show" and one of the top three circuses in the world.

Over the years, circuses such as Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros., Sells-Floto and John Robinson wintered in Peru. Emmett Kelly, the famous clown, and Clyde Beatty lived in Peru. The Peruvians seemed to enjoy the circuses, although the wild animals caused concern. Older Peruvians

still recall the escape of Modoc the elephant who terrorized the countryside for a week before being lured to his capture with a truckload of bread.

The last of Peru's circuses fled to sunnier climes after being purchased by John Ringling. Only the scorched skeletons of wagons, burned to prevent their use by competitors, remained. The burning lives in infamy here as "the day Peru died".

Next, the Frances Slocum Trail passes the house of Cole Porter's grandmother. Her flower garden was the inspiration for Porter's song "The Old Fashioned Garden". Cole Porter's house still stands in Peru.

About 3 miles east of Peru, the trail travels along the top of "The Seven Pillars". Gnarled red cedars hang over the bluff, clinging by roots that have penetrated the cracks in the strata. Along the cliffs are sycamores, ash, black and red oak, and American Elm. The northern bluff of the fast-flowing river is carved into a series of pillars. The pillars result from the unequal disintegration produced by the river on the harder and softer portions of the limestone.

- continued on page 7

Editor's note - The following note is a copy of a press release issued to area newspapers on May 30, 1992. Its purpose was to familiarize readers in the area with ACRES, Inc., to feature the Seven Pillars project, and to generate interest in building the fund to secure this unique parcel of land.

From: ACRES, Inc.
1802 Chapman Road, Box 140
Huntertown, Indiana 46748
Tel/Fax 219-637-6264

NEWS RELEASE

May 30, 1992

Call for additional information.

Seven Pillars Project Fund Effort Announced by Land Preservation Group

ACRES, Inc., a northeastern Indiana natural areas preservation group, has launched a major fund drive for the purchase of 150 acres of land associated with the Seven Pillars geological formations along the Mississinewa River, near Peru.

The organization already owns the Pillars themselves, a gift to it in 1982. "The natural forests, fields and uplands along the opposite side of the river will create an environmental system rich both in nature and human history," said Ted Heemstra, ACRES president, a Fort Wayne resident.

ACRES has already received a substantial gift of \$25,000 toward purchase, from Dr. and Mrs. John W. Klotz, ACRES' first president during the 1960's, when he was a biology professor and theologian at Concordia Seminary, Fort Wayne. The Klotz' now reside in the St. Louis, Missouri area.

Heemstra said the fund raising goal from the nearby communities is \$50,000, and that \$7,000 has already been raised toward it from individuals; \$43,000 remains to be raised. ACRES is a not-for-profit organization. Gifts to it are deductible.

A Seven Pillars Project Committee to aid in fund raising includes residents of Miami, Wabash and Huntington counties: Daniel and Terry Wilson and Ed and Ann Larimer, Peru; Ginger Murphy and Dave and Val Doud, Wabash; Robert M. Larson, Converse; and Phil and Jean Ross, Huntington.

The land being purchased is located along Miami County Road 200 West, opposite of the Pillars, and ranges along 3,000 feet of that shoreline, bordered by large sycamore trees.

In addition to lowland fields, the "crown jewel" of the land includes high, forested escarpments with deep ravines and rugged terrain providing a view of the Pillars on the far side of the river.

- continued on page 7

Seven Pillars - continued from page 5

The bluffs are about 50 feet high.

Traditional stories among the Indians emphasize that this was a favorite haunt where pow-wows and dances were held. The top of the cliffs was a favorite meeting place for Indian councils. In pioneer days, there was a trading post in one of the shallow caves eroded into the cliffs.

The first white men made their homes around this trading post, where furs and land bargains were made.

"The Seven Pillars" is an area with a colorful history and beautiful scenery. Arrangements were made to work with the Miami County Historical Society to keep trash picked up and to dedicate a commemorative marker in the spring.

by Carolyn McNagny

News Release - continued from page 6

ACRES is preparing a mailing with complete information to area businesses, community groups, and conservation organizations asking for contributions.

Also being solicited is historical information about the site. Much is already known, Heemstra said, "but it is so rich in both natural and human history that we want to be fully aware of all available background, so that all qualities can be protected."

Over the years since its 1960 founding, ACRES has acquired 28 natural areas in most northeastern Indiana counties, including Hanging Rock on the Wabash River, designated as a National Natural Landmark by the U.S. Department of Interior. Most of these are dedicated under the protective provisions of Indiana's Nature Preserve Act, although they are fully owned, managed and protected by ACRES, Heemstra added.

Heemstra said that ACRES will pursue Nature Preserve dedication of the new lands as well.

He explained that all of ACRES' preserves are available to the public for appreciation of their natural features, though no disturbance of plants, animals, soils or waters is permitted. When acquisitions are completed, ACRES' experts plan appropriate trails through areas. There is usually a registration box for visitor convenience and comments, and small parking sites outside the dedicated portions where possible.

The organization's volunteer members conduct frequent field trips to the sites, and the public is invited to participate and to help protect the areas. "That will be the case also when our acquisition of the land by the Pillars is completed," Heemstra said.

Additional information can be obtained from Jane Dustin, Secretary of ACRES, at 219-637-6264.

* * *

The Back Page...

Environmentalists be Damned!

The other day I was listening to a major, radio station, talk show. The host is not noted for his environmental convictions and most often is very critical of environmentalists' claims. He is a popular host and often rallies loyal callers to his views. That day's program took on a tone of a satirical, whimsical form of environmentalist bashing! It was as if people were afraid or tired of the trouble of a faltering economy and found it easy, comforting, and even funny to blame and take punches at environmental concerns.

To me, it signalled a dangerous shift away from what I thought was a populace becoming more environmentally aware. These people are not seeing the important connections everything has with the environment. I also think that "bashing" in many forms is a way for people to downplay some truth that they are afraid to admit or something they just plain do not understand and feel is threatening to them.

Wherever you stand on environmental issues, at least insist that they are important and should be taken seriously. We have come a long way in caring for the earth. Don't slow down now just because some people want us to think it is a fad or something unpopular to support. You know better.

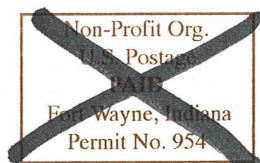
- Fred J. Wooley, Editor

The ACRES Quarterly welcomes letters, articles, artwork, black & white photos, and anything else of interest to our readers. Send any and all items to Fred J. Wooley, Editor, ACRES Quarterly, 180W., 400N., Angola, Indiana, 46703-9502. Deadline for the Autumn issue is September 1, 1992.



printed on recycled paper

ACRES
P. O. Box 140
1802 Chapman Road
Huntertown, Indiana
46748-0140



RETURN ADDRESS REQUESTED

Directors: Ted Heemstra, President; Robert C. Weber, VP; James M. Barrett, VP; Ethyle R. Bloch, VP; Jane Dustin, Secretary; James L. Shearer, Treasurer; Edward H. Eberhardt, John Ellenwood, Arthur Eberhardt, Mary Anna Entwisle, Judy Esterline, James D. Haddock, Carolyn McNaghy, Sam Schwartz, Sharon Partridge, David Gall, Nancy Kasdorf; David J. Miller. Membership Secretary: Mary Anna Entwisle. National Advisory Board: Howard Michaud, Alton Lindsey, M. Graham Netting, Richard H. Pough, Durwood Allen, Lynton K. Caldwell, Frank Kirschner, John W. Klotz. ACRES Quarterly is published by ACRES, Inc. at 1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, Indiana for the interest of its members, friends, and others similarly dedicated to the preservation of natural lands in northeast Indiana. ACRES, Inc. is a non-profit corporation, incorporated under the laws of Indiana. Contributions are deductible for tax purposes. Fred J. Wooley, Editor. MEMBERSHIPS: Patron, \$100.00; Sustaining, \$50.00; Family, \$10.00; Regular, \$5.00; Senior Citizen, \$2.00; and Student, \$1.00. Payable Annually. Membership year is July 1 to June 30.