

THE HISTORY OF HIGHLAND PARK



Main Entrance to City Park, Kokomo, Ind.

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INTRODUCTION

Since its establishment in 1892, Highland Park has made its mark upon the City of Kokomo and its residents. Being that the park spans over 80 acres in the middle of the city and has been the location of many events, it's become a longstanding fixture that is hard to forget about. Due to the park's ever present status in the lives of Kokomo citizens, many don't realize the range of history this piece of land holds. Throughout it's years of service to the public, the grounds of Highland Park have changed and grown as the generations flew by. Many corners of this public park hold tales and artifacts of the history that had once taken place here. Some of the structures and figures of the past are no longer present, but their stories and influence still hold true and helped create Highland Park into what we see today. While its name and look may have changed as time ticked by, the love that Kokomo has held for Highland has never wavered.



ESTABLISHMENT AND CITY PARK

Back in the early days of the City of Kokomo, the notion of including a city park was first suggested sometime in the 1870's. A prime location at the time for a park to be constructed was a plot of land that once held Camp Stilwell during the Civil War. This particular area sat northeast of the city's parameters and was known locally to be a preferred place for picnics and family gatherings. Unfortunately, the City Council did not take action in acquiring the Camp Stilwell site and the city remained further without a park.

In 1892 on April 2nd, 15 acres of a wild wooded piece of ground through which Kokomo Creek flowed was purchased from George and Mary Gwinn for the sum of \$1,500. This Purchase suggestion had been taken more seriously than the first based off of Mayor J.C.F. Thorne's promise to extend a street car line further southwest to the purchase site.

The Kokomo Street Railway Company was only a few months old at that time, following new ownership and management which had taken over the very poor and run-down system. At the time of the land purchase, there had been a street car line between the Panhandle station on North Main and Markland, with a branch on East Sycamore and Ohio to the Diamond Plate Glass Company. The street car station built for the extended line to the park lay along the Deffenbaugh Street entrance. The building still stands, now going by the name Rodgers Pavilion and has had different modifications in it's time to transition it from being a street car station into a community park building.

Due to the lack of given name at the time of establishment and the fact that it was the only park in town, the park was referred to by citizens as 'the city park'. This then formed an attachment of being commonly known as City Park.

CHAUTAUQUA PARK

Land for the new park, which adjoins the park along the east side, was purchased by the newly formed Kokomo Street Railway Company in the 1890's and a large exhibition hall was then built to serve a variety of groups over the years. This area was a part of an 80 acre farm that formerly belonged to M.M. Trabue. One of the first events held in the new addition was the annual Chautauqua meeting which featured lectures, classes and entertainment for people in the area. Thus it was then known as Chautauqua Park for a time.

EXPOSITION PARK

The Chamber of Commerce leased the grounds of the park and the exhibition hall for the first Great Industrial Exposition here in 1914. The large exhibition hall was used to exhibit hand-made crafts and art objects while another building was erected and called the Transportation and Machinery Hall was used for showing large objects such as automobiles and farm machinery. A third building was built just inside the main entrance to the park for local merchants to exhibit their wares and services. This building was a long narrow affair that housed the booths of more than 150 merchants said to represent more than 80% of the total in the city.



Smaller structures were also added including a baseball clubhouse and ticket office. Because of the expansion of the park and the public attention the Great Industrial Exposition had gained, the park was now at this time being referred to as Exposition Park. In fact, the crowds were so large that attended the park and the Great Exposition, extra street cars had to be enabled to handle the amount of attendees. Most of the stores in the city closed for a time so their employees could attend the exposition.

ATHLETIC PARK

Later the utility gave up ownership of the area following the final Expo in 1923 and donated it back to the city. With the main event of the Great Industrial Exposition no longer occurring, the name was then changed to Athletic Park; a name it was briefly referred to as for a small amount of time before it had become Exposition Park. A baseball stadium erected in the place of the exhibition buildings after they had been leveled due to lack of use. The CFD Investments Stadium, known simply as the Highland Park Stadium in the past, has been the scene of many athletic events (mostly baseball) but the American Legion football team also used it during the 1920's.



Among the teams that have played here were the Kokomo Giants, Kokomo Dodgers, and the Kokomo Highlanders. Some of the players who made names for themselves later in the major leagues were Orlando Cepeda, Tommy Davis and Ed Palmquist. The American Legion World Series was held in the stadium on a few different occasions.

TOURIST CAMP

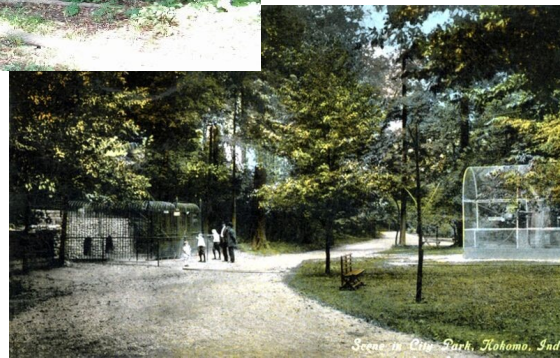
Tourist camps disappeared many years ago but during the 1910's and 20's they were a great convenience for touring motorists. In those days, road travel was rather primitive compared to today's accommodations. Travelers then could pitch a tent in a farm yard, stay overnight in a tourist residence or at a hotel, which many people did. Just about every town established a tourist camp, and Kokomo was no exception.

The year was about 1920 when Henry Balcom, a well-known nurseryman and landscape architect, was employed to lay out this camp which was located close to the Well House in the park opposite the dam and the bridge for the road that led up to the Country Club. Balcom's nursery was located where the Harris Bank branch now stands on West Jefferson.

In his plan there were spaces for 29 tents with a surrounding strip for parking cars. A graveled street and walkways were included in the plan along with grills for cooking. For some reason this camp was called the "Tin Can Camp". How long it was used is uncertain, but since it was not on a well-travelled highway it probably was not heavily used as about the only way tourists could know about it was by use of the tourist guides of the time. To this day, the exact layout of the camp remains somewhat of a mystery.

PARK ZOO

Although most people don't remember, as it has been gone for many years, Highland Park was once home to a small Zoo. Located in the west section of the park, the Zoo probably dated back to about 1908. At one point in time it had cages for at least three bears, one of which was donated by T.C. McReynolds, manager of the city's utilities. These bears are most likely to have been brown bears. There were also cages for several small mammals such as raccoons, deer, foxes and several kinds of birds. The birds were said to be housed in a large cage separate from the other animals and are said to have been an eagle, owls and swans. Also separate from the rest was an alligator pit surrounded by a tall iron fence and covered with screening located in a section of the creek. This zoo was described as one of the park's more remarkable attractions at the time.



Unfortunately, Kokomo's Zoo was the victim of the Great Depression of the 1930's as the Park Department decided it could no longer afford to feed its animals and it relinquished ownership, thusly ending the attraction. The bear caves and fox dens can still be seen cut in the hill next to the original site of the zoo.

HIGHLAND PARK

Due to the lack of given name at the time of establishment, the park was referred to as both City Park and Highland Park for the first 30 years of its existence. The park was more commonly referred to as City Park in its early days due to the few amount of parks that were present in Kokomo. In the latter half of the 1900's, the park began to be referred to exclusively as Highland Park as to help set it apart from the many other parks that the city had established and acquired. There is no set origin story for how the name Highland came about, but it could possibly have something to do with the fact that the portion of the park's land, that was the original purchase site, sat high above the creek beds. The fact that the original park had 'high land' above the creek could have possibly led to the transition of the name Highland.

SYCAMORE STUMP

The Sycamore Stump is a lasting marker from the past that reminds all who visit it just how wooded the Howard County area once was. Being the biggest representative of its species, the Sycamore Stump definitely makes an impression. It sometimes comes as a surprise to local citizens to learn that the old relic did not grow at the site where it is now housed.

The original tree once stood in the west section of Howard County about two miles north of New London. Early residents reference the location of origin to be along the north bank of the Wildcat Creek on the farm of Dorval and Gladys Hudson on West Sycamore Street Pike, a short distance to the west of the New London Road. According to reports concerning the tree, it was said to have been 100 feet tall before storms broke it down to a huge, hollow stump. The trunk was said to have been measured at 57 feet in circumference and one of its lowest hanging branches was eight feet in diameter. It is estimated to be at least 800 years old but some newspaper accounts at the time the stump was removed and transplanted to Highland Park claimed that the tree was 1,500 years old.

In June of 1916 the City Parks Administrator, Jacob Bergman, began to promote the notion that the stump should be transferred to a city park so as to preserve it as a relic of the county's pioneer period. Colonel Jim Milner undertook the unusual task of moving the old landmark and hired Henry and Ed Ortman to pull the 21-ton load with their 35-horsepower Rumley tractor engine. Preparations and appraisals of the stump for its move began as a concrete platform was being placed 'on the highest part of the city park'. Personal accounts recall that the stump sat so close to the creek bed that those participating in the removal had to stand in the water while actively sawing it free. To fully release and free the stump from its expansive roots, a man had to be hoisted to the top of a 15-foot-high snag and lowered into the hollow middle to finish cutting it free. Then a small hole was knocked through the side, a crosscut saw inserted, and the shell was quickly cut through at the water's edge.

On Sunday, June 18, 1916, the stump was loaded onto a flatbed wagon and attached to the Ortman's engine to be pulled through the preplanned route. Due to exposure from local newspapers, citizens came out and crowded the sides of the streets along the scheduled route to witness the transition of the massive stump. At one point, when the stump was being brought up the bluff of the creek bed into an oat field, the chain between the Ortman engine and the wagon snapped due to the weight and pressure. Because the wagon's wheels were being choked with wedges as they progressed up the bluff, the stump stayed in place and the problem was quickly solved as the chain was reinforced and doubled up.



Although the project had been planned to take only Sunday, since part of the route was scheduled to be torn up the next day for repairs, it soon became evident that most of the trip would need to be completed on Monday. The stump was so large it almost blocked the entire road. Because of the size, a route had to be planned with no obstruction to the stump's width or height.

The route outlined by Jacob Bergman to the Kokomo Tribune was to bring the stump in on the Jefferson Street Pike to the first road west of "the new boulevard" then south to the Sycamore Road which would be taken east to the "Conwell" road, since the county Superintendent of Highways would not allow the traction engine on the new boulevard. At Conwell Road the movers would go south, crossing Wildcat Creek at the Chaffin Bridge, a concrete arch bridge with no superstructure to interfere with the 15-foot-high stump. At the Junction School, they were to turn east and enter the park by way of Alto Pike.

The Kokomo Tribune reported in 1916 that several modifications were to be made to the stump including a brass plate that was to be attached to the side of the Sycamore Stump telling something of its past, a door cut into the trunk's wall, and a winding stairway constructed to the top where a roofed-in platform was to be installed. These plans were never completed. However, it is claimed that a long-distance telephone booth was installed for some time in the hollow of the stump that could hold at least a dozen people.

At first the Sycamore Stump was simply placed upon the cement slab that was made for it and left to the public for viewing. In the 1930's an open-air shelter was built around the stump to provide shade and shelter from rain fall. Due to vandalism that can still be seen etched and written on the walls of the Sycamore Stump, the shelter was added onto and enclosed to ensure the relic's safety. Later on, the Visitors Center was built to house the Sycamore Stump along with its new neighbor, Old Ben, the World's Largest Steer.

OLD BEN

Old Ben has been a constant fixture in Highland Park for as long as most Kokomo residents can remember. Along with the Sycamore Stump, he is currently housed in the Visitors Center located on Old Ben Drive where he can be viewed by visiting park goers. While his name has been spread far and wide due to his popularity and title of World's Largest Steer, this local legend is known no better than in the City of Firsts. Being in the public eye for a number of decades, Old Ben's lengthy story is sometimes forgotten.

Old Ben was born in 1902 on a farm belonging to Mike and John Murphy located in the southern section of Miami County near an area commonly known as Haggerty's Crossing. Ben was born at 125 pounds to an ordinary short horned cow and a registered Hereford bull. It's said that due to his size and height, at less than a week old Ben had to rest upon his knees to be able to nurse from his mother. From there his growth continued to top the charts. By 20 months of age, Ben weighed approximately one ton. At 4 years of age Old Ben had reached a weight of over 2 tons. Despite Ben's massive size, he was not fed a special diet to gain weight and was just set out to pasture with the other livestock owned by the Murphy brothers.

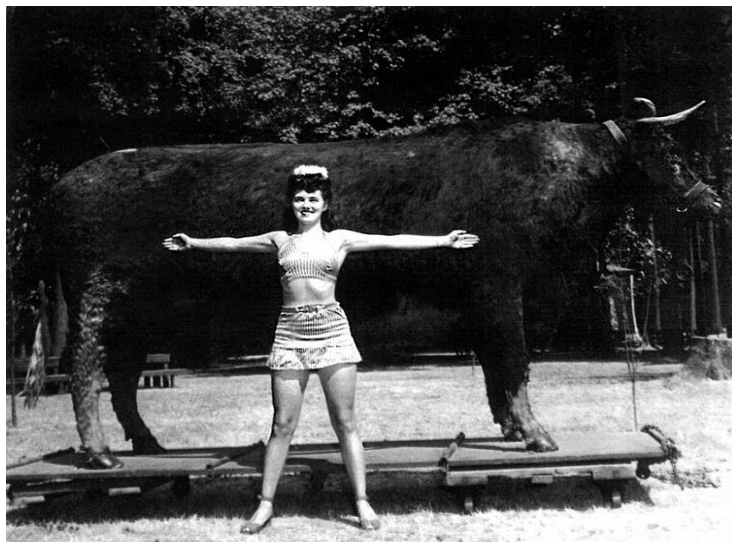
Because of his obvious size, sightseers were drawn to the Murphy farm to gaze at the World's Largest Steer; a title that he had set and still holds to this day. Due to his status as steer of mixed breeds, he could not be registered. But because of his popularity, Ben made his way around to different fairs and festivals appearing in his own private tents and venues, often gaining ribbons and awards for his fine lines and grand size. His traveling became so frequent that the Nickel Plate Rail Road extended a spur line to stretch to the Murphy Farm to help transport him. Many side-show and circus owners tried and offered to buy Old Ben but the Murphy's turned them down, preferring to show him themselves in a private tent at fairs all over Indiana and at the State Fair for many years.



Unfortunately for Ben, a day in February of 1910 came and cut his life short. Ben had slipped on a patch of ice on the farm and fell heavily, resulting in a broken leg. Due to his size and the inability to move him as well as limited animal health resources, the Murphy brothers reluctantly decided to contact a veterinarian from Marion to come and put Old Ben down. At his time of death, Ben measured at 6 and $\frac{1}{2}$ feet tall at the shoulder, 14 feet around, and 16 and $\frac{1}{4}$ feet from his nose to the tip of his tail. Two different figures have been reported for his weight at the time of death: 4,585 pounds and 4,720 pounds. A Peru grocer bargained for the beef of Old Ben, thinking the he could profit off of the steers fame. However, once the citizens of Peru caught wind of the plans, threats of boycotting the store came about and cancelled the grocer's scheme. Instead, the beef was quickly transported to Indianapolis for conversion into frankfurters. The hide of Old Ben was then sent to a taxidermist in New York where it was stuffed and mounted for posterity. The Murphy brothers displayed Old Ben's mount on their farm until they sold the property in 1919.

Highland Park: Landmarks

With the Murphy Farm sold, the City of Kokomo gained ownership of Old Ben's stuffed form from the brothers. Some accounts claim that he was donated while others say he was sold for the price of \$300.00, crooked horn and all. Ben was then sent to the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department and placed within his own shelter in Highland Park called the 'Swiss Chalet' that sat across the way from the Sycamore Stump. During WWII, word about Old Ben spread around the world. Two young men from Kokomo who were a part of a garrison stationed on a Pacific island had bragged to their peers about the World's Largest Steer that claimed fame for their hometown. Because of the disbelief and ridicule from the members of their unit, the two young men wrote to the Kokomo Tribune to request proof to show their fellow soldiers in black and white. The reporter assigned to the story was able to convince the Park Superintendent at that time to take Old Ben out of his enclosure for a photo shoot. A local model, Phyllis Hartzell-Talbert, was used in the photo shoot to show the scale of how big the steer's form truly was. The photo was sent to the young men along with sworn statements from a sheriff, a judge, and an editor that contained the exact measurements and a letter stating Ben's story. Attention to the picture of the steer and the girl caught fire and spread throughout the armed forces as the soldiers from the original garrison were transferred and scattered around the world. Young American men stationed around the world wrote to the Kokomo Tribune to request a copy of the picture and each request was met. Old Ben even received attention from Ripley's Believe It or Not! and his tale was featured in a publication in 1968.



In the 1960's Old Ben became the center of a scandal that sparked rage in the heart of Kokomo. A vandal broke into the Swiss Chalet and mutilated the steer; taking off with his tail, both ears, and right horn. A lone vandal was then apprehended after a month long investigation was launched by Kokomo Police Department and the missing parts of Old Ben were recovered and restored. The act was executed by an Indiana State University student who had previously lived in the City of Kokomo. It was reported in local news that the vandal had not mentioned or admitted to any sort of motivation for the awful act.

As the years waned on, Old Ben's original home in Highland Park of the Swiss Chalet became dilapidated and worn down. In 1989, it was decided that Old Ben would be moved across the way to join the Sycamore Stump in the newly constructed Visitors Center. In a ceremony held in mid April, Old Ben was hoisted and moved across the street by a group of 10 Parks Department workers. The steer was perched upon a surfboard styled platform and wheeled through the park as he donned a pair of sunglasses, Bermuda shorts, and sun hat. Old Ben has been housed in the Visitors Center ever since.

CIVIL WAR CANNON

In the past, few people were aware that a Civil War cannon still exists in Kokomo. Even fewer know how long that it has been here. Some remember when it still had its wooden wheels and stood just beyond the entrance bridge to the left as you entered City Park (now Highland). A picture of it there, taken around the year 1910, is the earliest information about it to be reported. Later, the cannon was mounted in the western part of the park without its wheels or carriage. During the 1920's and early 1930's it was relocated to Foster Park and then disappeared into storage. It was briefly in Mehlig Park before being moved to the miniature golf course at the Seashore municipal swimming pool where it was mounted (barrel only) on a wooden base. Since no markings or touch hole were visible it was more than likely mounted upside down. According to a local account, the cannon was shoved into Kokomo Creek one Halloween in the early 1940's.

For many years, the identification of what type of cannon it is was uncertain. Some claimed it to be a 12 pound Napoleon, the type most commonly used during the war, while others thought it to be a Parrott. As of the year 2008, further investigations revealed that the cannon currently in possession of the Parks Department is a 12 pound Howitzer Cannon.

Only due to photographic proof do we know that there was yet another cannon that called Highland Park home. Not much is known of the cannon other than the fact that it was a 6 pounder Parrott cannon. The fate of the 6 pounder Parrott cannon that formerly stood in Highland Park is still unknown. What we do know is that it was a Civil War piece and that it was probably originally obtained by the local GAR. We also know that it had two different placements in the park. It seems likely that it was melted down for one of the war efforts of the 1940's. Several theories have been put forward as to what happened to the Parrott cannon; including the one that states it was buried on the island in Kokomo Creek which seems very unlikely. Other rumors state that due to the consistent flooding of Highland Park, that the cannon simply sunk into the soft ground and has since been submerged.

The "Kokomo Cannon" has been in Kokomo since shortly after it was donated to the Thomas J. Harrison Post # 30 of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) by Congress on August 8, 1882. There were two cannons, both 12 pound bronze field Howitzers, donated at this time. Only this one remains. The 12 pounder Howitzer that was once located at the Seashore Pool area is one of the two obtained by Orlando A. Somers following the Civil War in which he had served and was elected National Commander of the GAR in 1917. It is believed both were in his front yard for a time located just west of Somers Park. One was said to have been stolen while another account said it was loaned to an out of town restorer but never returned. There was also a 3 inch Ordinance cannon in City Park (Highland) for many years that appeared on several postcards of the day. Sadly, it also no longer exists. The cannons were to honor and memorialize the Civil War Veterans. Today this cannon stands as a symbol of honor to all Kokomo Veterans, may we never forget them.

Highland Park: Landmarks

As to restoration, the cannon received a new gun carriage from funds raised from Kokomo's Orlando A. Somers' Camp 1 of the Sons of Union Veteran's of the Civil War.

The Kokomo Civil War Cannon was created by Leeds and Company of New Orleans. Leeds made a total of 49 cannons for the South. Nine of these were 12 pound bronze Howitzers. Of the nine, only three are known to still be in existence today. The other two cannons are in the possession of the National Park Service. New Orleans surrendered to the Union forces on May 1, 1862, thusly putting Leeds and Company out of business.

STATS:

12 pound Confederate bronze Howitzer

Foundry: Leeds and Company-New Orleans

Foundry #: 48

Years Made: 1862

Weight of Barrel: 775 lbs.

Powder Charge: 1 pound

Range at 5 degrees elevation: 1,072 yards



VERMONT COVERED BRIDGE

The City of Firsts holds dear another transplanted monument that happens to be the last of its kind within Indiana. The bright red covered bridge in Highland Park has the final remaining Smith Type #3 Trusses in Indiana. The Vermont Covered Bridge is a transplant from the town Vermont, which sat about 5 miles to the east of Kokomo. The bridge's story first started when official action began on August 11, 1875 when the Howard County Board of Commissioners sought bids for two bridge projects; one at the town of Vermont and the other near Stonebreaker's Mill, about 10 miles west of Kokomo. On October 5, 1875, the commissioners accepted the bid from the Smith Bridge Company of Toledo, Ohio for the Vermont Bridge and a local contractor for the other bridge. The Smith Bridge Company's bid of \$991.62 was for a "Smith Patent Wooden Bridge" with a "High Double Truss".

The completed 95-foot clear span of the covered bridge, which engineers at the time estimated would sustain a rolling weight of 5,600 pounds per lineal foot, was accepted by the commissioners January 5, 1876 at the same time as the Stonebreaker Bridge. The contract did not include the stone abutments or hauling materials from the Kokomo Train Depot to the town of Vermont - about \$1,000 - which was paid for by local residents. According to the January 8, 1876, Kokomo Saturday Tribune; "The contractors, anxious to have their bridge introduced in this part of Indiana, have done a most excellent job, one that gives satisfaction to all who have seen it, as well as the commissioners. It is very symmetrical, has beautiful approaches and looks about as well as a well-finished house." The article also states that the cost of first-class wooden bridges was about three-fifths that of iron structures at the time. The Stonebreaker Bridge was ultimately removed after the 1913 flood severely damaged its abutments. The Old Strawton Pike, known now for being the oldest road in Howard County, was moved slightly when the Vermont Bridge was built so as to have it cross the new bridge.

Now, the only visible remain of the town of Vermont in its original placement is an old grain elevator but it wasn't always in that state. In 1957, plans for the new Kokomo Reservoir called for flooding the valley at the bridge site. The old wooden bridge was to be replaced with a wider and longer concrete span, built on higher ground. The only saving grace for the Vermont Bridge was the late M.E. White, the then president of the Howard County Historical Society. White proposed moving the span to one of Kokomo's parks. It is mostly due to his efforts that the bridge has been preserved. White coordinated public meetings, fund raising efforts, volunteer work, a search for the bridge's new location, and the acceptance of bids to move the bridge. The original low bid to move the bridge intact from the town of Vermont to its new home in Highland Park was about \$10,000.



While the bridge was waiting for enough funds to be raised as well as arrangements to be made for its move, it was set on fire. Thanks to an alert passer-by and the quick action of the Greentown Volunteer Fire Department, the bridge was saved with only minor damage. According to the July 30, 1957 Kokomo Tribune, "An arsonist, apparently disgruntled over efforts to save the bridge for historical purposes, touched a torch to kerosene sprinkled over the aging span and then fled the scene." The bridge was closed to traffic following the fire.

Highland Park: Landmarks

September 2, 1957 arrived but yet still no work had been started. The Historical Society made an agreement with local citizen Homer Hollinger to dismantle the bridge, numbering each piece for reassembly in Highland Park, with the consent of the Kokomo Park Board at a cost of around \$3,000. He began work immediately and by September 21st, only the framework remained to be taken apart. When the work of dismantling the bridge was completed in January 1958, local YMCA members agreed to raise the remaining \$1,500 needed to pay for the project.

The total cost of moving the bridge was under \$3,500. The Kokomo Parks Department constructed the new abutments for the covered bridge. Because of rotten wood, one end of the bridge had to be extensively repaired. This occurrence had a major effect on the decision to not allow vehicular traffic pass through the bridge. The abutments were about 6 feet deep with no pilings put in them, meaning that it would be safe for foot traffic only.

In January of 1992, through the Parks Department, the bridge received a new shake roof. The new roof's price of about \$6,000 is close to six times the cost of the entire bridge in 1875. In recent years, the bridge has been opened to the public and has become a popular venue for weddings.

Flood waters in the park have reached the bottom of the bridge three or four times since it's been in Highland Park, but so far there has been no damage. There are no plans to raise the abutments.

In January of 2012, the Vermont Covered Bridge received an official Historical Landmark Designation by the Kokomo Common Council.

ELWOOD HAYNES MUSEUM

Elwood Haynes

October 14, 1857 - April 13, 1925

For 35 years Elwood Haynes was a resident of Kokomo. The record of those years was one of fine achievement for himself and for this community. As the builder of America's first commercially successful gasoline automobile, he linked Kokomo's name enduring with the motor vehicle industry. As the inventor of Stellite alloy and stainless steel, he gave the mechanical world two rustless materials of inestimable value. In the hearts of his fellow townsmen Mr. Haynes was enshrined as a Christian gentleman, a designation thoroughly deserved and universally accorded him. Elwood Haynes' property and former home, now turned in the Elwood Haynes Museum, were donated to the City of Kokomo by Bernice Haynes Hillis and family on October 14, 1965.

Elwood Haynes was born of English ancestry in Portland, Indiana on October 14, 1857. He graduated from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Worcester, Massachusetts in 1881, where he discovered tungsten chrome steel. In 1884, he attended Johns Hopkins University for post graduate studies. He was the "Father of the Natural Gas Industry" in Indiana. In 1888, he invented the vapor thermostat. In 1890, he moved to Greentown, Indiana as the Superintendent of the Indiana Natural Gas Company.

Haynes conceived the idea of a "horseless carriage" while in Portland in 1891. He moved to Kokomo, completed the plans and hired Elmer and Edgar Apperson to build the first automobile in 1893. After having discovered an alloy made of pure chromium and pure nickel, he began commercially producing automobiles under the Haynes Apperson logo in 1898.



Highland Park: Landmarks

Haynes also discovered an alloy to make a durable spark plug electrode in 1899. It is from these alloys that Haynes Stellite Company was formed. In 1906, Haynes patented several cobalt-chromium alloys. This work led to patents being issued for cobalt-chromium-molybdenum-tungsten alloys, which he named Stellite. These cobalt-based alloys found immediate use as lathe tools in the First World War, tripling machining production.

The Elwood Haynes Museum is located at 1915 South Webster Street, on the east end of Highland Park. The previous home, possessions, and automobiles of Elwood Haynes can be viewed during the business hours of 11am to 4pm on Tuesdays through Saturdays and 1pm to 4pm on Sundays.



AWARDS:

1922-The John Scott Award (Highest award given to a scientist of the USA), University of Pennsylvania

1925-Pioneers of the Automobile Award, National Automobile Chamber of Commerce

1965-Inducted into the Hall of Fame for Great Americans, New York University

2007-First inductee into the Howard County Automotive Heritage Hall of Fame, Kokomo, Indiana

2015-Inducted into the Automotive Hall of Fame, Detroit, Michigan

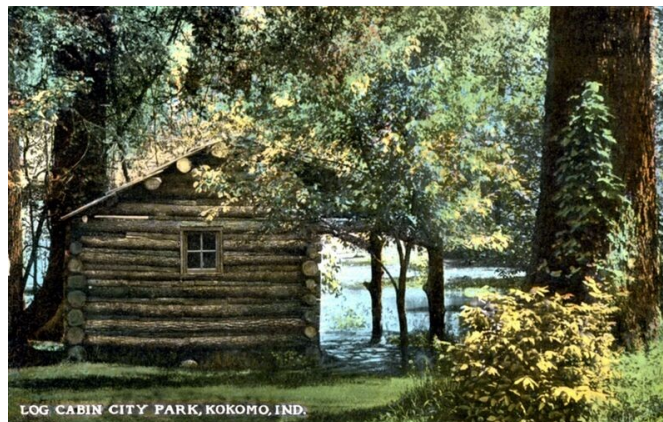
RODGERS PAVILION

Another very prominent landmark in Highland Park that many people may not know the historic origin of is Rodgers Pavilion. Originally a trolley station, the building was built by the street railway company for the convenience of passengers attending the Great Exposition or visiting in the park. Originally, it was open on the sides with about eight or ten long wooden seats. Street cars ran along the north side and a broad cement platform separated the track from the building. In a way, Rodgers Pavilion helped finalize the establishment of Highland Park. At first, the promise of a city park was only solidified once a deal was in place to extend a City Trolley line to the parcel of land acquired for the park. This then gave the citizens access to the southwest part of the city and helped flow attendance to the park, which at the time, was on the far edge of the city limits. Following the last run of a street car in Kokomo in 1931, the structure stood empty for several years and was used for storage until about 1958 when it was enclosed and improvements were made to the interior. The former trolley station was first known simply as “the shelter house”. It has since been changed to the present name of “Rodgers Pavilion” after the former Park Superintendent at the time in which it was converted. Since that time, the Rodgers Pavilion has become a community building that is rented out year round by the Parks and Recreation Department for events and programs.



LOG CABIN

One historical landmark within Highland Park no longer stands but its previous location is a commonly known area within the park. A small log cabin sat in Highland Park many years ago, but when it was built and its original purpose are uncertain. The cabin sat upon the small island located in the Kokomo Creek that can be accessed by a foot bridge. For years the log cabin was used as a meeting place for local Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops, club gatherings, camping and picnics. Unfortunately, the cabin was set afire and destroyed by a gang supposedly celebrating VJ Day during the WWII era in 1945. All that is left to remember the cabin are a few pictures and the small island that was once its home.



PLAYGROUNDS

Highland Park has hosted many different playgrounds throughout its time that have provided many children with enjoyment and memories. The first playground was established around 1910 and was located just to the left of the Park Road exit. This playground included a merry-go-round, several swings and two slides. At one point, many residents remember there being a miniature children's train with a short track that ran next to the main service bridge over the Kokomo Creek. These features no longer have any trace in the park and can only be referenced by fond memories.

In August of 2016, a tornado came through the south end of Highland Park. Along with other property and landscape damage, a small playground equipped with handicap accessible equipment was demolished. Instead of rebuilding the separate playground, the Parks and Recreation Department decided to merge new handicap accessible equipment with the existing equipment at the main playground. Along with the instalment of the new equipment, the main jungle gym that had been placed prior to the 1980's received refurbishing and new paint to match the new pieces. The Highland Park main playground has since been deemed a National Demonstration Site as an all-inclusive playground for individuals of all abilities to play together.



WELL HOUSE

Highland Park once had a community well where the public was able to drive up and get their fill of water. The water from the Highland well was once described as tasting and smelling like eggs. The well was later capped sometime before the 1970's but the structure of the well's house still stands and can be found next to the Vermont Covered Bridge. The original well house has a picnic shelter located just next to it that is referred to as the Well House Shelter that can be rented for picnics and parties.

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*The historical photos featured were provided by
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