



In Case You Missed It

P. A. Cohen paciascc@aol.com is (was?) selling this book for \$10. Patty has given me permission to reproduce a few portions of the book for your enjoyment and this is the last installment. The whole time I did this selection, I have been thinking of Beverly Railsback who retired as a Reference Librarian. If anyone would like a copy, please contact Patty Cohen.

The new library was a big surprise to me. I was trying to get some information and take pictures for the upcoming 50th reunion of the Class of 1960 (*the best graduating class in history – that's my story and I am sticking to it* ☺) and saw the **SOLD** sign that hit me like a ton of bricks. How can they sell one of Cambridge City's most prized possessions and landmarks? Sure, it was cramped and was too small but it was our library and we grew up with it. The new one doesn't have the same feel, smell, closeness, or hominess (is that a word?). After seeing the finished product, I don't know why this wasn't done years ago. It has room to grow, more parking, better access, better lighting, and to top it off . . . the same helpful and friendly staff!

The Cambridge City Public Library

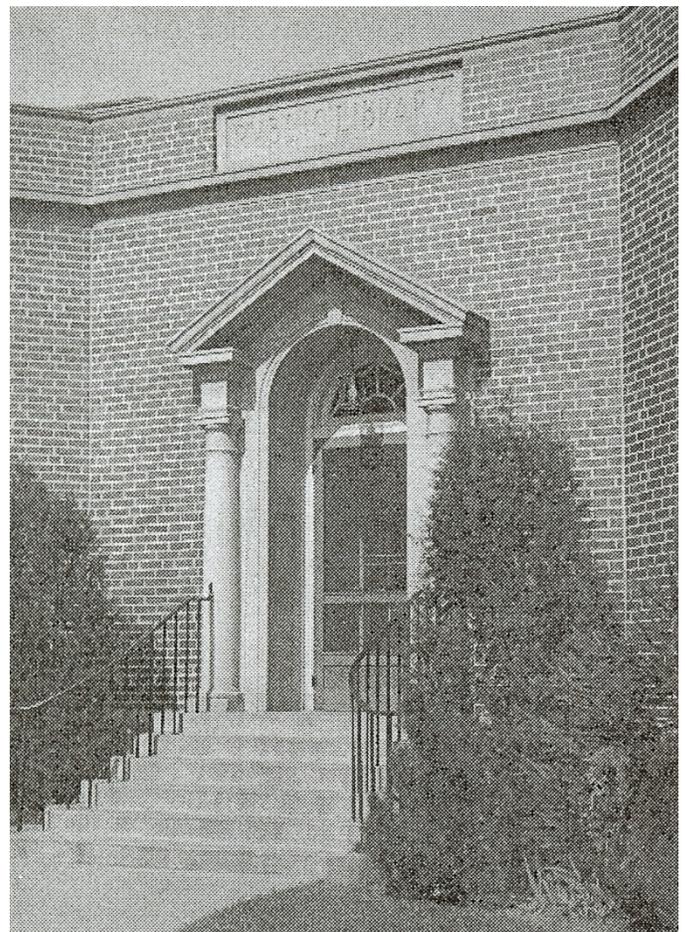
The establishment of the Library of Cambridge City may be attributed to the "vision" of a group of women, namely the Helen Hunt Club. In February of 1892, realizing the great value of a library, Mrs. Virginia Meredith appointed a permanent committee consisting of Mrs. Belle Callaway Marson, Mrs. William Hastings and Mrs. Mae Study Boden. Their duty was to investigate the laws under which a public library could be organized. The school board readily cooperated, but nothing could be done under the prevailing law. But these women did not lose sight of their vision. In 1899 a Traveling Library was brought from Indianapolis and installed in J. C. Dodson's law office. In 1908 one was placed in the overall factory where books might be available to the young women employed there.

At the invitation of the Helen Hunt Club, in 1911, Carl Millam of the State Library commission spoke in Cambridge City. People from the surrounding communities were present as well as the people of Cambridge City. Plans were made and committees appointed for organizing a library. Among those serving on the committees were B. F. Wissler, Mrs. W. H. Honey, Mrs. John Judkins, Mrs. Virginia Meredith, Mrs. W. A. Roth, Mrs. Willard Petro, Mrs. Robert Hicks, Thad Frazier, Frank Marson, Lawrence Bertsch and Robert Hicks. The town was divided into four districts, and a house-to-house canvas was started. In March of 1913, subscriptions for the Cambridge City Public Library amounted to \$1,000.99. At this time a room in the Boyd flat, second floor, was rented to house the library.

Everyone was invited to attend a social hour one evening and to bring a book. The first Victrola ever heard in Cambridge City was a feature of the evening. The guests brought over 500 books which was the actual beginning of the library. The seven persons appointed to constitute a library were L. A. Bertsch, W. H. Doney, Mrs. W. A. Roth, B. F. Wissler, Mrs. John Judkins, F. C. Mosbaugh and Mrs. Katherine Callaway Ferguson. Before a librarian was employed, the library was open three evenings with board members in charge. Miss Irene Smith of Connersville became the first librarian in September of 1913. In the fall of 1914 Miss Florence Webb of Angola took charge for a year. For the next ten years, until 1925, Mrs. Tweedy was librarian and contributed much to the growth of the library. A branch library was opened in Pershing in 1916 and one in Milton in 1918.

In 1919 the library was moved into a first floor room in the Judkins building. With the increase of volumes, the need for more room was a constant problem. It had been the hope of many that a public library building might be erected. The dream became reality through the generosity of a man who was a daily visitor at the library. Upon the death of Joseph Hollowell in May 1934 it was revealed that he had left a bequest of \$10,000 for a library building with the stipulation that the community raise \$5,000 within a year. With the same spirit of zeal and cooperation with which the people had first established a library, the community raised over \$6,000. Further aid was received when the Public Service Commission of Indiana donated a lot on Main Street and a grant of \$13,000 from the government was received.

Work on the building started January 1936, but due to the extremely cold weather little was accomplished for several weeks. On April 1, 1936, a cold rainy day, the cornerstone was laid with the Masonic Grand Lodge in charge. In 1936, the library board consisted of Miss Katherine Kniese, president; Mrs. Oliver Wallace, vice-president; Mrs. Edith Hughes, secretary; Mrs. William Guyton, Mrs. Eva Paul, L. W. Arburn, I. J. L. Harmeier, Bruce Henderson, W. D. Judkins, George Crull, and Hugh Foss.



1936 Library exterior

I suppose that this sounds silly but the 1936 Library had a smell and warmth that was extremely inviting. After dad passed, I spent a couple of weeks with mom. During that time, I walked down to the Library and checked out a couple of books. I don't think

I was supposed to be able to have them since I lived in Indianapolis but they gave them to me anyway . . . that is the way the folks are in Cambridge City.



1936 Library interior

The 1936 library building served the community well for many years. But with the additions of computers and increased use of the library, the Library Board was compelled to hire professionals in 2006 to perform a feasibility study to determine whether a new library was needed, or whether the old library could be adapted for greatly increased usage and for new technology requirements. The study revealed that a new library was definitely needed, with parking and accessibility for the handicapped. Many options and sites were considered, but the final site selected was the former Allen Chevrolet building,

located at 600 West Main Street. The facility was purchased in July of 2008 at a cost of \$242,000. The Library received a Community Block Grant of \$500,000 in March of 2009. Other grants received include a grant through the Indiana State Library for \$10,000 and a Stimulus Plan Grant for \$111,800. Over \$70,000 was raised from public donations, including the purchase of over 330 memorial bricks.

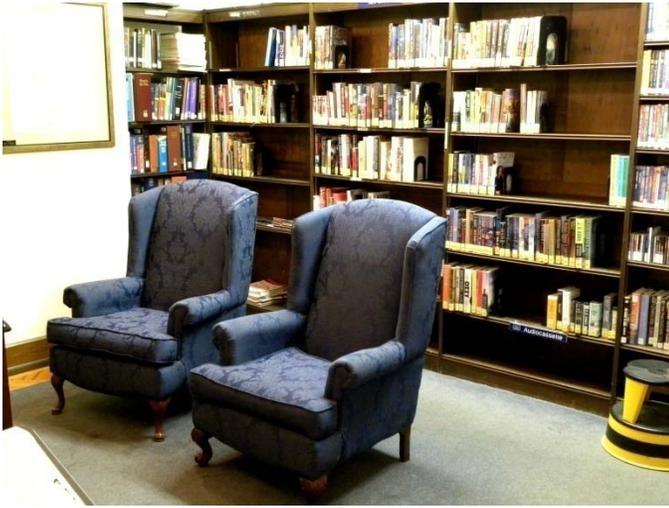


In the old Library in 2010



There were some computers

If you look for it, the Class of 1960 purchased one of the memorial bricks for the Library.

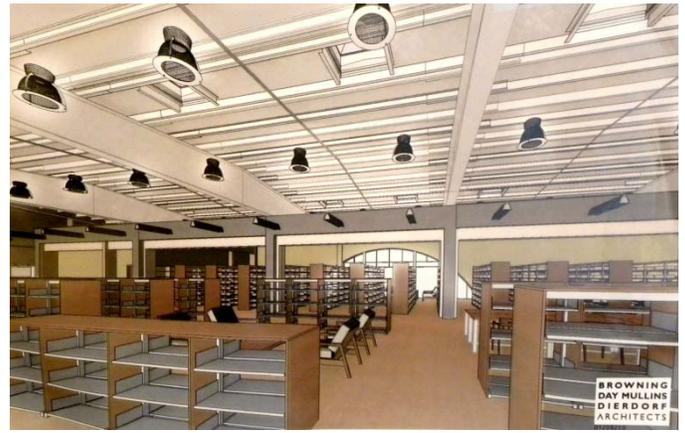


And some places to sit and read

Groundbreaking on the new building was held March 30, 2010. The 1936 library's official last day as a library was February 19, 2011. The new library had its ribbon cutting and grand opening on March 20, 2011 and officially opened to the public as the new Cambridge City Library on March 21, 2011. The library uses a new card catalog system called Evergreen. Programs at the library continue to expand with the new facility, including computer classes.



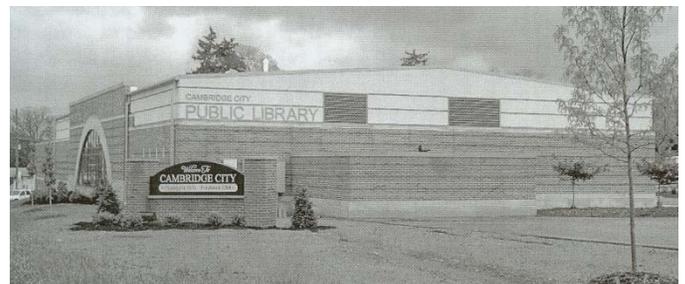
*Browning Day Mullins Dierdorf PC, Inc.
rendering of the exterior of the new Library.*



*Browning Day Mullins Dierdorf PC, Inc.
rendering of the interior of the new Library.*



East entrance of Library



View of Library from the west

CAMBRIDGE CITY HISTORY ROOM AND MUSEUM

In the 1970's, Mrs. Rose Cohee and Mrs. Martha Lambert examined a basement room in the 1936 library, then used as a stack room for magazines, reference materials, and memorabilia which had been donated to the library, and saw an opportunity. Mrs. Cohee and Mrs. Lambert convinced the Library Board the room could

be a valuable resource for the community and went to work, emptying and remodeling the room, cataloguing and organizing the library's resources and memorabilia. The two ladies added some of their own treasures to the resources available. Their goal was to have the room ready for the celebration of the Bicentennial. The National Road Traveler of February 4, 1976 announced Mrs. Rose Cohee and Mrs. Martha Lambert were officially named the Historians of Cambridge City. A date was set for the room's first open house - June 20, 1976.

In a special article on the History Room and its opening, the Traveler reported, "The two gals have kept this newspaper well apprised of the goings on at the room, and that we appreciate, but more importantly, they have indexed contributions, studied artifacts and diligently insisted upon accuracy. More generously, they have provided many personal articles to assure the future generations that a live and continuing history of Cambridge City and area will always be available."

In subsequent years, the mission of Mrs. Cohee and Mrs. Lambert has been continued by Mary Graver, Pauline Montgomery, Virginia Martin, Roberta Lemley, Ruth Ann Hayes, Marthanna Ashley, Phyllis Harrod, Sarah Addison, Lori Griffin, and current workers Patty Hersberger, Joan Casey, Leah Huddleston, Doug Arthur, and Jill King.

I have spent quite a bit of time in the History Room before it was moved. I can't say enough for the amount of help I received while looking for things.



The new History Room

Treasures of the History Room include many personal effects .of General Solomon Meredith, including his commission signed by President Lincoln, his sword, sash, spurs, cane, and shoebox. Other valuables include the baton used to lead the East Germantown Civil War Band, the Medal of Honor earned by Milton native Thomas Jefferson Graves, and a canal bell from a boat on the Whitewater Canal. Other holdings include maps, atlases, copies of Town Board minutes and indices to the minutes, scrapbooks, family histories, yearbooks, and even paintings and objects of art. Files are kept on historical people, places, and events, and each historical tidbit is carefully cataloged. Visitors may be seated on chairs made by the Cambridge City Chair Factory. Microfilm of early newspapers is available. In the new Cambridge City Library, the History Room is more visible, accessible, and spacious.

OVERBECK POTTERY AND OVERBECK MUSEUM

Undoubtedly the name of Overbeck has brought more world-wide attention to

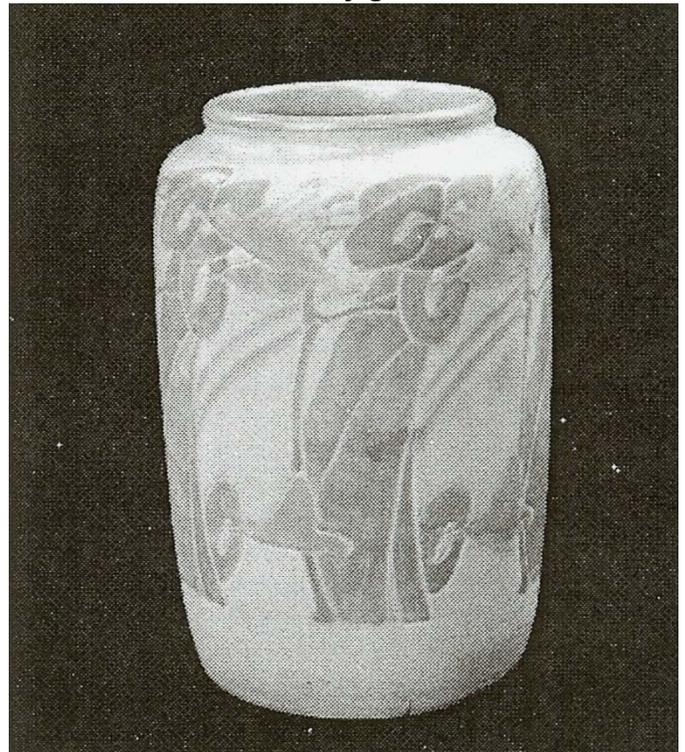
Cambridge City than any other name during its one hundred and seventy five years. So it behooves us to give honor and recognition to the Overbeck sisters in these pages of history. The Overbeck family migrated from Virginia to find a new home in Eastern Indiana. The father and mother were educated, cultured people; their family consisted of six daughters and one son - Ida, Margaret, Hannah, Harriet, Elizabeth, Mary Francis, and Charles. Four of the daughters (Margaret, Elizabeth, Hannah, and Mary Francis) were intimately connected with the pottery.

Margaret, who was an art teacher in DePauw University, is credited with starting the making of pottery in 1911. Elizabeth, the potter, studied at New York State School of Clay Working and Ceramics under Prof. Charles F. Binns. Hannah specialized in design, specializing in plant designs. Mary, the designer, studied at Columbia University. Their work was all done in their studio workshop and home - the complete process from preparing the clay to the final firing of the pottery. Quality was their aim, not quantity; in fact, only a few hundred pieces were turned out each year. The pottery was handmade on the potter's wheel or hand-built (the same method the Indians used). The wheel-made pieces generally have a smooth surface; the hand-built a surface is uneven, showing dim finger marks. Each piece was specially designed and never duplicated - both shape and decoration being used only once. The glazes were originated by Miss Elizabeth and were the potter's exclusive property. In this work every effort was made to harmonize the decoration perfectly with the piece decorated. One of the sisters was

quoted: "So far our work has been experimental, but it is at least as original as possible. Whatever its merits or demerits, it is a thoroughly American product." These sisters may truly be called designers, creators and decorators in whose work, utility, sincerity, and beauty unite and give to the world rare gifts.



Overbeck figurines

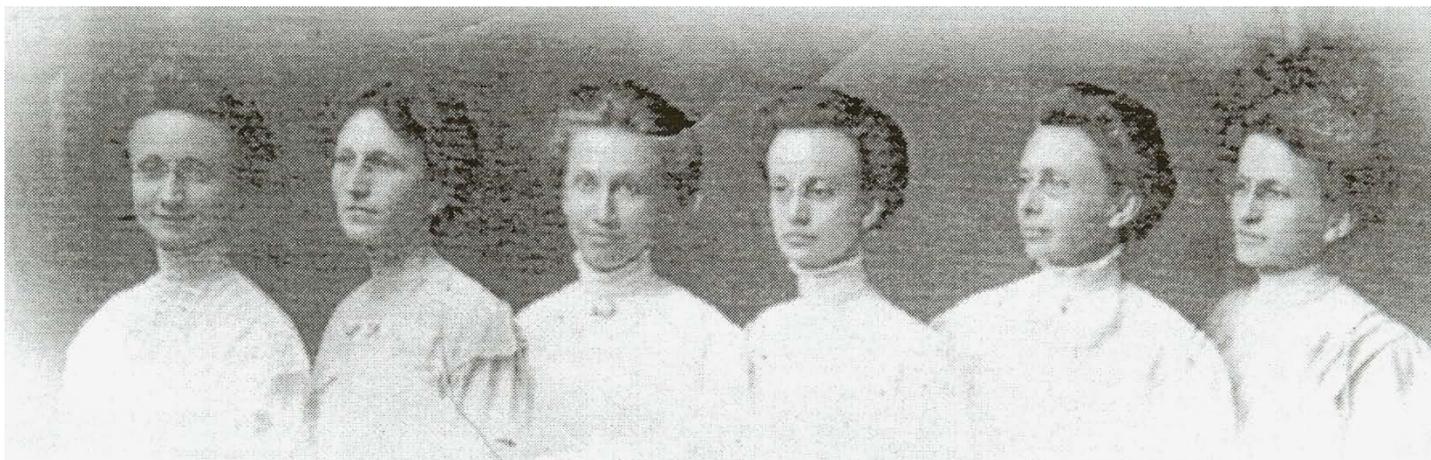


Overbeck vase

In 1972, Kathleen and Arthur Postle gave their extensive collection of Overbeck pottery to the Cambridge City Library in

memory of Mrs. Postle's parents and former Cambridge City residents, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Ressler. This gift formed the nucleus of the current collection of the Overbeck Museum, which is now housed in a dedicated exhibit space in the new Cambridge City Library. Pieces from the

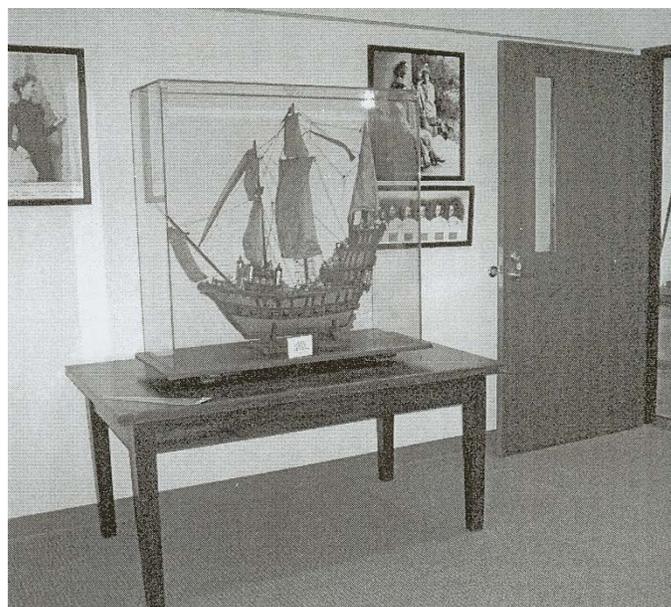
Museum have traveled the United States and have been displayed in the country's finest museums among the works of some of America's greatest artists. The Overbeck Museum collection continues to grow, with donations from generous friends of the Museum.



Overbeck Sisters: Harriet, Margaret, Hannah, Elizabeth, Ida, Mary Francis



Overbeck museum



Overbeck museum