

INDY POSTCARD COLLECTOR

DECEMBER
2024

Indianapolis Postcard Club, established January 6, 1975



Happy Holidays to You!

Please join us at our next meeting!

Please join us at our next regular monthly meeting on Thursday, December 12, 2024, at the MCL in Speedway. We will gather for dinner at 5:30 p.m. and the meeting will start at 6:00 p.m. The competition is Indiana companies.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Kent Clady
(317) 966-5302; kclady@ol-g.org

Going Underground

Dewey J. Conces, Jr.

Mines are either open pit or shaft mines. In the Keweenaw copper range of Michigan, the mines were shaft mines. The miners sank shafts from the surface sometimes vertically but usually at an angle following the vein of copper ore. From the shaft, miners created horizontal tunnels or drifts from which the ore was mined and then sent to the surface for processing. Each shift the miners had to descend to the level of the drift they were working on. At the end of the shift, they had to return to the surface.

Ladders:

When mining began in Keweenaw during the 1840s, ladders in the shaft were used by the underground crew to enter and leave the mine. The ladders had numerous drawbacks. A major drawback was the time it took to descend and ascend from the mine. In mines deeper than a thousand feet it would take a miner almost an hour to climb to or from the surface. In deep mines this reduced the miner's productivity since he spent considerable time climbing down and up and started his shift exhausted from the climb.

Another major concern was the number of falls related to the use of ladders. The ladders in the summer were wet and slimy and the winter covered with ice making them very slippery. A Cornish expression about these dangers was "Hold on with your hands when your feet go to the Devil". Henry Hobart, the Schoolmaster at the Cliff Mine, described in his diary the death of Henry Benney in a ladder related accident on February 18, 1864. "This boy of thirteen was killed in the mine this morning by falling from a ladder... The shaft is full of ice & it was very slippery. His feet slipped & he fell striking his father's shoulder in the fall. He was killed almost instantly".

Man-Engine:

The man-engine was developed to improve the movement of miners into and out of the mine. First employed in German and Cornish mines in the 1840s, a man-engine was installed in the Cliff mine in 1865 and soon at other mines. The man-engine was essentially a mechanical ladder. (Figure 1) Man-engines were installed in their own shafts. They consisted of two side-by-side wooden timbers a foot square which rested on rollers. The timbers were bolted together end-to-end. Every 10 feet on the timber was a platform. (Figure 2)

At the surface the timbers were connected to a steam powered mechanism that moved the timbers up and down. The ascending miner would step onto a platform and the timber would move upward 10 feet while the opposite timber moved downward 10 feet. The movement of the timbers would briefly stop, and the miner would step across to the platform on the opposite timber. The motion of the timbers would then reverse, and the miner would move upward another 10 feet.

The process of changing timbers when movement was suspended was repeated until the miner reached the surface. When descending the miner reversed the process. The man-engine quickly moved miners in and out of the mine with little physical exertion on their part. Falls still occurred but were dramatically reduced. The chance of a timber breaking existed and did happen at the Quincy mine in 1892, but safety catches immediately caught the detached timber. Man-engines had several issues which became more pronounced as mines became deeper. They needed their own shaft, which was expensive to create and required costly machinery on the surface for it to operate. Most mines could afford only one man-engine which meant that miners often had to walk long distances in drifts to get to their work site.

Man-Car:

The solution to these problems was the man-car, a cheaper and simpler way to transport men into and out of the mine. The man-car was a specialized cart that traveled up and down on rails in the shaft of the mine. (Fig 3) It usually had ten bench seats each holding three miners. At change of shift, the workers in the shafthouse removed the rock skip (cart used to bring ore up from the mine) from the hoist cable and replaced it with the man-car. The miners then climbed on to the man-car and sat on the bench seats. When all were seated the man-car was lowered to the level at which the miners were working.

Man-car safety was of the utmost concern for mining companies. The hoist cables that supported the cars were inspected for wear. After being attached to the cable the man-cars were often run down and up empty to ensure they were functioning properly. The cars were raised and lowered by a hoist engine. This steam powered hoist was in a separate building with the cables running along pulleys to the shafthouse. (Fig 4) The hoist engineer usually had an assistant on the control platform when the man-car was being used so that someone was available in case of an emergency and settings could be double checked. (Fig 5) Man-cars were equipped with safety catches to stop the fall of the car if it became separated from the cable. The rate at which rock skips were raised or lowered was about 3000 ft per minute. When man-cars were used, the rate was lowered to 1000 ft per minute. Special attention was made to ensure that the man-car started and stopped smoothly without a jarring motion. Because of the attention to safety, injuries and deaths related to the use of the man-car were rare.

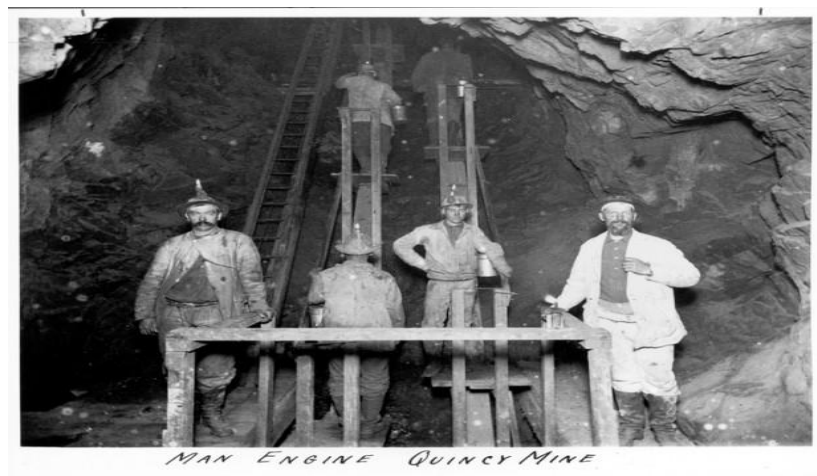


Figure 1. Photograph of man-engine at the Quincy Mining Company taken in 1890. The two side-by-side timbers of the man-engine are seen in the dedicated shaft. Wooden platforms are visible with miners on each of the timbers. The miners are carrying their metal lunch buckets. A ladder is visible on the left. Candles are seen attached to the miner's hats which provided the illumination for the miner to work. The man on the right in white is a mining captain. (Michigan Technological University Archives - MTU Neg 01062)



Figure 2. Photograph showing the Quincy Mining Company man-engine from the side. Platforms are spaced 10 feet apart. Two miners on the near platforms are going up, while the miner on the far platform is heading down the shaft. (Michigan Technological University Archives -ACC 239-5-6-1985-02-90)



Figure 3. Postcard showing a man-car in the Quincy Mining Company shaft No. 2. The car has ten bench seats with 30 miners seated waiting to descend into the mine. The shaft has two tracks. A man on the left can be seen straddling the left 15/8-inch steel hoist cable.



Figure 4. Postcard depicting Quincy Mine Company shafthouse No. 2 in the foreground and the hoist house behind it. Steel towers carry cables on pulleys from the hoist house to the shafthouse. The shaft had a length of 9,260 feet with a vertical depth of 6,225 feet.

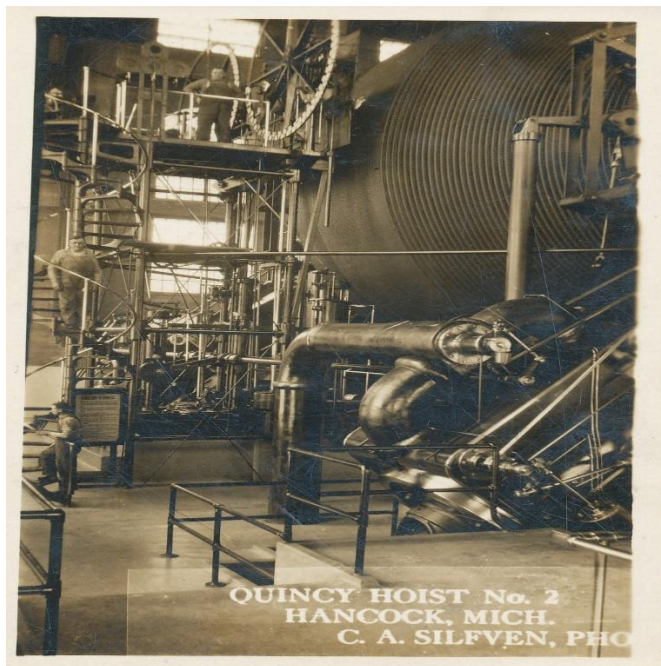


Figure 5. Postcard showing the control platform of the Nordberg hoist at Quincy No. 2 mine. The large dial to the right of the engineer on top of the platform showed the level of the car (total of 92 levels). The drum on the right held 10,000 feet of 15/8-inch steel cable. The hoist could lift a 10-ton rock skip at 36 miles per hour.

Thank you, Dewey, for an interesting article about mining in Michigan!

Postcard Collector Harley Sheets

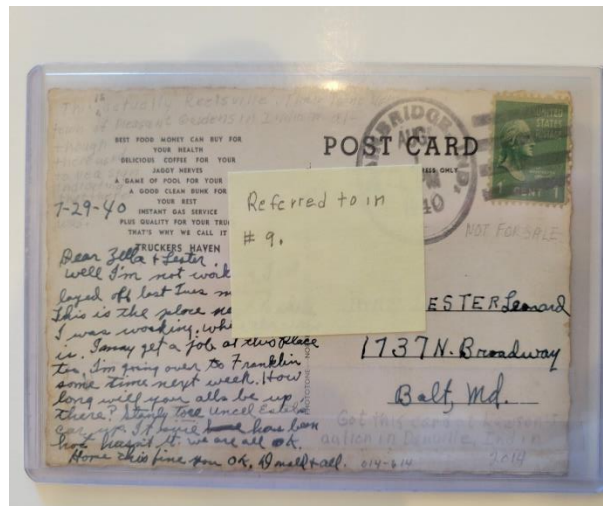
Email: hbs1954@yahoo.com

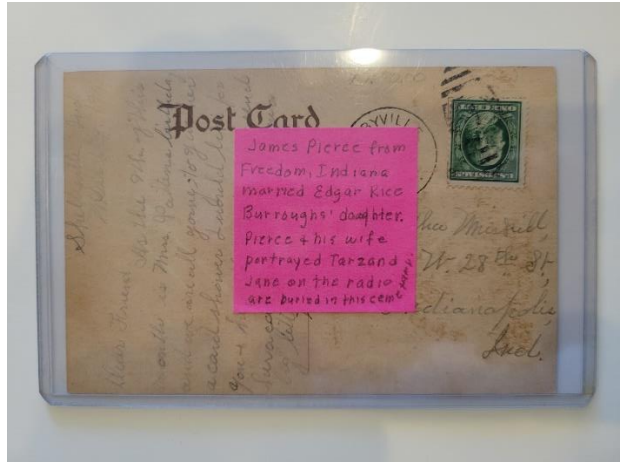
Please meet postcard collector Harley Sheets. Harley reports being a member of the Indianapolis Postcard Club (IPC) for 28 years. He got involved in postcard collecting when he was looking for photographs of Indiana high schools and was at Carrie Walker's bookstore. She said that there were images of high schools on postcards, and he purchased some from her.

Indiana high schools and Boone County are among the special topics and themes that Harley collects. He finds most of his postcards from purchases that he makes during presentations about postcards, postcards shows and antique shops. He is fine with either a postcard that has never been used or one that has writing, stamps, addresses or postmarks on the back. A unique postcard Harley's collection is one of Reelsville, although the caption identifies it as Pleasant Gardens. He has never been able to find that there was a town by that name.

In terms of rare postcards, Harley looks for postcards of very small communities in Boone County, reporting that he has a couple images that he never expected to find. To complement his postcards, he collects all kind of memorabilia from Boone County, along with items related to FDR, Truman and Churchill, his political idols. He enjoys belonging to the Indianapolis Postcard Club (IPC) because it gives him the opportunity to associate with some fine individuals who have the same interests as he does.

Thank you, Harley, for being the interviewee for the December 2024 issue of *Indy Postcard Collector!*





Indianapolis Postcard Club Is On the Move

At the January 2023 meeting of the Indianapolis Postcard Club, members decided to rotate our meetings between restaurants in the area that could provide the space we needed and a variety of options for dinner. Please note the following information about IPC meetings for 2024 as well as the categories for the competitions and presentations. Please join us!

Time:

Gather for dinner around 5:30 p.m. and the meeting will start at 6:00 p.m. Please bring items to sell or trade.

Meeting Dates, Locations, Competitions, Presentations:

December 12, 2024, MCL in Speedway, competition is Indiana companies.

March 15, 2025: **Postcard and Vintage Paper Show**, tentatively to be held at Our Lady of Greenwood School Gym (399 South Meridian Street, Greenwood, Indiana 46143), 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., admission is \$1.00, free for IPC members. As you can see from these photographs, the Fall 2024 show was a great success!



Future Presentations: Presentations are intended to introduce IPC members to the unique and exciting categories of postcards that people collect and to additional areas of deltiology scholarship. The Board will be requesting presenters and topics for 2025, so get ready with your ideas.

Indianapolis Postcard Club Officers for 2025-2026

Nominations for officers for 2025-2026 were received at the November 14, 2024, IPC meeting. Adjustments were made to the job descriptions for some of these positions to cover all of the responsibilities. The election will be held at the December 12, 2024, meeting. Thank you to everyone who served in 2023-2024!

Co-Presidents: Deedee Davis-Roberts and Kyle Kingen

Second Vice President – Dewey Conces

Secretary and Webmaster – Laura Balke

Treasurer – Kent Clady

Newsletter Editor – open

Reminders

Competitions:

Competitions at our monthly club meetings are a great way to showcase your collection as well as see the kinds of subjects that other members collect. Voting is anonymous. Prizes are:

1st Place - \$7.00

2nd Place - \$5.00

3rd Place - \$3.00

4th Place - \$1.00

We are requesting ideas for competitions in 2025, so please be ready to suggest some new subjects for collections that we have not had in recent years.

Dues for 2025:

Be sure to renew your membership for 2025 so you don't miss out on all of the activities planned for the year. Dues are \$15.00, which can be mailed to Kent Clady at 3852 Stonemeadow Drive, Greenwood, Indiana 46142. Please let Kent know any addresses or email changes.

Mark Your Calendars:

Don't forget that our Spring Postcard and Vintage Paper Show will be held on Saturday, March 15, 2025. Come support our wonderful dealers, who will again be offering postcards, books, paper items, advertising materials and other artifacts and ephemera. It's a great way to learn about other postcard shows in the Midwest and meet new collectors and dealers.

50th Anniversary:

We have already made some plans to celebrate the Indianapolis Postcard Club's 50th anniversary in January 2025. Our main celebration will be held at our club's Spring show next year in 2025; the date will be Saturday, March 15, 2025. Please let the officers know about any additional ideas you have, such as press releases, special events, articles about IPC's history for the *Indy Postcard Collector*, etc. Please be thinking about what the options might be.

Thank you!

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as Editor of *Indy Postcard Collector* for 2023-2024. I appreciate everyone's contributions, especially our interviewees and the interesting articles by Dewey Conces! Sara

