



Don't forget to check out these historical stops on the way!

Balbec Underground Railroad

Just a few minutes north of Pennville is a historical site that brings us back to the days of the Underground Railroad. The president of the Underground Railroad, Levi Coffin, chose Pennville and Balbec as his safest routes to help slaves become free. The old cabin was torn down and a new one along with a site marker is located on the property now.
- 6703 N. St. Rd. 1, Pennville

Mt. Vernon Pioneer Cemetery

Mt. Vernon Pioneer Cemetery in Redkey is located across the corner from where Mill and Central streets meet. Buried here is the father of Redkey, James Redkey, for which the town was named after. Before it was given the name Redkey, it was called Mt. Vernon. James Redkey's daughter Maggie is also buried here. - 35 W. Central Ave., Red Key

Elwood Haynes Mural

This mural located on the corner of Meridian and Arch streets in Portland is dedicated to Jay County's most notable inventor of the gas boom era. Elwood Haynes invented the first horseless carriage and many tools that were important to Jay County's natural gas boom. Elwood was born in Portland in 1857 and moved his family to Kokomo after the gas boom emerged. - 928 W. Arch St., Portland

Floral Hall

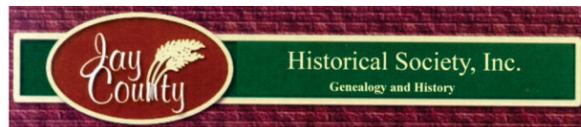
This beautifully round, octagon barn was opened to the public in 1891. It has remained a landmark in the fairgrounds in Jay County. Floral Hall is used to display exhibits during the annual county fair and is one of the few octagon-shaped barns left in the Midwest. It is located in Portland on the corner of Votaw and Morton streets. - 806 E. Votaw St., Portland

Welcome to Jay County

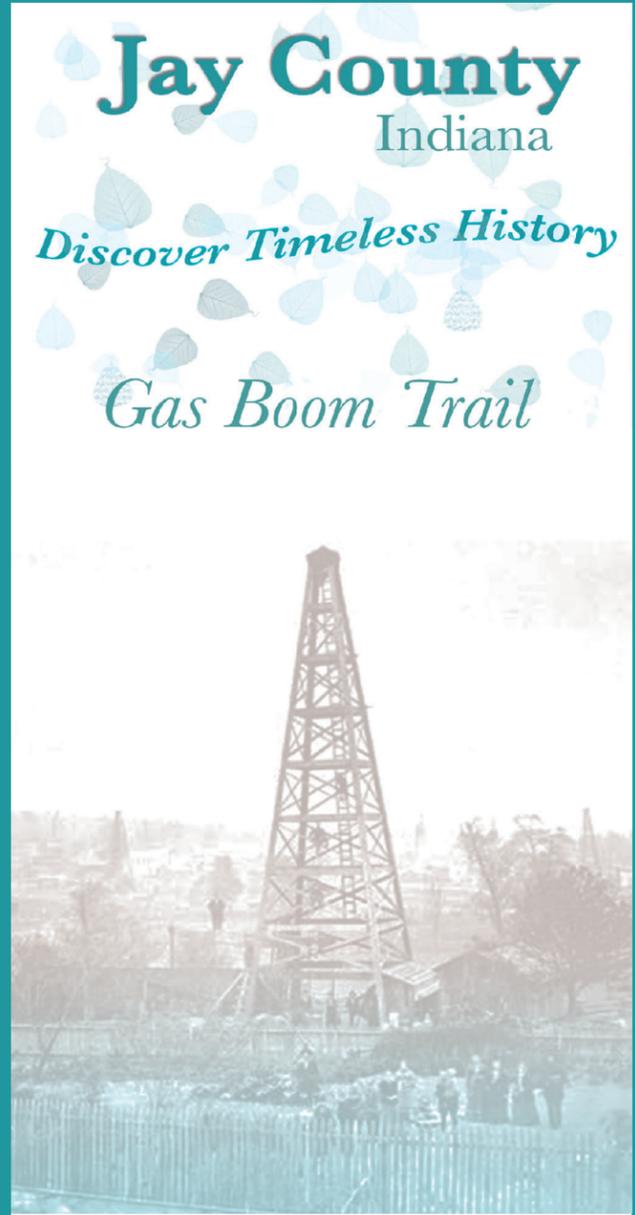
The Only Jay in the U.S.A!

The Jay County Historical Society welcomes you! We are proud of our work collecting, preserving, and displaying the rich heritage of Jay County, Indiana, the only "Jay" County in the United States. Come see the 11,000 square foot Jay County Historical Museum. Admission is free, and the museum is handicapped accessible. The museum is staffed by dedicated volunteers who would be happy to share Jay County's history with you. It offers visitors a unique glimpse of bygone times here in east central Indiana.

Visit us!



Jay County Historical Society
903 East Main Street, Portland, IN 47371
www.jaycountyhistory.org
260.726.7168



JAY COUNTY
VISITOR & TOURISM BUREAU
118 South Meridian Street, Portland, IN 47371
www.visitjaycounty.com



10. Masonic Hall
This building was erected in 1895 and was used as a location for the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, which was instituted in 1869 with 13 members. Oddfellowship got its start in Pennville in 1954 by Henry Jenkins. In 1867 a second lodge was built in Portland. Following Portland came a lodge in Dunkirk. This was one of the few secret societies that existed in Jay County. - 112 E Main St.

9. Smith Building
Originally built by Joseph D. Smith in the Romanesque Revival Style popular during the late 19th century, this structure features the semi-circular arches around the window. Around 1910, Marshall B. McCarty moved into the building. After 1916, McCarty took on partners and the name of the business changed to McCarty & Gordon. - 175 S Union St.

8. Grissell Mansions
This home is one of 3 mansions that were built within 3 generations of the Grissell family. It was built in 1903 by Samuel and Arn Grissell's daughter. The first was built in 1874, and it is located west of the site. The third home is east of the site. - 235 S Broadway St.

7. Provident Hospital
This was the first hospital in Pennville, and it was constructed in 1907. The staff consisted of 5 employees and 10 beds for patients. The hospital had another name, Caylor Hospital. Dr. Caylor was very wealthy and closed the hospital in 1917 when a new one was opened in Bluffton. The building is still standing. - 116 E Bridge St.

6. David L. Adams Home
This home was built in 1894 by a man named David L. Adams. This time period was at the peak of the gas boom, and he and his family were of substantial means. He married a Jay County native, Edith Felham, and moved his family into this luxurious home. During the depression Adams lost everything and died soon after in 1931. - 505 E High St.

5. Asbury United Methodist
Possibly the most monumental church in Jay County, the Asbury United Methodist Church was begun well within the Gas Boom, in 1897. After delays caused by slowness in raising funds, the church was completed in 1903. Alone of Gas Boom churches in Jay County, the Asbury building is faced completely with stone. - 209 E Arch St.

4. College Corner School
This site once served as a one room school house until the schools merged in the 1940s. The building standing was constructed in 1901 by McFadden and Current Construction and was remodeled into a home in 2009. There are sculptures and works of art on the property. - 101 W 200 S

3. Historical Society
The Jay County Historical Society is a great place to get in touch with Jay County's past. The Genealogy Library is a great resource to track down relatives that had an impact on the present state of Jay County. Inside you can find information and artifacts from the gas boom era. Admission is free and the building is handicapped accessible. - 903 E Main St.

2. Presbyterian Church
At the height of the gas boom, Portland's infrastructure displayed a desire for quality materials and beauty. This Church was completed in 1902 and represents a work of Gothic architecture with its distinctive octagonal tower and belfry with pyramidal roof. - 402 N Ship St.

1. First Drilling Site
On November 1, 1886, a natural gas well was drilled for the first time and emitted 100,000 cubic feet of gas per day. The company responsible for the profitable gas was Eureka Oil Company. This was just the beginning of the gas boom days for Jay County, Indiana. This site can be found in Portland just across from McDonalds. - 680 N Meridian St.

The Gas Boom of East Central Indiana began in Portland, county seat of Jay County, on March 28, 1886, when local drilling efforts first successfully encountered natural gas. Less than six months later on September 15, 1886, gas in "paying quantities" was found in little Eaton, Indiana, in Delaware County. Once the gas was hit, a flame rose ten feet high and could be seen in Muncie, twelve miles to the south. From that point, both investors in Dearborn County and from Winchester in Randolph County over to Kokomo in Howard County, flambeaux began to dot the landscape. An illustration in a national periodical, Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, soon showed crowds of on-lookers gaping at a cluster of flambeaux in the Indiana Gas Belt.

What was natural gas? It was, according to the Indiana State Geologist, the decayed residue from animals and vegetation that existed at the bottom of shallow seas in what is now Indiana millions of years ago. As the seas receded and sedimentary layers built up, the organic residue, now gas, was trapped within porous sedimentary limestone. Additional, impermeable layers of stone formed about the gas-bearing Trenton limestone. According to the Indiana State Geologists of the late 1880s and early 1890s, gas prospectors had to drill through at least four layers of soil and stone before they reached the reservoir of gas in the Trenton limestone that underlay much of eastern Indiana.

-Dr James Glass

Jay County's Gas Boom Era

Portland

Pennville

DUNKIRK

11. Todd Opera House

The Todd Building was built in 1893 and was a place where operas and musical programs were performed. This building is still standing on the west side of Main Street. Admission into the Opera House for Dunkirk's high school graduation was 10 cents. — 218 S Main St.

12. Matthew Hart Home

The Matthew Hart home is a stunning example of late 19th and early 20th century Queen Anne architecture. Matthew Hart of Maring-Hart Glass Co. had the home built in the early 1900's while the gas boom was starting to wind down. It is still standing, and a Dunkirk resident resides inside. — 302 S Broad St.

13. The Glass Museum

The Glass Museum is located on South Franklin Street and is connected to the Dunkirk Public Library. There are over 8,000 pieces of glass from over 100 glass factories around the world. Many of the pieces were made by Indiana Glass during the gas boom. The oldest piece in the museum is 600 years old and is from St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome. — 314 S Franklin St.

14. Ardagh Glass Factory

The Ardagh Glass Factory stands on the site of the Dunkirk Bottle Works established by Maring, Hart and Company about 1889, on the east side of Dunkirk. Bottles have been continuously made at this location for approximately 125 years. Currently, the factory holds public tours once a year during Dunkirk's Glass Days of the plant. The factory now produces 2.5 million bottles a day. — 125 Hoover St.

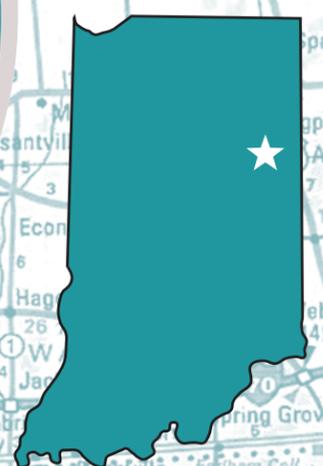
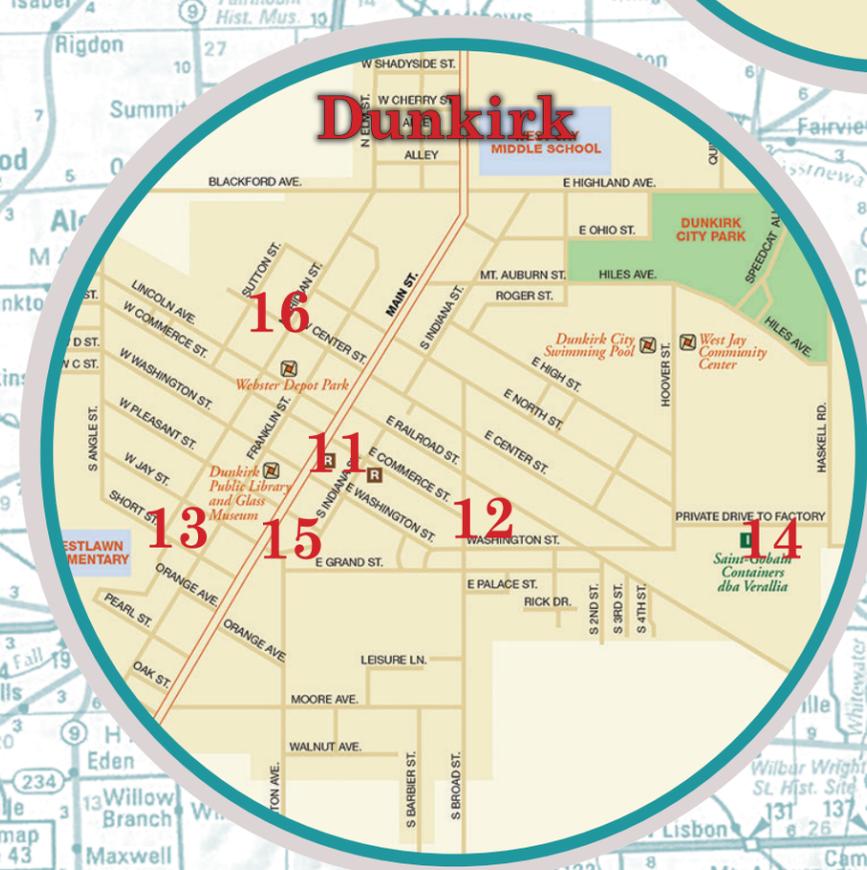
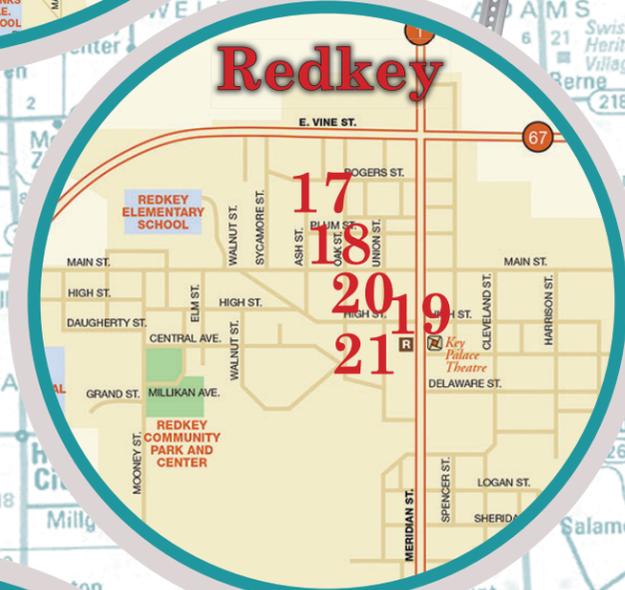
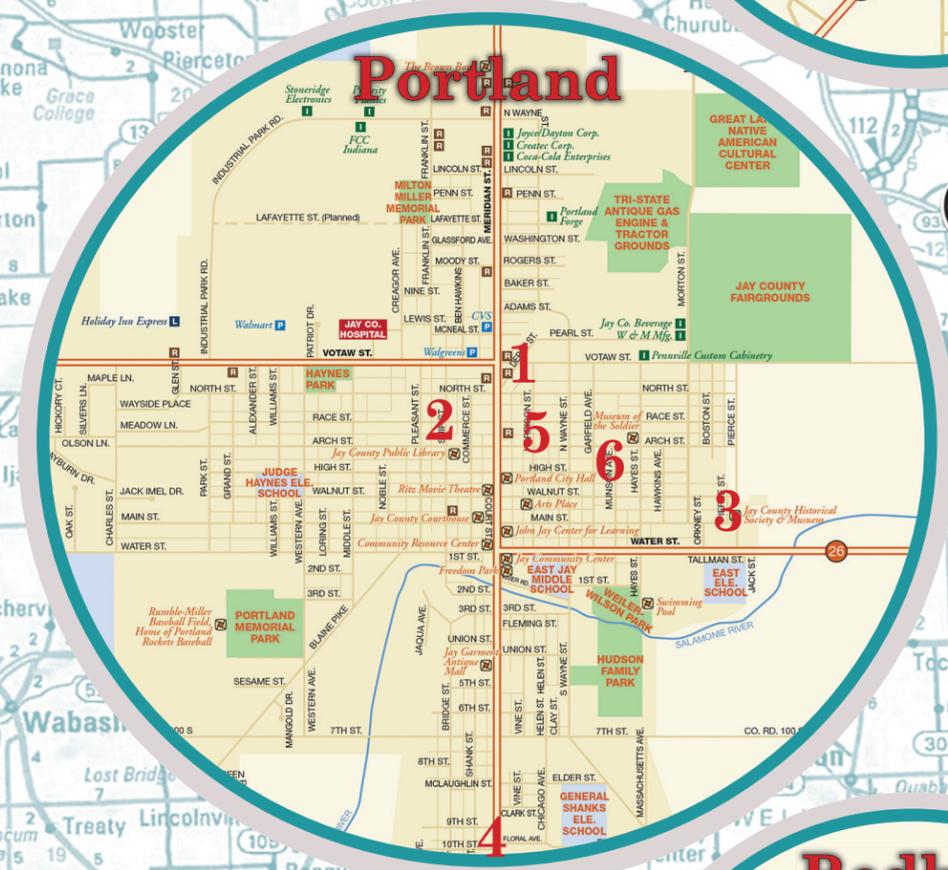
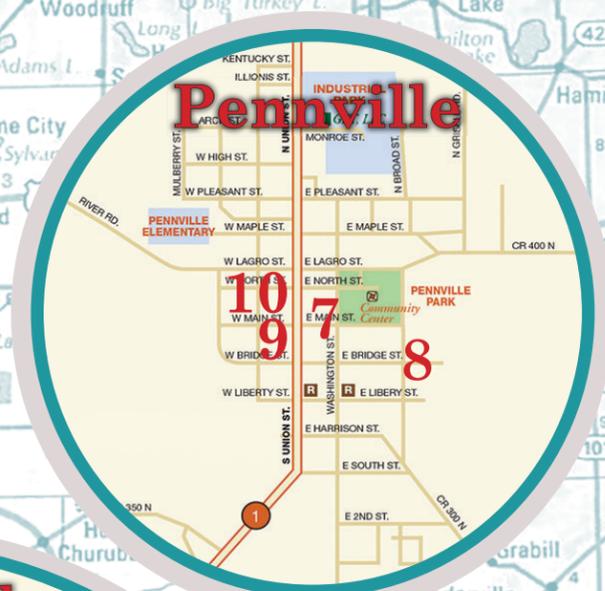
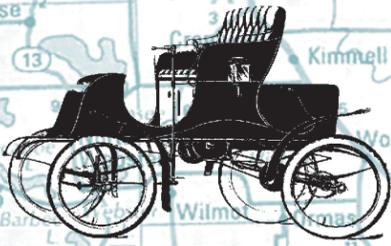
15. Plymouth United Church of Christ

The Plymouth Congregational Church was built in 1896 at the height of the Gas Boom. As Dunkirk's population increased rapidly, the church's congregation grew as well. The exterior is a notable local example of the Romanesque style popular in the United States during the late 19th century. Romanesque features include the rock-faced stone arches over windows in the second and attic stories and over the two entrances. — 387 S Main St.

16. Worker's Housing

This home was designed for glass factory workers to live in, and it is one of many other examples around Jay County. It was easier for workers to live close to work and in clusters so they could take the trolley to the factories. This house is still standing in livable conditions. — 194 W Center St.

Gas Boom Driving Tour



REDKEY

17. Worker's Cottage

When the gas was booming in Jay County there were numerous plants with several different owners over the years. At one time low-rent housing was provided to the employees near the plant which includes several buildings in Dunkirk and Redkey. This included a few cottages on North Oak Street in Redkey. — 203 N Oak St.

18. Manager's Housing

This home is one example of the type of housing that managers of the glass factories lived in. They were generally substantially well-off and lived in two-story homes throughout Jay County. This home was built in the early 1900's. — 56 N Union St.

19. Old Fire Station

This is the building where the first Redkey Fire Department began. It was formed in 1886 and consisted of 15 volunteers. Many fires destroyed beautiful infrastructure around Jay County during the gas boom era, and fire fighters used a hand pump hose to fight them off. — 202 W High St.

20. Redkey United Methodist

One of the most attractive works of Romanesque architecture in Jay County is the Redkey United Methodist Church. Built in 1895, the church has a monumental presence in Redkey with its four-story corner tower rising to a pyramidal roof and ell-shaped plan with two full facades with rose windows. — 180 W Main St.

21. Former Odd Fellows Building

The Independent Order of Odd Fellows Building is a fully detailed Romanesque-style building of the early 1890s. It has the characteristic round arches over its second floor façade windows, brick corbel tables, supporting the parapet along the roof, and small turrets. In 1895 the first floor contained a drug store on the corner and a clothing store to the east. — 89 W High St.