

Great-great grandson of Jean Chiquot, who immigrated to New France in 1662, Zachariah was part of a merchant and fur trading family whose interests had spread westward from Montreal to Detroit, and south to Vincennes, Indiana. The mid-Wabash River Valley,

which was to become the center of his trading network, had been home to Native peoples for centuries.

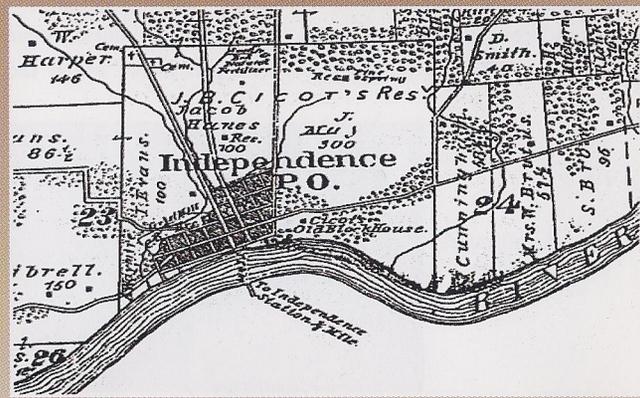
At the age of 16, Zachariah Cicott began operating out of Vincennes, Indiana, visiting the central Wabash region to engage

several Native groups in trade. The War of 1812 put a temporary end to commerce and a permanent end to British and French influence in the area. Legend has it that Cicott served as a scout for William Henry Harrison in the events leading up to the Battle of Tippecanoe. It wasn't until about 1816 that Zachariah Cicott and his family were able to settle down and construct a permanent trading fort

on the banks of the Wabash. As a result of two successive marriages to Native women (Pe-say-quot, a Potawatomi and Elizabeth Isaacs, a Brotherton) Zachariah's children received reserves in Indiana. These

reserves were one mile square, therefore they contained much more land than what was required to survey a village like Independence. A portion of this land Cicott ultimately sold off as the town lots of Independence, founded in 1832.

Treaties ultimately resulted in the removal of most Potawatomi to reserves west of the Mississippi, and to the cessation of the fur trade by about 1836. The widowed Zachariah retired and settled into the role of founder of Independence. He passed into local legend as a man who loved to dance and gamble, hold loud and long parties, and who was known as a man with an eye for a pretty girl. He passed away in 1850, and is buried in the town cemetery.



Click for google map.



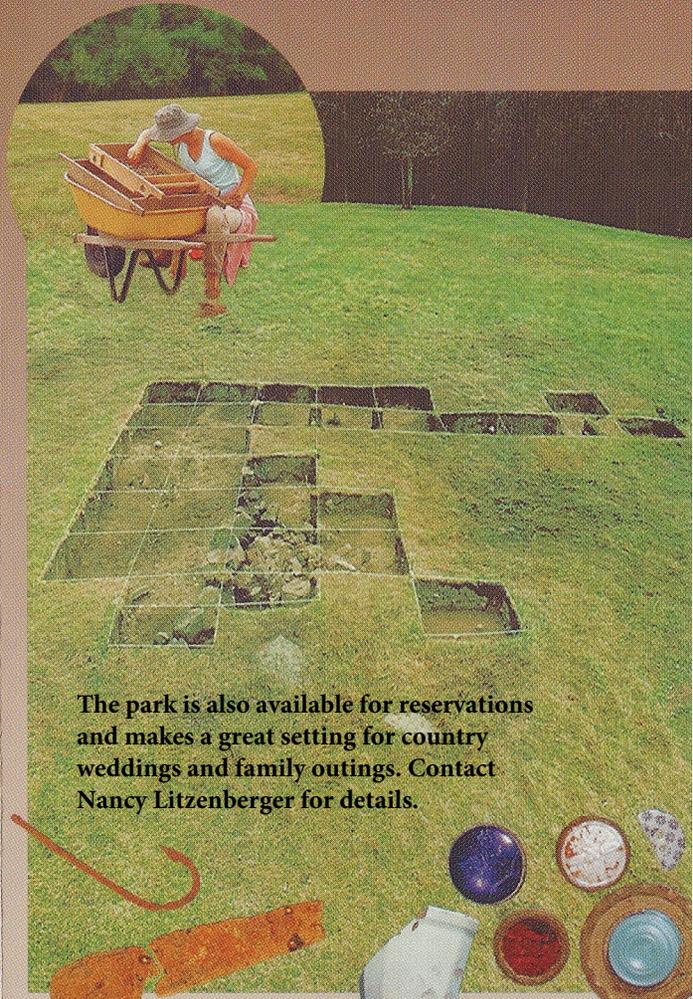
Cicott Park contains the site of Zachariah Cicott's home and trading post. Because of a series of unique circumstances, the site has never been plowed and remains remarkably intact. Cicott Park was founded in 1993 to preserve this unique portion of Indiana's past and to commemorate the heritage of Warren County and its early pioneers. To reach the Park, take combined Highways 41 and 28 west out of Attica across the Wabash River to Route 55 north. Immediately after turning on to Route 55, you will cross a bridge over Pine Creek. After crossing the bridge, turn right on Independence Road. Proceed 5.5 miles to the 4-way stop at the edge of the village. You can see the park from this intersection.



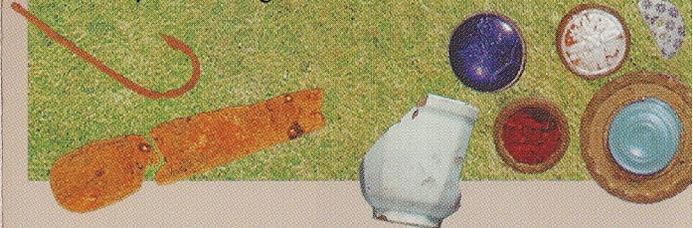
For their assistance during the 1997 archaeological dig, the Cicott Park would like to extend a special thanks to: The Warren County Park Board, Nancy Grenard, West Lebanon Grain Elevator, Wilbur Pearson, Williamsport Volunteer Fire Department, Pine Village Volunteer Fire Department, Larry Chowning, John and Linda Conrad, the Double KK Cafe and Mr. Rick Jones, Indiana State Archaeologist.

Funding for the acquisition, development, and archaeological studies at Cicott Park were provided by the Wabash River Heritage Corridor Fund. Additional funding was provided by the Warren County Park Board. Matching funds for the archaeological investigations in 1997 were also provided by Hemisphere Field Services Inc. (Minneapolis, MN).

# Cicott Trading Post Historical Park



The park is also available for reservations and makes a great setting for country weddings and family outings. Contact Nancy Litzenberger for details.



## Independence, Indiana

Archaeology always begins with questions - questions about what we are trying to learn by investigating a site, a person, a time in the past. In this case, one goal of the archaeologists was to discover where Cicott's house stood, and to see how it related to other buildings and parts of the property. Another was to discover what elements of French Canadian, British, Native and American lifeway, tools, and goods that characterized daily life at the Cicott Trading Post.

Excavations in the area took place in 1990, 1991, 1992, and in 1997. Excavations carried out in 1990 brought to light evidence of a Native encampment just west of the Cicott Trading Post. A series of archaeological explorations at the Cicott site itself have also been conducted. Their findings were intriguing - trade goods such as glass beads and trinkets bear witness to contact with Europeans.

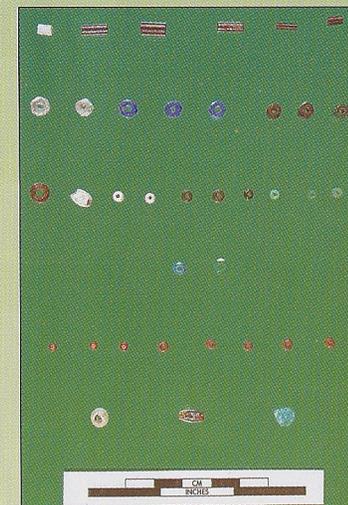
In 1992, more intensified excavations revealed evidence of walls and trenches dating to Cicott's lifetime, together with what was thought to be the foundation of a building. The archaeologists suggested that it was constructed using the piece-sur-piece building method, one characteristic of French-Canadian style architecture. The 1997 dig was established to answer questions raised by previous investigations at the site, and to reveal further architectural remains that might shed light on how Cicott and his family lived.

Slowly and carefully the archaeologists began to dig. They used small sharp trowels to scrape away the layers of dirt. As artifacts and other evidence of human activity came to light, each was carefully measured in and mapped, photographed, and described. Every bit of soil was washed through a fine screen using water pressure to clear away debris and dirt so the tiniest bit of brick, glass, straight pin or bead was recovered.

In addition to features that give clues about where buildings were located, artifacts help us to understand what they might have been used for and how they were constructed. Building materials found during the dig included nearly three thousand nails, most of them probably purchased in either Vincennes or Detroit, since they were made by machine. But 101 of the nails at the site were forged by hand, possibly by a local blacksmith. Thousands of fragments of chinking, brick and window glass were recovered as well, evidence that the Cicott house, while on the frontier, was warm and snug with brick fireplaces and glazed windows.

The excavations in 1992 had uncovered portions of the foundations of the trading post. Excavations in 1997 revealed the rest of the foundations.

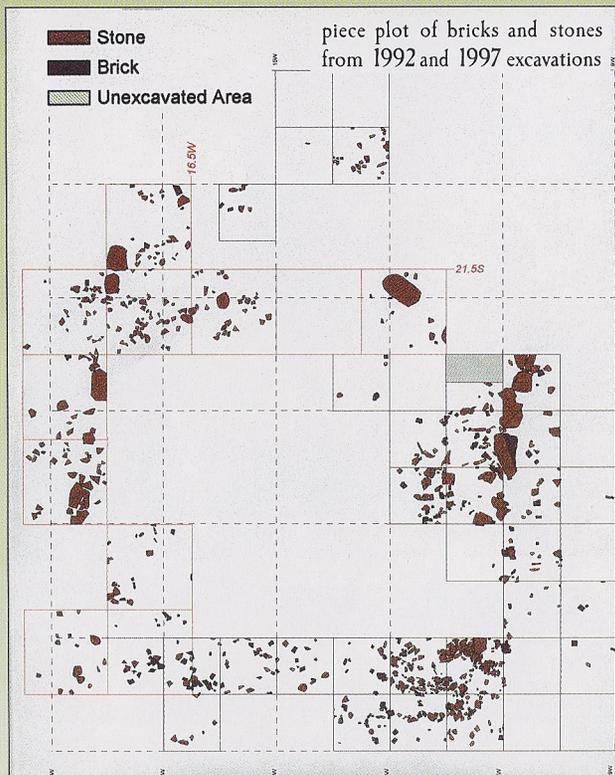
As at all fur trade sites, many glass beads were discovered. A staple of the trade and culturally important as both personal and group identifiers, Native peoples provided a ready market for the wide variety of cheap glass beads produced by Europeans manufacturing throughout the period of the trade. At the Cicott site, some 250 beads and bead fragments were recovered. The



Beads



Glassware

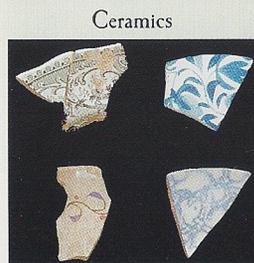


site produced 64 buttons or button parts in the 1997 season alone. Some of them were very ornate, one being of the type known as calico, made of porcelain with a black design on the face, and dates to about 1848.

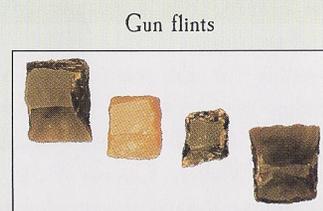
Finally, one of the things that archaeology has shown is the presence of people of all ages at the Cicott site, and also of leisure activities. We know from historical documentation that Zachariah was fond of gambling, and we even found some of the dice used during his lifetime at the site. Marbles and pieces of china dolls show that children lived there as well. We can't, of course, prove that they were Cicott's own dice, nor that his children played with the toys. But we know, from archaeology, that those kinds of objects and the activities they suggest played a part in the life at the Cicott Trading Post.



Archaeologist water screening for artifacts



Ceramics



Gun flints

Architectural artifacts

