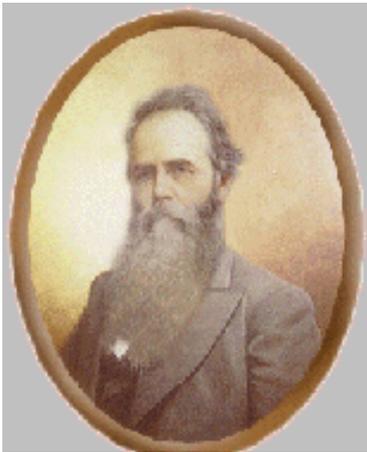


# HISTORY OF CARBONDALE.... THEN and NOW



In August 1852, Daniel Harmon Brush, pictured left, John Asgill Conner and Dr. William Richart bought 360 acres of land along the right-of-way for the Illinois Central Railroad with the intention of founding a new town. The site chosen was conveniently located between Marion and Murphysboro and between proposed

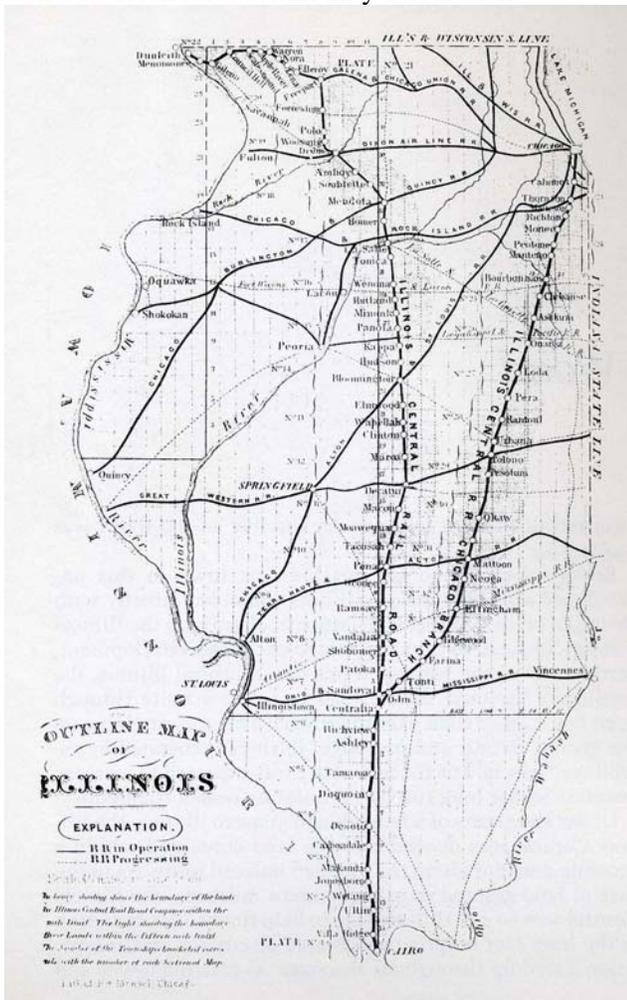
railroad stations at Makanda and DeSoto. The town was platted on November 27, 1852. Not only was the railroad the determining factor in the location of Carbondale, it was to be of great importance in the development of the town and of Southern Illinois. The first train through the town on the main line north from Cairo, on Independence Day, 1854, was the occasion for a community celebration.

By the Civil War, Carbondale had been incorporated as a village and had a population of about 1,150, most of whom were Union sympathizers. Brush, Conner and John A. Logan were among prominent Carbondale citizens who fought for the north. In all, 250 Carbondale men went to war and 55 died. On April 29, 1866, the first Memorial Day was celebrated at Woodlawn Cemetery.

After the war, Carbondale continued to develop as a mercantile and transport center. The railroad made possible the shipping of Southern Illinois coal and fruit. By this time, Carbondale had also become an education center with the founding of Carbondale College, which later became Southern Illinois College (1866). The City was incorporated on August 23, 1873. Carbondale won the bid for the new teacher training school for the region and Southern Illinois Normal University (SIU) opened here in 1874. Instructors began in 1874 for a two-year teacher training program and by 1904 students were enrolled in four-year graduate degree programs and Master's degree in education started the same year. This gave the town a new industry, new citizens and a model school to supplement the public grade schools.

In the 1890's, SIU continued operations adding additional buildings. The Illinois Central Railroad was thriving and the town's population and commercial ventures grew. Modern conveniences contributed to the town's growth. The Carbondale Electric Company was established in 1891; in 1900, Public Water Works was built; the Carbondale Telephone Company was operating in 1903. By 1906, the town was an established commercial, industrial and education center for the region.

By action of the Illinois General Assembly, in 1947 SIU was renamed as the Southern Illinois University (SIU) and became a comprehensive research institution. Ph.D. programs started in 1955 and the first doctoral degree was granted in 1959. In 1979, SIU became accredited from the North Central Association. This accreditation is renewed every ten years, and the latest renewal came in 2010 as a "Research University: High Research Activity," by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Student enrollment increased from 2,711 in 1947 to a high of 24,869 in 1991 and the latest figure for fall of 2014 is 17,989. SIU is a large part of the City's economy. The university employs about 40% of Carbondale's labor force. Being the home of SIUC has given the community cultural activities usually available only in larger cities.



**Illinois Central Railroad route and stations in Illinois, 1856**

Carbondale is also the hub of medical care in the Southern Illinois region. In 1912, Carrie Holden gave her

home in

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Litchfield, Illinois to the Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Church in Southern Illinois to establish a hospital. This came to be The Holden Hospital Corporation of Carbondale, officially opening in 1916 as a non-profit institution for the purpose of healing and care of the sick and needy by the Methodist Church of Southern Illinois. A training school for nurses was established shortly thereafter, and operated until 1936. In 1924, an addition was built to the original building. On March 4, 1940, fire destroyed a section of the original building, with damage amounting to \$40,000. By October of 1941, all repairs were made and the new South wing was occupied. In 1949, the last of the original building was torn down because it had become too much of a fire hazard. In 1955, a fund drive was launched to attempt to raise \$220,000 for an expansion program. The drive failed, and the board recommended closing the hospital, but the Southern Illinois Conference of the Methodist Church reorganized the hospital and was able to keep it open. On February 7, 1958, an agreement was reached with the Southern Illinois Hospital Corporation to sell the hospital. After a three-year legal battle, the sale was completed on September 1, 1961. In 1965, it was announced that Holden Hospital was being consolidated with Doctors Memorial Hospital, and would become primarily an extended care hospital. The hospital property was sold in 1967 to the First National Bank of Carbondale, but the hospital remained in operation until April 15, 1971, when the new wing of Doctors Memorial Hospital was completed and the facilities at Holden were all transferred. Shortly thereafter, the old section of the hospital, built in 1924, was demolished, but the rest of the building was retained as an office building until 1976, when the last of the building was torn down to make way for a parking lot.

community is a leading facility in Southern Illinois. With over 3,000 employees, along with physicians and volunteers, SIH (Southern Illinois Healthcare) works to ensure that the health care needs of the community is met. Memorial Hospital of Carbondale is the flagship hospital for SIH and regional referral center for the 16 county southern Illinois region. Physicians in nearly 40 different specialties practice in Carbondale. A few of the highlights of Memorial Hospital in Carbondale is; a 140-bed tertiary care hospital; Southern Illinois' largest and most spacious birthing center with Level II Plus Special Care Nursery; the only dedicated pediatric unit in the region; the core hospital for SIH's comprehensive, regional heart program, Prairie Heart Institute; affiliated with SIU School of Medicine through its Family Practice Residency Program, Neuroscience program including neurosurgery and the region's only Primary Stroke Center. The hospital is accredited by the Commission on Cancer for comprehensive cancer treatment. Carbondale also hosts medical facilities with private practices, sleep centers, imaging centers, professional offices in obstetrics, pediatrics, chiropractic, rehabilitation, surgery and walk-in clinics. In November of 2014 a 4,050 square foot Cancer Center was opened just outside of Carbondale. Setting next to Crab Orchard Wildlife Preserve, the center has infused a calm setting to treat patients. Staff members have access to state of the art technology and work space that will improve the level of care patients receive while maintaining patient privacy.



Memorial Hospital of Carbondale has been renovated and enlarged with additions of the Prairie Heart Institute, an Out-Patient Surgery center, a level one trauma ER center and a multi-level parking garage. Carbondale's medical



Carbondale today is a thriving active community. The city of Carbondale operates under a council-manager form of government with a mayor and six city council members elected at-large for four-year staggered terms. The City Manager, a professional hired by the city council, appoints the department heads. The city provides services such as police, fire, development services, public works, and public library. Several boards and commissions allow for

citizen participation, bringing more citizens into civic activities. Carbondale is a zoned, home-rule municipality.

In 2014, the city made final revision on a new comprehensive plan

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that lays out goals for the future and ways to accomplish these goals. In Fiscal Year 2015, Carbondale started the process to continue the revitalization of the Downtown area. The formation of a DAC (Downtown Advisory Committee) was implemented and with the input from the community, a plan to develop and restore the downtown has been started.

The community of Carbondale is enriched with SIU having a teaching museum on campus, the University Museum, which has 60,000 artifacts in its collection and hosts traveling shows from known artists. In addition to the University Museum, there is the African American Museum and the Science Center. Theater-goers can see both professional and student-produced plays and performances at the university's McLeod and Kleinau Theaters. SIUC is also home to the largest auditorium in Southern Illinois, Shryock Auditorium. Shryock Auditorium has brought in many performing artists, along with orchestras and other musical productions. There are also productions by The Jackson County Stage Company. In 2007, the Stage Company and Carbondale Community Arts (CCA) partnered to purchase and renovate the Varsity Theatre, which had been vacant since 2003, into the Varsity Center for the Arts (VCA). The VCA is now the performing home of the Stage Company and also supports a variety of other fine arts and performances through the CCA.

Several bars and coffeehouses offer live music, poetry readings, and other entertainment. The Carbondale Chamber of Commerce offers information on local businesses in over 60 categories.



Carbondale is known for a number of yearly festivals and events including the Lights Fantastic parade in December, the Big Muddy Film Festival (February/March), the Taste of Chocolate (February), the Indian celebration of Diwali (December), the Great Cardboard Boat Regatta (April), the Sunset Concerts (a summer series of free outdoor concerts on the Southern Illinois University campus and in city parks), and Brown Bag Concerts (a spring and fall series of free outdoor concerts in the Town Square Pavilion).



The city's business districts include several large shopping malls, featuring a mixture of national chain stores and locally owned businesses. In addition, Carbondale is home to many small shops and restaurants, many of them located in the downtown area. The downtown district is supported by Carbondale Main Street which has listings and information about individual businesses. Because of the large student population in the city, there is a great variety of restaurants, featuring many nationalities of cuisine.



Carbondale has access to 8 public golf courses, 18 public tennis courts, as well as the Superblock, which is a sports multi-complex with baseball, softball, soccer, football, and track fields. The Carbondale Park District maintains seven parks and an indoor pool for public use. In the spring of 2015, a "splash park" – Outdoor Aquatic Center will be opened in the "Superblock area" adjacent to Carbondale Community High School. The park will feature a lazy

river, splash areas, competition lanes and slides. This will be in addition to the “spray park” the Park District opened

in 2010 at Attucks Park. Also, Southern Illinois University's

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Recreation Center is open to the public; it provides swimming, bowling, rock climbing walls, tennis, basketball, an indoor track, racquetball, weight training, and a variety of exercise equipment. Carbondale is located near many venues for outdoor activities, including some 14 parks in the immediate vicinity. These include Giant City State Park, the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge, Little Grand Canyon, Piney Creek Ravine, Pomona Natural Bridge, the Garden of the Gods Wilderness area, and Trail of Tears State Park. These areas offer opportunities for hiking, biking, and horseback riding. Carbondale is also adjacent to the Shawnee National Forest; one of the area's most stunning natural resources. With 270,000 acres, it provides some of the most beautiful scenery in the Midwest. Shawnee National Forest lies in the rough, unglaciated areas of southern Illinois, known as the Ozark and Shawnee Hills. The area offers more than 135 miles of trails as well as opportunities to picnic, swim, and view wildlife.



Five minutes south of Carbondale is the city reservoir, Cedar Lake, which is open to kayaking and canoeing. The north access features several dramatic rock bluffs and secluded bays. Other lakes nearby include Little Grassy Lake, Devils Kitchen Lake, Crab Orchard Lake, and Kinkaid Lake. Another more remote location is Cache River Swamp, the northernmost cypress swamp in North America. The surrounding areas also offer hiking and mountain biking. The Shawnee National Forest is also home to many wineries. The Shawnee Hills Wine Trail visits twelve vineyards in scenic settings, offering local wines and dining facilities. Several of the vineyards are bed-and-breakfasts or offer cabins for close accommodations.

