



*Illinois' First Road*

**ST. CLAIR COUNTY  
MONROE COUNTY  
RANDOLPH COUNTY**



Trail Ride Re-enactment, WATERLOO



Holy Family Church, CAHOKIA



Fort de Chartres, PRAIRIE DU ROCHER





## *Welcome to the King's Road*

**K**ing Louis XV of France, that is! French colonists gave this name to the Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail (KCT) in the early 1700s. More than 300 years later, the route is still traveled in Southwestern Illinois.

In this region, the Illinois, Missouri, Ohio, Kaskaskia and

Meramec Rivers converge with the Mississippi and throughout history provided reliable transportation for exploration, settlement and trade, with overland trails used to access interior lands beyond and between the rivers.

The KCT can be traced to American Indian people around



# Welcome

11,000 BC whose migrations created the trail for economic trade, government and social/religious purposes. These first inhabitants over time built large civilizations with mound cities along the trail. Their use of the trail continued into historic periods, introducing the route to the first French explorers and colonists in the late 1600s. When the French established permanent settlements at Kaskaskia and Cahokia in 1699, they named these villages after the local Illini people.

These colonial villages and the overland KCT, led to the establishment of other forts and settlements over the next 100 years along the east side of the Mississippi River Valley. This first road spawned many routes for expanded growth that led to Illinois becoming the 21st state in 1818, with Kaskaskia serving as the first state capital.

Today, the Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail is part of the St. Louis metropolitan area. The 60-mile long auto tour route connects visitors with many opportunities to discover the region's diverse heritage. Explore the history of native cultures, French colonial roots, Revolutionary War era settlement, early Illinois statehood, westward expansion,

European immigration and agricultural significance along the Trail.

The alluvial bottomlands and dramatic bluffs of the scenic Middle Mississippi River Valley uniquely shape the natural landscape of the Trail. Rolling

oak-hickory forests, prairies and farmlands including quaint, historic villages and rural back roads make this 60-mile journey one you will never forget.



Kaskaskia Indian



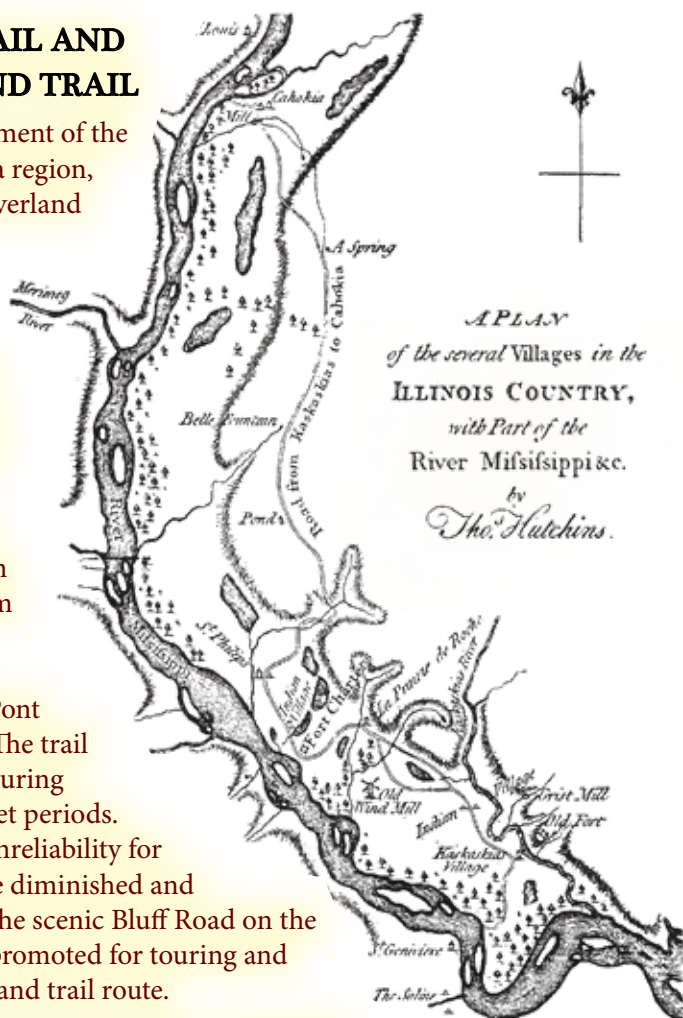
# Thomas Hutchins' 1778 Map of the *Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail*

## THE UPLAND TRAIL AND THE BOTTOMLAND TRAIL

During historic settlement of the Kaskaskia and Cahokia region, there were two main overland trails developed and used to connect the villages of Kaskaskia and Cahokia- a predominately upland trail and a bottomland trail on the Mississippi River floodplain.

The bottomland trail traversed the American Bottom floodplain from Kaskaskia to Prairie du Rocher and on to Columbia, Prairie du Pont (Dupo) and Cahokia. The trail was often impassable during high river levels and wet periods. Over time, due to its unreliability for passage, its importance diminished and it disappeared. Today the scenic Bluff Road on the American Bottoms is promoted for touring and represents the bottomland trail route.

The upland trail from Prairie du Rocher to Cahokia was a more reliable route that did not flood and was easier to use and maintain, so over time it was a continuously developed roadway that is in use today and is considered the main route of the historic Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail.



# Timeline

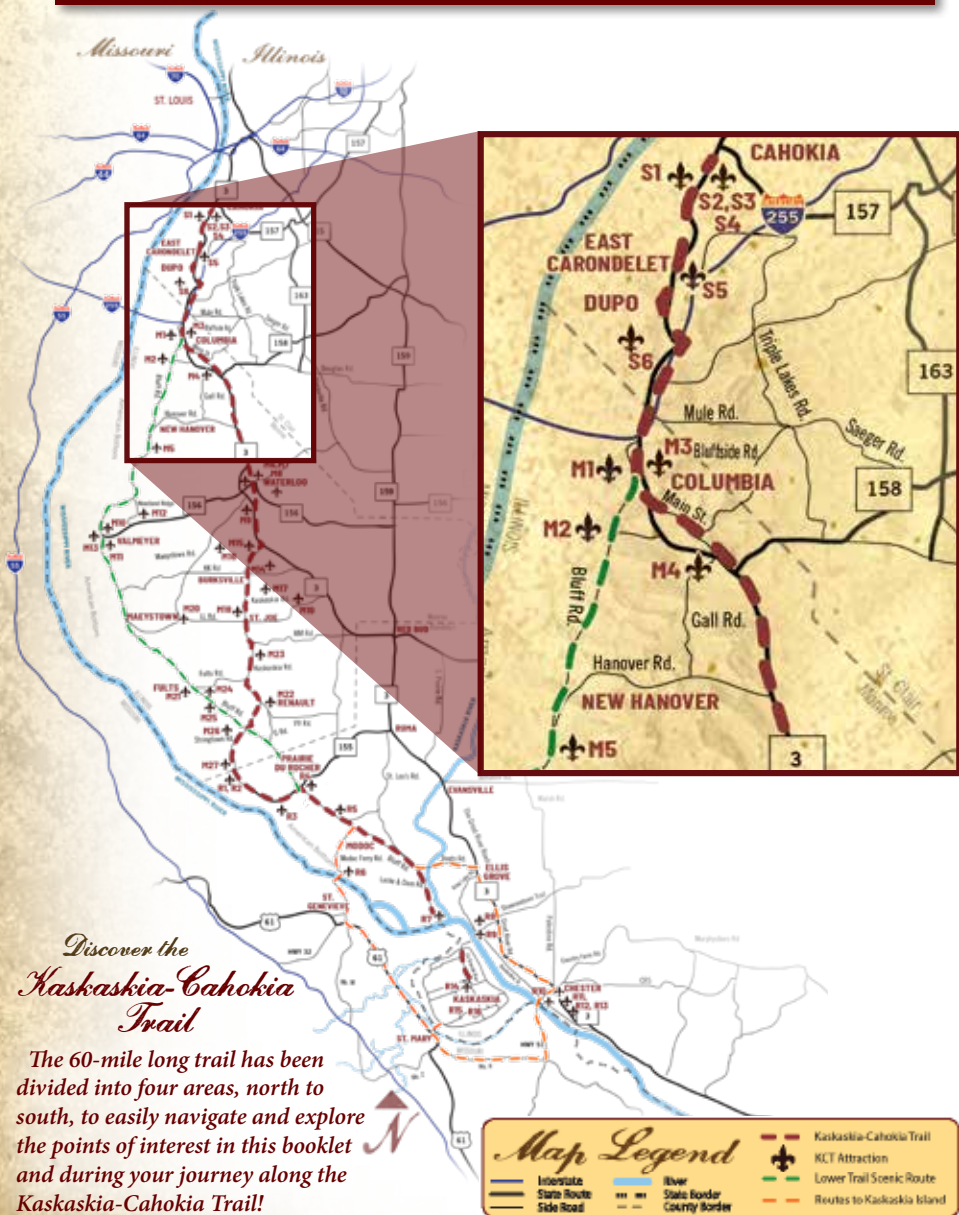
## Looking Back at Illinois' First Road







# AREA 1



# Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail Attractions

## St. Clair County

### CAHOKIA

#### S1. Cahokia Courthouse SHS



Originally built as a French dwelling around 1740, the home became a courthouse in 1793 and served as a center of political activity in the Old Northwest Territory. From December 1803 until the spring of 1804, Lewis and Clark used the courthouse to coordinate final preparations for their expedition that embarked from Wood River in May of 1804. 107 Elm St., 618-332-1782

#### S2. Holy Family Church & Parish Museum

Holy Family Church is the oldest church west of the Alleghany Mountains and the oldest continuous Catholic parish in the United States. It was founded by Canadian Missionaries in 1699 and the log church, built in 1799 is a National Historic Landmark. 116 Church St., [holyfamily1699.org](http://holyfamily1699.org)

#### S3. Jarrot Mansion SHS

This historic brick home was constructed in 1807, making it one of the oldest surviving masonry buildings in Illinois. This State Historic Site is notable for its use of American Federal architectural design. A stone spring house that dates before 1810 can be found on the grounds. In 1974, the Jarrot Mansion was added to the National Register of Historic Places and designated a National Historic Landmark in 2001. 116 Church St., 618-332-1782, [jarrotmansion.org](http://jarrotmansion.org)



#### S4. Tricentennial Heritage Park

The park was created in 1999 by the Village of Cahokia for their Tricentennial celebration. It is dedicated to Judge Jerome Lopinot. There are four brass plaques written by Lopinot describing the significance of the area. It was the sight of a meeting between George Rogers Clark and a large number of

local tribes in August of 1778. Clark convinced them to remain neutral during the American Revolution. *This park is located at the intersection of IL Routes 3 and 157 in Cahokia, IL.*

## EAST CARONDELET

### S5. Martin-Boismenu House SHS

This home is typical of many of the French Creole poteaux-sur-solle (post on sill) type dwellings that predominated the area in the late 18th century and is one of the oldest structures of its kind in Illinois. Built by Canadian born Revolutionary War veteran Pierre Martin, its squared-log outer walls rest upright on a log sill mounted on a stone foundation.

*From the Cahokia Courthouse, follow IL-3 south four blocks then veer right onto Water St. Continue across the creek into East Carondelet. The house will be on the left. 618-332-1782, [dnr.illinois.gov](http://dnr.illinois.gov)*



Martin-Boismenu House

## DUPO

### S6. Pulcher Mississippian Mounds Site



Pulcher Mississippian Mounds

Pulcher Mississippian Mounds (1100 to 1400 AD) is an intact archaeological site with eight earthen mounds, that once had plazas, buildings, gardens, and a craft workshop. This ancient village was associated with the Cahokia Mounds Urban Center. Use Old State Route 3 going north out of Columbia, IL. Turn left onto Davis Ferry Rd. and follow the road over Interstate 255 viaduct and railroad tracks. Turn left onto Oklahoma Hill Rd. Pulcher Site is located along Oklahoma Hill and Fish Lake Rd. in a private farm field. The large mounds can be viewed from the road.

## Monroe County

## COLUMBIA

### M1. Sandbank School

Less than 50 feet off of an original section of the KCT, this log cabin subscription school was located on the northeast quarter of the 400 acre



# Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail Attractions

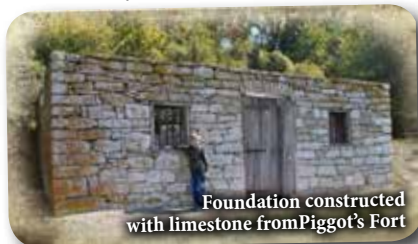
land claim belonging to James Piggot's wife. A frame school replaced the log school in 1902. The restored schoolhouse still stands today. *11832 Bluff Rd., 618-593-7663*



Sandbank Schoolhouse

## M2. Piggot's Fort Marker

A marker commemorates and interprets the life of Revolutionary War Captain, James Piggot. Around 1783, Captain Piggot arrived in the American Bottoms with 17 other families after a long and arduous battle with the Chickasaw and Choctaw tribes at Fort Jefferson near Paducah, KY. The families established a fort on Carr Creek just under the bluffs along the road from Kaskaskia. This was said to have been the largest fortification erected by early Americans in Illinois. *11562 Bluff Rd.*



Foundation constructed with limestone from Piggot's Fort

## M3. Historic Main Street District

As the population of settlers grew near Piggot's Fort, a town containing general stores, blacksmith and harness shops, mills, and hardware stores was soon established. Platted as the town of Columbia, the original Kaskaskia to Cahokia Road was re-routed to the east becoming the Main Street of the new town. Historic Main Street Columbia was designated Illinois' 46th Main Street Community in 2015 and boasts national and local historic landmarks, a thriving residential and business community, and exciting local events held throughout the year.

*mymainstreetcolumbia.com*



Miller-Fiege Home

## Miller-Fiege Home

Built in 1850, this historic home is a unique example of a brick two-story German vernacular cottage on a limestone foundation, a style popular in the 1830s to late 1800s and easily the most prevalent style found in Columbia's historic neighborhoods. The home is being restored and features furniture and memorabilia

from the Miller and Fiege families who owned it for nearly 150 years.  
*140 S Main St.*

### ***Historic Main Street Columbia Self-guided Walking Tour***

Copies of the tour are available at the Columbia Public Library, 106 N. Metter Avenue or at Columbia City Hall, 208 S. Rapp St. Visitors are guided through a historical journey of Columbia's Historic Main Street and buildings. Once the primary mail and stagecoach route through Columbia, Main Street attracted businessmen who built inns, taverns and shops that served travelers and a growing number of settlers.

### **M4. Shoemaker Schoolhouse Plaza**



The one-room schoolhouse commemorative plaza incorporates several pieces of Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail history. The Shoemaker School, a one-room schoolhouse originally built as a log cabin school in 1851, was replaced in 1867 with a new brick schoolhouse. The schoolhouse was moved to this site after the threat of being demolished with the

widening of IL Route 3 and was recently re-branded as POP-UP SHOP, Columbia, IL. The shop offers a short term rental space where entrepreneurs, retailers and makers sell their wares. *6 Gall Rd.*

### ***One-Room Schoolhouses of Monroe County Exhibit***

Located at the Shoemaker Schoolhouse Plaza, this exhibit identifies the more than 60 one-room schoolhouses that once dotted the County. *6 Gall Rd.*

### ***Gall Road Stone Arch Bridge***

Several European-style stone arch bridges are found in Monroe County. This basic design was first used by the Roman Empire for bridges and aqueducts and is still a popular design because it can withstand extreme conditions. German immigrants who came to Columbia in the mid-1800s borrowed this design and used the abundance of local limestone to construct this bridge over Carr Creek. *6 Gall Rd.*

### ***Whiteside Station Memorial***

Whiteside Station was originally built in 1783 between Columbia and Waterloo as a stockade. It was rebuilt by Captain William Whiteside (1747-1815) with his family and friends to offer protection to early settlers from American Indians along the KCT. The memorial honors Captain Whiteside and his role as a patriot during the Revolutionary War. *6 Gall Rd.*



# Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail Attractions

## M5. Eagle Cliff/Miles Cemetery

Many founding American pioneers and soldiers of Monroe County are buried here next to a rare bluff top prairie, and over-looking the Mississippi River floodplain below. Graves for soldiers from the American

Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Mexican-American War, Civil War and 20th century wars, along with those of prominent local families are found here. The Miles Family mausoleum is a prominent historic structure at the cemetery. 7801 D Rd.

*Located approximately 5 miles south of Columbia off of Bluff Rd. (near H Rd. and D Rd. intersection).*



Miles Cemetery







## AREA 2



### Discover the Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail

The 60-mile long trail has been divided into four areas, north to south, to easily navigate and explore the points of interest in this booklet and during your journey along the Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail!

# Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail Attractions

## Monroe County

### WATERLOO

#### M6. Waterloo Historic District

The Waterloo Historic District includes the majority of central Waterloo, Illinois. The district includes 271 buildings, of which 182 are contributing buildings to its historic character and 83 have been evaluated as possessing special architectural and/or historical significance. The center of the district includes Waterloo's town square, the site of the Monroe County Courthouse, as well as a two-block section of Main Street which forms the city's commercial core. The predominant architectural styles in the residential parts of the district are local adaptations of the Federal style and a German cottage style developed by the city's German immigrants in the 19th century. The district was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on December 1, 1978.



Downtown Waterloo Historic Walking Tour

#### Monroe County Courthouse



Monroe County Courthouse

In 1832, the first official Courthouse was completed in the center of Waterloo where there now stands a community bandstand. The construction quality was lacking, and the building had to be replaced. In 1853, a new Courthouse was completed – a solid brick 2-story building. That building is now the center portion on the west side of the current Courthouse. Since then, it has been added on two times – the north and south wings in 1908 and the newest east wing in 1995. 100 South Main St., 618-939-8681, [monroecountyil.gov](http://monroecountyil.gov)

#### Historic Downtown Building Self-guided Walking Tour

Take a self-guided walking tour of the historical buildings that make up Waterloo's vibrant downtown. Along the way you will discover stunning architecture, beautiful murals, unique boutiques, plenty of opportunities for fantastic food and drink, and lots of friendly faces!

## M7. Peterstown House

The Peterstown House is a saltbox building constructed in the mid-1830s. Emory Peter Rogers, for whom the house and surrounding neighborhood were named, was the first owner of the building. The building served as an inn and stagecoach stop along the Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail. The Peterstown House is the only intact inn which still stands along the trail. In the late nineteenth century, the Peterstown House became a local social hall. In 1973, it was scheduled for demolition but was spared when concerned citizens formed the Peterstown Heritage Society and saved the building. It is now an interpretive museum. There are three historic cabins on the property as well. 275 North Main St., 618-939-4222, [peterstownheritagesociety.weebly.com](http://peterstownheritagesociety.weebly.com)



## M8. Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail Historic Marker/Ford Monument

Near this marker stood the boyhood home of Thomas Ford, the eighth governor of Illinois. He held many public offices before serving as Governor in 1842. This monument is also one of the original markers of the Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail, placed by the Monroe County Historical Society in 1975. 223 North Main St.



## Ditch's Tavern/Roger's Seminary

Ditch Tavern was the first hotel in Waterloo. It was a beautiful two story log cabin operated by David and Hannah Ditch. David owned the land on which Waterloo was built until it was purchased by George Forquer in 1818. The county seat was moved to Waterloo from Harrisonville in 1816 because of continual flooding. There were no county buildings, so meetings were held at Ditch's Tavern until the Courthouse was built.

Also in this same block of Waterloo was Roger's Female Seminary, which was one of the early educational institutions of Monroe County, opening in 1872. 223 North Main St.



# *Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail Attractions*

## **M9. Waterloo Historic Complex *History Museum of Monroe County***

The History Museum of Monroe County in Waterloo offers visitors a unique opportunity to experience history through a variety of permanent exhibits and changing displays in the Kueker, Wm. Zimmer and Allscheid-Metzger galleries. A broad span of eras and interests is anchored by the gifted "Edd & Violet Kueker Collection". Loaned and donated artifacts represent transportation, agriculture, several wars, local commerce (including a General Store from the 1860s), the settlement of the west, a local archaeological exhibit dating back to the Stone Age and much more. Interesting programs are presented in the "theatre" area. 724 Elaine Dr., 618-939-5008, [monroecountyhistorymuseum.org](http://monroecountyhistorymuseum.org)



## ***Bellefontaine House and Spring***

Bellefontaine was one of the first American settlements in what is now Illinois. The earliest settlers included families of Revolutionary War veterans who had served with George

Rogers Clark. During this period of time, the Monroe County Illinois area was a County of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

In 1778, James Moore was ordered, by George Rogers Clark, to lead expeditions to the Illinois Country, establish a military post and to serve as Captain of that company.

By the spring of 1782, James Moore



and his family, along with a band of pioneers, Revolutionary War Soldiers and their families, had arrived at

this site. The French had called the site, "La Bellefontaine," meaning the beautiful spring.

The 1800 federal census showed that Bellefontaine, with 286 inhabitants, had become the third largest community in the Illinois territory. 709 South Church St., 618-939-5230, [monroecountyhistoricalsociety.weebly.com](http://monroecountyhistoricalsociety.weebly.com)

## ***James Moore Cabin***

Due to the lack of funds after the Revolutionary War, Patrick Henry, the Governor of Virginia at the time, issued land grants to the soldiers who had served. This is when James Moore, Captain under George Rogers Clark, decided that this site was where his family was to settle. In this cabin, James Moore's sixth child (of eight

total) Enoch Moore was born in 1783. Enoch was a delegate to the convention that framed the first Illinois constitution. Five generations of Moores called this homestead their home. 709 South Church St.



Presentation at James Moore Cabin

### **Moore Cemetery**

Moore Cemetery is where many of the Moore family are buried. A plaque honoring the service of Revolutionary War soldier James McRoberts is also located in this cemetery, along with gravesites of several other Revolutionary War heroes. Just north of the cemetery is a “potter’s field” where many men, women and children were buried in unmarked graves dating back to 1897. *South of the Bellefontaine House*

### **Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail Remnant with Stone Arch Bridge**

This stone arch bridge dates back to 1877 when it was built by Charles Liebheit and Christian Hartmann. It extends over a tributary of Fountain Creek, called Moore’s Run (named after James Moore, one of the founders of Waterloo). The bridge

connects the only intact portion of the original Kaskaskia Cahokia Trail. *South of the Bellefontaine House*

## **VALMEYER**

### **M10. Salt Lick Point Reserve & Trails**

Salt Lick Point Land and Water Reserve is a 600+ acre site owned by the Village of Valmeyer. The reserve protects bluff land forests and a rare, unique hill prairie and glade habitat. The hilly Salt Lick and Newman trails traverse the bluffs offering scenic views of the floodplain below. The easily hiked Johnson trail at the base of the bluffs features showy wildflowers. The trails offer a combined 3 miles of hiking and are open year-round. 1309 Limestone Ln., 618-935-2131, [saltlick@htc.net](mailto:saltlick@htc.net)

### **M11. White Rock Nature Preserve**



Hiking the White Rock Nature Preserve Trail

The 306-acre White Rock Nature Preserve is open to the public for hiking and nature study. Approximately 2 miles of moderately strenuous hiking trails

# Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail Attractions

traverse the heavily forested bluff lands culminating with bluff top prairies with views over-looking the Mississippi River American Bottoms floodplain. Many rare plant and animal species exist in this scenic natural area. *Located approximately 1.5 miles south of Old Valmeyer on Bluff Road near the intersection with Harris Road.*  
[clifftopalliance.org](http://clifftopalliance.org)

## M12. Valmeyer Community Heritage Society Museum



Also known as the Monroe City School, this one-room schoolhouse, built in 1918 has been transformed into a museum open to the public. The schoolhouse was last used in the mid-1950s, when all the one-room schoolhouses were consolidated into community school districts. The structure was uprooted from its home near KK Road and relocated to “new” Valmeyer. The entire village was relocated to the adjacent uplands after it was devastated by the Great Flood of 1993. 321 South Cedar Bluff Dr., 618-935-2142

## M13. Flood of 1993 Site

Now called “Old Valmeyer” this site is where the village of 900 lost its battle with the Mississippi River during the summer of 1993 after a levee break. About 95 percent of the properties (roughly 325 homes and 25 businesses) were substantially damaged. Valmeyer residents abandoned the floodplain and built a new community atop the towering, thickly wooded bluffs that bordered the eastern edge of the old village. Now, only about 25 houses that survived or were rebuilt remain in Old Valmeyer. The rest of the buildings have been torn down and much of the land is farmed.

## BURKSVILLE/NEW DESIGN

### M14. James Seely Historic Marker

Erected in 1970, this sign marks the site of the first English speaking public school in the Illinois country. It was located in New Design, on a tract of land known as the James Lemen Grant. A school was located in an abandoned squatter’s cabin. Mr. Samuel John Seely taught children in 1783. KK Rd., 1 mile east of Burksville



Area 2 continues on page 19

For more information, please visit [KCTrailIllinois.org](http://KCTrailIllinois.org)



# Discover the Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail

## From the Peoria Tribe of Oklahoma

Welcome to the land of our people and our elders who came before us. The Confederated Peorias originated in the lands bordering the Great Lakes and drained by the mighty Mississippi. These people are the Illinois or Illini Indians, descendants of those who created the great mound civilizations in the central United States two to three thousand years ago.

The Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail was important to us as you will learn.

To discover more, please visit our official Peoria Tribe website: [PeoriaTribe.com](http://PeoriaTribe.com)



### Map Legend

- Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail
- KCT Attraction
- Lower Trail Scenic Route
- Routes to Kaskaskia Island
- Interstate
- State Route
- Side Road
- River
- State Border
- County Border

Don't lose your way, follow the Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail road signs.





### M15. Lemen Monument

James Lemen, a revolutionary war soldier and anti-slavery leader, came to the Illinois Country of the

Northwest Territory and is credited with giving the settlement the name of New Design because he decided to build a settlement here in 1786, one with a “new design.” His

home was in the center of this community, which was the largest settlement made by Americans in these times. The monument was erected in 1909 in his honor in the family cemetery.

*On private property*

### M16. Baebler Farm

Baebler Educational Farm is a University of Illinois Extension & Monroe County 4-H Education Foundation owned property. The site provides opportunities for youth to learn about agriculture and natural resources. There is a walking trail and many gardens to explore.

4022 JJ Rd., Waterloo, IL,  
[baeblfarm4kids@gmail.com](mailto:baeblfarm4kids@gmail.com)



### M17. Burksville Cave/ Illinois Caverns

Illinois Caverns State Natural Area is a 120-acre preserve owned by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. The main attraction of the site is an unimproved wild cave with nearly three miles of walking-height passage. Located in karst-rich Monroe County, the area contains woodlands, restored prairie and a half-mile long prairie trail. 4369 G Rd., Waterloo, IL, 618-458-6699. *No access to cave available.*

## ST. JOE/TIPTON

### M18. St. Joe

Once home to several businesses, the town now only has Zion United Church of Christ, which was originally built in the 1860s, and is now a satellite of St. John Church in

Maeystown. *Located on Kaskaskia Road south of Burksville*

### M19. Tipton

Tipton was settled in the 1830s by immigrants from Tipperary, Ireland. The original name of the town was Tipperary, later changed

to Tiptown and shortened to Tipton. St. Patrick's Parish was originally constructed in 1853, and a larger church was built in 1860. The parish is still active today. *Located southeast of Burksville on LL Rd., approximately 3 miles east of Kaskaskia Rd.*

# Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail Attractions

## MAEYSTOWN

### M20. Historic District

Maeystown was founded in 1852 by Jacob Maeys and settled by German immigrants. The village is unique in manner with structures integrated into the landscape. Sixty significant buildings still exist, including Maeys' log house, the original church, the stone arch bridge entry into town, Zeitingner's Mill and various outbuildings, barns, and smokehouses made of limestone, brick and wood. Maeystown, in its entirety, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978 – one of only a few villages in the State of Illinois to be so honored. Today the village has a restaurant, museum, general store, bed and breakfast, and shops. 618-580-5875, [maeystown.com](http://maeystown.com)

### Maeystown Creek Stone Arch Bridge

The arched stone bridge, built in 1881, marks the entrance to historic Maeystown. Most recently restored



Annual Duck Races in Maeystown

in 2018, this one lane bridge is still in use today.

### Maeystown Mill Museum



Maeystown Mill Museum

In 1859 Jacob Pilliard and John Coleman built a steam-powered flour mill along the middle creek in Maeystown. It passed into the possession of Anton Zeitingner in 1868, and shortly after it burned. In 1880, a group bought the land and rebuilt the mill, but it was never used for that purpose. Over the years, the building has been a funeral parlor, furniture business, dance hall, auto garage, gas station, and furniture restoration shop. The Maeystown Preservation Society bought the mill in 1980, made restorations, and reopened it as a visitor center and museum.

1113 Main St., 618-458-6464







*The 60-mile long trail has been divided into four areas, north to south, to easily navigate and explore the points of interest in this booklet and during your journey along the Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail!*



# Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail Attractions

## Monroe County

### FULTS/RENAULT

#### M21. Fults

The Village of Fults originated in 1901 as a stop on the St. Louis Iron Mountain and Southern Railway line that was built through that area. Brownsburg was the original name of the Village, after John Brown, a resident of nearby Brown's Hollow. The name was changed to Fults, in honor of Jacob Fults, who lived near the town. Fults had many businesses that supported the surrounding farming community. Fults was also home to Cedar Bluff School, an elementary school of the Valmeyer School system. Following the 1993 Flood, many of the homes were demolished. St. John United Church of Christ received major damage as well, but a local resident purchased and renovated the building.

#### M22. Renault

Renault, originally named Glasgow City, after founder James Glasgow is located on the upland Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail. It was founded in 1860 and incorporated as a Village in 1896. The Village was later named

Renault, in honor of Philip Francois Renault who came to the area from France in search of mineral resources in the Mississippi River bluffs.

#### M23. Paul Wightman

##### Subterranean Nature Preserve

This 535-acre nature preserve, overlying the Foglepole Cave system, the largest cave in Illinois, was purchased in 2013 to protect the



Foglepole Cave

cave's subterranean stream water quality, endangered bats and cave aquatic species. The surface is a karst sinkhole landscape that was historically farmed. A mosaic of native prairie grasses and wildflowers are now planted, and the woods and sinkholes are being managed to improve native vegetation and reduce erosion and contaminated surface waters percolating into the cave streams. The preserve is named in honor of Father Paul Wightman who did extensive research and surveying of the cave system in the mid-20th



Wildflowers at Paul Wightman Nature Preserve

Century. The site is open to the public with access facilities, interpretive displays/brochures, and 4 miles of easy hiking trails. 3325 G Rd., Fults, IL, [clifftopalliance.org](http://clifftopalliance.org). Cave access is prohibited for environmental and safety reasons.

## **M24. Fults Hill Prairie Nature Preserve**

The 532-acre Fults Hill Prairie Nature Preserve is owned and managed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Most of this unique area was purchased by IDNR between 1970 and 1976. This area contains a wide variety of plants and animals, some common and others found nowhere else in the State. It includes woodland, prairie and glade communities, and has the largest complex of high quality loess hill prairies in Illinois. In 1986 it was recognized by the U. S. Department of the Interior as a National Natural Landmark. *Bluff Rd. just southeast of Kidd Lake Rd. [dnr.illinois.gov](http://dnr.illinois.gov)*



## **M25. Kidd Lake Marsh State Natural Area**

The 465-acre Kidd Lake State Natural Area is owned and managed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. It is an example of the

once expansive wetlands of the Mississippi floodplain known as the American Bottoms.

Historically, the marsh was part of an 800-acre lake bed. It is an important rest stop for migrating waterfowl and continues to provide critical habitat to a diverse range of birds, amphibians and reptiles. Kidd Lake was named for Robert Kidd, one of Monroe

County's early settlers, who came to the area in 1782. *Bluff Road, four miles north of Prairie du Rocher. [dnr.illinois.gov](http://dnr.illinois.gov)*

## **M26. Native American Village**

Signage interpreting the village of the Metchigamia, a tribe of the Illiniwek confederation. The Metchigamia people lived in close relations with the neighboring French Settlements. *Intersection of Kaskaskia Rd. and Stringtown Rd.*

## **M27. St. Philippe and Renault Land Grant Roadside Pull-Off**

On June 14, 1723, Philip Francois Renault received several concessions of land in order to support the establishment of mines in the bluffs. The plan was to develop mineral resources and exploit the wealth of the Mississippi Valley. Boisbriant, the Commandant at Fort Chartres, and Des Ursins, the Principal of the Royal India Company, signed this conveyance. Of these concessions of land, the one that fronts the Mississippi at the Great Marsh has



# Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail Attractions

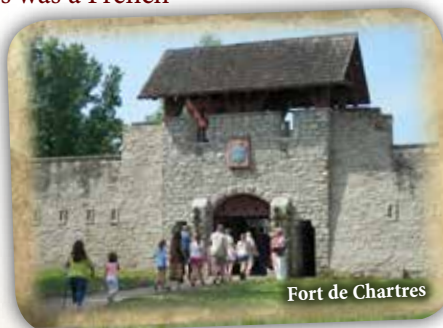
since been known as the Renault Grant in the south corner of Monroe County. Renault himself had headquarters at the fort. The Village of St. Philippe was founded within the lands of this grant, just north of Fort de Chartres by Philip Renault. Farmers and tradesmen were encouraged to settle here to support mining operations initiated in 1717 by the Company of the West and the Company of St. Philippe. The fertile tract of bottom land in the Renault Grant was intended to furnish supplies for the mines. It was soon discovered that the bluffs did not contain the rich minerals that the French had expected. The Village quickly declined, and by 1765, most of the residents of St. Philippe had moved away. *Stringtown Rd. near Randolph County line*

## Randolph County

### PRAIRIE DU ROCHER

#### R1. Fort de Chartres

Fort de Chartres was a French fortification originally built in 1720 on the eastern bank of the Mississippi River. The Fort was named in honor of Louis, duc de Chartres,



son of the Regent of France. It was originally built as a palisade of logs with two bastions at opposite corners. Prone to river flooding, the fort was rebuilt several times, further from the river, and the last time built of limestone in 1756. The fort's stone powder magazine is considered the oldest building in the State of Illinois. Following the conclusion of the French and Indian War in 1763, the French transferred control of the area to the British, who abandoned the fort in 1772 and established Fort Gage in Kaskaskia Village until 1778. By 1900, the structure was in ruin, and the exterior walls were gone. Several buildings and the fort's gateway were reconstructed on original foundations. *1350 IL-155, fortdechartres.us*

#### R2. Ste. Anne Church

Signage interpreting the site of a chapel to Ste. Anne built in 1721 outside the first Fort de Chartres near the river. *South edge of the fort.*

#### R3. Pierre Laclede Home

Floodwater in 1993 damaged a

bridge adjacent to Fort de Chartres historic site. In 1998, State transportation workers doing repairs came across the foundation of an old home. Archaeologists excavated the site and analyzed the findings



Cannon Re-enactment at the Annual Rendezvous at Fort de Chartres

including pottery and other items. The description of the property built with methods used by the French, along with the pottery, deed records, architectural evidence and the historical records all point to Laclede's ownership of this property.

#### R4. Historic Prairie du Rocher

Prairie du Rocher translates to "prairie by the rock." The fourth European settlement in Illinois, this Village was founded in 1722, shortly after the establishment of Fort de Chartres, on a tract granted by the Royal Indian Company to Pierre Dugue Boisbriant, the commander and builder of the fort. Situated in the fertile farmland known as the American Bottoms, and at the base of the Mississippi River Bluffs, Prairie du Rocher provided grain and other foodstuffs to New Orleans

and other lower Louisiana Territory communities. [visitprairiedurocher.com](http://visitprairiedurocher.com)

#### Village Hall

The Village Hall building was constructed to recreate the historic "post on sil" architectural style so prevalent during the French colonial era. 207 Henry St., 618-284-7171

#### Creole House

The original portion of the Creole House was built around 1800 by Dr. Robert McDonald. This one-room dwelling held a living room, kitchen,



Creole House



# Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail Attractions

dining area and sleeping quarters. A second room was added as either an office or additional bedroom. This portion of the house was constructed in a manner that is called “half-timber,” which was common in Europe throughout the Middle Ages. In 1855, owner Franklin Brickley added four additional rooms, a long front porch and a basement. The house is on the National Register of Historic Places and is owned by the Randolph County Historical Society.

*Located on the east side of Market St. in Prairie du Rocher; 618-284-7396, [Rchistorical.weebly.com](http://Rchistorical.weebly.com)*

## St. Joseph Church

This parish was established in 1722 as a chapel dependent upon the royally endowed church of Ste. Anne at Fort de Chartres. The original

log chapel was replaced by a larger log church in 1734. The records and sacred vessels of Ste. Anne are now held for safekeeping at St. Joseph Church. The present church building dates to 1850. It is the only true French parish in the Diocese of Belleville, founded under the patronage of the king. The Romanesque style of architecture and the flat ceiling were inspired by the famous basilicas of Rome. 802 Middle St., [stjoespdr.org](http://stjoespdr.org)



French Marine Ceremony at Fort de Chartres





## AREA 4



# Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail Attractions

## Randolph County

### MODOC

#### R5. Modoc Rock Shelter NHS

This rock bluff on the edge of the Mississippi River floodplain was undercut at its base by Ice Age floods. First inhabitants used this natural rock shelter as far back as 9,000 years ago. Archeologists excavated and studied the site in the 1950s and 60s revealing three prehistoric periods of habitation and historic uses by Native Americans and European settlers traveling on the KCT. On site exhibits interpret the history of the site. *Bluff Rd., two miles southeast of Prairie du Rocher*



#### R6. Ste. Genevieve-Modoc Ferry

In the small community of Modoc, the road going west (follow the signs) takes you to the Modoc River Ferry on the Mississippi River. This commercial fee ferry takes you to the northern edge of the French colonial village of Ste. Genevieve, Mo. and on to HWY 61 South which will

take you to the bridge to Kaskaskia Island in St. Mary, Mo. and the "new" Kaskaskia Village. This is the southern end of the KCT and its origin.

The ferry operates during daylight hours, year-round except when river conditions are unsafe. 8205 Little Rock Rd., Ste. Genevieve, 573-883-7097, [stegenmodocferry.com](http://stegenmodocferry.com)

#### Ste. Genevieve, Missouri

Originally established in 1735 as a French colonial settlement, this is Missouri's oldest town today. The community's French Colonial National

Landmark Historic District features many original, historic and internationally recognized French colonial architecture homes open for tours. Quaint and historic downtown shops, bed and breakfasts, restaurants, and area wineries and breweries make Ste. Genevieve a great place to visit with many attractions. In 2018, the National Park Service designated Ste. Genevieve as a National Historic Park, which is currently under development. *Ste. Genevieve Tourism, 66 South Main St. Phone: 1-800-373-7007/ 1-573-883-7097, [VisitSteGen.com](http://VisitSteGen.com)*



## **R7. US Army Corps of Engineers Kaskaskia River Recreation Area and the Jerry F. Costello Lock and Dam**

The Jerry F. Costello Lock and Dam provides for commercial navigation on the lower 36 miles of the Kaskaskia River with a reliable connection to the Mississippi River for waterborne shipping of bulk commodities. Visitors are welcome to the lock to view barges and tows passing through. The Corps Recreation Area offers visitor information, boat ramps, campground, picnic facilities, and the one-mile Confluence Heritage Trail where the Kaskaskia and Mississippi Rivers converge. *4800 Lock and Dam Rd., 618-284-7160*

## **ELLIS GROVE**

### **R8. Fort Kaskaskia State Historic Site/Garrison Hill Cemetery**

First built in 1751 and further improved in 1759, Fort Kaskaskia was built on Garrison Hill bluff overlooking the original French Colonial Kaskaskia Village and the two rivers to provide defense from the hostile British and

their Native American allies leading up to, and during the French and Indian War. The fort was destroyed by the French after they lost the war in 1763 to avoid seizure by the British.

A large group shelter overlooks the confluence of the Kaskaskia River, the old

Kaskaskia Village area, and the section of Illinois now known as Kaskaskia Island that is isolated on the Missouri side of the river due to the historic river course change that began in April 1881. Fort Kaskaskia SHS offers camping, picnic areas, and interpretive signage.



Garrison Hill Cemetery, located adjacent to Fort Kaskaskia, was established during the 1880s' and 90s primarily by graves that were relocated from Kaskaskia Village.

They, along with the entire village, were being destroyed by the encroaching Mississippi River that was cutting a new, flood induced, main river channel thru the area. Approximately 3,000





# *Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail Attractions*

grave sites remain from the Kaskaskia village floodplain. The graves of many of Illinois' earliest pioneers are located here, including Pierre Menard, the first Lt. Governor of Illinois, and his family. 4372 Park Rd. and 4230 Kaskaskia Rd., 618-859-3741

## **R9. Pierre Menard Home SHS**



The historic Pierre Menard home is located nearby at the base of Garrison Hill. Menard, Illinois' first Lt. Governor, built the home around the 1800s before Illinois became a state, and Kaskaskia served as the first state capital. The home was placed on the Register of Historic Places in 1970. The Menard Home is one of the finest examples of French architecture in the Midwest and opens in May for warm-month visits. 4230 Kaskaskia Rd., [dnr.illinois.gov](http://dnr.illinois.gov)

## **CHESTER**

Chester is a historic Mississippi Riverfront town established in 1819 with many interesting attractions in and around the City.

## **R10. Chester Welcome Center**

The Chester Welcome Center is located at the entrance to the Chester Bridge and includes several exhibits and regional visitor information. 10 By-Pass Road (Rt. 150), 618-826-2721, [chesterill.com](http://chesterill.com)

## **R11. Governor Shadrach Bond State Memorial in Evergreen Cemetery**

In Chester's Evergreen Cemetery, you can visit the Governor Shadrach Bond State Memorial. Bond served as Illinois' first governor. 501 W. Holmes St., 618-859-3741

## **R12. Randolph County Courthouse & Museum and Archives Building**

Chester is the Randolph County seat of government. The Randolph County Courthouse complex includes the Randolph County Museum and Archives, the Plaza of Flags noting the various governments that controlled Illinois through history, and National Society Daughters of the

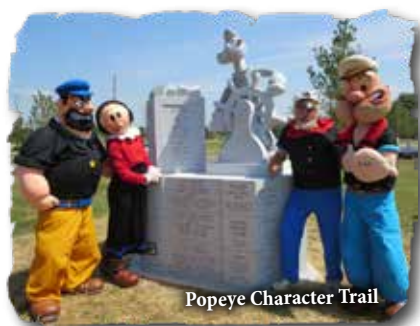


American Revolution Monument that memorializes “Where Illinois Began”, with pictures of the “Liberty Bell of the West”. This location is on a bluff overlooking the scenic Mississippi River and Missouri and Illinois bottomlands. The fifth floor of the courthouse is a scenic outlook with a ring of windows.

1 Taylor St., 618-826-5000, [randolphco.org](http://randolphco.org)

### **R13. Popeye Statue and Character Trail (Elzie C. Segar Park)**

Chester is home to the late Elzie Segar, creator of Popeye the Sailor Man and his many associated comic characters. Chester celebrates Segar and his world famous comic characters with annual festivals, a Popeye Character Trail located throughout town, a Segar Park and gift shops selling Popeye memorabilia. 618-826-2721, [chesterill.com](http://chesterill.com)



Popeye Character Trail

## **KASKASKIA ISLAND**

On the center of the island you can visit the very small and rural relocated Village of Kaskaskia. This community was established over time from the late 1890's until the 1930's

as the river channel course change widened and eroded the banks of the Mississippi River on both sides. Eventually the original town site was used as farmland with about 20 acres of the 325 acres incorporated town site becoming part of the river. Today the island is ringed by a Federal levee. Record floods of 1973 and 1993 breached the levee and they were repaired. *To access Kaskaskia Island, cross the Chester River Bridge into Mo. on Rt 51, go right on Hwy H to Hwy 61 and St. Mary, Mo., then take the bridge to the island.*

### **R14. Kaskaskia Bell State Memorial**



This bell was forged in France and given to the colonists of the original village of Kaskaskia in 1741 by King Louis XV. The Bell has been known as the “Liberty Bell of the West” since the American Revolutionary War. On July 4, 1778, the bell was rung by Father Pierre Gibault in celebration of Colonel George Rogers Clark's capture of Kaskaskia as part of his successful western front campaign to defeat the British and claim the western territories for America.

203 1st St., 618-859-3741



**R15. Immaculate Conception  
Catholic Church**

Located next to the Bell Shrine is the fifth building of the historic Immaculate Conception Catholic Church. This existing church building was constructed in 1838 in the original village. In 1894, after the river course change began, the structure was moved to its current location, brick by numbered brick. This historic church was started in 1675 under the Archdiocese of Quebec and became a sanctioned parish in 1718 that has remained continuously active.  
207 1st St., 618-615-5747



**R16. La Grande Rue**

La Grande Rue (the great road) is the main road that traverses the island north-south and was a part of the original KCT, or the Kings Road as it was called in the 1700s. This

road was the connection between the new Kaskaskia Village and the old 1703 village, Prairie du Rocher, and Fort de Chartres, but now disappears into the floodplain forest and river at the northeastern end of the island with little trace of the old village. *Main north-south road on Kaskaskia Island.*





# GREAT RIVER ROAD



**T**he *Great River Road National Scenic Byway* follows the course of the Mississippi River for 3,000 miles from northern Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico. The scenic route passes through 10 states and hundreds of river towns. The Great River Road is arguably the longest and most significant scenic byway in America. All along the Great River Road, travelers will find white signs displaying the green pilot's wheel logo. The familiar pilot's wheel symbol denotes which roads are part of the designated route. The route has been selected for its natural, cultural, historical, recreational and scenic properties. The section of the Great River Road National Scenic Byway in the Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail region is Route 3 from Cahokia to Chester, IL. Sections of the Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail located specifically on Route 3 in this region overlap with the Great River Road National Scenic Byway.





# *Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail*



## *Grant Recognition*

The production of this informational booklet is made possible in part by the “Forgotten Illinois” Grant from Illinois Humanities. The Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail Coalition is extremely grateful and would like to express the utmost thanks to Illinois Humanities, not only for allowing us the opportunity to share the importance and beauty of the Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail through this booklet, but also for the incredible scope of work they do on a daily basis.

### *Credits and Disclaimer*

Illinois Humanities is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the Illinois General Assembly [through the Illinois Arts Council Agency], as well as by contributions from individuals, foundations and corporations.

Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed by speakers, program participants, or audiences do not necessarily reflect those of the NEH, Illinois Humanities, our partnering organizations or our funders.

## *Awards*



### **Landmarks Illinois**

Richard H. Driehaus Foundation Preservation Award



### **Excellence in Tourism**

Best Cooperative Partnership Award



### **East West Gateway**

### **Outstanding Local Government Achievement Award**

Exemplary Intergovernmental Collaboration



### **Midwest Travel Treasure**



## The Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail Coalition

*The Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail Coalition is a 501 c 3 organization formed exclusively to promote, preserve, protect and develop the historic, architectural, cultural and natural heritage of the Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail through educational, charitable, historical and scientific purposes and to promote the expansion of the tourism industry in Southwestern Illinois.*

### *Interested in preserving and enhancing the Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail?*

**The Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail Coalition is a nonprofit group dedicated to the protection, preservation and interpretation of historic sites along the trail.**

**We always welcome new members and donations.**

**Get involved! Become a supporting member!**

**Visit our website for more information or send donations to:**

**Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail Coalition  
100 West Fourth Street, Waterloo, Illinois 62298**

**KCTrailIllinois.org**

*Please recycle or return to site for reuse*

