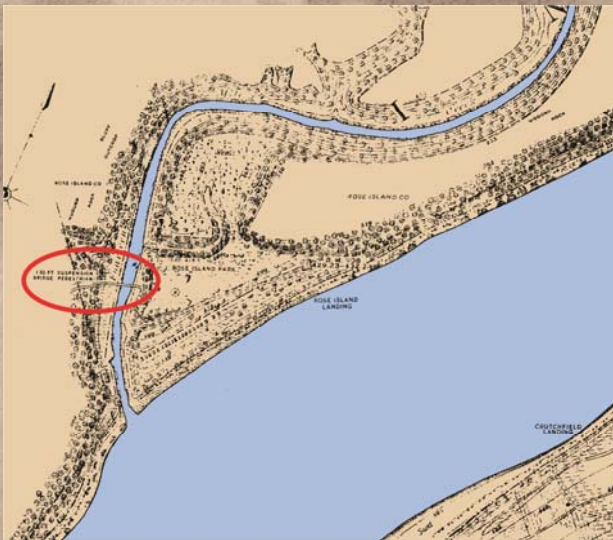


# The Portersville Bridge

## Rose Island Suspension Bridge

From the 1880s until 1937, a suspension bridge connected the mainland to the Rose Island amusement park. The suspension bridge pier footings can still be seen near the new bridge.



After a century of service connecting two Indiana counties, the Portersville Bridge now connects two pieces of Charlestown State Park.



## The Portersville Bridge Serving Dubois and Daviess Counties

The steel bridge was built by the Vincennes Bridge Company in 1912. The two spans crossed the White River at Portersville.

Shortly after the bridge was completed in 1912, a huge flood



on the White River submerged the bridge deck under a few feet of water. The railings and decking were removed to prevent heavy debris from becoming entangled on the bridge. After the waters receded, the bridge was raised three feet higher and opened in 1913.



The wedding of Dot and Dimp Graves was held on the Portersville Bridge on July 13, 1913. The pair met while Dimp was overseeing the bridge's construction.

## Iron Truss Bridges

Iron truss bridges were built in the United States from 1870 to around 1895, gradually replacing wooden covered bridges as the dominant bridge type. After 1895, most metal bridges were steel, which was stronger and less expensive per pound than wrought iron.

The Portersville Bridge is an example of a *pinned camelback through truss*.

**Pinned:** members of the bridge are pinned together at the joints.



**Camelback:** The top chord curves down to meet the bottom chord creating the outline of a camel's back.



This truss style was a modification of the Parker truss. It was commonly used in the United States for railroad and highway bridges in the late 1800s and early 1900s.



**Through Truss:** Traffic travels through the structure with overhead cross-bracing between the two parallel top chords.

## Bringing the Bridge to Charlestown

In 1999, the Portersville Bridge was closed to traffic. In 2008, the bridge was dismantled for restoration and relocation at Charlestown State Park.



Each span was lifted by a crane and set on the ground.

As the spans were taken apart, pieces were numbered for reassembly. Every piece was inspected, cleaned and painted.



Only 5% of the bridge trusses had to be replaced, largely due to rust. The decking and railings are new.



**In 2011, the Portersville Bridge re-opened at its new location. We invite you to walk across this historic bridge, and enjoy its new home in Charlestown State Park.**

