

## ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH - EASTERN HISTORIC ROUTE

### STOP E1 – GLEN ELLYN CA&E STATION

- Glen Ellyn Main Station - Former CA&E Station from 1902 to 1957, located on both sides of trail/trackway. Eastbound station (south side of path) was originally about 10'x12' in size, constructed of wood. Replaced in 1926 with large stone building in stone cottage design, architected by Archibald Armstrong in cooperation with Glen Ellyn Plan Commission. Metal plaque marks the general location of station. Westbound platform was a canopied waiting area. Station was a full stop, with a ticket office, along a dual trackway.



- Prairie Path Park just east of here. Features a gazebo, bike repair station, water fountain, and gaming area.
- Glen Ellyn Public Library just to the west of here, at Prospect and Duane

## STOP E2 – TAYLOR AVENUE CA&E STATION

- Taylor Avenue Station - Former CA&E Station from 1907 to 1957, with stations/platforms located on both sides of trackway. Two small wood frame station houses, about 8'x8' in size with hip roof. Eastbound station located on west side of bridge over Taylor Street, on the south side of track/trail. Westbound station/platform located on the east side of bridge over Taylor Street, on the north side of the track/trail. Wooden steps led up from Taylor Street below. Station was a flagstop along a dual trackway.



## STOP E3 – GLACIAL RIDGE

- Walnut Glen Park to the south of the trail – playground, tables, benches
- Glacial Ridge Trails (DuPage Forest Preserve District) – Glacial ridge or kame left by retreating glaciers more than 10,000 years ago. Area all along here to the north is chock full of glacial deposits. Perry Mastodon found in a glacial pond just north of here.
- As we proceed, we will pass a CA&E signal base artifact on the north side of the trail. Large concrete signal base. Signal bases typically had large holes for wiring. Signals would pass information to the conductor and motorman operating the trains, with red, yellow, and green lights - typically indicating warnings, stopages, or all clear for the approaching section of track. Often seen by curves where line of sight not good.
- Will also pass concrete piers on both sides of the trail, where there once stood a steel pedestrian bridge that spanned over the CA&E railway. Most visible is the remains of concrete pier on the south side of the trail.



## STOP E4 – CA&E HILL AVENUE UNDERPASS

- Former Hill Avenue Underpass or Subway – Where the IPP trail suddenly bends south, the former railway continued straight and underneath Hill Avenue. Steel bridge went across Hill Avenue and the railway passed beneath. The bridge was a favorite place for photographers to take photos of the train station and trains below. The railway bridge was completely filled in after the abandonment of the railway.



## STOP E5 – GLEN OAK CA&E STATION

- Glen Oak Station and Gates to Golf Course leading to station - Former CA&E station from 1909 to 1957. Originally known at Pickwick. Eastbound station (south side of path) was wood frame construction, about 20' x 10' in size, with a multi-tiered gable roof. Westbound station was wooden canopy. Station was a flagstop with dual trackway running between the two platforms. Stone gates mark the former entrance to/from the CA&E station and the golf course. The eastbound station platform can still be seen about 50 feet north of the gates.



## **STOP E6 – MOORING MEMORIAL BRIDGE**

- Paul & Jean Mooring Memorial Bridge spanning over the East Branch of the DuPage River. The Moorings were IPP charter members. First bridge built by volunteers in 1969. Moorings led the building of 4 more bridges. Those early bridges were destroyed by vandals and floods.
- Right before we pass over Interstate 355 Bridge can be seen the future intersection of the Illinois Prairie Path with the East Branch DuPage River trail, which will head north to the Great Western Trail and south to the Morton Arboretum.

## **STOP E7 – CA&E SIGNAL BASE**

- Just over the Interstate 355 Bridge, on the north side of the trail, near Vance Street, on the western edge of Lombard, we'll find another in situ concrete signal base. Recall that these signals were used by motormen and conductors on the CA&E trains to pass safely through sections of the railway.

## ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH - WESTERN HISTORIC ROUTE

### STOP W1 – GLEN ELLYN CA&E STATION

- Glen Ellyn Main Station - Former CA&E Station from 1902 to 1957, located on both sides of trail/trackway. Eastbound station (south side of path) was originally about 10'x12' in size, constructed of wood. Replaced in 1926 with large stone building in stone cottage design, architected by Archibald Armstrong in cooperation with Glen Ellyn Plan Commission. Metal plaque marks the general location of station. Westbound platform was a canopied waiting area. Station was a full stop, with a ticket office, along a dual trackway.



- The Prairie Path Park just east of here. Features a gazebo, bike repair station, water fountain, and gaming area.
- Glen Ellyn Public Library just to the west of here, at Prospect and Duane
- Will also pass by Danby Park and Hoffman Park as we head west.

## STOP W2 – COLLEGE AVENUE CA&E STATION

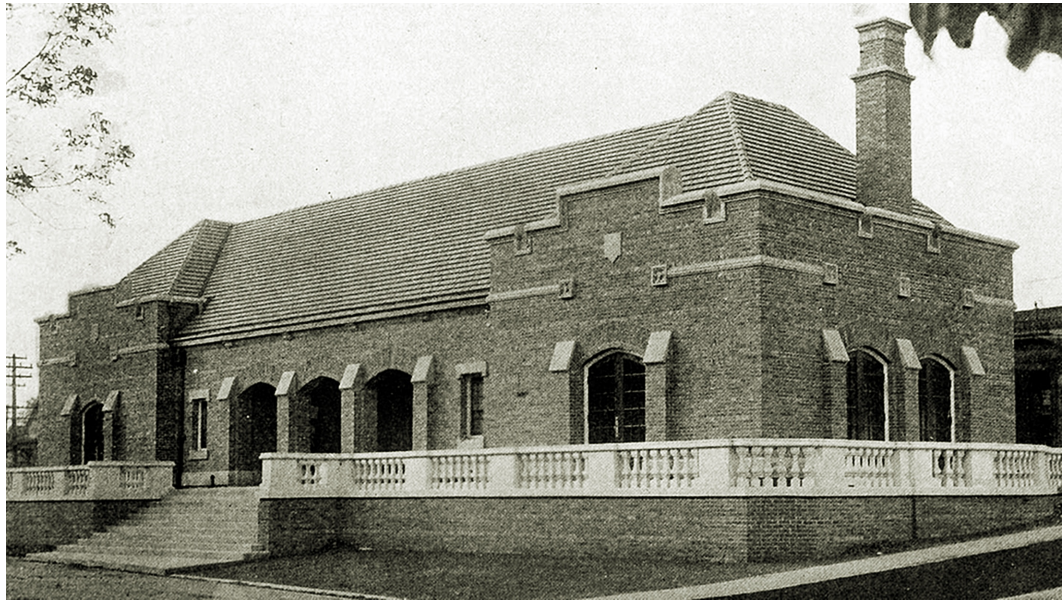
- College Avenue Station - Former CA&E Station from 1903 to 1957, located on both sides of track/trail. Both eastbound and westbound structures were small wood frame buildings, about 6'x6' to 8'x8' in size. College Avenue was named in reference to nearby Wheaton College. The station was a flagstop on a dual trackway.



- We passed by Wheaton College located to the north of the path. Private Christian Liberal Arts college founded in 1860, with Jonathan Blanchard as the first college president. Today has an enrollment of approximately 2900 students, undergrad and post grad.
- As we head west, we will pass Triangle Park, followed quickly by a culvert Artifact - Concrete culvert circa 1905, built by the AE&C
- About 600 feet to the west of President Street, we will also pass a pair of Signal Bases on both sides of IPP. Used for signaling motormen and conductors as to rail section status - stop, proceed with caution, or proceed
- As we enter downtown Wheaton, we will pass by Clocktower Park to the south of the trail

## STOP W3 – WHEATON CA&E STATION

- Wheaton Station Site - Former CA&E Station. This was the main station and hub for CA&E railway, from 1902 to 1957. Originally a wood frame building, about 20'x50' in size. In 1912, replaced by a large brick building, about 100'x32', designed by H R Wilson and Company of Libertyville. General Elizabethan aesthetic for design. Room for waiting areas, restrooms, ticket office, luggage area. After abandonment, torn down in the late 1960s. A canopied platform stood on the north side of the track/trail. This was a full station stop along a dual trackway.



- Looking to the east, we can see the tower of the former DuPage County Courthouse – built in 1896. Served until 1990 when the new county courthouse built along County Farm Road. Designed in Romanesque style by Mifflin E Bell. Lightning strike destroyed the original tower in 1988 – but the tower was rebuilt. National Louis University purchased building in 1993. Sold around 2005 to developers.
- Wheaton French Market and Pavilion – recently completed to house the French Market and to improve the ambiance along the Illinois Prairie Path.
- Former Chicago & Northwestern Station to the north of the train tracks. Built in 1911, designed by Charles Sumner Frost. Served until 1972. Replaced by single story red brick station which served until about 2000. Replaced around 2000 by new Metra (Union Pacific) station a few blocks to the west.

- Original AE&C Headquarters - Kiddycorner from the CA&E station was the AE&C headquarters building - a three story brick building, with a front porch and a large flagpole at the pinnacle of the building - formerly Wheaton Hotel. Building served as AE&C headquarters from 1902 until March, 1913, when lightning struck building during thunderstorm – the building quickly burned down. Records were moved to 2nd floor of the new Wheaton Station until 1915, when AE&C headquarters moved to Aurora.



## **STOP W4 – ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH FOUNDERS PARK**

- Illinois Prairie Path Founders Park - Park dedicated to the 14 people who launched the Illinois Prairie Path in 1963, especially May Thielgaard Watts, who wrote a letter to the Chicago Tribune in September of 1963 suggesting that the abandoned CA&E right of way be converted into a nature trail. There was large public support for Watts proposal. Watts, along with many other volunteers, such as Helen Turner, Lillian Lasch, and Elizabeth and Samuel Holmes, worked with DuPage County officials and Illinois State officials to create one of the first, if not the first Rails to Trails nature trails in the United States, by 1966. Read more about the IPP founding at the IPP website.

## STOP W5 – CA&E RAILYARD

- CA&E Admin Building. Single story red brick building built in 1949 - headquarters and administrative building for the CA&E. If you take a careful look at the portico on the north side of building, you can still see the holes left where the signage for the Chicago Aurora and Elgin railway were pinned above the doorway.
- CA&E Dispatch Tower - Another key building was the Dispatchers Tower, a two story brick building with a tower, which was located so as to give it clear line of sight for trains entering/departing on all three major branches, the Main Line, the Elgin branch to the north, and the Aurora Branch to the south, and it was located on the south side of Liberty Drive. Trains ran to the south of tower, then curved northward. Original wood frame dispatch tower stood few hundred feet west.



- Wheaton Yards and Shop - The Wheaton Railyard had a very large footprint and extended from West Street on the east to Bridge Street on the west, and from Liberty Street on the north, and to Childs street on the south, about 25 acres in all. At the heart of this railyard was the Wheaton Shops building, a very large single story building , where train cars were maintained and repaired, and it was located at about where the Three Wheaton Center apartments are located today. There are still remnants of the many sidings of the railyard - you can see one such siding at the northwest corner of Carlton and Childs Street.



## STOP W6 – VOLUNTEER BRIDGE

- Illinois Prairie Path Volunteer Park, which is the point from which all the mileage markers are calculated for the Illinois Prairie path.
- Volunteer Bridge - Steel bridge, originally built of wood in 1901. Replaced with steel bridge in the 1907 timeframe. Earlier referred to as Tall Bridge and the Wesley Street Bridge. When the CA&E abandoned the ROW, this bridge fell into disrepair. Group of IPP volunteers reconstructed the floor of the bridge to enable people to once again pass over bridge into downtown Wheaton. IPP volunteers had generally cleared the land, laid trails from the existing Right of Way, built bridges, and expanded the path. The former steel railroad bridge was rededicated as Volunteer Bridge in 1984.
- Wesley Street Station - Former CA&E Station from 1907 to 1957. Small wood frame building, about 8'x8', with a hip roof, stood on edge of trackway/ridge. Cinder platform ran a few dozen feet in front of station. Wooden steps led up from Wesley Street below. This was a flagstop station along a single trackway.



## STOP W7 – LINCOLN AVENUE CA&E STATION

- Stevens Park across the street, with playground and water fountain.
- Lincoln Avenue Station and flag base - Former CA&E Station, from 1929 to 1957. Small wood frame building, about 10'x10', with hip roof. This was a flagstop station along a single trackway. Flagstop base still visible in the ground.



- Pair of loose concrete signal bases can be seen north of the trail - removed from original location (you can see one such signal in the photo to the right of train car). Used for signaling motormen and conductors as to rail section status - stop, proceed with caution, or proceed

## **STOP W8 – WINFIELD CREEK BRIDGE**

- Winfield Creek Bridge - Concrete CA&E bridge constructed in the 1905 timeframe. A smaller example of many bridges built by the CA&E, with about a 25 foot span - the largest surviving bridge is further along the Elgin trail, spanning the West Branch of the DuPage river.
- More than 600 feet west of the bridge is a pair of Signal Bases on both sides of path. Used for signaling motormen and conductors as to rail section status - stop, proceed with caution, or proceed
- More than 800 feet further along the path is another signal base artifact on south (left) side of path. This is a concrete signal base. Used for signaling motormen and conductors as to rail section status - stop, proceed with caution, or proceed.
- Almost 900 feet further to the west along the path is yet another concrete signal base artifact on south (left) side of path. Used for signaling motormen and conductors as to rail section status - stop, proceed with caution, or proceed. Note National Geodetic Survey Marker on nearby concrete base. Marker no longer in use.

## **STOP W9 – MYSTERY CA&E BRIDGE**

- A little more than 400 further west is the Mystery Bridge artifact. Here we see bridge piers on both sides of the trail/trackway. Two sets of three concrete piers for supporting a bridge are located here – likely a wooden truss bridge. These were likely installed in the 1902 to 1905 timeframe. The street to the north of the bridge is today known as Prairie Avenue but earlier was noted as being Bridge Street. There is no designation on early maps for a bridge here. Nor is there a bridge noted on aerial photos from 1939 timeframe. Was this bridge ever installed? One theory is that this was a temporary bridge structure used for unloading fill material to be used for building the massive ridge through Lincoln Marsh. Once the construction was completed, the temporary bridge was removed.
- A little further northwest, on the west side of Jewell Road, stood the next station along the line, a flagstop station, consisting of a small frame shed building along a single trackway.