

## The Log Inn

Founded: ca. 1825

Location: R. R. 2, Haubstadt (1825– )

The Log Inn can boast of several historical attributes. Many visitors have rested at the inn, including Abraham Lincoln who, in November 1844, dined while campaigning for Henry Clay. It was also once a stop on the Underground Railroad and helped feed the workers digging the southern portion of the Erie-Wabash-Central Canal. By the early twentieth century it was situated on the Dixie Highway, the main route from Chicago to Florida, before the introduction of interstate highways.

Henry Haub, for whom Haubstadt is named, built the first house in the community, combining in one place a stagecoach stop, general store, and trading post to accommodate travelers on the Noon Day Stage Coach route running to Vincennes. A dance hall was built above the tavern and store. Marx Dreyfuss owned the restaurant, general store, and dance hall for almost a year in 1852 before selling it to Meier Heiman, who ran it alone until 1857.

Meier Heiman's brothers, Leon, Jacob and J. L., joined the business, continuing as their brother's partner for eighteen years. Heiman added a mule barn and attached a new store to the log section in 1867, converting the log section into living space. Joe Reinhart owned the business next for nineteen years before selling it to Fred Stehmeyer in January 1914. One tale still circulating tells that during dance nights the number of people and the power of their footwork induced Reinhart to put props under the floor for support. Charles Farney became the inn's proprietor in September 1914, operating the complex until 21 November 1921, after which time George, Henry, John, and Frances Memmer ran the operation. The Memmers opened a new dance hall in 1925.

A Mr. Rettig, a tool and die maker, his wife, and her father, ran the business for thirty-one years. He uncovered the log section, hidden underneath a century of building materials, and made it the centerpiece of the restaurant, designating it the Lincoln Room. The room is all hardwood and is adorned with nineteenth-century prints painted by Emma Litchfield Conner, the wife of a stagecoach driver. The 1867 addition was also refinished by Rettig, who brought out the yellow poplar wood hidden beneath plaster and wallpaper. The bar and cash register in the restaurant date to the 1890s. Rettig held a new grand opening from 8 to 10 May 1965. He sold Indiana's oldest restaurant to its current owners, Gene and Rita Elpers, in 1978. As many as five hundred patrons can be seated in the inn, which is open Tuesdays through Sundays.