

## “My Favorite Historic Place in Indiana” Essay Contest Winner!

To help celebrate Historic Preservation Month, the Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology sponsored its second-annual essay contest for fourth graders. Asked to write on the topic “My Favorite Historic Place in Indiana,” 37 classes submitted over 425 essays about state parks, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, house museums, and local landmarks. Despite the difficulty of choosing a winner, the panel of judges finally decided on Savannah White’s essay about Spring Mill State Park in Mitchell.

### Essay Contest Winner

#### A Cool Adventure Called Spring Mill State Park

By: Savannah White

Mrs. Knies’s Class-Tenth Street Elementary, Jasper, IN

Spring Mill State Park was established as a state park in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps. But the village its self was originally settled in the 1760s. Now on this state park of 1,358 acres there are several caves, including the Twin Caves and the Donaldson Case. This is also a working grist mill.

Two of the caves are the Donaldson Cave and the Twin Cave. The Donaldson Cave is very long with a grand total of 8,000 feet of passages. Until a recent outbreak of white nose syndrome you could take a walking tour of this cave. There was about 700 feet of room in cave and it is really really dark. During the spring rains you can watch water rush out of it due to the underground river. The Twin Cave is named that because of the Donaldson Cave and Bronson Caves cross sectioning each other. Now a neat feature about the Twin caves is the boat ride. Yeah that’s right a boat ride in the cave. The whole boat ride takes about 20 minutes and is only 600 feet long. Still that’s pretty cool. Now there are several caves in Spring Mill you’ll just have to find out which one is the coolest.

Now is the coolest of the cool parts, the Village. Again the village was settled in the 1760s and was abandoned by the 1850s. Mainly due to the understandings of steam power giving way to the grist mills being made everywhere. Some of the buildings that are in the village are a leather shop, a school house, a general store, and oh yeah their grist mill. Did you know the grist mill was made in 1817 from limestone and granite that was from the area. The mill took corn and crushed into different things like corn meal and grits. The mills water wheel is one of three styles, and undershot, overshot, and a breast

shot. This mill uses the overshot wheel which gets turned by water coming down a chute from the hills and caves. It is really cool to see spin.

In conclusion, there is so much history at Spring Mill like the caves, the trails, the village, or even the Gus Grissom memorial that I can go on about. But you just need to go find out for yourself. So pack a lunch and bring a camera cause its way too much fun there. And that is why it is one of my favorite places in Indiana. Now Florida is a whole other story.