



# Indiana State Capital Self-Guided Tour



The Indiana Territory as carved in 1800 from the Northwest Territory. The Capitol was located in Vincennes, Indiana; the government building there is a State Historic Site. The seat of government was moved to Corydon in 1813 because of the proximity of the Ohio River. Indiana became a state on December 11, 1816, and Corydon remained the Capitol. The original Statehouse is now a State Historic Site.

As settlers moved northward, a more centrally located seat of government was needed. In 1821, the site where Indianapolis is located was designated as such, and the city was created. The government of the state was officially transferred to Indianapolis in January of 1825. Until 1835, Indiana had no formal building in which to conduct business. Sessions of the General Assembly were held in the Marion County Courthouse.

A new State House was built in 1835 at a cost of \$60,000. It stood on the south end of the present Statehouse grounds. In 1867 the ceiling of the House Chamber collapsed; the damage was repaired. In 1878, a new building was started with a budget not to exceed \$2,000,000. Edwin May was chosen as the architect. The U.S. Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. influenced May's design. In 1880 May died and his draftsman, Adolph Scherrer, was named to succeed him.

The General Assembly held its first session in the new Statehouse in 1887. Construction continued until 1888 and was completed at a cost of \$1,980,969.18. Materials used in construction are limestone (from Indiana), marble, brick and mortar. Columns on the main (2<sup>nd</sup>), 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> floors are marble from the Eastern United States; the eight columns in the Rotunda area are granite from Maine. The floors and steps are also marble. Most of the wood in the building is white oak from Indiana although there is walnut and maple used in the building too.

The interior of the building has been remodeled many times. The look you see today is the result of an \$11,000,000 restoration of the public spaces, which was accomplished in 1987 and 1988. Wall and ceiling designs are the same colors and patterns as the originals; lighting fixtures were reproduced (chandeliers on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor are original) to replicate the gas/electric originals.

## BEGIN YOUR TOUR ON THE 2<sup>ND</sup> (Main) FLOOR

The center of this four-story building is the Rotunda; this is a good place to begin your tour. You are standing beneath a stained glass

dome which is original to the building. It is 72' in diameter and rises 105' above the floor. Surrounding this dome is the large dome you see from the exterior of the building; atop the large dome is a smaller one. It is 235' to the top of the small dome.

You will see eight marble statues surrounding the Rotunda. They were designed by Alexander Doyle and cost \$9,000 for all eight. They were made from Carrara marble and were imported from Italy. They reflect the values that they stand above and are considered to be the attributes of a civilized society. Four atriums surround the Rotunda. In either the North or South Atrium you will notice the graduated design of the columns. The capital style on the main floor is Doric; the third floor has Ionic capitals and the fourth floor, Corinthian.

Many busts and plaques are on display in various niches throughout the building. They are marked for your information. On the east side of the North Atrium is a bust of Benjamin Harrison IV; the only U.S. President from Indiana.

The second floor holds the offices of six of the seven Executives. As you move through the building, you might look above doorways; they will be marked if there is an office of note behind the door.

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On the North end of the building are the offices of the Attorney General (East side), the Clerk of the Courts (East side), the Superintendent of Public Instruction (West side), Legislative Services (West side, West Atrium) and the Budget Office (East side, East Atrium). On the South end of the building are the offices of the Governor (East side), the Secretary of State (East side), the Treasurer (West side) and the Auditor (West side). To continue on to the upper floors of the building you may use the stairs on either the North or the South end of the building (39 steps in each flight) or take elevators located just outside the Rotunda on the North or

## THIRD FLOOR

On the third floor you will find one Executive office, that of the Lieutenant Governor. This is located on the Southwest side of the building. Also on the South end of the building are offices for the House of Representatives and Legislative Services. Continuing into the center of the building, on the East side of the Rotunda is the House of Representatives. The House Chamber has undergone many renovations and does not look like it did when the building opened. Some distinctive features of the House are the large chandelier in the center of the room and the mural at the front of the room. The chandelier is the largest in the Statehouse and is lit by 100 lights. Each light represents a member of the House. The mural was installed in 1963 and painted by an Indiana native, Eugene Savage. The central section of the mural represents statehood. A young woman dressed in the mode of 1816, holds a white rose and represents Indiana stepping into statehood. She is being guided by William Henry Harrison an early statesman from this area.

To the right of the painting the economy of Indiana is depicted (agriculture and industry); to the left, aspirations and education. Students with their books near a sacrificial fire remind us that a large portion of each budget is spent on public education. Just beneath the mural is a plaque of the State Seal. It has been used since at least 1802 but was not adopted as the official seal until 1963. You will find the seal molded into many doorknobs in the building.

Proceed to the West side of the Rotunda opening; you are now in front of the Senate Chamber. The Senate has also undergone many renovations. There are fifty desks in the Chamber that the members use when the General Assembly is in Session (Indiana has a part-time Legislature – winter through early spring). You can see the buttons on the desks in both the House and the Senate used by the members to cast their votes. To get a closer look at the House and the Senate, you can view them from the Public Galleries on the 4th floor.

The Supreme Court is located at the North end of the building. This room is unchanged, in many ways, from the way it looked in 1888 when the building opened. The furnishings in the room are original as are the lighting fixtures. The chandelier is the heaviest in the Statehouse (1,500 lbs.); this beautiful piece and the sconces around the room display the original gas jet candles. The carpet in the room is only the second for the Court (the first lasted for 98 years) and is a copy of the original. The ceiling and the upper portions of the walls have been historically restored to the look they had originally. Portraits around the room are of the present Bench and 103 of the 105 former Justices of the Court. The Law Library is located in the Northeast corner of the building.

## FOURTH FLOOR

The upper floors of the building are good vantage points for viewing the beauty and expanse of the building. The restoration included the hand stenciling of over 4 acres of walls and ceilings and are the original color. It is also on this floor that you are seeing chandeliers that are original. All light fixtures in the building in 1888 had both gas and electric capabilities. The up-turned lamps were for gas and the down-turned ones for electricity. Visit the display about our restoration in the South Atrium.

The House and Senate Galleries are located on either side of the Rotunda; the House on the East and the Senate on the West. The public may observe the House and Senate, when they are in Session, from these galleries.

The House Ways and Means Committee Room is on the East side of the South Atrium. And opposite it is the Senate Appropriation Committee Room. These rooms are where the State budget is debated.

Offices for the House and the Senate are located at the South end of the building.

On the West side of the South Atrium is the Meditation Room. The room is non-denominational and is used by many in the Statehouse.

The Gallery for the Senate is located on the West side of the Rotunda opening. Observing from the Gallery, you can look directly into office space fashioned during a renovation. You can also see a large video wall at the front of the Senate. This is used as a voting machine and for the presentation of information.

On the Northeast side of the building is the Court of Appeals. On the North wall are portraits of former judges

## GROUND LEVEL (1<sup>ST</sup> FLOOR)

**P**ress and administrative offices are located on this floor. In addition, there are House and Senate Committee meeting rooms.

The North end of the Ground level at one time had a tunnel entrance for horse and wagon deliveries and possibly a stable. There are no remnants remaining of this interesting feature.

There are currently tunnels on Ground Level which lead to Circle Centre Mall (Southeast corner), Government Center South Southwest corner) and Government Center North (Northwest hallway). Both Government Centers have public cafeterias. Restaurants and shops are in Circle Centre Mall and there is a snack bar located on the East side of the Ground Level.

If you wish to take a walking tour of the grounds of the Statehouse, the Tour Office has a Walking Tour available at the Information Desk (2<sup>nd</sup> floor, North side of Rotunda) or in Room 220. You must stay on the sidewalks outdoors.

# Schedule a Tour

(317) 233-5293

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