Center Township (30001-031)

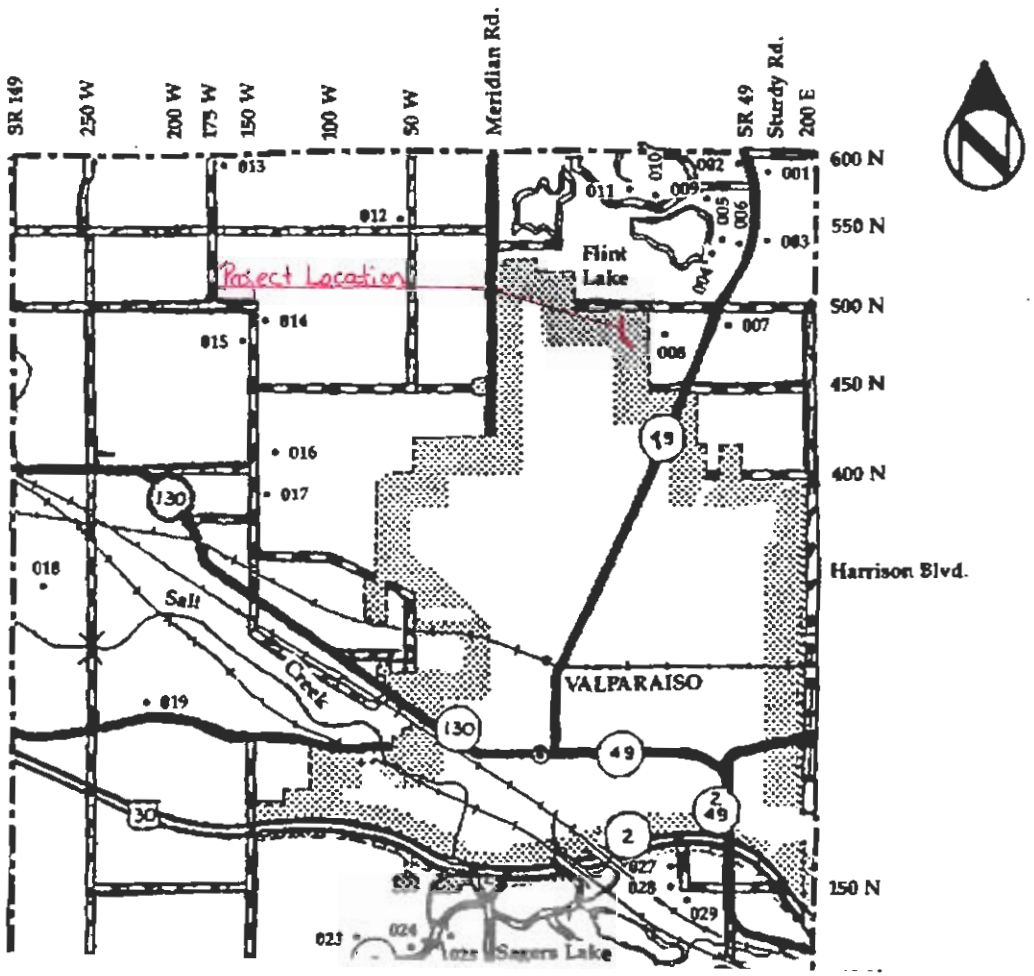

Figure 3: from the Porter County Interim Report (Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory)

Center Township, one of the county's original townships, was established in 1836 and named for its location. The township was heavily timbered with a large number of lakes within its boundaries. Flint Lake is connected to Long Lake which extends into Liberty Township. Round Lake, now known as Bulls Eye Lake, is located at the northwest corner of 450 N and Old SR 49. Sagers Lake just southeast of Valparaiso was originally just a small mill pond but has since developed into a small lake.

The township's first settler was Seth Hull who in 1833 settled just southeast of present day Valparaiso near a small Potawatomi Indian village called Chiqua's Town. Another early settler who came that same year was Thomas A. E. Campbell. Soon others followed including Selah Wallace, Ruel Starr and Philander A. Paine.

Samuel A. Shigley built the township's first sawmill during the 1830s. The mill was later occupied by William Sager. In 1838 a wool carding mill was established about a mile south of Valparaiso. A second carding mill was erected in the 1830s on Salt Creek by Jacob Axe. Several flour and sawmills were built on Salt Creek not far from Sager's mill. None of these mills is standing today.

Three major railroad lines went through the township: the Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne and Chicago Railroad; the New York, Chicago and St. Louis Railroad; and the Grand Trunk Railroad. Valparaiso is the principal village in the township. Flintville was located on Old SR 49 but nothing remains of it today.

Valparaiso was first called Portersville and was laid out in 1836. The name was changed later to Valparaiso after the Chilean port where Commodore David Porter fought a major battle during the War of 1812.