In the 1830’s, the Central Canal was envisioned as part of an eight-canal system to cross the state and link major points of commerce. After three years of construction and the introduction of railroads, debts halted the project, leaving the Central Canal with no connections to other navigable waterways. In 1881, the Indianapolis Water Company purchased the canal. The Central Canal is a primary source of drinking water for the Indianapolis metropolitan area and receives its water from the White River in the Broad Ripple area.