CHIEF SHABBONA
HISTORICAL TRAIL

FRIEND OF THE WHITE MAN
1775 — 1859

SPONSORED BY
THE HIKING 25

SHABBONA TRAILS COMMITTEE
2207 N. PRAIRIE AVE.
JOLIET, ILL.
CHIEF

SHABBONA

HISTORICAL

TRAIL

This trail was laid out and is maintained by Boy Scout Troop 25 & Explorer Post 25, popularly known as "THE HIKING 25"

These units are sponsored by the Theodore Street Ev. Lutheran Church

Joliet, Illinois.

The trail is under the supervision of the Shabbona Trail Committee.

Our purpose is to increase interest in the hiking of historical trails.

Please address all inquiries to:

SHABBOA TRAIL COMMITTEE
2207 North Prairie Ave.
Joliet, Illinois

Phone: Saratoga 3-2930
The Chief Shabbona Historical Trail begins at Channahon Parkway State Park at Channahon, Illinois and follows the tow path of the old Illinois & Michigan Canal for a distance of 16½ miles.

When the locks at Channahon were completed in 1848 they were considered to be such a marvel of engineering that they would never again be duplicated. The DuPage River, one of the main feeders for the canal crosses the canal here at Channahon and then flows into the Des Plaines River to form the Illinois River. Also to be seen is the old spillway box which was used to control the water level at the locks.

The only time the hikers will leave the tow path is when they visit the grave of Chief Shabbona in the Evergreen Cemetery. The hike ends at Gebhardt Woods State Park in Morris. The hikers will then furnish their own transportation to the Chief Shabbona reservation which is about 12½ miles from Morris. In order to reach the reservation it is necessary to travel across several miles of private property. It is necessary therefore that the hikers take special care to see that no damage is done to this property. Acts of vandalism could result in the revoking of this privilege. Full cooperation of all hikers and leaders in respect to the rules and regulations of the hike will be greatly appreciated.

Once in every lifetime there flashes across the horizon of history a great light left by some person who, by his own character, leaves an everlasting impression on the sands of time. One of these, one of the greatest, not because of the warlike ferocity of his attacks on the white man, but because of his fight to bring peace between the red man and the white settler, was Shabbona.

We know that the exact history of the Indian people has been a very uncertain thing. Having no means of recording the happenings of their time but by means of simple pictographs and primitive drawings, it was very difficult to pass on any historical facts that could be considered authentic.

Such was the case concerning the history of the early life of Shabbona. In fact there are several names by which he was known. In the writings of early historians there appears the names of Shabney, Shaubena, and Shabbona. Even the place of his birth is a matter of question. Each historian gets a different picture of things and ends up with a different story. The author is prone to agree with the opinion of one Mr. M. Katson, who wrote a biography of the great chief, and claims to have known him personally.

In his book, "The Memories of Shaubena", written in 1880, Mr. Katson has this to say: "Shaubena, according to his own statement, was born in 1775 or 1776 at an Indian village situated on the banks of the Kankakee River, in what is now Will County of Illinois. This is near the site of the present village of Wilmington, Illinois. Shabbona's father was of the Ottawa tribe, having come with Chief Pontiac who came to the Illinois country about the year 1775 or 1776.

After repeated defeats along the shores of the lake around Detroit, Pontiac fled to more peaceful lands to be found to the south. Along with him came a small band of warriors and their families. With this group came the parents of Shaubena. The father of Shaubena was a war chief and was one of the red men appointed..."
to represent the tribe at Wayne’s Treaty at Greenville in 1795. It was at this time that the father of Shaubena made a speech that shows him to be a person of more than ordinary ability. His oratorical ability more than once was instrumental in bringing a more bountiful settlement for the red-man.

While he was still in his infancy, Shaubena’s parents took him back to Canada with them, stopping at a village some twenty miles east of Detroit, where they lived for a number of years. But getting lonesome for their people who stayed in Illinois, they returned to their village along the banks of the Kankakee River. Shaubena was then seven years old, and he continued to make his home there until about ten years later. In his early youth, when he was about seventeen years of age, he traveled southward and eventually spent much time in the village of chief Spotka of the tribe around what is now Ottawa, Illinois. It was here that he met the daughter of Spotka and took her for his bride according to the customs of the tribe. Her name was Cokanoke and she lived with her family along the shores of the Fox River in the territory now known as Ottawa.

It is a well established fact that Shaubena had more than one wife. Polygamy was quite common among the red man. It is said that Cokanoke, in her later years, became very obese and at one time weighed over 400 pounds. It is also known that Shaubena took another wife of the Kickapoo tribe and that she was very small and pretty.

After the death of Spotka, Shaubena took over the duties of chief of the tribe and eventually became the leader of the Pottawatomi tribes in this region."

Shaubena, or Shabonna, was a long a figure in the Indian affairs of the midwest and its growth. He refused to join Blackhawk in a war to drive the early settlers from Illinois. Instead, when Blackhawk refused to abandon his determined attack on the white settlers, Shaubena and his sons, along with several other Indians, spread warnings to the whites to flee for their lives to the forts and centers of protection here in this region. It was at this time that residents of Walker's Grove, or Plainfield, fled north to Fort Dearborn on the shores of Lake Michigan for protection.

After a full fruitfull life, Shabonna died at his reservation in Korman Township, on July 17th, 1859. He was buried in the Evergreen Cemetery at Morris, Illinois. A huge boulder is the only mark that identifies his grave. It is as simple as the life of the man who is buried there.

**Shabonna 1775-1859**

The following is a story printed in an old almanac of Grundy County, printed in 1905. As you can readily see, it tells an entirely different story of the great chief.

Shabonna was born in the Dominion of Canada in the year 1775, in the principal village of his people, the Ottawa’s, near the town of Chillico. About the year 1779, he, with a part of his tribe, moved to what is now Wisconsin, and made their home in the southern part of that state and the northern part of what is now Illinois. Born of parents living close to nature Shabonna inherited the qualities essential to the making of a great man, namely, a rugged constitution, courage, honesty, and a heart filled with love of his fellow men. And so this child of the forests grew to manhood as nature intended that he be, a man that was a model of physical development. His height was five feet, nine inches, and he was broad of shoulder, deep of chest, with a head and neck of majestic proportions.

It is said that he became a leader of his tribe not so much on account of his hereditary rights but more because of his knowledge, courage, and ability to guide his people well.

Shabonna, early in life, saw and knew the strength of the white people. He saw, and realized, that the time was coming when he and his people would be forced to give up the hunting-grounds of their people. He saw, too, that most of the white settlers were good men and women. He became their friend. His deeds of heroism and self-sacrifice were many, and always in the inter-
est of peace, and the preservation of life and property of his white friends.

In the spring of 1800, while on the hunting trip to the southward, he journeyed to a village of the Potawatomi, a tribe of Indians living near what is now the village of Chicago. This was a memorable trip for the young chief, for here he met the daughter of Spotka the Head Chief of the Potawatomi. Her name was Wio-mex Okono, sometimes called Cokanoke. They were shortly married according to the customs of her tribe. By this marriage it became necessary for Shabbona to lose his place of residence. He chose to stay with the Potawatomies and soon became a leading chief.

In 1832 Shabbona declined to join arms with Black Hawk in a war of extermination on the whites. Instead, he forfeited his good name as a warrior in the opinion of his own race and risked his life to warn the white settlers of the awful fate that confronted them. For this service Shabbona was entitled to the unending friendship of a grateful people. What he received was the broken faith of the federal government and banishment from the home that years of life had endeared to his great heart.

After he had refused to unite with Black Hawk, Shabbona slipped away from the council of war under darkness of night, mounted his horse and made of himself a courier to notify the whites far and wide. He sped through dense forests and over lonely trails, knowing that if he fell into the hands of any of Black Hawk's men he would meet the quick fate of an Indian traitor. If his warning had been heeded the massacre of Indian Creek, where sixteen whites went to their doom, never would have taken place. All in all, Shabbona performed an incalculable service in thwarting the designs of Black Hawk.

Years after the Black Hawk War, while he was in western Kansas, the land to which commissioners of the government pledged him permanent title, was sold without his knowledge or consent at public auction. When he came back to claim his own he was driven away by the new owners, and his plea to the Great Father for his rights was made in vain. When he found that his old home was lost to him forever he is said to have wept like a child. He spent his last years on a twenty-acre farm which white friends bought for him near Morris, in Grundy County. It was there he died, his strong spirit broken by the wrongs he had suffered.

For many years his grave was marked only by a rude board. It was not until October 31, 1903, forty-four years after Shabbona's death, that a shaft in his memory was reared in a large boulder in Evergreen Cemetery at Morris. Then, on August 29, 1906, Shabbona Park, of seven and one-half acres, fourteen miles north of Ottawa, was dedicated for all time to the memory of the heroic chief and a monument was erected to commemorate those who lost their lives in the Indian Massacre.

In his prime Shabbona was a striking figure — six feet tall, symmetrical, strong and tingling with energy. He was generous, forgiving, hospitable, true, endowed with a fine mind, and brave as he was true. The Chicago Historical Society has a portrait of him painted from life in 1840.

"Never blame an Indian for anything he does to a white man", is one of the sayings that used to be current when Illinois was a frontier state. Force was added to it by the gross ingratitude with which the whites made sick the heart and sad the life of Shabbona in his later years. When this old chief of the Ottawans died on July 27, 1859, there passed out of the activities of Illinois a noble red man who was one of the truest friends the paleface settlers had.
Key to Map:
1. Lock #6 at Channahon. Start of hike.
2. Historical Marker. Turn left down tow path.
3. DuPage & Desplaines rivers join.
   - Dresden Atomic Energy Power Plant
   - Dresden dam and locks.
5. Aquaduct over Aux Sable creek, Stone bridge.
   - Lock #8
   - Illinois Youth Commission Camp
10. Shabbona Cabin site.
HISTORY OF THE ILLINOIS - MICHIGAN CANAL

Long before the coming of the white man the shallow divide between the waters of Lake Michigan and the river, now known as the Mississippi, was in general use by the Indians as a route of portage, via the Des Plaines River and other navigable streams between the two large bodies of water.

Victor Collot, French military engineer, who made explorations as early as 1790, realized the advantage of the inception of a man made canal to join Lake Michigan with the Mississippi River. This would do away with portage thru marsh land, which could navigate a canoe during the high water season.

In 1826, Congress donated to the State of Illinois a strip 10 miles wide along a route from Chicago to LaSalle, which totalled 300,000 acres. In 1829, the State Assembly created a Board of Canal commissioners, who were authorized to sell lands, with many of the early settlers getting a title to land under the Act. The digging of the "deep cut" officially started on July 4, 1836 with a ceremonial ground breaking at Bridgeport. By 1842 over $5 million was spent in the digging of the deep cut. Work at this time was suspended. By the fall of 1840 a debt of $14,237,348 was contracted.

The canal debt was paid up to 1841, with no provisions for 1842, so the work stopped entirely. An additional $1,600,000 was obtained and the canal was completed. Money came from tolls, sales of land and lots. Work resumed in 1845 and the "deep cut" was completed in 1848.

The opening of the canal was a day of great celebration, with bands playing, bells ringing, cannons firing and speeches by many notables from all over the state. When the original plan of the deep cut was completed there was another similar celebration. Poetic speakers called it the "union of the blue waters of Lake Michigan with those of the sparkling tributary of the Mississippi". With the completion of the canal both Lockport and Joliet started to build boats to ply the canal.

Historians tell us that the Canal Office at Lockport was the main point of operation for the building of the canal and today it still stands as one of the most historic landmarks in the state. It served as both a hotel for state dignitaries and as an office for some of the most famous canal engineers.

With the completion of the Illinois Waterway in 1933, the use of the Illinois and Michigan Canal was discontinued as an artery of traffic, being maintained as a means of controlling local drainage. Much of the land along the canal is now a game preserve and the wild vegetation is a cross section of the natural flora of this area of the state. Wild life along the canal is varied and abundant.

There was considerable toil, tense and human drama provided by the men who gave their sweat and brains to forge a link of water transportation between the two great bodies of water. Some of these men had the misfortune to lose their lives, having their skulls cracked by the handle of a pick while working or dying in a street fight or saloon brawl, which were not uncommon sights. Representing almost every country of national origin, the men wielded picks and shovels to open the deep cut thru rock, sand and soil. Their salary was from $20 to $30 a month, including board. Historians say other prices were steep at this time, with pork at $20 to $30 a barrel, and flour at $9 to $12 in barrel lots.
FACILITIES

CAMPING:
Illinois Parkway State Park at Channahon offers excellent free tent space. There is water and toilet facilities at the campsite. The park is open from April 1 to November 30th.
Channahon is located 10 miles S. W. of Joliet on U. S. route 6.
Stores for the purchase of supplies are close at hand. Leaders should check in with the resident Supt. of the park on arrival.

DATES:
The trail is open from April 1st to November 30th.
Special permission will be given on unusual occasions to hike the trail at other times. Much of the natural beauty of the trail will be lost if the trip is taken in the winter.

CHURCHES:
There is a Protestant church in Channahon. Both Protestant and Roman Catholic churches are located in nearby Hinckley.
Churches of all denominations are available both in Joliet and in Morris.

REFUNDS:
Trail Credentials which are not used may be returned for credit at the time the unit turns in their trail reports. A charge of 50 cents will be made for each credential returned. ($2 will be refunded).
The Shabbona Trail Committee cannot be responsible for accidents on the trail. Each hiker must assume this responsibility.

A CANOE TRAIL

The I & M Canal is navigable throughout the entire distance of the trail.
Several short portages are involved.
There is no boat traffic on the canal.

The Canoe Trail credentials are furnished at the rate of $2.50 per person.

Canoes can be rented from Troop 25. They have 18 foot fibreglass canoes that can carry 3 persons.
The rental fee is $3 per canoe per day. Paddles are furnished with the canoe.
Life jackets must be furnished by the individual and are required by law.
The rental fee includes delivery to Channahon and pick-up at Morris at Gebhard Woods State Park.

A responsible adult must sign for the canoes and paddles and all damages to canoes and paddles must be paid for the day of use.
RULES FOR THE TRAIL

This trail officially opens on July 30, 1960. It is primarily intended for Boy Scouts, Explorers, and their leaders. Senior Girl Scouts are eligible also. Other groups interested in historical trail hiking may also obtain permission to take the hike. The minimum age for hikers is 12 years but Second Class Scouts are eligible. There should be at least one adult leader for each 10 hikers.

To qualify for the Chief Shabbona medal each hiker must:
1. read the life of Chief Shabbona and the history of the I & M Canal in this booklet.
2. carry his own credential sheet on the hike and make the identifications indicated and fill out the hike report. About 20 various items will be labeled with white tepees with black numerals. The hiker must find them and name the object they are attached to.
3. carry his own food and water on the trail. There is none available along the way.
4. complete the hike in one day.
5. visit the Shabbona Cabin site.
6. wear his Scout uniform on the hike. Tee shirts and shorts are permissible.
7. carry First Aid supplies such as adhesive tape, gauze, and antiseptic.
8. The Scout Oath and Law are the Law of the trail. Be a credit to Scouting.
9. refrain from damaging or destroying trees, plants or other objects.
10. No sheath knives, or axes are permitted on the trail.

This hike is relatively easy and should provide a great deal of pleasure to the hiker as well as acquaint him with the history of the area. We urge him to notice the various modes of transportation being used along the way. There is much natural beauty to be enjoyed.

A SCOUTING WE WILL GO! HAVE FUN.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Chief Shabbona Historical Trails Committee wishes to express their grateful appreciation to the following persons who have helped to make this trail possible.

1. Mr. Ed Murphy for his research and his summary of the life of Chief Shabbona.
2. Mr. Elmer Ott for his excellent summary of the history of the I & M Canal.
3. The E. Wunderlich Granite Company for the donation of the marker which was placed at the cabin site, and to Russell Wunderlich for setting the stone.
4. Mr. Ernest A. Peterson of Route 5, Morris, Illinois for permission to cross his property to reach the Shabbona cabin site.
5. Mr. & Mrs. John Ullrich of Morris for their information and kind assistance and for permission to visit the Shabbona Museum.
6. The inauguration of this trail brings into being a dream which has long been in the mind and heart of Mr. Snyder Watson, beloved Scoutmaster of Troop 25. He has taken his boys into every state east of the Mississippi River in a period of 5 years.

We all say "Thank You, Mr. Snyder Watson."

THE SHABBONA TRAIL COMMITTEE

Donald Crowther
Frank Piazza Sr.
Robert Gould

Ward Kellogg
Russell Wunderlich Sr.
Snyder Watson

Pastor Elwyn D. Goodsell
You are urged to visit

JACK'S TRADING POST

to see the

SHABBONA MUSEUM

Arrowheads and Indian Artifacts can be purchased.

Operated by: Mr. & Mrs. John Ullrich

Located on route to cabin site.
PURPOSE OF THE TRAIL

First of all it is to call attention to a great Indian Chief by the name of Shabbona. He lived from 1779 to 1859. His memory is cherished by many in this territory because he was a friend of the White Man. He refused to join with Chief Blackhawk in a war against the Whites. Instead he risked his life to warn them of their peril. His action saved many lives.

The second purpose is to acquaint the hiker with the I & M Canal. This water route played an important part in the development of the state. It connects Lake Michigan with the Mississippi river. Today it is used as a part of a drainage control program.

The history of Chief Shabbona and the I & M Canal is found in the booklet given to each group registering for the hike. It is required reading before taking the hike.

Another purpose is to furnish a pleasant hiking experience to all interested persons. Bring your camera along and make a picture record of your hike.

POINTS OF INTEREST

The old wooden locks.

Abundant animal and plant life. Many kinds of birds can be observed. Many species of trees are to be found. This is an excellent NATURE TRAIL.

Two unique aqueducts can be examined. They carry the canal over the creeks.

The world's largest privately owned Atomic power generating plant can be seen from the trail.

A comparison of the old and the new canals can be made.

Various forms of water transportation can be watched.

An old stone arch bridge can be examined.

Markers in the tow path which designate the boundaries of the land in the original survey can be found.

The Dresden Dam and Locks on the deep waterway at the junction of the DuPage, Kankakee, and Illinois rivers is an interesting place to watch.

FOR REPEATERS

This trail is so pleasant that many take it again. An attractive arrow pin to wear on the ribbon of the medal is available for all repeaters. The cost of the Trail Credential for repeaters is $1.00 which includes the cost of the arrow.

A CANOE TRIP

The canal can be navigated all the way by canoe. Three short portages are involved. The canoe trip is to made only by repeaters. Hire the trail and then take the canoe trip.

A boy must be 14 years or older to qualify.

A little paddle is given to those making the canoe trip. The cost is $1.00.

We prefer you furnish your own canoes. But the Committee does have four fiberglass canoes for rent at $4.50 per day. They accommodate 3 persons. They must be picked up and returned.

Sponsored by the

CHIEF SHABBONA

HISTORICAL TRAIL COMMITTEE
1515 Burry Ave., Joliet, Illinois
Phone: Joliet 3a 7-7054
CHIEF SHABBONA TRAIL

A 16 1/2 mile hike which begins at Illinois State Parkway at Channahon and ends at Gebhard Woods Park in Morris.

It follows the tow path of the old I & M Canal except for the visit to Shabbona's grave in Evergreen Cemetery near Morris.

It is on level ground and is shaded most of the way.

It abounds in historic and scenic interest.

WHO MAY QUALIFY

The trail is open to Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and to other groups interested in historical trails.

Hikers must be at least 12 years old or Second Class. There must be at least one adult leader on the trail to take charge of each group of hikers.

The trail is open from April 1st to December 31st. Special permission will be granted to hike at other times upon request.

COST

The hike fee is $2.50 which includes a medal and patch. The Trail Credential is furnished for each boy. It has a map and list of items to be identified.

Each hiker must carry his own Trail Credential and make his own identifications.

Application blanks can be obtained from CHIEF SHABBONA TRAIL COMMITTEE 645 Perry Ave., Joliet, III.

FOOD AND WATER

Food and water to be consumed on the trail must be carried by the hikers.

Excellent stores are to be found in Channahon but there are no stores on the trail.

CHURCHES

Channahon - Methodist
Minooka - 3 miles Catholic & Protestant
Joliet - 10 miles Catholic & Protestant
Morris - 15 miles Catholic & Protestant

CONDUCT ON THE TRAIL

All hikers are expected to act in a manner which will be a credit to Scouting. Leaders are responsible for their group. Axes, sheath knives, and firearms are not permitted on the trail. Do not destroy plants, trees, or flowers. Leave them for others to enjoy.

Use care when going through the Youth Commission Camp at Aux Sable creek. Hikers are not to talk with these boys or mingle with them.

Watch out for cars on the tow path.

A SCOUT IS REVERENT

Be reverent in Evergreen cemetery. Do not disturb a funeral service. Stay on the road. Do not throw sticks or stones onto the grass as they dull the mower blades. Do not use the cemetery as a resting place. Please assemble your group before entering the cemetery and keep together until you leave.

Do not ask for water. The water used for lawn sprinkling is not to be used for drinking purposes.