

Winding road leads to 40 years of theater

"... something new has been added to the inducements that Brown County, scenic heart of southern Indiana, offers visitors. Nashville today is the only county seat town in the state that can boast of a dramatic stock company but no film emporium." — Corbin Patrick, *Indianapolis Star*, July 16, 1949.

In his autobiography, *The Road Taken*, the late Lee Norvelle, who was chairman of the Indiana University theater department, did not share with his readers what kind of arguments or horse trading it took to get Nashville businessman Jack Rogers to turn into a theatrical "angel." Rogers' Nashville House and the surrounding artists' colony had been a tourist attraction for many years.

For his part, Norvelle was interested in promoting a summer stock company to give his promising students as much experience in acting,



Looking back

By Rose McIlveen

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design and lighting as possible.

Together, the two men started the Brown County Playhouse, which is marking its 40th season this summer.

It has been written that Norvelle's aim in starting the theater was to "do for the theater in Brown County what has been done in the field of painting." Rogers delivered the land along Shoppers' Lane in Nashville, and Norvelle agreed to produce plays that would tantalize the public's interest.

Old timers remember the rustic
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