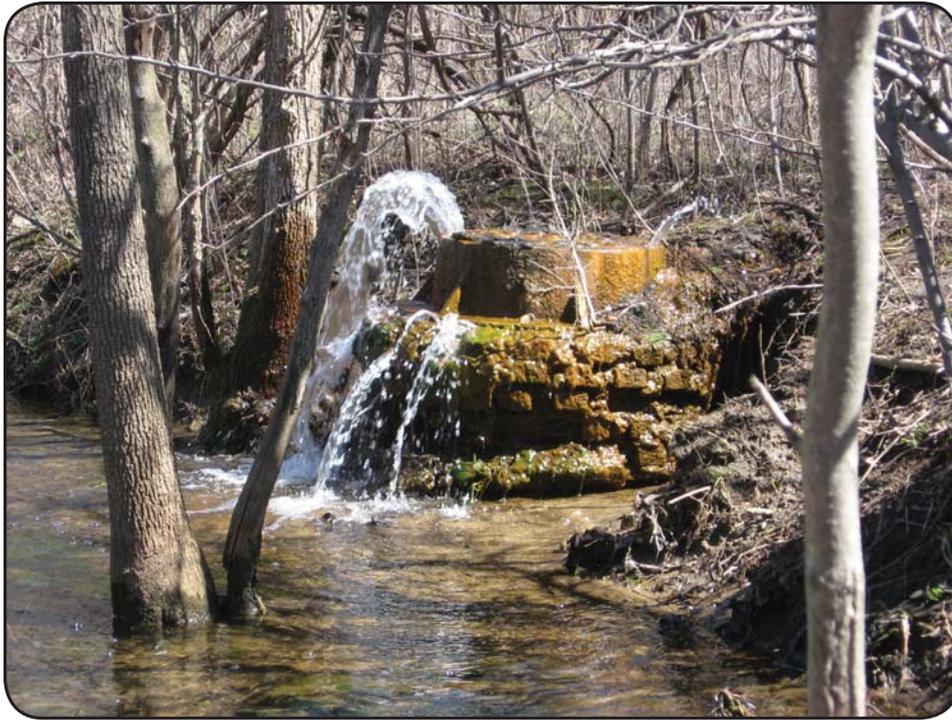


Mystery Photo 9

If you have spent much time walking around Havenwoods, you have probably come across something that made you stop and wonder—a patch of asphalt in the middle of the woods, a lone-standing fencepost, or a bubbling manhole! That's right, the mystery photo is not an old fountain or a spring, it is a manhole connected to an abandoned sewer line.



To find the place I took the photo, take the limestone road south from the building. When you get to the fork in the limestone road, go left. Take the first grassy trail to the right. About 40 – 50 yards before the bridge, head ENE cross-country toward the creek. When you arrive at Intermittent Creek, begin looking along the east bank of the creek. If you go out while the leaves are down, you can see the manhole from the trail.

The directions above will help you find the old manhole any day of the year, but if you want to find it the way that I found it, simply wait for a good spring rain! Many years ago while walking around in the southeast corner of the property, I kept hearing the sound of rushing water. Except for the floods of 1986 and 1997, there has never been rushing water at Havenwoods! I finally tracked the sound to the manhole shown in the mystery photo. Water was shooting out of every crack and crevice. The water seemed to be under incredible pressure. I really didn't know what to think. The water looked crystal clear. It

wasn't sewer water. Was this manhole somehow connected to a water main?

I headed back inside to study the old maps and drawings that we have from past land uses. The manhole appeared to be part of a sewer line that we suspect the Army installed during the 1950s. This line starts near the old Nike missile launch area, runs south through the wetland, angles over to the creek, then runs south again

to cross under the railroad tracks. Workers collapsed parts of the line when the wetland was constructed, and staff and volunteers have filled in several of the other manholes. So, how was water gushing from this manhole? Just to be sure, we called the City to confirm that there were no active sewer or water lines on the property that we should know about.

It was many years later that I learned a possible answer to this mystery. One spring, after a good rain, a group of water specialists was meeting at Havenwoods. At lunch, I seized the opportunity and took a couple of them for a walk. They were intrigued. After some

discussion, they reached the following logical conclusions:

- Noting the orange coloration all over the exposed manhole, they agreed that the water was not from a water main, but that it was probably groundwater. Groundwater, not treated water, would have the high iron content needed to cause the discoloration.
- Looking around, it is easy to see that the manhole is located at one of the lowest parts of the property. It is also right next to the creek. They deduced that the groundwater is very close to the surface in this part of the property.
- Considering that the manhole only gushes in spring and after heavy rains, they concluded that the old sewer line must be connected to some weak spot in the bedrock. After a heavy rain, the groundwater would be under pressure, and it would seek out a weak spot or crack to relieve the pressure.

Thus, our gushing manhole! Another mystery is—at least tentatively—solved!