Historic WALKING TOUR of Owatonna

visitowatonna.org

HISTORIC WALKING TOUR OF OWATONNA

Past and present come together in Owatonna. On this self-guided walking or biking tour you will encounter and enjoy a blend of architectural styles from the late 1800s to early 1900s.

Highlights:

- The world-famous Louis Sullivan-designed bank
- The State School Historic District and Orphanage Museum
- Murals depicting Owatonna's history
- The beautiful Zamboni Building

YOUR GUIDE TO HISTORIC PLACES IN OWATONNA

4 ..... Historic Downtown District
11 ..... Pillsbury Academy Campus Historic District
12 ..... Minnesota State Public School Historic District
Center .... Owatonna Map
15 ..... Historic Residential

National Register of Historic Places

Guided Tours Available

Research provided by Nancy Vaillancourt. Photo credit to Greg Helgeson, Shot In The Dark Studio, Skye's the Limit Photography, Betsy Cole Photography, Studio 122 and Paquin Studio. Funding for this brochure provided by the Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism. A special thanks to Owatonna residents and businesses for welcoming visitors into our community and neighborhoods.

take a walk through history

Downtown Owatonna became a National Register Historic District in February of 2015. The district was listed in the National Register as a distinct example of a downtown business district that served as the commercial center of the county and region. The historic district consists of twelve city blocks, in part or in whole, including Central Park which is the focal point of the district.

The park is fronted by three properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register): the National Farmers' Bank (1907-1908, NHL) on the north, the Steele County Courthouse (1891-1892) on the southeast, and the Firemen's Hall (1907) on the south. The district contains a total of 75 contributing buildings and one contributing park (Central Park, 1871). The contributing buildings range in date from 1876 to the late 1950s.

1 CENTRAL PARK

1854 – Downtown

In 1854, when the city of Owatonna was laid out, 19-year-old surveyor Edwin Doud set aside one block in the center of the town as a park. At the beginning it was only a wet pasture, but improvements were made over the years. The fountain was placed in the park in 1874 and contained goldfish in later years. Originally an oval, the block was squared off in the 1950s due to traffic concerns. The community stage was built during the 2004 Sesquicentennial and is modeled after the late 1890s bandstand. Central Park remains a community gathering place for summer concerts, holiday lights, farmers' market, and more.

2 FIRST NATIONAL BANK

1914 – 108 W Park Square

Billed as "the oldest bank in Steele County," First National Bank was organized in 1866 by the Kinyon family. This was the bank's third location, and may have been built in response to National Farmers' Bank's new building. The building features a balcony with large columns.

3 WEST BRIDGE STREET

113-151 W Bridge Street

The commercial blocks on Bridge Street were platted as half-blocks, when the city was originally laid out. This allowed many of the buildings to have both north and south public entrances. The first Owatonna post office was located on the north side of the street. Across the street, the Morehouse Block was located at 113 W Bridge; the upstairs rooms held an auditorium used for operas and other performances. Later, The Kelly Company, a diversified department store, occupied several of the buildings on the south side of the street.

4 MAINSTREET & SCHOOLHOUSE MURALS POCKET PARK

2011 – 128 E Main Street

Steve DeLaitsch, Artist/SEMAC Grant/Local Contributions

This empty lot was home to a historic building (1890) which was destroyed by a fire in 2002. Recently turned into a pocket park, this spot now features a mural representing the people who inhabited Main & Bridge Streets. The Little Red Schoolhouse section represents the first all-city 1892-1952 kindergarten classroom.

5 OWATONNA GATEWAY MURAL

2009 – Corner of W Bridge St. & Muckle Bike Trail

Steve Delaitsch, Artist/Melanie Nelson, Mural Commissioner

Portrayed in a prairie school style, this mural features historic and architectural treasures of Owatonna including the National Farmers' Bank, a 1898 women's music band, the Central Park fountain, Orphanage at West Hills, American Indians walking through Mineral Springs Park, and Broadway Street in the 1920s.

6 SECURITY STATE BANK

1902 – 102 N Cedar Avenue

F.B. Long & L.L. Long, Architects

Former site of the Eureka House, this structure was known as the Kelly Block, in honor of builder W.H. Kelly. Security State Bank occupied the corner of the building with the Luethold & St. Clair clothing store in the remainder of the main floor. Following the failure of National Farmers' Bank, which was located directly across the street, Security State Bank moved to the Sullivan building in the late 1920s.

7 RASMUSSEN BLOCK

1901 – 120-124 N Cedar Avenue

Olaf Hanson, Architect/Hammel Brothers & Anderson, Builders

Built for the Security State Bank, C.M. Rasmussen's store, and the offices of Hammel Brothers & Anderson, the building included Luxfer prisms in the transoms which allowed more light to be reflected inside the structure. Olaf Hanson of Faribault is recognized as the nation's first deaf architect.

8 PARROTT & SMITH

c. 1896 – 202 N Cedar Avenue

Frank A. Gutterson, Architect

The Parrott & Smith hardware store occupied the main floor with medical and dental offices on the second floor and a barber shop in the basement. The third floor housed the International Order of Odd Fellows with a large meeting room at the front of the building. The arches above the third floor windows were originally leaded glass. After a fire in 1905 completely gutted the building, the interior was rebuilt.

9 KASPER BUILDING

1896 – 310-312 N Cedar Avenue

Hammel Brothers & Anderson, Builders

Built by the Bohemian Slovak Benevolent Society, and known as the C.S.P.S. Auditorium, this rock-faced building is trimmed with pink sandstone. Originally occupied by F.J. Kasper & Co., the upper floors contained meeting rooms, a gymnasium and an auditorium which was the site of many performances, including Czech language plays.

10 LIVERY STABLE/GARAGE

329 N Cedar Avenue

Built as a livery stable for Alexander Lumber, this building has also been a Studebaker and Ford garage, a thrift shop, and a taxi and bus garage, until finally becoming The Kitchen restaurant.

11 ZAMBONI BUILDING

1880 – 301-303 N Cedar Avenue

Jacobson & Jacobson, Architects

The original building was built in 1880. In 1920 the Jacobsons designed the north addition, adding stonework and colorful glazed terra-cotta to both buildings. Originally a bicycle repair and gun shop, the Zamboni family later sold Dodge automobiles here.

12 ADSIT BLOCK

1895 – 203 N Cedar Avenue

The Adsit family built this brick structure to house *The People's Store* which sold dry goods, clothing and shoes. The *Veterans of Foreign Wars* occupied the second floor, which was the scene of many dances.

13 NATIONAL FARMERS' BANK

1908 – 101 N Cedar Avenue

Louis H. Sulllivan, Architect | Hammel Brothers & Anderson, Builders

Commissioned by bank president Carl Bennett, Louis H. Sullivan created "a jewel box of the prairie." The bank is world-renowned as an example of Prairie School architecture and is one of 25 National Historic Landmarks in Minnesota. Remodeled in 1940, many of the interior architectural elements were destroyed. Subsequent work in 1958 and 1976 to 1997 restored it to its original grandeur. Today it operates as Wells Fargo Bank.

14 THE ARMORY

1915 – 128 E Broadway Street

Built by Company 1

This brick structure not only housed military groups, but in later years served as the site of regional Golden Gloves boxing matches, which drew over 1,000 people. A new armory was built and this building is currently used for storage.

15 FEDERATED INSURANCE

1923 – E Broadway Street

Jacobson & Jacobson, Architect

The Original Building is another example of Prairie School architecture. It was initially two stories with a red tile roof; the third floor is an addition. The C.I. Buxton Building, which faces west onto Central Park, was designed to complement the original Prairie School building and uses terra-cotta pieces from the first building.

16 JOSTENS

1930 – 148 E Broadway Street

Hammel Brothers, Builders

Founded by Otto H. Josten in 1897 as a watch and jewelry repair business, Jostens went on to produce school recognition products nationally under the direction of Daniel C. Gainey. During World War II this facility was used to manufacture bomb sights which necessitated the construction of a security fence around the building.

17 PUBLIC LIBRARY

1900 – 105 N Elm Avenue

Built in Neoclassical style, the library was the first public building erected by the city of Owatonna and was begun with a bequest from Elizabeth Hunewill. A large addition which aesthetically matches the original building was added in 1992.

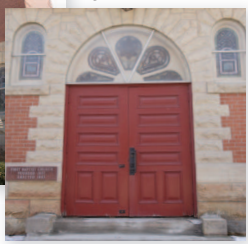
18 JOHN SHEA HOME

1892 – 140 E Main Street

This Victorian home was one of many houses on the block when it was built as a residence for local business owner John Shea. After serving as a boarding house for Federated employees, it currently serves as a law office.

19 FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

1893 – 123 E Main Street



First Baptist is the only remaining church of the four that once lined Main Street. The second Baptist church to be located on this site, this brick building is noted for its stained glass windows, stone trim, and octagonal steeple. The Pillsbury family donated the Tracker pipe organ, one of the oldest organs in the state which is still in use.

20 STEELE COUNTY COURTHOUSE

1891 – 111 E Main Street

T.D. Allen, Architect

The second County Courthouse was built in 1891. The general style of the structure is Romanesque, featuring an impressive four sided clock tower with the three figures representing Mercy, Justice and Law gracing the niche over the main entrance.

21 CEDAR COURT

1927 – 308 S Cedar Avenue

Jay Axelwood, Architect

Built by the Stahmer family, the unique Craftsman style apartment complex of bungalows was centered on an inner courtyard. Each of the eight apartments had its own basement and second floor, and was furnished with two Murphy beds.

22 ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

1867, 1884 – S Cedar & Mill Street

One of many Episcopal churches in Minnesota built under the direction of Bishop Whipple, St. Paul's Church is a Carpenter Gothic structure that features an open bell tower and beautiful stained glass windows.

The Guild Hall was built in 1867; after the sanctuary was built in 1884, the Guild Hall was moved and connected to the church.

23 FIREMEN'S HALL

1906 – 107 W Main Street

Firemen's Hall stands at a corner of the town square, and is built in a classic Italian Romanesque style that complements the nearby County Courthouse. Built in 1906 as a combination city hall and fire hall, the third floor was used for community dances and meetings. The garage addition on the east was added in 1996.

HISTORIC RESIDENTIAL

29 L.L. BENNETT HOME

c. 1880 – 249 E Main Street

Built for the founder of National Farmers' Bank, Dr. L.L. Bennett treated patients who had been injured while walking on rotten wooden boardwalks. He was among the first in Owatonna to install cement sidewalks, the hexagonal ones still in place. Note the carriage house off of the alley.

30 WILLIAM MORK HOME

1898 – 306 E Broadway Street

A Queen Anne style Victorian house with Colonial influences on the porches and trim. William Mork, local shoe store owner, built the house, which includes leaded glass and several porches.

31 JOHN H. ADAIR HOME

1913 – 322 E Vine Street

Purcell & Elmslie, Architects

Hammel Brothers & Anderson, Builders

Built for Dr. John H. Adair, this Prairie School home features horizontal lines in the wood siding and tiered roofing. Wide eaves, a cantilevered window box, and decorative woodcuts add to the Prairie School style. The tuck-under garage, the first of its kind in Owatonna, is original—the detached garage was built in the 1990s and complements the house.

32 W.R. KINYON HOME

1893 – 343 E Pearl Street

This Queen Anne home is the second house built on this site. The first, built by W.D. Washburn, was purchased by W.R. Kinyon in the late 1860s and burned down in 1893; the present structure was built on portions of the remaining foundation. The three-story home was one of the largest homes in Owatonna. The upper floors feature stained glass, decorative porches and a rounded turret. A fire in 1930 destroyed the carriage house; this was replaced with a garage. The three other homes on the block were added after the Kinyon family sold the property in 1954.

33 SIDNEY KINYON HOME

1912 – 342 E Pearl Street

Hammel Brothers, Builders

Built by Sidney W. and Florence Kinyon, this stucco and brick Tudor house is located on 1-⅓ acres (five city lots). A living room and bedroom were added after a fire in the home. Sidney moved back to the large house across the street after his mother's death, but retained part of the land where he built his own tennis court.

34 F. KEEN YOUNG HOME

c. 1883 – 405 E Vine Street

Initially a foursquare farm house, owners F. Keen and Marianne Young modernized the home in 1947 by removing the porches and adding onto the sides of the house. The Youngs also added sculptures and landscaping, as well as its distinctive pink paint. *House Beautiful* Magazine featured the remodeling in 1947.

35 OTTO JOSTEN HOME

1894 – 415 E Broadway Street

Nels P. Peterson, Builder

A Victorian cottage built by Nels P. Peterson, a local contractor who built many of the homes in this area. Otto H. Josten owned the home while building up his jewelry store business.

36 ALEXANDER HOME

1909 – 352 E Broadway Street

A brick Prairie School house that is a variation of Frank Lloyd Wright's $5,000 concrete house from a 1907 *Ladies Home Journal*. The floor plan is the mirror image of the Stockman House in Mason City, Iowa. Built for Judge Alexander, the house has retained its red tile roof and stone trim.

37 MARK ALEXANDER HOME

1927 – 351 E Broadway Street
Mark Nelson, Architects
Sid Hammel, Builder

This stately Tudor style home was built for Mark and Veta Alexander, of Alexander Lumber Company. Note the stone accents on the chimney and doorway, as well as winding sidewalk.

38 EZRA ABBOTT HOME

c. 1860 – 345 E Broadway St.
Abijah Odell, Builder

Possibly the oldest surviving home in Owatonna, the foundation walls of this Greek Revival are over two feet thick. Built for Ezra Abbott, an early settler who was Steele County's first superintendent of schools.

39 NORTHROP-OFTEDAHL HOUSE

1898 – 358 E Main Street

This Victorian home was built as a wedding present from H.M. Hastings, a pioneer flour miller, to his daughter Ida Slaid. The Northrop family purchased the house for back taxes in 1943 and now operate it as a bed & breakfast. The interior woodwork and light fixtures are original. The third floor first served as a ballroom, then as a children's playroom.

40 GUY BENNETT HOME

1908 – 412 E Main Street
Guy Bennett, of National Farmers' Bank, built this brick foursquare variation home. Neighborhood lore suggests that the house is built with the same brick as the interior of the bank.

41 BUXTON BUNGALOW

1912 – 424 E Main Street

Purcell, Feick & Elmslie, Architects

The Buxton Bungalow was built for Charles and Grace Buxton of Federated Insurance. The stenciled theme "Rest Awhile" is attributed to Charles who traveled extensively and came home to rest. The wide overhangs and bands of windows give the home characteristic Prairie School details.

42 JOHN BUXTON HOME

1929 – 434 E Main Street

Jacobson & Casey, Builder

John Buxton and his wife, Vera, built this house next door to John's parents' home. The two houses shared formal gardens. A Tudor style, it is constructed of brick, stucco, and exposed beams.

43 LYLE BERGHS HOME

1937 – 505 E Main Street

Originally the location of the Chambers estate, this Mediterranean style home with stucco exterior, arched doorway and red tile roof was built for Dr. Lyle Berghs.

44 RUEBEN KAPLAN HOME

1939 – 565 Agnes Street

This Streamline Moderne home, was built by Rueben A. Kaplan of Owatonna Tool Company. Additions were made in the 1960s. Note the curved lines of the home, as well as the octagonal window on the second floor.

45 DONALD DEWEY HOME

1938 – 551 Agnes Street

Originally a Moderne style home similar to the Kaplans', this building was remodeled in the 1950s when Dr. Donald H. Dewey replaced the concrete exterior with brick and built a second floor addition over an enlarged garage.

46 ALFRED HART HOME

1929 – 527 Agnes Street

An English Tudor home built for Dr. Alfred B. Hart. From the street, the entryway is not visible, although an arch gives interest to the facade. The garage and rooms above it on the east were added later.

47 TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

1956 – 609 Lincoln Avenue

LeRoy Gaarder, Architect

Organized in 1919 as Trinity English Lutheran Church, the congregation built this building when their previous structure, the former Universalist Church on Elm and Main Streets, became inadequate. Massive 2-foot thick limestone walls form the Chancel, which is decorated with furnishings designed by the architect. The half-timbered parish wing to the south was added in 1961. A major remodeling and expansion project that included a new multi-purpose room was completed in 2012.

48 BRICK FARMHOUSE

1896 – 518 S Lincoln Avenue

Originally located on Riverside Avenue close to the now-demolished Rock Island depot, this brick farmhouse was moved to this location at an unknown date. Porches and the south wooden section were added after the move.

49 GEORGE HOLDEN HOME

1917 – 431 E School Street

Built for George D. Holden, the architect of this Prairie School home is not known. Note the wide overhangs and groups of windows.

50 OWATONNA HIGH SCHOOL

1921 – 333 E School Street

Jacobson & Jacobson, Architects

The Owatonna Senior High School was originally built in 1921. Additions were added onto the original building in the 1950s and in the 2000s. The most recent addition is the underground portion in front of the original building that faces Grove Avenue.

51 JOHN MCINTYRE HOME

1932 – 222 E School Street

Built by Dr. John and Margaret McIntyre, this Tudor style home had an addition built six years later to accommodate their four sons. Dr. McIntyre saw patients at the home in later years.

52 ST. JOSEPHS PARISH

1929 – 512 S Elm Street

Slifer & Abrahamson, Architects

When a fire destroyed the St. Josephs Church on the corner of North Elm and Fremont Street in 1927, this new building was already being planned. Built in an early Romanesque style, the church contains many symbolic carvings. The stained glass windows designed by Conrad Pizel, depict a saint for each century from the 1st to the 20th. The Catholic Community Adoration Chapel was added in 2010.

53 WILLIAM ST. CLAIR HOME

Prior to 1900 – 605 S Cedar Avenue

Built for William St. Clair, the house was remodeled to an Italianate style in the 1920s. A garage was added to the house at that time.

54 JULIUS YOUNG HOME

1896 – 111 W University Street

This Victorian style house with a turret was built by jeweler Julius F. Young; later owned by banker Norman Evans. An unusual feature is the wooden flooring on part of the basement floor.

55 CYRUS ANDERSON HOME

1915 – 506 S Cedar Avenue

This four square design with some Prairie School elements was the home of Cyrus Anderson, a local contractor. It was built across the street from his partner, Louis F. Hammel.

56 LOUIS HAMMEL HOME

1896 – 430 S Cedar Avenue

Louis F. Hammel, of Hammel Brothers and Anderson, built this massive home. With the stone foundations, as well as the spacious porches, this house may well have served as advertising for his construction business.

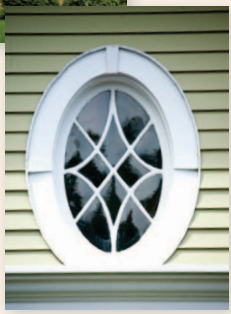
57 W.S. BOICE HOME

1899 – 404 S Cedar Avenue

W.S. Boice, furniture store owner and undertaker, had this Queen Anne home built with its distinctive circular tower. The house directly south of this one is reported to be Boice's barn. It has since been remodeled into a home.

58 MCINDOE ALEXANDER HOME

1886 – 128 W Rice Street



McIndoe S. Alexander, founder of Alexander Lumber Co., one of the oldest businesses in Owatonna, built this spacious home. The house features a third floor ballroom and impressive porches.

59 F.M. SMERSH HOME

1896-97 – 216 N Oak Avenue

Hammel Brothers, Builders

Designed by owner Dr. F.M. Smersh, this brick house featuring a tower served both as a residence and a medical office. The property stretched to the Straight River and included pasture area for horses.

ADDITIONAL POINTS OF INTEREST

FRANKLIN SEYKORA HOME

1918 - 473 W Bridge Street

Built for Frank & Mamie Seykora, this Tudor style home features porches on both sides. Reportedly a tunnel connected this house and that of an aunt on the corner of State Avenue and Bridge Street; the tunnel was removed when Bridge Street was reconstructed.

L.P. LORD HOME

1896 – 222 State Avenue

This Victorian home was built by L.P. Lord who was involved with the Clinton Falls Nursery located further west on Bridge Street. The name "Lord" is etched in the glass of the front door. The property had several acres; the barn still remains.

Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism
320 Hoffman Drive | Owatonna, MN
800.423.6466
visitowatonna.org