

TOUR OF HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Introductions & a brief background:

Several tribes of Indians inhabited the area prior to the arrival of the Lewis & Clark expedition in 1804. A series of treaties between the United States government and the Indians removed them from their ancestral homes to lands ever farther west. In 1837 some 2500 Pottawattamies came to what is now western Iowa. Billy Caldwell – an educated half-Irish, half-Mohawk Indian who knew several languages and negotiated on behalf of the Indians led some of them from Chicago to these bluffs by the river. They divided into five villages in what we know as southwest Iowa. Caldwell’s Village, as it was called, was in the area of today’s North Broadway, along Indian Creek. A Jesuit mission was established on the hill above Pierce Street by Frs. DeSmet and Verrydet, from St. Louis, in an unused blockhouse (an abandoned fort given to them by Col. Kearney) and four other buildings. The mission included the first church and school in the area. Billy Caldwell died of cholera in 1841 and was buried on the hill behind the mission. When Franklin Avenue was cut through, his remains were moved to “the old Catholic cemetery (believed to be St. Joseph Cemetery). The marker which simply read “Indians” was made of wood and cannot be located today. By 1848 most of the Pottawattamies were removed, once again, to a reservation in Kansas.

Next to come were the Mormons, fleeing persecution in Nauvoo, IL. Although headed west, some remained in the area which they named Kanesville after Col. Thomas Kane who befriended them. In 1852 thousands left for Salt Lake City and sold their land cheaply to the next band of emigrants – the gold rushers who stopped off and decided to settle here and start businesses or farm. The name Kanesville was changed to Council Bluffs, and the frontier town became a major outfitting station for the wagon trains passing through. The coming of the railroads again changed the face of Council Bluffs. It is this early Council Bluffs that we will show you today.

START AT BAYLISS PARK CORNER –PEARL STREET & FIRST AVENUE

Bayliss Park Hall – Built in 1901 as Elks Lodge – Colonial Revival

Council Bluffs Clinic – This example of the Classical Revival/Neoclassical style was built in 1928

FIRST AVENUE TO SOUTH SEVENTH STREET

Also on the right is the YMCA Building- Listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

SOUTH SEVENTH STREET TO SEVENTH AVENUE – turn right

Around the corner, on the right are two examples of the double houses that were popular at the beginning of the 1800s – even the affluent kept boarders. White and beige houses..

Bloomer School – named for Dexter Bloomer, husband of women’s rights activist Amelia Bloomer, the first Superintendent of Schools in CB, and an organizer of the Republican Party in the state of Iowa.

On the next corner, gray house, now law offices - C.R. Cornelius built this Queen Anne/Free Classical style house in 1900. Also known as The Hennessy House, after daughter and son-in-law, Dr. A.V. Hennessy.

Across 6th Avenue, on the corner behind the trees: A.B. Walker House – this Mid-Victorian was built in 1877 for a former Mayor of Council Bluffs.

The house next door was built in 1889 for Mary B. Walker, daughter of A.B. Walker.

Next door – on the corner is the O.P. Wickham House – Queen Anne/Eastlake style built in 1882. It remained in the Wickham family until 1962. O.P. Wickham was a well-known brick manufacturer and contractor in the metro area. His company laid many of the brick streets and built many of the commercial buildings. National Register.

At SOUTH EIGHTH STREET turn right

Immediately on the right is the Paige House, built by an attorney.

Across the next street is the McDonald House - this Second Empire house built in 1890 by agricultural implement dealer Charles McDonald is a wonderful example of the elaborate ornamentation used during the Victorian period.

The Douglass House - This Victorian Dutch Colonial was built in 1898 by Wilbur Douglass, President of Eagle Laundry. The architectural firm of J.C. and W. Woodward designed this home as well as the Carnegie Library. Eagle Laundry was the first dry-cleaning establishment in the area and was later sold to Max I. Walker Cleaners. Mrs. Douglass was related to President Andrew Jackson.

Loomis House - Gray siding with maroon trim - W.W. Loomis, agricultural implement dealer, was the original owner of this house built in 1889 when the Queen Anne style was at its peak.

Shea House – This brick Queen Anne house was built in 1887 for John Shea, who lost it in bankruptcy in 1895. Timothy G. Turner purchased the house in 1900. Mr. Turner and his brother-in-law, C.R. Hannan, Sr. started City National Bank, now US Bank.

Look to the left – W.J. Hancock, of American and Wells Fargo Express, had this Victorian home built in 1880 and left town shortly thereafter. The second owner was E.H. Merriam. The Merriam Block stood on the present site of the downtown Omni Centre.

Back to the right – the gold house - Farnsworth House. This Queen Anne was built in 1886 for banker Shepard Farnsworth. Judge John P. Tinley was the second owner.

Next door on the corner -This 1904 Queen Anne was the home of Thomas Farnsworth, owner of a furniture company and the son of Shepard Farnsworth.

On the left are two white houses. The first, with the columns, was built in 1906 for H.H. Van Brunt, carriage dealer, and his wife whose parents lived next door on the corner. The Van Brunt's daughter, Barbara, became the voice of silent film stars when talking movies became popular. She was also the voice of cartoon characters, and one of her husbands was the legendary Sky King.

On the corner - This Free Classical Queen Anne was built in 1885 by Charles R. Hannan, Sr. who became President of one of the largest banks in Iowa.

At FIFTH AVENUE turn right –

The Squirrel Cage Jail and the Carnegie Library on the left, and look to the right for THE HAYMARKET - The open area between South Main and Pearl Streets that begins at Broadway and merges at Sixth Avenue is called the “Haymarket”. It derived its name from the farmers market and public scales placed there in the 1890s to weigh agricultural commodities. The building were erected between 1856 and 1900. The Haymarket District is a Local Landmark and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

THE WATERING TROUGH FOUNTAIN small fountain below is for dogs.

At THIRD STREET turn right

We are now entering the Willow/Bluff/Third Street Historic District, recently listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Third Street was known as the “Street of Generals”, as four generals lived on it, two of them, Frank and George Everest, at the top of the hill, out of sight.

Look to the left: the large Tudor Revival house on the far corner was built in 1911-1913 and was the home of J.G. Wadsworth.

The gray house next door on the corner was the home of Carolyn Dodge, attorney, daughter of Nathan P. Dodge and niece of Gen. Grenville Dodge.

Right: Brick house: This 1918 Prairie School/ Italian Renaissance home was built for Fred R. Davis, founder of the Pioneer Implement Company. It is now the Girl Scout office.

Across the street: Historic General Dodge House – This French Second Empire mansion was built in 1869 at a cost of \$35,000. General Grenville M. Dodge, a Civil War general, became the chief construction engineer for the Union Pacific Railroad. The house was

purchased by the city in the 1950s and restored as a house museum. It is open to the public and is a National Historic Landmark.

The Colonial Revival home next door was built in 1899 for August Biersheim, banker, who was elected to the legislature in 1871. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, it is now the orientation center for the Historic General Dodge House.

The brick house on the corner, across Ninth Avenue is the Martin Hughes house. He built this Queen Anne house in 1888 for the sum of \$25,000. It is said that he incorporated the many decorative design elements to showcase his work as a contractor. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Turn right on NINTH AVENUE

Turn right on BLUFF STREET – turns into EAST PIERCE STREET

The gray Gothic house on the right was one of the earliest - built in 1862 by Xenophon Kynett, local druggist.

Next block, on the left, the white Queen Anne was built in 1896 for Andrew Brock, bookkeeper for Peregoy & Moore, a cigar manufacturing company.

Next door, the 1900 Queen Anne was built for Albert Annis, dealer in real estate, abstracts, loans.

Pull over, if possible, in the middle of the block.

Next door: Frederic Empkie was the first owner of this 1900 Queen/Anne Free Classic – Empkie owned a wholesale hardware firm.

The white Italianate house with the green roof, corner of Bluff and Willow, was built in 1880 by John Bennett, an early pioneer who opened a lumber yard, a grocery store, then was a founder and Cashier of State Savings Bank, and served as Mayor. The Bennett Building and Bennett Ave. are named for him.

Look left- the house with colored accents: Henry Van Brunt built this Queen Anne house in 1890. VanBrunt was a dealer in carriages, buggies, wagons, and harnesses.

Across the street on the left, corner: O.P. Wickham built this as a Queen Anne in 1878 and sold it in 1882 to P.C. DeVol, who renovated it as Italianate/Prairie School. DeVol was a hardware dealer. Known as the Wickham DeVol House, it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The corner house on the right: The Clinton House, built in 1868 for attorney Samuel Clinton.

Next door is an 1877 early English Tudor Revival- the Metcalf house, restored to a single family residence. Metcalf owned a Millinery store. Also known as the Joe Smith House, owner of a premier clothing store on Broadway.

St. Peters Catholic Church – Victorian Gothic was built in 1887 as the German parish. The rectory was built in 1895. Both are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

We are about to enter the Fairmount Park Historic District, currently applying for National Register status. Originally the bluffs were much higher, forming deep valleys, or “hallows” between. Glen Avenue was called “Hang Hollow”, or “Hangman’s Hollow” because an immigrant accused of murder was hung here by the Vigilance Committee.

At GLEN AVENUE turn right

The white house on the left is the home of Calvin Beebe, built in 1885 in the Queen Anne style. Beebe came this far with the Mormons, and started a furniture store at 201 West Broadway. The business grew to become the Beebe & Runyan Furniture Company in Omaha, now newly opened as upscale condos.

On the right – the blue house: George & Marie Pfeifer built this Spindlework Queen Anne in 1891. Early records show small, irregular parcels of land that were put together to make up some of the lots on Park and Glen.

On the left: Richard Green - Neoclassical – 1893 - Thomas Green, a shipbuilder in England, came here with his sons, Richard and Robert, and opened a packing house. They produced mostly bacon and ham, much of which was sent back to England.

On the right, corner house, William Keeline built this three-story mansion after the turn of the century. It remains a single-family residence. It was in this yard that the lynching took place. The large elm tree was blown over in a storm in 1935.

Across the street, past the corner at 407, Iowa Supreme Court Judge Joseph R. Reed built this home in 1871. Judge Reed collaborated with H.H. Field, whose home you will see on the next street, in writing *The History of Pottawattamie County*.

Left on PAMONA for one short block, then another left on

PARK AVENUE, first known as Market Street, that leads to the north entrance of Fairmount Park, up the hill. The city built a six-foot wide sidewalk on this street to accommodate the many people who walked to the park by this route.

On the corner to the right: This Colonial Revival house dates back to before 1876 when it was a one-storey building. A subsequent owner added the second storey and gave it the style that it is today. Its first owner, John Oliver, was the first merchant taylor to open a shop in the city.

Down the street on the right: the red brick house with circular drive and white picket fence was the home of Thomas H. Benton, banker and relative of Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri. The house was built in 1857, with Georgian and Federal style elements.

Next door: S.S. Evans built this home in the Southern style in 1862. Twin curving staircases originally led to the formal main entrance on the second story. The house was extensively remodeled in the 1880s, and the staircases were removed.

Across the street, the white house with large columns: German immigrant Jacob Neumayer was the first owner of this home and of the Neumayer Hotel downtown, on the present site of the Omni Centre. Behind the hotel was a stable that held 150 horses. Neumayer was one of the founders of St. Peters Church.

Back across the street on the right: Thomas and Harriet Tostevin built this Tri-Gable farmhouse style home in 1859. He was appointed by the governor to survey the original squatters claims. He became mayor in 1868 and was a founder of the local temperance movement.

Stop at the set-back Tulleys house driveway: Civil War veteran Col. Lysander Tulleys built this brick Victorian Gothic home for his family in 1877. Tulleys was a lawyer and real estate agent, and started the first farm loan business in the area. The house and carriage house (behind the house) are listed on the National Register.

Across the street on the left, the red brick house: Thomas Cavin, with the help of his father-in-law H.H. Field, built this home for his family in 1887. It features elements of several styles: Queen Anne, Gothic, and Neocolonial. It was converted to apartments in 1961 and in 1990 the present owners bought the house and restored it to a single family home. It is listed on the National Register.

Worthy of note: same side of the street, the house under renovation is the Eiseman, house, built by one of the founders of the Eiseman Store, forerunner of the Peoples Department Store. As with the Cavin house, it was converted to apartments and is being restored to its original condition.

The green house with off-white trim: H. H. Field built this Spindlework Queen Anne house in 1890. Field, an early pioneer, was among other things, Sheriff, Chief of Police, Justice of the Peace, conducted the draft for the Civil War, was a talented violinist, organized shows at the opera house, played on Missouri River showboats, and at the age of 80 began work as co-author, with Judge Reed, of *The History of Pottawattamie County*.

Cross Pierce St. and pause at Broadway: look to the left to the Historic 100 Block, listed on the National Register. Buildings were constructed between 1850s and 1900.

Cross Broadway to KANESVILLE BLVD. and turn left

To NORTH SECOND STREET

We are now entering the Lincoln Fairview Historic District, recently named to the National Register.

The white house on the right is the Elder House— 1869 – Gothic Revival – Thomas Elder owned a considerable amount of property and wrote for the Nonpareil.

STOP - Ruth Anne Dodge Memorial – erected and dedicated in 1919 to the wife of General Grenville Dodge by her daughters, it commemorates a dream described by Mrs. Dodge on the three nights preceding her death. The sculptor was Daniel Chester French, whose other works include the seated Lincoln in the Lincoln Monument in Washington, DC and the Minuteman in Concord, Massachusetts.

FAIRVIEW CEMETERY ON THE RIGHT, where many of the pioneers who founded the city are buried. At the top, in Soldiers Circle, is the Kinsman Monument, dedicated 39 years after the death of Col. William H. Kinsman on a Southern battlefield. Born in Nova Scotia, Kinsman moved to Council Bluffs, was a school teacher, a reporter, a lawyer, a politician, and a military hero. In mid-morning of May 16, 1863, the 29-year-old Kinsman, commanding officer of the 23rd Iowa Volunteer Regiment, led the regiment in a classic infantry charge across a cotton field toward Confederate lines and was fatally wounded. Four decades later, his remains were recovered and returned to Council Bluffs by General Grenville Dodge.

TO LINCOLN MONUMENT

STOP

Erected in 1988 by the Daughters of the American Revolution, the monument commemorates a visit by Abraham Lincoln to Council Bluffs in 1859 to check on some real estate and visit former neighbors from Illinois. While here, he was brought to this spot and decided that Council Bluffs would be the eastern terminus of the first transcontinental railroad.

Turn right on OAKLAND AVENUE and go slowly down the hill to Kanesville Blvd.

The white house with black trim on the right: Cunningham R. Scott, attorney, built this Italianate house in the 1880s. The house was built of brick from a local brickyard and faces west, with a view of the Missouri River valley.

Across the street, note the 1880 Victorian with the large wrap-around porch.

The brick house on the right: Carlton H. Woodward built this Arts & Crafts home in 1914.

He was the son of famed candy-maker John Woodward. The Woodward Candy Company stood at the corner of Broadway and Glen Avenue. It was at one time the largest

employer in Council Bluffs, shipping candies all over the world. Some of the recipes were sold to Russell Stover Candies in the 1930s.

Next: the turquoise house: Maurice Wollman, jeweler and sculptor, was the first owner of this Tudor Revival house built in 1900. The sculpture of the fireman at the Oak Street fire station is his work. He also owned the first automobile in Council Bluffs.

The white house on the right: Attorney Bradbury Hight had this home built around 1899. It features classical details that give it a Colonial Revival style.

Note the one-storey Queen Anne with gingerbread trim.

This home, also on the right, with the brick addition was built by Lucius Wells, John Deere Implement dealer.

Stone house on the right: Finley Burke Burke built this Richardsonian Romanesque home for his family in 1891. He came here as an infant in 1855 and in 1874 at age 19 he was licensed to practice law, becoming the youngest attorney in the state of Iowa. The second owner was John and Hattie Woodward, who lived here for many years.

Farther down the street on the right: H.A.Cole built this Queen Anne house in 1890. Note the false fourth floor window.

WEST ON KANESVILLE TO MAIN STREET AND TO STARTING POINT

Point out Old Rusty – the fountain installed in Bayliss Park in 1905. It was moved to the Dodge House in the 70s, and recently restored and relocated to this little park.