

A WALKING TOUR OF HISTORIC HUDSON

Hudson Library and Historical Society

Part of the 120-mile "Western Reserve" area of northeast Ohio, Hudson was founded in 1799 by Connecticut pioneers David Hudson, Birdsey and Nathaniel Norton, Theodore Parmelee, Stephen Baldwin, and Benjamin Oviatt. Another influential settler, Owen Brown, was father to controversial abolitionist John Brown, who lived here as well. Hudson played an important role in the slavery debate and the Underground Railroad.

Western Reserve College was founded here in 1826; eventually, it moved to Cleveland to become Case Western Reserve University, but the prep school Western Reserve Academy continues to educate students from around the globe. A devastating fire consumed many North Main Street businesses in 1892, and most of the buildings you will see in that block were built shortly thereafter. Further improvements resulted from the efforts of industrialist James Ellsworth to make Hudson a model town; his final gift was our clocktower.

With two National Historic Register districts, Hudson continues to preserve its history and charm while keeping pace as a great place to live or visit. We hope you enjoy this tour of a few of our historic locations.



1) 47 Aurora St. (1865), The First Congregational Church. The congregation, founded in 1802, is one of the oldest continuing church groups in the Western Reserve. The architect of the Romanesque Revival building was Simeon Porter, and an addition was completed in 2001 on the site of an earlier wing.



2) 19 Aurora St., Christ Church Episcopal was established in Hudson in 1842, under the guidance of Anson A. Brewster. A wooden Gothic church building was constructed in 1846 on the site of the present Chapel, and demolished in 1930. The 1930 Chapel served as the main church until the new building was completed in 1994. The Guild House (the Isham-Beebe House, 21 Aurora St.) was built in 1834 and originally served as the home of newspaper publisher Warren Isham. It later became the home of Mr. and Mrs. David Duncan Beebe.



3) 30 Aurora St. (1826) The Whedon-Farwell House was built in 1826 in the Greek Revival style, and was the home of Benjamin Whedon. In the 1870s, the Farwell family remodeled the house in the Tuscan Revival style. Benjamin Whedon was a deacon in the Congregational Church, but was forced out because his wife held "entertainments" such as dances at their residence.



4) 49 East Main St. (1834) The Baldwin Babcock House was built by Frederick Baldwin. It served as a home to several families -- including Caroline Baldwin Babcock (founder of the Hudson Library and Historical Society) -- until 1922, when it became the Hudson Library. As the library grew, additions to the facility were constructed in 1934, 1954, and 1963. In 2005, the facility was sold to the Burton D. Morgan Foundation and the house was separated from the additions once more. The house has become home to community organizations.



5) 22 Aurora St. (1924). Originally an addition to the library housed in the Baldwin Babcock House, it is home to the Burton D. Morgan Foundation, and the ICF Foundation of the Ong family.



6) Corner of Main and Aurora Streets (1912), The Hudson Clocktower was built in 1912 as a gift to the community from multi-millionaire James W. Ellsworth. The clockworks, built by the E. Howard Clock Company of Boston, run on gravity. Originally, the tower had water fountains on its west and north sides. The tower stands 42 feet and nine inches tall.



7) Ohio Historic Underground Railroad Marker on the green honors Hudson's role in the anti-slavery movement, and was the first such marker for Northern Ohio in May 2000. A detailed brochure on specific Underground Railroad sites in Hudson is available from the Library and Historical Society.

8) The Bicentennial Walkway at this location was installed as part of Hudson's 200th birthday celebration of 1999.



9) 41 East Main St. (1841) The Edgar Birge Ellsworth Store was built as a general store. One of Edgar Birge Ellsworth's sons was James W. Ellsworth, a self-made multi-millionaire who worked to make Hudson a "model town." James' son was Lincoln Ellsworth, famous polar explorer/aviator.



10) 35 East Main St. (1891) The A. W. Lockhart House was the home of the operator of the saloon and billiard parlor at 84 North Main, the origination of the great fire of April 1892 which destroyed downtown Hudson. In the early 20th century, it was attached to the Edgar Birge Ellsworth Store building.



11) 33 East Main St. (1824) The Town-Shields House was originally constructed in the Greek Revival Style, and was the home of Dr. Israel Town. In 1890, the Shields family decided to remodel the house in the Queen Anne style, which was fashionable at that time.



12) 27 East Main Street (1879) The Hudson Town Hall was built in 1879 on the site of the original building of the First Congregational Church. That wooden New England style meeting house was constructed here in 1820 and served as the church, meeting room and school until 1865, when the brick church on Aurora Street was completed. It was in that church on this site that John Brown gave his first public speech denouncing slavery in 1837. The old church building was dissembled in 1878 to make room for the brick Town Hall.



13) 19 East Main Street (1836) The Town-Neibel House was built by Leander Starr for Dr. Israel Town in the Greek Revival style. In 1877, the Neibel family remodeled the house, adding the decorative wood trim seen today. During the remodel, two wings moved to new locations.



14) 13 East Main Street (1878) The Sebastian Miller House was built in the Italian Revival style. A Main Street merchant, Miller was one of the first people on the scene at the outbreak of the devastating fire that destroyed the Main Street block in 1892.



15) 7 East Main Street (1825) The Captain Heman Oviatt House. Captain Oviatt commanded the local militia during the War of 1812, the first mayor of Hudson, and helped found Western Reserve College.



16) 1 East Main Street (1860) Old Saint Mary's was built at another location in 1860 and moved to this site in 1890. A major addition was finished in 1908. The Roman Catholic congregation was established in Hudson in 1847; in 1973, the congregation moved to a modern building to the north. Since then it has served multiple purposes, including a nursery school and as a home for new church groups on their way to getting established in Hudson.



17) 5 East Main Street (1842) The Free Congregational Church was built in 1842 with funds supplied by Owen Brown. Established as an abolitionist church, it was originally a one-story building. It was in front of this church that John Brown gave his last appearance in Hudson before the raid on Harpers Ferry in 1859. In the first half of the 20th century, the building was the home of the Hudson Ornamental Iron Works, run by Angelo Lavelli, father of Pro Football Hall of Fame inductee Dante Lavelli.



18) The Hudson Bandstand was built in 1976 as part of the celebration of the United States Bicentennial, and along with the clocktower is an iconic Hudson landmark. It is the home of band concerts during the summer months. The roof is made of copper.



19) The Boy Scout Cabin (1931) was built out of chestnut wood salvaged from Camp Manatoc after chestnut blight ravaged the camp's trees. It is still in use today. Also on this green is Hudson's World War I memorial.



20) 36 North Main Street (1825) The Augustus Baldwin House. Augustus was the brother of Frederick Baldwin (49 East Main Street) and Harvey Baldwin, who was married to David Hudson's daughter, Anner Maria Hudson. A historic marker in front of the Augustus Baldwin House commemorates the site of the first formal worship service in Hudson in 1800.



21) Near the Hudson Bandstand is a historical marker that commemorates the site of the cabin which served as the first schoolhouse, and the site of Hudson's first election.



22) 72 North Main Street (1962) The Hudson Square Building was built on the site of the Buss Store/Hudson Theater. The original Buss Store was burned in the fire that destroyed downtown in 1892. Charles Buss rebuilt on the site in the summer of 1892, and the building later became a movie house. It was torn down to make room for the present building.



23) 84 North Main Street (1892) Lockhart's Saloon was rebuilt after a fire originating there on April 28, 1892 spread and destroyed Hudson's downtown. A. W. Lockhart used insurance money he received after the fire to construct the present building, which houses Kepner's Tavern.



24) 96 North Main Street (1920) The Old Post Office Building. Currently home to the GAP, this was once the site of a bowling alley and arcade, as well as the Hudson Post Office. Prior to the Main Street fire in 1892, this was the location of the Mansion House Hotel.



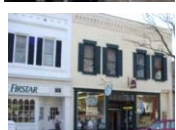
25) 112-116 North Main Street (1892) The Wehner Building was built on the site of Henry Wehner's original store, destroyed in the 1892 fire. Wehner and his family, who lived upstairs, managed to escape the fire, but over \$3,000 in uninsured goods just delivered to the store were destroyed. The original part of the building to its south, where Riley's Cleaners is today, was built in 1953.



26) 120 North Main Street (1893) The Marrott Building was built in 1893 to replace the building destroyed in the Main Street fire. Louis Marrott's tailor shop was here, and in the 1920's, this was the home of the Hudson Post Office.



27) 124-126 North Main Street (1892) The Sebastian Miller Block was built in 1892 after the fire. Miller ran a shoe store here. Many businesses have had their home in this building, including Gott's Hardware and Western Auto.



28) 134 North Main Street (1892) The Mead Block was built in 1892 after the Main Street fire. J. G. Mead ran a harness shop here. For many years, a pharmacy operated here. The second floor was once the home of the Knights of Pythias Lodge.



29) 140 North Main Street (1892) the Miller Brothers Building It was briefly the home of Saywell's Drug Store from 1911-1913, and then was Hudson's Acme grocery store until 1962 when Acme moved to Hudson Plaza. It has continued to house businesses related to food ever since.



30) 144-148 North Main Street (1892) The Campbell Building was built in 1892 after the Main Street fire. C.A. Campbell ran a harness shop here, and for many years it was a butcher shop. For almost 20 years, this was the home of Dodd's Department Store.



31) 160-164 North Main Street (1839) The Saywell's Building Originally on this site was the American House (1831), a local hotel. In 1866, it was converted into the Farrar Block/Adelphian Hall, which burned in the 1892 fire. The Hudson Independent Building, constructed in 1892, burnt in 1911 and the current building was constructed to replace it. Clinton Street, to the north of this building, marks the point where the Main Street fire of 1892 was stopped.



32) 5 Aurora Street (1839) The Brewster Store was built to house the Kent and Brewster general store. Eventually, Anson Brewster dissolved his partnership with Zenas Kent and became the sole proprietor. He later took his son-in-law, David Duncan Beebe, as a partner, and the business became Brewster and Beebe. Many businesses have occupied this building since Brewster's death in 1868; this commercial building has been in continuous use since its construction.



33) 9 Aurora Street (1853) The Brewster Mansion was built on the site of an earlier wooden home that belonged to Owen Brown, which was the childhood home of abolitionist John Brown. Anson Brewster purchased the original building from Brown and lived in it until it was destroyed by fire in 1842. When the Brewsters decided to rebuild on the site, they hired architect Simeon Porter to design a Gothic Revival "castle" for them on the town square. After the deaths of the Brewsters, the building was sold and became the Park Hotel. In the 20th century, it served as a nursing home, and then as an office building, and is still housing businesses today.



34) 93 College Street (1838) The Loomis Observatory is the second-oldest observatory in the United States, and still contains its original European instruments. It is located on the campus of Western Reserve Academy.



35) 318 N. Main Street (1806) The David Hudson House is the oldest house in Summit County. Built by Hudson founder David Hudson, it has also served as a post office, an inn, and a church.

Want to learn more about Hudson's history or see the stops on the Underground Railroad? Visit The Historical Society in the Library at 96 Library Street (off Clinton, two blocks west of the clocktower) or explore online at <http://www.hudson.lib.oh.us> (select "Historical Society").

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Location Map

