

Peck, who had acquired great wealth in early Chicago real estate. Mr. Peck had perished in the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. Madame Peck became one of Oconomowoc's greatest boosters and summered here for 30 years. She sold the home to her son, Clarence, and moved across the street to 503 Lake Road (#19). Clarence Peck executed the last major expansion of the home, including the addition of the 10 Ionic columns (reportedly from the 1893 Columbian Exhibition). Three other Peck sons built major homes in the City (Harold, #13, Walter, #22 and Ferdinand, a "chalet" just to the south which has been razed). The Pecks staged extravagant parties on the lakefront. The gazebo on the shoreline was part of a judging stand for yacht races. In 1923, the mansion was sold to John and Lenore Stevens. They divided the house in 1927 and sold the original southern element of the property. That portion was remodeled in 1979. The northern building was remodeled in 1988. The houses were added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1988.

19. 503 LAKE ROAD - c. 1870. Built by Albert Rockwell, the son of John S. Rockwell (#8), it once had a sprawling verandah on two sides. Madame Peck (#18) bought the home in 1884 and summered here with her two spinster daughters, Mary and Sarah. The house was sold in 1927 and remodeled into apartments.

20. 517 LAKE ROAD - c. 1840 and later. The back part of this house is one of the oldest buildings in the area. The first house in the village (a log cabin) was erected on this lot in 1837 by Philo Brewer. G.A. Foster built part of the present structure a few years later and eventually sold it to John S. Rockwell (#8). Albert Rockwell and his mother erected a stone wall around the property in 1868. (Much of Oconomowoc history is built around the Rockwell and Peck names).

21. N. LAKE ROAD DAM. The first dam was built in 1837 west of the present bridge, but it washed away. It was rebuilt a number of times. A sawmill and gristmill were also located here. A navigational lock was built between the two lakes in 1885.

22. ISLANDALE – 1882. This stately home, located on the island west of N. Lake Road Bridge, was built by Walter Peck. His wife would not set foot in a boat, so Walter had a series of bridges and a causeway built to the mainland. This necessitated dumping 10,000 loads of gravel into the lake! The elegant "cottage" is still occupied only in the summer. A better view of it is possible in the winter when the trees are bare.

23. 800 N. LAKE ROAD - KNOLLWARD – 1928. This imposing mansion has been called the finest example of French Provincial manor-type architecture in the Midwest. It was built by Marjorie Ward in 1928, the stepdaughter of A. Montgomery Ward of Chicago. The original cost was \$80,000.00. A north addition was made in 1932. In the 1960's, the estate was presented to Lutheran Homes of Oconomowoc, Inc., along with a large sum to build the present new north addition. It then became a retirement home and, most recently, was sold to a private individual.

24. 128 LISBON ROAD - c. 1873. This Gothic Revival house is said to have been the home of the Clark sewing machine millionaire from Chicago. It supposedly was moved to this site from Lac La Belle. Many additions have changed its original design, but it still has some striking features – the 3rd floor balconies (both front and rear) with lancet windows, framed by gable-end ornaments.

25. 351 E. LISBON ROAD - THE INN AT PINE TERRACE – 1884. (On walking tour, viewed from Greenland Avenue). It was built by Henry Schutter, a Chicago wagon manufacturer, as a summer home. The two Schutter brothers married into the brewing families of Anheuser and Busch. The estate originally included 220 acres of forest and farmland. A large flower garden and lawn area once connected the mansion with the north shore of Fowler Lake. In 1988, the mansion was extensively renovated and restored and is now an Inn with 13 guest rooms. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

26. OAKWOOD AVENUE - FOWLER PARK. This property changed hands a number of times before it was purchased in the 1860's by Dr. James A. Henshall, M.D. He developed America's first private fish hatchery here, between 1860 and 1870. The coach house is all that remains of a once spectacular estate. Fowler Lake was formed when the first dam was built in 1837 at the Oconomowoc River's entrance to Lac La Belle (#21). During winter in the early 1900's, there was an extensive ice cutting operation on the lake. Ice was shipped to Chicago and elsewhere. In 1945, this site was donated to the city as a park by Ida M. Binzel and Mrs. E.C. Theobald, members of an Oconomowoc pioneer family.

27. 354 N. OAKWOOD AVENUE – Cornerstone Church - 1872-80. A congregation of Norwegian Lutherans began building this church in 1872, but it was not completed until 1880. The painted stained glass windows are original and are beautiful at night when lighted. Note the interesting octagonal steeple with 8 gables.

28. 344 N. OAKWOOD AVENUE - c. 1880. This house belonged to the Townsend House, a great hotel which once stood directly north of the Norwegian (Oakwood Avenue) Bridge (and south of here). The hotel burned in 1901. It had been the summer headquarters for Chicago Society and was the scene of many gala social events of the era. This charming Carpenter Gothic home was used by the hotel as a guesthouse. It originally had no kitchen, because guests took all of their meals at the hotel.

29. *OCONOMOWOC DEPOT - 115 Collins Street – 1896. This is not included in the Historic Walk around Fowler Lake, but is noted because it is one of the most important landmarks of the city. It is said to be the only fieldstone depot left in the U.S. Albert Earling, President of the Milwaukee Railroad Co., and Phillip D. Armour, wealthy Chicago meat-packer, built this depot for personal use. The old facility, which overlooked the stockyards, was considered unsuitable for the reception of their distinguished guests. The depot is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is no longer used as a depot. It is currently a dining establishment.

30. FIRST BANK FINANCIAL CENTRE - 155 W. Wisconsin Avenue. Founded in 1859, the bank first opened its doors as Summit Bank and was located on North Lake Road. Summit Bank was also the first bank in town. In 1870, Summit Bank moved to the corner of Wisconsin Avenue and Main Street. It was chartered as the Bank of Oconomowoc on January 2, 1890. In 1984, the bank moved to its present location, 155 W. Wisconsin Avenue. Throughout its history, the bank has remained an independently owned community bank.

The paintings in the bank lobby are as follows:

- (1) Summit Bank, predecessor of First Bank Financial Centre, in 1875
- *(2) The Milwaukee Road train depot, in 1920 (Tour #29)
- *(3) The Oconomowoc City Hall in 1945 (Tour #1)

*These subjects are on the walking tour
The artist is Randall Berndt ~ Madison, Wisconsin

Tour compiled by
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Sources of information
Early Oconomowoc Heritage Trail Guidebook
Copyright 1975, John S. Rockwell
Chapter 721, Daughters of American Revolution

The Heritage Guidebook
Landmarks and Historical Sites
In Southeastern Wisconsin
By H. Russell Zimmermann, 1976

Present owners of some of the homes

Published by
THE INN AT PINE TERRACE
351 E Lisbon Road • Oconomowoc, WI 53066
July 2001 • Rev 2011
262-567-7463
www.innatpineterrace.com



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*Around Beautiful
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This walk was designed to give a glimpse into Oconomowoc's past when it was known as the "Newport of the West" - from the 1870s into the 1930s. Oconomowoc's great beauty attracted the wealthy from Milwaukee, Chicago and St. Louis who built palatial summer homes on the lake shores and arrived by train every summer. Although that elegant life style has changed, and most of the summer homes have been converted into year-round homes, the beauty which attracted people a century ago still remains. We are fortunate that many of the homes have been preserved and restored. **NONE OF THE PRIVATE HOMES ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.**

Some of the buildings and structures mentioned on the tour have been razed, but three of them can be viewed in large paintings hanging in the lobby of First Bank Financial Centre, 155 W. Wisconsin Avenue (#30 on the tour). Buildings or sites which are depicted in the bank paintings are noted with an asterisk*.

The self-guided walk is about 2 miles in length and will take an hour or so to complete.



1. *CITY HALL - 174 E. Wisconsin Avenue - 1886. Designed by Milwaukee Architect George B. Ferry, it was originally the Civic Center of Oconomowoc and functioned as City Hall, Police Station, Fire Department and Auditorium. Dances and plays were held on the second floor, which was later used as a Court Room and as City Council Chambers. The City Council still meets there. The award-winning restoration and expansion of the building was completed in 1983 at a cost of \$1,879,394.16. It presently houses City offices and the Police Station. City Hall was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980.

2. CHASE BANK - 138 E. Wisconsin Avenue - 1920s and earlier. This building was originally the livery stable for the "Jones House Hotel", which stood on the corner west of here. Later it became a rocking horse factory (The Oconomowoc Wooden Toy Horse Co.). The Bedford stone classical facade was added in the 1920s.

3. VILLAGE GREEN - Corner of Wisconsin Avenue and Main Street (Highways 16 & 67). A number of Indian trails crossed here, and two hotels have occupied the site. The first, The La Belle House, of white frame construction, opened in 1850. It was destroyed by fire in 1875, along with other portions of the downtown. In 1889, a second hotel, The Jones House (later called The Majestic Hotel), opened. It had a two-story open porch on two sides with the first floor used for dining and the second floor for the local band, which played for street dancing. The hotel played a long and colorful role in the city's history with a series of owners and name changes. It was condemned and razed in 1975. The present City Park is the scene of city celebrations.

4. MANN BLOCK - 106-110 N. Main Street - 1871. This 3-story Italianate commercial building contained "an elegant hall used for Masonic purposes, with a separate one used for theatrical performances...both located on the third floor". Note the double-bracketed wood cornice and statuary niche on the eastern facade.

5. PETER KLOS SALOON - 125 N. Main Street - 1879. The builder's name and date appear near the roofline, which contains an ornamental brick cornice. This building still serves as a bar.

6. N. LAKE ROAD TURNAROUND. In the early 1900's, a marine railway was built across N. Main Street at this site. The railway enabled an excursion and mail boat to be portaged across the 200 ft. isthmus between Fowler Lake and Lac La Belle.

7. MEMORIAL PARK. Note the sign with early history. A 3-story, water-powered flourmill was located on the west side of N. Main Street from 1855 to 1935. Also located here, but razed in 1988, were buildings known as Library Complex. They served as the Public Library and Museum for years. This complex was Oconomowoc's original downtown business district. It included a hardware store, a general store, a bank (later City Hall) and a blacksmith shop.

8. ZION EPISCOPAL CHURCH - 135 Rockwell Place - 1889. This Romanesque style limestone church replaced an earlier brick structure. The land for the church was donated by John S. Rockwell, the "father of Oconomowoc", who built the flourmill, the dam and the lumber mill in early Oconomowoc. The beautiful peninsula setting on the lake is one of the City's outstanding landmarks.

9. 238 LAKE ROAD - 1860. The original structure was remodeled in 1899 to its present appearance by David Gould, a St. Louis millionaire.

Inside, the 16-room mansion was fitted with 11 fireplaces. The once broad lot had sunken gardens and tennis courts.

10. 306 LAKE ROAD - before 1870. This cream brick home was built by Henry K. Edgerton, a banker at the Summit Bank, which was just down the street to the south.

11. 307 LAKE ROAD (Masonic Temple) - c. 1895. Built by a Capt. Scudder from St. Louis, it once had a huge verandah which wrapped around the building and made it appear half again as large. It was known as "Scudder's Cottage", and remained in that family until the 1920's when it was bought by the Kohls. The Masonic organization purchased it later. Note the exceptional oval window in the triangular gable.

12. 317 LAKE ROAD - c. 1885. Built by H.J. Brookins, a St. Louis lumberman, the Queen Anne style mansion was used sporadically as a summer home until the 1920's. The coach house in the rear is now apartments. The massive 3-story octagonal tower has an unusual porch opening on three sides on the top floor.

13. 318 LAKE ROAD - 1882. This was the former site of the Harold Peck mansion. Harold was one of the sons of Madame Peck (see #18) and died during construction of the mansion. The home was completed by his widow at a cost of \$15,000.00 and became one of the most expensive mansions in this area. Eventually the home was razed and a condominium built in its place.

14. 333 LAKE ROAD - DRAPER HALL. This was formerly the site of a large, rambling hotel with a 7-column colonnade across the front. The columns were three stories tall. Famous guests included Grover Cleveland, Eugene Field and Marshall Fields. In the 1870's, it had 46 rooms. Later remodeling doubled that number. The hotel passed through several owners in this century. It was razed in 1967.

15. 404 LAKE ROAD - 1874. This was the home of J.C. Hitchcock, who was in the hardware business in Oconomowoc. The grounds had a large mineral spring which furnished the home with drinking water from cellar to garret. The "Swiss Cottage" style was designed by Milwaukee Architect James Douglas as was its next door neighbor (#16). Both homes have the same floor plan.

16. 412 LAKE ROAD - 1875. Built by Mr. Medbury, a friend of Mr. Hitchcock, this house with its roof and stick-style gable is more typical of Douglas' work. On the top floor resided Harry Channon while he was writing his book "Paradise City", a story based on early Oconomowoc. Mr. Channon was also a member of Parliament in England.

17. 423 LAKE ROAD - 1884. This Queen Anne style home was built by Mrs. H.G. Fuller of Chicago. The north side wall has an unusual window layout, a scroll-cut decorative panel at the 3rd floor level, and ornamental shingle siding.

18. 430 AND 434 LAKE ROAD (formerly one building) - 1846 with later additions. The most southern portion was built in 1846 by Dr. Hosea Townsend, the City's first resident physician. In the 1850's, it was purchased by Dr. William Warner, who built an addition to the north. In 1866, Rev. Ezra Jones, rector of Zion Church, purchased the property, added a second story on the north end and opened a school for boys. The property was purchased by Dr. Orlando Wight in 1869, but was sold again in 1873 to Mary K. Peck, the widow of Phillip K.