

## Merchants Avenue District



### 1 401 Whitewater Ave. Hoard Historical Museum (Circa 1866)

This Gothic Revival house was built in the mid-1860s and it has been extensively remodeled over the years. In 1909, Frank Hoard purchased the home and later renovated it with an Arts & Crafts motif. The youngest son of Governor W.D. Hoard, Frank was also president of the local Hoard Printing Company after his father's death in 1918. The children of Frank and Luella Hoard donated the building to the city in 1956 for use as a museum. Since then, four major additions have been added.



### 2 430 Whitewater Ave. Vickery House (1908)

Maier and Wollet of Jefferson built this substantial frame Queen Anne style house for merchant Herbert Vickery.



### 3 500 Whitewater Ave. Klein House (Circa 1909)

This Queen Anne house was built by George Klein who was mayor of Fort Atkinson in 1904-05 and 1918-20.



### 4 506 Whitewater Ave. Donkle House (1910)

This picturesque Queen Anne house was built by O.W. Donkle, a banker. It has a steeply pitched roof with an arched tripartite front window.



### 5 513 Foster St. Craig House (c. 1855)

This Gothic Revival house was built for Peter Craig. It is almost identical to those at 112 E. Milwaukee and 200 E. Milwaukee.



### 6 425 Foster St. Adelaide Bellman House (c. 1910)

The Adelaide Bellman house was built by Lloyd and Adelaide Bellman Lloyd, who lived in Chicago, for Adelaide's mother. Adelaide Bellman was an artist who graduated from the Chicago Art Institute. Her brothers, John and Frank, managed the Lyric Opera House in Fort Atkinson. When Mr. Lloyd died, Mrs. Adelaide Lloyd came to live with her mother. Milo and Joan Jones owned the house from 1958 to 1978.



### 7 414 Foster St. Foster House (1841)

This Greek Revival style building is Fort Atkinson's oldest frame house. It was moved to the museum property and restored in 1971. Built by Charles Rockwell for \$2,000, it was later sold to Dwight Foster. Wooden pegs are used throughout for the joinery. Mr. Foster was Fort Atkinson's first settler, operated the first ferry, and was the first postmaster.



### 8 339 Merchants Ave. Daniel White House (1854)

Built by Daniel White, this Greek Revival house has pilastered corners and a simple gable roof. The bracketed canopy over the entrance adds a Victorian touch. This house served as the rectory for St. Peter's Episcopal church in the 1930's.

# FORT ATKINSON WISCONSIN

## HISTORIC WALKING & DRIVING TOUR BOOKLET & MAP



## SPONSORED BY THE FORT ATKINSON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION CHAMBER OF COMMERCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

COPYRIGHT: 2009



## History of Development of Main Street

Main Street has been the commercial core of Fort Atkinson since settlement began in the 1830s. In the first decades of Fort Atkinson's history, its downtown looked like a peaceful New England village, with small, mostly frame cottages and stores set among tall maples and elms. Wide shingled canopies on wooden posts sheltered shop customers, and an occasional false front lent a boomtown accent to the new community. The Rock River split Main Street in two. There was no bridge in the earliest days and the settlers went across the river on a ferry run by Dwight Foster. By 1870 the 00 and 100 blocks of South Main Street and the 00 block of North Main Street were largely commercial, but open spaces, trees between buildings, and an unofficial commons in the 200 block of South Main Street maintained a rural character.



As the town grew in the late 19th century, the small frame shops gave way to moderate-sized two and three story buildings. Constructed predominantly of the local cream brick, with Victorian arched windows, fancy cornices, and common party walls, they gave a new uniformity to the streetscape. Canvas awnings replaced the wooden canopies and business signs projecting into the street added a new urban character to downtown Fort Atkinson. Particularly noteworthy were the many storefronts composed of three or five large round-arched openings; but by 1900 that Old World detail had been nearly obliterated by storefront remodelings in plate glass. Also of note, and still a significant part of the visual character of the district were the upper story designs in decorative brickwork, probably attributable to the German masons working in the area.

Besides the abundant stilted arch details, brick pilasters and corbelling, which add variety to the blockface but are not particularly unusual in themselves, more unusual details decorate several of the buildings on Main street. For instance, the round arches on the large brick blocks at 99 South Main and 96 South Main are composed of alternately flush and recessed bricks, creating a unique "dashed-line" effect on the window trim. Diamond and cross shaped cartouches decorate the upper wall of the old Langhoff Hotel at 225-229 South Main, and an unusual brick diaper pattern trims the wall of the block at 99 South Main.



The short distance between street corners also enabled builders to maximize the landmark potential of corner sites. All four of the over two-story structures are corner buildings. The sides of the corner buildings throughout the district are as a rule in fairly original condition with decoratively arched windows and frame orielled bays. By 1900 the downtown commercial section stretched from Sherman Avenue to South Third. The edges of the downtown were marked on the north and south respectively by the spires of the Catholic and Methodist Episcopal churches. Located nearby on the cross streets were service businesses, including livery stables, wagon works, tin and blacksmith shops, and a few industrial plants such as the electric company on North Water; Cornish, Curtis and Greene at 201 North Main; and the City Brewery at 22 South Water Street West. The opera house/city hall at 23-25 East Milwaukee Street was built in 1884 and served as the civic center for the town.

The visual boundaries of the commercial district and its essential character remain nearly unchanged from 1900 to the present day. The basic effect is one of continuous facades of one, two, and three story commercial storefronts. Most of the buildings in the district are brick, and a few are stone. All are commercial or industrial structures. Rhythmic patterns are created by the second story arched windows and brick pilasters. New buildings constructed in the early 20th century added modern elements without disturbing the unity of the streetscape. The First National Bank, in stone with classical, two-story columns, the small Art Moderne Citizens State Bank, also of stone, and the large, neo-classical Municipal Building are monumental landmarks. The Black Hawk Hotel and the Creamery Package Mfg. Co. replaced large multi-story structures of early vintage.

### 9 323 Merchants Ave. Marston House (c. 1855-65)



This Italianate house with later Queen Anne additions was built by George Marston, a dry goods merchant. The individual most closely associated with it was Arthur Hoard, the middle son of Governor W.D. Hoard. Art founded Hoard's Creameries and Better Sox Knitting Mills. He lived in the house from 1893 until 1942. The house was damaged by fire in 1980 but has been completely restored.

### 10 303 Merchants Ave. Willard/Caswell House (1881)



Built by Dr. H.B. Willard for his daughter Della and her banker husband, Chester Caswell, this is one of the few local examples of the Mansard or French Second Empire style. It has metal curbs, tall windows with molded window banks, bracketed eaves and a veranda like porch (now enclosed).

### 11 332 Merchants Ave. Ganong House (c. 1871-73)



This fine example of Italianate architecture was built by Monmouth H. Ganong who was a store owner, ran a stagecoach line, and served both as mayor and postmaster of Fort Atkinson. It has a low pitched roof, tall windows, and elaborate window lintels. The house was remodeled in the 1930's and a library was added in 1942.

### 12 302 Merchants Ave. St. Peter's Episcopal Church (1928)



Designed by Eschweiler and Eschweiler of Milwaukee, this unusual Spanish Colonial Revival style church features a stucco exterior, prominent bell tower and side parapets. A new wing was added in 1990.

### 13 14 S. Third St. E. Langhoff House (c. 1890)



This picturesque Queen Anne style house was built by Ferdinand Langhoff.

### 14 109 S. Third St. E. Winslow House (1861)



Dr. Joseph Winslow built this Second Empire style house of cream brick with the focal point being the central tower with its tall thin windows and mansard roof. The side entrance led to the doctor's office.

### 15 115 S. Third St. E. McMillen House (1893)



G.W. McMillen who owned a meat market on Main Street built this Queen Anne style house. It has a multiplaned steep roof with open gables; fish scale shingles call attention to the height of the house. A barn in back repeats the house's features.

### 16 200 E. Milwaukee St. Allen House (1855)



This Davis and Downing type Gothic Revival house was built of local brick by Charles Allen. The one and one half story house has a steep roof and bracketed eaves. A sister to the houses at 112 East Milwaukee and 512 Foster, this dwelling was built for George Stafford, a lawyer and stockholder in the First National Bank of Fort Atkinson.

# Main Street District



## 17 26 Milwaukee Ave. E. U.S. Postal Office

The U.S. Postal office was built in 1916 and upgraded 50 years later. In 1915, the postmaster in Fort Atkinson had the distinction of doing more business than any other post office in a city of comparable size in the nation.



## 18 19 Milwaukee Ave. E. Fort Theater

The Fort Theater and the first municipal building occupied this site. Both were demolished in 2000. The new building incorporated some of the Mediterranean Revival elements of the original theater.



## 19 201 S. Main St. International Order of Odd Fellows

What is currently Humphrey Floral & Gifts, built in 1884 and remodeled before 1940, was first used as a grocery store. The upstairs hall was used by the Knights of Pythias, English Odd Fellows Lodge and a labor temple.



## 20 225-229 S. Main St. Langhoff Hotel

Originally the Langhoff Hotel & Saloon, this building, which today is occupied by a tavern and an insurance agency, was built in 1875. It was known for years as the Farmer's Home Hotel and was also used as a boarding house.

## 21 222-234 S. Main St.



**234:** This furniture store, built in 1888, was used as A. H. Downing's furniture shop in 1888-1891, and then for W. D. Hoard & Sons printing in 1891-1908. It again was used for furniture from 1910-1970.

**232:** This retail store was built in 1895 by W.D. Hoard to join his two other buildings, the present cellular phone shop also had housed A. R. Hoard's Better Sox Knitting Mills.

**228:** This financial office building was constructed in 1883; a second floor was added in 1914. It was used by W. D. Hoard & Sons for printing from 1883-1908, and for a hardware store from 1936-1980.

**226:** Built in 1893 with storefront remodeling in 1968, this restaurant building has been used as Fred Dawes' bakery, a billiards room, grocery as well as several restaurants.

**222:** This building housed a thrift store for many years, and is currently an architecture and engineering firm.



## 22 218 S. Main St. Citizens State Bank

Built in 1884 as the Citizens State Bank building. The Art Moderne facade was added in 1937.



## 23 210 Milwaukee Ave. W. Black Hawk Hotel

The Black Hawk Hotel & Restaurant began as Milo Jones' Green Mountain House in 1848. The Black Hawk Tavern was built in 1915 by Frank W. Hoard and Harry Curtis. When the Green Mountain House was razed in 1929, the tavern expanded streetward.



## 24 28 Milwaukee Ave. W. W.D. Hoard & Sons

In 1908, William Dempster Hoard built the W. D. Hoard & Sons Co. building, which today houses the Daily Jefferson County Union and Hoard's Dairyman offices. An addition was built in 1973.



## 25 18 S. Water St. W. A. C. Krueger Block

What currently is the Café Carpe originally was A. C. Krueger's tavern, built in 1901-1902. In 1906-1968 it was owned by Spaeth Brewery. Construction was begun by Gustaf Heth, who operated the tavern for a short time until he was sued by the contractor. The structure was completed by Heth's brother-in-law, Krueger, after Heth was jailed for forgery.



## 26 102 S. Main St. Drug Store

What is currently Tuttle's Pharmacy was built by W. F. Hovey in 1870 as a one story building, the second floor was added in 1884. Successive hardware stores and Judd Gates, a druggist, occupied the building. There have been three generations of Tuttle pharmacists.



## 27 101 S. Main St. Reuben White Building

Located in this 1871 building (rear addition built in 1904-1909 with storefront remodeling in 1960), have been Harriet's Dress Shop, Ron and Kay's Tavern and the Fort Atkinson Area Chamber of Commerce. Over the years, it has housed Reuben S. White's drugs and grocery store, as well as shoe, variety, and hat stores.



## 28 99 S. Main St. Office Products

What is currently Jonas Office Products' building, constructed in 1895 (the rear wing between 1898 and 1904), housed Becker's Dry Goods until 1918 and Niepert's Clothing, 1918-1976.



## 29 96-98 & 88 S. Main St. Retail Store Fronts

E. R. Strong built this cream city brick on the river in 1886. It was subsequently Westphal's Dry Goods and J. C. Penney's. Also in 1886, Dr. L. C. Bicknell built on the corner. Dr. Bicknell's office and various retail establishments occupied the building. An intervening building was removed and the two buildings were joined to allow combined stores and a restaurant.



## 30 Main St. Bridge

In 1843 the first wooden bridge was built, with citizens of the town doing the work and supplying the materials themselves. In 1872 the wooden bridge was replaced by one of iron. This served the community for fourteen years until another iron bridge was constructed in 1881.



## 31 70 N. Main St. First National Bank Building

Premier Bank was built at this location in 1922 as the First National Bank of Fort Atkinson. Founded in 1863 and located across the street, it was the third oldest national bank in Wisconsin.

## 32 79-89 N. Main St.



**79:** The Andra Building, home for Vance, Wilcox, Short & Johnson law offices, was constructed in 1894 and remodeled in 1959. It was occupied by the Andra Saloon in 1894-1897 and Perry jewelers until 1905. It was one of four buildings constructed on the site of structures destroyed by a fire in 1893.

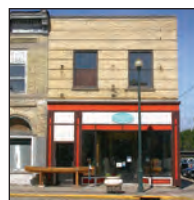
**87:** Currently a tax office, this building creates an intact transition to adjacent facades.

**89:** Brandel Block, this current retail store was Brandel's Boots and Shoes, built in 1893.



## 33 96 N. Main St. Heuchtel Building

The Premiere Bank annex, built in 1895 and remodeled in 1969, was known as the Heuchtel Building. It housed a grocery and tailor shop from 1895-1935, and since has housed Jensen & Jones clothing, and a sporting goods store.



## 34 99 N. Main St. Retail Store

W. H. Tancre constructed this building of locally made brick in 1858 for use as a grocery. The Good Templars Lodge was on the second floor. Later, the building was occupied successively by druggists Asa Foote, Eighmy Brothers, and Winterburn and Schlei.



## 35 101 N. Main St. Municipal Building

The Fort Atkinson Municipal building was constructed in 1929. Madison team Law and Potter created this well-proportioned, neoclassical building. It received a modern canopy in the late 20th century.



## 36 100 N. Main St. Hanneman Building

This current financial office was built in 1883 and remodeled 90 years later. Until 1942 it was used as a grocery store, succeeded by Wilson's fur and clothing stores. From 1884 to about 1904 the Hahnemann Lo. 9, the local German lodge of the International Order of Odd Fellows, used the upstairs for meetings.



## 37 112 N. Main St. Abe Mack Building

This former Sears and Roebuck catalog store was built by local mason John Becker in 1898. The Abe Mack building has been used for sales of carriages, bikes, pianos, and real estate. It was remodeled in 1952.

## 38 117-131 N. Main St.



**117:** Originally the A. E. Kump Building, the current exercise studio was built in 1901 and remodeled in 1955. It was used for Mayor Giles Hibbard's Bakery and Ice Cream in 1907-1919; as Hibbard's Grocery from 1919-1938, and Bertha Dinse's K&F Restaurant in 1940-1970.

**125:** The Fitch building was built in 1904 as a dry goods store, and became Bammel's Furniture in 1931. It is currently an antiques store.

**131:** This Cream City brick storefront with decorative metal cornices over the top windows was Albert Winslow's Grocery starting in 1857. The storefront was remodeled in the mid-1960s. It has had many occupants over the years.



## 39 201 N. Main St. Creamery Package & Manufacturing

Built in 1919 for the Creamery Package Company, this building is a major landmark in the district because of its sheer size. It was designed by Martin Tullgren & Sons of Milwaukee. The building currently houses the headquarters and factory outlet for a mattress company.

# State Landmarks



## Panther Intaglio 1200 block of Riverside Drive

(Circa 1000 AD) In 1855, when Increase Lapham published *The Antiquities of Wisconsin*, he documented a remarkable series of Indian mounds that

ran along what is now Riverside Drive in Fort Atkinson. At one end was the most interesting of all: an effigy mound in reverse, or cut into the ground. Called an intaglio (in-tol-ee-oh), its shape follows the lines of a panther. Its length measures 125 feet. When Lapham did his surveys in the 1850s, he found eleven intaglios in Wisconsin. Unfortunately, all but this one were destroyed as a result of farming and development. The Daughters of the American Revolution and city officials led the campaign to preserve this unique landmark back in 1920. "Instead of an embankment of earth thrown up, we have here a cavity in the ground." Increase A. Lapham, *The Antiquities of Wisconsin*, 1855.



## Lorraine Niedecker Cottage W7307 Blackhawk Island Rd. (Const. 1946)

20th Century poet Lorine Niedecker is known as the Poet of Place. Her imagery is grounded by her home on Blackhawk Island, its culture, wildlife, landscapes and bird songs. The small cedar cabin, built by her father, sits near an often flooding river. The cottage closest to the river was built by Lorine's second husband Al Millen. They lived there at the end of her life. The cabin and cottage are now privately owned.