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Snippets of history and architecture listed in the order you'll see them on this walk.	
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(Your option to print)	
Snippets of history and architecture listed in the order you'll see them on this walk.	

Driving Directions to the Ypsilanti Michigan Start Point

The start point is from the **Frog Island Parking lot, Rice St/Market Place, Ypsilanti, MI 48198.**
GPS coordinates = (42.2472222°N, -83.6116667°W).

From I-94

1. Take Exit 183 S (S Huron St.).
2. Go north on Huron St. to E Cross St.
3. RIGHT at signal on E Cross St., to first left.
4. LEFT on Market Place/Rice Street. Frog Island Parking Lot is on left.

Additional Information for the Ypsilanti 6K and 10K Walks

- This event may be walked from April 1st through December 31st.
- Trail Description: Rated: 1A.
- Restrooms are available in the coffee shop when it is open. Port-a-potties are located in Riverside Park during summer months (also available when restaurants are closed).
- Everyone is welcome. This event is sanctioned by the American Volkssport Association – America’s Walking Club (AVA), a member of the International Federation of Popular Sports (IVV). It counts towards the acquisition of IVV Achievement Credit. No awards.
- Pets allowed, leash required and not inside buildings. Strollers and wheelchairs allowed.
- Special Programs: “Great Lakes, Great Fun, Great Fitness, Great Friendships”, “Little Free Libraries” (10K), “Town Hall/City Hall”, “Rockin’ Around the Clock” and “Walking the USA A-Z”.
- Both the 6k and 10k routes begin and end in the Frog Island Parking Lot.
- For your safety, do not walk either Ypsilanti route after dark.
- For additional information about this event contact: Nancy Howard, 734-754-6135, nancy.howard@comcast.net .



**AMERICA'S
WALKING CLUB**
— ESTABLISHED 1974 —

SANCTIONED EVENT
Eligible for credit towards IVV Achievement Awards



Washtenaw Wanderers Volkssporting Club©2022

YPSILANTI MICHIGAN

AVA 6K Directions

Washtenaw Wanderers Volkssporting Club©2022

These instructions may be used only by individuals who have received and signed the AVA Athletic Waiver covering this event. If you have a question about the instructions, call Nancy Howard at 734-754-6135.



In case of emergency, please call 911.

Special Programs:

Great Lakes, Great Fun, Great Fitness, Great Friendships

Rockin' Around the Clock

Town Hall/City Hall

Walking the USA, A-Z

From Frog Island Parking Lot off Rice St/Market Place:

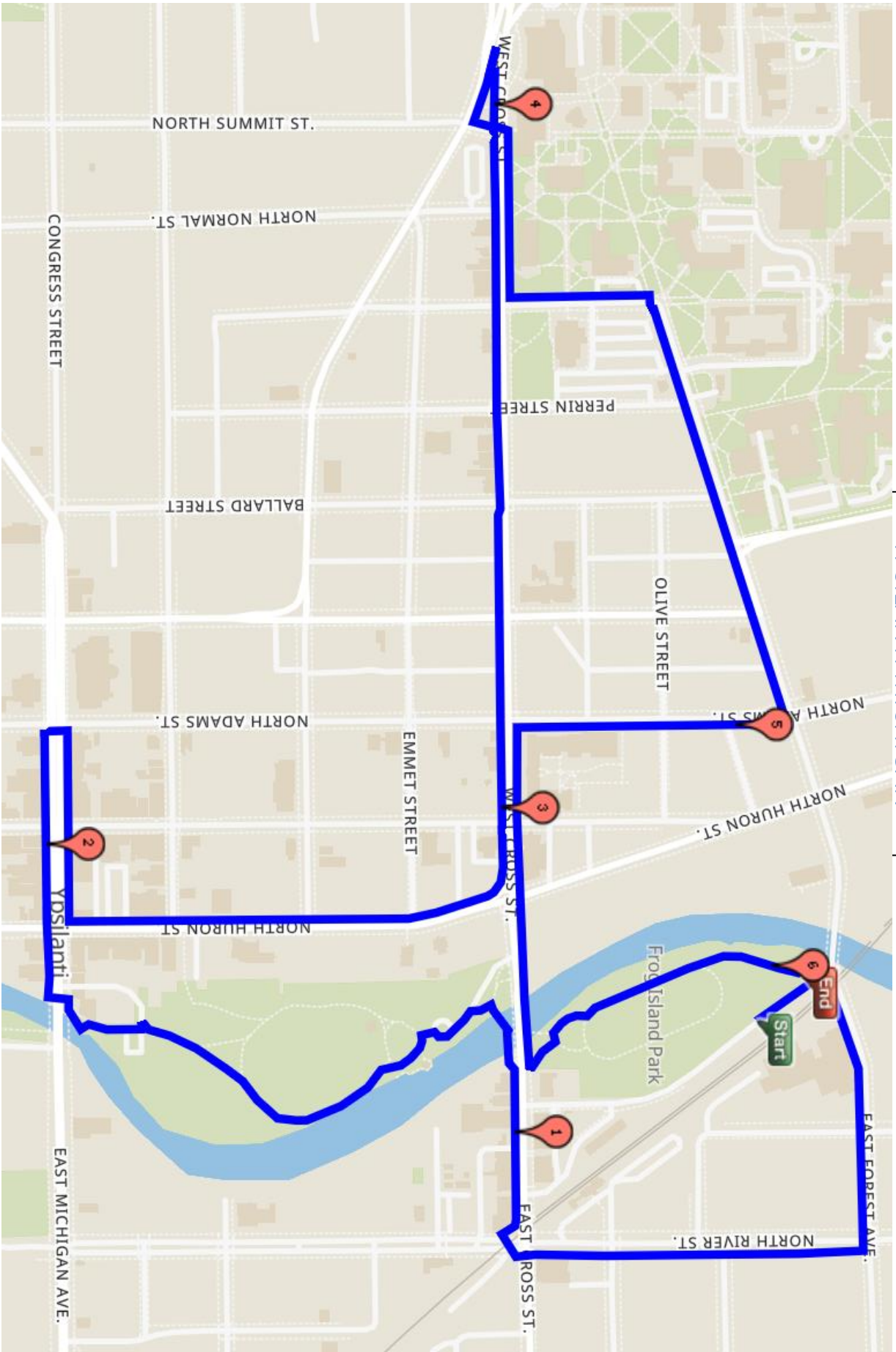
1. LEFT on Market Place/Rice St to E Forest Ave.
2. RIGHT on E Forest Ave to N River St, crossing N River St then RIGHT on N River St. to E Cross St. You are now in Depot Town.
3. Cross E Cross St then RIGHT to cross N River St at crosswalk.
4. Travel west on E Cross St. to stairs leading down to Tridge, just before the bridge over the Huron River.
5. Bear LEFT on the Tridge to enter Riverside Park. LEFT to follow the park trail along the Huron River. Exit the park using the bicycle bridge ending at Michigan Ave. Cross to the south side of Michigan Ave at the crosswalk.
6. RIGHT on Michigan Ave to Adams St.
7. RIGHT at Adams St and cross to north side of Michigan Ave.
8. RIGHT on Michigan to N Huron St.
9. LEFT on N Huron St to W Cross St.
10. LEFT on W Cross St to Summit St (cross Summit) to Water Tower. *Take a few minutes to admire the infamous Ypsilanti water tower. Note the bust of Demetrius Ypsilanti, for whom the city was named.*

11. Cross to north side of W Cross St at Summit intersection.
12. RIGHT on W Cross St to College Place.
13. LEFT on College Place to W Forest Ave.
14. RIGHT turn to cross College Place. Continue on W Forest to N Adams St. Cross N Adams St.
15. RIGHT on N Adams St to W Cross St.
16. LEFT on W Cross St (changes to E Cross St after bridge over Huron River).
17. CHOICE: LEFT to go down steps just after the bridge OR LEFT to trail into south end of Frog Island Park.
18. Follow the paved trail next to the Huron River to the exit and Frog Island Parking Lot.

6K Points of Interest

Many of the homes and buildings you'll see along this walk are briefly described in pages included in the directions download.

YPSILANTI MICHIGAN



YPSILANTI MICHIGAN

AVA 10K Directions

Washtenaw Wanderers Volkssporting Club©2022

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In case of emergency, please call 911.

Special Programs:

Great Lakes, Great Fun, Great Fitness, Great Friendships

Little Free Libraries

Rockin' Around the Clock

Town Hall/City Hall

Walking the USA, A-Z

1. From Frog Island Parking Lot - LEFT on Market Place/Rice Street to E Forest Ave.
2. RIGHT on E Forest Ave to N River St.
3. LEFT on N River St to Highland Cemetery. Stay on left (west) side of road to and from cemetery.
4. LEFT at Highland Cemetery entrance.
Highland Cemetery, built in 1864, is an example of a "garden style" cemetery, with a variety of architectural styles and winding, landscaped pathways.
5. Proceed along driveway around the Starkweather Memorial Chapel and return to N River St.
6. RIGHT on N River St to E Forest Ave.
7. LEFT to cross N River St. RIGHT to cross E Forest Ave.
8. Straight ahead on N River, crossing E Cross St.
9. Carefully cross RR tracks and continue to North St.
10. RIGHT to cross N River St, RIGHT to head north on N River St back to E Cross St. *The Norris House at 213 N River St was purported to be a stop on the Underground Railroad (never proven) and ironically the childhood home of Lyman Norris, the lawyer who argued against Dred Scott and won, sending Scott back into slavery.*
11. Proceed to cross walk at N River and E Cross St.
12. Cross E Cross St then LEFT on E Cross St.
13. RIGHT into Alley by clock. Follow sidewalks past caboose and freight house, returning to E Cross through the Alley. *Note historic events signs in alley.*
14. RIGHT on E Cross, which becomes W Cross to N Adams. *Be sure to check out the Firehouse Museum between Huron & Washington Sts.*
15. Cross and turn Right on N Adams St.
16. LEFT on W Forest to College Place, crossing College Place at crosswalk. *Welcome to Eastern Michigan University, originally the Michigan State Normal School (teacher's college).*
17. LEFT on College Place to W Cross St.

18. RIGHT on W Cross St to 2nd crosswalk at N Summit St.
Proceed counter-clockwise around tower, to crosswalk at Washtenaw & Summit. *Note the bust of Demetrius Ypsilanti, a renowned Greek general, for whom the city is named.*
19. Cross Washtenaw Ave, then RIGHT on Washtenaw to Oakwood St.
20. LEFT on Oakwood St to Congress St.
21. LEFT on Congress St to N Adams St.
22. CROSS N Adams St.
23. RIGHT to cross W Michigan Ave.
24. LEFT to W Michigan Ave, passing Ypsilanti Downtown Library. *There is a statue honoring Harriet Tubman (Underground Railroad) and an historic marker for Elijah McCoy (inventor and original source of "the real McCoy,") located in the courtyard, East of the library.*
25. RIGHT on S Washington St to Catherine St. *Washington St sign is on the NW corner of Michigan Ave*
26. LEFT on Catherine St to S Huron St.
27. LEFT on S Huron St to W Michigan Ave.
28. RIGHT on W Michigan Ave, crossing S Huron St.
29. LEFT to cross W Michigan Ave, continuing on N Huron St to W Cross St. *Note the plaque on the Riverside Off Center (56 N Huron) commemorating the first settlement in Washtenaw County. Visit the Ypsilanti Historical Museum. (ypsilantihistoricalsociety.org)*
30. RIGHT on W Cross St to entrance to Riverside Park.
31. RIGHT into Riverside Park; bear left, following circular path around the park.
32. RIGHT on the "Tridge" that takes you under the bridge on Cross St. Bear LEFT towards Frog Island Park.
Frog Island was an attempt to channel the power of the river in the mid-1800's.
33. LEFT to follow the paved path, keeping the Huron River on your left, to E Forest Ave.
34. RIGHT to return to the Frog Island Parking Lot.

10K Points of Interest

Many of the homes and buildings you'll see along this walk are briefly described in pages included in the directions download.

Be sure to log back into <http://my.ava.org> > my account > finish table to log your walk as completed

Information about Ypsilanti

Food and Lodging www.michigan.org/property/depot-town

City of Ypsilanti www.cityofypsilanti.com

Additional Sources & Resources are on the last page of the “Along the Way” guides

Information about Washtenaw Wanderers

- Washtenaw Wanderers www.facebook.com/washtenawwanderers

Ypsi 6K: What You'll See Along the Way

Walking in Ypsilanti, I see homes and buildings harkening back to several eras and wonder what they were and who built them. The following snippets have been gathered from a number of sources, placed in order of where you'll pass them on the walk. This is not a comprehensive historical guide – books have been written (literally!) that explore Ypsilanti's history, growth, booms and busts, famous and infamous citizens. Sources for these notes are listed on the last page.

Ypsilanti's Start

Established as a city in 1823, Michigan's second oldest city was named after General Demetrius Ypsilanti, a hero in the Greek war for independence. Judge Woodward of Detroit was so impressed and fascinated by General Ypsilanti's military successes that he named this settlement on the Huron River after the war hero. Ypsilanti would eventually encompass several area settlements that were established to take advantage of both the Huron River and existing Indian trails. The most famous of which was the Sauk trail. In 1835 a military road following the path of the Sauk trail opened from Chicago to Detroit, and the railroad followed three years later. Originally named the Chicago Road, the byway would become Michigan Avenue, providing a major source of industry and anchoring Ypsilanti's downtown commercial district.

From the Start Point, Frog Island Parking Lot, Rice St/Market Place.

E Forest and N River Streets

1. **12 E Forest Avenue - Michigan Ladder Company**, has been in business since 1901. A small-town company who, like Jiffy Baking Mixes (Chelsea Milling, Chelsea, MI) has prided itself in not laying off employees during down-times. Ladders were a 10-month a year business, so they produced other wooden products – including ironing boards, toys and ping-pong tables during those times. Is it a coincidence that the “Detroit” ping-pong table was used in the movie “Forrest Gump” – made on Forest Avenue?
2. **101 E Forest Street** - Frederick Swaine purchased a malt house at the NE corner of N. River and Forest in 1872 and built an Italianate house. The malt house was removed in the 1920s, except for a small brick portion now serving (and still visible) to the east of the house.
3. **600 N River Street** - Shelly Byron Hutchinson, the “H” in S&H Green Stamps, built the house on the SE corner of N. River and Forest Avenue in 1904. His highly successful trading stamps idea made him fabulously wealthy, but only for a short time.
4. **400 N River Street** - The recently renovated building on the NE corner of Cross and River Streets was originally built by Mark Norris and referred to as the Norris Block. It was rumored that the basement served as a stop on the Underground Railroad. It was built from bricks from Norris's Great Western Hotel, after the hotel was demolished in 1860 when the Railroad acquired the land it was on. The building has also been known as “The Barracks,” serving as such for the 14th Michigan Infantry Regiment in 1862 and the 27th Regiment in 1863. Oliver Thompson was the next owner and moved his wagon manufacturing business into the building. Thompson's business and family grew over the years, and he became a dealer in agricultural implements. More recently, the Norris Block is known as the Thompson Block. In 1916, Oliver's son Joseph opened one of the first Dodge dealerships in the north end of the building, which moved south across Cross street to where the Ypsilanti Automotive Heritage Museum is located today.
5. **100 E Cross Street - The Ypsilanti Automotive History Museum** building started as a car dealership and from 1927 until 1957 was a Hudson dealership – the last operating Hudson dealership in the world. It remained a dealership until the mid-1990's when the museum opened.
6. **308-312 N River Street - Ypsi Food Co-op** building – on N River, just south of the RR tracks, not on the walk but in view. Built in 1840 by Philo Ferrier as a foundry to produce flour mill machinery, this is one of the oldest

buildings in Ypsilanti.

7. As you stand at the entrance to “Sidetrack,” look across the street (north) to see the octagonal structure on N River Street that is a 1991 reconstruction of the late 19th century signal tower that controlled the gates and signals at the crossing. The remaining one story of the Michigan Central Railroad Depot is a little further up the tracks. Built in 1860, it was a grand 3-story building said to be “the largest and finest between Detroit and Chicago.” It was reduced to one story by a fire in 1910 and further remodeled in 1939 after a train wreck. In its heyday, there were elegant flower gardens where the Maple Street parking lot is today.
8. **17-29 E Cross Street (NE corner of Rice Street) – The Follett House hotel** was begun in 1852 and completed in 1859 by Benjamin Follett. Ideally located near the Michigan Central Railroad depot. The Italianate-style building boasted a large ballroom indicated from the exterior by 2-story windows.

(Not on the AVA walk, but another quick side-trip – cross north at the clock and proceed through the alley. There are historic event signs, a caboose and freight house).

Riverside Park – This is a very popular place to relax, walk dogs, jog, bring kids to play on the playground, picnic, attend festivals and fish.

Downtown – Michigan Avenue

1. **Ypsilanti City Hall**, SE corner of S Huron Street and Michigan Avenue, was built in 1877 as the Ypsilanti Savings Bank. City Hall moved from the Quirk House (304 N Huron St) to this location in 1976. Mary Ann Starkweather donated a large (over 12 feet tall) water fountain, with drinking bowls for humans and horses, located on the West side of the building, where the East-bound turning lane is. The fountain was there from 1890 to 1932.

Descriptions below are ordered so that you look across the street to see the buildings you will walk by.

2. **18 W Michigan Avenue - Haab’s Restaurant**, another building that has been known as a place for people to eat, drink and gather was built in the 1970’s. It has been operated as Haab’s Restaurant since 1934.
3. On the **NE corner of Washington Street and Michigan Avenue**, Walter Hewitt built a boot/shoe factory and store in 1860. He included an auditorium on the 3rd floor that hosted many community concerts, public speakers and performances, including Frederic Douglass in 1866.
4. Also built in 1879, the **Union Block building sits at the NW corner of Washington Street and Michigan Avenue**. The most well-known of its occupants was the S.S. Kresge department store from 1921 to the mid-1960’s.
5. **214-218 W Michigan Avenue** – (across the street) you would have found the Hawkins House Hotel, erected in 1979. The West façade is mostly intact, but recessed portion of the building (which was a verandah) has been “bumped out” to house retail shops.

Crossing to the north side of Michigan Avenue

6. **229 W Michigan Avenue - The Ypsilanti Downtown Library** was built in 1915 as a US Post Office, which moved to S Adams Street.
7. The building on the **SW corner of Washington Street and Michigan Avenue** is a 3-story Italianate commercial building erected in 1880 and has served as a public gathering place for over 100 years. The streamlined storefront of the Tap Room was added in 1941, with its historic and distinctive neon sign.
8. On the **SE corner of Washington Street and Michigan Avenue**, is an example of an historic façade restoration. The First National Bank of Ypsilanti was built in 1907 in neoclassical style, “modernized” in 1963, then returned to its original façade in 1985.

N Huron Street

Even house/building numbers are on the East side, odd numbers on the West.

(Not on walk, but visible from N Huron St)

9. **111 Pearl - Scharf Tag, Label & Box Company (Congden's Hardware since 1913)** - This building, circa 1890, and the adjoining brick building to the west housed a large commercial printing establishment. Note the projecting metal cornice, the large arched second story windows, and the delicate convex mortar joints between the stones. A wider mix of manufacturing, retail, and residential uses was common in the 19th century.
10. **108 and 110 Pearl - the G.A.R. Hall** - Probably built in the mid-1880s, this block served as a tinsmith's shop, a Chinese laundry, an annex of the dress stay factory (now torn down), and a G.A.R. Hall. The G.A.R. (Grand Army of the Republic) was a Civil War veterans association, which wielded social and political power in the 1880s and 1890s.
11. **Corner of Pearl and North Huron** (site of the former Ypsilanti Dress Stay Factory). Now a parking lot, a two-story brick structure stood on this site, where the production of dress stays took place at the turn of the century. The structure later housed the Ypsilanti Press.
12. **76 North Huron - Masonic Temple (currently Riverside Arts Center)** - Designed by Osgood and Osgood, this building is in the Beaux Arts style. Extensive interior renovations were done in 1924 and in 1970 after the space was damaged by fire. The Masons used the building for 78 years, until they moved to Ypsilanti Township in 1987. Since 1994, the building has housed the Riverside Arts Center (RAC), a performing and visual arts center and rental facility. To make the space accessible, an elevator was added in 2003.
Note the plaque on the Riverside Off Center (56 N Huron) commemorating the first settlement in Washtenaw County.
13. **120 N Huron Street - St. Luke's Episcopal Church.** One of the many interesting church buildings in our community, this mid-Victorian Gothic Revival building dates back to 1858 and is Ypsilanti's oldest existing church. Eventually the parish hopes to reinstall the spire and bell, removed in 1971 due to building stress. A garth, or memorial garden, is also located here.
14. **119-121 N Huron Street - Watling Dental Clinic/House.** These elaborate mid-Victorian buildings once were the office and home of dentist Drive. John Watling. It was built around 1872 and represents the Tuscan variety of the Italianate Style. Mrs. Watling helped found the Ladies Library Association, and her husband was instrumental in the establishment of the School of Dentistry at the University of Michigan.
15. **125 N Huron Street - Ballard/Breakey House.** The original structure was a modest Federal-style house of brick and stone built in 1830. The massive Doric columns were added in the 1840s. The house is listed in the Historic American Buildings Survey. Mr. Ballard was Mayor of Ypsilanti, and Drive. Breakey was a judge.
16. **130 N Huron Street - Starkweather Home/Ladies Library.** This Italianate-style home was built in 1858 by local merchant Edwin Mills. It was purchased by John and Mary Ann Starkweather in 1875. John died in 1883. Mary Ann Newberry Starkweather came into a significant inheritance in 1886 and, having no heirs, concentrated much of her philanthropy in Ypsilanti. She donated the house to the Ladies Library Association in 1890. The library changed from being the Ladies Library to "Public Library" in 1948. The Public Library was relocated in 1964 to the former Carnegie Post Office at 229 W Michigan Avenue.
17. **203 N Huron Street - Cornwell Residence.** This Georgian/Queen Anne-style residence was said to be the largest example of its type between Detroit and Chicago. Built in 1883 by Cornelius Cornwell, a local pulp mill owner, it boasted the first telephone in Ypsilanti.
18. **206 N Huron Street - Showerman/Quirk Residence.** Note the hipped slate roof and Italianate window hoods on this home built in 1863 by Delos Showerman, sawmill operator and builder. The Daniel Quirk family added the large north addition and the neoclassical detailing in 1909.
19. **214 N Huron Street - Andrews/Drury/Thompson House.** This Italianate-style Victorian frame house has served as the Ypsilanti Teen Center as well as a counseling center and classroom site for Washtenaw Community College. It was built in 1851 by Frederick Andrews and has housed many families since, including Mayor Cheryl Farmer.

20. **220 N Huron Street - Ypsilanti Historical Museum.** This former brick mansion of the Dow family, built in 1860, has been home to the Historical Museum and Archives since 1970. Several rooms have been furnished to represent gracious homes of the Victorian period.
21. **300 N Huron Street - D.L. Quirk Sr. Residence.** A rare example of the Second Empire Style, this 1860 home was built for Daniel L. Quirk. It features a mansard roof. In 1914, it was donated to the city and served as the City Hall until 1977.

Eastern Michigan University and Ypsilanti Water Tower

22. Heading west on West Cross Street, you'll pass numerous businesses that primarily serve EMU students. You'll also pass "Got Burger!" located where Dominick's Pizza stood. So popular with college students, Dominick's grew into Domino's Pizza, a world-wide company.
23. The **Ypsilanti Water Tower** is possibly the city's most iconic structure. It has been featured on post cards, publications, and at one-time, the City logo. It is difficult to ignore its resemblance to a portion of male anatomy. One wonders if the city's namesake, Demetrius Ypsilanti, would be proud or embarrassed at the placement of his pedestalled bust on the east side of the tower.
24. **Eastern Michigan University** was founded in 1849 and opened as the Michigan State Normal School in 1853 as a teachers college.
25. **324 W Forest Avenue** - Jenness house was built in 1858. John Sedgewick Jenness had a highly successful wholesale grocery business in Detroit, starting in the 1830s. He commuted between Ypsilanti and Detroit after building this house until he retired.
26. **210 W Cross Street** - The "Old High School." The Tecumseh Hotel was built on this site around 1840 to serve a railroad that was never built. Since 1844, the land has been used for schools. The current building started as a Central School in 1915, with numerous renovations and expansions. It was part of Ypsilanti Community Schools until 1995, when it was sold and transformed into senior citizen housing.
27. **110 W Cross Street** – This served as the main Firehouse for the city from 1898 to 1975. Motorized fire trucks were introduced in 1916. The Firehouse Museum opened 2002.
28. **6 West Cross Street** – Ypsilanti's first City Hall and Jail was located here from 1859 to 1914. City Hall moved to Quirk House 300 N. Huron and then to its current location at 1 S Huron Street.
29. As you enter **Frog Island Park**, you're in the heart of where many mills were located in the 19th century and trading posts in the 18th century, relying on the power of the Huron River. Frog Island was created to take advantage of this power (a mill race) but legal arguments over rights increased and water-powered mills dwindled. It was never really an island, but frog catching and killing did exist there, so the name stuck. It has been said that during temperance, it was a place where men gathered to drink, but told their wives they were going down to kill frogs. The path along the river and its entrances have recently been paved to improve accessibility.

Resources

The following sources were found at the **Ypsilanti District Library**:

Hidden History of Ypsilanti, 2011 Laura Bien

Old Ypsilanti Town, 1974 Hazel Proctor et al

Our Heritage: Down by the depot in Ypsilanti – Volume I, 1999 Thomas Dodd and James Thomas Mann

Tales from the Ypsilanti Archives, 2010 Laura Bien

Wicked Ypsilanti, 2014 James Thomas Mann

Ypsilanti A History in Pictures, 2002 James Thomas Mann

Ypsilanti in the 20th Century, 2003 James Thomas Mann

The **Ypsilanti Historical Museum and Archives**, 220 N. Huron St. Ypsilanti MI 48197 is a treasure-trove of information! <https://ypsihistory.org>

Historic Self-guided Walking Tours of Ypsilanti are available at:

<https://cityofypsilanti.com/326/Historic-Walking-Tour>

At this writing, there are 3 self-guided tours and maps posted. Each contain photographs and more detailed information. Many thanks to the City of Ypsilanti's Preservation Planner for these resources.

Historic Downtown Walking Tour (25 page pdf)

Historic Depot Town Walking Tour (12 page pdf)

Historic West Cross Walking Tour (25 page pdf)

Many thanks to the **Ypsilanti Historical Society** for information from "A Walking Tour of Central Ypsilanti."

Ypsi 10K: What You'll See Along the Way

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From the Start Point, Frog Island Parking Lot...

Highland Cemetery and Depot Town

9. **12 E Forest Avenue - Michigan Ladder Company**, has been in business since 1901. A small-town company who, like Jiffy Baking Mixes (Chelsea Milling, Chelsea, MI) has prided itself in not laying off employees during down-times. Ladders were a 10-month a year business, so they produced other wooden products – including ironing boards, toys and ping-pong tables during those times. Is it a coincidence that the “Detroiter” ping-pong table was used in the movie “Forrest Gump” – made on Forest Avenue?
10. **Highland Cemetery** was designed and built in the “garden style” by Colonel James Lewis Glen in 1863. It features both natural and man-made beauty, with winding pathways, trees and plantings, sculptural markers and classical statues. The recently renovated Starkweather Chapel, built in 1888, was sponsored by a gift from Mary Ann Newberry Starkweather.
11. **101 E Forest Street** - Frederick Swaine purchased a malt house at the NE corner of N. River and E Forest in 1872 and built an Italianate house. The malt house was removed in the 1920s, except for a small brick portion now serving (and still visible) to the east of the house.
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You are now in Depot Town.

14. **100 E Cross Street - The Ypsilanti Automotive History Museum** building started as a car dealership and from 1927 until 1957 was a Hudson dealership – the last operating Hudson dealership in the world. It remained a dealership until the mid 1990’s when the museum opened.
15. **308-312 N River Street - Ypsi Food Co-op** building was built in 1840 by Philo Ferrier as a foundry to produce flour mill machinery, this is one of the oldest buildings in Ypsilanti.
16. **SE corner of River and North Streets.** The octagon house there was moved from 915 Washington Avenue in 1966. While there, it was purported to be a station on the Underground Railroad. Ypsilanti’s first murder took place May 22, 1860 at 114 North River Street. George Washburn, butcher and alcoholic, was convicted of strangling his wife Lucy and placing her at the bottom of the cellar stairs. Sadly, their 7 year-old son found the body.
17. **213 N River Street - Norris House** - Mark Norris and his wife Roccena came to Ypsilanti in 1828 from Covington, NY, seeking opportunities in the growing town. Trained as a land surveyor, he had also owned businesses and within 5 years in Ypsilanti was able to build this beautiful brick house on River Street. Mark’s son, Lyman, grew up in this house. Lyman was the first student in the first class of the University of Michigan. He studied law in Detroit, practiced in St. Louis and eventually returned to Michigan. Mark and Roccena were strong supporters of the Temperance and Abolition of Slavery movements. It has been rumored that this house was a stop on the Underground Railroad, which would be likely, but has never been substantiated. Ironically, one of Lyman’s claims to fame was to argue the case against Dred Scott’s freedom – and win. Lyman’s ‘justification’ of his stance is found in *YG 2003 Summer*.
18. **223 N River Street - Clark Cornwell House** - Built in 1857 for Bernard Whittemore, then owned by Wells Burt and purchased in 1881 by Clara Cornwell, wife of Clark Cornwell, son of Cornelius Cornwell. Cornelius was the founder of the Cornwell Paper Mills. Cornelius’ mansion is on N. Huron Street, later on the tour.
19. At the **corner of E Cross and N River** there is an octagonal structure that is a 1991 reconstruction of the late 19th century signal tower that controlled the gates and signals at the crossing. The remaining one story of the Michigan Central Railroad Depot is a bit further up the tracks. Built in 1860, it was a grand 3-story building said to be “the largest and finest between Detroit and Chicago.” It was reduced to one story by a fire in 1910 and further remodeled in 1939 after a train wreck. In its heyday, there were elegant flower gardens where the Maple Street parking lot is today.
20. Take a moment to enjoy the photo and history display boards in the alley between **E Cross Street and Market Plaza**.
21. **Market Plaza** serves several purposes The New York Central caboose is a remnant from the past, acknowledging the acquisition of the Michigan Central Railroad line. The Freight House is now run by the city of Ypsilanti as an event venue and there is a Farmer’s Market on Saturday mornings, May – October.
22. Back through the alley, look East across the street to see the **Masonic Block** that stands between Ninde and N River Streets. Built in the 1850’s, a classic example of Italianate commercial architecture. The upper floors served at one time as the Masonic Lodge and later the Maccabees Hall. The northeast corner building has always been a saloon, catering to neighborhood customers, railroad workers and travelers. The small outdoor dining area on the northeast side of the building was originally a candy store, but when a train crashed into it, an al fresco dining space seemed a more reasonable choice than rebuilding.
23. **17-29 E Cross Street (NE corner of Rice Street) – The Follett House hotel** was begun in 1852 and completed in 1859 by Benjamin Follett. Ideally located near the Michigan Central Railroad depot. The Italianate-style building boasted a large ballroom indicated from the exterior by 2-story windows.
24. **6 West Cross Street** – Ypsilanti’s first City Hall and Jail was located here from 1859 to 1914. City Hall moved to Quirk House 300 N. Huron and then to its current location at 1 S Huron Street.
25. **110 W Cross Street** – This served as the main Firehouse for the city from 1898 to 1975. Motorized fire trucks were introduced in 1916. The Firehouse Museum opened 2002.

26. **210 W Cross Street** - The “Old High School.” The Tecumseh Hotel was built on this site around 1840 to serve a railroad that was never built. Since 1844, the land has been used for schools. The current building started as a Central School in 1915, with numerous renovations and expansions. It was part of Ypsilanti Community Schools until 1995, when it was sold and transformed into senior citizen housing.

Eastern Michigan University Neighborhoods

27. **324 W Forest Avenue** - Jenness house was built in 1858. John Sedgewick Jenness had a highly successful wholesale grocery business in Detroit, starting in the 1830s. He commuted between Ypsilanti and Detroit after building this house until he retired.
28. **Eastern Michigan University** was founded in 1849 and opened as the Michigan State Normal School in 1853 as a teachers college.
29. The **Ypsilanti Water Tower** is possibly the city’s most iconic structure. It has been featured on post cards, publications, and at one-time, the City logo. It is difficult to ignore its resemblance to a portion of male anatomy. One wonders if the city’s namesake, Demetrius Ypsilanti, would be proud or embarrassed at the placement of his pedestalled bust on the east side of the tower.
30. You are now walking through a residential area with a mix of housing built from the early 1900’s to about the 1970’s. Some are stately university faculty dwellings, some more modest craftsmen bungalows. The Recreation Park at the South end of Oakwood Street was first proposed as a horse racetrack. There a few historic residences along Congress Street, as well as vintage student boarding houses.

Downtown – Michigan Avenue

1. **229 W Michigan Avenue - The Ypsilanti Downtown Library** was built in 1915 as a US Post Office, which moved to S Adams Street.
2. **214-218 W Michigan Avenue** – (across the street) you would have found the Hawkins House Hotel, erected in 1979. The West façade is mostly intact, but recessed portion of the building (which was a verandah) has been “bumped out” to house retail shops.
3. Also built in 1879, the **Union Block building sits at the NW corner of Washington Street and Michigan Avenue**. The most well-known of its occupants was the S.S. Kresge department store from 1921 to the mid-1960’s.
4. On the **NE corner of Washington Street and Michigan Avenue**, Walter Hewitt built a boot/shoe factory and store in 1860. He included an auditorium on the 3rd floor that hosted many community concerts, public speakers and performances, including Frederic Douglass in 1866.
5. On the **SE corner of Washington Street and Michigan Avenue**, is an example of an historic façade restoration. The First National Bank of Ypsilanti was built in 1907 in Neoclassical style, “modernized” in 1963, then returned to its original façade in 1985.
6. The building on the **SW corner of Washington Street and Michigan Avenue** is a 3-story Italianate commercial building erected in 1880 and has served as a public gathering place for over 100 years. The streamlined storefront of the Tap Room was added in 1941, with its historic and distinctive neon sign.

S Washington Street

7. **102 S Washington Street - Towne Residence** - Built in 1840 by Dr. Thomas Towne, this Federal-style brick house has simple lines, little or no detail, a central entry, and six-over-six windows. It is currently undergoing restoration.

8. **106 S Washington Street - Sherwood residence** - Built in the mid-1880s by Philo Sherwood, a boot and shoe dealer on Michigan Avenue, this house is a handsome example of Queen Ann style. Notice the ornate sawn brackets, shingles, and porch details. Not also the excellent example of 19th century carriage barns in the rear lots of 106, as well as 112, South Washington.
9. **112 S Washington Street - Dr. Parmenio Davis residence** - This charming brick house of 1845 features handmade bricks and a beautiful classical revival porch.
10. **118 S Washington Street** - This home was built by Charles Glover, son of former Ypsilanti Mayor Henry P. Glover. Henry Glover was also the President of the Ypsilanti Dress Stay company, which was one of the largest employers in the city at the time. Construction of the house began in 1891 with the demolition of the existing house on the property, the former house of Ypsilanti's first mayor, Parmenio Davis. The house has been painstakingly restored, with "greener" energy options utilized where possible.
11. **221 S Washington Street - Kishlar Residence** - This home, built in 1860, is an excellent example of Italianate style.

S Huron Street

12. **220 S Huron Street** - Barnes residence, then the Newton residence, currently The Queen's Residence Bed & Breakfast. Built around 1879 for Samuel Barnes, vice president of Peninsular Paper, this house is in the Italianate style. Charles Newton, chief buyer for Greenfield Village in the 1930s and 40s, did extensive remodeling of this home to reflect his interest in the Classical Revival style. The interior of a colonial New England kitchen is a novel feature of the basement.
13. **212 S Huron Street - Griffin Residence** - Begun in 1903, this distinctive stone house was completed in by local attorney Darwin Griffin in 1905. It defies a particular style but has elements of Queen Anne and perhaps Tudor influence. Note the slate roof and the beautiful relief carving above the front porch entry.
14. **206 S Huron Street - Childs residence** - Louis Childs, a local florist and grain dealer, built this Eastlake style home sometime between 1873 and 1878. A multiple-family dwelling since the early 1950s, the building is being restored by the present owner.
15. **202 S Huron Street - Larzelere Residence**. In 1830, this Federal-style house was built in two stages: front and back. It rests on heavy oak beams, and the basement is paved in brick which, it is believed, may have been imported from France. Pioneers Jacob and Abraham Larzelere owned this house.
16. **Ypsilanti City Hall**, SE corner of S Huron Street and Michigan Avenue, was built in 1877 as the Ypsilanti Savings Bank. City Hall moved from the Quirk House (304 N Huron St) to this location in 1976. Mary Ann Starkweather donated a large (over 12 feet tall) water fountain, with drinking bowls for humans and horses, located on the West side of the building, where the East-bound turning lane is. The fountain was there from 1890 to 1932.
17. **18 W Michigan Avenue - Haab's Restaurant**, another building that has been known as a place for people to eat, drink and gather was built in the 1970's. It has been operated as Haab's Restaurant since 1934.

N Huron Street

Even house/building numbers are on the East side, odd numbers on the West.

18. **76 North Huron - Masonic Temple (currently Riverside Arts Center)** - Designed by Osgood and Osgood, this building is in the Beaux Arts style. Extensive interior renovations were done in 1924 and in 1970 after the space was damaged by fire. The Masons used the building for 78 years, until they moved to Ypsilanti Township in 1987. Since 1994, the building has housed the Riverside Arts Center (RAC), a performing and visual arts center and rental facility. To make the space accessible, an elevator was added in 2003.

Note the plaque on the Riverside Off Center (56 N Huron) commemorating the first settlement in Washtenaw County.

If you stand directly in front of RAC and look west, you'll be looking at . . .

19. **Corner of Pearl and North Huron** (site of the former Ypsilanti Dress Stay Factory). Now a parking lot, a two-story brick structure stood on this site, where the production of dress stays took place at the turn of the century. The structure later housed the Ypsilanti Press.

(Not on AVA walk, but a quick side-trip)

20. **108 and 110 Pearl - the G.A.R. Hall** - Probably built in the mid-1880s, this block served as a tinsmith's shop, a Chinese laundry, an annex of the dress stay factory (now torn down), and a G.A.R. Hall. The G.A.R. (Grand Army of the Republic) was a Civil War veterans association, which wielded social and political power in the 1880s and 1890s.
21. **111 Pearl - Scharf Tag, Label & Box Company (Congden's Hardware since 1913)** - This building, circa 1890, and the adjoining brick building to the west housed a large commercial printing establishment. Note the projecting metal cornice, the large arched second story windows, and the delicate convex mortar joints between the stones. A wider mix of manufacturing, retail, and residential uses was common in the 19th century.

(Continuing north on N Huron Street)

22. **120 N Huron Street - St. Luke's Episcopal Church.** One of the many interesting church buildings in our community, this mid-Victorian Gothic Revival building dates back to 1858 and is Ypsilanti's oldest existing church. Eventually the parish hopes to reinstall the spire and bell, removed in 1971 due to building stress. A garth, or memorial garden, is also located here.
23. **119-121 N Huron Street - Watling Dental Clinic/House.** These elaborate mid-Victorian buildings once were the office and home of dentist Drive. John Watling. It was built around 1872 and represents the Tuscan variety of the Italianate Style. Mrs. Watling helped found the Ladies Library Association, and her husband was instrumental in the establishment of the School of Dentistry at the University of Michigan.
24. **125 N Huron Street - Ballard/Breakey House.** The original structure was a modest Federal-style house of brick and stone built in 1830. The massive Doric columns were added in the 1840s. The house is listed in the Historic American Buildings Survey. Mr. Ballard was Mayor of Ypsilanti, and Drive. Breakey was a judge.
25. **130 N Huron Street - Starkweather Home/Ladies Library.** This Italianate-style home was built in 1858 by local merchant Edwin Mills. It was purchased by John and Mary Ann Starkweather in 1875. John died in 1883. Mary Ann Newberry Starkweather came into a significant inheritance in 1886 and, having no heirs, concentrated much of her philanthropy in Ypsilanti. She donated the house to the Ladies Library Association in 1890. The library changed from being the Ladies Library to "Public Library" in 1948. The Public Library was relocated in 1964 to the former Carnegie Post Office at 229 W Michigan Avenue.
26. **203 N Huron Street - Cornwell Residence.** This Georgian/Queen Anne-style residence was said to be the largest example of its type between Detroit and Chicago. Built in 1883 by Cornelius Cornwell, a local pulp mill owner, it boasted the first telephone in Ypsilanti.
27. **206 N Huron Street - Showerman/Quirk Residence.** Note the hipped slate roof and Italianate window hoods on this home built in 1863 by Delos Showerman, sawmill operator and builder. The Daniel Quirk family added the large north addition and the neoclassical detailing in 1909.
28. **214 N Huron Street - Andrews/Drury/Thompson House.** This Italianate-style Victorian frame house has served as the Ypsilanti Teen Center as well as a counseling center and classroom site for Washtenaw Community College. It was built in 1851 by Frederick Andrews and has housed many families since, including Mayor Cheryl Farmer.

29. **220 N Huron Street - Ypsilanti Historical Museum.** This former brick mansion of the Dow family, built in 1860, has been home to the Historical Museum and Archives since 1970. Several rooms have been furnished to represent gracious homes of the Victorian period. Visitors are welcome between 2pm and 4pm on Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday.
30. **300 N Huron Street - D.L. Quirk Sr. Residence.** A rare example of the Second Empire Style, this 1860 home was built for Daniel L. Quirk. It features a mansard roof. In 1914, it was donated to the city and served as the City Hall until 1977.

Riverside and Frog Island Parks

31. Riverside Park is extremely popular and the site of many festivals. You'll often see people fishing in the swift current of the Huron River.
32. **The "Tridge"** provides pedestrian access between Frog Island and Riverside Parks and Cross Street.
33. As you enter **Frog Island Park**, you're in the heart of where many mills were located in the 19th century and trading posts in the 18th century, relying on the power of the Huron River. Frog Island was created to take advantage of this power (a mill race) but legal arguments over rights increased and water-powered mills dwindled. It was never really an island, but frog catching and killing did exist there, so the name stuck. It has been said that during temperance, it was a place where men gathered to drink, but told their wives they were going down to kill frogs. The path along the river and its entrances have recently been paved to improve accessibility.

Resources

The following sources were found at the **Ypsilanti District Library**:

Hidden History of Ypsilanti, 2011 Laura Bien

Old Ypsilanti Town, 1974 Hazel Proctor et al

Our Heritage: Down by the depot in Ypsilanti – Volume I, 1999 Thomas Dodd and James Thomas Mann

Tales from the Ypsilanti Archives, 2010 Laura Bien

Wicked Ypsilanti, 2014 James Thomas Mann

Ypsilanti A History in Pictures, 2002 James Thomas Mann

Ypsilanti in the 20th Century, 2003 James Thomas Mann

The **Ypsilanti Historical Museum and Archives**, 220 N. Huron St. Ypsilanti MI 48197 is a treasure-trove of information! <https://ypsihistory.org>

Historic Self-guided Walking Tours of Ypsilanti are available at:

<https://cityofypsilanti.com/326/Historic-Walking-Tour>

At this writing, there are 3 self-guided tours and maps posted. Each contain photographs and more detailed information. Many thanks to the City of Ypsilanti's Preservation Planner for these resources.

Historic Downtown Walking Tour (25 page pdf)

Historic Depot Town Walking Tour (12 page pdf)

Historic West Cross Walking Tour (25 page pdf)

Many thanks to the Ypsilanti Historical Society for information from "A Walking Tour of Central Ypsilanti."