

1. LOG CABIN

This quaint cabin serves as the Historical Society's Welcome Center to Grand Rapids. Visitors can obtain brochures about Northwest Ohio attractions and view a map of the immediate area, along with enjoying the gardens and windmill surrounding the cabin. It is a great location for photographers or artists to capture the Maumee River below.

2. BLUEBELL ISLAND

Bluebell Island was located in the Old Miami and Erie Sidecut Canal basin at the east end of the business block. Canal boats turned around here to head west to return to the Miami and Erie Canal across the river. The island was filled in because of erosion. Today visitors can rest on a bench and listen to the river as it flows over the rapids. They can cross the footbridge over the canal spillway for a scenic hike down the Old Gilead Side Cut towpath down to the dam at Mary Jane Thurston State Park.

3. BOY SCOUT CABIN

The first Scout Troop in Grand Rapids was started in 1926. The troop met until December of 1927. It was reorganized as Troop #204 in 1928. It was again reorganized as Troop #317 in 1930. In 1936, the present Troop #325 was organized, sponsored by the school. The present scout cabin was built in 1949 on Hamlin Street between the canal and the Maumee River.

4. STUMPS MILL

Frank M. Stump and his two brothers traveled to Ohio from Germany. Frank operated Crystal Mills in Grand Rapids around 1890. Daniel Frank Stump was operating Stump's Mill behind the Hockman Building along the canal when the fire of 1898 destroyed many local businesses, including the mill. During 1900, Daniel and Walter Herbert built a new steam-powered brick mill at Mill and Front Streets. Long lines of horse-drawn wagons and cars pulling trailers lined the street as farmers waited their turns to have grain reduced to flour or livestock feed. In 1977, the old mill was purchased by Donald Enteman.

5. THE MILL HOUSE BED AND BREAKFAST

This building, formerly Stump's Mill, became a bed and breakfast in 1992. Visitors enjoy a memorable stay complete with a delicious breakfast with home-baked treats prepared by Ron and Kathy Munk. - 24070 Front St.

6. GRUBBER HOUSE

Built in 1860 by one of the first pioneers, Alfred Gruber, the home is a Greek Revival design. It has had many renovations over the years. - 24049 Front St.

7. HOUSLEY HOUSE

Richard Housley built this Victorian manor in 1886 for his Southern bride. The home is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In the 1950s, it was converted into apartments.

The home was purchased by entrepreneurs Don and Audrey Enteman in the 1970s. They remodeled the home into a majestic manor that sits on the lofty banks of the mighty Maumee River. The home was operated as a bed and breakfast for a number of years, but now is a private residence. It has a beautiful English rose garden in the back. - 24055 Front St.

8. FLOOD MARKERS

Located on Front Street, this marker displays depths of the remarkable floods in Grand Rapids. Flood levels are also marked at the entrance to the Isaac Ludwig Mill.

9. LAROE'S RESTAURANT

Dave Laroe purchased two buildings on Front Street and started restoration of these Kerr buildings on the north side of Front Street in 1981. He installed new tin ceilings using historic patterns appropriate to the construction of the building. In the tavern area, the original wood floors and oak bar were restored. The original woodwork in the upstairs space was cleaned and restored. The exteriors of the two buildings, while very similar, are not identical. Two different colors of brick were used. The storefront posts in the building on the left are iron while the ones on the right are wood. Dave had the exterior brick repointed, new windows milled to match the originals, and the tin surrounding the upstairs windows repaired and repainted. His restaurant, a popular destination, has operated successfully since the 1980s. Some years ago, Dave added a patio overlooking the canal, and this is a very popular dining experience during the warm months. Dave was awarded the Ohio History Connections 2014 State Historic Preservation Award for his efforts in preserving these two historic buildings. A number of portraits of notable Grand Rapids citizens by local artist Bill Kuhlman line the walls of Laroe's dining room, and guests are invited to stop in and view them with the owner's permission. - 24138 Front St.

10. LINCOLN STREET

This quaint bricked rest area between Laroe's Restaurant and Library House Books and Art is the location of public restrooms, a water fountain and benches for visitors. Access to the canal towpath is made easy via a footbridge. It serves as the pathway through which thousands of visitors have passed on their way to perhaps "the most beautiful spot in North America", the Great Rapids of the Maumee River. A Lincoln Street Revitalization Project was completed in 2017 which added landscaping, a water feature and a plaque commemorating the role played by Don and Audrey Enteman in the transformation of Grand Rapids from an aging river town to the vibrant village it is today.

11. JERRY WRIGHT PAVILION

This open-air pavilion was completed on the north side of the canal in the summer of 2000. It is named for Jerry Wright who

served his community and church all of his life; he died in 2013. It is available to reserve free of charge for gatherings. The programs of the music series Rhythm on the River, sponsored by the Historical Society, are held here along with many other community events.

12. TOWPATH

The trail follows the remains of the Miami and Erie Canal along the old towpath where mules towed flat-bottom boats along the waterway. It's a peaceful walk with historic sites along the way. Lined by trees, most of the path is covered with crushed stone.

13. GRAND RAPIDS PLANNING MILL

The origin of this mill is obscure. It was located behind the Masonic Building on Front Street. J.L. Pough had the building called Pough Planning Mill in 1888. He made carriage and wagon parts at the mill. J.S. Foor leased the mill from Pough in 1888 and called it the Grand Rapids Planning Mill. Richard A. Housley purchased the mill from Pough in 1894 and added a sawmill and bending works. It was the largest such mill in Northwest Ohio.

14. THE OLD FIRE STATION

This station was built and started operations in November of 1928. Opening day was in February 1929. The Historical Society of Grand Rapids now leases the building from the Village. It contains two meeting areas, a large truck bay, smaller meeting room, kitchen, restrooms, and offers the use of tables and chairs. The building can be rented for events, classes, reunions, parties, etc. - 24232 Front St.

15. HOWARD PARK

This location was once home to commercial establishments such as general stores and hardware. Grain elevators, warehouses and loading docks also lined the canal banks. A flurry of canal boats loaded and unloaded their cargoes here. Eventually, the buildings were destroyed and the land was presented to the town for a park. It provides a natural setting where veterans' groups conduct Memorial Day services each year. This is also where Applebutter is stirred on the second Sunday in October when the Historical Society holds its famous Applebutter Fest. The park is located at the west end of the business block and contains playground equipment and picnic tables. Access to the canal towpath is granted here via a footbridge.

16. GRAND RAPIDS TOWN HALL

By an act of the State Legislature, authorization for the building was sanctioned on March 21, 1896. The building is a two-story, square brick building which has a hip roof. There is a massive brick arch with a keystone dated 1898. Above the center bay is a flat-arched window rising upward, blending into a square wood belfry. The belfry itself has a steeply-pitched roof, three

arched and lowered openings on each facade, and small turrets at each corner. W.K. and Howard Evans were the slate roofing contractors. The only original slate remaining is on the cupola. A new roof was installed in 1969. The interior houses a first floor containing village and Historical Society offices and a theater on the second. The sloped stage is quite rare today and is an asset to the performer. The upper story of the building was used for graduations until 1936. In recent years, the Historical Society has restored the theater, allowing it to be used for its original purpose of hosting town events and plays. On May 27, 1975, The Romanesque-style Town Hall was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. 24282 Front St.

17. BOAT DOCKS

There are 10 short-term courtesy docks for boaters to dock their boats and enjoy the attractions that the Village has to offer. The docks are adjacent to the West Street Boat Launch and are ADA accessible.

18. THE GRANARY/WICHMAN HOUSE

The repurposed old granary was rescued from a country location. There are still bin marks in the interior. 24399 Front St.

19. HUFFMAN ICE HOUSE

This home was located at the end of Front Street. In ages past, ice was cut from the quarry nearby, packed in sawdust, and stored in the ice house.

20. THE GRAND KERR HOUSE

The Queen Anne Home is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Successful business owners Benjamin Franklin and Ann Pratt Kerr watched their home being built over three years starting in 1880. The Kerrs and their descendants occupied the house for nearly 100 years. In 1997, it was purchased by Laurie Hostetler who spent two years restoring the Victorian Mansion to its original grandeur. She operated it as a nationally-known health and wellness spa for 35 years. Today it is a bed and breakfast called The Grand Kerr House and is operated by Bob and Cathy Trame. 17777 Beaver St.

21. JACOB HEATER HOUSE

This home is also known as the Gingerbread House. It was built in the 1870's and renovated in the early 1990s. 24486 Second St.

22. GABRIEL GUYER HOUSE

This is said to be the oldest house in Grand Rapids. Many additions have been added over the years. 24423 Second St.

23. BARR HOUSE

Dr. Daniel R. Barr practiced medicine in a little building behind his home on Second St. from 1911-1915 and from 1921-1950. There was also a carriage house which housed his laboratory. The last remaining outhouse in the village, now used as a garden shed, is also on the property. Other owners of the house were Dave LaRoe and Denny and Deb McDonald, and the current residents are Jim Brown and Josh Goltiao. They have done extensive work inside the home and plan to do more. They have installed antique wrought iron fencing around the yard, and are restoring the home with various period light fixtures, historic paint colors, and wallpaper. They are furnishing the home in Victorian furniture and restored the widow's watch on top of the roof with a railing system that allows guests to enjoy the view of the downtown and Maumee River. - 24064 W. Second St.

24. NEW FIRE STATION

The Grand Rapids Township Fire Department, a 100% volunteer unit, is housed in a pre-engineered metal building with offices, full kitchen, safe room and four bays. The new station was completed in 2014. - 17706 Wapakoneta Rd.

25. GRAND RAPIDS PIRATES PARK

On this site in 1878, a two-story brick schoolhouse with two classes on each floor was built. One of the classrooms on the second floor was the Grand Rapids High School. This building was used forty years. A new high school was built in 1916 east of the original high school. The Pirate mascot was adopted during the 1930s, so the park's name is a tribute to the Grand Rapids Pirates who were the original students to occupy the school. - Corner of Second St. and Wapakoneta Rd.

26. GRAND RAPIDS BRANCH OF THE WESTON LIBRARY

A local history room is housed in the library. It contains numerous resources, artifacts, and books specific to the history of Grand Rapids. - 17620 Bridge St.

27. GRAND RAPIDS AREA SWIMMING POOL

The Grand Rapids Swimming Pool, located near Bridge and Third Streets, was organized in 1968 and financed by an FHA loan and donations from residents. The first pool manager was James Meeker. - Bridge and Third Sts.

28. LABINO PARK

This park is a complex for recreation in the village and contains an all-purpose court for basketball, tennis and inline roller hockey along with picnic tables. Dominic Labino was an internationally-known local inventor and glass blower. There is also a historic marker in honor of "Nick".

29. HOWARD CEMETERY

The Cemetery stands at the corner of Front Street and Wapakoneta Road. It features an ornate iron fence and includes the veterans' monument and World War II artillery gun. Members of the Howard family who settled here in 1820 and the first white settlers on the south bank are buried here. Thomas Howard, who passed away in 1825, was a Revolutionary War soldier. Tee-Na-Beek, who is believed to be the last Ottawa Indian left in the Maumee Valley and died in the 1850s, is also buried here. His widow had no burial spot, so his friend Dresden Howard allowed the Indian's body to be placed outside the iron fence.

Corner of Front St. and Wapakoneta Rd.

30. CANAL EXPERIENCE

Canal boats once carried goods and people 249 miles between Toledo and Cincinnati, linking Lake Erie and the Ohio River. At Providence, you can get a sense of what canal traffic was like during a trip aboard an authentic, mule-drawn canal boat on an original section of the Miami and Erie Canal. The Volunteer, pulled by mules, travels along more than a mile of the original Miami and Erie Canal and passes through Lock #44, one of the last functioning 19th century limestone locks. The one-hour boat rides are narrated by living history interpreters.

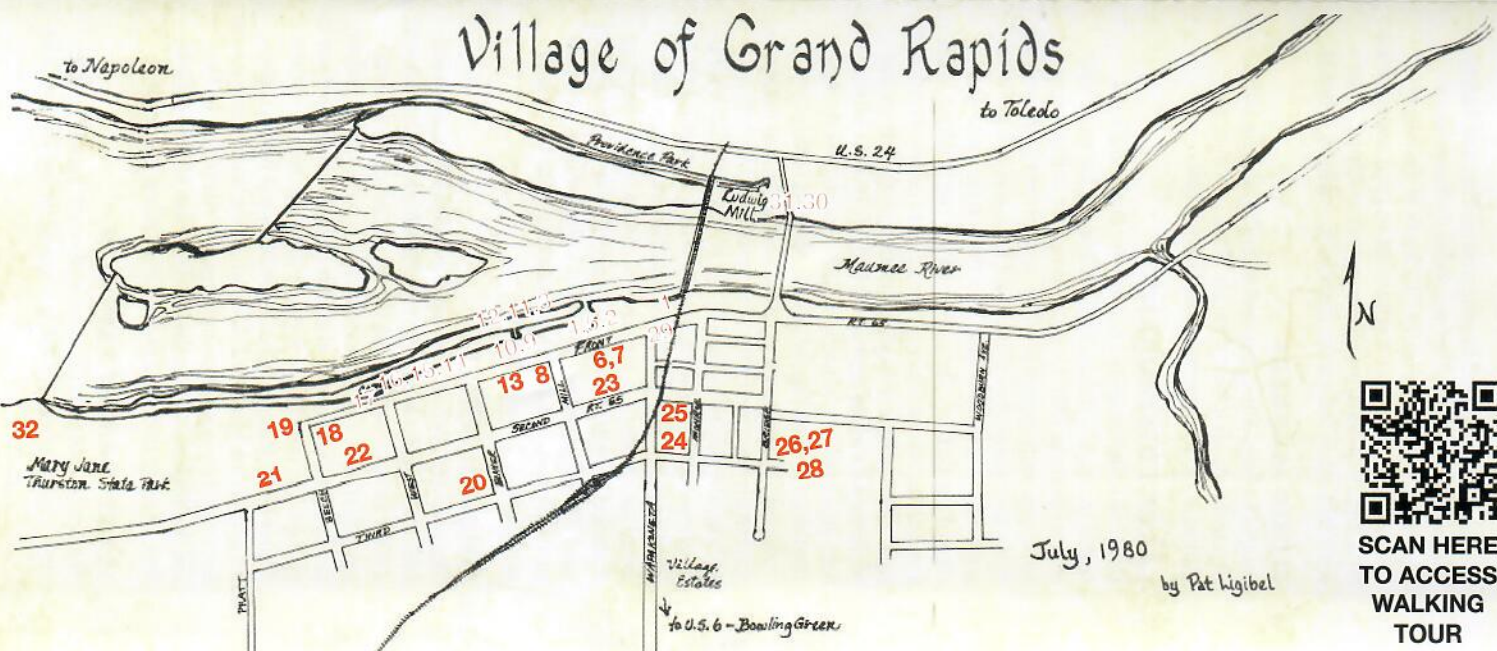
13801 S. River Rd.

31. ISAAC R. LUDWIG HISTORIC MILL

When settlers migrated this way, the first thing they needed was a sawmill, and it was built in 1822 by Peter Manor. The first grist mill between Fort Meigs and Fort Wayne was added in 1835. In 1846, a new three-story flour mill was constructed. The mill was sold to Isaac R. Ludwig in 1865 by the original owner, Peter Manor's son. The mill pumped water for the Toledo, Delphos and Burlington Railroad's water tower at the north end of the railroad bridge. Toledo Edison purchased the electric power rights in 1915. On March 25, 1940, a fire struck the mill a devastating blow. The belief was that a passing locomotive blew a spark through an open roof hatch. The third and most of the second story were gone. Many firefighters battled the fire for over four hours. In 1971, the mill was sold to Cleo Ludwig who donated it to the Metropolitan Park Board in honor of his great-grandfather, Isaac R. Ludwig. 13496-13600 S. River Rd.

32. PROVIDENCE DAM AND WPA SHELTER

This State Dam was first built of wood in 1838 and originally constructed to keep the canal filled with water. It was rebuilt of concrete in 1908 when the state attempted to pump new life into its canals. However, the canals failed completely in 1913 when statewide flooding caused severe damage to the canal banks.



GRAND RAPIDS

WALKING TOUR



Historical Society

of Grand Rapids, Ohio

P.O. Box 124

Grand Rapids, OH 43522