

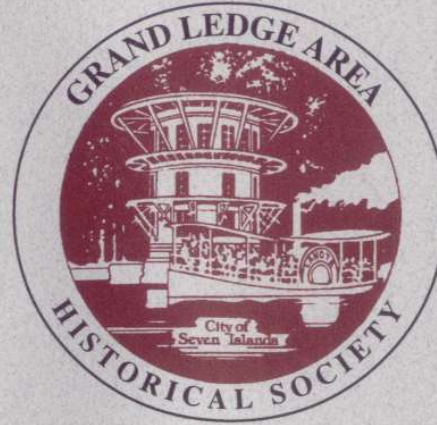


Welcome to Grand Ledge. This community of 8500 inhabitants is located on the Grand River and takes its name from the unusual sandstone ledges along the river. First settled in the late 1830's, the city received its name and first post office in 1850 and was incorporated in 1871.

It is hoped that this walking tour will give residents and visitors a better appreciation of the local history and early architecture of Grand Ledge, in addition to its scenic beauty. Although the tour covers only a small portion of the city, participants are encouraged to explore other areas which are not included in this publication due to space limitations.

The tour begins at The Museum of the Grand Ledge Area Historical Society and weaves its way through the River Ledge Historic District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1987. Additional points of interest outside the district are also suggested for either an extended walking tour or a driving tour.

*Happy Sightseeing!*  
Grand Ledge Area Historical Society  
2000



~ Annual Events ~

**Victorian Days**

First Weekend in May

**Yankee Doodle Days**

Last weekend in June

**Island Art Fair**

First Saturday in August

**Color Cruise & Island Festival**

Second weekend in October

**Holiday Home Tour**

First Saturday and Sunday in December

The following publications  
are available locally at the  
Grand Ledge Public Library  
and  
Ledge Craft Lane

*Very Sincerely, Frank D. Fitzgerald*  
*Through the Years*  
*Greetings from Grand Ledge*



# Grand Ledge Historic District Walking Tour



## Historic District Walking Tour

### 1. 118 W. Lincoln, The Museum

This 1880 Gothic Revival cottage, built for Rev. Byron Pratt, showcases a complete restoration by the Grand Ledge Area Historical Society. The Museum is open Sundays from 2 to 4 p.m. and by appointment. Call 627-5170 or 627-2452.



### 2. 410 Harrison Street, Shane-Baptist Parsonage House

This house was built in 1906 for Willard Shane, a local businessman, by his father George. It is a fine example of Queen Anne architecture. This style is distinguished by an asymmetrical shape adorned with turrets, porches and gables.

### 3. 411 Harrison Street, United Methodist Church

This fine example of Romanesque Revival architecture was dedicated in 1912.

### 4. 321 Harrison Street, Kent-Winfield House

Edwin Kent built this Eastlake style house, one in a row of three, in 1891.

### 5. 315 W. Jefferson Street, Tumbull-Mulvay House

This stately brick home was originally Italianate in style. In 1899 Edward Turnbull, owner of Grand Ledge Chair Company, altered it to Colonial Revival and added a third floor. It is now divided into apartments.

### 6. 316 W. Jefferson Street, Rawson-Diebold House

Built in the late 1880's for a local business family, this house features an interesting square tower with small-paned, multi-colored glass windows.

### 7. 304 W. Jefferson Street, Campbell-Wirbel House

Surviving original features indicate that this was a Stick style house when first built by local carpenters in 1886. Note the sharply pointed gables bearing wood decoration common to the period. The addition of the wrap-around porch with turned spindles occurred around the turn of the century. Note other examples of added wrap-around porches at 207 and 315 E. Jefferson Street.

### 8. 238 W. River Street, Latting-Porter House

This picturesque bungalow, which has a lofty view of the Grand River and Island Park, was built by the owner of the adjacent house for his daughter in 1913. The house is simple in design, with wide overhanging eaves that extend outward over a large porch.

### 15. 201 E. Jefferson Street, Trinity Episcopal Church

Built in 1911, the Trinity Episcopal Church is a fine example of the Electric Gothic style with its arched windows, buttresses, and square bell tower. Take particular notice of the 12 Belgian leaded glass windows showing the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

### 16. 207 E. Jefferson Street, Smith Bros. Law Office

One of several beautiful examples of Italianate architecture, this structure is unique in Grand Ledge in that it retains its original crowning belvedere. Built in the 1870's for a local physician, it has served as a Catholic rectory and is now a law office.

### 17. 220 E. Jefferson Street, Fitzgerald-Moyes House

An excellent example of the Stick style, this house was built in 1890 for a local businessman. Note the wood trimmed upper floor, an adaptation of the English half-timber style, and bold use of colored glass in the upper portion of the windows.



### 18. 302 E. Jefferson Street, Wareham-Wade House

This is another example of the popular Italianate style with a wide overhanging cornice supported by heavy brackets or corbels. Note the decorative fanlight window above the front doors. Built in two stages during the 1850's and 1860's, it was the residence of the Wareham family whose son, John "Dee," was president of Rookwood Art Pottery of Cincinnati, Ohio.

### 19. 315 E. Jefferson Street, Berry House

This structure was also built in stages, the rear portion in the 1870's, the front about 1900, and the wrap-around porch still later. Occupied at one time by Fred Berry, a prominent banker, this Colonial Revival House is one of several in Grand Ledge with a third floor ballroom.



### 24. 502 E. Scott Street, Dale House

Probably built in the 1880's when the Italianate style was highly popular, this one story version of the bracketed style is unique in Grand Ledge. Note the tall, narrow window treatments with bracketed heads.

### 25. 300 E. Scott Street, Chappell-Worthy House

This Gothic revival home with unique Italian villa window casements was built in the 1870's. The Fred Chappell family lived here 59 years. He was a local pharmacist.

### 26. 221 E. Scott Street, Putterille-Smith House

The exterior of this house exhibits the Victorian era's extensive use of architectural detail and use of bold color. Originally a simple structure built in 1893 by a local blacksmith, it was expanded into the existing Queen Anne structure with third floor ballroom in the early 1900's.

### 27. 316 Taylor Street, Grand Ledge Hotel-Deming Law Office

This post-Victorian Princess Anne was built in 1902 as a private residence before becoming first a hotel, then a fabric shop and now a law office.



### 28. 312 Taylor Street, Coryell-Voltattorni, DDS

Built in 1890, this structure is one of the area's finest examples of Carpenter Gothic architecture. Take time to examine the use of ornate exterior detail on porches and balconies, and the square bay windows decorated with colored glass panes. Moved to this location from the corner lot in 1923, this structure served as a dress shop and now a dental office.



## Additional Points of Interest

### A. Island Park

Around the turn of the century, when trainloads of tourists came to Grand Ledge to visit the Seven Islands Resort, Island Park was the idyllic setting for the Island House Hotel. It also featured a picturesque fountain and a bandstand. Although these are gone, this state historic site is the setting for a number of city festivals. The riverboat Princess Laura docks here. Many wedding parties, charters and busloads of visitors cruise between Second Island and Fitzgerald Park to view the ledges. The Pavilion, built in 1976, is dedicated in honor of the nation's Bicentennial.

### B. River Path

Beginning at the perennial gardens planted during the



**9. 219 W. Jefferson Street, Sheets-Fitzgerald House**  
A state historic site, this house was the official residence of Gov. Frank D. Fitzgerald from 1936-1939. Built in 1909 for a local merchant, this brick house is of the Romanesque style with a tile roof, massive chimney, and rounded bay windows. The original owners, who were Spiritualists, used the third floor to conduct seances. Note the variety of window styles and the rounded dormer flanked by two additional dormers with triangular roofs.

**10. 211 W. Jefferson Street, Edwards-Stout House**  
This structure and the adjacent house at 207 W. Jefferson Street were built by Elmer Edwards in the early 1900's from unusual "rusticated" cement blocks produced by the William Devine and Sons Cement Company. These are two of many cement blockhouses in Grand Ledge made from local blocks.

**11. 210 W. Jefferson Street, Bryce-Congregational Parsonage**  
This large Vernacular Victorian brick home was built at the turn of the century for the cashier of a local bank. The simple lines and the absence of ornamentation are characteristic of this style. The structure at one time served as the parsonage for the Congregational Church.

**12. 119 W. Jefferson Street, Kent-Trinklein House**  
Built in 1893, this brick Eastlake Victorian home has high gable ends and a recessed porch with clusters of pillars painted to enhance the architectural detail. Note the characteristic Eastlake carving on the front door. The belvedere atop the house was added in the 1970's.

**13. 118 E. Jefferson Street, U.S. Post Office**  
Built under the Emergency Construction Program Act in 1938, the Post Office depicts a traditional design of that era for public buildings, having a stylized Classical order with stone base, brick exterior walls and stone trim. The interior wall mural, painted by Detroit-born artist James Calder in 1939, depicts a rural scene in Grand Ledge with the water tower and possibly the Grand Ledge Chair Company and tile factory.

**14. 131 E. Jefferson Street, Public Library**  
Built in 1931, 20 years after the inception of the Ladies' Library Association, the Grand Ledge Public Library is typical of the Classical style of architecture popular during this period. The symmetrical design is enhanced with a soft green tile roof, many-paned windows, and a formal entrance with an elliptical pediment. The brick used in construction was from the Grand Ledge Face Brick Company, a local concern that ceased operation in 1947.

**20. 328 E. Jefferson Street, Tucker House**  
Built in 1911 for a Grand Ledge merchant, the house's exterior is embellished with bay windows, beveled and leaded glass upper windowpanes, and heavy finished wood.



**21. 406 E. Jefferson Street, Granger-Garlock House**  
Built in 1881 for Sylvester Granger, a local businessman, this two-story home is in the Georgian Colonial style. The porch is of particular interest with Ionic columns and displays dentil molding and turned balustrades.



**22. 424 E. Jefferson Street, Oding-Spencer House**  
This house was built in 1900 and later owned by the Oding family, local grocers, and is an example of Queen Anne architecture. Note the leaded glass window treatments, projecting bay windows on the first and second stories, and inviting front porch with clustered Classical columns.

**23. 428 E. Lincoln Street, Stobel-Huhn House**  
*Known as "The Homestead,"* this Georgian Colonial house was built in 1930 as a funeral parlor for the Stobel family who lived in the adjacent cottage. It was converted to a private residence in the 1960's. The use of a symmetrical design with cornices and chimneys located at either end is typical of this style. Note the portico surrounding the front door trimmed with dentil molding and Doric columns. Behind the structure is a 1909 carriage house (visible from Kent Street), which is constructed of conduit tile from the Grand Ledge Clay Products Company.

which meanders alongside the Grand River to Fitzgerald Park. Along the trail can be seen the Seven Island Chain and the outstanding sandstone ledges on both sides of the river. Look for climbers near the RR bridge.

**C. 3808 Grand Ledge Highway, Fitzgerald Park**  
Fitzgerald Park is a 78 acre Eaton County recreation area where visitors can walk the ledges and nature trails, view the fish ladder, picnic, play ball, canoe and cross-country ski. The large pavilion in the park began as a meeting place for the Spiritualist Association. Later it was used for other church meetings, dances, roller skating, and community meetings. The Spotlight Theatre now presents shows here in the summer.

**D. 115 Perry Street, Riverwalk Apartments**  
1988 saw the former Grand Ledge Chair Company, built in 1906, transformed into 50 apartments and townhouses. One of several furniture companies established in the early days of Grand Ledge, the Grand Ledge Chair Company was formed in 1883. The Chair Company gained a national reputation as the maker of distinctive chairs. Operation ceased in 1981. It is a state historic site.

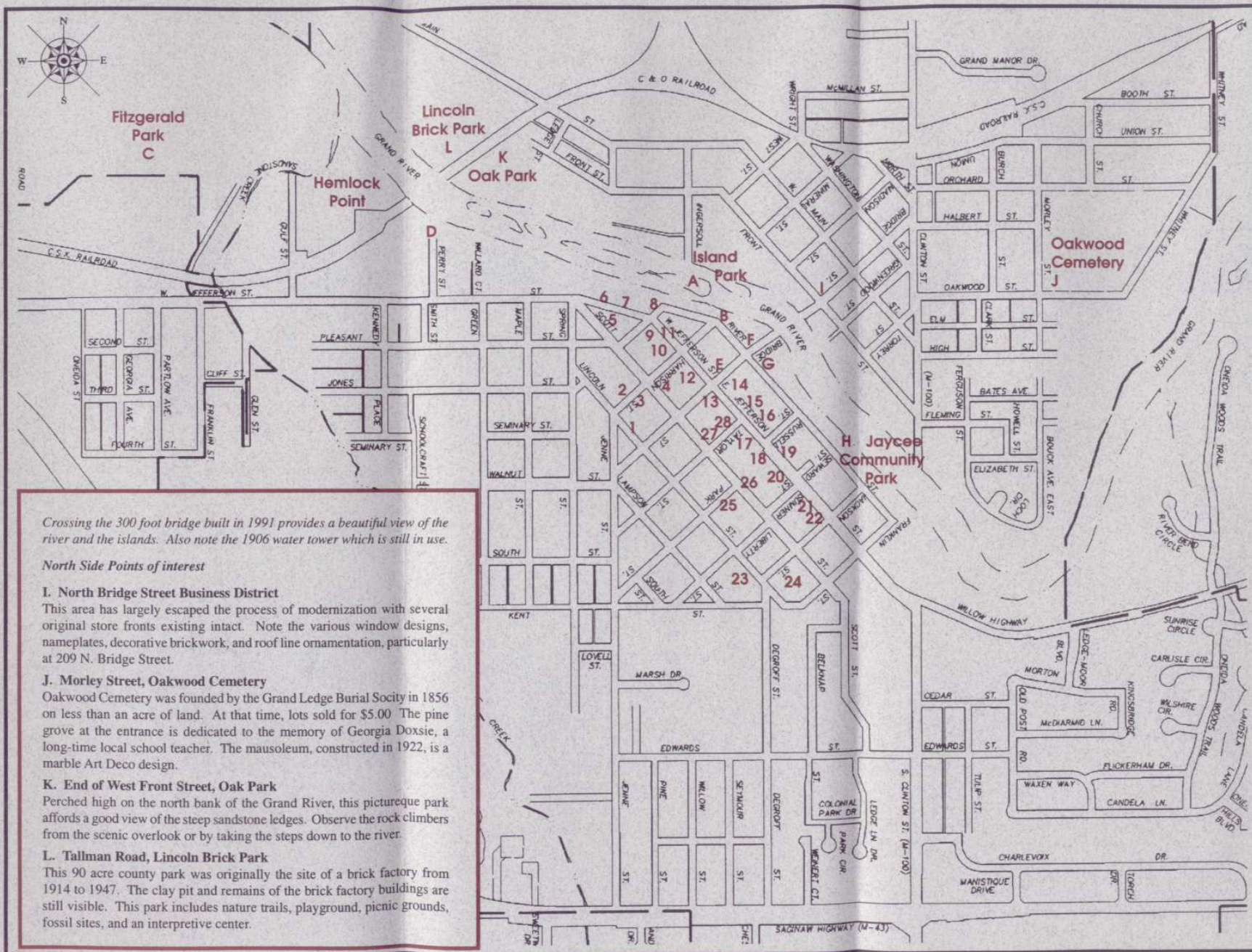
**E. 200-300 South Bridge Street Business District**  
The 200 and 300 blocks of the Grand Ledge Business Districts have changed dramatically over the years due to costly fires in the 1870's, 1890's, 1960's, and 1990's, as well as extensive modernization. Although much of the lower store front details have been lost, the upper levels of these mainly Renaissance Revival buildings still display decorative brickwork and handsome windows. Note the various nameplates including 100F, Babcock and Holmes, and the beautiful pressed metal front on 216 S. Bridge Street crafted by George Mesker and Company of Evansville, Ind.

**F. 120 S. Bridge Street, Ledge Craft Lane, Ltd.**  
Built in 1885, this was originally known as Firemen's Hall. The wagons stood ready for use behind 13 foot doors that opened onto Bridge Street. Later, the building housed the police department and served as city hall until 1970. Restored in 1973, the building now houses a community arts and craft center.



**G. 121 S. Bridge, Opera House**  
Originally built as a roller rink in 1884, Peter Blake converted it into an opera house in 1886. Later owned by the Sackett family, it offered attractions from vaudeville to medicine shows. A furniture store from 1928 to 1982, the renovated structure serves as a community center. It houses a Barton theatre organ, originally at the Michigan Theatre in Lansing.

**H. East River Street, Jaycee Community Park**  
This city park boasts a boat launch, playground and log cabin built by the Jaycees in the early 1950's. It serves as home to scout groups and is the local senior center.



Crossing the 300 foot bridge built in 1991 provides a beautiful view of the river and the islands. Also note the 1906 water tower which is still in use.

**North Side Points of interest**

**I. North Bridge Street Business District**

This area has largely escaped the process of modernization with several original store fronts existing intact. Note the various window designs, nameplates, decorative brickwork, and roof line ornamentation, particularly at 209 N. Bridge Street.

**J. Morley Street, Oakwood Cemetery**

Oakwood Cemetery was founded by the Grand Ledge Burial Society in 1856 on less than an acre of land. At that time, lots sold for \$5.00. The pine grove at the entrance is dedicated to the memory of Georgia Doxsie, a long-time local school teacher. The mausoleum, constructed in 1922, is a marble Art Deco design.

**K. End of West Front Street, Oak Park**

Perched high on the north bank of the Grand River, this pictureque park affords a good view of the steep sandstone ledges. Observe the rock climbers from the scenic overlook or by taking the steps down to the river.

**L. Tallman Road, Lincoln Brick Park**

This 90 acre county park was originally the site of a brick factory from 1914 to 1947. The clay pit and remains of the brick factory buildings are still visible. This park includes nature trails, playground, picnic grounds, fossil sites, and an interpretive center.