

## WALKING TOUR AROUND THE SQUARE

### Tour 4- Main Street South

Created originally, in part, for the Heritage Day in 1985,  
probably by Town Historian, Irene Meyers

Re-typed & expanded by Heather Stevens 2009 Village Historian



(At one time was known as Maine Street)

Starting point is 94 Public Square

**A. Public Square:** (94 Public Square) The LeFever Block was formally known as the Low- Coville Building. Early buildings on this site burned and later were replaced by the present brick structure about 1880/81. In later years businesses were conducted by Lows and Devitts. In 1940 Mr. George Devitt sold his store to Taylor and Everson for a Red and White Super Market. In 1960, James Everson moved to Florida and Bruce Taylor moved to a new store on South Main Street. Taylor rented the upstairs to Boudina Winks. LeFever's Pharmacy occupied the downstairs. In 1960, Low's sold to Kenneth House who closed it in 1971. The wall between Low's and Devitt's stores was torn down and LeFever's occupied the entire downstairs. They also added a lunch counter.

**B. Brown Block:** (670 S. Main Street) This "unique building" has often housed three businesses with apartments on top. The first two-story building formerly stood on Mallory St. just north of the William Church block. It was purchased and moved to its present site by H.C. Devendorf.

This block, in the 1920's it housed the Bidwell Harness Shop, a post office and later Syracuse Lighting Company Office and the E. E. Church barbershop. Apartments and a law office have been housed upstairs. To my knowledge this last section has always been a barber shop! Later from left to right was a gift shop, the Niagara Mohawk Office which later became Deanne's Beauty Shop and then Don Sweet's Jewelry Store. The Barber Shop is known by most as CJ's Barber Shop, once run as Browns Barbershop by Walter and Dick Brown.

**C. Yates Block (Central Plaza area):** The Yates building was originally a store. Elmer Wood's undertaking parlor was there at one time along with Sherman Covill's restaurant. At a much earlier date Charles Beeby was post master in the post office there. Later it became another well known restaurant operated by "ma Dodge" and later "Wickhams". Then it became the business place of Mr. and Mrs. Woodrow Yates. Many may still remember when this property housed the Franklin Restaurant, which served fish, frog legs, chicken and steak dinners. There was also an ice cream fountain. In the 1940's a large addition was added in the back for banquets. Bill Yates bought the building and named it Skyranch Saddlery. He sold outfits for square dancing and costumes for horse shows. There was also a billiard room in the rear (William Bowman Pool Room) at one time. In earlier days this section may have been an early meat market. Later it was Harold's Pharmacy after Leland and Alma Gardener ran a bakery there. It was torn down for the Village House parking lot.

The second half of the plaza (Around the corner), was a restaurant building built by Del Yager as a plumbing and heating supply store. It has housed businesses such as Del Yager Plumbing, Harold's Pharmacy, Gardners Bakery, and Tom Penoyers Restaurant. More recent businesses have included North Country Chiropractic, Oriental Nail Salon, Bo Bo's Restaurant, First Impressions Rubber Stamping and North Country Taekwondo.

Where the parking lot is between these two plaza styles building there once stood a two story dark wood sided building. It reminds me of a salon from the Wild West days. I have not yet figured out exactly what it was.

**D. Quintos Pizza:** (660 Main Street South) I believe this was, at one time, the home of Del Yager and may have been a Sears catalog home.

**E. Mutters Hall:** In 1860 a group of 23 disgruntled Methodists left their church and built the "White Church". After a short time the group disbanded and sold the property to Joseph and Elizabeth (Morey) Mutter. Mr. Mutter made the church into a public hall with a stage. In the early 1900's this was the center of entertainment in Central Square. Later it became a stage for silent movies. While this building was used as a place of entertainment the Mutter family lived in a home in the back. Later the hall fell into disrepair and John Coble bought it. He turned it into a two family residence. It then changed hands a few times and when Clate Bates purchased the property he built a third apartment upstairs in the back. In 1938 the house was purchased by Frank Struwing and many improvements were made, including removing the front porch and painting it. A garage was also added out back. There has been a lot of discussion about which home exactly this is...however based on that info it is believed it is the home just south of Quintos pizza (between 660 and 654)...not the home that runs perpendicular behind it as previously believed.

**F. Pleasant Acres Nursing Home:** (652 South Main Street) Built in 1851 by Thomas Shepard. In 1941, Mr. and Mrs. L. E. Woodcock sold this property (then a home and florist shop) to Mr. and Mrs. B. F. Conrad of Fairmount because they were going to move to Santa Cruz, California...however, they decided to stay. In 1943 Mr. and Mrs.

Theodore Barber moved in from Baldwinsville, the Conrads had moved to Liverpool. December 1, 1947 Mr. and Mrs. George Archibald took possession of the Pleasant Acres Nursing home. They were from Syracuse. The Nursing home had about 28 beds. This beautiful Victorian was a nursing home until at least the late 1970's. Today 652 South Main Street is the home of a day spa and flower designer as well as a hair stylist.

**G. Main Street School:** (642 South Main Street) Prior to this current building, the original school on this property was built by George Elliott in 1873 and cost \$6,000. It became the Union Free School and Academy in 1887. By 1925 the building was condemned and taken down. A new one was erected on the same lot in 1926. At that time, there was a staff of fifteen to twenty teachers with an enrollment of approximately 300 pupils. Four buses picked up children and the school tax was \$.85 per thousand.

When the district became centralized in 1944, the enrollment jumped to 1300 pupils. The old school building now houses the offices for the district. The new buildings were built in 1958 on Caughdenoy Street. These buildings cost the tax payers \$6,500, 000 and the tax rate jumped to \$31.00 per thousand.

**H. Jreck Subs Store:** (636 South Main Street) Prior to 1968, this property had the home of Paul Fuller. The home was torn down in 1968 to build the Byrne Dairy Store. Today the Byrne Dairy is located north of the village and the property is the home of Jreck Subs.

\*\*At this point cross Webb Avenue and continue on Main Street South.

**I. The Wilcox House:** (632 South Main Street) On the corner of Webb Avenue and Route 11 was built by Avery T. Low in the late 1800's. It is classified as a (the only in Central Square) Empire home. Avery's son, Henry Low and daughter Armonelle (Devendorf) were born here. About 1883 Major and Mrs. Henry C. Devendorf lived here after returning from Georgia. Most remember this as the Wilcox Home. Dr. Hadwin Wilcox and his first wife, Nell here for many years. He practiced medicine and had an office on the first floor of the home. In 1950, Dr. Reed a dentist purchased the property and ran his practice here. March 1, 1954 Mr. Frank Merriam bought the property and remodeled it. He turned it into two apartments and kept the dental office.

**J. Carriage House:** (632 South Main Street) The Carriage house for the Wilcox home has its own interesting history. Up until the 1920's it was used by Dr. Wilcox for his carriage and horses and then later as a garage for his car. When Mr. Merriman bought the property he remodeled it into an apartment upstairs and office downstairs. For many years the office was used by Dr. Charles and Henrietta Dauerty (general practice-medicine). On June 1, 1957 Albert Pirr purchased the property and turned the offices in dwelling space also.

**L. Crims Furniture:** (604 South Main Street) Few can miss this lavender highlighted building☺ However, originally this was the farm house of Clarence Hayden. (He delivered mail for many years). Then most of us will remember it as Crims Furniture Store which opened in about 1957. Today it is the Country Boutique, a craft store.

**M. St. Michael's Rectory:** Dr. Frederick Newman and his wife built this home in 1939. Part of it was used for his doctor's office. After he died, Dr. Edward Murphy lived here. Today it is the parsonage for St. Michael's Catholic Church.

**N. St. Michael's Parish Hall:** (592 South Main Street) Formerly the Arthur Getman Farm, the parish center was built in about 1976.

**O. Morse Park:** Between the Parish Center is Morse Park. It is named in honor of Reverend John J. Morse for his total commitment to the youth of this community. At one time, Rev. Morse guided a group of talented teenagers called the Believers. They entertained the youth and seniors in our area. Today this is the home of the Central Square Little League.

**P. Country Gardens:** (566 South Main Street) The spacious apartment residences you see today are built on what at one time was the Thomas Weatherup Farm.

**Q. Central Square Farm and Lawn:** (526 South Main Street) This building is the former Super Duper Grocery Store. It was originally built by Bruce Taylor as a Red and White Store and then Taylor's IGA.

**R. Byrn's Service Center** (518 South Main) Today a service center at one time this was a bakery outlet.

\*\*At this point carefully cross main street and head north towards the center of the village.

**S. Lakeview Tire and Service:** (520 South Main Street) Actually to the rear of Lakeview Tire you will see what was the Village Car Wash. It was the first car wash built in the village and had its grand opening on about December 1, 1966. I believe it was owned by Walt and Howard Scott. This location was previously the home of Community Motors and car dealership and repair shop.

**T. Village Pharmacy:** (537 South Main) The Village Pharmacy was built on the property formerly owned by Ted Wade. Mr. Wade sold coal that was delivered by the railroad to village residents.

**U. Herrick Home:** (551 South Avenue) This is a Sears Roebuck Home. At one time it may have been a boarding home. When Mr. and Mrs. Frank A. Herrick lived here it was called The Evergreen.

**V. Fairway Physical Therapy:** (573 South Main Street) This was the location of Glenn's Service Station. William H. Glenn owned and operated the station for 31 years. One of the "extras" at this station was his talking parrot.

**W. Adam's Automotive:** the small garage that sits back to the left of Adam's automotive

from South Main street was at one time Pat's Polka-dot Beauty Shop.

**X. St Michael's Catholic Church:** (589 South Main Street) Early services were held in the Hamilton Hotel and later in the Grange Hall. The original part of the church was built in 1927. Rev. Simson was the first full time pastor. In 1950 wings were built on the original structure to double church capacity.

**Y. Square Central Diner:** (595 South Main Street) Here is where the first drive in gas station in the village was built by John W. McKinley. He bought the property in about December 1919 and sold the station in 1928. In recent years this property has been a diner. In 2006 the property was purchased by the Village of Central Square to be green space/a park eventually.

**Z. Richfield Station:** (601 south main Street) In 2009-Parking lot/grass area north of diner. The Richfield Gas Station once stood here. Also in this area was the H. H. Wheeler Building, he sold coal. In 2006 when the village bought this property there was a former auto body shop and car lot here (LJC Wholesale Cars). The garage was torn down and revealed it had at one time been an antique store.

**Z1. Watson Funeral Home:** (631 South Main Street) Arthur Watson came from Cleveland in 1926 and was the first owner of Watson Funeral home. In 1959 Ernest Ladd Jr. became manager. In 1992 Ernest Ladd III took over the business.

**Z2. Central Square Library:** (637 South Main Street) The Central Square Library officially opened December 13, 1933 by Inez Moon. The current building was built in 1945. The house that stood on this site was owned by Mrs. Rogers. She lived in an apartment on one side and the library occupied the other side of the house. Inez Moon rented for \$8 a month the other side and was responsible for organizing the first library. Much later Ada B. Smith lived in the house. She was most influential in collecting funds for the new library.

**Z3. Fancher Home:** (643 South Main Street) This home belonged to Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Fancher and later their son Charles and wife, Dell. Later it was the home of Mr. and Mrs. DeAlton Towsley and the late Dr. DeAlton Towsley. Mr. Fancher drove the stagecoach which met the many trains that came into Central Square. Prior to 1873 a school operated on this site for a few years. However it was inadequate and a new brick structure was built across the street. (see letter G of this tour).

**Z4. Wood Home:** (647 South Main Street) This home was built by David L. Wood in the 1840's or 1850's. Mr. Wood was a prominent business man for many years. He was a dealer in boots, shoes and ready-made clothing. When David died in 1893, the place was left to two daughters, Gertrude (Wood) Randall and Grace Wood, who later married Dr. Frank Strong. Grace bequeathed the place to the Universalist Church. After Mrs. Strong died the home was remodeled into two apartments. It was sold to Paul V. Moore, whom the High School is named after, in 1946. Today it is the home of Cronk's Insurance Company.

**Z5. Contermans:** (661 South Main Street) Timothy Conterman settled in Central Square in 1892, when he opened a meat market here. The family lived in the back of the building and the store was in front. He was active in public life, being at various times Collector for the Town of Hastings, Justice of the Peace and Mayor of the village. His son, Bruce later carried in the business until 1961 when he and his wife, Marian retired. The place has had other types of businesses since including; Angelo's Bakery, The Fox's Gifts and Antiques, A&S Computers, Beauty Salons and today Carlene's Antiques.

**Z6. The Penoyer House:** (Corner of South Main Street & Caughdenoy Road) The Penoyer Home once stood here, built in 1879 for George Woodin. It was one of the show places of the village. The builder was Thomas Smith who constructed many building in the village at that time. It was bought by Earl Penoyer and family who lived there for nearly 30 years. The barn was as beautifully constructed as the house. It was moved to the corner of Pleasant Avenue and Caughdenoy Street and built into a home for Timothy and Cora Conterman. The Penoyer home was torn down to make room for a new post office.

\*\*At this point please cross Caughdenoy Street and continue towards the center of the vilalge.

**Z7. Traub Block:** (671 South Main Street) Across the corner of Caughdenoy Street was the Traub block which became one of the oldest buildings in the village until it burned in the fire of 1921. It was erected by Gehiel Noble in 1836. In stage coach days, Jacob Farrington used the building for a hotel and sold it to William Slocum who conducted business for some time. The first drug store in the village, owned by Mr. Drake, was in this old building. Mr. Slocum sold to Gabriel Traub and purchased the large brick hotel next door. Mr. Traub converted it into a residence where he lived until his death. His son, Louis Traub opened a furniture store and undertaking business there in the 1800's. It was destroyed by fire in 1921. The Traubs built a new building, just to the west on Caughdenoy Street. The furniture store was downstairs and the family lived upstairs.

**Z8. The Penoyer Building:** (Parking lot & 675 South main Street) Next to the Traub building was the Penoyer building. In 1823 Hastings Curtiss built a brick hotel which became the center for the town meetings and public gatherings. It was also the stage coach stop. It burned in 1839 and was rebuilt by Robert Elliott and John Beeby. In 1895 it was known as the Johnson House, later becoming the Dixon House. The hotel was destroyed by fire in 1916. The three story building which replaced it was the shortest lived building in the village. It was built in 1918 and burned down in 1921. Edgar Wightman and Earl Penoyer built the block. It housed the showroom for their Ford Auto Sales, a restaurant operated by Leon Miles (Penoyer's brother-in-law) and a post office with Charles Beeby serving as postmaster. The second floor had apartments and a hall where Henry Rice and Clair Bennett ran movies of the silent type. The third floor was occupied by the Masons and Eastern Stars. The hand drawn fire apparatus was housed in the basement. When fire broke out, the fire engine proved to be of little value because of the lack of water and lack of pressure. The building was completely destroyed along with

the Traub building to the south and the First National Bank on the other side. In 1922, the Wightman-Penoyer building was rebuilt and used for dealership of Hudson and Essex cars followed by the Ford dealership. After the Penoyer Ford Company went out of business in 1979, the building was used for a hardware store. It has now been torn down.

Stephen Farnett was taken in as a partner of Wightman-Penoyer. In 1947 Farnett bought the next building and ran a hardware business until 1969. Farnetts lived upstairs and Jessie had a beauty shop. Stephen Farnett was Clerk of the School District for many years. When the Farnetts retired, they sold the building back to Carl Penoyer. It later was the office of Century Real Estate and today at that location is Dignity Plus.

**Z9. First National Bank:** (Corner of South Main & Fulton Ave) The first bank building was built through the efforts of Henry D. Coville in 1912. After it burned in the 1921 fire, the present bank was erected next door. The old bank building was rebuilt to become the Central Square Fire Company No. 1. An upper floor was added to accommodate firemen and to store equipment. For many years there was a Salvation Army deposit box and telephone booth to the right of the building. It also had a meeting hall and “detention room” on the second floor. It was torn down by the bank to enlarge their parking lot.

**End of Main Street South Tour.** If you would like to continue from this point please view Walking Tour 1- Fulton Avenue.