

VILLAGE OF MEDINA SELF-GUIDED HISTORY TOURS

These tours are comprised primarily of private property. Please be respectful and responsible by staying on the sidewalks. Also, be sure to practice social distancing while out walking and be vigilant crossing streets. Alternatively, these tours can be done in a car or even by using Street View in Google Maps. Here is a link to [Google Maps Street View Instructions](#)

Tour 1 (Gwinn St Park to Prospect Ave Lift Bridge - 0.7 mi one way)

1. At the northeast corner of Gwinn St. and W. Oak Orchard St. sits Gwinn St. Park. This park was originally a cemetery and at that time Gwinn St. was known as Burying Ground Rd. This was the second burying ground in the village. The first was on the southeast corner of West Ave. and W. Center St. As the village developed, it was decided to move the original burying ground to where you are standing now. It was thought at the time that the area would be far enough away that settlement would not encroach upon it. However, by the late 1840s, the cemetery was being hemmed in by development and a new location was sought. In 1849, the Village purchased the area that is today known as Boxwood Cemetery on North Gravel Rd. It was not until 1895 that the bodies and headstones were removed. Many of them were placed in a separate section of Boxwood Cemetery. Sometime after 1915, this became the first village park.
2. At the southwest corner of Gwinn St. and W. Oak Orchard St. sits the former home of Andrew Downie McPhee. There is an historical marker in the yard that explains his significance. Behind this house is Veterans' Memorial Park. This park was originally privately owned by the Medina Athletic Association. A highlight of this time period was the arrival of Babe Ruth, in 1920, who participated in a barnstorming exhibition game. In the game he struck out, hit a triple, and a homerun. It was turned over to the village in 1929. It was dedicated in 1948, as Veterans' Memorial Park to honor past athletes who played here and also served in the two World Wars. It is now part of the Medina Central School District.
3. On the northwest corner, at 814 Gwinn St., is the home built for Edward Davey around 1857. Davey was prominent in the carriage-making business. His business was located where 116-120 E. Center St. is today, though his buildings were burned in 1903. When he died in 1894, his son, Edward H. Davey, inherited the home and the business. Upon the younger Davey's death, the home was sold to Eugene Walsh in 1899, who owned and operated the Walsh Hotel on West Ave. The next owner was George Becker, an official of H.J. Heinz, who lived here for twenty-five years, until 1962 – just months before Heinz announced its closing.
4. You can now begin your walk north on Gwinn St. Just after you cross North Avenue, is the old freight depot. It is the third depot on the site. The first was built in 1852, and served as both a passenger and freight depot. The second one was strictly a freight depot and was used from 1862 to 1905. The current one was built in 1905, by the New York Central Railroad. In 1963, it was sold to Thomas and Helen Hickey who eventually turned it into a furniture store. When they retired, they sold it to Marty Phelps, in 1991, who opened the doors on the current Medina Railroad Museum in 1997.
5. Continue north to the corner of Gwinn St. and Park Ave. Pause for a moment before turning left on Park Ave. – originally called Mill St. due to the mill at its eastern terminus, it was later renamed for the fact that there was a driving park (harness racing) at the west end. The home across the street at 228 Park Ave. was built for Thomas B. Robbins. In the early 1950s it was known as the Cornell Restaurant. In the early 1960s, it became a funeral home run by Leo Houseman. It is currently a private residence.
6. Next door, at 232 Park Ave, this home was built in 1899, for Charles J. Brennan who was the brother-in-law of the Maher brothers and eventually ran their furniture company. Daniel Cleary, Jr. turned it into a funeral home. He died just two years later so his wife Mildred studied embalming and undertaking and became one of the first women in New York to be licensed. It eventually was sold to Dennis Bates and became Bates-Cleary Funeral home, and now a private residence.

7. After a very brief walk on Park Ave., turn right onto Prospect Ave. This street was originally the western boundary of the village. Heading north once again, stop at the corner of Prospect Ave. and W. Center St. This is a prominent corner as indicated by the architecture. At 503 Prospect Ave., on your right, there is an historic marker explaining the significance of this home. It is two-sided, so be sure to read both sides. For many years this was also the Maple Crest Inn.
8. To your left, at 303 W. Center St., is the former home of S.A. Cook. He began in business wholesaling tobacco, cigars, and confections. When the cheap furniture he was giving away as premiums for buying his products proved popular, he began manufacturing furniture and became a prominent furniture manufacturer in Medina.
9. Carefully cross over W. Center St. This is a very busy intersection. On your left, at 304 W. Center St., is a pink Medina sandstone home built by Augustus Ives, a produce dealer. It was then owned by Homer Luther, the vice-president of the Union Bank. It is currently being restored into a boutique hotel and events center by Talis Historic Restoration.
10. To your right, at 238 W. Center St., is the former site of the Casey Nursing Home, owned and operated by Helen K. Casey in the 1950s and 1960s. It was built in 1890, along with the house to the east at 234, by William G. Skinner, who is given credit for the start of the 29th Separate Company militia, the precursor to Company F.
11. As you approach Pearl St., on your left is 400 Prospect Ave. This is actually the second house built on this site. Joseph Craig began to build a wood frame house on this site in 1839, but it burned down as it was being completed. He then built the impressive home you see here today. It was later the home of one Medina's great characters – Charles Newton Hood who was a newspaperman and the manager of Bent's Opera House. Take a look to your left to get a view of the old Medina High School. This school was built in 1922-23 to replace the even older Medina Academy. This is also the original location of Lee-Whedon Library, which was inside the school you see here. The last graduating class was the Class of 1991.
12. Across the street is the magnificent Medina sandstone structure that was originally an armory, built in 1901. Many Medina citizens served out of this armory and there is a statue and plaques dedicated to their service. After the armory was de-commissioned in 1977, the Armory Action Committee was formed and they were able to convince the YMCA to start a branch here, which still operates today. Feel free to challenge yourself on their sidewalk obstacle course.
13. Continuing north on Prospect Ave. you come to the corner of Eagle St. and Prospect Ave. At 300 Eagle St. is the precursor to the Medina Memorial Hospital. It is not the first hospital in Medina, however. The former home of A.L. Swett – prominent iron works owner – was purchased in 1910, for this latest location of the Mary Louise Hospital run by Myra Coon. The current Medina Memorial Hospital opened in 1925. If you look to your left, all the way to the end of Eagle St., the current hospital is located here on Ohio St. If you look to your right, Holy Trinity (St. Mary's) Catholic Church is down a block. This is another great example of Medina sandstone, built from 1902-1904. This is the third Catholic Church on the property.
14. Stopping at the corner of Prospect Ave. and Commercial St., if you look to your right, the large red building was most recently Snappy – a galvanized pipe and fittings manufacturer. It was originally known as Acer & Whedon and then Acme.
15. Crossing over Commercial St. you approach the lift bridge for the Erie Canal. It is one of only sixteen lift bridges on the entire Erie Canal. They are all located between Lockport and Fairport.
16. The last stop is the original John Ryan Medina sandstone quarry. Unfortunately, the quarry has been filled in, but there is an historical marker across North Gravel Rd. (North of the bridge Prospect Ave. turns into North Gravel Rd.) Be very careful crossing here. It is busy and it is sometimes hard to see vehicles coming over the lift bridge.