

# Oneonta's Self-Guided

# Walking Tour

Enjoy Oneonta's Residential Historic District

SPONSORED BY:  
**MAIN STREET ONEONTA**

## WHO IS MAIN STREET ONEONTA?

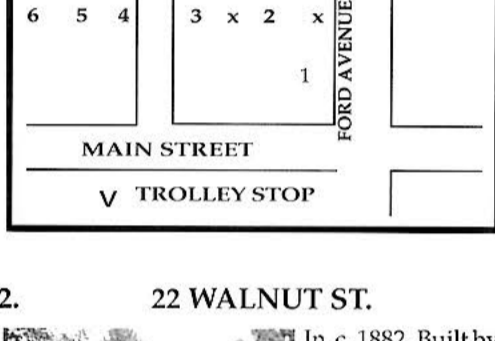
MAIN STREET ONEONTA is an organization of citizens and local business owners concerned with the vibrancy of the City of Oneonta's Main Street downtown area. We work to ensure the economic vitality of the Main Street area, accomplishing this through programming, information dissemination, and events. We strive to enhance the community's connection and visitors' experiences in the heart of Oneonta.

## MAIN STREET ONEONTA

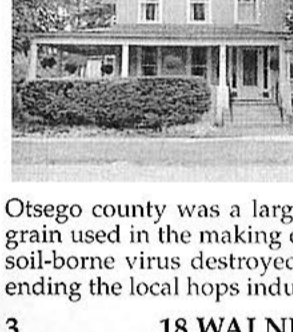
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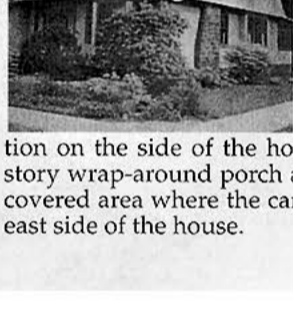
### 2. 22 WALNUT ST.



In c. 1882. Built by D. M. Miller as a single-story hops warehouse and business office this "Victorian Craftsman" was converted to a two-story home in the 1890's. The green building across the street was Miller's hops drying barn. In the 1800's

Otsego county was a large producer of hops, a grain used in the making of beer. Around 1900, a soil-borne virus destroyed the hops vines, thus ending the local hops industry.

### 3. 18 WALNUT ST.



c. 1898 A shingle style home built by the first president of the Oneonta Normal School, Mr. P. I. Bugbee. Now Oneonta has two colleges, the State Univ. College, Oneonta and a private school, Hartwick College. Before the 1950's addition on the side of the house, there was a two-story wrap-around porch and a porte-cochere (a covered area where the carriage stopped) on the east side of the house.

### 7. 8 WALNUT ST.

c. 1900. Originally similar to 10 Walnut, it was modernized by successive owners. In the 1950's, this house was owned by NYS Supreme Court Justice Joseph Molinari.

### 8. 6 WALNUT ST.



c. 1853. This Classic Revival style home is one of the city's earliest. When this house was built, it stood at the intersection at Dietz St. facing East down Walnut. In 1895 Walnut St. was extended by one block and the house was moved to this location. It was built by Gould Dietz, the son of Jacob Dietz, an early settler. Past owners include a College president and an Oneonta mayor.

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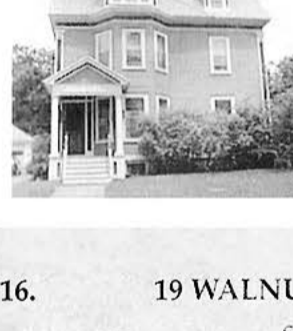
### 9. 1-3 WALNUT ST.

c. 1912. A late Victorian double house, with identical side from attics to cellars.

### 10. 5 WALNUT ST.

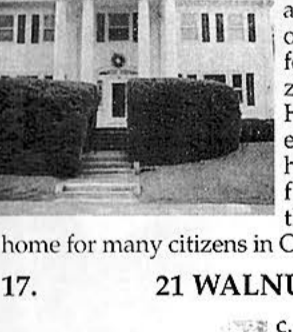
c. 1915. As the ornate Victorian house style lost popularity, the more practical Craftsman style bungalow replaced it. As the population of the city increased in the 1910's due to the growth of the railroad, this snug, three bedroom, one bath home style was constructed throughout the city.

### 11. 7 WALNUT ST.



c. 1900. Not uncommon to this time, is the architectural split-personality of this home. The outside is Neo-Classical while the interior reflects the earlier Victorian ornateness.

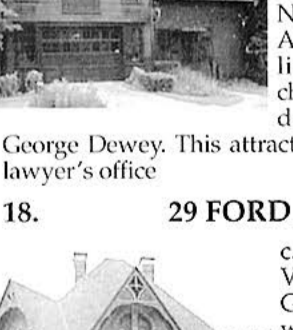
### 16. 19 WALNUT ST.



c. 1904. Neo-Classical Revival with two-story columned portico and an elliptical fanlight over the front door. Built for the attorney of Citizens Bank, Mr. Hemstreet, A "Southern Plantation" style home is most unusual for Oneonta making this house a favorite

home for many citizens in Oneonta.

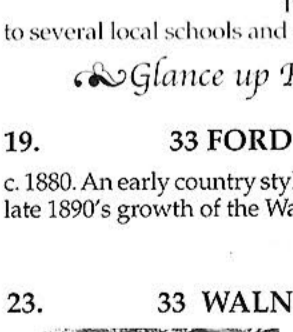
### 17. 21 WALNUT ST.



c. 1882. Initially, a hops barn for the Miller family across the street. Next, it became a carriage & chauffeur's house for the NY State Justice, Abraham Kellogg, who lived next door. The chauffeur later became the driver for NYS Gov.

George Dewey. This attractive building is now a lawyer's office

### 18. 29 FORD AVE.



c. 1882. An ornate Gothic Victorian built by Frank Gould, partner in a hardware business. Later Mr. Kellogg, a NYS Justice, lived in the house for 35 yrs. In the 1920's, Judge Kellogg was an early investor in a small local time clock business that later became IBM. In 1986 he left \$23 million

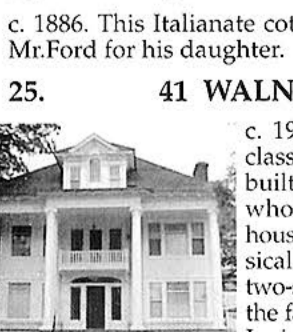
to several local schools and colleges.

Glance up Ford Avenue

### 19. 33 FORD AVE.

c. 1880. An early country style house built before the late 1890's growth of the Walnut St. area.

### 23. 33 WALNUT ST.

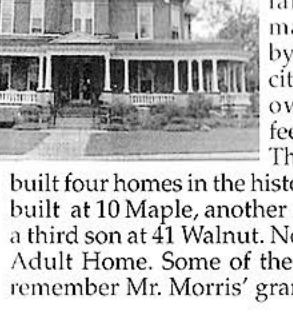


c. 1920. The newer house on the street it shows the influence of the American Four-Square style, a design having four rooms on each floor. As families turned away from the Victoria elaboration, the more practical style became popular. Present this home is the Murphy House Bed and Breakfast.

### 24. 35 WALNUT ST.

c. 1886. This Italianate cottage was built by Mr. Ford for his daughter.

### 25. 41 WALNUT ST.



c. 1913. A grand Neo-classical Revival house built by Burton Morr whose father built the house next door. It's classical features include two-story veranda across the facade supported by Ionic columns, a dormer Palladian window & lovely fanlight over the front door.

### 26. 43 WALNUT ST.



c. 1885 A masterpiece of Victorian eclecticism with flaring conical roofs, dormers with bold roof shapes, large porch and mansard roof. Built by Albert Morris, the city's first mayor, who owned a successful feed & grain business. This respected family

built four homes in the historic district: one built at 10 Maple, another one at 5 Maple and a third son at 41 Walnut. Now the Robynow Adult Home. Some of the residents here can remember Mr. Morris' grandchildren.

## An Overview

In 1806 settlers began to build in clearings along the Oneonta Creek, driving the Iroquois Indians from their territorial home in the Upper Susquahanna Valley. When the Charlotte Valley Turnpike became a well traveled passageway through the area in the 1830s, Oneonta developed into a village.

The railroad, being built from Albany to Binghamton, reached Oneonta in 1865. The Delaware and Hudson Railroad located its division offices here in 1870. At that point, Oneonta played an important role in the rail system and experienced remarkable growth. Feed and grain, hops, dry goods, and other businesses prospered. The population, which was only 744 before the coming of the railroad, grew to 3,700 by 1882. In 1902, Oneonta had become a city with a population of 9,041.

The history of Oneonta also was shaped by educational institutions which remain an important part of today's community. The State University of Oneonta was founded in 1887 as the State Normal & Training School, the first state-supported teachers college. Hartwick College, a private liberal arts school, moved to its present hillside location in 1927.

A walk along Walnut Street shows the history of Oneonta through the grand homes built between 1863-1920 by its founding fathers of government, business and education. The Walnut Street area of the 19th Century was honored by its 20th Century residents, celebrating its recognition as a National Historic District in 1980.

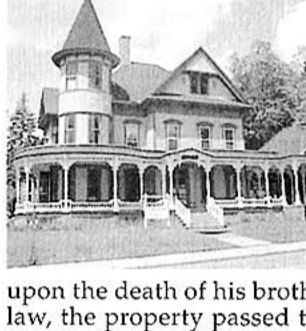
In the 21st. Century, Walnut St. remains a prestigious address. Oneonta, with a population of 15,000, is the largest city and commercial center in Otsego County.

This walking tour will take you along four residential blocks of the Walnut Street Historic District which lies one block N. of Main Street. The tour will take approximately 45 minutes.

We hope you'll enjoy our lovely city as much as we do.

To begin, walk N. on Ford Ave.

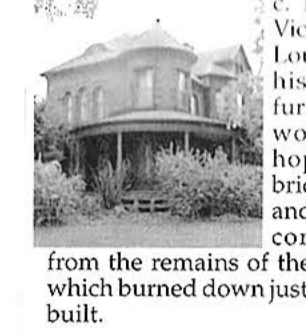
### 1. 11 FORD ST.



Wilber Mansion was built by George Wilber, son of the founder of our local bank, Wilber National Bank. Mr. Wilber was known for his philanthropy to his city and

upon the death of his brother and sister-in-law, the property passed to the City which used it as headquarters for many civic groups. Recently, the ownership has passed to our local arts council which has its offices and galleries here. When the Mansion was built in 1875, it was a simple, flat-roofed Italianate structure. In the early 1890's, it was renovated in the High Victorian style adding deep porches, fanciful decorative motifs, a turret, a porte-cochere, stained-glass windows & pitched roof. Public opinion saved the house when the municipal parking lot was built. Later on this tour, we'll point out a parking lot where public sentiment could not save a house even in the historic district.

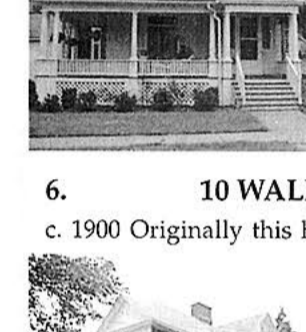
### 4. 55 DIETZ ST.



c. 1895. A Romanesque Victorian home built by Louis Gurney who, with his brother who lived further down Walnut St., worked in dry goods, hops and salvage. The brick used for this home and its mate on the other corner was salvaged

from the remains of the first Normal School which burned down just two years after it was built.

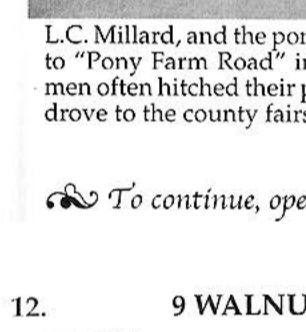
### 5. 12 WALNUT ST.



c. 1900 A less ornate version of its immediate neighbor, it was the home of Bea Blending, one of the city's most generous benefactors and owner of an early auto dealership in Oneonta

### 6. 10 WALNUT ST.

c. 1900 Originally this home was owned by Mr. Keenan and was a pony farm.



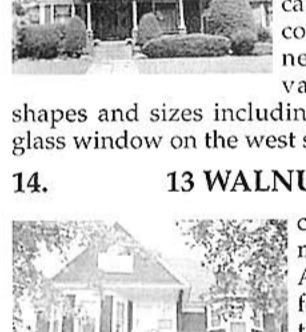
As many as ten ponies grazed on this property and stabled in the barn that is now the shared garage for numbers 10 & 12 Walnut. Mr. Keenan went into partnership with L.C. Millard, and the ponies were then moved to "Pony Farm Road" in West Oneonta. The men often hitched their ponies to wagons and drove to the county fairs.

To continue, open the brochure

### 12. 9 WALNUT ST.

c. 1910. Brick was not a common material used for private homes in Oneonta. The city has fewer than 100 brick homes.

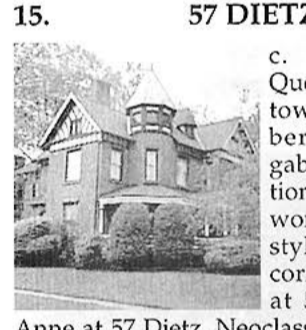
### 13. 11 WALNUT ST.



c. 1896. This is an exceptional Queen Anne Shingle style home with its porte-cochere, the covered area for a horse & carriage, wide porch, complex and prominent roofline, and varied window

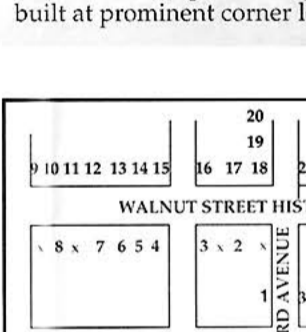
shapes and sizes including a large stained glass window on the west side.

### 14. 13 WALNUT ST.

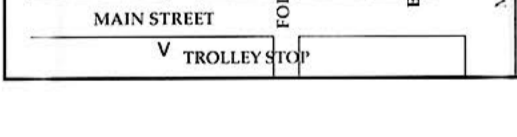


c. 1896. Another magnificent Queen Anne home with features similar to the house next door. Past owner, Dr. Dietz, had his office in his home as was common during this time.

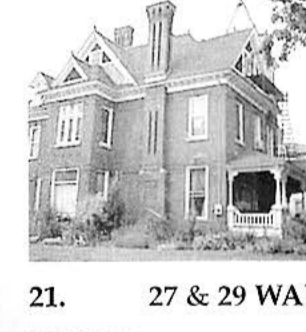
### 15. 57 DIETZ ST.



c. 1896. Masonry Queen Anne and half-timbering in the gables. This intersection is especially noteworthy as a different style is seen at each corner: Romanesque at 55 Dietz, Queen Anne at 57 Dietz, Neo-classical Revival at 19 Walnut and Shingle Style at 18 Walnut. It was common to find particularly imposing houses built at prominent corner locations.



### 20. 35 FORD AVE.



c. 1890. Exceptional masonry Chateausque style home built by another early hops merchant. Note the tower, the patterned brick tile plaques and generous porches.

### 21. 27 & 29 WALNUT ST.



c. 1866. At this time Walnut St. had several scattered houses & hops warehouses. E.R. Ford owned the north side of the street, and he built two Italianate structures, one for a son at 29 Walnut. Although, 27 & 29 were built by different people they are each typical Italianate structures with flat roofs, bracketed eaves and double doorways.

### 22. 31 WALNUT ST.

c. 1885. A brick home with an Italianate porch, decorated wood gables and rows of angled brick.

## Glance across Maple St.

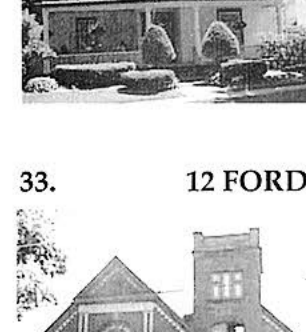
### 27-30. 4-10 MAPLE ST.

The houses at 2 Maple St. to 10 Maple are included in the Historic District & represent an interesting range of style from the large Queen Anne, the stately masonry house to the charming purple cottage.

### L. 5 MAPLE ST. PARKING LOT

In 1998 the Clifford Morris home was demolished & replaced by this parking lot despite local opposition.

### 31. 27 ELM ST.



c. 1860. Another early Italianate (flat roof) house that had a roof-lift "roof-lift" when the more ornate Victorian style came into fashion. Currently an Inn run by Hartwick College.

### 32. 30 WALNUT ST.



c. 1880. A pleasing example of a Victorian home. It was formerly the home of a city mayor and a bank president, and, of course, their families.

### 33. 12 FORD AVE.



c. 1896. Chapin Chapel, a Unitarian Universalist Church is in the process of applying for designation on the National Register of Historic Places.