

Huntley's Historic Town Square: A Self-Guided Tour

*Courtesy of the Village of Huntley Historic Preservation Commission and
The Huntley Area Public Library Local History Department*



Huntley Downtown Area Map



Huntley Town Square Detail Map

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1. The Huntley School Apartment building was built in 1875, an addition added in 1910, and razed in 2017. The building was first an elementary school. High school students were added in the 1890s. The building was used as a school until 1955.
2. The First Congregational Church was built in 1863 by a 10-year old congregation. The building, plaqued by the McHenry County Historical Society, is the oldest church in continuous use in McHenry County.
3. The Offie's Tap building dates to c.1940. Originally it housed a barbershop and coffee shop, as well as a tavern. Previously on this spot, a frame building housed the Disbrow wagon shop and meeting rooms upstairs. The frame building was destroyed by fire in the late 1930s.
4. Strode's Furniture Main Store: A frame house, which was moved to south Church Street, was the earliest structure on this site. The Pabst Building, now Strode's Furniture, was built in 1916. The cement blocks were made on-site for this building and the Pabst home around the corner. Through the years the ground floor housed the Heuer Brothers, Amos Brothers and Sigrist restaurants, Kalsow Drugs, Michelsen Garage and Dolby Chevrolet. The second story was used for community gatherings, dances and Huntley High School basketball games.
5. Strode's Furniture West: The west section of Strode's was a separate building which was the location of John Wendt's Drug Store, Frederick and Clanton grocery, post office and Clanton and Schoof's Royal Blue Store until the 1950s. Sites 4 and 5 have been recognized by the Huntley Historic Preservation Commission for the historical maintenance of the building.
6. Village Inn Restaurant was originally two buildings. The east section was Fenwick, and later, Hansen Hardware Store. The west was the Pabst, then John Schlupp's saloon until the 1950s. In 1961, Coils Inc. used the building as its first Huntley factory site.
7. Patrick Michael Jewelers was originally a 2-story brick structure built in 1893 by Dr. Charles Cook. It housed his office on the east section and Farmers Exchange Bank on the west. Edward Cook, Charles' brother, operated a drug store and funeral service business after Charles' death. The second story was a showroom for the undertaker's casket sales. The State Bank of Huntley occupied the west section of the building until the 1970s.
8. Best Price Tobacco and Gift Shop is on the site of the Franklin Amos harness and shoe shop, later Frank and Lone Noeth's Gift Shop.
9. Parkside Beer Garden was originally two buildings that housed the Dwyer Confectionery and later Farley grocery stores. The west parcel was Lawson Meat Market. The upstairs rooms were used for living quarters and for Dr. Norman's dentist office.
10. Parkside Restaurant & Pub replaced the Carroll Pool Hall. Earlier, it was the Lee, Hadley and Heinemann hardware stores.
11. The Sawyer-Kelley Mercantile Building sits on the site of the former Sawyer-Kelley Mill built c.1890. After the mill closed it housed the post office, rental storage and a milk depot. The original mill was razed in 2014. Today it houses Morkes Choclates, Irie Cup and Huntley Eye Care.
12. Sal's Pizza Place, Ritual occupy this 2-story, L-shaped brick building built in 1878 by John Hawley where he operated a general store until 1894. Frank Weltzien, then John Burns continued the business. Heinemann Hardware followed for 30 years, then Louis Kahl's Groceries, Oakley & Morehead Appliances and Purdom's IGA Grocery Store. The upper floor served as a silent movie theater, bowling alley and Huntley High School from 1920-25. Now it is apartments.
13. Century 21 New Heritage is one of the oldest buildings in the village. It originally housed a hotel. From the 1880s to 1917 it was Devine and Skeels General Store. Later, it served as Otto Hardt's grocery, a laundromat, a dental office and the Sigrist and Tessmer restaurants and the Hayes Tavern (facing Main Street). In the 1990s it was a religious goods store. This building has been recognized by the Huntley Historic Preservation Commission.
14. LMM & Associates, Inc.: This building built in the 1960s was Heinemann and Brill Hardware. Formerly on the site was a frame building used for Sigrist Restaurant, Van Ness Grocery and adjoined the first Dolby Garage. The northern most section of this building has been the Huntley Post Office since 1957.
15. The American Legion Post 673, this 84-year-old organization moved to this location in 1951. Prior to that, the building housed Walter Zimmerman's gas station, a freezer-locker plant and a Marlowe Feed and Hatchery business.
16. The former John G. Kelley House, built pre-Civil War. Kelley, a blacksmith, operated his shop to the west of where the Huntley Chamber of Commerce now stands. The house was razed in April of 2017. BBQ King plus two store fronts were built during the spring and summer of 2018.
17. The Huntley Chamber of Commerce, formerly the Huntley Village Hall, was built in 1939 for \$8,500. It housed the fire engine on the Church Street side, a jail on the first floor and boardrooms and community meeting room on the second floor.
18. The Centennial Time Capsule marker is to be opened in 2051.
19. The Old Village Fire Bell was mounted on a metal tower on the square and was used to summon volunteers to fight fires until it was replaced by a siren in 1968. The number of tolls of the bell signified the location of the fire.
20. Memorial Clock - In honor of Florence Conley Schaffenegger (1917 – 2009). Florence was the daughter of prominent businessman Enos Conley. She left money in her will to help maintain the Huntley Town Square.
21. Gazebo: This current gazebo was built in 1994 with time and materials donated by local businesses. It replaced the former "bandstand" which was constructed on a concrete base built by stonemason Andrew Schmitt in 1910. Earlier a wooden structure in the same spot served as a site for band concerts. In the gazebo's center is the 2001 Sesquicentennial time capsule, to be opened in 2051.
22. Huntley Town Square: Thomas Stillwell Huntley purchased land and by 1851 laid out the town square and business area, the train depot, three church sites, and a cemetery. North of the Town Square sign are the sesquicentennial bricks donated to support the town's 150 Anniversary in 2001.
23. This WWI Mine Thrower was mounted on its base by local stonemason Andrew Schmitt under guidance of WWI veteran Clay Marsh.
24. WWI Memorial Rock: In 1923, The Huntley Women's Club dedicated this rock to honor veterans from WWI.
25. Veterans Memorial honoring men and women who served or are serving in all braches of the United States Military. Dedicated July 2, 2016.
26. Veterans Gold Star Monument honoring veterans who died while in service. Dedicated July 2, 2016.
27. Historic Buildings Area: This area is the location of several early businesses which covered the east end of the park and Coral St., which had previously ended in front of the Kelley house #16. The businesses were Glazier's Harness Shop and Home, O. H. Schmalz's Store, Oakley and Fisher Furniture Stores, a millinery shop, an attorney and a dental office.