



The tour begins and ends at the Bayshore Parking Lot, located at Front Street and London Road ('P' Symbol on the map). There is ample free parking at this lot. The first stop is The Henry T. Ross Substation at Water and Maxwell Streets (#1 on the map).

To return to your vehicle after the last stop (#30 on the map), walk north on Front Street along the waterfront back to the Bayshore Parking Lot.

**Please respect private property and view all properties/sites from the sidewalk.**

Scan the code to connect with the City's Digital Mobile Friendly Interactive Web Map!



Presented by the Sarnia Heritage Committee



Further information about heritage properties in the City of Sarnia as well as the Sarnia Heritage Committee can be found by visiting [www.sarnia.ca](http://www.sarnia.ca) or by calling 519-332-0330.



# SARNIA HERITAGE WALKING TOUR

## 1) The Henry T. Ross Substation

*101 Water Street (Corner of Water & Maxwell Streets)*

Built as part of the Sarnia Consumer's Gas Plant in 1880, this station produced and marketed gas fuel for lighting and heating. By 1894, the gas plant was generating electricity with a GE dynamo driven by a Goldy-McCullough 100 hp. steam engine that produced enough power to light 500 incandescent lamps. When the street railway was electrified, the company had to increase its energy production. In 1916 Ontario Hydro (now Hydro One) took over electrical power production and Union Gas took over fuel gas production. Sarnia Consumer's Gas then ceased to exist and this building became a Hydro One substation. The building was eventually renamed in honour of Sarnia's 62nd mayor, also a chair of the Hydro Commission.

## 2) St. Joseph's Hospice of Sarnia Lambton

*475 Christina Street North*

This Queen Anne style house was built between 1869 and 1875 by Charles M. Garvey, a Sarnia lawyer. In 1953 the house was bought by Lewis and Laurette Gordon and it served as the family residence for over 35 years. Renovations in 1988 revealed fish scaled shingles, Victorian era railings on the wraparound veranda porch and a tiny Gable Room window balcony. The interior has ten foot sliding panel doors, four fireplaces (three made of carved wood) and main level oak flooring. The house with a large south side addition previously served as the Discovery House Museum and in 2005 became the Sarnia - Lambton Hospice.

## 3) S.L. McKay House

*453 Christina Street North (Corner of Christina & Maxwell Streets)*

This attractive office building was originally built as a private residence in 1908. A distinct feature is the small, circular bay turret on the east side of the building.

## 4) McKenzie & Blundy Funeral Home

*431 Christina Street North*

Built in around 1892, for Sarnia Judge John A. Mackenzie, this Queen Anne style home draws attention with its domed spire tower running up the northeast corner. Donald McKenzie and Paul Blundy founded the present funeral home in 1946. Blundy also served as Mayor (1967 - 1974) and Sarnia MPP (1977 - 1981).

## 5) Our Lady of Mercy Church

*390 Christina Street North (Corner of Christina Street & London Road)*

Originally St. Michael's Church occupied this site which was donated by George Durand (a Protestant) in honour of his wife (a Catholic). The Catholic community built a wooden church in 1857, "Our Lady of Mercy" and St. Michael's became the rectory. In 1878, the present European Gothic structure was built replacing the wooden church. Distinctive features include the large circular rose window above the double front doors pediment, buttresses and the tall copper steeple.

## 6) Skilbeck House

*112 Maria Street \*\**

Robert Skilbeck, who established Canada's first Trust Company (later known as Lambton Loan & Investment Company), built this house in 1844 in the Regency style that flourished from 1810 to 1840. The house was originally a single storey hip roofed (Regency) structure, however in the 1930's it was renovated with the addition of a gable roofed second storey with three dormers, more depictive of the French Regime style as it appears today. The front door and windows are trimmed with white bricks. The interior was destroyed by fire in 2005, however was restored to its original granduer. This is one of the oldest buildings in Sarnia.

## 7) Row House

*116 - 118 Maria Street (Corner of Maria & Vidal Streets)*

Built in 1880, this was the first two-family house in Sarnia. Notice the pediment cornice roofline and the hood moulding ("labels") projecting over the windows.

## 8) Colonel Bob Mackenzie House

*308 Vidal Street North*

Built in 1876 by Sarnia Mayor Bob Mackenzie (1864 - 1865) and occupied by the Mackenzie family for over 70 years, this Georgian style home is an example of the durability of lime stucco render. Notice the small dormer and front porch roof.

## 9) Brogden House

*326 Vidal Street North*

Sarnia Mayor David Milne (1909 - 1910), built this brick house for his daughter Susan in 1906. Notice the dormers, cornice brackets, decorated soffit and Doric columns supporting the veranda, that also functions as the second floor balcony.

**\*\* Properties with heritage designation plaques.**

## 10) Mulberry - Saddy House

*197 London Road (Corner of London Road & Brock Street) \*\**

Reputedly built by Alexander Mackenzie in around 1867 for the James Roger family who occupied it for over 90 years and named it "The Mulberry House", is among the oldest brick homes in Sarnia. Roger, a tombstone maker built the front steps from discarded tombstones. Markings on the back window indicate where knives were sharpened. A candy store also once operated from the rear of the home. With a blend of Georgian and Gothic Revival styles this "Ontario Classic" house features distinctive bargeboard gable trim with a finial, wooden fascias and friezes as well as stone carvings over the front door and windows. Sarnia Mayor Marceil Saddy (1980 - 1988), bought the house from the Roger family and left it to the Sarnia Community Foundation upon his death in 1988. The foundation later sold the home and it is now a private residence.

## 11) McKellar - Carter House

*303 Brock Street North \*\**

This large Victorian era brick house was the first in Sarnia to receive a heritage designation plaque in 1989. Built by James McKellar (a Mooretown farmer) in 1895 for his and his sister's children (the Carter's) while they attended school in Sarnia. The rear carriage house was built for the parents who visited every Sunday to check on them. The home features a slate roof, steep gables, a flat veranda over the front entrance and windows with large stone lintels. Paul and Anne Carter bought the home in 1974 and restored it to its original state.

## 12) Carruthers House

*144 Maria Street (Corner of Maria & Brock Streets) \*\**

This Tudor style home constructed for Doctor Calvert M. Carruthers in 1934, is Sarnia's finest example of an Elizabethan style manor. The lower storey of the front facade and north side gable is built of cut stone with a hammered finish which is interspersed with red bricks, while the second storey is constructed of vertical wood columns and white stucco, creating the traditional Tudor half timbered veneer. A wood decorative trim with brackets separates the first and second floors, while the roof has a dark cedar shake surface finish.

## 13) The Paton House

*283 Brock Street North (Corner of Brock & Maria Streets)*

Built in 1890 - 1891, this two storey Queen Anne style house formerly belonged to business executive, Peter Paton. Notice the veranda balcony supported by dual pillars, the oval window above it and rounded entry porch. Also note the tower that flares out on the second storey and the finial above its conical roof.

## 14) Misener House

*286 Vidal Street North \*\**

This Victorian Queen Anne style house was built in 1896 for Thomas Cook, Mayor of Sarnia (1903-1904, 1923), where he lived with his wife Lucie and four children until 1927, when it was sold to Captain Scott Misener, founder of the Misener Sarnia Steamship Company, who later moved to Port Colborne. Unique features include original clapboard walls, two storey curved front walls, rounded entry porch and wraparound veranda. The property was meticulously restored by Wayne and Valdene Wager in 1991 - 1992.

## 15) Mackenzie House

*316 Christina Street North (Provincial Heritage Designation Plaque, 1977)*

Constructed in 1861 by local stone mason Alexander Mackenzie (Canada's second Prime Minister, 1873 - 1878) for his brother John, this house is a blend of Georgian and Gothic Revival styles termed "Ontario Classic Design" that was prevalent during the latter 1800's. Elaborate bargeboard trim, pendants and a finial decorate the gable and verges, while above the front door and windows are distinctive stone entablatures. Visible in the window above the front door are the initials of John's wife Charlotte, inscribed with her diamond ring.

## 16) The Beatty House

*301 Christina Street North (Corner of Christina Street & Derby Lane)*

Also known as the Scott Building, this Italianate style home was built in 1875 for Moses Masurette, a local merchant who soon after its completion sold it to John D. Beatty, a co-owner of the Northwest Transportation Company (later Northern Navigation Co.). The company produced two of the largest and most luxurious wooden hull passenger steamers on the Great Lakes, the "United Empire" and the "Monarch". Upon his death, the house passed on to his daughter Ann, wife of Sarnia Mayor and inventor Thomas Doherty, and was sold to the Scott family in 1947. The east facade is now hidden by the store that faces Christina Street.

## 17) Insignia Hotel

*283 Christina Street North*

Built in 1963 and modelled after the original owner's ancestral home in Europe with distinctive Tudor architecture. During construction, workers discovered a well, that is believed to have been drilled by one of the earliest white settlers for the Attawandron Natives. Because of its historical significance, great care was taken to preserve the well and to construct the hotel around it. Today visitors to the hotel can walk down the south basement hall and make wishes at the well.

## 18) St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

*261 Christina Street North*

Built in 1867 on lands donated by Mr. & Mrs. Malcolm Cameron, St. Andrew's is Sarnia's oldest surviving church building and replaced the original church that was built in 1841. Alexander Mackenzie laid the cornerstone as part of the July 1st Confederation celebrations. The tall copper steeple, pointed arches, narrow windows, spires and buttresses reflect the Gothic designs seen in European cathedrals. Unlike those however, the buttresses of St. Andrew's were built for aesthetics, not structural support. Also notice the clock at the steeple base.

## 19) Fleming House

*251 Vidal Street North (Corner of Vidal & Charlotte Streets) \*\**

Built in 1875 by Michael Fleming, an agent of the Montreal Telegraph Company and former Sarnia Mayor, this grand Italianate and French Second Empire style home features a mansard roof, double front doors with a glass transom, double brick voussairs and a veranda balcony supported by omate pillars. The wrought iron perimeter fence is one of the last of its type in Sarnia. This building was formerly the Kenneith Art Gallery and a "Church of Christ, Scientist" church.

## 20) St. George's Anglican Church

*248 Vidal Street North (Corner of Vidal & Charlotte Streets)*

Constructed in 1883, this Gothic Revival church was built to replace St. Paul's Anglican church on London Road. The first pipe organ used in this church was salvaged from a sunken ship. Artifacts from St. Paul's are kept at St. George's and include a cornerstone dated 1848, a baptismal font, a wooden plaque with the Lord's Prayer inscribed and the Ten Commandments inlaid in gold as well as a commemorative plaque to the builder, R.E. Vidal. Also see the two storey red and yellow brick French Canadian style house (built in 1866), attached to the north side of the church along Vidal Street, with gabled parapets that originally acted as firewalls and an overall symmetrical layout.

## 21) LeSueur House

*240 Vidal Street North (Corner of Vidal & Charlotte Streets)*

Sarnia Mayor Robert E. LeSueur (1892 - 1893) lived in this distinctive Victorian style house, built in 1900. The three story conical roofed tower with original curved glass window panes make it one of the most unique buildings in Sarnia. Also notice the matching rounded entry porches, pillars and flat veranda roofs.

## 22) Central United Church

*220 George Street (Corner of George & Brock Streets)*

Built in 1882, this is the last of four churches built for the Wesleyan Methodist congregation. The first church built in 1830 on Chief Wawanosh property on Devine Street served as a mission house and school for both First Nations and European peoples. The second built at the corner of Brock and Lochiel Streets was completed at the time of the Fenian Raids and the third (destroyed by fire) was built on Vidal Street, south of George Street in 1864. The church contains one of the largest pipe organs in the area, which can broadcast over a sound system inside the tower. The chimes were donated in memory of the many congregation members who lost their lives in World War Two. In 2021, the church was redeveloped as a mixed use residential building, whilst retaining all important historical architectural features.

## 23) The George Street School Bell

*180 College Avenue North \*\**

This bell is the only remaining relic of the George Street School (the last of our original schools) which was demolished in 1938. Initially the bell was mounted atop a stone cairn, inside the school fence along George Street and has since been moved twice, each time with a new base. During moves, the time capsule inside the base was opened and copies of some of the original contents were displayed at the Lambton Heritage Museum, while others can be viewed inside the Lochiel Kiwanis Centre. The original contents, along with new ones were buried inside the new cairn. The bell received heritage designation in 1998.

## 24) Manse Residence

*245 Cromwell Street \*\**

Built in 1900, this two storey yellow brick Edwardian style home is an example of Canadian Vernacular architecture. The house served as the Central Baptist Church Manse from 1912 to 1957 and may have originally been built for Sarnia Mayor George Durand. Notable features include the wraparound veranda supported by detailed wood columns, triangular dormer and rounded porch.

## 25) The Boer War Memorial Drinking Fountain

*124 Christina Street South Sarnia Library Grounds \*\**

Built in 1907 with money donated mainly by children through a "dime fund" established in local schools, the memorial was damaged during the old Sarnia Library demolition but was restored and received heritage designation in 1998.

## 26) The Lawrence House

*127 Christina Street South (Corner of Christina & Wellington Streets) \*\**

Lumber baron William F. Lawrence built this Victorian Queen Anne style house in 1892 at a cost of \$30,000. Interior highlights include a large alcove stairway, five spacious second floor bedrooms and a third floor tower children's game room. Exterior features include the conical tower, circular bay windows in the domed southeast corner turret, finials and the decorated chimney. The house was occupied by the Lawrence family until 1940 and vacant until 1977, when it was donated to the City by Mr. and Mrs. Carroll Lawrence. Thanks to the generosity of Suncor Energy and the City, the home was fully restored in 1986 and later served as the Sarnia Library art and audio visual centre. Since 2001, it has been home to the Lawrence House Centre of the Arts.

## 27) The Loughhead House

*115 Christina Street South \*\**

In 1900 this two and a half storey, triple brick house was built by the Doherty family. Thomas Doherty, former Mayor (1916), occupied it for a short time before selling to Harry Loughhead. Doherty was an industrial pioneer whose invention's include Sarnia's first gas powered car, a water boiler home heating system, municipal water filtration system and a process for strengthening cast iron known as "Decarbon Steel." He established Watford Agricultural Implement Works and later opened a foundry Doherty Stove Works that manufactured stoves and heaters. Loughhead manufactured munitions during the First World War and later, as part of the Loughhead-Seagrave Company in the 1920s, made early motorized fire engines. The Loughhead family, well known throughout Sarnia-Lambton, occupied the home for over 60 years. This Victorian Queen Anne home is most notable for its three storey conical roof tower. Also notice the engraved "Loughhead" stone, railings and coloured windows above the front porch balcony.

## 28) Imperial Theatre

*160 Christina Street North \*\**

Built in 1936, this two storey Art Deco style building was originally the Capitol Movie Theatre and was one of the largest in Ontario at the time with seating for 1200. In 1988 the theatre closed and was left abandoned until 1996 when the building (slated for demolition) was purchased by Theatre Sarnia and with assistance from the City, local industry, private donors and volunteers was renovated and transformed into a theatre for live performances with a seating capacity of 600. In 2000, the building received heritage designation from the City. To date over one million patrons have attended a show at the theatre and in 2016, it was listed among the 50 best Canadian Small Music venues.

## 29) World War One Plaques

*286 Front Street North Royal Canadian Legion Branch 62 \*\**

The bronze plaques from the original cenotaph are displayed on the west facing wall of the Canadian Legion and received heritage designation in 2001. They list the names of every person from Lambton County who served in the war.

## 30) Russell's (Sarnia) Brewery

*301 Front Street North*

This building was originally constructed as Russell's Brewery in 1862. Ice from the Sarnia Bay was cut in the winter and used to keep the cellar temperature 20 °F below room temperature. After 25 years of operation, the brewery was forced to close due to the "Temperance Movement." The building was then occupied by several other tenants, including a jam producer and Silverwoods Dairy, prior to its renovation into a modern office complex. The only original wall that remains is the west facing wall of what was once the lautering cellar.