



14. Hamilton House
328 W. Main Street
1868:1881:1877 • LL 11/8/1990
MSHD/NRHP

In 1868 the Hamilton House was built by Dr. Green, Whitewater's first dentist and was probably built as a simple gabled ell with Italianate details. In 1881 it was remodeled and the elaborate mansard roof with arched dormers was added at that time which changed entirely the style of the house. The house was again remodeled in 1887. Its details include Second Empire style bay windows with brackets, dentils, pilasters and panels; two Second Empire porches; a Queen Anne porch with turned posts, spoon and spindle work, brackets, a pediment; and a two-story Queen Anne style bay window on the west wall. Two tunnels have been discovered in the basement leading to speculation that it may have been part of the Underground Railroad.



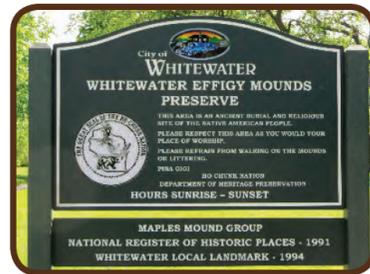
15. Sanger Marsh House
522 West Main Street
1861 • LL 11/8/1990 • MSHD/NRHP

Local builder Nelson Salisbury built this Italianate house. It has a rectangular form with a low-pitched hip roof topped with metal cresting, wide eaves with paired brackets that are attached to a paneled frieze and beautiful Italianate porches. The porches feature thin, square columns and brackets.



16. White Memorial Building
402 W. Main Street
1903-04 • LL 1/20/1994 • MSHD/NRHP

The White Memorial Library is an example of simple classicism with its hip roof, entrance decorated with colossal ionic columns and full pediment over a wide frieze. This design is one of the standard library designs by the noted architectural firm of Claude and Starch of Madison. These architects were well known for their prairie style houses and the interior of this building is in this style. Mary Flavia White donated this building to the city for use by the Whitewater Free Library (1904 to 1992). It now is home to the Whitewater Cultural Arts Center and the Whitewater Public television station.



17. Whitewater Effigy Mounds Preserve
288 S. Indian Mound Pkwy
c. 700-1200 • LL 1994 • NRHP

Whitewater's oldest landmark is a group of conical, linear and effigy mounds which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places as the Maples Mound Group. Between 700 A.D. and 1200 A.D. the people of the Late Woodland Stage began building large numbers of mound clusters which included effigy mounds in the shapes of birds and other animals. This site has been a gathering place for several Midwestern Native American tribes. All the land in this public preserve is certified as an archaeological site and a burial site, and therefore, it is protected by federal law which states that the soil within its boundaries cannot be disturbed.



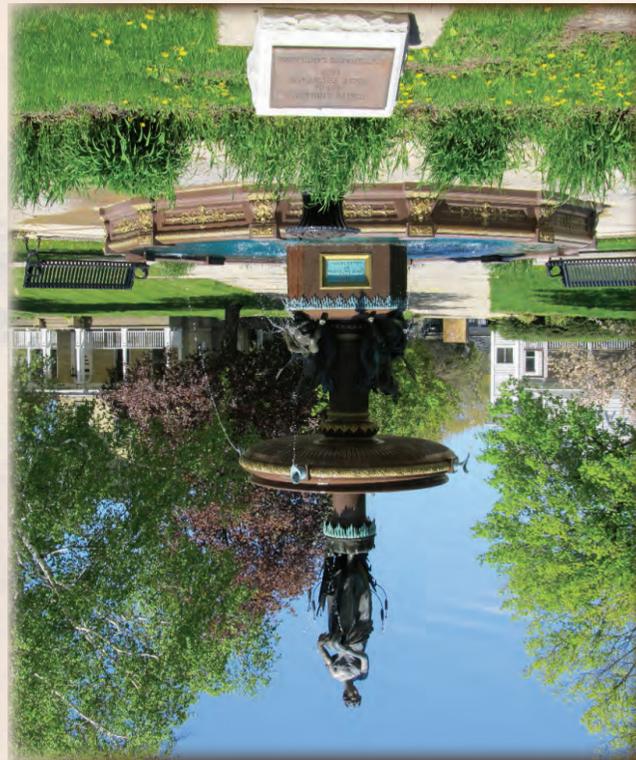
**18. Hotel Walworth/
Landmark Hotel**
204 W. Main Street
1890/1970's • LL 10/29/1998

During the peak of Whitewater's nineteenth century economic prosperity, the Hotel Walworth was built. It was considered a "first class" downtown-type hotel with a dining room that, during the early years, served multi-course gourmet meals and became the leading hotel in the city. This three story Queen Anne style building was remodeled in the 1970's into small apartments with a tavern and barber shop in the basement level. It was renamed the Landmark Hotel at that time.



19. Kiernan - Yasko House
136 S. Whiton Street
1882 • LL 9/15/2011

This property was sold to Bryon Moore in 1878 and the house was constructed within the next 3 years. The house was inherited by Elmer Kiernan in 1913. Elmer's wife Erika established "Kiernan's Candy Kitchen" and sold confections at the house. This two-story frame house has had no exterior modification since its original construction. Note the scalloping on the three gables, the original transom over the front door and the "Candy Kitchen" porch entrance on the south side. This home is currently owned by Richard and Caryl Yasko, who is a nationally recognized muralist. Currently it is the only home listed for its cultural significance rather than architectural style.



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Whitewater Historic Landmarks Guide

Whitewater Local Landmarks

1. **Smith-Allen House, 445 W. Center Street**
2. **Engbretsen-Dorr House, 622 W. Main Street**
3. **Newton M. Littlejohn House, 429 W. Main Street**
4. **George W. Esterly House, 604 W. Main Street**
5. **Esterly Carriage House, 122 N. Esterly Avenue**
6. **Nelson Salisbury House, 404 W. North Street**
7. **F. J. Starin Mansion, 131 N. Fremont Street**
8. **Whitewater Passenger Depot, 301 W. Whitewater Street**
9. **Birge Fountain, 402 W. Main Street**
10. **Lyman Wight Octagon House, 127 N. Newcomb Street**
11. **J. J. Starin House, 507 W. Main Street**
12. **Bassett House, 708 W. Main Street**
13. **First United Methodist Church of Whitewater, 145 S. Prairie Street**
14. **Hamilton House, 328 W. Main Street**
15. **Sanger Marsh House, 522 W. Main Street**
16. **White Memorial Building, 402 W. Main Street**
17. **Whitewater Effigy Mounds Preserve, 288 S. Indian Mound Parkway**
18. **Hotel Walworth/Landmark Hotel, 204 W. Main Street**
19. **Kiernan-Yasko House, 136 S. Whiton Street**

9. Birge Fountain
402 W. Main St.

1903:2003
LL 1/24/1985
MSHD/NRHP



Julius Birge presented the Birge Fountain to Whitewater, the city of his birth, on July 4, 1903. At the time, it was one of the largest fountains in the county, and there was some concern among the city officials over the amount of water it would require. It was placed on the site where the "Little Brick" schoolhouse stood, which Julius Birge attended as a child. The fountain is 17.5 feet high with two catch basins which collect water flowing from the "Maid in the Mist" and the four cherubs riding on dolphins. It was originally cast of zinc but was thoroughly renovated and recast in bronze. A rededication of the fountain was celebrated in 2003.

WELCOME TO WHITEWATER

A community rich in history and steeped in beauty, Whitewater has always been known for its charm and ideal location. Nestled within the forest, lakes, prairies, and hills of the Kettle Moraine State Forest in southeastern Wisconsin, Whitewater is the perfect choice for biking, hiking, fishing, cross country skiing, or just exploring! We look forward to showing you our city and thank you for visiting.

The History Of Whitewater

Whitewater received its name from a tribe of Potawatomi Native Americans that settled along the Whitewater River (known today as the Whitewater Creek). The name Wau-be-gan-naw-po-cat, meaning "white water", was given due to the white sands that lay at the bottom of the creek.

The area was first settled in 1836, when Alvin Foster made his stake on the land by marking his name on a tree. At that time, that was all that was needed to make a legal claim on a piece of land. In 1837, Samuel Prince built the first log cabin near the current site of Whitewater's Indian Mounds Park. After a six-day trip on foot, 20 settlers arrived here from Milwaukee and started the early makings of Whitewater. Other early settlers who arrived that first year were Johnson, Hamilton, Brewer, Collins, and Nichols. It was not until 1839, with Dr. Trippe's donation of money for the Old Stone Mill, that Whitewater started to grow. The mill helped to create the new industrial hub of Whitewater.

By 1840, three main arteries were laid out: Whitewater, Main and Center Streets. The town had a mill, blacksmith shop, store, hotel, and school, with a post office on the way. By 1844 Whitewater had grown to six stores, one grocery, two hotels, three blacksmith shops, a tailor, two cabinet shops, a cooper, a gristmill, and twenty-nine recorded homes.

In 1852, the first railway to cross Wisconsin laid its tracks through Whitewater, spurring industrial growth. Winchester and DeWolf Plow Factory (1850) Esterly Reaper Works (1857), and Winchester and Partridge Wagon Works (1860) were some of Walworth County's first and largest industries. In 1855 the population of Whitewater was 2,224. By 1888 it had grown to 3,621. Esterly Reaper Works was the largest employer in the 1880s, employing 525. Esterly employees built homes close to the factory on the east side of the city; hence the surrounding area became known as "Reaperville". Various industries fueled Whitewater's growth until 1892, when the Esterly Reaper Works moved to Minnesota and the Wagon Works shut down, thus marking the end of Whitewater's first industrial era.

With the loss of two major industries, Whitewater lost one quarter of its population and did not regain its 1890 population level until 1950. During the world wars and the Great Depression, Whitewater relied on small trade and light industries to sustain its economy. Agricultural products, including eggs, farm produce, cheese, dairy products, livestock and small game made up 66% of Whitewater's trade at the time. Meanwhile, the Whitewater Normal School (which later evolved into the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater) went about its business of training teachers. The school made several changes through the years, including diversifying its studies. After World War II, veterans returning from war boosted enrollment, sending the school well on its way to becoming the university it is today. Between the university and the manufacturing and service industries we have today, Whitewater has seen many changes. This community looks forward to this century and what the future has in store.

To learn more, visit DiscoverWhitewater.org
1-866-4WW-TOUR



LANDMARKS COMMISSION

In 1982, the Whitewater Common Council approved the Landmarks Ordinance that created the Whitewater Landmarks Commission. The intent of the Commission includes protection, enhancement, perpetuation and use of archeological sites, geological formations, structures and city-owned historically significant personal property of special character or special historical interest or value. The primary duties of the Commission include identifying and designating landmarks and historic districts, and promoting preservation and protection of all historic resources in the city.

The city of Whitewater has 19 locally designated landmarks. It has one historic district.

Whitewater Local Landmark (LL)

In order to be designated a Whitewater Landmark, a building, structure or archeological site must either represent an individual or on-going historical event that is significant at the local, state or national level; or be identified with an historic person or persons significant in local state or national history; or embody the distinctive characteristics of an architectural style or form or be the work of a master architect.

Main Street Historic District (MSHD)

The Main Street Historic District was the most prestigious residential neighborhood in nineteenth and early twentieth century Whitewater. The buildings constructed in the district between 1855 and 1935, include fine Italianate, Second Empire, and Queen Anne style homes, several outstanding Gothic and Romanesque Revival style churches and a fine Classical Revival library. Collectively the buildings form a neighborhood of religious, educational, and social activity.

In 1988, the Whitewater Landmarks Commission completed the nomination of the Main Street Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places. The district runs along Main Street roughly between Fremont and Prairie Streets and along a portion of North Street and south down Church street to Center Street.

National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)

The National Register of Historic Places is the official national list of historic properties in America worthy of preservation. Through the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Park Service's NRHP is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources.



1. Smith-Allen House
445 W. Center Street
1856 • LL 4/20/1983 • MSHD/NRHP

This Italian Villa style house is a subcategory of the Italianate style. It was built by Porter and Hunter for E.A. Smith a local hardware store owner. It was sold in 1862 to Nathan Allen, a lumberman from Maine. It is built with cream brick and features a tower, wide eaves with brackets, cornice with dentils, round-arched openings and tall narrow windows. It is said that on election night, Mr. Allen would place one or two candles, depending upon the outcome of the election, in the tower. From 1946-56 it was owned by Teacher's College (UW - Whitewater) President, Robert Williams.



2. Engebretsen-Dorr House
622 W. Main Street
1895 • LL 4/20/1983 • MSHD/NRHP

This Queen Anne style house was designed by George Bradley and Son and built for Edward Engebretsen, a dry goods merchant and Whitewater's first treasurer and second mayor. It features narrow clapboards and is decorated with scalloped, square and diamond shingles. Other features include an octagonal tower, projecting gables, a second floor balcony, a classically appointed veranda and leaded glass windows. It was later occupied by John Dorr, Engebretsen's son-in-law, who worked as the head of the Electric Company's sales department. It was the first house in Whitewater to be wired for electricity.



3. Newton M. Littlejohn House
429 W. Main Street
1859 • LL 8/23/1983 • MSHD/NRHP

This cream brick house features Italianate details. It was built for Newton Littlejohn, a lumberman, land investor and Whitewater's first village president. It features an Italianate porch, an elaborate bay window, oculus windows, and is decorated with brackets. It was once owned by the First English Lutheran Church and used as a parish house where Sunday school classes were held.



4. George W. Esterly House
604 W. Main Street
1876 • LL 10/20/1983 • MSHD/NRHP

This late Italianate house was designed by noted Milwaukee architect, H. C. Koch and built for G. W. Esterly, the son of George Esterly, an inventor, who founded the Esterly Reaper Works, Whitewater's leading nineteenth century industry. It is a later variation of the Italianate style with a taller and steeper hip roof, and a main elevation that is dominated by a tall narrow entry pavilion with a large gable and returned eaves. It was later occupied by Teacher's College (UW-Whitewater) President, Frank Hyer. Of special note is the art glass in the inner set of entry doors.



5. Esterly Carriage House
122 N. Esterly Avenue
1885:1919 • LL 10/20/1983 • MSHD/NRHP

This cream brick carriage house was built in the same Italianate style to match the Esterly house. Like the main house, it has wide eaves with gable end returns and windows accented with round brick arches. In 1919 George Pollock remodeled this house for Easton Johnson by adding interior rooms, a Colonial Revival Style entry and a sunroom. It is one of the few extant brick carriage houses in the state.

6. Nelson Salisbury House
404 W. North Street
1874 • LL 1/12/1984
MSHD/NRHP

This late Italianate house was constructed by Nelson Salisbury, a local builder, who also built the Sanger Marsh house at 522 W. Main and the Lucius Winchester house at 532 W. Main. It has the same kind of vertical emphasis found in the Esterly House. A massive cornice dominates the building. Windows are decorated with pedimented stone hood molds and across the front façade is an Italianate porch. Salisbury worked as a farmer, salesman, lumberman and banker. He was the first president of the Whitewater Normal School.



7. F. J. Starin Mansion
131 N. Fremont Street
1856: 1878 • LL 1/12/1984

This house was originally built as a two story cream brick Italianate by the firm of Cook, Roseman and Kjuhn for Frederick J. Starin, a civil engineer and land speculator. In 1878, Starin added a mansard roof, a feature of the Second Empire Style. This enlarged the house by adding a fourth floor ballroom. Two unusual features in the basement are a "tunnel", and a "secret room" which can only be accessed by crawling through a window located near the ceiling.



8. Whitewater Passenger Depot
301 W. Whitewater Street
1890 • LL 7/09/1984 • NRHP

With High Victorian Gothic style details, the Whitewater Passenger Depot is an unusual example of a small town railroad depot. Designed by master architect, J.T.W. Jennings, it exhibits pointed arched openings, foliated and geometric patterns decorating wall surfaces and polychromatic effects using materials of different colors and textures. Examples of this style are relatively rare in Wisconsin. The smooth vermillion red bricks are heavily accented with the rusticated grey lime stone that forms the foundation. In the early 1900's a minimum of 4 freight trains and four passenger trains went through daily, with as many as 20 trains recorded in a single day. Since 1974, the depot has been the Whitewater Historical Society Museum.



10. Lyman Wight Octagon House
127 N Newcomb Street
1862 • LL 5/16/1985

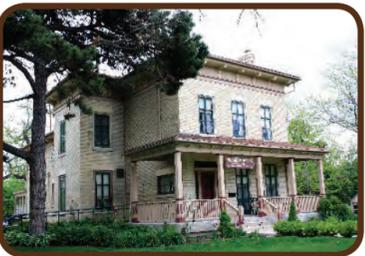
This octagon style house was developed and promoted as an economical and functional home but never became popular with only Massachusetts, New York State and Wisconsin having small concentrations of them, with probably only twenty of them in Wisconsin. This house is a small, two-story frame structure with wide overhanging eaves, a carved frieze and brackets. The house was built for T. Lyman Wight, a designer/inventor at the Esterly Reaper Manufacturing Company. This house is unique because of its small size and the rarity of the octagon style.



11. J. J. Starin House
507 W. Main Street
1860 • LL 7/18/1985 • MSHD/NRHP

A large two-story cream brick structure with Greek Revival features, this Italianate house was built in a more vertical rather than square style. It features a cross gable form with a broad, low-pitched cross gable roof that extends on all four sides into full pediments featuring wide eaves and brackets. Built by a Mr. Parker, it was sold to Jacob Starin. In the 1920's it became the Green Shutters Restaurant and at that time the fanlight-topped French doors and large veranda were added by the owner, Sander Hoyum. In 1941, Deacon Gerard Cutler of the

Congregational Church organized the first Sunday school in Whitewater teaching a class of 12 under the trees where the home would later be built. Today it serves as a medical clinic operated by Mercy Health System.



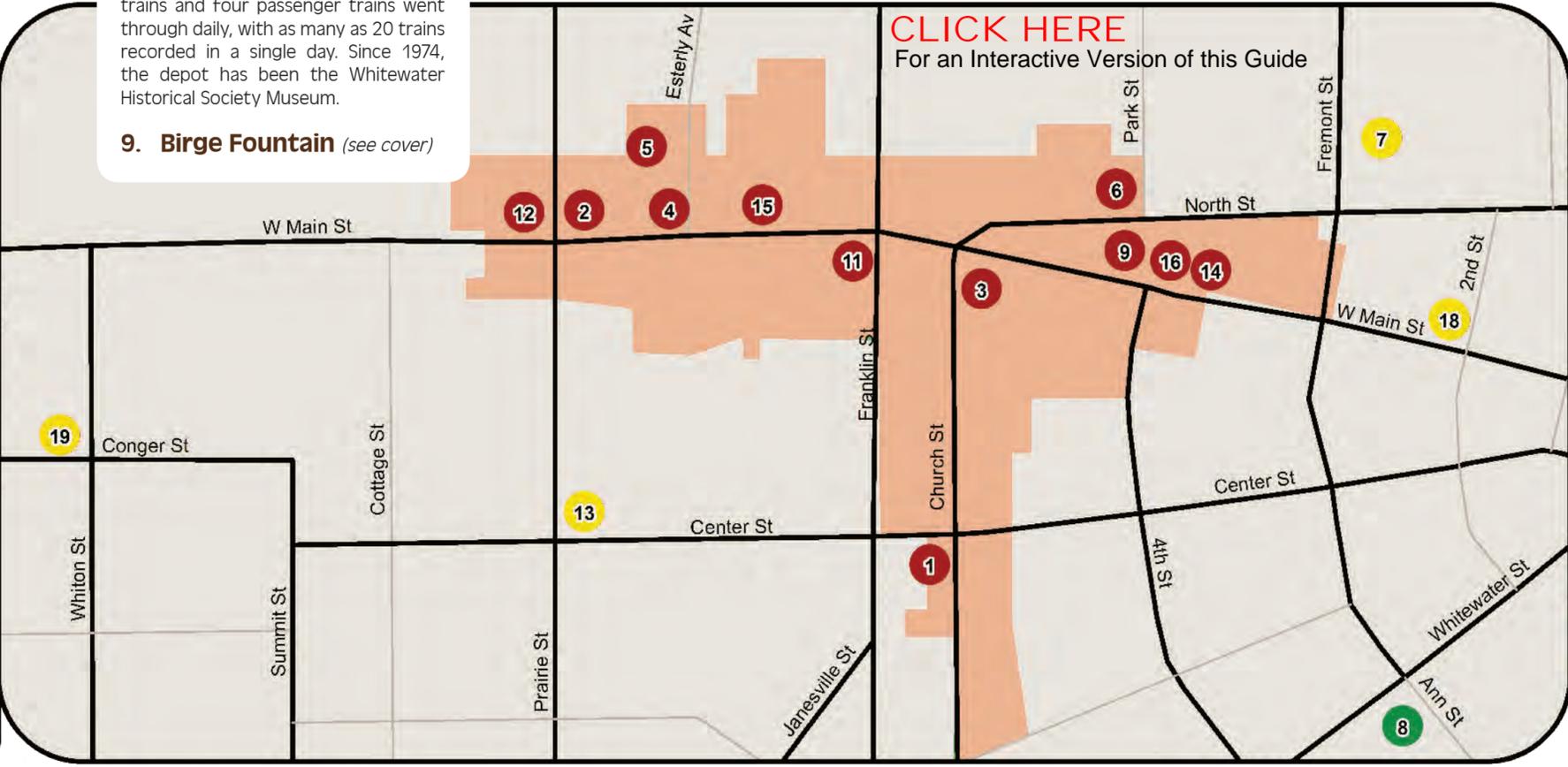
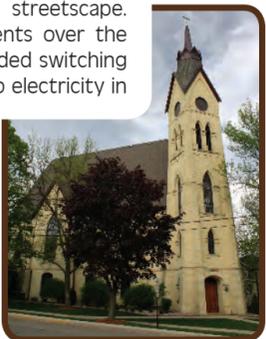
12. Bassett House
708 W. Main Street
1857:1878 • LL 8/25/1985 • MSHD/NRHP

This cream brick house was built in the Italianate style, the rear wing being added in 1878. The house has a bracketed frieze and bay window with mansard roof, brackets, modillion blocks and keystones. The Thomas Bassett family lived in the house for seventy years.

Thomas's daughter Florence, in 1926, bequeathed the house to the Whitewater Federation of Women's Clubs to be used for their gatherings and so it has been to this day.

13. First United Methodist Church of Whitewater
145 S. Prairie Street
1872-73 • LL 2/29/1988

This outstanding Gothic Revival church is constructed of cream brick and features a steeply pitched gable roof of fan-vaulted construction. This building has Gothic arched openings and large buttresses. The immense steeple and large Gothic features make the church an impressive structure, one that dominates the streetscape. Improvements over the years included switching oil lamps to electricity in 1896.



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- Designated Main Street Historic District
- Whitewater Local Landmark (LL)
- National Register (NRHP) & (LL)
- Main Street Historic District (MSHD), (NRHP) & (LL)