

31. The Hamburg Felt Boot Co. at 166 Peel St.



This building is a superb example of an early industrial building in Ontario. In 1898, Ed Merner (nephew to Samuel) established his felt business in the former carriage works of his brother Frederick. The original building was constructed in c.1848 and then rebuilt in 1898 as a two-storey with an extension.

The factory had a staff of 70 at the turn of the century. It continues to produce felt to this day.

32. Kirkpatrick Park on Wilmot St.

Initially an island in the Nith River, this park has several walking paths and observation points to view the Nith River, including a replica of the town's original bandstand. Around 1970, the Nith River was widened downstream from the dam, and dikes were constructed to reduce flooding. The area around the Waterlot, which was the opening of the mill race, was filled in at this time.

33. Waterwheel.



The New Hamburg Board of Trade constructed a 65 foot waterwheel in 1990 to commemorate the early water powered industries located along the Nith River. In 1994, the Nith River, as a part of the Grand River watershed, was designated a Canadian Heritage River.

By continuing along the walkway you will return to the Carnegie Library.

The committee would like to acknowledge the assistance of Ernie Ritz and the staff at the New Hamburg Independent. Sources: New Hamburg As It Really Was and the New Hamburg Tweedsmuir History Books.

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Heritage Walking Tours

TOWNSHIP OF WILMOT



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History of New Hamburg

A grist-mill built by Josiah Cushman about 1834 formed the nucleus around which a small community of Amish Mennonites and recent German immigrants developed. A village plot was surveyed in 1845 and six years later a post-office, New Hamburg, was established with William Scott, an early mill-owner, as postmaster. By then the village, with a population of 500, contained several prosperous industries, including a pottery, and the carriage-works and foundry of Samuel Merner, a prominent Swiss-born entrepreneur. The construction of the Grand Trunk Railway, completed in 1856, and agricultural prosperity stimulated the community's development as an important centre for milling and farm machinery production. New Hamburg was incorporated as a Village, with about 1100 inhabitants, in 1857 and as a Town in 1966. (Ontario Heritage Foundation Plaque)

Seventy-five percent of the buildings located in the core area of New Hamburg have been identified as heritage buildings. This core was designated by the Township of Wilmot as a Heritage Conservation District under the Ontario Heritage Act in 1992.

1. The Carnegie Library (Region of Waterloo Library)



at 145 Huron St.

Built c.1914 in the Beaux Arts/Classical Revival Style, the masonry work was done by local contractor, George Clair. In 1969 and 1995, the library underwent renovations and an expansion. The expansion is connected to the

original building by a breezeway that showcases the original keystone entrance and brickwork.

Note: In the early 20th century, the Carnegie Foundation provided grants to build libraries across North America. A total of 2,509 Carnegie libraries were built between 1883 and 1929. In Canada, 125 libraries were built. With about 1,485 residents in 1914, New Hamburg was granted the funding for their own public library.

2. Cenotaph on Huron St.

The first Cenotaph plans began in 1918 when interested citizens met at the library hall to discuss the erection of a monument in honour of New Hamburg's fallen heroes. Two cenotaphs were built between 1922 and 1929. Six decades later in 1989, a new granite cenotaph was built in the Classical Revival style. It honours those that died while serving during WWI, WWII, and the Korean War.

3. The Hartman Bridge on Huron St. (c. 1936).



Located within the Heritage Conservation District, this steel Pratt truss bridge was built during the Great Depression by the Hamilton Bridge Company. This style of truss bridge, made from metal, was found to be more eco-

nomical during this era. The bridge was named after the Hartman family who owned and donated the land on the opposite side of the river. The first wooden bridge here was built c.1845. This bridge is the third steel truss bridge to be located at this site, and was ranked number four of the top ten heritage bridges in the Region of Waterloo in 2012. The Heritage Canada Foundation selected the Hartman Bridge for its National Achievement award for its perceived value as a heritage structure in the community following the 2006 bridge restoration project. The structure was only slightly altered during this restoration, the largest modification being the deck replacement

and repainting. The original builder plaques, Hamilton Bridge Company trademark plaque, lattice railings on the pedestrian sidewalk and the bridge's flooring system were all preserved. A commemorative plaque is located near the library.



4. St. Peters Lutheran Church at 144 Huron St.

St. Peters was built c.1910 in the late Gothic Revival style. The church was founded due to a dispute amongst the members of Trinity Lutheran Church over the location of a new church building. The original tower and steeple were replaced in the 1960s. It was known for many years by local residents as the "red" Lutheran Church due to its brick colour.

5. Fire Hall at 121 Huron St.



The original structure for firefighting was built here in 1882; it was replaced in 1969 with municipal offices and a Fire Department for the Town of New Hamburg. The offices relocated to Baden in 1994. Note: The front of the property holds an historical plaque commemorating the founding of the village. Beside the plaque the 1906 fire bell is preserved and displayed.

6. Luft Block at 100-106 Huron St.

This block was first built c.1865 to house a jewellery and watch store. It was converted into a residence which Henry Luft bought in 1907. The old frame structure was demolished and replaced with an Ontario Vernacular brick house in 1909 which also included a bakery. As the years progressed, this site would be best known



as the Luft Brothers Bakery operated for several decades. Note: this 1954 photo from the Hurricane Hazel flood shows the proprietors standing in water with rubber boots on while removing the day's baking from the brick bake oven.

7. The Volksblatt & Independent Newspaper Office at 84-88 Huron St.

The Volksblatt and the Independent newspaper office was built here in 1892. After 1895, the building was renovated into a smoke and barber shop with pool and billiard tables in the rear. Fred Debus, ran the Debus Feed Store here for thirty eight years starting in 1906. Debus was Reeve of New Hamburg for sixteen years, Warden of Waterloo County and also a founding member of St. Peters Lutheran Church. The current owners of this property have received a recognition award from Heritage Wilmot for their restoration work.

8. The Hartman Block at 78-82 Huron St.

This block was built by John Hartman in the Ontario Vernacular style in 1914. Hartman operated a meat market at this location. He later replaced the original frame structure with a two-storey brick building in 1914. Lawrence Ruth took over Hartman's business in 1937 and sold fresh meat for almost three decades until selling to Hans Egli.

9. The Lautenschlager Block at 91 Huron St.



This Ontario Vernacular building was re-built after a fire in 1890. It housed a flour and feed store, a tailor, and barber shop. In 1903, local photographer John Lautenschlager purchased the Block. Municipal Clerk, William "Lawyer" Miller, also occupied this building.

Other businesses included: a Cash-and-Carry grocery, a Singer sewing machine store and Willis piano agency. Walter R. Hostetler, town Councillor and reeve, ran his dairy here, which included pasteurizing and bottling lines. He later added an ice cream and dairy bar in the front section. Ward Cockerton took over the dairy delivering bottles door to door from 1950 to 1971.

10. The William Tell Block at 71-79 Huron St.



This impressive building was built in c.1885 by Samuel Merner. It is a fine example of Second Empire architecture featuring a "grape motif" keystone over the windows. Over the years, many banks have been located on the main floor as well as other businesses. The third floor served as a public hall and was the location of many social events in the community. Note: Merner was a Swiss blacksmith

whose business ventures prospered in the New Hamburg area. His political career began in 1867 as Councillor in the village of New Hamburg; Reeve of New Hamburg from 1872-1878; and later as MP of Waterloo South from 1878-1882. In 1887 Merner was appointed to the Senate by Sir John A. Macdonald.

11. Ernst Block / Hostetler Block at 65-67 Huron St.

This Edwardian Classicism building was built in 1910 to replace a two-storey frame building destroyed by fire. It originally contained the Bell telephone office and millinery. The work above the main floor windows is an excellent example of tinsmithing. This building has been recently restored to reflect the original façade along with the Scott/Ernst block.

12. The Mammoth House/ Scott/ Ernst Block at 51-59 Huron St.

This three-storey building in the Quebec Classical Revival style was the site of New Hamburg's first post office. William Scott, one of New Hamburg's founders, built this Block about 1850. The building was damaged in 1884, and rebuilt in 1885. Note: Scott was a Scottish immigrant who dammed the Nith River and built many foundational businesses including a sawmill, flour mill, fabric mill, distillery and a hotel. The west side of this building housed various businesses such as: the Waterloo County chick hatchery. The east portion of the building was more commonly known as Brenner's Grocery Store.

13. Imperial Hotel at 60 Huron St.



Built as the Dominion Hotel, this building was destroyed by fire in 1870. The structure was rebuilt in 1872 in the Italianate Ontario Vernacular style and was best known as the Imperial Hotel. New Hamburg's first library, (the Mechanics' Institute), was

located in the western end of this building and opened in 1881. The third storey was added in 1902.

14. The Flour Mill at 183 Mill St.



In 1905, this brick Ontario Vernacular building was built by the Stuart Brothers as a flour mill. It replaced a three-storey frame mill building built by William Scott about 1848. The frame building was destroyed by fire in 1902. The mill was designed to use water power via the mill race which was buried in the 1950s. Water power was used for ten months of the year and steam for the other two months.



Bird's Eye View of New Hamburg

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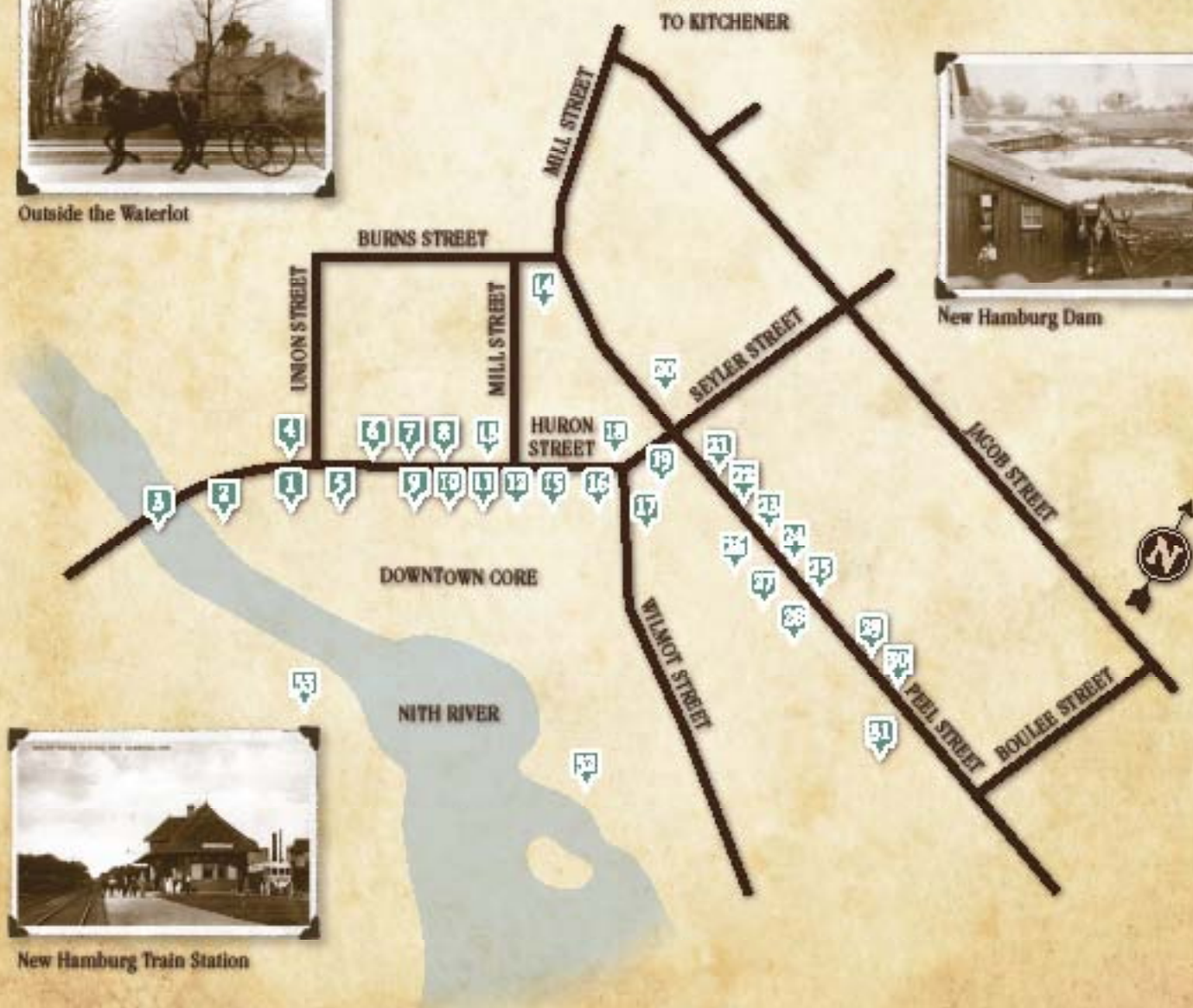
Stroll Through the Past



Outside the Waterlot



New Hamburg Dam



New Hamburg Train Station

15. The Mill Race.



In 1847, William Scott received permission from the Wellington District Council to construct a mill race to power his newly constructed grist mill. This “new” mill replaced earlier ones which were located along the banks of the river. The mill race ran through

the present day Royal Bank parking lot, under the street and up to the mill where it turned a water turbine. This turbine is still located under the mill.

16. The William Scott House at 17 Huron St.



This Gothic style home with Italianate details was built by William Scott about 1846. It was also the home of Senator Samuel Merner. For many years the home housed the medical practices of Drs. Anderson and T.C. Kirkpatrick. An addition was added when the home was renovated to the present day Waterlot Restaurant.

17. Stables/ The Regent Theatre at 97 Wilmot St.



This structure was originally built between 1850- 1860 by J. Merner as a foundry. In the 1880s, it became the livery stables for the Commercial Hotel that was owned by Samuel Merner. In 1920, Ralph Gribble converted the stables into a 275 seat theatre. The theatre was in operation until 1954.

18. Town Square.



The main intersection in New Hamburg underwent significant change in 1961 when the current post office was built. Originally North and South (Wilmot Street) and East and West (Huron Street) intersected here with North and South running

through to Peel Street. A small park (Lion Park) with a bandstand served as a focal point for the community. A large commercial building known as the American Block occupied the post office site. Note: the Centennial Fountain also located here.

19. The Commercial Hotel at 11-13 Huron St.



Built in 1866, this Italianate structure has been a hotel for most of its existence. The hotel, owned by Samuel Merner and located in the Commercial Block, was badly damaged by fire in 1898. It was rebuilt within six months when a third storey

was added. A significant alteration in the 1970s saw the brick covered with stucco, and the third floor hidden by a new roof. Today, the building houses apartments on the second and third floors as well as street level retail.

20. The Seyler Building at 43 Peel St.

Ludwig and Johann Klein ran a general store here known as Klein's Market House Store from 1858 to 1861. This Italianate Ontario Vernacular site also served as a saddle and harness shop, a bakery as well as a tannery and wool sorting center under John and Sarah Otto (1899-1917). Seyler's Home Furnishings was located here for many years. In 1944 William Seyler removed a storey from the original three storey building and used some materials for a single storey addition to the rear.

21. The Queen's Hotel at 73 Peel St.



This Italianate Ontario vernacular structure built c.1884 and housed the Queen's Hotel. John Jr. and Fred W. Ernst were the first operators. They sold to the Franke family c.1896 who ran the hotel until the Kraus family (from the Baden Hotel) took over in 1908. The Kraus'

modernized and refurnished the hotel which operated until 1916 when prohibition was introduced. Since then it has housed many businesses. Note: Similar to the William Tell Block, this building features “grape motif” keystone over the windows.

22. The Hamburg Hotel at 81-87 Peel St.



This building is one of the oldest commercial blocks built c.1850 under the ownership of Theobold Seyler. Originally the property held a brick hotel, store and frame house. The frame house was removed to facilitate the building of

the Queen's Hotel next door. It became known as the City Hotel after 1867. The building was transformed into a store in 1885. A third floor was added in 1927. For many years it housed Kruspe's and later Binning's drug stores. The original hardware is still found in the centre door which leads upstairs.

23. The Franke Block at 91 Peel St.

Theodore Frank erected this Italianate building in 1912. It served as a grocery store and operated for fifteen years. Originally a laneway, the building was converted into a restaurant in 1927. In 1950, the building was refitted for an insurance office.

24. The Becker Block at 95-105 Peel St.



This block was built by William Hunter c. 1864. Jacob Becker opened a store here in 1877. His sons, Daniel and Herman, renovated the building into a true department store with a new brick façade and a two-storey extension in 1901. They renamed the business *D. & H. Becker Department Store*. Daniel's son, Oliver took over for twenty-three years. In 1953, Bill & Dora Murray operated a department store selling both groceries and clothing. After 60 years, the family business continues with a focus on clothing and footwear. Murray's carefully restored 2/3 of this façade and were recognized for their work in 1995 by the Waterloo Regional Heritage Foundation and Heritage Wilmot.

25. Becker's Ford Garage at 115 Peel St.



Dan Becker bought this site for his new brick automobile showroom and garage which he constructed in 1915. Here he sold and serviced Ford trucks and tractors until 1924 when Ezra G. Hammer took over. Hammer installed gasoline pumps in 1926

but eventually moved his business to part of the old foundry property. Maurice and Kenneth Hammer, Ezra's sons, renovated the building into Hammer Hardware in 1954. The façade was altered in the 1990s.

26. Standard Reliance & Mortgage Co. at 98 Peel St.



This unique building was built in the Beaux Arts/Classical Revival style in 1914. The uniqueness comes from the fact that Beaux Arts is usually reserved for large and imposing buildings. The original mortgage company went bankrupt in 1919 and the building was purchased by Emerson Luckhardt. He operated a jewellery business here for many years. This building was designated by the Township of Wilmot under the Ontario Heritage Act in 1987. A laneway was located here prior to 1914.

27. The Cookson Block at 100-106 Peel St.



Built in 1893 by Jacob Becker, this Italianate Ontario Vernacular building showcases interesting detailing in the brickwork on the second floor and the trim on the first floor. Under Becker, the site operated a clock and jewellery store as well as a boot and shoe

store. John Bastendorff moved his jewellery store here in 1928 and was successful for over four decades. Many other unique businesses have served the community from this site such as: a gent's furnishing store, Dr. Cairns veterinary as well as a tobacco, cigar and confectionary store. Note the faded mural advertising Stag tobacco on the side of the block.

28. The Independent Block at 112-120 Peel St.

Samuel Merner built this Italianate Ontario Vernacular structure in 1878 for commercial and office use from 1898 to 1959. The New Hamburg Independent was the first English newspaper in town and Merner financially assisted in establishing this paper. A serious fire in 1959 resulted in four deaths and severely damaged the building. The third floor and mansard roof were removed at that time.

29a&b. Deichert's Home & Harness Shop



at 121 & 129 Peel St.

a. Built about 1850 by Henry Deichert Sr. in the Second Empire style, it served as Deichert's Harness and Saddlery for many years. Henry Jr. continued his father's business until 1919 when Jacob Zurbrigg relocated his own saddle and harness shop

here. Nith Valley Laboratories, a drug and barbershop product manufacturer, also operated here under Reginald T. Puddicombe. A tea room, butcher shop, egg grading/ retail outlet and Pop's Variety were just some of the many businesses located here throughout the years. Note: the interesting brickwork, semi circular windows on the upper façade and grape keystone.

b. This building was the Deichert home built c.1854. It remained a home until the 1950s when it was converted to commercial use.

30. The Puddicombe House at 145 Peel St.



This was the residence of politician and businessman, Samuel Merner. It was built by Merner in 1868 in the Italianate style. Robert B. Puddicombe purchased the house in 1881 for \$4,500. The well-established Puddicombe family resided in this home until 1969 when it was

converted into apartments. The home boasts superb detailing; especially the two-storey bay windows and the metal work on the roof. This building was restored in 2006 and received a Heritage Wilmot Award in 2007.