

Owosso Downtown Historic District  
City of Owosso  
Shiawassee County  
Michigan

August 2010

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Tom Cook, Chairperson  
c-989-277-3953  
w-989-725-1621

Lorraine Weckwert  
989-725-9113  
[lorrivy@yahoo.com](mailto:lorrivy@yahoo.com)

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Section I

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# SECTION I

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# Owosso Downtown Historic District

## Shiawassee County

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

August, 2010

#### Background:

Some citizens of Owosso recognized the potential benefits of creating an historic district in the downtown commercial district of the city, both in terms of preservation and economic development. Throughout the entire year of 2009, they conducted meetings to garner support for the idea, and they collected signatures from the proposed district's building owners that signified their support for creating an historic district. This grass-roots effort resulted in a petition that was made to the Owosso City Council to form a Historic District Study Committee in March of 2009. The grass-roots effort continued, and signatures were subsequently collected from additional building owners in the proposed district until over 60% of the building owners had signed in support of creating an historic district. On November 16, 2009, a petition to the Owosso City Council was made again. The new Owosso City Council voted unanimously in favor of forming the study committee. Appointments were made (page 22), and work began to research "The Owosso Downtown Historic District."

An ambitious time line was adopted for completion of the work by the study committee. This was done so that Downtown Owosso building owners could take advantage of the upcoming Michigan construction season. Boundaries of the proposed district were designated after consulting with Robert Christianson of the State Historic Preservation Office, and a map was created to delineate the district. (Page 26.)

The area surveyed and recommended as an historic district encompasses 41.2 acres of land. Field Survey Forms were distributed to several members of the committee, and the field work was completed. The field survey yielded little revealing information about the area, because the district already had been widely recognized as having a large concentration of historic commercial buildings. The exercise was, nonetheless, completed as directed.

It was determined through the survey within the proposed boundaries of the district, that the district contained a total of 115 buildings with 85 being declared contributing and 30 non-contributing, for a 73.9 percentage being historic. The recommendation by the committee was to proceed with an Intensive Level Survey. Field Survey Forms are found arranged alphabetically by street and sorted by number in Section III of the following report.

While the Field Survey Forms were being completed, work had already begun on the historic research and the writing of the architectural descriptions for each building. Photographic evidence was simultaneously collected, which resulted in current photos, and in addition and

when available, vintage photos, for each of the 115 buildings in the district. The data forms are included in pages in Section III., arranged alphabetically by street name and sorted numerically by street number. As a result of the evaluations conducted, the final determination is that the entire ten block area is eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places as the district meets all four of the criteria set forth by the National Register.

Criterion A. Association with Significant Events: The Owosso Downtown Historic District is associated with over seventy-five significant historic events. The events are significant in Michigan history, or in American history, and sometimes even in world history. These events begin with Owosso's association with the establishment of pioneer communities during the westward migration from settlements on the East Coast – especially following the opening of the Erie Canal. The events also include Owosso's huge contribution to the Union effort during the Civil War, and Owosso's association with abolitionism, which is exemplified, in part, by its hosting of an underground railroad station.

Criterion B. Association with Significant People: Since 2007, committee member and author Shaffer Fox has done research and written about significant people of Owosso, and has lent his research and writing to this document. He has identified over one hundred people, who were born in Owosso and/or who lived long term in Owosso, whose lives have made national or international impact. He has provided biographies on several of these significant people in this document. Some of the entrepreneurs of early Owosso are among them.

Criterion C. Architectural Significance: Owosso's downtown historic district exhibits most of the important architectural styles of the nineteenth and twentieth century with exuberant brickwork and little repetition. The downtown architecture ranges from early Victorian commercial, Tudor Revival, Beaux Arts, Richardsonian Revival and Renaissance Revival, to Art Moderne.

Criterion D. Yields Further Information: The Committee feels that even more history of buildings and people may be discovered, and members have agreed to continue research and exploration.

The Evaluations Section of the report can be examined on page 25. The Planning Needs and Recommendations for action by local governing body can be found on pages 43-46 in Section I of this report. The Historic District ordinance and amendments are found on pages 9-21 of Section I.

# **CREDITS AND CREDENTIALS**

## **Owosso Downtown Historic District Study Committee Membership**

### **Tom Cook, chairperson**

Member of City Council, Executive Director of Cook Family Foundation, former city planner in California

### **Shaffer Fox**

Researcher and historian, author of three books, author of histories now viral on the Internet about Owosso and about people from Owosso who have made national or international impact. He is a member of the Owosso Historical Commission, and Secretary of Owosso Friends and Neighbors Association.

### **Scott Newman**

B.G.S. University of Michigan with concentrations in history and architectural history, M.S. Eastern Michigan University in Historic Agency Administration. He is the former Director of Operation Comeback – a program of the Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans. He also is a former member of Owosso Historical Commission.

### **Maurice Shattuck**

Owosso businessman, owner and preserver of an historic home within a potential historic district, Owosso native and interested community member.

### **James Civile**

Real Estate broker, historic home owner within a potential historic district, owner of two historic buildings within the proposed historic district.

### **Don Marrah**

Owner, investor and restorer of a downtown historic property called “Mootsie's” art gallery. He restored his own 1840's house and two barns as well as his downtown property. He is a founding member of Preservation Owosso – a group of preservation-minded citizens.

### **James Eaton**

Pastor of an historic church within the proposed historic district. In his first career, he was a city administrator.

### **Lorraine Weckwert**

Owosso historian and researcher, founding member of Preservation Owosso – a group of preservation-minded citizens. She is a member of Owosso Historical Commission, and President of Owosso Friends and Neighbors Association – the organization leading this effort for an historic district.

### **Gary Wilson**

Active in historic preservation initiatives in Detroit since 1980. Since moving to Owosso in 1992, he has been involved in the restoration of the Arthur McHardy house, built in 1878. He is a member of the Michigan Historic Preservation Network, the Owosso Historical Commission, and he was a founding member of Preservation Owosso. He is currently the Director of Alumni and Donor Relations, University Advancement, at Michigan State University. He holds an M.A. in American Studies from M.S.U., with emphasis in American history, literature and material culture, including vernacular architecture.

## **Ground Level Surveys**

The Ground Level Survey was conducted by the following members of the Owosso Downtown Historic District Study Committee: Shaffer Fox, Tom Cook, James Eaton, Maurice Shattuck and Lorraine Weckwert.

## **Credits and Credentials**

Lorraine Weckwert, historian and researcher. Mrs. Weckwert performed the historical research on, and wrote the text about, buildings and building owners in the historic district, and businesses that have occupied buildings in the historic district. She also performed legal research, and wrote several of the narratives, the executive summary, and Criterion D., of the Significance Statement. Additionally, Mrs. Weckwert researched and described the architectural details of all twenty-seven non-contributing buildings in the Owosso Downtown Historic District. Furthermore, Mrs. Weckwert provided research on some of Owosso's earliest pioneers, women and buildings that helped set the tone for the writing of Criterion A., of the Significance Statement.

Mrs. Weckwert was previously involved with Owosso's Historic Home Tours, and she conducted the research for buildings included in the tours. Mrs. Weckwert is the past president and founding member of a community group called "Preservation Owosso," whose prime purpose is to promote restoration and preservation of Owosso's historic structures.

We, the editors of this application, also respectfully state, with much appreciation, that it was Mrs. Weckwert who initiated the effort of defining Downtown Owosso as an historic district. It, too, was Mrs. Weckwert who, for over two years, meticulously and relentlessly directed, managed and promoted this project, which thereby made completion of this application a reality. She did so for the good of all citizens of the great City of Owosso. Mrs. Weckwert currently serves as a member of the Owosso Historical Commission, and she is a co-founder and President of the Owosso Friends and Neighbors Association.

Scott Newman, B.G.S. with concentrations in history and architectural history from the University of Michigan, and an M.S. in historic agency administration from Eastern Michigan University. Scott Newman is a former member of the Owosso Historical Commission, and a restorer of over thirty historic buildings in New Orleans prior to Hurricane Katrina. From 1993 to 1996, he served as the Director of Operation Comeback – a program of the Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans. Because of his educational and occupational background, Scott Newman was able to meticulously research and describe the architectural details of all eighty-five contributing buildings in the Owosso Downtown Historic District. He also wrote the architectural narrative section of this report as well as Criterion C., of the Significance Statement.

Gary Wilson, M.A. in American studies from Michigan State University, with emphasis in American history, literature and vernacular architecture. Gary Newman served as editor for the text created by Newman and Weckwert, blending the architectural description with the historic research. Gary Wilson also wrote the historic overview narrative for the report. Gary Wilson is a member of the Owosso Historic Commission.

Shaffer Fox, researcher and a historian, author of three books, the author of histories now viral on the Internet about Owosso, and about people from Owosso whose lives have made national or international impact. Shaffer Fox did the research, and wrote the text, for Criterion A., and Criterion B., of the Significance Statement, which he has lent to this project. He was an editor of Section 1 of this application, a final editor of the application, and other work of his led to the acquisition of dozens of historical photos. Shaffer Fox is a member of the Owosso Historical Commission, and he is Secretary of the Owosso Friends and Neighbors Association.

Paul Heimnick, professional photographer and a retired controls engineer. Paul Heimnick took the digital photos of every building in the historic district. He also scanned and processed the historic photos that were contributed, designed and produced the maps and captions, designed the format of this application, and combined it all, along with the reports and narratives, to produce this application in its final form. Paul Heimnick is a member of the Owosso Friends and Neighbors Association.

Tom Cook, B.S. in geography and environmental studies from Dartmouth University, and a M.S. in city planning from the University of California Berkley. Tom Cook served as a city planner in California, currently is the Executive Director of the Cook Family Foundation, and he is a member of the Owosso City Council. Tom Cook served as chairperson of the Downtown Historic District Study Group Committee, and he wrote the thematic narrative. He also made the public presentation of the Downtown Historic District Study Group Application to the Owosso City Council.

Suggestions for the planning narrative were written by Philip Hathaway, who also served as an important liaison for the group. Phil Hathaway is a retired Director of Community

Development for the City of Owosso, and the retired Director of the Owosso Downtown Development Authority. Phil Hathaway is Treasurer of the Owosso Friends and Neighbors Association.

Dianne Acton, a building owner in the Owosso Downtown Historic District, helped with data collection and formatting, editing, and keyboarding. Diane Acton is a member of the Owosso Friends and Neighbors Association.

Thanks must be extended to the Shiawassee District Library, Owosso Branch, where much of the history collected is archived and where a copy of this document may be found in the future. The Shiawassee Historical Society also provided historic photos from their collection. Thanks also to the staff at Owosso City Hall who provided support for creating this research document to help preserve Owosso's downtown. In particular, we give special thanks to the office of the Owosso City Manager, to the office of the Owosso City Clerk, and to the office of the Owosso City Engineer. Copies of this report will be on file at Owosso City Hall. Copies of this report will also be found at the State Historic Preservation Office, and at the Bentley Library at the University of Michigan.

We also are pleased to give thanks to: William Barrett, who generously scanned and e-mailed dozens of rare and historic photos of Owosso to the committee from his home in California; George Welte, the grandson of one of Owosso's most gifted and prolific early photographers, who contributed dozens of rare and historic photos to the committee; Steve Schmidt, a local jeweler and historian whose website was an aid to researchers involved in this project; the late Helen Harrelson, Owosso author and historian, whose research and books were frequent reference sources; and the late William Allen May, author and former chairman of the 1936 History Committee, whose research and writings were also frequent reference sources.

Finally, we are also pleased to give special thanks for the leadership of the Owosso City Council: Mayor Benjamin R. Frederick, Mayor Pro-tem Cindy Popovitch, Councilman Gary Martinis, Councilwoman Joanie Forrester, Councilman, Michael Erfourth, Councilman Tom Cook, and Councilman Chris Eveleth. It was the Owosso City Council's majority vote in favor of forming an Owosso Downtown Historic District Study Group that made completion of this application possible. It was their subsequent majority vote in favor of accepting this completed application, and approving the formation of a historic district, that will benefit Owosso's current generations of citizens and all generations that follow.

# HISTORIC DISTRICT ORDINANCE & AMENDMENTS

## ARTICLE IX. HISTORIC DISTRICTS\*

\*Editor's note: Ord. No. 598, § 1, adopted September 5, 2000, amended the Code by repealing former art. IX, §§ 8-200--8-216, and adding a new art. IX, §§ 8-200--8-215. Former art. IX pertained to similar subject matter, and derived from Ord. No. 577, adopted May 3, 1999.

### **Sec. 8-200. Short title.**

This article shall be known and may be cited as the "historic districts ordinance."

(Ord. No. 598, § 1, 9-5-00)

### **Sec. 8-201. Definitions.**

The following words, terms, and phrases, when used in this article shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

*Alteration* means work that changes the detail of a resource but does not change its basic size or shape.

*Center* means the Michigan Historical Center of the Michigan Department of State.

*Certificate of appropriateness* means the written approval of a permit application for work that is appropriate and that does not adversely affect a resource.

*Commission* means the city historic district commission created by the city pursuant to PA 169 of 1970 as amended.

*Committee* means a historic district study committee appointed by the city council.

*Demolition* means the razing or destruction, whether entirely or in part, of a resource and includes, but is not limited to, demolition by neglect.

*Demolition by neglect* means neglect in maintaining, repairing, or securing a resource that results in deterioration of an exterior feature of the resource or the loss of structural integrity of the resource.

*Denial* means the written rejection of a permit application for work that is inappropriate and that adversely affects a resource.

*Historic district* means an area, or group of areas not necessarily having contiguous boundaries, that contains one (1) resource or a group of resources that are related by history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture.

*Historic preservation* means the identification, evaluation, establishment, and protection of resources significant in history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture.

*Historic resource* means a publicly or privately owned building, structure, site, object, feature, or open



space that is significant in the history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture of the city, county, state or the United States. *Notice to proceed* means the written permission to issue a permit for work that is inappropriate and that adversely affects a resource, pursuant to a finding under section 8-208(f).

*Open space* means undeveloped land, a naturally landscaped area, or a formal or manmade landscaped area that provides a connective link or a buffer between other resources.

*Ordinary maintenance* means keeping a resource unimpaired and in good condition through ongoing minor intervention, undertaken from time to time, in its exterior condition. Ordinary maintenance does not change the external appearance of the resource except through the elimination of the usual and expected effects of weathering. Ordinary maintenance does not constitute work for purposes of this act.

*Proposed historic district* means an area, or group of areas not necessarily having contiguous boundaries, that has delineated boundaries and that is under review by a committee or a standing committee for the purpose of making a recommendation as to whether it should be established as a historic district or added to an established historic district.

*Repair* means to restore a decayed or damaged resource to a good or sound condition by any process. A repair that changes the external appearance of a resource constitutes work for purposes of this act.

*Resource* means one (1) or more publicly or privately owned historic or non-historic buildings, structures, sites, objects, features, or open spaces located within a historic district.

*Standing committee* means a permanent body established by the city council to conduct the activities of a historic district study committee on a continuing basis.

*Work* means construction, addition, alteration, repair, moving, excavation, or demolition. The definition of work specifically excludes painting and ordinary maintenance.

(Ord. No. 598, § 1, 9-5-00)

### **Sec. 8-202. Historic preservation as public purpose; purpose of article.**

Historic preservation is declared to be a public purpose and the city council may by ordinance regulate the construction, addition, alteration, repair, moving, excavation, and demolition of resources in historic districts within the city limits. The purpose of this article shall be to do one (1) or more of the following:

- (1) Safeguard the heritage of the city by preserving one (1) or more historic districts in the city that reflects elements of the unit's history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture.
- (2) Stabilize and improve property values in each district and the surrounding areas by protecting the value and preserving historic resources.
- (3) Foster civic beauty.
- (4) Strengthen the local economy.
- (5) Promote the use of historic districts for the education, pleasure, and welfare of the citizens of the city and of the state.
- (6) To take advantage of state tax credits available to owners of historic properties.

(Ord. No. 598, § 1, 9-5-00)

### **Sec. 8-203. Compliance required for construction, repair, demolition, etc.**

There shall be no work performed on a resource within any designated historic district, unless such action complies with the requirements set forth in this chapter.

(Ord. No. 598, § 1, 9-5-00)

**Sec. 8-204. Historic districts; establishment; study committee; duties; public hearing; notice; actions; availability of writings to public.**

(a) The city, from time to time, may, by ordinance, establish one (1) or more historic districts. The historic district commission shall administer the historic districts. Before establishing a historic district, the city council shall appoint a historic district study committee. The committee shall contain a majority of persons who have a clearly demonstrated interest in or knowledge of historic preservation, and shall contain representation from one (1) or more duly organized local historic preservation organizations. The committee shall do all of the following:

- (1) Conduct a photographic inventory of resources within each proposed historic district following procedures established or approved by the center.
- (2) Conduct basic research of each proposed historic district and the historic resources located within that district.
- (3) Determine the total number of historic and nonhistoric resources within a proposed historic district and the percentage of historic resources of that total. In evaluating the significance of historic resources, the committee shall be guided by the selection criteria for evaluation issued by the United States Secretary of the Interior for inclusion of resources in the National Register of Historic Places, as set forth in 36 CFR part 60, and criteria established or approved by the center, if any.
- (4) Prepare a preliminary historic district study committee report that addresses at a minimum all of the following:
  - a. The charge of the committee.
  - b. The composition of the committee membership.
  - c. The historic district or districts studied.
  - d. The boundaries for each proposed historic district in writing and on maps.
  - e. The history of each proposed historic district.
  - f. The significance of each district as a whole, as well as a sufficient number of its individual resources to fully represent the variety of resources found within the district, relative to the evaluation criteria.
- (5) Transmit copies of the preliminary report for review and recommendations to the local planning body, to the center, to the Michigan Historical Commission, and to the state historic preservation review board.
- (6) Make copies of the preliminary report available to the public.

(b) Not less than sixty (60) calendar days after the transmittal of the preliminary report, the committee shall hold a public hearing in compliance with Act No. 267 of the Public Acts of 1976, as amended, being MCL sections 15.261 to 15.275. Public notice of the time, date, and place of the hearing shall be given in the manner required by Act No. 267 of the Public Acts of 1976, as amended. Written notice shall be mailed by first-class mail not less than fourteen (14) calendar days before the hearing to the owners of properties within the proposed historic district, as listed on the tax rolls of the city.

(c) After the date of the public hearing, the committee and the city council shall have not more than

one (1) year, unless otherwise authorized by the city council, to take the following actions:

(1) The committee shall prepare and submit to the city council a final report with its recommendations and the recommendations, if any, of the historic district commission and the planning commission. If the recommendation is to establish a historic district or districts, the final report shall include a draft of a proposed ordinance or ordinances.

(2) After receiving a final report that recommends the establishment of a historic district or districts, the city council, at its discretion, may introduce and pass or reject an ordinance or ordinances. If the city council passes an ordinance or ordinances establishing one (1) or more historic districts, the city council shall file a copy of that ordinance or those ordinances, including a legal description of the property or properties located within the historic district or districts, with the register of deeds. The city council shall not pass an ordinance establishing a contiguous historic district less than sixty (60) days after a majority of the property owners within the proposed historic district, as listed on the tax rolls of the local unit, have approved the establishment of the historic district pursuant to a written petition.

(Ord. No. 598, § 1, 9-5-00)

**Sec. 8-205. Historic district commission; establishment; appointment, qualifications, and terms of members; vacancy.**

In order to execute the purposes of this article, the city council hereby appoints a historic district commission to serve as the governing body.

Each member of the commission shall reside within the city. The membership of the historic district commission shall consist of not less than seven (7) or more than nine (9) members. A majority of the members shall have a clearly demonstrated interest in or knowledge of historic preservation. The mayor, with the approval of the city council, shall appoint the members. Initial members shall be appointed within six (6) months after the ordinance establishing the commission is enacted. Members shall be appointed for three-year terms except the initial appointments of some of the members shall be for less than three (3) years so that the initial appointments are staggered and that subsequent appointments do not recur at the same time. Members shall be eligible for reappointment. A vacancy on the commission shall be filled within sixty (60) calendar days by an appointment made by the appointing authority. The city council shall appoint at least one (1) member from a list of citizens submitted by one (1) or more duly organized local historic preservation organizations. The commission shall include as a member, if available, a graduate of an accredited school of architecture who has two (2) years of architectural experience or who is an architect registered in this state.

(Ord. No. 598, § 1, 9-5-00)

**Sec. 8-206. Rules of procedure; compensation; meetings; freedom of information.**

(a) The commission shall adopt rules governing its procedure and the holding of regular meetings, subject to the approval of the city council. Special meetings may be held when called in the manner provided in the rules of the commission.

(b) The business that the commission may perform shall be conducted at a public meeting of the commission held in compliance with the Open Meetings Act, Act No. 267 of the Public Acts of 1976, as amended, being MCL sections 15.261 to 15.275. Public notice of the time, date, and place of the meeting shall be given in the manner required by Act No. 267 of the Public Acts of 1976, as amended. A meeting agenda shall be part of the notice and shall include a listing of each permit application to be reviewed or considered by the commission.

(c) The members of the commission shall serve without compensation.

(d) The commission shall keep a record of its resolutions, proceedings, and actions. A writing prepared, owned, used, in the possession of, or retained by the commission in the performance of an official function shall be made available to the public in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, Act No. 442 of the Public Acts of 1976, as amended, being MCL sections 15.231 to 15.246.

(Ord. No. 598, § 1, 9-5-00)

**Sec. 8-207. Duties and powers.**

It shall be the duty of the commission to review all plans for work in the historic district, and the commission shall have the power to pass upon such plans before a permit for such activity can be granted. In reviewing the plans, the commission shall follow the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's standards for rehabilitation and guidelines for rehabilitating historic buildings, as set forth in 36 CFR Part 67, or their equivalent as approved and established by the Michigan Historical Center of the Department of State.

Nothing in this section shall bar the commission from meeting in an emergency session should there occur a severe and imminent threat to the health, safety, welfare of the public when two-thirds ( 2/3) of the commission members decide that delay would be detrimental to efforts to lessen or respond to the threat.

(Ord. No. 598, § 1, 9-5-00)

**Sec. 8-208. Permit required; completed application; certificate of appropriateness or notice to proceed; issuance; permit fee; appeal to review board and circuit court; plan review standards, guidelines and considerations; scope of review; preservation plan; approval; conditions; availability of writings to public; approval of minor work; finding of demolition by neglect; restoration or modification of work done without permit.**

(a) A permit shall be obtained before any work affecting the exterior appearance of a resource is performed within a historic district or, if required under subsection (d), work affecting the interior arrangements of a resource is performed within a historic district. The person, individual, partnership, firm, corporation, organization, institution, or agency of government proposing to do that work shall file an application for a permit with the city building official. The building official shall immediately refer the application, together with all required supporting materials that make the application complete, to the commission. A permit shall not be issued and proposed work shall not proceed until the commission has acted on the application by issuing a certificate of appropriateness or a notice to proceed as prescribed in this ordinance. Applicants shall pay the normal permit fee.

(b) An applicant aggrieved by a decision of a commission concerning a permit application may file an appeal with the state historic preservation review board of the Michigan Historical Commission within the Department of State. The appeal shall be filed within sixty (60) days after the decision is furnished to the applicant. The appellant may submit evidence or arguments in written form, which the review board shall consider at its first regularly scheduled meeting after receiving the appeal. There is no charge or fee for considering an appeal. The review board may affirm modify, or set aside a commission's decision and may order a commission to issue a certificate of appropriateness or a notice to proceed. A permit applicant aggrieved by the decision of the state historic preservation review board may appeal the decision to the county circuit court.

(c) In reviewing plans, the commission shall follow the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's standards for

rehabilitation and guidelines for rehabilitating historic buildings, as set forth in 36 CFR part 67. Design review standards and guidelines that address special design characteristics of historic districts administered by the commission may be followed if they are equivalent in guidance to the secretary of interior's standards and guidelines and are established or approved by the center.

The commission shall also consider all of the following:

- (1) The historic or architectural value and significance of the resource and its relationship to the historic value of the surrounding area.
- (2) The relationship of any architectural features of the resource to the rest of the resource and to the surrounding area.
- (3) The general compatibility of the design, arrangement, texture, and materials proposed to be used.
- (4) Other factors, such as aesthetic value, that the commission finds relevant.

(d) The commission shall review and act upon only exterior features of a resource and shall not review and act upon interior arrangements unless interior work will cause visible change to the exterior of the resource. The commission shall not disapprove an application due to considerations not prescribed in subsection (c).

(e) If an application is for work that will adversely affect the exterior of a resource the commission considers valuable to the local unit, state, or nation, and the commission determines that the alteration or loss of that resource will adversely affect the public purpose of the local unit, state, or nation, the commission shall attempt to establish with the owner of the resource an economically feasible plan for preservation of the resource.

(f) Work within a historic district shall be permitted through the issuance of a notice to proceed by the commission if any of the following conditions prevail and if the proposed work can be demonstrated by a finding of the commission to be necessary to substantially improve or correct any of the following conditions:

- (1) The resource constitutes a hazard to the safety of the public or to the structure's occupants.
- (2) The resource is a deterrent to a major improvement program that will be of substantial benefit to the community and the applicant proposing the work has obtained all necessary planning and zoning approvals, financing, and environmental clearances.
- (3) Retaining the resource will cause undue financial hardship to the owner when a governmental action, an act of God, or other events beyond the owner's control created the hardship, and all feasible alternatives to eliminate the financial hardship, which may include offering the resource for sale at its fair market value or moving the resource to a vacant site within the historic district, have been attempted and exhausted by the owner.
- (4) Retaining the resource is not in the interest of the majority of the community.

(g) The commission may delegate the issuance of certificates of appropriateness for specified minor classes of work to its staff, to the building official, or to another delegated authority. The commission shall provide to the delegated authority specific written standards for issuing certificates of appropriateness under this subsection. On at least a quarterly basis, the commission shall review the certificates of appropriateness, if any, issued for work by its staff, the building official, or another authority to determine whether or not the delegated responsibilities should be continued.

(h) Upon a finding by a commission that a historic resource within a historic district or a proposed historic district subject to its review and approval is threatened with demolition by neglect, the commission may do either of the following:

(1) Require the owner of the resource to repair all conditions contributing to demolition by neglect.

(2) If the owner does not make repairs within a reasonable time, the commission or its agents may enter the property and make such repairs as are necessary to prevent demolition by neglect. The costs of the work shall be charged to the owner, and may be levied by the city council as a special assessment against the property. The commission or its agents may enter the property for purposes of this section upon obtaining an order from the circuit court.

(i) When work has been done upon a resource without a permit, and the commission finds that the work does not qualify for a certificate of appropriateness, the commission may require an owner to restore the resource to the condition the resource was in before the inappropriate work or to modify the work so that it qualifies for a certificate of appropriateness. If the owner does not comply with the restoration or modification requirement within a reasonable time, the commission may seek an order from the circuit court to require the owner to restore the resource to its former condition or to modify the work so that it qualifies for a certificate of appropriateness. If the owner does not comply or cannot comply with the order of the court, the commission or its agents may enter the property and conduct work necessary to restore the resource to its former condition or modify the work so that it qualifies for a certificate of appropriateness in accordance with the court's order. The costs of the work shall be charged to the owner, and may be levied by the local unit as a special assessment against property. When acting pursuant to an order of the circuit court, a commission or its agents may enter a property for purposes of this section.

(Ord. No. 598, § 1, 9-5-00)

**Sec. 8-209. Grants, gifts, and programs.**

The city may accept state or federal grants for historic preservation purposes, may participate in state and federal programs that benefit historic preservation, and may accept public or private gifts for historic preservation purposes. The historic district commission is hereby appointed the agent to accept and administer grants, gifts, and program responsibilities.

(Ord. No. 598, § 1, 9-5-00)

**Sec. 8-210. Historic resource; acquisition by local legislative body.**

If all efforts by the commission to preserve a resource fail, or if it is determined by the city council body that public ownership is most suitable, the city council, if considered to be in the public interest, may acquire the resource using public funds, public or private gifts, grants, or proceeds from the issuance of revenue bonds.

The acquisition shall be based upon the recommendation of the commission or standing committee. The commission or entity appointed by the city council is responsible for maintaining publicly owned resources using its own funds, if not specifically designated for other purposes, or public funds committed for that use by the city council. Upon recommendation of the commission or entity appointed by the city council, the city may sell resources acquired under this section with protective easements included in the property transfer documents, if appropriate.

(Ord. No. 598, § 1, 9-5-00)

**Sec. 8-211. Historic district commission; filings with delegated authority; duties of local public officials, employees, and Michigan Historical Center.**

The commission shall file certificates of appropriateness, notices to proceed, and denials of applications

for permits with the city building official. A permit shall not be issued until the commission has acted as prescribed by this act. If a permit application is denied, the decision shall be binding on the building official or other authority. A denial shall be accompanied with a written explanation by the commission of the reasons for denial and, if appropriate, a notice that an application may be resubmitted for commission review when suggested changes have been made. The denial shall also include notification of the applicant's rights of appeal to the state historic preservation review board and to the circuit court. The failure of the commission to act within sixty (60) calendar days after the date a complete application is filed with the commission, unless the applicant and the commission agree upon an extension in writing, shall be considered to constitute approval.

Local public officials and employees shall provide information and records to committees, commissions, and standing committees, and shall meet with those bodies upon request to assist with their activities.

(Ord. No. 598, § 1, 9-5-00)

**Sec. 8-212. Construction of act.**

Nothing in this act shall be construed to prevent ordinary maintenance or repair of a resource within a historic district, or to prevent work on any resource under a permit issued by the city building official or other duly delegated authority before the ordinance was enacted.

(Ord. No. 598, § 1, 9-5-00)

**Sec. 8-213. Appeal of decisions.**

Any citizen or duly organized historic preservation organization in the city, as well as resource property owners, jointly or severally aggrieved by a decision of the commission may appeal the decision to the circuit court, except that a permit applicant aggrieved by a decision rendered under this ordinance may not appeal to the court without first exhausting the right to appeal to the state historic preservation review board.

(Ord. No. 598, § 1, 9-5-00)

**Sec. 8-214. Establishing, modifying, or eliminating historic districts; study committee; considerations; review of applications within proposed historic district; emergency moratorium.**

(a) The city council may at any time establish by ordinance additional historic districts, including proposed districts previously considered and rejected, may modify boundaries of an existing historic district or may eliminate an existing historic district. Before establishing, modifying, or eliminating a historic district, a historic district study committee appointed by the city council shall comply with the procedures set forth herein and shall consider any previously written committee reports pertinent to the proposed action. To conduct these activities, the city council may retain the initial committee, establish a standing committee, or establish a committee to consider only specific proposed districts and then be dissolved.

(b) If considering elimination of a historic district, a committee shall follow the procedures set forth herein for issuing a preliminary report, holding a public hearing, and issuing a final report but with the intent of showing one (1) or more of the following:

- (1) The historic district has lost those physical characteristics that enabled establishment of the district.
- (2) The historic district was not significant in the way previously defined.

(3) The historic district was established pursuant to defective procedures.

(c) Upon receipt of substantial evidence showing the presence of historic, architectural, archeological, engineering, or cultural significance of a proposed historic district, the city council, at its discretion, may adopt a resolution requiring that all applications for permits within the proposed historic district be referred to the commission as prescribed herein. The commission shall review permit applications with the same powers that would apply if the proposed historic district was an established historic district. The review may continue in the proposed historic district for not more than one (1) year, or until such time as the city council approves or rejects the establishment of the historic district by ordinance, whichever occurs first.

(d) If the city council determines that pending work will cause irreparable harm to resources located within an established historic district or a proposed historic district the legislative body may by resolution declare an emergency moratorium of all such work for a period not to exceed six (6) months. The legislative body may extend the emergency moratorium for an additional period not to exceed six (6) months upon finding that the threat of irreparable harm to resources is still present. Any pending permit application concerning a resource subject to an emergency moratorium may be summarily denied.

(Ord. No. 598, § 1, 9-5-00)

**Sec. 8-215. Violation; fine; payment of costs.**

A person, individual, partnership, firm, corporation, organization, institution, or agency of government, including the historic district commission, that violates this act is responsible for a civil violation and may be fined not more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00).

A person, individual, partnership, firm, corporation, organization, institution, or agency of government that violates this act may be ordered by the court to pay the costs to restore or replicate a resource unlawfully constructed, added to, altered, repaired, moved, excavated, or demolished.

(Ord. No. 598, § 1, 9-5-00)

**Sec. 8-216. Reserved.**

Editor's note: Ord. No. 604, adopted December 4, 2000, from which former § 8-216 derived, was repealed by a vote of the electors of the city on August 14, 2001. Former § 8-216 pertained to establishment of historic districts.

**Sec. 38-32. Historic overlay districts.**

(a) Statement of purpose. The purpose of establishing historic overlay districts within the city is to:

- (1) Safeguard the heritage of the city by preserving historic districts as well as the individual buildings, structures, sites and objects within the districts in the city which reflect elements of the city's cultural social, economic, political or architectural history.
- (2) To stabilize and improve property values in the districts.
- (3) To strengthen the local economy.
- (4) To promote the use of historic districts for the education, pleasure and welfare of the citizens of the city and of the state.

(b) As used in this chapter:



- (1) Alter and alteration mean work that changes the detail of a resource but does not change the basic size or shape. Alteration includes any action requiring a building permit or site modification under all current city ordinances.
- (2) Destruction means the razing or demolition, whether entirely or in part, of a resource, and includes, but is not limited to, destruction by neglect.
- (3) Destruction by neglect means neglect in maintaining, repairing or securing a resource that results in deterioration of an exterior feature of the resource or the loss of structural integrity of the resource.
- (4) Historic resource means a publicly or privately owned building, structure, site, object, feature or open space that is significant in the history, architecture, culture, or beauty of the city.

(c) The city historic overlay districts shall be those areas already designated as national historic districts within the city. The districts are identified on maps maintained in the office of the city clerk and include:

- (1) The Oliver Street Historic District;
- (2) The Westown Historic District;
- (3) The Michigan Avenue Historic District; and
- (4) The Mason Street Historic District.

(d) Although it is not officially registered as a national historic district, downtown Owosso shall also constitute a historic overlay district for the purposes of this section. The downtown historic overlay district is described below:

*Beginning at the intersection of the south line of Mason Street and the west line of Washington Street, thence westerly to the east bank of the Shiawassee River, thence southwesterly along the east bank of the river to a point two hundred fifty (250) feet southerly of the Main Street right-of-way, thence northeasterly on a line perpendicular to Water Street and extended to the centerline at Water Street, thence southwesterly along the centerline of Water Street to the intersection of the north line of Comstock Street, thence east to the intersection of the west line of Park Street, thence north to the intersection of the north line of East Exchange Street, thence west to the west line of Washington Street, thence north to the point of beginning.*

(e) Whenever this chapter directs the planning commission, city council or zoning board of appeals to engage in a review and approval process of any proposed action to a structure, building or site, whether publicly or privately owned, within the city, the aforementioned public bodies shall consider whether the proposed action poses an adverse impact upon a historic resource located within the historic overlay district or whether the proposed action poses an adverse impact upon the historic overlay district itself. This section specifically includes any review and approval process necessary or ancillary to an expenditure of public funds or capital improvements.

- (1) The standards for judging adverse impact shall include:
  - a. Whether the proposed action involves the destruction or alteration of all or any significant part of the historic resource.
  - b. Whether the proposed action involves the alteration of the surrounding environment when the significance of the historic resource is derived from its relationship to its site.
  - c. Whether the proposed action involves the introduction of visual or audio elements that are out of character with the property and its setting.
  - d. Whether the proposed action would destroy or erode the integrity or the significance that was the basis for the historic resources designation as a historic resource.

(Ord. No. 584, § 1, 6-21-99)

**ORDINANCE NO. 717**

**AMENDING CHAPTER 8, ARTICLE IX HISTORIC DISTRICTS OF THE  
CODE OF ORDINANCES CITY OF OWOSSO, MICHIGAN TO CREATE THE  
OWOSSO DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT AND MODIFY OTHER PROVISIONS**

WHEREAS, the city council of the city of Owosso on May 3, 1999 adopted Ordinance 577 creating the historic districts ordinance, which was subsequently amended September 5, 2000 by Ordinance 598, all codified into the Code of Ordinances as Chapter 8, Article IX;

WHEREAS, an Owosso Downtown Historic District Study Committee was appointed and for the proposed district has:

1. conducted a photographic inventory of resources,
2. conducted basic research of the resources located within,
3. determined the total number of historic and non historic resources,
4. prepared a preliminary report,
5. transmitted copies of the preliminary report to the Owosso planning commission, the Michigan historical commission, the and the Michigan state historic preservation review board,
6. made copies available to the general public,
7. after public notice and mailing written notice to property, owners held a public hearing; and

WHEREAS, the city council has received the report of the Owosso Downtown Historic District Study Committee and determined that it is in the public interest to establish the Owosso Downtown Historic District;

THEREFORE, THE CITY OF OWOSSO ORDAINS THAT:

Section 1. The following definitions shall be deleted from Sec. 8-201. Definitions:

*Center* means the Michigan Historical Center of the Michigan Department of State.

*Notice to proceed* means the written permission to issue a permit for work that is inappropriate and that adversely affects a resource, pursuant to a finding under section 8-208(f).

*Ordinary maintenance* means keeping a resource unimpaired and in good condition through ongoing minor intervention, undertaken from time to time, in its exterior condition. Ordinary maintenance does not change the external appearance of the resource except through the elimination of the usual and expected effects of weathering. Ordinary maintenance does not constitute work for purposes of this act.

*Standing committee* means a permanent body established by the city council to conduct the activities of a historic district study committee on a continuing basis.

The following definitions shall be added to **Sec. 8-201. Definitions:**

*Department* means the department of history, arts and libraries

*Fire alarm system* means a system designed to detect and annunciate the presence of fire or by-products of fire. Fire alarm system includes smoke alarms.

*Notice to proceed* means the written permission to issue a permit for work that is inappropriate and that adversely affects a resource, pursuant to a finding under Section 399.205(6) of Public Act 169 of 1970, as amended.

*Ordinary maintenance* means keeping a resource unimpaired and in good condition through ongoing minor intervention, undertaken from time to time, in its exterior condition. Ordinary maintenance does not change the external appearance of the resource except through the elimination of the usual and expected effects of weathering. Ordinary maintenance does not constitute work for the purposes of this article.

*Smoke alarm* means a single-station or multiple -station alarm responsive to smoke and not connected to a system. As used in this subdivision, a "single -station alarm" means an assembly incorporating a detector, the control equipment, and the alarm sounding device into a single unit, operated from a power supply either in the unit or obtained at the point of installation. "Multiple -station alarm" means two or more single-station alarms that are capable of interconnection such that actuation of one alarm causes all integrated separate audible alarms to operate.

Section 2. The following shall be added to **Sec. 8-208. Permit required...** ( C )(5):

(5) Whether the applicant has certified in the application that the property where the work will be undertaken has, or will have, before the proposed project completion date, a fire alarm system or a smoke alarm system complying with the requirements of the Stille-DeRossett-Hale single state construction code act of 1972 (MCL 12.1501 to 125.1531).

Section 3. The title to Sec 8-212. Construction of act shall be changed to Sec. 8-212. Ordinary maintenance.

Section 4. Section 8.213. Appeal of decisions. Shall be deleted in its entirety and replaced with a new section as follows:

Section 8-213 Appeal of a commission decision.

(a) An applicant aggrieved by a decision of the commission concerning a permit application may file an appeal with the State Historic Preservation Review Board. The appeal shall be filed within sixty (60) calendar days after the decision is furnished to the applicant. The appellant may submit all or part of the appellant's evidence and arguments in written form. The State Historic Preservation Review Board shall consider an appeal at its first regularly scheduled meeting after receiving the appeal. A permit applicant aggrieved by the decision of the State Historic Preservation Review Board may appeal the decision to the circuit court having jurisdiction over the historic district commission whose decision was appealed to the State Historic Preservation Review Board.

(b) Any citizen or duly organized historic preservation organization in the city of Owosso, as well as resource property owners, jointly or severally aggrieved by a decision of the historic district commission may appeal the decision to the circuit court, except that a permit applicant aggrieved by a decision rendered under this article may not appeal to the court without first exhausting the right to appeal to the State Historic Preservation Review Board.

Section 5. The following shall be added as Sec. 8-216. Owosso Downtown Historic District.

**Sec. 8-216. Owosso Downtown Historic District.**

The Owosso Downtown Historic District shall be described as follows:

*The plat of J.H. Calkins Subdivision of Reserve Number 7 of the City of Owosso, also the following blocks in the Original Plat of the Village, now City of Owosso, 11, 12,14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, Lots 11 through 18 in block 27, that portion of Reserve No. 1 and 2 south and west of the following described line, beginning at a point on the west line of Water Street where the north line of Mason Street, if extended, intersects said west line, then north along the west line of Water Street 326 feet, thence west parallel with the south line of William Street 143.8 feet thence south 62 feet parallel with the west line of Water Street, thence east parallel with the south line William Street 38 feet thence south parallel with the west line of Water Street 110 feet, thence west parallel with the south line of William Street 80 feet, thence north parallel to the west line of Water Street 110 feet, thence west parallel to the south line of William Street 292.7 feet thence south to the east bank of the Shiawassee River, and that portion of Reserve No. 3 that is north and west of a line perpendicular to the southwest line of Water Street that intersects the south line of Comstock Street and the Northeast line of Water Street and extends to the Shiawassee River. Also lots 8, 7, 3, and the west 1/2 of lot 2 in Block 17, and the west 82' of lot 11, and the west 82' of the south 33' of lot 10 in Block 10. This description also includes all street and alley right of ways in and adjoining these blocks and Reserves. Approximately 44.6 Acres.*

A map of the Owosso Downtown Historic District is attached as Exhibit A.

Section 6. This ordinance shall become effective August 22, 2010.

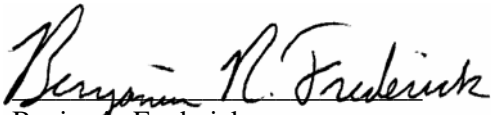
Section 7. This Ordinance may be purchased or inspected in the City Clerk's Office Monday through Friday between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

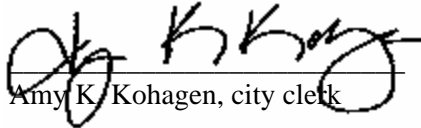
PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OWOSSO, SHIAWASSEE COUNTY, MICHIGAN THIS 2nd DAY OF AUGUST 2010.

AYES: 6  
NAYS: 1  
ABSTENTIONS: 0  
ABSENT: 0

CITY OF OWOSSO:

ATTEST:

  
Benjamin Frederick, mayor

  
Amy K. Kohagen, city clerk

# CITY COUNCIL ACTION

## BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS APPOINTMENTS

Councilperson Forster expressed concern that it appears there are two Council members on the Historical Commission. She wanted it noted that Councilperson Eveleth would be resigning from the Commission. She also asked about Councilperson Cook as a member of the Historic District Study Committee saying she thought it was supposed to be a citizen based organization. She also asked about potential conflicts of interest as Councilperson Cook is involved with the Owosso Community Players and the Lebowsky Center rebuild project.

It was noted that the Mayor had asked Councilperson Cook to be a part of the Historic District Study Committee and that because he had no direct financial benefit from his work with the Owosso Community Players there was no conflict of interest.

Motion by Councilperson Eveleth to approve the following Mayoral boards and commissions appointments:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Commission</b>	<b>Term Expires</b>
W. Shaffer Fox	Historical Commission	12-31-2010
Michael Erfourth	Historical Commission,	Term of office
Lorraine Weckwert	Historical Commission	12-31-2012
Thomas Cook	Historic District Study Committee	Council Determination
James Eaton	Historic District Study Committee	Council Determination
Scott Newman	Historic District Study Committee	Council Determination
W. Shaffer Fox	Historic District Study Committee	Council Determination
Donald Marrah	Historic District Study Committee	Council Determination
Gary Wilson	Historic District Study Committee	Council Determination
Lorraine Weckwert	Historic District Study Committee	Council Determination
James Civile	Historic District Study Committee	Council Determination
Maurice Shattuck	Historic District Study Committee	Council Determination

Motion supported by Councilperson Cook.

Roll Call Vote.

AYES: Councilpersons Forster, Eveleth, Cook, Erfourth, Martenis, Mayor Pro-Tem Popovitch, and Mayor Frederick.

NAYS: None.

## **PROJECT OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY**

People who live in Owosso certainly recognize that their downtown is full of “old” buildings. However, few if any people in Owosso knew much about their city’s downtown buildings – other than the names of the businesses that occupy the buildings now or that occupied the buildings during the recent past. Therefore, it seemed imperative that the buildings and their histories be investigated and documented. That, we believed, would enhance the appreciation of the architecture, and appreciation of the people who conducted businesses in the buildings. It would also reveal the enterprise of the early settlers, how each contributed to the community, and the struggles and successes that they, and those who came later, experienced. Our hope was and is that value assigned to the buildings will foster preservation and reinvestment movement within the downtown commercial district, and that was the prime motivation for conducting this intensive study.

A group of citizens intent on improving Owosso in every way possible, called Owosso Friends and Neighbors Association, initiated and undertook the drive to establish an historic district in Downtown Owosso. The association worked to attain support from building owners within Owosso’s downtown commercial district, as well as from the Owosso City Council.

The drive began with attempts to contact and communicate with every owner of a building in Downtown Owosso. This was not easy to accomplish, because some building owners were domiciled in other cities and even out-of-state. Nonetheless, attempts were made to contact every building owner, and building owners who lived in the Owosso area were visited, sometimes repeatedly, by members of the Owosso Friends and Neighbors Association.

During each visit, the guidelines and benefits of historic district designation were described. We also requested the signatures of each building owner visited, in order to indicate their approval of the effort to create a historic district in Downtown Owosso. With signatures of support by over 60% of the building owners, the Owosso City Council appointed a study committee for the proposed Owosso Downtown Historic District on November 16, 2009.

The Owosso Downtown Historic District Study Committee knew of previous documentation from a study which was conducted in 1978 for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. In 1978 this documentation was accepted by the National Register and a district was created. However, a building owner and the head of the Chamber of Commerce, at the time, went to the SHPO office in Lansing and demanded that the downtown be un-declared as an historic district. Documentation of that study is stored at the Owosso Branch of the Shiawassee District Library in the back room of the children's library. After viewing the scant documentation that was done in the 1978 study, the study committee of 2009-2010 knew it had much more work to do to meet the criteria required today by the State Historic Preservation Office and the National Register of Historic Places.

A reconnaissance level survey was first undertaken by the Owosso Downtown Historic District Study Committee as a whole, and the information was gathered and entered. As the members of the committee all recognized, the volume and extent of work to be performed – which would include doing research and documenting the histories of the downtown buildings –

was huge. Therefore, we did not wait for the analysis to be done from the street-level surveys before we began to write the architectural descriptions, conduct historical research, and photograph each of the downtown buildings.

Because some of the buildings have suffered facade changes, we sought vintage photos to document the changes that had been made to the original storefronts. A committee member produced a press release, which resulted in articles that were published in Owosso's two newspapers. The press release was also posted on the Internet. The publicity made the public aware of the effort to document Downtown Owosso's history, and the committee's desire and need to acquire old photos. The press release listed a date and time when citizens could appear at Owosso City Hall, to contribute photos and information about buildings in Downtown Owosso.

The success of the press release was initially realized when an Owosso-born gentleman, living in California, kindly scanned and e-mailed several dozen rare and historic photos of Owosso to the committee. This was followed by a surprisingly high number of people who appeared at City Hall one evening, where we had set up a scanner to copy vintage photos – with the owner's permissions, of course. One of the attendees was a grandson of one of Owosso's most gifted and prolific photographers of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. He appeared with a large box of dozens of additional rare and historic photos. Furthermore, a visit was made, with prior appointment, to the Shiawassee Historical Society to scan some of the old photos of Downtown Owosso, which were held in their archives. Many contacts were also made, usually first by phone, with people who potentially had some knowledge regarding the buildings we were researching. These conversations yielded an abundance of additional information. Because of the publicity and the many personal contacts that were made, the move to create an historic district in the Downtown Owosso became even more well-known.

A large amount of time was also spent at the Shiawassee District Library Owosso. There the committee members matched up the addresses of buildings with business names in old Owosso City Directories. The owners of the businesses that were operated in the buildings were often also found in Owosso City Directories. A large amount of time was spent at Owosso City Hall as well, where committee members went through old tax files to determine the ages and ownership of buildings.

With all of the maps made, photos taken, photos collected and processed, research completed, and data and documentation collected, committee members were able to focus their efforts on finishing the writing, editing and formatting of the Application for Owosso Downtown Historic District designation.

# **EVALUATION RESULTS**

## **Justification of Boundaries**

**August 6, 2010**

The boundaries for the proposed Owosso Downtown Historic District are on the North, Mason Street with a one block jog farther north for the three hundred block of North Washington that features historic buildings, homes and churches which should be included in the district. Farther to the North beyond this described boundary, begins the residential neighborhoods of Owosso, which do not fit into the character of the historic commercial district. Mason Street continues east.

On the East, the boundary is Park Street, because beyond Park Street the land use changes from commercial to residential.

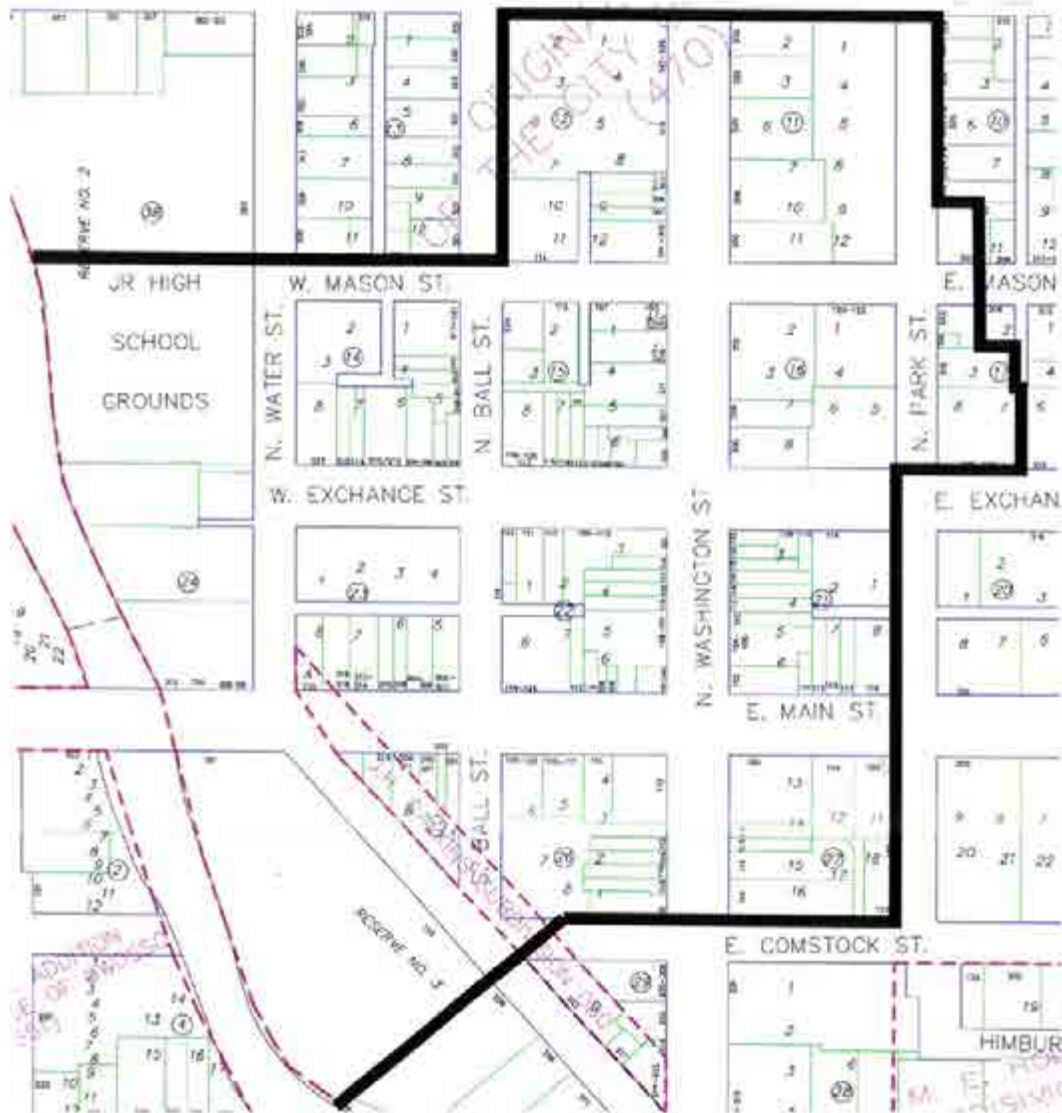
Comstock Street was chosen as the southernmost edge of the historic downtown, because south of Comstock Street exist more new commercial buildings which do not fit the character of the historic district – such as the new bowling alley constructed in 2009, the 1980's J. C. Penney Department Store, a movie theatre complex and new office buildings which were constructed in the early 1980's as well.

On the West, the Shiawassee River serves as the natural boundary to the downtown commercial district.

Within the Owosso Downtown Historic District are mostly nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings. However, there are also three historic churches, three banks (one of which is a Mid-Century Modern style while the other two are nineteenth century), two historic residences (one Italianate and one Carpenter Gothic) which are located next door to each other and managed to survive the commercialization of the street and seven modern newer buildings.



## DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DISTRICT



The following is the description of the proposed Owosso Downtown Historic District of the City of Owosso, Shiawassee County, State of Michigan. The district is comprised of the following plated areas: The plat of J.H. Calkins Subdivision of Reserve Number 7 of the City of Owosso, also the following blocks in the Original Plat of the Village, now City of Owosso, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, Lots 11 through 18 in block 27, that portion of Reserve No. 1 and 2 south of the north line of Mason Street extended to the Shiawassee River and that portion of Reserve No. 3 that is north and west of a line perpendicular to the southwest line of Water Street that intersects the south line of Comstock Street and the Northeast line of Water Street and extends to the Shiawassee River. Also lots 8, 7, 3, and the west ½ of lot 2 in Block 17, and the west 82' of lot 11, and the west 82' of the south 33' of lot 10 in Block 10. This description also includes all street and alley right of ways in and adjoining these blocks and reserves Approximately 42.1 Acres.

# CONTRIBUTING VS. NON-CONTRIBUTING

## Block 1

### Exchange W.

200	Contributing	Cadwallader-Lord-Hahn
202	Contributing	New York Style Salon
204	Non-contributing	Dr. Badra
208	Contributing	Oliver's Restaurant
210	Contributing	Oliver's Restaurant
212	Contributing	Oliver's Restaurant
214	Non-contributing	Oliver's Restaurant
216	Contributing	Dr. Tretheway
224	Non-contributing	Verizon

### Ball N.

209	Contributing	Savas Travel
211	Contributing	Solutions Spa & Tanning
213	Contributing	Happy Tails
215	Contributing	Stewart Graphics
217-27	Contributing	Shiawassee Copier

### Water N.

201	Contributing	Armory
215	Non-contributing	Chamber of Commerce
219	Contributing	Middle School

No Sites on Mason

## Block 2

### Ball N.

224	Contributing	Dignan's Law Office
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**Exchange W.**

110	Contributing	Owosso Community Pharmacy
112	Contributing	Sobak Medical Equipment
114	Non-contributing	Sobak Medical Equipment
116	Contributing	vacant (former Strawberry Patch)
118	Contributing	Raymond James
120-22	Contributing	The Exchange

**Washington N.**

201-03	Non-contributing	Wells Fargo
205	Non-contributing	Wells Fargo
207-09	Contributing	The Bake Shop
211	Non-contributing	Owosso Floral
213	Contributing	Tux & Bridal Boutique
217-19	Contributing	Gould Hall
221-23	Non-contributing	North Side Reality

**Block 3**

**Washington N.**

200-08	Non-contributing	Springrove/title office
210	Non-contributing	Jo-Ann's Fabrics

**Mason E.**

120	Contributing	Nelson House Funeral Home
201	Contributing	American Legion Hall

**Park N.**

218	Contributing	Woodbury Building
220-22	Non-contributing	Dr. Knecht's, DDS

**Exchange E.**

201	Contributing	Argus-Press
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## **Block 4**

### **Main W.**

200-06	Contributing	Page Plus Cellular/It's A Deli Thing/Martial Arts
208	Contributing	vacant (former LaBella)
210	Non-contributing	Siminski Chiropractor
212-14	Contributing	Fortune House
216-18	Contributing	Radio Shack/Security Alarm
220-22	Contributing	Urban Antiques & Art
300	Contributing	Matthews Building

## **Block 5**

### **Main W.**

102-04	Non-contributing	Treasures Back Door
106	Contributing	Spagnuolo Chocolates
108	Contributing	Soy Beam Candles
110	Contributing	Cerveney Jewelers
112	Contributing	Mootsies Gallery
114-16	Contributing	Dollar Daze

### **Exchange W.**

113	Contributing	Fletcher Block
117	Contributing	vacant
119	Contributing	Books & Beans
121-23	Contributing	vacant/vacant

### **Washington N.**

101-03	Contributing	Courtside Cafe
109	Non-contributing	Treasures
111	Non-contributing	Healthfirst
113	Contributing	Funny Pages
115	Contributing	Edward Jones
117	Contributing	Norm Henry Shoes
119	Contributing	Norm Henry Shoes
123	Contributing	Fifth Third Bank

**Ball N.**

114            Contributing            Community Church Offices

**Block 6**

**Washington N.**

100-02        Contributing            vacant (former Classy Closet/Carpenter's Corner)  
104-08        Contributing            Wesener Block  
110            Non-contributing        vacant (former Storrer's)  
112            Contributing            Schmidt Jewelers  
114            Non-contributing        Images Forever  
116            Contributing            Aldridge Art  
118            Contributing            Game Knights Entertainment  
120            Contributing            vacant  
122            Contributing            New Vision

**Exchange E.**

108            Contributing            Body Shop (Salon)  
110            Contributing            George's Beauty Salon  
114            Non-contributing        Firestone

**Main E.**

111            Contributing            Civile Insurance  
113            Contributing            Charles Lamp Studio  
115            Contributing            offices  
117            Non-contributing        Tri-City Trading Post

**Block 7**

**Main W.**

201            Contributing            Scrubs  
203-13        Non-contributing        Hankard/salon/Home Office Realty  
215            Contributing            Ruthy's Cleaners  
301            Contributing            City Hall

**Water S.**

209 Non-contributing Public Safety Bldg.

**Ball S.**

110 Non-contributing Elliott's (Salon)

**Block 8**

**Main W.**

113 Contributing Gilbert's True Value Hardware  
115 Contributing Gilbert's True Value Hardware  
117 Contributing Gilbert's True Value Hardware  
119 Contributing Gilbert's True Value Hardware  
121 Contributing Gilbert's True Value Hardware  
123 Contributing Gilbert's True Value Hardware

**Washington S.**

112 Contributing Day Spa  
114 Contributing Day Spa  
116 Contributing Freddie's  
118 Contributing vacant  
120 Non-contributing Jade Buffet

**Block 9**

**Main E.**

100 Contributing Chemical Bank  
114-18 Contributing Owosso Community Players Annex  
122 Contributing Lebowsky Center

**Washington S.**

111 Contributing Speedy Print  
113 Contributing Big City Dogs  
115-17 Non-contributing Risto's Bistro  
121-25 Contributing Wildermuth Hotel/Indian Trails

**Comstock E.**

123	Non-contributing	Sunnyside Florist
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**Block 10**

**Washington N.**

300	Non-contributing	Council on Aging
301	Contributing	Masonic Temple
308	Contributing	Fraternal Order of Eagles
307-13	Non-contributing	Laverock Block
319	Non-contributing	Post Office
320	Contributing	Jayne/Struber/Strong House
326-28	Contributing	Shattuck House
327	Contributing	1st Congregational Church
330	Contributing	Salem Lutheran Church

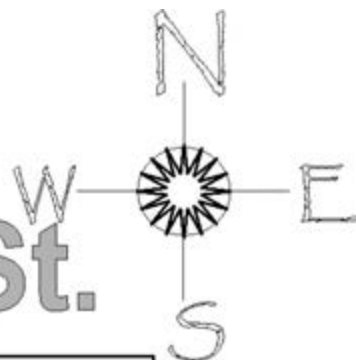
**Mason W.**

114	Non-contributing	1st Baptist Church
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<b>Contributing</b>	85
<b>Non-contributing</b>	30
<hr/>	
Total	115
% Contributing	73.9%

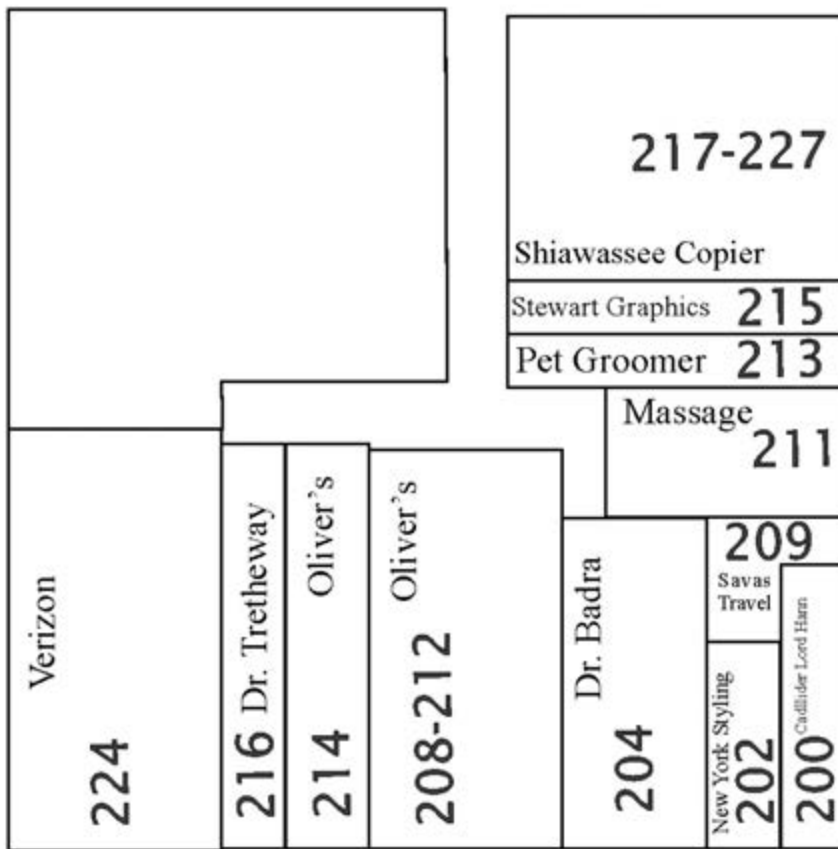
# Block 1

## W. Mason St.



219 Middle School

# N. Water St.



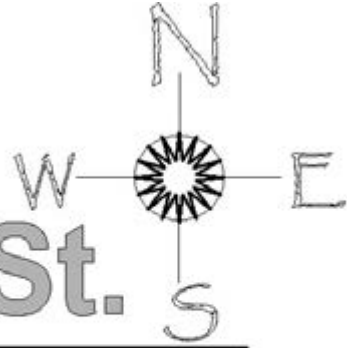
# N. Ball St.

## W. Exchange St.



# Block 2

## W. Mason St.



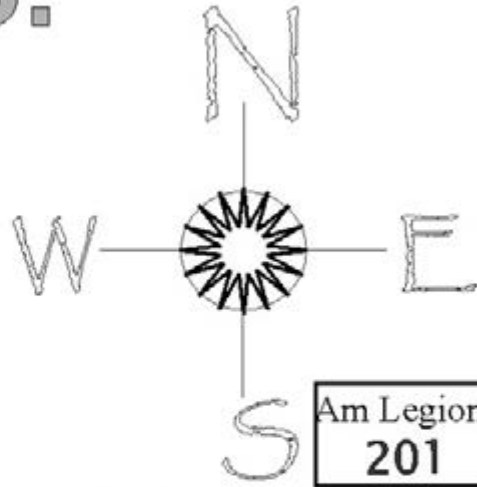
N. Ball St.

N. Washington St.



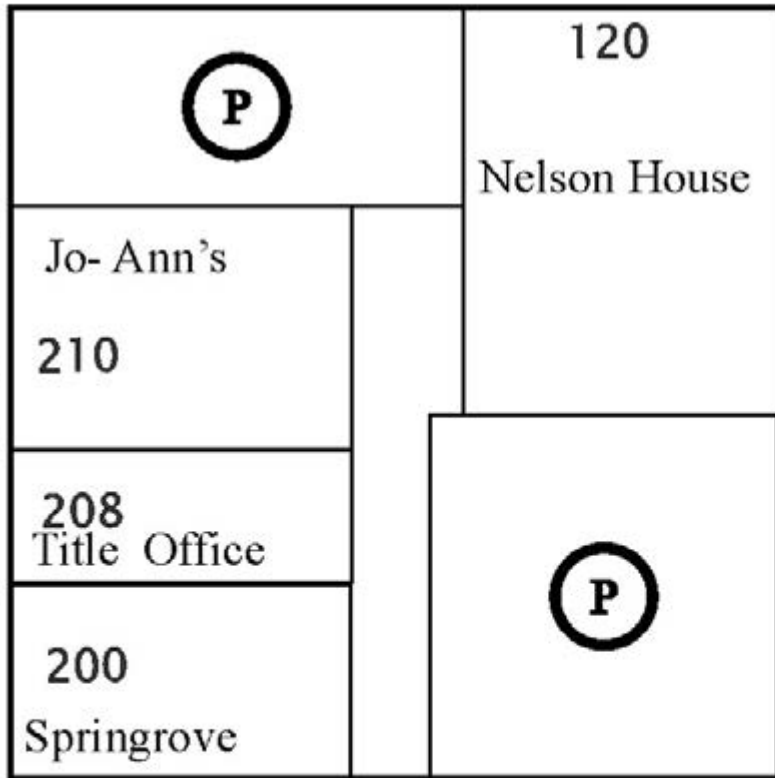
## W. Exchange St.

# Block 3.

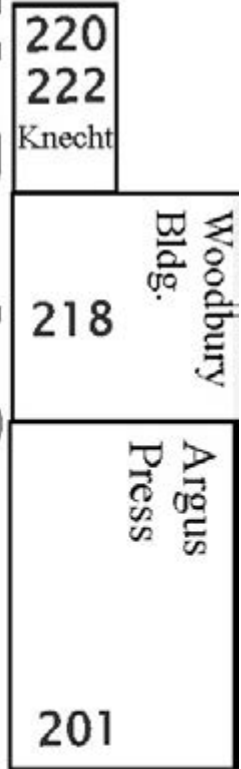


E. Mason St.

N. Washington St.



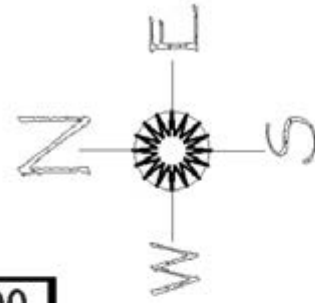
N. Park St.



E. Exchange St.

# Block 4

N. Ball St.



W. Exchange St.

<b>P</b>	Page Plus	200
	Deli Thing	202
	Martial Arts	204-206
	Vacant	208
	Siminski	210
	Fortune House	212-214
	Radio Shack Security Alarm	216-218
	Urban Antique	220-222

W. Main St.

N. Water St.

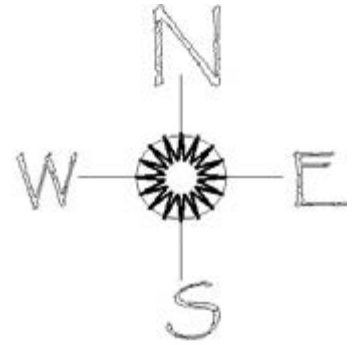
Chamber Bldg.	219
Armory	219

**P**

300
Matthews Bldg.

301
City Hall

# Block 5.



W. Exchange St.

N. Ball St.

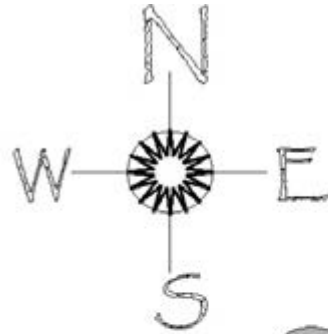
113 Fletcher Block	Fifth Third Bank 123	
117 Vacant	119 Norm Henry Shoes	117 Norm Henry Shoes
119 Books & Beans	115 Edward Jones	113 Funny Pages
121 Vacant	Community Church Offices	
123 Vacant	111 HealthFirst	109 Treasures
128	112	101-103
114	110	106
		108
		116
		116 Dollar Store Christians Dept. Store

N. Washington St.

W. Main St.

Chocolate Shop  
SoyBeam  
Cervany's  
Mootzies

# Block 6



## E. Exchange St.

## N. Washington St.

## N. Park St.

122	NuVision	108		114	Firestone Tire				
120	(Vacant)			110					
118	Game Knights								
116	Aldridge Art								
114	Images Forever								
112	Williams Block								
110	Storrerr's (Vacant)								
104-108	Wesener Building								
	Vacant								
100									

George's (Salon)  
Body Shop (Salon)

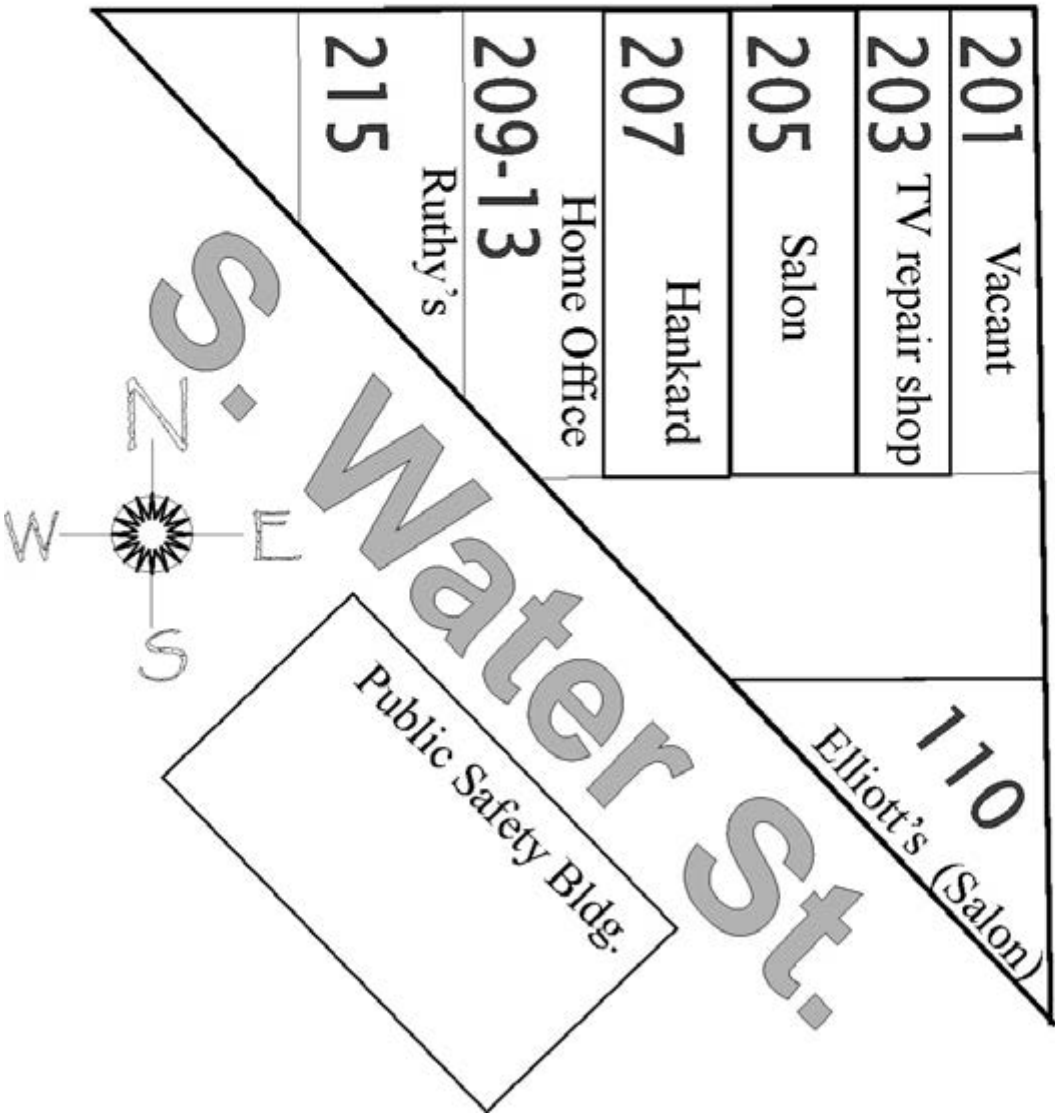


## E. Main St.

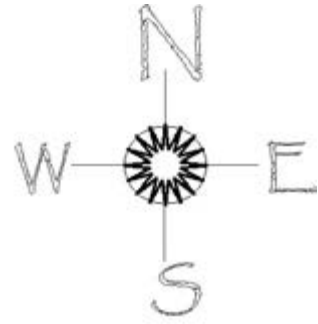
# Block 7

## W. Main St.

## S. Ball St.



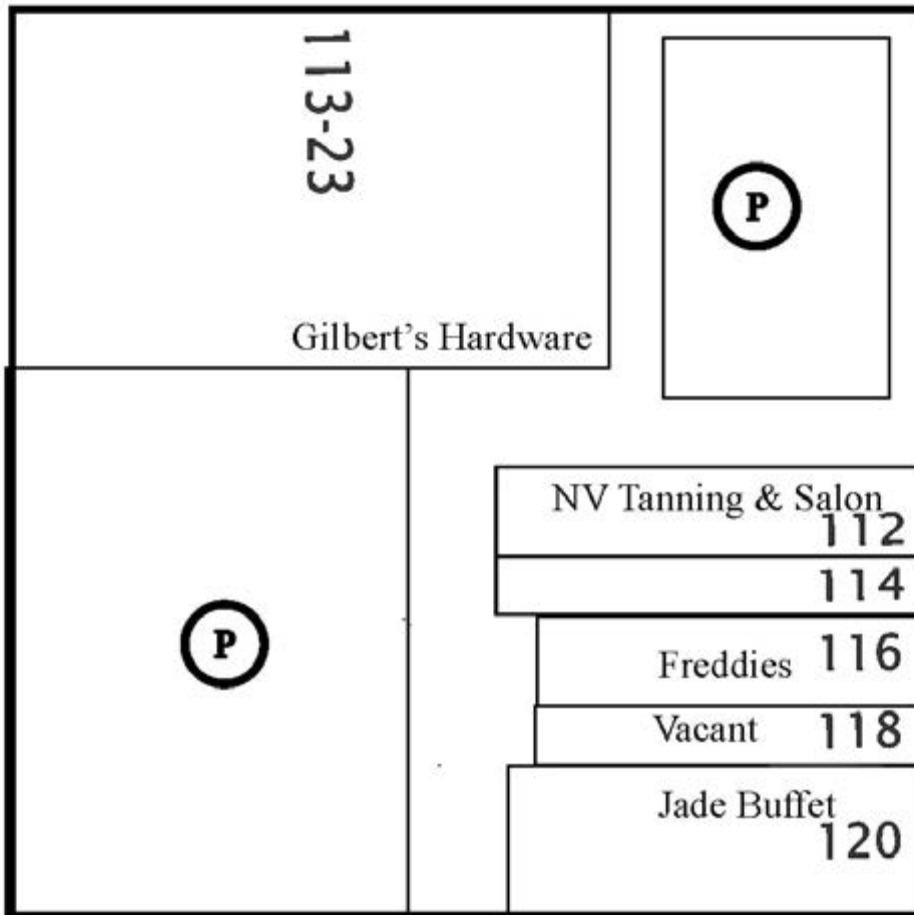
# Block 8



## W. Main St.

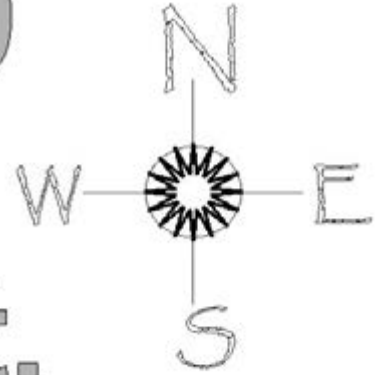
## S. Ball St.

## S. Washington St.



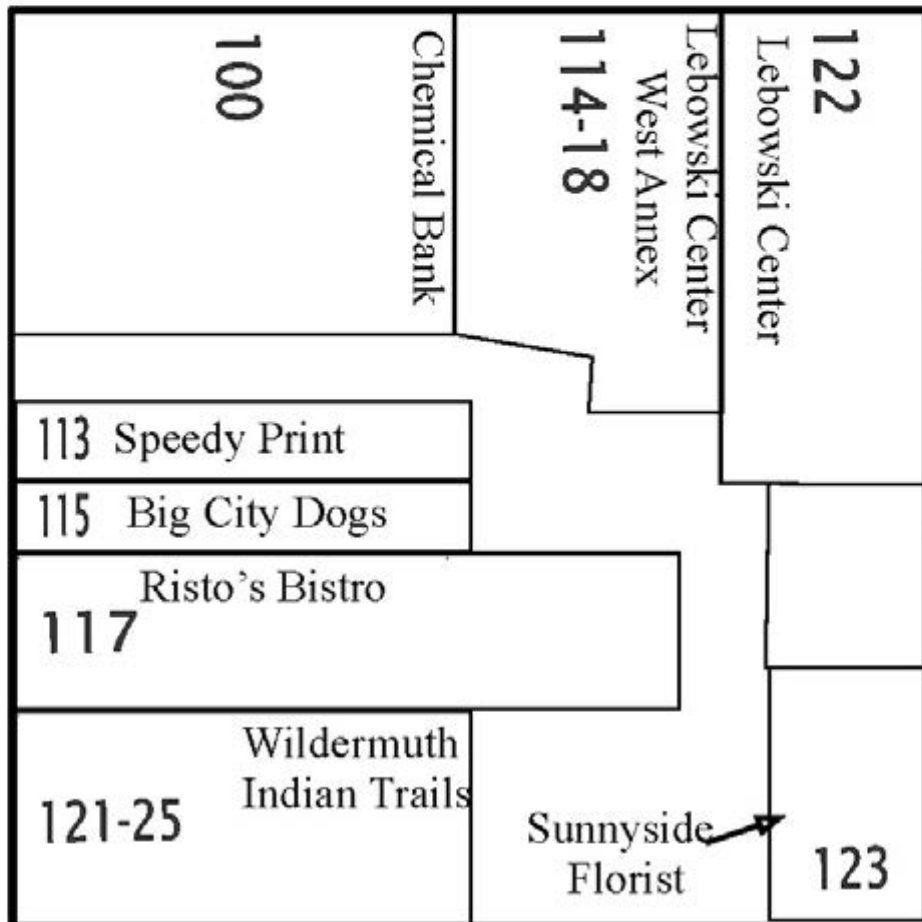
## W. Comstock St.

# Block 9



E. Main St.

S. Washington St.

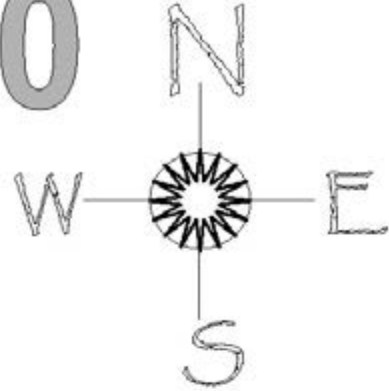


S. Park St.

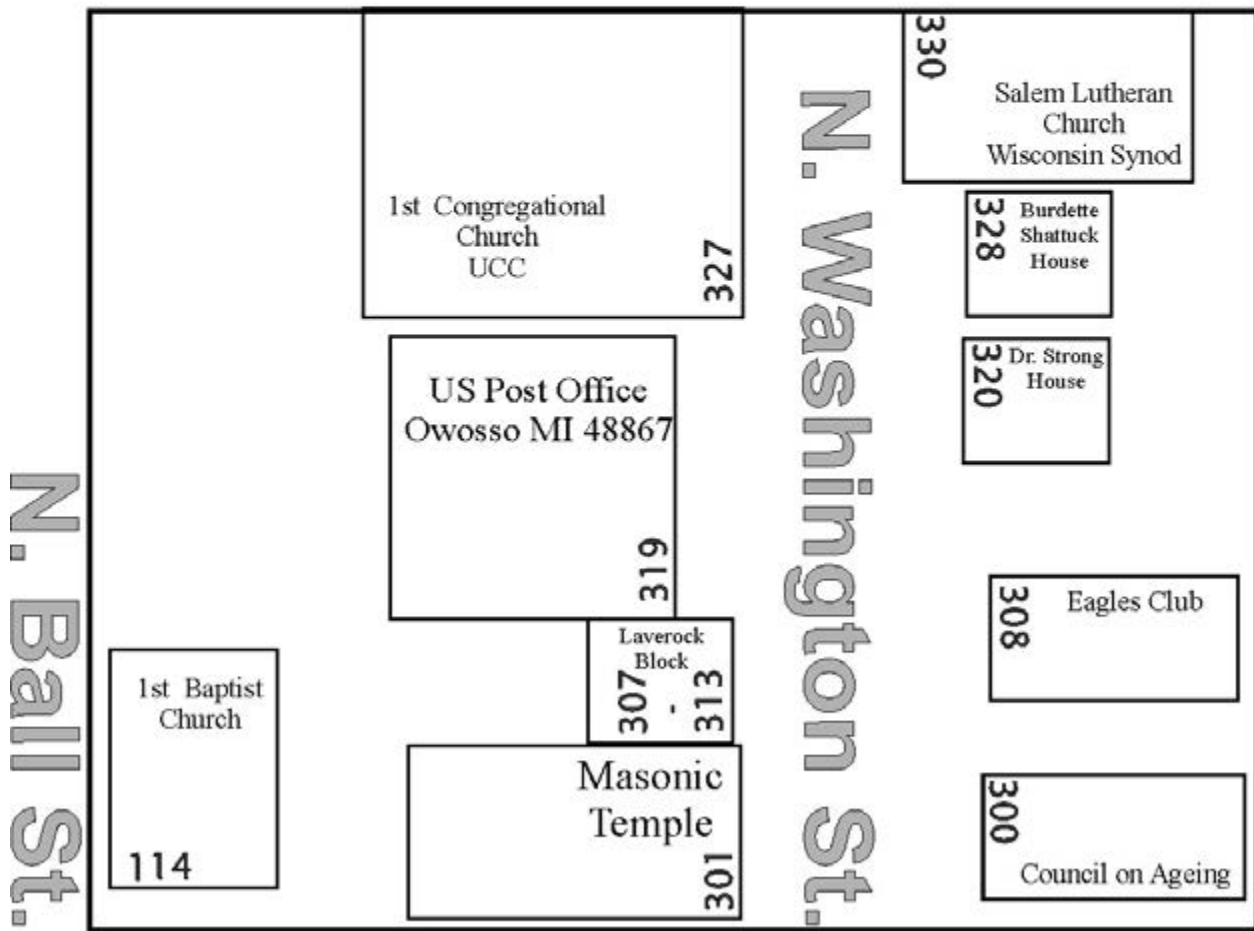
E. Comstock St.



# Block 10



W. Williams St.



W. Mason St.

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PLANNING

## Supplemental Programs and Policies

There are other beneficial measures that could be taken in downtown Owosso to encourage the future preservation of the survey area's historic resources. Some were implemented many years ago. With staffing changes attuned to these programs, those programs were discontinued. They should be reintroduced as familiar and successful inducements to preserving downtown buildings. The recommendations below are divided into two parts—programs from the past and new initiatives.

### A. Programs from the Past.

- 1) **Historic Preservation Loans.** The City maintains a Block Grant Loan Fund that was capitalized in 1984 with an Urban Development Action Grant for a downtown project—the Comstock Center. The portfolio is valued at over \$700,000 and may be used for economic development, including historic preservation of privately owned buildings. The City Council may adopt loan policies annually to reflect changing financial conditions and lending practices. The loan funds may be used for outdoor or indoor restoration projects and the investment must follow the National Trust standards.
- 2) **Lender Participation.** The two downtown lending institutions can be recruited to tie into the Historic Preservation Loans as a source for private funding required to partner with those loans. A fixed rate over a fixed term with a dedicated annual reservoir of available capital was offered in the 1980's. The lenders willingness to participate increases with the ability of the City to subordinate its Block Grant Loan Funds to the lenders loans.
- 3) **Historic Sign Program.** This is a mini-grant to induce downtown buildings to apply graphics to exterior walls of downtown buildings that represent historic treatments on these buildings. The past program referenced the need to follow National Trust standards maintained on file in the Downtown Development Authority files (now “Main Street”). The grant was valued up to \$1,000 or 50% of the sign costs whichever was less.
- 4) **Design Grants.** The Block Grant Loan Fund supplied architectural services to building owners for a number of initiatives that led to historic preservation. The principal program feature was exterior design. Supplemental work could be completed with upper story access designs, barrier free design, and building code compliance for upper story re-occupancy. Grants were capped at \$2,500 or 50% of the design costs whichever was less. The program was paid with annual interest

accrued from the Block Grant loans and its availability was tied to that interest being adequate.

- 5) **Supplemental Loans.** The Block Grant Loan Fund also funded downtown projects for retail development, upper story residential development and elevators. These loans responded to the most fundamental need of historic preservation and that is rent for the building owner. The residential component also added street life to the downtown environment.

## **B. New Initiatives.**

- 1) **Prioritization of Targeted Buildings.** With over 100 downtown buildings qualifying as historic, there should be a method to select buildings for program assistance. Funds are limited. In the 1980's a non-profit corporation with downtown interests published its annual "hit list" for critical and essential buildings in need of restoration. After that access to the lender/Block Grant loan fund was achieved solely on a first-come/first-served basis. Today other measures are recommended that include potential to contribute to economic development, to reserved funds for a substantial time of the year for priority buildings, or qualify a project also as a LEEDS certified restoration. It is recommended that the Main Street Design Committee work out a set of parameters that would permit prioritization and have them adopted with the City Council's annual approval of the Block Grant Loan Fund. Economic development professionals in the city system would proceed with outreach efforts to induce building owners to participate.
- 2) **Packaging for Restoration.** Economic development professionals are critical partners in historic preservation. Their presence invites an orientation to broaden a project's stability and justification with the use of a variety of tools custom-fit to a particular project. As an example, most downtown buildings qualify as brownfield sites where tax increment financing and Michigan Business Tax credits become available. Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Tax Credits are available in certain cases. State Community Development Block Grant programs exist for downtown development—their program features change regularly. Infrastructure grants are a most interesting add-on because quite often parking needs arise with restoration and the State program is especially tuned to parking facilities. There are two messages to this recommendation: 1) is the assurance of trained professionals on hand that can package projects in all their complexity and compliance, and ; 2) the need to supply policy advantages to the application of these programs for historic preservation projects.
- 3) **Building Owner Services.** Building owners make or break a downtown. This recommendation recommends a reorganization of existing programs and introduction of new programs around the building owners. Training programs on leasing and maintenance, restoration workshops, LEEDS standards, annual meetings on opportunities and new policies, and zoning and building code advisories are fundamental to downtown success. The establishment of a building owners identity and association raises the prospects for peer activity and participation. A Main Street sub-committee would lead this initiative.

4) **Zoning, Traffic and Parking.** Historic downtowns were built before zoning, suburbia, commercial sprawl, and the omnipresent automobile. Unfortunately the downtown does not fit contemporary conditions without the skillful and intentional application of a multitude of support functions. The inherent advantages of historic preservation are well-known. It is the present day context of *zoning, traffic and parking* that have changed and need to be in alignment with the objective to save the integrity of the built environment.

**A. Traffic.** The city's street grid system must be preserved with two-way streets and diagonal parking where possible. The street grid system is part of the Original Plat of the City of Owosso. Any alteration of the grid would isolate building resources and the traditional relationship between the buildings and the streets of downtown Owosso.

**B. Parking.** What is not historic about downtown Owosso is parking. The principle that must be espoused in a new Master Plan for the city is that the ten building walls of the downtown, that is those block facings with a solid front (or nearly solid) of upper story structures will not involve parking lots. Parking should be planned for the rear side of these buildings. Some existing surface lots need to be removed in favor of upper story buildings with design elements that are sensitive to the existing historic resources. Another parking aspect is in the policy arena where limited close-in spaces for upper story office and residential users should be reserved for historic restoration sites both past and future.

5) **Zoning.** The city planning commission reviewed a number of zoning practices for the downtown that were not yet in effect but had a supportive influence for historic preservation. In brief these are:

- a. Commercial buildings must be built close to the street.
- b. New buildings downtown must be built to complement nearby historic buildings.
- c. Buildings must have recessed entrances usually at 100 square feet of space.
- d. Buildings are to have 60% transparency level at the ground floor front and 40% on the side.
- e. Minimum building height of two stories is required for the center city district, the original 9-block core area.
- f. A horizontal expression line would be required to distinguish the base of the building from the remainder.
- g. New buildings and additions to existing structures must be placed 30 feet back from the waterfront.
- h. Drive-through businesses shall be evaluated through compliance with standards of a special use permit.
- i. The middle of buildings front wall shall be sign free.
- j. Driveway access shall be restricted to certain blocks
- k. Interior landscaping is required for parking lots with over 40 parking spaces.
- l. Private parking will be permitted under special use permit process.

- m. A maximum limit shall be placed on private parking; otherwise, no parking spaces are required for uses other than residential and institutional.
- n. Parking lots must be located behind or to the side of buildings to reduce the visual impact of parked cars.
- o. Cantilevered banners and awnings will be regulated through a maintenance clause of the property maintenance code.
- p. No plastic signs shall be permitted. Projecting signs over sidewalks shall consist of wood or metal and be limited to 10 square feet.

The details must be reviewed once again from this 2003 Planning Commission recommendation but it should be evident that many if not all of the standards must be addressed in order to supplement the historic preservation efforts.

# NOMINATION FOR NATIONAL REGISTER

## Significance Statement

The entire ten block area is eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, due to the fact that the district meets all four of the criteria set forth by the National Register.

### **Criterion A. ASSOCIATION WITH SIGNIFICANT EVENTS**

★The significant and eventful establishment of pioneer communities, during the westward migration from settlements on the East Coast, especially in relation to the opening of the Erie Canal, is represented by the establishment of a community at the Big Rapids – a community that became the City of Owosso.

A young man by the name of Benjamin O. Williams was the first to visualize the potential of a city in the location that is now Owosso. Sometime prior to August of 1833, Benjamin O. Williams and his friend, Esh-Ton-E-Quet, who was an Indian guide, were riding ponies through the wilderness along the course of the Shiawassee River from Newburg to Saginaw, Michigan. Through an opening in the woods on the highland that is now the corner of Oliver and Shiawassee Streets in Owosso, Benjamin O. Williams gazed down upon forceful rapids in the then undammed and wild-running Shiawassee River. After further inspection of the river, and all of the surrounding topography, Benjamin O. Williams determined the area would be the perfect location for a city – replete with water of sufficient volume and velocity to power industry and support growth. Indeed, as he reported many times thereafter, he believed a city on that site, in the geographical heart of Michigan, would be the perfect location for the state capitol or at least a county seat.

On August 2, 1833, after the federal government made lands available for purchase in Michigan, Benjamin Williams dispatched his elder brother and business partner, A. L. Williams, to make a sizeable purchase of land where Owosso is now located. The Williams brothers subsequently added to their land holdings with an additional purchase of land where Owosso is now located.

The Williams brothers began recruiting people who had the skills needed to build a community. One of those people was A. L. Williams' former teacher in Pontiac, Michigan, Elias Comstock, who, in June of 1835, bought land that also became part of Owosso. During early July of 1835, Elias Comstock, and nine other pioneer men, women and two children, left Pontiac, Michigan, with two ox-pulled wagons and a few cows. Though they primarily followed old Indian trails, they often had to cut paths through the wilderness to reach their destination. Later in July of 1835, the pioneers arrived and formed a community on land that would become the City of Owosso. Soon after their arrival, two of those pioneers, John D. Overton and David Van Wormer, built the first house in Owosso. It was a log cabin which they partitioned to form separate residences, with separate entrances, for their two families. Other settlers, Kilburn Bedell, Lewis Findley, and a blacksmith by the name of Henry S. Smith, all built separate log cabins for their families in Owosso during 1835 as well. A family named Ousteauh also built a log cabin residence in Owosso during 1835 or early 1836. In May of 1836, however, Elias

Comstock built what survived to become known as the first permanent home in Owosso, and that log cabin home, though it's been relocated, stands today in Owosso's Curwood Castle Park.

The Williams brothers realized that water-powered mills would be necessary to support any community that was to become a city. Therefore, during early 1836, the Williams brothers consummated a contract with a millwright by the name of Daniel Ball. The importance of water-powered mills to produce lumber, flour and other products, during the 1830's, is exemplified by the fact that the Williams brothers traded one third of their land holdings for the services of Daniel Ball.

By the fall of 1836, Daniel Ball arrived in Owosso, along with several families from Rochester, New York, who came to be known as "Ball's Colonists." In 1837, Daniel Ball and his colonists began building a millrace and a saw mill, and much of the northwestern-running mill race traversed the westernmost area of what is now Downtown Owosso. They also built a dam that crossed the Shiawassee River in Owosso, and its structure abutted land just east of where the Washington Street Bridge now stands. During the same period, the Williams brothers themselves built and opened a log cabin trading post on land that would become the corner of Main and Water Streets in Downtown Owosso. They also hired a surveyor from Pontiac, who platted land that is located on the eastern side of the Shiawassee River in what is now the City of Owosso, and it is land that includes what is now Downtown Owosso.

In 1838, Daniel Gould, another one of Owosso's early pioneers, agreed to survey, map, and lay-out the core street plans for what would become the City of Owosso. The north- and south-running streets were from Shiawassee Street (then called Mulberry Street) on the west to Hickory Street on the east. The east- and west-running streets were from King Street (then called North Street) on the north, to Comstock Street on the south. Nearly all streets ran perfectly north and south or east and west. Furthermore, while the then primary streets, called Main Street, Washington Street, and Exchange Street, were designed to be exactly ninety-nine feet wide, all other streets were designed to be exactly sixty-six feet wide. The reason the non-primary streets were designed to be sixty-six feet wide was two-fold: 1.) so that horse-drawn carriages and wagons would be able to make 180 degree turns within the streets, and 2.) so that the non-primary streets would not appear to be conspicuously narrow when compared to the primary streets.

All subsequent expansions and additions of streets in Owosso, are merely expansions of Owosso's original street plan that was designed by Daniel Gould in 1838.

The street "plans" of many and probably most cities today, are the consequence of initial growth that simply occurred anywhere according to convenience. This has resulted in several cities, large and small, that have a single wide primary street with several very narrow side streets; cities with narrow streets throughout; cities that have several oddly winding streets that are dangerous and inconvenient for travel; cities with traffic-congested neighborhoods; and cities where travel to different points is time-consuming and, therefore, costly. Owosso suffers from none of these flaws.

It is an interesting and significant fact that Owosso was a community that was properly planned and designed by its founders – way back in 1838. This may explain, in part, why that it takes less time to commute to work in Owosso than it does in most other cities its size in Michigan or nationally – according to City Town Info. It may also explain why, even though

Owosso is a northern city with long winters, Owosso ranks in the top 18 percent for the number of people who walk, jog or bike to work.

Owosso's street plan, and the layout of Owosso's downtown commercial district, are the result of foresighted leadership, proper planning, and state-of-the-art civil engineering. ★Therefore, Owosso is associated with the eventful advent of proper city planning, which, theretofore, was seldom utilized in pioneer cities.

The previously mentioned millrace, saw mill and dam that Daniel Ball was paid to build in Owosso were completed during 1837. Steamboat and flat-bottom boat transportation systems were operating in Owosso before 1839, the first grist mill was completed during 1839 and, during the 1840's, produce was frequently transported on the Shiawassee River from Owosso to Saginaw. ★Therefore, Owosso is associated with the significant and eventful expansion of passenger and freight transportation via Midwestern rivers during the first half of the 1800's.

Soon there was a wool mill, a school, stores, and Owosso developed into a much admired jewel right in the heart of Michigan. ★Owosso's association with another significant event is realized through the fact that by the mid-1840's, Owosso was so admired that the city was proposed and on-track to become the state capitol. However, last minute land deals and political maneuvering by an ignoble senator resulted in Lansing, then a wilderness area, taking the distinction by a single vote. Regardless, the population of Owosso grew to 500 by 1852. The growth of industry and the arrival of the railroad helped the population double to 1,000 by 1858, and increase to 1,160 by 1860.

By 1850, the California Gold Rush was on, and the Williams Brothers, who had founded Owosso, had left for the West. They succeeded there as well. Before returning to their homes in Owosso, they built the first waterway for washing gold in Nevada County, California; their operation was the first to dig for gold in hills; and they hit gold-rich soil just ten feet underground. ★Therefore, through Owosso's founders, Owosso is associated with the California Gold Rush – a significant event in American history.

The building and expansion of railroads was a significant influence on the growth of America and on the growth of Owosso as well. When the first train arrived in Owosso in 1857, the entire town turned out to see a small engine with three, attached, red-painted flatcars. Eventually Owosso was served by several railroads, including the Ann Arbor Railroad, the Michigan Central Railroad, the Grand Trunk Railroad, and the New York Central Railroad. Eventually, Owosso was served as well by *Interurban* streetcars, which linked Owosso to Corunna and Lansing during the period from 1893 to 1927. The *Interurban* allowed people to commute to jobs in, or travel for other purposes to, Owosso, Corunna, and Lansing, which further fueled business in these areas. ★Therefore, Owosso is associated with the significant and eventful expansion of railroads into pioneer cities that tremendously influenced the growth of America.

Today, the rails and maintenance facilities formerly owned by the Ann Arbor Railroad in Owosso, and the rails formerly owned by several other railroads that provided service to Owosso, are in the service of the Huron Eastern Railroad and, to a much greater extent, the Owosso-headquartered Great Lakes Central Railroad – the largest regional railroad in Michigan. And, the Huron Eastern Railroad and the Great Lakes Central Railroad generously share those rails with the Owosso-headquartered Steam Railroading Institute, which is home to the Pere Marquette 1225 steam locomotive – the largest operating steam locomotive in Michigan.



Slavery and the rise of abolitionism were significant events in America, both before and during the Civil War. A branch of the Underground Railroad, which was a conduit to freedom for escaping slaves from the South, was operated in Owosso from the 1840's through the mid-1860's. The primary station was located in a home on the corner of Owosso's West Main Street and John Street (now called Curwood Castle Drive). Slave runners would deliver three to six escaping slaves to the station every early morning. The slaves were fed and provided with comfortable sleeping quarters in the station's attic. At night the slaves were led to Detroit for their escapes into Canada. The Owosso station of the Underground Railroad was popular because it was friendly and safe. It also allowed slave runners to avoid bounty hunters who normally were concentrated on the main south to north routes that took slaves directly to Detroit and Canada. By swinging around the main routes, and traveling north to Owosso and then south to Detroit, greatly lessened the risk of capture of the fleeing slaves by bounty hunters. ★Therefore, Owosso is associated with abolitionism and the Underground Railroad system, both of which are significant events in American history.

★The Civil War is one of the most significant events in American history, and Owosso contributed an unusually high number of its sons to support the efforts of the Union.

News of the Confederate attack on Fort Sumter, and President Lincoln's call to arms, reached Owosso by telegraph on April 13, 1861. A meeting of Owosso's city leadership was held on April 22, 1861, to determine “. . . what measures Shiawassee County should take to aid the federal government in its time of peril.”

Decisions were made, and a flier was printed and distributed in and around Owosso that publicized a mass recruiting meeting that was to be held in Owosso two days later on Wednesday, April 24, 1861. The meeting proved to be the largest gathering ever held in Owosso to that date, and it was followed by several smaller meetings throughout Shiawassee County.

By May 4<sup>th</sup>, a company was formed of 110 men – ten more than required. By then, however, several men, who weren't willing to wait for the Owosso company to be organized, had already left to join army units in Detroit, Grand Rapids and Lansing. Plus, there were twenty additional men who tried to join in Owosso, but were turned away because the company had already reached its maximum size. These additional men joined an infantry unit in Grand Rapids. Regardless, the original company of 110 men formed in Owosso became known as the Ingersoll Rifles, which became Company H of Michigan's famed “Fighting Fifth” regiment – one of the most respected and heroic fighting units of the Civil War. And all of this was only the beginning of Owosso's huge contribution to preserve the Union and end slavery. Over 1,200 men from Shiawassee County served in the Civil War, and a major portion of those men came from Owosso. One of those men was Owosso's George Dallas Sidman, winner of the Congressional Medal of Honor, and another was Owosso's Ebenezer Gould, a Civil War first major in the 5<sup>th</sup> Michigan Cavalry, a lieutenant colonel in General George Armstrong Custer's brigade – *The Wolverines*, and a colonel in the Michigan Fighting Fifth.

Owosso is also associated with other significant events, including the fact that ★Owosso is home to the first building in the Michigan that was constructed as a mortuary; ★Owosso is home to the first American Legion building in Michigan; ★and, during the late 1800's, Owosso was the smallest community in population in Michigan that had its own National Guard Armory. Since then, troops from Owosso have served in the Spanish-American War, were selected to guard Michigan's governor at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago, and have served in World

War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Viet Nam War, the Gulf War, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, each conflict thereafter, and on peacekeeping missions through to today.

Owosso-born and -raised William Scott Ament became an ordained missionary at his home church, the Congregational Church (now the First Congregational Church/United Church of Christ) located on North Washington Street in Owosso. Beginning in 1877 and ending in 1908, Reverend Ament served four terms as a missionary in China. He was so effective that he became known as the "Father of Christian Endeavor in China." His activities were frequently the subject of news reports, and two books were written about his life.

During 1901, Reverend Ament was internationally acclaimed for his fearless rescue of Christians in China during the Boxer Rebellion. However, his missionary service was subsequently attacked in the national press as "Christian Imperialism" by Mark Twain and several other prominent journalists of the day. Conversely, during the same period, his "Christian Imperialism" was also defended and commended by prominent journalists, religious leaders, government officials, and others of the day.

Several additional distinguished missionaries from Owosso served overseas as well, including the Owosso Congregational Church's Pastor Lucius O. Lee, who resigned his position in 1880 to do missionary work in Turkey, and who later became President of the Central Turkey Theological Seminary at Maraş, and Owosso's Leander W. Pilcher, who did missionary work in China and was the co-founder and president of China's Peking University in 1886. (Although the Chinese government has managed to remove all mention of Leander W. Pilcher and religious involvement in the founding of Peking University, historical records prevail.) Therefore, Owosso is associated with these significant events of the times: ★The large scale efforts to Christianize people of many faiths in China, and Moslems in Turkey, during the late 1800's and early 1900's; ★the Boxer Rebellion in China; ★the slaughter of Christians in Turkey; ★the international debate about Christian Imperialism; ★the sensational debate that raged in the press during 1901 between Mark Twain and William Scott Ament and the American Board of Foreign Missions; ★and the founding of China's Peking University.

The Women's Suffrage Movement in the United States was preceded and advanced by the breakthrough by women into positions of leadership and decision making. ★The leadership of women in Owosso is associated with these significant events.

By insisting that their children needed to be professionally educated, Owosso women, along with Owosso's co-founder, B. O. Williams, spearheaded the drive to build the first schoolhouse in Owosso. The schoolhouse was located where the Salem Lutheran Church now stands on North Washington Street. In 1867, women in Owosso formed The Owosso Ladies' Library Association. The women negotiated with Owosso building owners to provide free space for several reading rooms in Downtown Owosso. Through their perseverance, their successes eventually resulted in the creation of the Owosso Public Library – a Carnegie library that is now known as the Shiawassee District Library Owosso. With saloons sprouting up all over Owosso, concerned local women set up a branch of the Women's Christian Temperance Union during 1877. In 1908, Owosso women formed the Owosso branch of The YWCA. It was also a woman who created Owosso's Miller Hospital in 1910, which was the first general hospital in Shiawassee County. The hospital's successes, in part, made the need for a larger hospital apparent. That resulted in the building of Owosso's Memorial Hospital – known today as Memorial Healthcare. Also during 1910, one of the most popular dentists in Owosso was a

woman. Her offices were located on the second floor of a building on Washington Street. And, it was a group of women who worked diligently and successfully to form the Shiawassee Chapter of the American Red Cross in 1917. It was founded in the old Elk's Lodge on North Washington Street in Owosso. Furthermore, the only transportation company in Michigan that was founded, owned and managed – all or in part – by a woman during the period between 1910 and the 1950's was the Indian Trails Bus Line, which continues to operate today in downtown Owosso.

During and following the Civil War, Owosso's growth continued to progress with the addition of firms in the city that manufactured pumps, plows, agricultural implements, engines, sewing machines, furniture, mattresses, beer, caskets, bricks, carriages, sleighs, stoves, rakes, snow shovels, tools, tool handles, window screens, screen doors, and the list continued to grow relentlessly. By the late 1800's, Alvin M. Bentley's Owosso Manufacturing Company was producing a million window screens, 450,000 screen doors, and 180,000 snow shovels per year. The Robbins Furniture Company of Owosso patented the first extension table with self-contained leaves, and sales were booming. By the late 1890's, The D. M. Estey Furniture Company of Owosso had two large factories trying to keep up with demand for its high quality bedroom and dining room furniture. ★An additional significant point to note, that's related to the eventful growth of the Michigan furniture industry, is that while Grand Rapids in Western Michigan was becoming a major manufacturer of furniture, Owosso was the first city in mid-Michigan to be home to multiple furniture manufacturers.

By the early 1900's, the massive Owosso Sugar Company was processing 500 tons of beets per shift, the Owosso Carriage and Sleigh Company was manufacturing sixty different models of carriages and thirty different styles of sleighs and, Owosso's W. E. Payne & Company was successfully manufacturing and marketing carriages, too. In late 1909, the Independent/Renown Stove Company of Owosso began manufacturing the first of its 300,000 ranges, furnaces and heaters that would be sold across the United States in the years to come, and the retail and service businesses needed to support the growth of those companies, as well as the many additional companies, area farms, and all of the employees and the families thereof, were thriving. ★The high production output and high quality of goods manufactured by Owosso firms eventually became known and admired nationally, and it helped to supply and fuel the significant and eventful success of Michigan, and the success and expansion of the United States.

By the time Spain declared war on the United States on April 23, 1898, Company G of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Michigan Volunteers had already been formed in Owosso. On April 26, 1898, seventy-one soldiers that made up the company assembled at the first Owosso Armory, which was located on the southwest corner of Mason Street and Park Street. Early in the afternoon of the same day, the soldiers marched to the First Baptist Church at the northeast corner of Ball Street and Mason Street. There the troops received a blessing from the church's pastor. Following the blessing, the troops marched south through part of Downtown Owosso to West Main Street, and marched west to the Michigan Central Railway terminal in Westtown Owosso. They then boarded a train for Island Lake at Brighton, Michigan, where, a month later, they were mustered in as U. S. Volunteers. After less than a month of training at Camp Russell in Virginia, the troops of Owosso's Company G arrived in Sibony, Cuba. Less than four days later, at 3:00 a.m. on July 1, 1898, Owosso's Company G was called into action at Aguadores, Cuba. Owosso's Company G was involved in only one day of action during the Spanish-American War. However, they fought bravely, and six Owosso men were cited for heroism. ★Owosso is

therefore associated with the Spanish-American War, a significant event in late 19<sup>th</sup> century American history.

At the dawn of the twentieth century, Owosso wanted its share of the burgeoning automobile industry and, by 1903, prototype cars had been built and tested in Owosso. However, full scale manufacturing of the vehicles never commenced. By 1909, though, General Motors was manufacturing its heavy duty Reliance truck in Owosso, and production lines were humming. By 1912, though, General Motors merged production of the Reliance with another truck line, *The Rapid*, at their plant in Pontiac, Michigan. In 1910, the Owosso Motor Truck Company was formed, but it closed in 1914 after producing only ten trucks. Although no Owosso firms succeeded in manufacturing cars or trucks long term, the city did have many transportation-related successes: The first GMC Truck was built in Owosso, the first production truck to use pneumatic tires (tires inflated with air) was built in Owosso and, during 1922, Field Manufacturing of Owosso was the largest manufacturer of truck bodies in the world. Owosso companies also became important designers and manufacturers of car bodies, vehicle trim, batteries, electric motors and other integral components of vehicles. And in 1989, the jet-looking cars used in the movie, *Back to the Future II*, were the *LiteStar Pulse* (a.k.a. *The Owosso Car*), which were designed and built in Owosso. ★Therefore, Owosso is associated with the early growth and long term success of the auto industry – one of the most significant industrial events in history.

During the late 1800's and early 1900's, indoor baseball was the nation's most popular indoor winter sport – and, yes, at the time, it was far more popular than even basketball. During 1905 and 1906, Owosso's West Side Indoor Baseball Team won the Owosso City League, then beat all contending Michigan teams, and then beat the seemingly unstoppable World Champion Chicago Spaldings in a three-day series to win the World Championship of 1905-1906. The championship series was played at the first Owosso Armory, which was located on the southwest corner of Mason Street and Park Street. Over 600 fans were in attendance for each game of the series. The Owosso West Side Indoor Baseball Team retained the title, and beat all future title contenders, until it disbanded in 1912. ★Therefore, Owosso is associated with some of the most significant sporting events of the early 1900's.

The coach of Owosso's 1905-1906 World Champion West Side Indoor Baseball Team was Chester Brewer. Five years later, while serving as the athletics director at the University of Missouri, Owosso-born and -raised Chester Brewer started the tradition of "homecoming" – a tradition that spread to nearly all other colleges and high schools in the United States. ★Therefore, Owosso is associated with formation of one of the most widespread and cherished high school and college traditions in America.

During the late 1800's and early 1900's, one of the biggest events that could occur in any city, was a visit and performance by the John Philip Sousa Band. The band was led, of course, by John Philip Sousa, who has been revered ever since as the greatest composer of American patriotic music and march music.

The John Philip Sousa Band's first tour was in the fall of 1892. During that tour, the band played ten cities in Michigan. The band performed in Detroit, Ann Arbor, Jackson, Saginaw, Flint, Lansing, Battle Creek, Kalamazoo, Muskegon, Grand Rapids and Owosso. During that tour, on Wednesday, October 5, 1892, the band played a matinee at Owosso's Salisbury's Opera House in Downtown Owosso. The John Philip Sousa Band performed a

second time in Owosso on Thursday, October 2, 1913, at the Owosso Opera House in Downtown Owosso. Playing trumpet for the band before, during and after that second appearance was Owosso's own Victor Welte. ★Therefore, Owosso is significantly associated through hometown membership in, and as a location for eventful performances by, the greatest American band of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

November 11, 1911, was one of the strangest days in weather history for the Midwest. In some areas, high and low temperature records were broken in the same day. There also were an unusually high number of tornados on that date, and one of those tornados hit Owosso at 11:11 p.m. on 11/11/11 (November 11, 1911). The tornado caused massive damage in Owosso. Fortunately, though, because the tornado struck at night, and in primarily industrial areas of the city, it killed only two people and injured only nine people. (2 + 9 = 11). Nonetheless, listing of the time, date and casualties of the tornado in numbers would read like this: 11/11/11/11/11/11.

The tornado that hit Owosso on November 11, 1911, is still one of the most famous tornados in history. It is called "The Tornado of the Elevens." ★Therefore, Owosso is associated with one of America's most famous, unusual and significant weather events.

World War I began in Europe during 1914, and in 1917 the United States joined the battle. Just as it had in the Civil War and in the Spanish-American War of 1898, Owosso, once again met the call and contributed greatly. In mid-1917, Owosso was a city of only 12,000 people, and yet, during the remaining year-and-a-half of World War I, over 725 men from Owosso served in the military. It should not be surprising, therefore, that Owosso reportedly suffered more casualties during World War I "than any other city of comparable size" in the nation. ★Therefore, Owosso's contribution is associated with the most significant military event of the first third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Following the end of World War I, the return of the troops, and the end of the Great Flu, Owosso moved into the Roaring 20's. By then, Owosso-born and -raised artist Frederick Carl Frieseke had been living in France since 1897, he had already won several major awards for his mastery of American impressionism, and he was becoming America's best known painter internationally. The work of another Owosso artist, Alice Rogers Fisher, was so admired that, during 1924, The Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., held a special exhibition of forty-one of her paintings. In the literary world, one of its most successful authors was Owosso's James Oliver Curwood; and with the addition of his international acclaim, Owosso was almost swimming in prestige.

James Oliver Curwood's first novel was published in 1908. By the end of his career in 1927, he authored over thirty more books; one hundred thirty-five movies and short films had been made from his books, short stories and screen plays; and he was also the producer and narrator of two films. Some of the greatest actors of the day starred in Curwood films, including Anita Stewart, Tom Mix, Constance Talmadge – to name a few. Additionally, Curwood was the first author in the world to earn a million dollars from films adapted from his writing. ★Therefore, Owosso is associated with the significant and eventful early growth of the fields of American art, literature, and the American movie industry.

The Ku Klux Klan has been active nearly nationwide since the post-Civil War period. Unfortunately, it was very active during the 1920's in Owosso as well. The Klan rented meeting room space and office space in a building on East Exchange Street in Owosso. After 1931, local membership in the organization dwindled to the point where it is believed to have been

nonexistent in Owosso for many decades. ★Therefore, Owosso was associated with the distasteful activities of the Ku Klux Klan during the period of the Klan's heyday in America.

In business during the 1920's, Owosso was continuing to break records and set higher levels for achievement nationally and even internationally. In 1925, for example, the Walker Candy Company, formerly of Muskegon, opened their new factory on Monroe Street in Owosso. In 1929, the company reported its greatest production year since the company made the move to Owosso. Throughout the 1920's, the Owosso Casket Company was the largest casket manufacturer in the world, and for decades it was one the most respected casket manufacturers in the world. Indeed, the Owosso Casket Company made the casket for President William McKinley in 1901, as well as the casket for President Benjamin Harrison who died the same year. ★Therefore, Owosso is associated with the significant events of the funerary preparations for two Presidents of the United States.

Business in Owosso continued to roar forward, that was, until a slowdown began to appear about six months before the stock market crash on April 29, 1929.

The Great Depression was on and, by 1932, stock prices in the United States had dropped 80 percent, manufacturing output had declined 54 percent, tens of millions of Americans were unemployed and, by 1933, 44 percent of the 25,000 banks in the United States had failed. Owosso, like many cities and towns, was in dire straits.

The people of Owosso maintained their lives the best they could, but were constantly searching for a solution. The city desperately needed to add a large and healthy company to its economy; a manufacturer of products that would be in demand even during a depression; a company that could employ many of the unemployed people in Owosso. In 1937, that solution appeared and its name was A. G. Redmond Company – a company that was searching for a solution to its own problems.

In 1925, Al Redmond, who had been one of the partners of the Arvin Corporation in Indianapolis, started the A. G. Redmond Company in Flint, Michigan. The company grew steadily and very successfully. In 1937, while Redmond was a target of severe labor organizing activities in Flint during the depths of the Great Depression, five business leaders from Owosso showed up at Al Redmond's office in Flint. They introduced themselves and then stated: "We're from Owosso. It's a wonderful town with wonderful people. However, about fifty percent of Owosso's industry has collapsed, and about fifty percent of the workforce is unemployed. Our citizens are suffering, and they're becoming angry. What do we have to do to get you to move your company to Owosso?"

Within about three days, an agreement was reached and, within about nine months, the A. G. Redmond Company was fully operational in Owosso – and, thusly, Owosso and its citizens were rescued from the ravages of the Great Depression.

Owosso and the A. G. Redmond Company were a perfect match, and Redmond's growth increased dramatically with the military buildup of World War II. By 1941, Redmond's workforce in Owosso had grown to 2,100, and Redmond had become the largest manufacturer of fractional horsepower motors in the world. However, business was so good that Redmond began turning down additional government contracts. At about the same time, the Redmond Company's chief engineer, George Hoddy, who had joined the A.G. Redmond Company only six years prior, joined the Manhattan Project. Al Redmond demanded that Hoddy resign from the project and

remain focused on his work at the A. G. Redmond Company. Frustrated, Hoddy continued his engineering design work with the Manhattan Project – and, even though his work was top secret, he was able to do most of it at a desk and on some tables in Owosso. He also started his own company, the Universal Electric Company of Owosso, and he began accepting additional government contracts.

In Owosso, the A. G. Redmond Company continued to thrive and, by 1948, it had over 2,300 employees in Owosso (an all-time record for an Owosso employer) and 3,000 employees total. It also had plants in Ithica, Michigan; Jacksonville, Arkansas; and in St. Thomas, Ontario, and sales offices across the United States. Redmond was attracting some of the biggest and brightest talent America had to offer.

Owosso's Universal Electric Company thrived as well. During World War II, Universal had developed and manufactured a motor for superchargers on B-17 Flying Fortresses, an aircraft turn and bank indicator, a gun sight gyro motor for use on battleships, a motor used in torpedoes, and other instruments and motors. Universal, too, was attracting some of the best talent that America had to offer. And, at its peak, Universal had over 800 employees in Owosso, plants in four states and three countries, and it eventually took over the title of "largest manufacturer of fractional horsepower motors in the world."

The history of Al Redmond, the A. G. Redmond Company, George Hoddy, and the subsequent success of the Universal Electric Company, associates Owosso with several significant events in American history: ★The Great Depression, ★labor union organizing efforts during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, ★recovery of the U. S. economy from The Great Depression, ★Owosso's significant roll in supplying electrical components and parts that were essential to America's domestic and war economies, ★the huge increase of women (Rosie the Riveters) into the industrial workforce during World War II, ★and the Manhattan Project – which resulted in both bringing an early end to World War II, and the creation of the atomic age.

From the moment the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, young men from Owosso were clamoring to join the war effort. Although accessible records don't show the number of men from Owosso who served in the military during World War II, it's difficult to find anyone from Owosso – who was a healthy young man during the war – who did not serve.

Life in the United States changed immensely during World War II, and it did in Owosso as well. Healthy young men began disappearing from Owosso to serve in the military, and women began replacing them in their jobs at home. Automobiles, tires, gasoline, bicycles, foods, stoves, shoes and several other every day items were available only through a rationing system. People grew food in what were called "Victory Gardens," they bought War Bonds, and they volunteered at the Red Cross. And, hundreds of parents, grandparents, siblings, wives, girlfriends, and children wrote to their loved ones in the service, and yearned for any news about their safety and return.

By the time World War II ended on September 2, 1945, sixty-one men from Owosso died or were left permanently missing in action while serving in the U. S. Army. Add to that the untold number of men from Owosso who died while serving in the U. S. Marines, the U. S. Navy, and the U. S. Coast Guard. Owosso is therefore associated with these significant events: ★World War II, ★life on the home front during World War II, ★the loneliness that American families and women suffered while American men were serving in the military, ★U. S.

casualties of World War II, ★and the entrance of women into America's industrial workforce during World War II.

During World War II, the Owosso Speedway served as a P.O.W. camp. Opened on May 30th of 1944 with 200 veterans of Field Marshall Erwin Rommel's Afrika Korps, it quickly grew to hold 375 to 1000 P.O.W.'s. The prisoner of war camp was officially known in the military and to others as "Camp Owosso." Six days per week, the P.O.W.'s in the camp were trucked to and from farms and a canning factory where they worked for eighty cents per day until the end of the war. Every day, as the trucks carrying German P.O.W's would drive through Downtown Owosso, the German prisoners would whistle at girls and wave to Owosso's other citizens.

Owosso and its P.O.W. camp were national news in 1945, when two Owosso girls helped two German P.O.W.'s escape from the canning plant where they all worked. An article titled, *The Lonely Ones*, for example, in the January 22, 1945 edition of Time magazine, described how young, strong men were rare in Owosso during World War II, because they were all off fighting in the war. Investigations also revealed that, due to loneliness, drinking and necking parties at Camp Owosso were frequent. The county sheriff later reported that ". . . about fifteen town girls were 'always sneaking out to the camp and nearby fields to meet the Germans.'"

Owosso is therefore associated with these additional significant events of World War II: ★the establishment and operation of P.O.W. camps in the United States; ★escapes of German P.O.W.'s during the war; ★the utilization of P.O.W.'s on farms and in U. S. factories while American workers were serving in the military; ★the entrance of women into America's industrial workforce during World War II; ★and, the loneliness American women suffered while American men were serving in the military.

Owosso-born and -raised Thomas E. Dewey became the famous mob-busting District Attorney of New York City, three term Governor of the State of New York (1942, 1946, 1950), and the Republican presidential nominee in 1944 and 1948. He often returned home to Owosso throughout his life to visit his mother and his many friends. Thomas E. Dewey's activities were national news that spanned four decades – and Owosso was often mentioned in the news that was made. Therefore, Owosso is associated with the significant events of ★mob-busting activities, ★elections in the State of New York, ★the governance of the State of New York, ★and the presidential elections of 1944 and 1948.

Less than five years after the end of World War II, the United States was forced into war again, this time against the Chinese- and Soviet-backed North Koreans. Once again, men from Owosso met the call to arms and served bravely. And, once again, families and other loved ones yearned for any news about their safety and return. Over 136,000 American servicemen were killed, were left permanently missing in action, or were wounded during the Korean War, and some of those men were from Owosso – though the exact number is unknown. ★Owosso is therefore associated with the Korean War – a significant event in American history.

Another association between Owosso and a significant event occurred March 1, 1954. On that date, Alvin M. Bentley, a four term U. S. Congressman from Owosso, was one of the five congressmen injured when Puerto Rican nationalist terrorists opened fire on the floor of the House of Representatives in the U. S. Capital. The terrorist attack was international news, and Owosso was mentioned in nearly every news report. ★Therefore, Owosso is associated with the



significant events of the 1954 terrorist attack on the U. S. House of Representatives, ★and the activities of the Puerto Rican “Freedom Movement”/separatist movement.

Following the end of World War II in September of 1945, the Baby Boom Era began – and it was also an era of tremendous economic growth and product demand for both Owosso and the United States.

Although Owosso’s A. G. Redmond Company and the Universal Electric Company continued their contract work for the federal government, both companies were also manufacturing motors for almost every conceivable type of consumer product that required a small electric motor.

The successes of Redmond and Universal, combined with those of other Owosso companies, created an intelliboom in Owosso that hit a 20<sup>th</sup> century zenith – one that extended from the early-1940’s all the way through the early 1970’s. Anything seemed possible in Owosso during this period.

In March of 1953, Don Mitchell’s Ionia Manufacturing Company merged with the Owosso Manufacturing Company. By the early 1960’s, the resulting Owosso-headquartered Mitchell-Bentley Corporation was the largest independent supplier of car bodies in the world. The Mitchell-Bentley Corporation also became a leader in the manufacturing of vehicular interior trim and transportation seating – and it was doing manufacturing in five Michigan cities in addition to Owosso.

In addition to the successes of the A. G. Redmond Company, the Universal Electric Company, and the Mitchell-Bentley Corporation, Americans were discovering the beauty of Woodard Furniture made in Owosso, and Michiganders were shopping at Byerly’s – headquartered in Owosso – then the largest grocery store/supermarket chain in the state with fifty-seven stores. They were eating pancakes made from Famo Pancakes mix produced in Owosso. Americans were turning on kitchen and bathroom fans made in Owosso, they were using sandpaper made in Owosso, they were being buried in Owosso Caskets, they were driving cars with batteries, car bodies, and heater and windshield wiper motors made in Owosso. And, if they were driving to a convention in a large exhibit hall out of town or out of state, odds were good that at least one of the trade show displays in the hall was designed and built in Owosso. During the drive, of course, they’d pass scores of billboards stamped “Wolverine Sign Works Owosso.” And, when they arrived home and turned on the TV, they found that even the host of one of Mid-Michigan’s most popular children’s shows was a school teacher from Owosso.

Americans were also listening to recordings that had been stamped into vinyl in Owosso. Indeed, about 80% of Motown’s records were stamped into vinyl at American Record Pressing Company in Owosso and, eventually, about 80% of Owosso’s American Record Pressing Company’s business came from Motown records – until the Owosso company’s plant burned down in 1972. Because of Owosso’s American Record Pressing Company, Owosso also played a roll in the British Music Invasion.

The first Beatles record to be released in the United States was *Please, Please Me/Ask Me Why*, which was stamped into vinyl at American Record Pressing Company in Owosso. This first release of the first Beatles' record released in the U. S., was first pressed into vinyl for Vee-Jay Records – almost a year before the Beatles first appeared on The Ed Sullivan Show.

All of this in a small city of between 12,000 (1946) and 17,179 (1970), surrounded only by farmland and a few small towns for over twenty miles in every direction. Owosso had blossomed from within. It had a dignity and cosmopolitan flair to it usually found only in cities several times its size, and it had a spirit that made it seem almost unstoppable. During the same period between the early 1940's and the early 1970's, nearly every square inch of usable retail, office, manufacturing and warehousing space in Owosso was occupied, and homebuilding was continuous. Therefore, Owosso is associated with the following significant events: ★The Baby Boom Era; ★the post-World War II economic boom era; ★national and/or state leadership in certain industrial, manufacturing, retail and advertising industries; ★the Motown Records phenomenon; ★the British Music Invasion; ★and the first U. S. release of the first record by the Beatles.

However, things did change.

Labor disputes had been ongoing for years in Owosso. However, they became increasingly bothersome to business owners who were losing the will and the energy to fight or to stay in business. Additionally, as the local owners of Owosso businesses aged, it seemed that few of their children wanted to take over the family businesses, whether those businesses were manufacturing-, retail- or service-related. At the same time, air conditioning had become widespread in the then less restrictive South, Southwest and West. That made those areas attractive alternatives for owners and entrepreneurs who wished to expand their businesses, move their businesses, or open new businesses. As opportunities grew in those areas, so did the flight of the young and some others who were seeking fresh opportunities.

By 1980, General Motors in Flint, Michigan, began a decline. That, combined with increased automation and outsourcing, resulted in the elimination of ninety percent of G. M.'s workforce employed in Flint by 1999 – and hundreds of those who were laid off lived in the Owosso retail and service area. The reductions in Owosso's retail sales were made even worse by the ripple effect the G. M. decline had on Owosso companies that were suppliers to the auto industry. Downtown Owosso was further affected by improved transportation and more frequent trips being made by its citizens and others to shopping malls in Flint and Lansing. An additional detriment to Downtown Owosso was the growth of the Miracle Mile – a two mile stretch of stores and restaurants on M-21 between the Owosso city limits and the nearby town of Corunna, Michigan.

Based on the above two paragraphs, Owosso is associated with the following significant events: ★latter-20<sup>th</sup> century labor disputes; ★the latter-20<sup>th</sup> century lessening of trans-generational family business ownership transfers; ★the flight of industry and population to the South, Southwest and West during the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; ★the decline of General Motors and the Michigan auto industry; ★the deleterious ripple effects that the decline of the Michigan auto industry had on industry suppliers, employees, and retail and service industries; ★the deleterious effects conversion to automation in industrial production had on blue-color employees of industrial firms; ★the deleterious ripple effects that the decline of blue-collar employment had on retail and service industries; ★the building and location expansion of malls in the United States during the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; ★the harmful effect of extra-city business development on downtown areas.

Nonetheless, this one and only period of decline in Owosso since The Great Depression would be reversed. In the meantime, pride within Owosso got a boost from a resurgence of its citizens in the fields of music, letters, athleticism – and because of a steam engine locomotive.

In athletics, Maxwell Award winner, and the New York Giants' Player of the Decade, Owosso's Brad Van Pelt, continued to bring thrills to TV viewers through 1986; Owosso's Teresa Vondrasek, became the high school women's national judo champion in 1978 and 1979, the collegiate women's national judo champion in 1980 and 1981, and she won the gold medal and became the women's national judo champion at the U. S. Team World Trials in 1987; and, at sixteen years of age, mountain bike racer, Owosso's John Tomac, became the National BMX Cruiser Class Champion in 1984, was voted the top all-around bike racer in the world in 1988, and won the XC World Championship in 1991. ★Based on the aforementioned, Owosso is again associated with sports championships – significant events in American culture.

In letters, Owosso's Ed Dodge's Viet Nam War novel, *Dau*, arrived in bookstores during 1986, became a hit, and sold 1.3 million copies. A year later, a book about Owosso's Betty Mahmoody's experiences came out, and it became one of the biggest selling books in the world.

The Pulitzer Prize-nominated, best-selling book, *Not Without My Daughter: Escape from Iran*, was published in 1987. The book recounted how Owosso's Betty Mahmoody, and her husband and daughter, traveled to Iran to visit her husband's family. Soon after arriving in Iran, Betty's husband informed her that he and Betty and their daughter were going to remain in Iran. With the suppressive laws following Iran's Islamic Revolution in full force, and with her husband becoming increasingly unstable, Betty decided that she wanted to return to the United States. However, Betty discovered that if she divorced or separated from her husband in Iran, she would lose custody of her daughter. Therefore, she planned and executed a brave and clandestine escape for herself and her daughter through well-guarded cities, towns, the wilderness and finally across snow-covered mountains and into Turkey.

*Not Without My Daughter: Escape from Iran* was co-written by Betty Mahmoody and the co-author of *Midnight Express*, William Hoffer – a man who spent months checked into a room at Owosso's Pines Country Inn where he did research for, and co-wrote, much of the book. *Not Without My Daughter* was translated into dozens of languages, it became an international best seller, and it sold over 12 million copies. Betty Mahmoody, who maintained her headquarters in Owosso, became a much-sought international lecturer and an advocate for the rights of women and children. From Owosso, she also headed a group that rescued American children who had been abducted by a parent and taken to foreign countries. Betty Mahmoody was a frequent guest on national and foreign TV and radio shows and, in 1990, Betty was voted *Most Courageous Woman of the Year*, and *Woman of the Year*, in Germany. Betty's book went on to become the basis for the movie, *Not Without My Daughter*, which starred Sally Fields and Alfred Molina. The U. S. premier for the hit movie was held at Owosso Cinemas in Owosso, Michigan. The premier was widely covered by national media.

Betty's Mahmoody's experiences associate Owosso with significant events, including ★Iran's Islamic Revolution, ★the early exposure of life in post-revolution Iran, ★the ongoing drive to secure equal rights for women, ★the ongoing drive to educate multinational couples about their parental rights, ★Owosso as the headquarters of an operation to rescue American children who had been abducted by a parent and taken to foreign countries, ★and Owosso as the site of the premier of a hit movie. Owosso was also the site of the 1989 U. S. premier for another

hit movie, *The Bear*, based on Owosso author James Oliver Curwood's book, *The Grizzly King*, which was published in 1918. This premier was also held at the Owosso Cinemas in Owosso, Michigan.

After years of work by dedicated volunteers, and just a year after Betty Mahmoody's book came out in 1988, the rebuilt 400 ton Pere Marquette 1225 steam engine locomotive and tender – the largest operating steam locomotive in Michigan – was making excursion runs from its home in Owosso. The magnificent train thrilled everyone who saw it, and brought tears to the eyes of those who lived during the period of steam. Seven years later, the Pere Marquette 1225 steam engine locomotive and tender would be listed on National Register of Historic Structures. Less than ten years after that, Steven Spielberg's production company filmed and recorded the exterior sights and sounds of the Pere Marquette 1225 steam locomotive for the computer rendering of the hit Christmas movie, *Polar Express*. Owosso is therefore associated with these significant events: ★the operation of the historic structure, the Pere Marquette 1225 steam locomotive, which is continuously witnessed by visitors from around the world, ★and the movie, *Polar Express*, which is now one of the most revered traditional holiday movies.

In 1993, Diane Carey, a best selling author of eight popular historical romance novels, and four Star Trek books, moved to Owosso permanently. From Owosso she produced twenty-six more Star Trek books, two Alien Series books, eight young adult adventure books, and a movie novelization – and several of these books were best sellers as well. ★Owosso is therefore associated with the significant Star Trek phenomenon.

Then, in 1994, Owosso's Pat Carmody became the first place winner of the 1994 Los Angeles Blues Guitar Showdown – a tournament in which the guitar playing of 10,000 blues guitarist in America was graded over a period of two months. ★Owosso is therefore associated with one of the world's greatest contests of musicianship.

Over the latter part of the years since the mid-1970's, Owosso's manufacturing economy, and its economy as a whole, gradually began to become more diversified and less dependant on the auto industry. Furthermore, a beautiful walking bridge was built across the Shiawassee River in Owosso during 1984, an amphitheater was built during 1990 where free concerts are held through the summers, a new hotel was opened in 1997, Owosso's Michigan Avenue was beautifully re-paved in brick during 2004, and Owosso's Curwood Heritage Parade was drawing over 65,000 people per year. Although Owosso continuously improved, it was until 2007, when all the stars began moving into the right alignment, that civic improvement in Owosso began to move into critical mass.

Even with all the dozens of amazingly positive improvements that have been occurring in Owosso since 2007, and even with the “dynamic volunteerism” that is constantly working for the betterment of Owosso, there are many dozens of imperative assets of Owosso that are in immediate need of special attention. Those assets are the contributing buildings of the Downtown Owosso Historic District.

There are eighty-five contributing buildings in the Downtown Owosso Historic District. The City of Owosso, its citizens, the Downtown Owosso Historic District, the owners of the buildings, and the businesses that operate within the buildings, would benefit from exterior improvements. In most cases, however, the improvements would be financially viable only through utilizing the benefits of historic district designation. For those reasons, we are grateful for the opportunity to respectfully make this application for historic district designation.

The aforementioned associates Owosso with another significant event: ★The transformation and rebirth of an historic American city.

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References for association with the significant events listed herein Criterion A., are located in the bibliography.

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## **Criterion B. ASSOCIATION WITH SIGNIFICANT PEOPLE**

The area that comprises the Owosso Downtown Historic District has served as the home of several noteworthy Americans, including Michigan Governor John Judson Bagley who, as a young teenager during the 1840's, lived in a log cabin on the corner of Ball and Exchange Streets. During his governorship, John Judson Bagley oversaw the laying of the cornerstone for the Michigan State Capitol building on July 2, 1873. Felix Oscar Schlag, the designer of the Jefferson Nickel, maintained his studio and home at 109 and 109½ West Exchange Street, which are in the Fifth/Third Bank Building located on the corner of Washington and Exchange Streets. The artist, Gordon Graham, winner of the 1961 International IAD Award for furniture design, maintained his studio and home at 128 ½ North Ball Street, which was in the third floor apartments above the location of the City Club in Owosso.

One of the many dozens of entrepreneurs to do business in the area that comprises the Owosso Downtown Historic District was Charles Shattuck, who moved to Owosso in 1848. A banker, an internal revenue service assessor, and a consummate merchant, Charles Shattuck, was also one of the first in Owosso to embrace and promote the modern inventions of the times. In 1869, he started the Michigan Sewing Machine and Organ Company at 207-209 North Washington Street in Owosso. He was the first person in Owosso to own and sell a talking machine/phonograph, and the first in Owosso to sell sewing machines, bicycles and moving picture machines. His son, Jessie Shattuck, who took over the presidency of the Michigan Sewing Machine and Organ Company in 1890, was the first person to own an automobile in Owosso. The automobile – a steam-propelled vehicle with the brand name of Mobile – was purchased by Jessie Shattuck in 1901. The automobile was such a novel addition to Owosso, that Jessie Shattuck, in the same year, led the city's Barnum Circus parade with it. Jessie Shattuck's wife, Myrtle, owned another of Owosso's first cars, and she is believed to have been the first woman to drive a car in Owosso. Jessie and Myrtle Shattuck's son, Justin "Juddy" Shattuck, was one of the first persons to own an airplane in Owosso, and he was one of the organizers of the Owosso Community Airport.

Another relative of Charles Shattuck was Donald Shattuck who owned and operated Owosso's first radio station. It was located in the Shattuck Music House at 207-209 North Washington Street in Owosso. As of June 30, 1925, WSMH (Wireless Shattuck Music House), 1250 on the dial, was one of only sixteen radio stations in Michigan.

Yet another early entrepreneur who did business in the Owosso Downtown Historic District was D. M. Christian. In 1885, D. M. Christian founded the D. M. Christian Department Store. By 1900, D. M. Christian's Department Store, which was located at 118-120-122 West Main Street, was the largest, most modern, up-scale and complete department store in Owosso and in Shiawassee County.

D. M. Christian was not only a brilliant merchant and businessman, he was also a devout Methodist and determined temperance advocate. Indeed, he hosted many of the nation's most resolute like-thinkers – including the fearsome, hatchet-wielding Carrie Nations – in his business and home in Owosso. Ironically, D. M. Christian's son, Leigh Christian, who inherited the D. M. Christian Department Store from his father, was much more open-minded. During the Prohibition, Leigh Christian founded the City Club in Owosso where members could legally drink alcoholic beverages in an atmosphere of elegance and dignity.

The City Club was located at 120 North Ball Street, and its membership consisted of the most socially prominent families of Owosso and the surrounding areas. Many of Owosso's

grandest and most elegant balls, dances, dinners, receptions, showers, association meetings, and other important social and business events were held at the City Club in Owosso. Former members can fondly remember mingling at the City Club with great inventors and industrialists such as Charles F. Kettering, playing poker in the City Club's Men's Lounge with the future president, Gerald R. Ford, dining with Michigan governor George Romney, chatting with New York Governor Thomas E. Dewey or exchanging pleasantries with Thomas E. Dewey's mother, Annie, as she played bridge in the City Club's Lady's Lounge during the early afternoons. The City Club was the venue in Owosso, Michigan, for a seemingly endless stream of lunches, dinners and the entertaining of private and public nobility from around-the-world.

Other early entrepreneurs who did business in the Owosso Downtown Historic District were Wayne Taylor and Cora (Phillips) Taylor. In 1910, the Taylors founded the Phillips-Taylor Livery Service. The company name was later changed to the Owosso-Flint Bus Line and, beginning in the early 1930's, the service became known as the Indian Trail Route. Since 1935 the service has been consecutively named Indian Trails Bus Line, Indian Trails Motor Coach Service, and Indian Trails. The name Indian Trails resulted from the fact that one of the bus line's original primary routes was along U.S. Highway 12, which was locally known as the *Old Indian Trail*. Cora Taylor, who was a student of Michigan history and a great admirer of American Indians, began the tradition of christening each new bus in honor of an Ottawa, Potawatomie or Chippewa Indian chief.

During the late 1930's, Indian Trails was one of the first bus lines in the nation to acquire modern rear-engine diesel buses. Today, the company operates sixty-two state-of-the-art buses, and it carries over 750,000 passengers per year. It is now also one of the oldest, most respected, and most successful interstate bus lines in the United States.

Indian Trails' headquarters were originally located at 219 North Ball Street in Downtown Owosso and, since the 1920's, its headquarters have been located at 109 East Comstock Street in Downtown Owosso. Both of these locations lie within the area that comprises the Owosso Downtown Historic District.

Also of historical significance is the fact that the Michigan Department of Transportation recognizes Indian Trails' co-founder, Cora Taylor, as the first woman in Michigan to be issued a commercial chauffeur's license, and Cora Taylor's portrait hangs in the Department's Hall of Honor. Other sources report that on April 19, 1914, Cora Taylor became the first woman in the United States to obtain a commercial chauffeur's license.

There are many additional people of significance who have lived and/or worked in the area that comprises the Owosso Downtown Historic District. However, it must be realized that the area gifted with an Owosso address was the birthplace and/or long-term home of over 100 people whose lives, to varying degrees, have made national and/or international impact.

It has long been stated that there is something very special about Owosso, Michigan, and that Owosso produces winners. Visitors to Owosso are often astonished that such a small area, an area nearly surrounded by farmland, has generated such greatness in terms of its people and their accomplishments. Of course, as could be expected, Owosso has produced at least a couple anti-heroes as well. Nonetheless...

Because the hub of the Owosso-area's commercial and social activities was located in Downtown Owosso, each of these significant people and/or their ancestors and other relatives walked the streets, shopped in the stores, utilized services, and socialized in the area that

comprises the Owosso Downtown Historic District. The Owosso Downtown Historic District was the center of their worlds. They both enriched it and were enriched by it. A partial list of some of these significant people from Owosso, and their accomplishments, follows:

★ **A governor of New York: Thomas E. Dewey** – lawyer, author of several books, mob-busting District Attorney of New York City, three term Governor of the State of New York (1942, 1946, 1950), and the Republican presidential nominee in 1944 and 1948. As a prosecutor, Thomas E. Dewey ended the careers of some of the biggest mobsters of his day, imprisoned the former president of the New York Stock Exchange for theft, protected workers from racketeering, convicted the leader of the American Nazi party for embezzlement, etc. During his twelve years as governor of New York, Thomas E. Dewey is widely recognized for running one of the most remarkably honest and effective government administrations in history. He passed America's first state law that banned discrimination in hiring, streamlined government agencies, lowered taxes, doubled state funding of education, increased salaries of state employees, and was still able to cut the state's budget deficit in half. He was a major force in the establishment of the State University of New York system and the creation of the New York State Thruway – the longest toll highway system in the United States. Thomas E. Dewey appeared on the cover of Time Magazine five times during the 1940's, a popular radio show called *Gangbuster* was based on his successes against the mob, he was portrayed in several movies, and several books have been written about his life. In 1964, the New York State Thruway was renamed *The Governor Thomas E. Dewey Thruway* in his honor. In 1972, a Michigan Historical Marker was erected in front of Thomas E. Dewey's birthplace at 313 W. Main Street in Owosso, and a second historical marker was erected in front of the home in which he was raised at 421 W. Oliver Street in Owosso. In 2005, the New York City Bar Association created *The Thomas E. Dewey Medal*, which is awarded each year to one outstanding assistant district attorney in each of New York City's five counties.

★ **A governor of Michigan: John Judson Bagley**, two term Governor of Michigan who served from 1873 to 1877. Governor Bagley reorganized the state militia into the Michigan National Guard; he encouraged the establishment of a state commission to regulate railroads; and he led the effort to establish the state Board of Health and the state Fish Commission. In the matter of juvenile delinquency, Governor Bagley made major changes to the operation of Michigan's Reform School. He removed the bolts and bars, demanded that the boys be treated decently, tempered punishments, set up incentives for reform, and he set up a successful honor system for self-government. During his governorship, John Judson Bagley also oversaw the laying of the cornerstone for the Michigan State Capitol building on July 2, 1873. Prior to his governorship, John Judson Bagley played a roll in the founding of the Republican Party, and he served as the Chairman of the Michigan Republican Party from 1868 to 1870. He served for six years as one of Detroit's police commissioners, for two years as an alderman, and for two years as a member of the Detroit Board of Education. In his business life, he built a small tobacco shop into the Mayflower Tobacco Company, which became an industry leader. He helped organize the Michigan Mutual Life Insurance Company, and he served as its president for five years. He also served as president of the Detroit Safe Company, and as a director of American National Bank. Today a school bell, donated by Governor John Judson Bagley to Owosso's Union School in 1868, stands on a pedestal memorial in front of Owosso's Central School – a school located just six blocks away from the site of Owosso's first school house where John Judson Bagley studied during the 1840's. There is also a beautiful fountain memorial to Governor Bagley on Woodward and Monroe streets in Detroit, Michigan.



★ **The only person to have been elected to Congress from two different states:** **Charles A. Towne** was elected as a Republican from Minnesota to the U. S. Congress (1895-1897); elected national chairman of the Silver Republican Party (1896-1900); nominated for Vice President of the United States by the national conventions of the Populist Party in 1900, but declined to run; appointed as a Democrat from Minnesota to the U. S. Senate to fill a temporary vacancy (December 5, 1900, to January 28, 1901); was a partner in the law firm of Clarence Darrow (1903-?); and was elected as a Democrat from New York to the U. S. Congress (1905-1907). Because of Towne's great oratory skills, in his time he was referred to as the "Cicero of the Senate." There is a bust of Charles A. Towne in the Shiawassee District Library in Owosso.

★ **Champaign founders: Bill Ross and Bob Smith**, Owosso businessmen who founded the nation's first *Ronald Reagan for President* campaign and opened its headquarters in Owosso on October 28, 1964.

★ **Experts in international relations: Sherman W. Garnett**, dean of James Madison College of Michigan State University, and former senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace where he directed projects dealing with Russian-Chinese relations and security and national identity in the former Soviet Union. For more than a dozen years Dr. Garnett also held U. S. Government positions where he specialized in arms control and post-Soviet security, and where he worked as deputy assistant secretary of defense for Russia, the Ukraine, and Eurasia. Dr. Garnett is the author, co-author and editor of several books and professional journal articles. Dr. Garnett is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. **Michael J. Kovich** served in the United States Naval Security Group for seven years. Upon leaving the military, he was recruited into the U. S. Foreign Service where he served as an attaché, first secretary, and in various other positions in diplomatic missions for the U. S. Department of State. In conjunction with his presidential appointment to senior Foreign Service officer (a rank equivalent to an admiral in the navy), he was promoted to the permanent diplomatic rank of counselor. During his thirty year career in the Foreign Service, Michael J. Kovich was assigned to U. S. embassies in hot spots around-the-world. He also served on the staff of James Baker, U. S. Secretary of State, from 1989 to 1991, where he was responsible for operational activities while the Secretary was on overseas missions. **Alvin M. Bentley** was a U. S. Foreign Service officer, a congressman, and a philanthropist. While in the diplomatic corps, Bentley served as vice consul and secretary in Mexico, and subsequently served in Colombia, Hungary, and Italy. As a congressman, Bentley was elected to four terms and was one of the five congressmen injured when, on March 1, 1954, Puerto Rican nationalist terrorists opened fire on the floor of the House of Representatives in the U. S. Capital. During the 1960's, Bentley served as chairman of the Michigan Freedom from Hunger Council, and as chairman of Partners of the Alliance. Bentley Park in Owosso was named after his family who donated the land for the park, as was Bentley Historical Library at the University of Michigan which received generous funding from the Bentley family.

★ **Six university presidents: Jerry Hultin**, former Under Secretary of the Navy, Chief Administrator for the Wesley J. Howe School of Technology Management of the Stevens Institute of Technology, and President of New York's Polytechnic University. **John Perkins**, scholar, artist, author, Under Secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Controller of the State of Michigan, Professor Emeritus at the University of California Berkley and system-wide, President of the University of Delaware, and former Chairman of the Board of Dunn and Bradstreet. **Harry Burns Hutchins**, President of the University of Michigan from 1910 to 1920, Professor of Law and Dean of the University of Michigan Law School, organizer

of the Cornell University Law School and, during 1871 and 1872, Director of Owosso Public Schools. **Father John J. Cavanaugh**, former President of the University of Notre Dame. He was the personal priest of the Kennedy family and a good friend of John F. Kennedy's father, Joseph Kennedy. He did many of the Kennedy weddings and was one of the three priests who officiated at J. F. K.'s funeral. He is portrayed in the movie, *Rudy*, by actor Robert Prosky. **Edward Hardy**, President of the State Normal School/San Diego State College/San Diego State University from 1910 to 1935, and executive director of the San Diego Museum of Man. **Lawrence H. van den Berg**, President of the State Normal School/State University of New York at New Paltz from 1923-1943. The doctor's prior resume includes serving as Principal of Owosso High School from 1904 to 1907.

★ **The co-founder of the University of Peking: Leander W. Pilcher**, missionary and co-founder of China's Peking University in 1886.

★ **A Nobel Prize winner: Alfred D. Hershey**, bacteriologist, director of genetics research at Carnegie Institution of Washington, Cold Spring Harbor, New York, and co-winner of the 1969 Nobel Prize in medicine/physiology. Hershey, who was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 1958, was also the 1958 winner of the Albert Lasker Award of the American Public Health Association, and the 1965 winner of the Kimber Genetics Award of the National Academy of Sciences.

★ **A Leonardo da Vinci Award winner: Donald A. Tomalia**, Professor and Scientific Director of the National Dendrimer & Nanotechnology Center at Central Michigan University, and DNT Principal Investigator at the Institute for Soldier Nanotechnologies at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Among his over one hundred discoveries and inventions, Dr. Tomalia is the discoverer of dendritic polymers – the fourth major class of macromolecular architecture, and he coined the term dendrimers. Dr. Tomalia is the recipient of the Leonardo da Vinci Award (France), and the Society of Polymer Science Japan Award for Outstanding Achievement in Polymer Science. He also is co-author of *Dendrimers and Other Dendritic Polymers*.

★ **The discoverer of rare earth Element 61: B. Smith Hopkins**, Professor of Chemistry at the University of Illinois, whose contributions to rare earth chemistry led to tremendous advances in the field. Dr. Hopkins and his students discovered the long-sought element 61, named *illinium* (technetium). He was a star holder in American Men of Science, and the author of twelve books including *Essentials of General Chemistry* and *Chemistry of the Rarer Elements*.

★ **The developer of the Welch Bound standard: Lloyd R. Welch**, Professor Emeritus at the University of Southern California. Dr. Welch is the developer of the *Welch Bound standard* – an important tool in the design and analysis of certain methods in telecommunication engineering, particularly in coding theory. Dr. Welch is also the co-developer of the *Baum-Welch algorithm* – a method of calculating unknown parameters within a model used in computer science, statistical computing and bioinformatics. Dr. Welch was elected to the National Academy of Engineering in 1979, and he is the recipient of the 2003 Claude E. Shannon Award – the highest honor granted by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers' Information Theory Society.

★ **The top climatologist of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: C. Warren Thornthwaite**, Professor of Climatology at Johns Hopkins University, adjunct professor at Drexel University, President of the Commission for Climatology of the World Meteorological Organization, co-author of the book *Water Balance*, recipient of the Outstanding Achievement Award of the Association of

American Geographers, and the Cullum Medal – the highest award of the American Geographical Society. The doctor's published research on climatology is considered to be some of the most influential of the twentieth century. His life is the subject of the book, *The Genius of C. Warren Thornthwaite, Climatologist-Geographer*. Dr. Thornthwaite also served as a teacher at Owosso High School from 1922 to 1924.

★ **The Chief of the Emergency Medical and Ambulance Service in Hawaii during the attack on Pearl Harbor: Harry Loren Arnold, Sr.**, medical doctor, head of the Territorial (Hawaii) Medical Association, President of the Hawaiian Academy of Science, Chief of the Emergency Medical and Ambulance Service of the Office of Civilian Defense in Hawaii from 1941 to 1946 (and during the attack on Pearl Harbor), and author of *Poisonous Plants of Hawaii*; a book that has remained a classic in its field.

★ **A controller of the Tennessee Valley Authority: Eric Louis Kohler**, professor at Northwestern University, visiting professor at several other universities, and author of ten books on accounting, including *A Dictionary for Accountants*. Professor Kohler served as Controller of the Tennessee Valley Authority, Controller of the Economic Corporation Administration, President of the American Association of Accountants, etc. In 1945, Professor Kohler was recipient of the AICPA Gold Medal – the highest honor granted by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. He was also recipient of the Alpha Kappa Psi Foundation Accounting Award in 1958.

★ **A few of Owosso's many other academics, scholars and scientists: Albert John Cook**, Professor of Zoology and Entomology at Michigan Agricultural College/Michigan State University from 1875 to 1893, Professor of Biology at Pomona College from 1893 to 1911, Commissioner of Horticulture for the State of California, and author of *Birds of Michigan*, as well books on entomology including, *Injurious Insects of Michigan*, *Bee-keepers' Guide*, etc. Dr. Cook was a pioneer in the use of insecticides to protect crops, taught the first college course in beekeeping in the U. S., and served for many years as President of the National Beekeeper's Association. **Yasujuro Nikaido**, Chief Chemist at the Owosso Sugar Company, scientist, inventor, and the author of *Beet-Sugar Making and Its Chemical Control*; a book that has remained a classic in its field since 1909. In 2007, Yasujuro Nikaido was honored by the University of Nebraska's Department of Chemistry as one of its most prominent alumni. **Marion L. Shepard**, Professor of Engineering at Duke University's Pratt School of Engineering, and the author of *Introduction to Energy Technology*. **Harry Loren Arnold, Jr.**, medical doctor, Clinical Professor of Dermatology at the University of Hawaii, and a specialist in leprosy. Dr. Arnold, Jr., served as the editor of the Hawaii Medical Journal for forty-one years, corresponding editor for the Pacific Area of the International Journal of Leprosy, and he authored four books, thirteen monographs and 200 published articles. Dr. Arnold, Jr., also served as President of the American Academy of Dermatology and Syphilology, Chairman of the Section on Dermatology of the American Medical Association, President of the Hawaii Academy of Science, etc. **Merle Lawrence**, Professor Emeritus of Otolaryngology, Physiology and Psychology at the University of Michigan, first Director of the Kresge Hearing Research Institute, and the author and co-author of several books. Dr. Lawrence was the recipient of the Award of Merit from the Association for Research in Otolaryngology, the Gold Medal Award from the American Otological Society, the Distinguished Service Award from the Princeton Class of 1938, the Distinguished Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Academy of Audiology, etc. Dr. Lawrence was also a highly decorated W.W.II naval aviator. **Richard E. Young**, Professor Emeritus at Carnegie-Mellon University, author of scholarly books and other works on English

and rhetoric, and founder of one of North America's first Ph.D. programs in rhetoric. He coined and defined the term *current-traditional*. **Benjamin A. Stolz**, Professor Emeritus at the University of Michigan and author, co-author, and editor of scholarly books and other works on language and literature. **Timothy R. Zinnecker**, Professor of Law at the South Texas College of Law, and author and co-author of books on law and business. **Kimberly A. (Burek) Neuendorf**, Professor in the School of Communication of Cleveland State University. Dr. Neuendorf is the author and co-author of several books and book chapters, and scores of journal articles, on advertising, new technologies, and other forms of mass media. Dr. Neuendorf is a videographer, editorial board member of four professional journals, and she has taught over twenty different courses on film and other media.

★ **The developer of art identification through infrared reflectography: Molly Faries**, Professor Emeritus of the Department of History of Art of Indiana University, and Professor and Chairperson of Technical Studies in Art History at the University of Groningen, Netherlands. Dr. Faries initiated and developed the use of infrared reflectography to see through layers of paint down to artists' original drawings, thereby revolutionizing the fields of technical art history and authorship identification. Dr. Faries is the author and co-author of several books and monographs, and she has been honored with top awards in higher education and scholarship.

★ **Six renowned artists: Frederick Carl Frieseke**, American impressionist artist whose work in France won many awards internationally, including the Chevalier of the Legion of Honor – the highest honor that can be conferred upon an artist by the French government. During his lifetime, Frieseke became America's best known painter internationally and he was recognized as one of the ten foremost contemporary artists of the world. Frieseke was very influential to other artists and, for several years, he and Claude Monet lived behind each other. Frieseke's paintings adorn the walls of many of the world's great art museums. One of his paintings, *Woman with a Chinese Parasol*, adorns a wall of the Shiawassee Arts Council Gallery in Owosso. In 1987, a Michigan Historical Marker was erected in front of his birthplace and childhood home located at 654 N. Water Street in Owosso. **Alice R. Fisher (Alice Rogers Fisher)**, American artist whose work in the U. S. and Europe brought many honors. In 1924, The Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., held a special exhibition of forty-one of her paintings. A portrait of Alice Rogers Fisher and one of her paintings, *Cathedral Aisles*, adorn walls in the Shiawassee District Library in Owosso. **Felix Oscar Schlag**, artist and winner of a dozen European art awards by 1929, designer of the Jefferson Nickel in 1938, and award-winning designer of many other medals and sculptures in the United States. Felix Oscar Schlag was also a noted photographer, who operated a photography studio in Owosso for many years. A memorial to Felix Oscar Schlag, designed and erected by Michigan State Numismatic Friends, stands in front of his grave in Owosso's Oak Hill Cemetery. **Gordon Graham**, author of children's books, a fine artist, an interior decorator, a hat designer for Bergdorf Goodman, and winner of the 1961 International IAD Award for furniture design. One of Gordon Graham's oil paintings, *Interiors*, adorns a wall of the Shiawassee Arts Council Gallery in Owosso. **Elmer Harland Daniels**, American artist whose work is on permanent exhibit in the Indiana State Capitol building, at Indiana State University, and in California. He is also the author of *The Lincoln Sculptures*. **Albert Spear Hitchcock**, botanist, botanical explorer, artist, author and co-author of several books and hundreds of research papers and monographs, and co-developer of the Smithsonian Institution's Hitchcock-Chase Collection.

★ **Over thirty-five best selling, award-winning or classic authors:** including **Diane Carey**, best-selling author of fifty-three books, twenty-nine of which are Star Trek books. And,

**James Oliver Curwood**, a conservationist and best-selling author of thirty-three novels. As of this writing, 199 movies, short films and TV shows have been made of Curwood's books and stories, including *The Bear*. James Oliver Curwood was the first author to earn a million dollars from films adapted from his writing. The tourist attraction and museum now known as Curwood Castle in Owosso was built by Curwood to serve as his writing studio, and Mount Curwood (1978 ft.) in Michigan's Upper Peninsula was named in his honor.

★ **Great journalists: Halleck (Hal) Duncan Fry, Jr.**, a reporter at the Argus Press in Owosso during the 1940's, a reporter, feature writer, editor, and editorial writer at the Akron Beacon Journal until 1983. Fry was part of the team that won the Pulitzer Prize for the Akron Beacon Journal's coverage of the Kent State shootings in 1970, and he was the recipient of the John S. Knight Award for Journalism in 1984. He also was the editor of several books, and author of the book *Publish It!* **James Paul Sterba**, award-winning journalist, and a foreign correspondent, war correspondent and national correspondent for The New York Times for sixteen years and, since 1982, for The Wall Street Journal. He is currently a senior correspondent in the New York bureau of The Wall Street Journal, and he writes for the Journal's front page. James Paul Sterba is also the author of the book *Frankie's Place: A Love Story*. **Michael J. Phillips**, city editor of the Owosso Press American newspaper and fiction writer for magazines including the Saturday Evening Post. He also wrote the story for the movie *Conceit* (1922), which starred William B. Davidson, Hedda Hopper, and Charles K. Gerrard; and he wrote the story for the movie *Somewhere She Danced* (1945), which starred Yvonne De Carlo and Rod Cameron. Phillips served in the Spanish-American War as a lieutenant in the 33<sup>rd</sup> Michigan Volunteer Infantry and he retired from the army as a major. During 1908 Phillips won the National Press Match sharpshooter competition at Camp Perry, Ohio. Additionally, Michael J. Phillips also played for at least two seasons as the catcher for the world champion Owosso Westside Indoor Baseball Team.

★ **TV stars and movie actors in the United States and Europe: Robert L. Gibson**, actor who co-starred in the TV shows *Jag*, *The Practice*, *Without a Trace*, etc., and who was a principal, featured or recurring actor on *Another World*, *General Hospital*, *Highway to Heaven*, *Days of Our Lives*, *Divorce Court*, *Matt Houston*, *Santa Barbara*, *Young & Restless*, etc. He has also co-starred in feature films, in over a thirty stage plays in Los Angeles and New York, and he has appeared in several TV commercials. Robert was an instructor for the Artists in Education program at the University of Southern California, and was co-founder of the famous Actor's Alley Repertory Company in Los Angeles. In 2007, Robert L. Gibson won first place in American Jewish University's Bruce Geller Screenwriting Competition for co-writing the screenplay, *Lena on the Seventh Day*. **Steve Crumrine (Steve Tracy)**, actor who appeared in several movies, including *National Lampoon's Class Reunion*, *Save the Last Dance for Me*, *Forever Young*, *Say Yes*, *Desperate Moves*, etc., and who guest starred or co-starred in several TV shows, including, *Quincy*, *The Jeffersons*, *The Frankie and Annette Show*, etc. Steve was probably best known for playing Percival Isaac Cohen Dalton, the young Jewish husband of Nellie Oelson on the TV series *Little House on the Prairie*. **Robert Lyons**, actor, director, producer, stand up comedian and writer. From 2004 through 2007, he was a recurring actor in the German TV soap opera, *Gute Zeiten, schlechte Zeiten*, which is the most successful daily soap opera in Europe. He played himself in the German TV soap opera *17*, and was an episode director of the German TV soap opera, *Unter Uns*. Robert Lyons has acted on stage, and he has appeared in thirteen films, of which he's been the lead actor in seven. **Anthony Hornus**, actor in twenty movies including *Ghost Town: The Movie*, and writer, director and producer of movies. He is also the author of the book, *An Ordinary Killer*. For thirty-three years, Anthony Hornus

was a reporter and an editor at the Argus Press in Owosso, where he was honored fourteen times by the Associated Press for excellence in writing. **Aaron Sherry**, actor in ten movies, producer of two movies, and actor in TV commercials. He played the part of Obi-Wan Kenobi in *American Jedi*, and Nightmare Man in the movie *Nightmare Man*. Aaron Sherry is the son of Michael Sherry, the three-time Emmy Award-winning editor of *Oprah*.

★ **A Woman of the Year in Germany: Betty Mahmoody**, lecturer, advocate for the rights of women and children, and co-author of the Pulitzer Prize-nominated, best-selling book, *Not Without My Daughter: Escape from Iran*. The book sold 12 million copies and was the basis for the movie, *Not Without My Daughter*, which starred Sally Fields and Alfred Molina. In 1990, Betty was voted Most Courageous Woman of the Year, and Woman of the Year, in Germany.

★ **The former host of N.P.R.'s *All Things Considered***: Heather Claborn, reporter and producer for National Public Radio (WNPR) in Hartford, CT. Heather Claborn was the host of *All Things Considered*, and a reporter/anchor for the USA Radio Network.

★ **A Peabody Award winner and an Emmy Award winner: Jane M. (Fettes) Golombisky**, award-winning producer of the public radio program *This American Life*. She is also a producer and music supervisor of the Showtime television series *This American Life*.

★ **Children's Show Host: Peggy Dillingham**, host of *Miss Peggy's Playhouse*, which was broadcast mostly live on Lansing's WJIM TV (WLNS TV). One of Michigan's/America's great early children TV shows, *Miss Peggy's Playhouse* ran from 1954 to 1959.

★ **Animated TV show artist: Rob Oliver**, character layout artist, team artist and episode director of *The Simpsons* TV show, and additional sequence director of *The Simpsons Movie*.

★ **First coronet in the John Philip Sousa Band: Victor Welte**, musician who played coronet in John Phillip Sousa's band for over twenty-two years.

★ **A rock star: Mel Schacher**, bass guitarist and a vocalist for the rock band Question Mark and the Mysterians and, later, a co-founding member, bassist and vocalist of Grand Funk Railroad – a rock band that sold twenty-five million records and had four gold albums.

★ **Award-winning guitarist: Pat Carmody**, first place winner of the 1994 Los Angeles Blues Guitar Showdown – a tournament in which the guitar playing of 10,000 blues guitarists in America was graded over a period of two months. Pat Carmody was also the first place winner of the 1992 Michigan Hot Licks Competition – a tournament in which the top 200 guitarists in Michigan were graded on multiple guitar playing styles – from classical, to acid jazz, to country, to heavy metal.

★ **Great keyboardist: Scott Kinsey**, jazz keyboardist with several groups and best known for his work with Tribal Tech. Kinsey's work is also part of many major motion picture soundtracks, including those of *Ocean's Eleven*, *Ocean's Twelve*, *Analyze That!*, *Confessions of a Dangerous Mind*, *Code 46*, *Stander*, *Brown Sugar*.

★ **New age music composer: Richard S. Burmer**, composer/sound designer/ producer of New Age/ambient/atmospheric/electronic music. Winner of the 1994 Stemra Award for best use of music in TV.

★ **A Medal of Honor winner: George Dallas Sidman**, was a sixteen year old drummer boy with the rank of private in Company C of the 16th Michigan Infantry during the

Civil War. While in battle at Gaines Mill, Virginia, on June 27, 1862, "Private Sidman rallied his comrades to charge vastly superior force until he was wounded in the hip."

★ **Two navy admirals: Kenneth Charles Hurd**, U. S. Naval Academy graduate who served with the Asiatic Fleet in Manila, and served on the staff of the Commander of Submarines in Washington, D.C. He was involved in submarine-related activities in the Panama Canal Zone during the 1930's, was commander of the submarine the U. S. S. Seal in the Philippines during and after the attack on Pearl Harbor, and he served as a divisional and squadron commander of submarines during World War II. In the *Roll of Honor* section of the March 16, 1942, issue of Life magazine, Kenneth Charles Hurd was featured for his receipt of the Navy Cross; he subsequently received additional commendations. Following World War II, Admiral Hurd was assigned to inspection duty and trained in amphibious warfare. During the Korean War he captained an attack transport ship while commanding a transport division. Following the Korean War, Admiral Hurd served as the head of the Policy and Planning Branch of Naval Intelligence. **Arthur Burhans**, U. S. Naval Academy graduate who served in World War I, commanded a gunboat in China during the 1920's, and was captain of the cruiser U. S. S. Portland during World War II. Arthur Burhans retired as a rear admiral.

★ **Three army generals: John H. Steck**, former brigadier general in the U.S. Army. Steck fought in the Spanish American War and in World War I, and he trained troops for World War II. **Ralph Hamilton Tate**, former brigadier general in the U.S. Army during World War II. Executive Officer to the Assistant Secretary of War 1942-1943, Chief of Staff Atlantic Base Station 1943-1944, Assistant Chief of Staff 5th Army 1944-1945, Deputy Chief of Staff 5th Army 1945-1947, and Deputy Commanding General U. S. Forces in Austria 1947. **Robert Ploger**, West Point graduate, and retired major general in the U. S. Army. Ploger fought on Omaha Beach on D-Day, was active in the Korean War, and was Director of Military Engineering in Viet Nam during the Viet Nam War. He is the author of the book, *Viet Nam Studies: U. S. Army Engineers 1965-1970*. His son, Robert Ploger III, and his son's wife, were passengers on Flight 77 when it crashed into the Pentagon on 9/11.

★ **Six full bird colonels: Richard E. Campbell**, retired colonel in the U. S. Marines who served on the staff of General William Westmorland as Senior Press Officer of the Military Assistance Command – Viet Nam. Colonel Campbell also served as a battalion commander in the Viet Nam War, a platoon commander in the Korean War, and as a company commander in Okinawa during the late 1950's. Following retirement from the Marines, Colonel Campbell worked in the advertising and news departments of Owosso's Argus Press newspaper and, since 1973, he has served as editor of the Argus Press. **Ebenezer Gould**, a Civil War first major in the 5<sup>th</sup> Michigan Cavalry, a lieutenant colonel in General George Armstrong Custer's brigade – *The Wolverines*, and a colonel in the Michigan Fighting Fifth. Colonel Gould fought in several major battles of the Civil War, including Gettysburg. Ebenezer Gould was a lawyer and a merchant in Owosso and, from 1841 to 1846, he served as Owosso's postmaster. **Edgar P. Byerly**, enlisted in the 4<sup>th</sup> Michigan Cavalry in July of 1862, and fought in the battles of Stone River and Chickamauga. In December of 1863, he was transferred to the 10<sup>th</sup> Michigan Cavalry and was promoted to the rank of first lieutenant and, later, to captain. On February 1, 1891, he was appointed to Michigan Governor Edwin B. Winans' staff, was promoted to the rank of colonel, and was aid-de-camp and treasurer of the Michigan State Military Board. **Richard Boerem**, lieutenant in the Michigan National Guard who was twice selected as a member of the "President's 100" – an organization comprised of the 100 best pistol and rifle marksmen in the United States. In 1935, Lieutenant Boerem won first place in the nation in pistol marksmanship

competition against city and state police, National Guardsmen, Marines and civilians. Richard Boerem went on to fight in the Pacific Theater during World War II, and retired as a colonel. **Wayne Koppa**, retired colonel in the Michigan National Guard. Colonel Koppa joined the Owosso 144<sup>th</sup> M. P. Company in 1970 as a private. He attended an officer's candidate program, and consecutively became the state headquarters manager for recruiting and retention, the brigade executive officer, and the commander of Camp Grayling – which, at 147,000 acres spread over three counties, is the largest National Guard training installation in the nation. He also served as the team leader assigned to the U. S. embassy in Riga Latvia, with the responsibility of transforming the Soviet-style Latvian military into a modern military force that recognizes civilian control. **James Joseph Lennon**, a colonel in the U. S. Army Reserves. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

★ **Troop supporter: Josephine Nicholson McDonell**, who devoted fifty-four years to supporting American military troops. Josephine McDonell developed methods, which included fund raising and even using short wave radios in her home, that made it possible for many thousands of military personnel serving overseas, to connect with their loved ones by phone. The service she provided became known as *Jo's Operation Telephone Home*. She was honored for her work by President Nixon, by House Concurrent Legislation Number 136 of the Michigan State Legislature, and by the awarding of several honorary titles from military groups.

★ **A champion of the Red Cross: Mrs. C. O. Loring**, prominent organizer and manager of the Owosso-based Shiawassee Chapter of the Red Cross. Formed on April 6, 1917, at the Elks' Lodge on North Washington Street in Owosso, the Shiawassee Chapter of the Red Cross is believed to have been the first chapter in the U. S., without a preexisting war chest, to have exceeded its Red Cross War Fund quota. The quota, in fact, was exceeded thirty-six hours before the fund-raising campaign even began. Following World War I, in April of 1920, Owosso's Mrs. C. O. Loring was highly honored with a special medal awarded by the French government for her work done on the rehabilitation of France. She was one of only two women in the state of Michigan to receive the honor.

★ **The hero of Tung Chow, China: Reverend William Scott Ament**, minister, missionary and temperance advocate. Reverend Ament gained international acclaim during the Boxer Rebellion in 1900. Outnumbered 50 to 1 by the marauding revolutionary Boxers, Reverend Ament heroically defended and rescued Christians from Tung Chow, China, and escorted them to safety in Peking. Reverend Ament's life is the subject of the books, *William Scott Ament and the Boxer Rebellion: Heroism, Hubris and the "Ideal Missionary,"* by Larry Clinton Thompson, published in 2009, and *William Scott Ament, Missionary of the American Board in China*, by Henry D. Porter, published in 1911 in Canada and in Great Britain.

★ **Founder of Los Angeles' Leo Baeck Temple: Rabbi Leonard Beerman**, lecturer, teacher, activist, and founding Rabbi of Los Angeles' Leo Baeck Temple. Among his many notable life events, he performed the wedding of Barbra Streisand and James Brolin.

★ **Mother of the McCaughey septuplets: Bobbi McCaughey**, the Iowa mother, and wife of Kenny McCaughey, who made international news when she gave birth to septuplets in Des Moines, Iowa, on November 19, 1997.

★ **Native American chief: Chief Wassa/Chief Wasso/Chief Wosso**, chief of the Shiawassee band of Ojibwa Indians. Chief Wassa was a signatory of the Treaty of Saginaw in 1819, which ceded 15,000 square miles in central Michigan to the U. S. Government. He was also a signatory of the Treaty of Detroit in 1837, which ceded much of southeastern Michigan



and northwest Ohio to the U. S. Government. Chief Wassa lived on and near land that became Owosso, and the city was named in his honor.

★ **Pioneer in transportation: Cora Taylor**, co-founder of Owosso's Indian Trails Bus Line. On April 19, 1914, Cora Taylor became the first woman in Michigan, and is believed to have been the first woman in the United States as well, to obtain a commercial chauffeur's license. An admirer of American Indians, Mrs. Taylor researched the histories of several dozens of Indian chiefs, and began a tradition of christening each new Indian Trails bus/motor coach in honor of a Michigan Indian chief. Cora Taylor's portrait hangs in the Michigan Department of Transportation's Hall of Honor.

★ **Miss Michigan: Bette Lou Pittman**, represented Michigan in the Miss America pageant. Bette Lou Pittman was Miss Owosso 1950 and Miss Michigan 1950.

★ **Richard Cain: (Ricardo Scalzitti)**, mobster, double agent, chief aide and emissary of mob chief Sam Giancana. Cain's life is the subject of the book *The Tangled Web*.

★ **World champion pipe smoker: Paul T. Spaniola**, named six-time world champion pipe smoker by The International Association of Pipe Smokers' Clubs, Inc. In 1952, Paul T. Spaniola was recruited by Twentieth Century Fox Studios to teach Susan Hayward how to smoke a pipe for the movie *The President's Lady*.

★ **Rodeo champion: Earl Sutphen (Earl Sutton)**, trick roper, riding and roping champion, and rodeo star. In 1927, Sutphen won the world championship in trick roping at the International Rodeo at Tampa, Florida.

★ **Professional baseball pitcher: William Graham**, left-handed pitcher for the St. Louis Browns from 1908 to 1910.

★ **The five-time, World Champion, Top Alcohol Drag Racer: Bill Reichert**, engine builder, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010 National Champion Top Alcohol Dragster, and top speed national record holder in top alcohol dragsters. In Joliet, Bill Reichert set a national record for hitting 284.75 miles per hour in a quarter mile – the highest speed ever reached in an alcohol fueled dragster. Reichert also set the elapsed time record with a 5.10 seconds in a quarter mile. Bill Reichert, who has become an icon of the professional drag racing world, has been interviewed well over 100 times on ESPN-TV.

★ **The world's top mountain bike racer: John Tomac**, bicycle racer, bicycle builder, and an icon in the mountain bike racing field. At 16 years of age he became the 1984 National BMX Cruiser Class Champion, and he has won nine additional national championships. John Tomac has also won more international mountain bike races than anyone else in the sport, and he won the XC World Championship in 1991. He was voted the top all-around bike racer in the world in 1988, and was inducted into the Mountain Bike Hall of Fame in 1991.

★ **American Softball Star: Jo Ellen McGinnity Smith**, was an all conference pitcher during each of her four years at Grand Valley State University. She later pitched for four Michigan Amateur Softball Association state championship teams, and she pitched in national tournaments 17 times with six different teams. She was named a National Amateur Softball Association second team All American in 1984 and 1992, and a first team All American in 1989. She went 5 and 0 in the 41 team Women's Amateur Fast Pitch Softball Association tournament

in which her team won the 1992 Class B national championship. In 1999, Jo Ellen McGinnity Smith was inducted into the Michigan Amateur Softball Hall of Fame.

★ **The Women's National Judo Champion: Teresa Vondrasek Graham**, American judo, softball and basketball star. In judo, Teresa Vondrasek was the 1978 and 1979 high school national champion in <160.5 lbs. class; in 1980 and 1981 she was the collegiate nation champion in <160.5 lbs. class; and in 1983 she won two more gold medals and was the collegiate national champion in both the <160.5 lb. class and in the open weight class. During 1984, she won a silver medal in the U. S. Team qualifications, a silver medal in the British Open, and a bronze medal in the U. S. Open. Additionally, Vondrasek won gold medals at the U. S. Olympic Sports Festivals in 1985, 1986 and 1987; and she won the gold medal and became the national judo champion at the U. S. Team World Trials in 1987. In softball, Vondrasek batted 400 and was the MVP of the 41 team Women's Amateur Fast Pitch Softball Association tournament in which her team won the Class B national championship. In her four year basketball career at Oakland University, Vondrasek scored 1147 points and made 1127 rebounds. Her Oakland University teams had a combined record of 87-29, won a pair of league titles and advanced to the NCAA Tournament twice, including a national semi-final berth in 1982. In 1993, Teresa Vondrasek was inducted into the Oakland University Sports Hall of Honor.

★ **Maxwell Award Winner and the New York Giants' Player of the Decade: Brad Van Pelt**, American football star. Van Pelt was a three sport star at Michigan State University. In football, he was a two-time All American, and in 1972 he became the first defensive back to win the Maxwell Award as the nation's top collegiate football player. Van Pelt was a first round draft pick for the NFL where he played, from 1973 through 1986, with the New York Giants, the L.A. Raiders and the Cleveland Browns. Van Pelt was named the Giants' Player of the Decade for the 1970s, and he was selected for the Pro Bowl five years in a row from 1976 through 1980. He was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 2002, and has recently been nominated for the Pro Football Hall of Fame. Brad Van Pelt appeared in national TV ads for Cystic Fibrosis, United Way, Pepsi Light, Honeycomb cereal, and Bond's Clothing. He was also the national spokesperson for Bond's Clothing and Cystic Fibrosis, and he was the Michigan, New Jersey and New York spokesperson for the Special Olympics.

★ **Colorado State University football star: Bradlee Van Pelt**, one of the all-time favorite quarterbacks for the Colorado State University Rams, he set several records there during his years as a starter. Bradlee Van Pelt came within 100 yards in passing and rushing of becoming the only collegiate quarterback in history to pass for 3,000 yards and rush for 1,000 yards in the same season. During his senior year at Colorado State, Bradlee Van Pelt had a 60% completion rate in passing. In the NFL, Bradlee Van Pelt was a backup quarterback for the Denver Broncos and later the Houston Texans during 2004 through 2007. During 2010 he was quarterback and assisted as a safety for the Bergamo Lions of Italy and, in late 2010, he signed to play for the Leicester Falcons in Great Britain. Bradlee Van Pelt is the son of American football star, Brad Van Pelt.

★ **The originator of the high school and college "homecoming" tradition: Chester Brewer**, star athlete, coach and athletic director. Chester Brewer was a four sport star at the University of Wisconsin, and the football coach at Michigan Agricultural College/Michigan State University from 1903 to 1910, and in 1917 and 1919. As the MAC/Michigan State University football coach, he posted shutouts in 49 of 88 games and went undefeated in 43 straight home games. He also coached track, field, cross country, baseball and basketball. As baseball coach he led his teams to a .564 record from 1904 to 1910, and as basketball coach he

led his teams to a .736 record from 1904 to 1910. He also served as athletics director and coach at the University of Missouri from 1910 to 1917, was Director of Army Athletics for the U. S. War Department during 1918, served as director of athletics and professor of physical education from 1919 to 1922 at MAC/Michigan State University, and held the same positions at the University of California-Davis until returning to Missouri where he served as athletics director until 1935. Brewer also coached his hometown, Owosso, Michigan's, West Side Indoor Baseball Team to win the world championship in 1905-1906. In 1911, while serving as the athletics director at the University of Missouri, Owosso's Chester Brewer started the tradition of "homecoming" that spread to nearly all other colleges as well as high schools throughout the United States. Brewer Fieldhouse at the University of Missouri in Columbia, Missouri, was named in honor of Owosso's Chester Brewer.

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The aforementioned list of some of the significant people associated with the Owosso Downtown Historic District elucidates the unusual richness per capita of good, inventive, ingenious, hard-working and accomplishment-prone humanity within which the Owosso Downtown Historic District lay. It's an amazing fact that all of these people are not only associated with the Owosso Downtown Historic District, they each were also born and/or lived long term in the same postal zip code area of the Owosso Downtown Historic District. As previously stated, these people, and all others from Owosso, both enriched the area that comprises the Owosso Downtown Historic District and were enriched by it.

Owosso, Michigan, is, indeed, a *very* special place – and the area that comprises the Owosso Downtown Historic District is its cherished centerpiece as well as its heart and spirit.

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References for the significant accomplishments of each of the people listed herein Criteria B., are located in the bibliography.

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### **Criterion C. ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The boundaries for Owosso's proposed historic district incorporate the central section of the city's downtown, the location of which was determined by the earliest settlers in the 1830s and 1840s. A map from 1857 shows a village (at that point) with a few dozen buildings spread out over several blocks. Instead of a settlement consisting of commercial buildings tightly clustered along one or two block fronts (as was found in many small Midwestern towns), Owosso's settlers early on expected Owosso to develop into a mercantile center. The years spanning the Civil War to the First World War brought the prosperity Owosso's forebears anticipated and had planned.

During this boom time, the downtown filled with impressive buildings in a variety of architectural styles. The first log cabins (of which one miraculously survives and is displayed in a park just outside the district's boundaries) were replaced with small wooden buildings with very few rooms. (Amazingly, a few of these have also survived, having been moved to a residential area just north of downtown.) Despite their humble dimensions, these small houses displayed many Greek Revival design elements. By the 1850s, Owosso was ready for brick construction, built with supplies from local brickyards.

Brick commercial buildings began to rise in Owosso within 20 years of its founding. The first 3-story brick building still stands at 112 N. Washington Street, and another early example is at 213 N. Washington Street. These buildings both present dignified, simple brick walls with a minimum of Greek Revival ornamentation. The Italianate Revival is represented by (among others) the massive and historically important second Gould's Hall at 217 N. Washington Street, built in 1868, whose second and third floor façade has miraculously survived intact for more than 140 years. From this point until the turn of the twentieth century, a building boom filled downtown Owosso with an amazing and impressive collection of two- and three-story Victorian commercial buildings displaying a seemingly endless array of design choices.

This period in Owosso's growth gave us much of the wonderful and often exuberant Victorian architecture we enjoy today. The masons were kept on their toes following the intricate designs on the upper levels of the facades. When one remembers that every detail – each arched lintel, each inset panel of textured brick, each frieze of stepped brick, each piece of decorative stone, each twist and turn, each corner and angle, each cast iron lintel, each wood or metal cornice – involved additional expense, the incredibly ornate Victorian facades that ornament downtown Owosso are appreciated that much more. They represent proud and prosperous citizens who took pride in their buildings and wanted to add beauty to their city. Following the long reign of Victorian architecture, a taste for neoclassicism dominated American tastes, and Owosso's splendid collection of commercial buildings reflects this evolution. 112-14 W. Main Street offers a façade replete with pilasters and an Adam-style frieze of exquisite design. The Chicago School, fighting the sweeping neoclassicism, is also represented downtown, most notably, by the Fletcher building at 113 W. Exchange Street. And Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie Style is, slightly surprisingly, evident in the grand four-story building at 100 N. Washington Street that dominates Owosso's primary intersection.

Twentieth century styles are also evident, and each example is an outstanding one: the Beaux Arts Chemical Bank at 100 E. Main Street; the Tudor Revival armory (1915) and high school (1929); the 1924 Beaux Arts City Hall; the Federal-inspired 118 N. Park Street (1922). Even 1950s modern is represented by the bank building at 200 E. Main Street.

All this information has been presented to make the following argument: the wealth of historic buildings that comprise downtown Owosso presents a veritable encyclopedic resource of American architectural styles for the last 150 years. Every style that swept the nation's taste is present in some building. (We even have a little Gothic, in the windows and details of the church at 330 N. Washington Street.) And the buildings, given the prosperity of the city's populace, the obvious attention to detail, and the willingness to spend money to obtain the best results, are exemplary representatives of their genre.

Owosso's proposed historic district, the commercial center laid out in the 1830s and its buildings dating heavily from the second half of the nineteenth century, is a treasure deserving protection from further losses.

#### **Criterion D. YIELDS FURTHER INFORMATION**

The Committee feels that even more history of buildings and people may be discovered, and members have agreed together to continue research and exploration.

The Evaluations Section of the report can be examined on page 25, which includes the Planning Needs and Recommendations for action by local governing body on page 43 in Section I of this report. The Historic District ordinance and amendments are found on page 9 of Section I.

## **DATA LOCATION**

Shiawassee District Library

City of Owosso – Clerk’s Office

State Historic Preservation Office

Bentley Library at the University of Michigan

Owosso Downtown Historic District  
City of Owosso  
Shiawassee County  
Michigan

August 2010

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Section II



## SECTION II

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# Owosso Downtown Historic District

## Shiawassee County

### **DESCRIPTIVE OVERVIEW**

June, 2010

The hub of Owosso's commercial and community activity was always and still is the downtown commercial district. In the earliest days of Owosso's history, there were several mills, the first constructed to saw lumber into boards to construct buildings, while others followed to grind grain into flour, and to card wool, all located on the Shiawassee River which flows South to North on the Western edge of the downtown and wraps around the southern edge of the commercial area paralleling Comstock Street. Our clever early settlers built a mill race to accommodate these mills and maximize the river's power. The mill race ran parallel to the river and with the advent of steam and more efficient methods to produce the same products, the mill race was filled in, paved, and became Water Street. Because of the availability of water, for power, and for drinking and for transportation, several general and dry goods stores opened within near proximity to the mills. Owosso's founding brothers, the Williams brothers, hired a surveyor to plat the downtown into generous blocks with streets right of ways sixty-six feet in width, except for Washington and Main and Exchange Street. These three streets were created to be ninety-nine feet wide, because these two men felt certain that Owosso would be an important town. In fact, Benjamin and Alfred Williams always thought that Owosso would be the State capitol. History records that when the state representatives voted for placement of the state capitol, Owosso as one of the cities selected, missed by one vote.

This portion of Michigan is largely agricultural due to the flat and fertile fields which surround and comprise Shiawassee County. Potatoes and sugar beets at one time drove the agricultural economy in this area. With a population of about 14,000, Owosso is the largest community in Shiawassee County and historically has served as the commerce and entertainment hub for the entire county.

Owosso is located almost dead center in the lower peninsula of the state of Michigan, easily accessible by State Highways M-21 which is downtown's Main Street, and the town is bisected by M-52. At one time three railroads had depots in Owosso; one of these still exists as a Elk's Club. The railroads still come through town though and The Steam Railroading Institute Museum is active in preserving railroad history in Owosso.

Homes were constructed near the commercial center of the town in the 1840's and 1850's, especially on Park Street which has become the easternmost boundary of the downtown historic district. As commerce increased and the town grew, those small Greek-Revival three or four room houses were relocated from Park Street throughout the town by house-movers using block and tackle, horses and wagons, and new businesses, and much later large parking lots, were

located on Park Street. During this time, more elaborate homes were built on the eastern, western and northern borders of the downtown, most of which still exists, but the commercial district ends on the northern edge at Mason Street primarily with some commercial buildings expanding the district to the 300 block of North Washington. In the three hundred block of North Washington, two historic homes still survive the expansion of the commercial district into residential neighborhoods, one Italianate which served, and serves still, as a doctor's office for many decades, and a later Victorian house. On Washington Street we also find four historic churches, two of which are located within the downtown historic district, which provide for the spiritual needs of the townspeople, as well as the Masonic Temple built in 1924. During the 1970 and 1980's, new commercial architecture appeared on this block with the advent of the Shiawassee Council on Aging Building and the new Post Office. Beyond this point, the architecture changes from commercial to historic residential.

From the 1850's, the social events of Owosso occurred in special second or third floor halls which were created for such events such as plays presented by the Owosso Dramatic Society, musical entertainments, circus acts including Tom Thumb and Minnie Warren, and parties in general, and yes, they were conducted above a commercial enterprise in the downtown. Today social events still center around the downtown with the Mitchell Amphitheater on the river, the Lebowsky Performing Arts Center (currently being rebuilt after a fire), Main Street Plaza and various businesses, movie theaters and restaurants which include entertainment.

The sense of history is pervasive in the entire town in which forty-five percent of the buildings have been built prior to 1939, but especially in the commercial downtown area. The broad streets and sidewalks, the grand (and formerly grand) multi-story nineteenth- and early twentieth- century buildings which comprise an eleven block area tell a story of the enterprise, pride and commitment of the people who settled and created wealth in this town. As the Michigan economy has faltered over the past three decades, so have the fortunes of the Owosso downtown, which has become in some instances, shabby, with botched attempts at modernization of the historic buildings. The covering of entire facades of Victorian buildings with materials foreign to the time such as enameled metal tiles and rough-sawn cedar, and metal are blatantly evident, however nineteenth century master brickwork details are fortunately more prevalent in the downtown, especially on buildings on Washington Street, both North and South and on Exchange Street and on the Armory and High School (now the Junior High School) buildings on Water Street, which is the western boundary of the commercial downtown, the Shiawassee River serving as a natural boundary.

On the southern boundary of the downtown historic district, an individual can stand on one side of the street with buildings from the nineteenth century at one's back and look across the street to see the expansion of the downtown in modern terms with a 1982 J. C. Penney's store and a new bowling alley, new movie theaters, restaurant and doctor's offices, the boundary being self-explanatory.

# HISTORIC NARRATIVE

The city of Owosso has passed through dynamic social and economic changes during the past two centuries that are recalled and reflected in one of the largest and best preserved collections of historic buildings in the state of Michigan. Like that of many other cities in the region, Owosso's civic development evolved through eighteenth-century pioneer beginnings and small mill enterprises, through an era of burgeoning transportation accessibility by river and rail that supported an early industrial boom and an accompanying period of building activity in the expanding business and residential areas. Like many other Michigan cities, too, the rising trajectory of Owosso's industrial development in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries took a profound downturn in the 1930's, only to rebound in the next decade through the success of thriving enterprises in support of the war effort. In the ensuing decades, Owosso's fortunes have risen and fallen with trends in manufacturing, especially in the auto industry, and the city now faces, with other communities throughout the Midwest, challenges associated with an economy in transition. Historical parallels aside, however, Owosso stands apart from most other cities in Mid-Michigan in the extent of its industrial development and the scope of its civic ambition, all of which may be read in the city's extensive surviving architectural record, especially in its richly detailed downtown district.

Prior to the arrival of non-native settlers in 1835 (preceded by trappers, traders and federal surveyors in the 1820s), that region of the Shiawassee River around which the central city later grew was home to the Shiawassee band of Ojibwa, after a chief of which, Wasso, the city is named. The early settlement was established by immigrants from the northeastern U. S. and nascent communities in southeastern Michigan, with residences, trading posts, mills and millrace all concentrated in what is now the epicenter of downtown, along current M-21 running east and west; with Adams, Water, Ball, Washington, Park and Saginaw, crossing to the north and south, almost all of it to the north and east of the Shiawassee. As late as 1884, the date of the first Sanborn fire map for Owosso, development within the city was still concentrated within these boundaries, edging toward Williams Street on the north and Comstock Street on the south. The eight Sanborn maps that follow, documenting the city's expansion through 1946, illustrate the growth of the city beyond these initial boundaries, with industrial enterprises moving outside the district and substantial residential districts developing to the north and south. It is worth noting, and indicative of the early citizens' breadth of ambition for their city from its earliest days, that the downtown was laid out not along a single main street, as is characteristic of so many Michigan municipalities, but according to a grid radiating outward from the intersections of a main street and six north/south streets.

Transportation of people and materials on the Shiawassee River were initially facilitated by flat-bottomed boats, with channel improvements and small steamboat enhancing travel as early as 1846, making Owosso an accessible destination. Extensive development of rail transportation through Owosso by multiple lines between 1850 and 1900 supported the growth of many industries, especially in the production of furniture and building elements. The vitality and quality of these enterprises is evident in the craftsmanship of fine homes, churches and other buildings from the period that survive largely intact in neighborhoods immediately adjacent to downtown. The resulting boom and prosperity enabled development of the downtown

infrastructure, including installation of electricity in 1890, implementation of a streetcar line in 1893, and brick paving of the streets in 1898.

By the turn of the century, early single residences and industries in the downtown had largely been displaced to outlying areas by an increasingly dense concentration of retail, and commercial buildings, often including apartments and/or offices on the upper floors; along with churches, hotels, restaurants and entertainment businesses. The economic success of ongoing manufacturing concerns, especially in industries relating to furniture, automobiles and electrical devices, fueled redevelopment, and sometimes architectural transformation, of existing downtown properties. Such changes to the cityscape were largely suspended during the Depression, which hit Owosso particularly hard given the predominance of its economic base in manufacturing, but resumed when thriving wartime industries revived the local economy.

Owosso's proximity to Flint and the presence of numerous auto-related industries in town kept Owosso economically healthy until the last quarter of the twentieth century, during which the economy of the city, along with that of the rest of Mid-Michigan, has struggled to survive a diminishing market for the manufactured goods that employed its citizens for more than a hundred years. While the downtown district has remained functional during this period of civic decline and inevitable urban sprawl to discrete commercial districts, the impact of the economic downturn is clearly visible in the deterioration of buildings that remain largely intact, but in urgent need of rehabilitation and regeneration.

# THEMATIC NARRATIVE

## Commerce and Social History

Downtown Owosso has been the commercial and social center for both the City and the surrounding areas of Shiawassee County for more than 150 years. From its origins as a few cabins on the Shiawassee River to the establishment of a mill and early industries to the development of stores and banks, Downtown Owosso has been a gathering place for the transaction of business and for the attendant personal interactions that accompany shopping, finance, and entertainment. Over the years, with changes in technology and transportation, the nature of commerce has changed, but downtown Owosso has adapted to remain a place where individuals can meet, do business, and build a social network.

Among the 19<sup>th</sup> century pioneers of the community were entrepreneurial individuals who started business to supply new settlers. Charles Goodhue made his fortune from his General Store located at the northwest corner of Washington and Main. Starting in the 1830s the entire Gould family was involved in commerce. Amos Gould opened the first bank, “D. Gould and Company,” which became the First National Bank of Owosso, and he was the town's first mayor. His brother Ebenezer Gould had an early general store with his brother in law – “Gould and Fish General Store.” David Gould not only managed the bank of his Uncle Amos, but was also the president of an early railroad and a partner in the Nason-Gould Timber Company in Chesaning, just downstream on the Shiawassee River.

Early settlers began commerce in Owosso with planing mills, grist mills and woolen carding mills. Early visionaries, knowing that transportation was crucial, formed the Shiawassee Navigation Company to clear the river of impediments from Owosso to Saginaw with the intent to float flat boats to and from Saginaw. A road building company was also formed to clear a track for a road, as early on the only "road" was an Indian path along the east side of the Shiawassee River from Pontiac to Saginaw.

The first train came in 1857, and Owosso soon had three depots and four railroads in town bringing new settlers. To supply the burgeoning community, the Osborn Family opened a large dry goods store. Dwight Dimmick who built his fortune in residential real estate, started in 1872 with a grocery store. James Laverock, who started in 1878 working for The Woodard Furniture Company, and sold “10cent sheds” to people doing business in town to shelter their horses, shifted to manufacturing cigar boxes and eventually settled into selling coal and wood for heating. He built two large tenement buildings on Mason and on North Ball, a business block in the 300 block of North Washington, and developed an entire section of residential homes called the Laverock subdivision. The Owosso Carriage and Sleigh Company for a time had a healthy business. The four furniture companies located in Owosso were rewarded with tremendous growth

By the turn of the century, Christian's Department Store and The New York Store of Charles Lawrence (later Lawrence Department Store) Osborn's Dry Goods, Shattuck's Music House, Hartshorn Agricultural Implement Company, Pearce and Ward (later Arthur Wards Dept Store) had replaced some of the small specialty businesses such as tin smiths, harness makers, purveyors of valises and trunks, and merchant tailors who sold top hats and cloaks.

There were also many grocers such as Hall Brothers and C. C. Duff. Byerly's started their entire Michigan chain of stores in Owosso packaging their own teas, coffees and spices. Meat markets and small grocery and fruit markets were many: Copas Meats being on North Washington and Barie's on Main Street; Spaniola's Fruit Market was a fixture in Owosso for almost a century, to name just a few.

In addition to commerce, the social aspects of downtown were complementary both in activity and architecture. The early construction of two and three story buildings allowed for ground floor retail and upper story "halls" which would be the venue for social events such as balls, parties, and other entertainment, such as the plays sponsored by the Owosso Dramatic Society. The Salisbury Opera House was located in the heart of the downtown on North Washington near Exchange; later there were four movie theatres.

Downtown halls were also the home for political meetings and various fraternal orders such as the Masons, The Knights of Pythias, and The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. That the historic churches were built near the center of the downtown also speaks to the importance of the social aspects of the area. The churches may have sought to counteract the influence of 14 saloons and billiard parlors and at least three operating breweries in Owosso. Restaurants, such as The Wildermuth Dining Room, the Merrill House Dining Room, The Blue Bird, The Popular Cafe, the Elite, Candyland, and Capitan's were popular social gathering places as well. Perhaps the most iconic gathering place for social and business interaction, was the Owosso City Club, on the upper floors at the corner of Exchange and Ball Streets.

The buildings of downtown Owosso have hosted a number of businesses that have changed with the economy and transportation technologies. But whether accessible by canoe and horse, or train, or automobile, downtown has been the gathering place where goods were offered for sale, retail purchases made, and financial transactions executed. Accompanying this commerce, social interactions occurred in halls, clubs, churches, taverns, restaurants, and on the street as people went from building to building. It is this legacy that will continue as downtown Owosso is preserved and further developed.

# ARCHITECTURAL NARRATIVE

## Introduction:

Owosso's downtown contains an exemplary collection of historic buildings. Today's streetscapes proudly display blocks of brick commercial buildings in an impressive array of architectural styles. (Unfortunately, one must look to the second and third floors of most buildings to see the original designs, as street-level facades have usually been heavily reworked to adapt to changing tastes.) Most plentiful are two- and three-story brick commercial structures of Victorian design that date from Owosso's boom years, which fit roughly within the last quarter of the nineteenth century. However, closer observation reveals that, in addition to our wealth of Victoria-era buildings, we also can claim handsome buildings from earlier days (Greek Revival and Italianate), grand civic structures in the later Beaux Arts and Tudor Revival styles, and even a few buildings with Art Moderne and Mid-Century Modern designs.

The proposed historic district is composed mostly of brick commercial structures. There are a few exceptions: three churches, a middle school, an armory, city hall and the adjoining public safety building, a funeral home, two houses, and a very few non-contributing contemporary buildings. These exceptions have been addressed in other areas of this report and will not be included here. The following architectural narrative will address the commercial structures in Owosso's downtown.

## The Early Years:

Founded in 1836 and incorporated as a city in 1859, Owosso early on dedicated its resources to commerce. The earliest settlers were drawn to the power generated by the Shiawassee River, and their settlement at the east edge of the river grew into today's downtown district. Countless other cities were founded for much the same reasons and in much the same way. Many of these smaller cities and small towns existed primarily to service the thousands of family farms that tilled the lush Michigan soil. While serving the need of the agricultural community, Owosso also concentrated on manufacturing. The city grew by leaps and bounds, money flowed in, and the downtown buildings reflected this increasing prosperity.

Today's downtown is by and large the product of Owosso' boom years, with much of its impressive inventory of two- and three-story brick commercial buildings dating from the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Interestingly, as Owosso grew and its buildings increased in size and grandeur, the center of downtown continued to occupy the area established by the earliest settlers. Starting at the east bank of the river (the site today of the 1915 Tudor-style armory and the 1924 Beaux Arts City Hall) and stretching two blocks east to the primary intersection of Main and Washington Streets, Owosso's downtown radiates only one to two blocks away from this core area. When someone wanted to build a new and larger building, they tore down (or moved) an existing structure and built anew. Thus, many of Owosso's extant historic buildings are actually the second (and sometimes third) structure on their site.



The earliest settlers built log cabins, and these cabins were clustered together for security in a small area (the core of today's downtown). These cabins served as residences and commercial spaces. (One of the very first log cabins has miraculously survived and is exhibited today in Curwood Castle Park, just across the river from the proposed historic district.) As more settlers arrived and Owosso's commerce started to expand, simple wooden structures were erected. (A few of these small Greek Revival buildings have also survived, saved by having been moved from the downtown to outlying areas.) Then, about the time of the Civil War, the buildings started to reflect an increased awareness of architectural styles; perhaps the coming of the railroads to Owosso did much to increase knowledge of style trends on the East Coast. Vintage photos show a city center filled with one- and two-story wooden buildings, independent structures with gable roofs and tall false fronts ornamented with elaborate woodwork. (To modern eyes, this style of building is familiar from Western movies.) The store owner conducted business on the first floor and the family lived above.

Residential neighborhoods developed on the periphery of the downtown area and, slowly, the prospering citizenry moved to newly-built houses in these areas. The downtown became dedicated to commerce. (Even the churches built their houses of worship on the edge of the city center, possibly because vacant land was cheaper away from the developed area.) The boom years were coming and Owosso's downtown architecture would reflect this increased prosperity.

#### The Civil War Era:

There had been large and impressive brick structures erected prior to 1875. History records the Williams brothers, founders of Owosso, built the first three-story brick building at 112 N. Washington Street in 1855, less than 20 years after the city's founding. The three-story brick building at 213 N. Washington Street dates from this era as well. Both facades feature the simple symmetrical designs of Greek Revival architecture. (As many of Owosso's first settlers came from New York State, they would have been building in the style much in favor as they left their homes and journeyed west to Michigan.) The second Gould Hall, at 217 N. Washington Street, was constructed in 1868 and reflects the Italianate style, with its round-topped windows and deep overhanging eaves supported by richly carved corbels. A smaller building at 118 S. Washington Street, far less grand and intimate in scale, also exhibits Italianate details.

The tall and impressive three-store corner building at 122 N. Washington Street, with its tall, narrow windows and heavy Renaissance Revival lintels, is believed to have been built in 1868; if so, it was built in the very height of fashion on the East Coast and represents the start of Owosso's building boom. Downtown Owosso as we know it today was about to be built.

#### The Boom Years:

Coming from the East Coast, Owosso's citizens brought with them a familiarity with urban architecture. Densely packed cities, some developed a century or two earlier, were filled with narrow buildings abutting one another, with street facades typically 25 to 30 feet wide, and stretching back 60 to more than 100 feet toward the back alley. (Buildings were typically no wider, as this was the widest possible support span in these pre-steel construction days.) As Owosso's commercial center grew in wealth and importance, and citizens wanted to construct finer, more substantial buildings, they replicated those long, narrow commercial buildings they had known back East. Down came the wooden stores with their gabled roofs and enlarged

parapets, and up went two- and three-story brick buildings with dignified, even exuberant brick facades.

Some of Owosso's Victorian era buildings were small, more utilitarian in their design and execution. These tended to be a little removed from the heart of downtown. The two-story building at 200 W. Exchange Street, for example, 208-12 W. Exchange Street, and the 200 block of N. Ball Street (odd numbered side) were all of simpler design, with minimal brick ornamentation held primarily to the frieze, and single windows under plain lintels.

Lots facing the important streets - E. and W. Main Streets, N. Washington Street, and W. Exchange Street – were in demand and prospective builders constructed increasingly elaborate brick structures. Great care was taken in details – window shapes and configurations, brick juxtapositions, stone embellishments, and wooden ornaments. It must be assumed that each heavily detailed façade satisfied the ego of its builder, as each corner and indentation, each inset panel, each row of specially-cast brick, cost the builder a little more. And downtown Owosso real estate must have been a good investment. There are several buildings that were constructed as one structure but divided, visually and spatially, into multiple store fronts. Examples abound in downtown Owosso: 116-20 N. Washington Street, 106-12 W. Main Street (the surviving section of the original 102-14), 111-13 S. Washington Street, 104-08 N. Washington Street, 121-23 W. Exchange Street, 120-22 W. Exchange Street, 113-19 W. Main Street, 216-18 W. Main Street, others. And, amazingly, given the rampant construction that must have kept downtown Owosso buzzing through the 1880s and 1890s, great care seems to have been taken to create unique street facades, as there is very little repetition among the various buildings.

Other than the matched store fronts on the above-referenced single structure buildings with multiple units, there is only one façade design that repeats on different sites downtown. One of Owosso's most elaborate and exuberant high-Victorian brick facades, it appears (with very slight variations) at 115-17 N. Washington Street, 112 S. Washington Street, and 114-16 W. Exchange Street (although 116's beautiful Victorian façade is regrettably hidden under a false front of mid-twentieth century tiles).

Owosso's surviving commercial buildings also reflect the advances in building techniques and construction materials. The earliest surviving brick buildings, such as the Greek Revival 112 N. Washington Street (1855) and the Italianate 217 N. Washington Street (1868), relied on centuries-old building techniques. Thick masonry sidewalls support the upper floors, the joists for which run parallel to the street. The weight of the second floor façade relied on support from the first floor façade, meaning piers were required between the original store windows; the weight of the third floor façade relied on the second floor façade for support, so second floor windows were separated by sturdy brick piers. When large open interior spaces were desired, they were of necessity placed on the highest floor. Such was the case with 217 N. Washington Street, the second Gould Hall. The façade features dramatic, large windows on the third floor – with an obviously much higher ceiling than on the first two floors. This vast third-floor meeting space was much used in the second half of the nineteenth century by Owosso's citizens for cultural gatherings, social events, and even military occasions.

These thick masonry sidewalls caused some interesting design decisions. In several instances, it is easy to see that one building was constructed as a stand-alone structure with both its side walls. Later, someone constructed a building abutting the original structure. Presumably to save space and expense, the support for the new building was tied into the existing sidewall of

its neighbor. At 208 W. Main Street, this caused the Adam-style wood frieze to extend onto the neighboring building's façade and sit squarely on that building's Georgian-style quoining. This at least helped maintain the attempted symmetry of 208's façade. 116 W. Exchange Street (one of the five near-twins) lacks its left sidewall and appears to be hugging its neighbor. Finally, the in-fill construction of the three-story 119 W. Exchange Street used the existing support wall of both of its neighbors; unfortunately, the neighbor to the left was only two stories tall, so the building without its own sidewalls suddenly gains a sidewall on the left side of the third floor!

The facades of the late Victorian buildings display evidence of the transition to newer construction methods and better materials. For example, 120-22 W. Exchange Street (188?) features individual windows on the upper floors, separated by wide sections of brick wall. Buildings of a slightly later date, such as 114 S. Washington Street, 110 W. Exchange Street, and the intricate façade repeated on five store fronts (115-17 N. Washington Street, et al), all feature much narrower brick piers between the upper floor windows. Then better support systems allowed for the façade at 118 W. Exchange Street, with two pairs of windows and one narrow brick pier between. There are four windows grouped together on the second floor of 111 E. Main Street, with only wood moldings separating the windows. (Here, the arch above the windows may be supporting much of the weight.)

By the end of the 1890s, downtown Owosso was filled with Victorian commercial buildings. Primary thoroughfares like N. Washington and W. Exchange Streets were lined with (mostly) three-story red brick commercial structures with Victorian facades of varying complexity. There have been regrettable losses – to fire, changing tastes, and neglect – but the downtown Owosso of 2010 was pretty much in place.

After the Boom:

The Columbian Exposition of 1893, held in Chicago and attended by millions, greatly influenced American architecture. The classic simplicity of the White City, with its neoclassical buildings, slowly strangled the supremacy of Victorian high-style architecture. Owosso builders continued to construct red brick facades with complex masonry and a plethora of details, but tastes were changing. One sees it at 208 W. Main Street, with an Adam-style wood frieze applied to a Victorian façade busy with brickwork. Neighboring 212-14 W. Main Street was constructed with very plain, flat brick walls and all its ornamentation was supplied by applied wood elements.

In 1907, a Beaux Arts style bank was erected in orange brick at 100 E. Main Street, on the southeastern corner of Main and Washington Streets. It is a handsome building, despite the uncharacteristic brick, and conveys everything one would hope for in a bank building. Yet its design hardly pushed the envelope, architecturally.

Not everyone subscribed to the new neoclassicism. Visiting the White City, Chicago architect Louis Sullivan, who had been moving American architecture forward to a new place, shook his head and expressed his disappointment. American architecture, he said, had just been set back 50 years. And Frank Lloyd Wright continued to blaze his own trail, promoting and advancing his Prairie Style, despite the setback. A very few of Owosso's buildings – 113 W. Exchange Street and 216-18 W. Main Street come to mind – exhibit Chicago Style elements in their designs.

Then, in 1911, fire destroyed the large three-story mid-Victorian building at the prime intersection of Washington and Main Streets. The structure that arose from the ashes at 100 N. Washington Street was a rare animal for downtown Owosso: a four-story brown brick commercial building whose design was heavily influenced by Wright's Prairie Style. Plain brick piers ran up the facades facing the busy streets, dividing groupings of large, plain windows. The emphasis was on the horizontal, with the roofline capped by a wide, flat overhanging eave that dominated the design. Ornamentation was held to a minimum. Today, this building (although vacant) still dominates the intersection.

A wealthy city with an active commercial center and thriving manufacturing concerns, Owosso entered the twentieth century with some impressive civic goals. A stunning Beaux Arts post office was constructed in 1906 on E. Exchange Street. In 1915, the huge and ungainly Victorian armory (at E. Mason and N. Park Streets) was replaced by the foursquare Tudor castle at 201 N. Water Street in the commanding position at the head of W. Exchange Street. In 1924, an impressive Beaux Arts City Hall was constructed at 301 W. Main Street, on a site whose history goes back to the very beginning of Owosso; this design reflects the neoclassical building boom then changing Washington D.C. into architect John Russell Pope's version of a great city. And a new high school was dedicated in 1929 at 239 N. Water Street, just north of the new armory. This time, the Tudor design was somewhat lighter in spirit, less ponderous than the new armory, with stone detailing and subtle design flourishes.

To the Present:

From this point, downtown Owosso as we know it was substantially complete. The streets were lined with buildings of various designs. There was minor growth on the fringes. But the greatest threat to the downtown's architecture was fire. Great fires had been part of Owosso's history almost from the beginning, but the fires of the twentieth century would strike like thieves, stealing our architectural heritage. A huge fire in the mid-1960s devastated the entire 200 block front (odd number side) of W. Exchange Street. What had been a row of handsome brick facades became a parking lot. It remains a parking lot today. In 1981, the three three-story Victorian buildings at 119-21 E. Main Street burned to the ground, creating another vacant space later converted to a parking lot. More recently, arsonists torched the historic Lebowsky Center (historically, the Capitol Theater), which is currently being rebuilt, and the Victorian building at 104-08 N. Washington Street (historically, the Wesener Building), which sits awaiting rehabilitation through tax credits made available once the historic district designation is in place.

Changing tastes have also led to significant losses. Handsome three-story buildings in the 100 block of N. Washington Street were replaced in the 1950s by a single-story, non-descript five-and-ten store. The entire block front (even numbers) of the 200 block of N. Washington Street was lost over two separate decades. In the 1950s, the southern half of the block, containing the Strand Theater and several handsome store fronts, was razed and replaced by another one-story five-and-ten. Then, in the 1970s, the northern half fell to the wrecker, to be replaced by a single story block building and, yes, another parking lot. The elegant Beaux Arts post office on E. Exchange Street, executed inside and out in marble, was razed in the early 1960s. The site became a parking lot (one detects a theme here: more parking places and fewer buildings to visit!) and replaced with a sleek 60s building with little style in the 300 block of N. Washington Street. The loading docks might have been vastly improved but Owosso's streetscapes suffered a devastating loss.

Changes in architectural fashions have also wrought havoc on some wonderful downtown facades. Several buildings (one of the five near-twins at 114 W. Exchange Street, 113 N. Washington Street, 113-117 W. Main Street, 211 N. Washington Street, 115 E. Main Street, 108 E. Main Street and, most notably, 123 N. Washington Street) have all had their handsome Victorian facades ignobly covered by a false front. The drug store at 201 N. Washington Street has recently been encased in a bland outer skin, although a recent sign change revealed, for one brief moment, the fabulous Art Moderne façade hidden underneath.

Age has also caused some losses. Many downtown buildings have bare parapets; some bear clear markings from the original elaborate cornices having been attached to the parapets for decades. The mid-Victorian brick façade at 110 N. Washington Street began to separate from the building, threatening to crumble into the street. The Victorian front was removed and a solid blonde brick façade was constructed over a street level wall of glass. At 207 N. Washington Street, Owosso's only stone façade in the Richardson Romanesque style, an owner in the 1970s wanted to reduce his upkeep and removed the entire third floor, reducing the grand building to two stories and a somewhat truncated appearance. And the historic first Gould's Hall at 221 N. Washington Street, dating from the 1850s and integral to Owosso's history, was reduced from three floors to one story in the 1950s.

In Conclusion:

Despite some heavy losses through the decades, Owosso's downtown contains an impressive collection of nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial architecture. Because Owosso was a wealthy community flush with manufacturing income, the buildings that were erected were often grander and more elaborate than in the average midwestern city. Architectural history for the last 150 years could be taught using Owosso's surviving commercial district for examples

Like old downtowns across the country, Owosso's commercial center is struggling. Big box stores and suburban shopping habits have made city centers almost passé. However, we believe that Owosso's downtown has the potential for revival. Much of its charm is derived from its exemplary historic architecture. The establishment of Owosso's downtown as an historic district will protect the surviving structures from some of the losses detailed in the section above. The availability of tax credits will allow for the rehabilitation of some endangered buildings and the renovation of others.

**NORTH BALL STREET**

**GROUND LEVEL SURVEYS**

## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 114

Direction: North

Street: Ball

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/14/10

Surveyor: Shaffer Fox

### NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Community Church offices

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built:

Source of Date:

Style: Mid 1800's red brick

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: appears to be staves

Walls: red brick with wood facing on 60% of face and modern window

Roof: flat-tar

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

2 story building

1<sup>st</sup> floor hosts Community Church offices.

2<sup>nd</sup> floor appears to be an apartment.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Face of first floor has been painted white with modern wood and window covering over half of face.

Second floor facing is unfinished red brick. There are two rows of stylistic brick outcropping work beneath roof line.

### HISTORY

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name:

Directory: 162

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 207

Direction: North

Street: Ball

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/14/10

Surveyor: Shaffer Fox

### NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Savas Travel Bureau Building

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: ca. 1884

Source of Date: Directories

Style: 1800's retail/commercial building

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: unknown

Walls: brick

Roof: flat tar

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Two story brick building. 1<sup>st</sup> floor hosts a travel bureau. 2<sup>nd</sup> floor appears to be an apartment. There is a large bay window on the second floor.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

There is a stylistic flour row brick outcropping that runs beneath the roof line. 1<sup>st</sup> floor has been painted forest green and has modern windows. 2<sup>nd</sup> floor is painted tan.

### HISTORY

Connected to 1884 building of The Argus Press. This has been the home to Savas Travel for thirty years. Historically, the offices of Dr. Knapp. This is part of the Cadwallader, Lord & Hahn building since 1924.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: ebay1 244

Directory: Photos Block 1

Photographer: Paul Heimnick





## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 211

Direction: North

Street: Ball

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/14/10

Surveyor: Shaffer Fox

### NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Solutions Spa & Tanning

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1900 ca.

Source of Date: Directories

Style: Mid 1800's

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: unknown

Walls: brick

Roof: flat tar

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

1<sup>st</sup> floor houses a travel agency and a spa and tanning center. 2<sup>nd</sup> floor may house an apartment. There is a modern window and door on the first floor.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

There are two rows of stylistic brick outcroppings that run beneath the roof line.

### HISTORY

Plumbing shop for many of its early years from 1915-1923. In 1900 Miss S.A. Barman, dress maker, was in this building.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186869

Directory: Photos Block 1

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 213

Direction: North

Street: Ball St.

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/14/10

Surveyor: Shaffer Fox

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Happy Tails

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built:

Source of Date:

Style: Mid 1800's Commercial Retail

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation: unknown

Walls: brick

Roof: flat-tar

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

2 story building

1st floor wood paneling covers brick work above doors and windows. 2<sup>nd</sup> floor has three windows with stylistic cement crowns above each. There are three rows of stylistic brickwork that run beneath the roofline.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

1<sup>st</sup> floor has three front doors

HISTORY

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186868

Directory: Photos Block 1

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 215

Direction: North

Street: Ball

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/14/10

Surveyor: Shaffer Fox

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Stewart Graphics Building

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built:

Source of Date:

Style: Mid 1800's

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation: unknown

Walls: brick

Roof: flat-tar

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

2 story building

1<sup>st</sup> floor has two doors and two picture windows

2<sup>nd</sup> floor has one bay-type window outcropping with three windows plus a second window.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

1<sup>st</sup> floor has been partially painted, partially covered with cement and a sign, and partially sided with aluminum.

HISTORY

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: ebay1 241

Directory: Photos Block 1

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 217-27

Direction: North

Street: Ball

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/14/10

Surveyor: Shaffer Fox

### NAME

Historic Name: Kelly Apts. – Haverock Flats

Common Name: Shiawassee Copier Sales

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built:

Style: Late 1800's

Source of Date: Directories

Property Type: Commercial &  
Apartments

### MATERIALS

Foundation: unknown

Walls: concrete block, modern brick, wood siding

Roof: flat tar

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Three floors face Ball St. On first floor modern aluminum windows face Ball St.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

223 Garage for Wiley Oldsmobile

### HISTORY

Philips & Taylor Jitney services (the forerunner of the Indian Trails Bus Company) services were located here in 1900. Wiley Oldsmobile showroom in 1950's. Bohaty dance Studios, 1970's & 1980's.

### COMMENTS

Built by James Haverock

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186863

Directory: Photos Block 1

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 224  
City/Village: Owosso

Direction: North

Street: Ball  
Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/14/10

Surveyor: Shaffer Fox

### NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Thomas Dignan Law Offices

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built:  
Style: House used for offices

Source of Date: Owners  
Property Type: Professional Office

### MATERIALS

Foundation: concrete block  
Walls: brick, partially covered with siding  
Roof: shingles

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

#### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

One of Owosso's earliest greek-revival styled houses was the first building on this site. Probably moved to this location in 1910.

#### HISTORY

Remainder of this residence-styled professional office was constructed in the 1940's, incorporating the greek-revival house, by the grandson of the first doctor in this building.

#### COMMENTS

#### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186865  
Directory: Photos Block 2  
Photographer: Paul Heimnick



**SOUTH BALL STREET**

**GROUND LEVEL SURVEYS**

MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 110

Direction: South

Street: Ball

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/14/10

Surveyor: Shaffer Fox

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Elliot's Family Hairstyling

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: Unknown – 1950's – 60's

Source of Date: Owner

Style: Modern, crackbox house style

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation: concrete block

Walls: aluminum siding

Roof: tar shingles

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

This building was a garage which was moved from two blocks away and served as an insurance office before it became a beauty shop.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P6110015

Director:y: Photos Block 7

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



**EAST COMSTOCK STREET**

**GROUND LEVEL SURVEYS**



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 123

Direction: East

Street: Comstock

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 6/4/10

Surveyor: Lorraine Weckwert

NAME

Historic Name: ---

Common Name: Sunnyside Florists

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date built: 1953

Source of Date: Mr. Hoddy, builder

Style: contemporary

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation: concrete block

Walls: concrete block

Roof: ?

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Stucco coating on concrete block, window walls facing east and south.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

A former Studebaker Garage, Mr. George Hoddy purchased the property, tore down the old garage and rebuilt on the site this modern commercial building about 1953.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P3167288

Directory: Photos Block 9

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



**EAST EXCHANGE STREET**

**GROUND LEVEL SURVEYS**

## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 108

Direction: East

Street: Exchange

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/10/10

Surveyor: Tom Cook

### NAME

Historic Name: Day Photography and Camera Shop

Common Name: Body Shop Salon

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1890

Source of Date:

Style: 2 story building

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick and glass

Roof:

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Nothing historically noticeable. Glass front on 1<sup>st</sup> floor. Metal false front on second floor.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Entry way on East side to alley; building above.

### HISTORY

1905 – Meat Market (earliest list of business)

1910 – Day Photography and Camera Shop until Dorr Day's death in 1957. Business continued with same name owned by Burdette Shatluck.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186889

Directory: Photos Block 6

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 110

Direction: East

Street: Exchange

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/16/10

Surveyor: Tom Cook

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: George's Beauty Salon

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1890

Source of Date: City Directory

Style: 2 story building

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation: brick

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES:

Ground floor, painted brick facade. Upper floor unpainted red brick. Decorative pressed glass above windows & entrance. Three upper floor windows with pediments over each.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Doors on West side. First floor commercial, second floor residential.

HISTORY

Allingham's Meat Market – 1894, Saloon, Consumer's Power Offices, George's Beauty Salon since 1955

COMMENTS

Brick on ground floor appears newer than above.

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186890

Directory: Photos Block 6

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 114

Direction: East

Street: Exchange

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/15/10

Surveyor: Tom Cook

NAME

Historic Name: Kroger Store

Common Name: Firestone

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1940

Source of Date: Directories

Style:

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Nothing notable in design.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

Built as a new chain grocery store. Firestone purchased building in 1959.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186892

Directory: Photos Block 6

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 201

Direction: East

Street: Exchange

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 6/4/10

Surveyor: Lorraine Weckwert

### NAME

Historic Name: Amos and Sax Livery/ Argus Press

Common Name: Argus-Press Building

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: prior to 1891

Source of Date: Directories

Style: ?

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: brick

Walls: brick

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Brick two story building with an annex to the north of the original structure. Evenly spaced windows on the first and second floors of this brick building.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

In 1919 the Argus Press, after a merger with the Evening Argus, purchased the Amos & Sax Union Transfer, Omnibus and Hack Building, at this address. Amos and Sax used the ground floor for stabling the horses and the second floor for feed and storage. The Argus moved from its long-time location at 200 West Exchange, where they had been since 1895. Amos and Sac had been doing business here at least since 1892.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P4070007

Directory: Photos Block 3

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



**WEST EXCHANGE STREET**

**GROUND LEVEL SURVEYS**

## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 110 & 110 1/2      Direction: West      Street: Exchange  
City/Village: Owosso      Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/16/10      Surveyor: Tom Cook

### NAME

Historic Name:  
Common Name: Owosso Community Pharmacy

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1904      Source of Date: City Directory  
Style: 2 story building      Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation:  
Walls: brick  
Roof:

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

First floor glass front with awning. Two doors on East side.  
Decorative brick facade on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, painted. The 2<sup>nd</sup> story windows with some apparent historic wood frames with modifications. Middle window double wide framing.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Stone bottoms to upper window casings.

### HISTORY

N.A. Goodyear Meats – 1905-1907, Bowers & Underwood Meats – 1910-1921,  
Bartz's Meat Market – 1921-1931, Owosso Dairy Store – 1932-1953.

COMMENTS: Alley way on East side of building.

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: ebay1 301  
Directory: Photos Block 2  
Photographer: Paul Heimnick





MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 112

Direction: West

Street: Exchange

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/16/10

Surveyor: Tom Cook

NAME

Historic Name: The Amos Block

Common Name: Sobak's Home Medical Equipment

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built:

Source of Date: 1892 City Directory

Style: 3 story building

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Original door on East side. Ground floor facade has been substantially altered.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURE:

Upper floor has decorative brick facade. Building has wide arch at top of 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. The 2<sup>nd</sup> floor windows have been replaced. The 3<sup>rd</sup> floor windows are boarder over.

HISTORY

The earliest listing in the City Directories is for Bunting & Miller Grocers.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P3167262

Directory: Photos Block 2

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 113

Direction: West

Street: Exchange

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/16/10

Surveyor: Tom Cook

### NAME

Historic Name: Fletcher (stone name plate at top of building)

Common Name: Getzell & Connell

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1900-1905

Source of Date: City Directory

Style: 3 story building

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Ground floor metal and glass facade. Building shared with 117 W. Exchange  
Six upper floor windows are not original.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Upper two floors historic facade. Flat with decorative stone inlays; 3 squares at top of each window; 3 diamond shape between floors.

### HISTORY

Oakes & Tone Chinese Laundry in 1907-08, Singer Sewing Machines – 1905-1911,  
Morris Five and Ten Cent Store from 1924-1031.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P3017140

Directory: Photos Block 5

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 114

Direction: West

Street: Exchange

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/16/10

Surveyor: Tom Cook

NAME

Historic Name: The Amos Block

Common Name: Sobak's Home Medical Equipment

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built:

Source of Date: 1892 City Directory

Style: 3 story building

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTE

Nothing of the original building apparent or visible. Brick under metal tiles and metal awning.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

Nicholas Goodyear Meats – 1892-94.

COMMENTS

Under this "slipcover" lay a beautiful Victorian commercial building which at one time had second floor bay windows.

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P3167263

Directory: Photos Block 2

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 116

Direction: West

Street: Exchange

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/16/10

Surveyor: Tom Cook

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Strawberry Patch (vacant)

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1870's – 1880's

Source of Date: City Directory

Style: 3 story Victorian building

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation: brick and field stone

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Original cornerstone of South/East corner and original brick on East side of 1<sup>st</sup> floor. The rest of the 1<sup>st</sup> floor has been modified with glass windows, doors and some newer brick work.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Three windows each on 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> floors. Original frames on second floor. Boarded up on 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. Small glass panels above each window. Decorative brick work on upper floors; unpainted. Arches above 3<sup>rd</sup> story windows. Stone bases on all windows except the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor middle.

HISTORY

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P3167264

Directory: Photos Block 2

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 117

Direction: West

Street: Exchange

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/16/10

Surveyor: Tom Cook

NAME

Historic Name: Jackson Block

Common Name: Consignment Shop

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1890

Source of Date: City Directory

Style: 2 story building

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Metal and glass facade on ground floor. Shared with 113 W. Exchange St.

Four windows on second floor; original(?).

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Decorative unpainted brick facade on second floor. Metal/wood(?) decorative features between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor and on top of 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.

HISTORY

A woman-owned millinery business operated at this store from 1907 at least through 1936.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P3017136

Directory: Photos Block 5

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 118

Direction: West

Street: Exchange

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/10/10

Surveyor: Cook

### NAME

Historic Name: Duff Block

Common Name: Raymond James

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1899

Style: 3 story building

“ Past & Present of

Source of Date: Shiawassee Co. 1906”

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Wood & glass ground floor façade; original? Center, recessed door.

Two stone bases at each front corner of bldg. Decorative brick façade, unpainted. Stone base across bottom of entries 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor facades and windows. Two large double windows on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.

Four single windows on 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. All original wooden frames(?).

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

Charles Duff was one of the pioneers of Owosso, owning two previous grocery stores. This store housed his wholesale tea & coffee business as well. Confusion over street numbering. Apparently listed as Suite 101 at 120 W. Exchange St., but a separate building.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P3167265

Directory Photos Block 2

Photographer:: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 119

Direction: West

Street: Exchange

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/16/10

Surveyor: Tom Cook

### NAME

Historic Name: Jackson Block

Common Name: Books & Beans

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1890

Source of Date: City Directory

Style: 3 story building

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Ground floor has new brick & glass façade and partial share awning; shared with 121 & 123 W. Exchange St.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Relatively flat brick façade on 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> floors.

Three windows on each floor have been modified, partially replaced. Some decorative brick and wood features on top floor.

### HISTORY

Charles Jackson Insurance Company – 1890-1915 on second level.

WWII Headquarters, U.S. War Price & Rationing Board.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P3017137

Directory: Photos Block 5

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 120-22                      Direction: West (North Side) Street: Exchange  
City/Village: Owosso                      Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/16/10                      Surveyor: Tom Cook

### NAME

Historic Name: The Grow Block  
Common Name: The Exchange

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1950's                      Source of Date: Building Store  
Style: 3 story building                      Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation:  
Walls: brick  
Roof:

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Original(?). Wood & glass ground floor & façade with several decorative small square glass panels. Central double door entry. New awning entry on front.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Six windows on each of two upper floors of varying widths. Original wood frames(?). Decorative brick arches above 3<sup>rd</sup> floor windows with inset stained glass panels.  
Brick, unpainted. Some bricks on S.W. corner of Bldg, top of 1<sup>st</sup> floor have been replaced. Four windows on W. side of bldg. (along Ball St.) have been replaced with new bricking.

### HISTORY

1930's-1970's – Montgomery Ward Store. 1905-1921 – Business College.  
1910-1924 – Hall Brothers Grocers.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P3167266  
Directory: Photos Block 2  
Photographer: Paul Heimnick





## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 121-23

Direction: West

Street: Exchange

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/10/10

Surveyor: Tom Cook

### NAME

Historic Name: The Struber Block

Common Name: vacant (former Consignment Shop)

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1890

Source of Date: City Directory

Style: Three story corner block--Victorian

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: brick

Walls: brick

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Second floor windows appear original but modified large 3<sup>rd</sup> floor windows have been replaced and filled-in with plywood sheets in some instances.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

Ludwig Struber was a long-time shoe merchant at 114 West Main and also constructed this building, perhaps as an investment, as he never moved his shoe and boot store. Second floor of this building and the one next door became a part of the Owosso City Club complex for over fifty years. This building's second floor would have held the main dining room, the winding staircase, the kitchen and a small dining room. This building on the Ball Street entrance is one of only two Iron Front buildings remaining in Owosso.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2196053

Directory: Light Room Working Catalog

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 200

Direction: West

Street: Exchange

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/16/10

Surveyor: Tom Cook

### NAME

Historic Name: The Argus-Press Building

Common Name: Cadwallader-Lord-Hahn Insurance

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1894

Source of Date: History

Style: Victorian

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick-painted

Roof:

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Ground floor façade may, or may not, be original(?).

2<sup>nd</sup> floor decorative brick arches over windows have all been painted. All windows have been replaced.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Poured concrete steps on corner entrance.

### HISTORY

1895-1919 Argus-Press. The sight was the location of a log cabin erected by Daniel Ball, millwright and pioneer of Owosso. Joseph Bagley, Governor of Michigan, lived in the cabin as a teenage boy with his family.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: ebay1 244

Directory: Photos Block 1

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 202                      Direction: West (North Side) Street: Exchange  
City/Village: Owosso                      Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/10/10                      Surveyor: Tom Cook

### NAME

Historic Name:  
Common Name: New York Style Salon

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1905                      Source of Date: History  
Style:                      Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation:  
Walls: brick  
Roof:

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

New glass & door on 1<sup>st</sup> floor. Plain front, painted, but peeling brick.  
Two small windows – not original. Door with stairs to 2<sup>nd</sup> floor on East side.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

Communication hub of Owosso – Pacific Express, Wells Fargo, Union State Express. Painters & Printers followed. Gordon Graham, Owosso artist kept his studio here for many years through the '50's and '60's.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: ebay1 260  
Directory: Photos Block 1  
Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 204

Direction: West

Street: Exchange

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/10/10

Surveyor:

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Dr. Angela Badra

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1903

Source of Date: History

Style: Victorian

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: new brick-slipcovered

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

All new brick & shingle façade.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

C.S. Gilbert – shoemaker – 1905-1911.

Union Telephone in 1921.

Christian Science Reading Room – 1950-1955.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186873

Directory: Photos Block 1

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 208

Direction: West

Street: Exchange

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/16/10

Surveyor: Tom Cook

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Oliver's Restaurant

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1884-1886

Source of Date: History

Style: 2 story

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

All new ground floor facade with wood, brick, no extended glass.

Second floor brick with decorative features similar to 200 W Exchange. Painted.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

No original windows

HISTORY

1884 – Owosso Gas Light Company headquarters .

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186874

Directory: Photos Block 1

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 210

Direction: West

Street: Exchange

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/16/10

Surveyor: Tom Cook

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Oliver's Restaurant

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1884-1886

Source of Date: History

Style: 2 story

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

All new ground floor facade with wood, brick, no extended glass.

Second floor brick with decorative features similar to 200 W Exchange. Painted.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

No original windows

HISTORY

1884 – Owosso Gas Light Company headquarters.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186874

Directory: Photos Block 1

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 212

Direction: West

Street: Exchange

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/16/10

Surveyor: Tom Cook

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Oliver's Restaurant

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1884-1886

Source of Date: History

Style: 2 story

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

All new ground floor facade with wood, brick, no extended glass.

Second floor brick with decorative features similar to 200 W Exchange. Painted.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

No original windows

HISTORY

1884 – Owosso Gas Light Company headquarters.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186874

Directory: Photos Block 1

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 214

Direction: West

Street: Exchange

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/16/10

Surveyor: Tom Cook

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Part of Oliver's Restaurant.

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1906-1907

Source of Date: History

Style: 2 story

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: ?

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Lower roof lines than buildings on either side. New glass, brick & vinyl façade.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

This address was the residence of a former slave by the name of Alex Johnson who Served in the Civil War and settled in Owosso as a banker. This building replaced his residence. Alex Johnson died in 1907.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186876

Directory: Photos Block 1

Photographer: Paul Heimnick





MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 216

Direction: West

Street: Exchange

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/16/10

Surveyor: Tom Cook

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Tretheway Foot Clinic.

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1906-1907

Source of Date: History

Style: 2 story

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Perhaps original façade on both floors (?). Except for new fixed shingle awning. Upper floor brick, unpainted. Few decorative (?). New windows on second floor

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Apartment on second floor. New door on ground floor.

Entrance to second floor boarded up.

HISTORY

George Martin Harness Company – 1905-1936. Shop operated by father and son.

Longest surviving harness shop in Owosso.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186875

Directory: Photos Block 1

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 224

Direction: West

Street: Exchange

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/16/10

Surveyor: Tom Cook

NAME

Historic Name: General Telephone

Common Name: Verizon/GTE Building

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1950's

Source of Date: ?

Style:

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Two story building, corner of Water St.

Two flat yellow/gold brick facades with subtle design features. No windows on front. Entrance & side windows at juncture of two facades. Interesting metal poles hold up entrance. Concrete steps.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Set back 8' from façade of building to the East.

HISTORY

At one time this was the commercial offices and telephone store for General Telephone. Verizon now uses the building for equipment storage.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186877

Directory: Photos Block 1

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



**EAST MAIN STREET**

**GROUND LEVEL SURVEYS**

MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 100

Direction: East

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/4/10

Surveyor: Maurice Shattuck

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Chemical Bank

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1907 – Rehabilitated 2009-10

Source of Date: Records

Style: Classical Beaux Arts

Property Type: Bank

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof: flat

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES:

2 story building

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES:

HISTORY:

Built as a bank in 1907, has continuously been a bank under several managements until current time when it is Chemical Bank, which in 2009 undertook a million dollarr-plus rehabilitation project.

COMMENTS:

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186912

Directory: Photos Block 9

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 111

Direction: East

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/4/10

Surveyor: Maury Shattuck

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Civille Insurance

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1880's

Source of Date: City Directories

Style: three story, single block

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

3 story building.

1<sup>st</sup> story remodeled.

2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> story appears to be original except for upper portion of 3<sup>rd</sup> story.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186907

Directory: Photos Block 6

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 113

Direction: East

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/4/10

Surveyor: Maury Shattuck

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Charles Lamp Studio

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built:

Source of Date:

Style:

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

3 story building.

1<sup>st</sup> story remodeled.

2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> stories appear to be original except for window replacement. Openings look original.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186907

Directory: Photos Block 6

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 114 -18

Direction: East

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/4/10

Surveyor: Maurice Shattuck

NAME

Historic Name: New Miner Building

Common Name: Owosso Community Players

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1953

Source of Date: Histories

Style: Art Modern

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

2 story building. Aluminum framed windows.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

In 1950's housed Klins. Burned down. Later housed offices of Chemical Bank. Now Owosso Community Players.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186912

Directory: Photos Block 9

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 115

Direction: East

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/4/10

Surveyor: Maury Shattuck

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: offices

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built:

Source of Date:

Style:

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

3 story building.

1<sup>st</sup> story remodeled.

2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> stories appear to be original except for window replacement. Openings look original.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186907

Directory: Photos Block 6

Photographer: Paul Heimnick





## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 117

Direction: East

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/4/10

Surveyor: Maurice Shattuck

### NAME

Historic Name: The Pantry Shelf

Common Name: Tri-City Trading Post

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1950's

Source of Date: Building owner

Style: blonde brick, single story block

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls:

Roof:

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

1 story building. Remodeled & original building appears to be recovered in front. East side of building facing parking lot, also remodeled.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

Constructed in 1940's or 50's. Longest business was "The Pantry Shelf" owned and operated by the Kokinakos family. Currently a second-hand store.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186909

Directory: Photos Block 6

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 122

Direction: East

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/4/10

Surveyor: Maurice Shattuck

### NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: The Lebowsky Center

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1925

Source of Date: Histories of bldg.

Style: brick, single story block

Property Type: Theatre

### MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Front-2 story

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

Built as a vaudeville theatre, converted to a movie theatre, now the home of a local theatre group known as "The Community Players." Largely destroyed by arson in 2007, it is in its first phase of being rebuilt.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186911

Directory: Photos Block 9

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



**WEST MAIN STREET**

**GROUND LEVEL SURVEYS**

MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 102-04

Direction: West

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

NAME

Historic Name: Kresge's – The Jupiter Store

Common Name: Treasures Back Door

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: Approximately 1952

Source of Date: Directories

Style: Has none

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation: ?

Walls: Brick with another type of brick as a façade.

Roof: ?

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Building has been altered one cannot tell anything about the original building.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P227057

Directory: Photos Block 5

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 106

Direction: West

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/22/10

Surveyor: Maury Shattuck

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Spagnuolo Chocolates

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built:

Source of Date:

Style:

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

This row of businesses appear to have been built as one building.

2<sup>nd</sup> story-Cervenypainted brick, top 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of windows filled in with bottom 2/3rds replaced.

2<sup>nd</sup> story-Soy Beam and Spagnuolo's unpainted brick with full windows appearing to be original.

Windows in all 3 appear to stretch from floor to ceiling.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P227057

Directory: Photos Block 5

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 108

Direction: West

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/22/10

Surveyor: Maury Shattuck

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Soy Beam Candles

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built:

Source of Date:

Style:

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

This row of businesses appear to have been built as one building.

2<sup>nd</sup> story-Cervenypainted brick, top 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of windows filled in with bottom 2/3rds replaced.

2<sup>nd</sup> story-Soy Beam and Spagnuolo's unpainted brick with full windows appearing to be original.

Windows in all 3 appear to stretch from floor to ceiling.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P227057

Directory: Photos Block 5

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 110

Direction: West

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/22/10

Surveyor: Maury Shattuck

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Cerveny Jewelers

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built:

Source of Date:

Style:

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

This row of businesses appear to have been built as one building.

2<sup>nd</sup> story-Cerveny-painted brick, top 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of windows filled in with bottom 2/3rds replaced.

2<sup>nd</sup> story-Soy Beam and Spagnuolo's unpainted brick with full windows appearing to be original.

Windows in all 3 appear to stretch from floor to ceiling.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P227057

Directory: Photos Block 5

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 112

Direction: West

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/22/10

Surveyor: Maury Shattuck

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Mootzies Gallery

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1886

Source of Date: Research

Style:

Property Type: Commercial Block

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

2 Story building. 1<sup>st</sup> story remodeled. 2<sup>nd</sup> story unpainted brick

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2196985

Directory: Photos Block 5

Photographer: Paul Heimnick





## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 113-23

Direction: West

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/410

Surveyor: Maury Shattuck

### NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Gilberts True Value Hardware

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1871

Source of Date: research

Style:

Property Type: commercial and  
apartments

### MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

2 buildings, both 2 story.

West building-1<sup>st</sup> story remodeled and recovered, 2<sup>nd</sup> story appears to be original except for windows.

Window openings original with upper 1/3 filled in and lower 2/3 with replacement windows. East

building-1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> stories remodeled and recovered.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

Corner store front (Main & Ball S.E.) housed Julie K Fashions for a number of years.

These four store fronts have been combined into one business for the past twenty years. 121 had been a saloon and beer brewery. 115 was the office of the Owosso Traction Company & Electric Railway.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2197046

Directory: Photos Block 8

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 114-16

Direction: West

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/22/10

Surveyor: Maury Shattuck

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Dollar Daze

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built:

Source of Date:

Style:

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls:

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

3 story building.

1<sup>st</sup> story remodeled, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> stories appear to be original. East end of building houses Christ Vineyard Church office.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

In 1950's known as D.M. Christian Department Store.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2196991

Directory: Photos Block 5

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 115

Direction: West

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/410

Surveyor: Maury Shattuck

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Gilberts True Value Hardware

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1871

Source of Date: Research

Style:

Property Type: Commercial and  
apartments

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

2 buildings, both 2 story.

West building-1<sup>st</sup> story remodeled and recovered, 2<sup>nd</sup> story appears to be original except for windows. Window openings original with upper 1/3 filled in and lower 2/3 with replacement windows. East building-1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> stories remodeled and recovered.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

Corner store front (Main & Ball S.E.) housed Julie K Fashions for a number of years.

These four store fronts have been combined into one business for the past twenty years. 121 had been a saloon and beer brewery. 115 was the office of the Owosso Traction Company & Electric Railway.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2197046

Directory: Photos Block 8

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 117

Direction: West

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/410

Surveyor: Maury Shattuck

### NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Gilberts True Value Hardware

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1871

Source of Date: Research

Style:

Property Type: Commercial and  
apartments

### MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

2 buildings, both 2 story.

West building-1<sup>st</sup> story remodeled and recovered, 2<sup>nd</sup> story appears to be original except for windows.

Window openings original with upper 1/3 filled in and lower 2/3 with replacement windows. East

building-1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> stories remodeled and recovered

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

Corner store front (Main & Ball S.E.) housed Julie K Fashions for a number of years.

These four store fronts have been combined into one business for the past twenty years. 121 had been a saloon and beer brewery. 115 was the office of the Owosso Traction Company & Electric Railway.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2197046

Directory: Photos Block 8

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 119

Direction: West

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/410

Surveyor: Maury Shattuck

### NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Gilberts True Value Hardware

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1871

Source of Date: Research

Style:

Property Type: Commercial and  
apartments

### MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

2 buildings, both 2 story

West building-1<sup>st</sup> story remodeled and recovered, 2<sup>nd</sup> story appears to be original except for windows.

Window openings original with upper 1/3 filled in and lower 2/3 with replacement windows. East

building-1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> stories remodeled and recovered

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

Corner store front (Main & Ball S.E.) housed Julie K Fashions for a number of years.

These four store fronts have been combined into one business for the past twenty years. 121 had been a saloon and beer brewery. 115 was the office of the Owosso Traction Company & Electric Railway.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2197046

Directory: Photos Block 8

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 121

Direction: West

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/410

Surveyor: Maury Shattuck

### NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Gilberts True Value Hardware

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1871

Source of Date: Research

Style:

Property Type: Commercial and  
apartments

### MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

2 buildings, both 2 story.

West building-1<sup>st</sup> story remodeled and recovered, 2<sup>nd</sup> story appears to be original except for windows.

Window openings original with upper 1/3 filled in and lower 2/3 with replacement windows. East building-1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> stories remodeled and recovered.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

Corner store front (Main & Ball S.E.) housed Julie K Fashions for a number of years.

These four store fronts have been combined into one business for the past twenty years. 121 had been a saloon and beer brewery. 115 was the office of the Owosso Traction Company & Electric Railway.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2197046

Directory: Photos Block 8

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 121

Direction: West

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/410

Surveyor: Maury Shattuck

### NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Gilberts True Value Hardware

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1871

Source of Date: Research

Style:

Property Type: Commercial and  
apartments

### MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

2 buildings, both 2 story.

West building-1<sup>st</sup> story remodeled and recovered, 2<sup>nd</sup> story appears to be original except for windows.

Window openings original with upper 1/3 filled in and lower 2/3 with replacement windows. East

building-1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> stories remodeled and recovered.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

Corner store front (Main & Ball S.E.) housed Julie K Fashions for a number of years.

These four store fronts have been combined into one business for the past twenty years. 121 had been a saloon and beer brewery. 115 was the office of the Owosso Traction Company & Electric Railway.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2197046

Directory: Photos Block 8

Photographer: Paul Heimnick





## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 123

Direction: West

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/410

Surveyor: Maury Shattuck

### NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Gilberts True Value Hardware

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1871

Source of Date: Research

Style:

Property Type: Commercial and  
apartments

### MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

2 buildings, both 2 story

West building-1<sup>st</sup> story remodeled and recovered, 2<sup>nd</sup> story appears to be original except for windows.

Window openings original with upper 1/3 filled in and lower 2/3 with replacement windows. East building-1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> stories remodeled and recovered.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

Corner store front (Main & Ball S.E.) housed Julie K Fashions for a number of years.

These four store fronts have been combined into one business for the past twenty years. 121 had been a saloon and beer brewery. 115 was the office of the Owosso Traction Company & Electric Railway.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2197046

Directory: Photos Block 8

Photographer: Paul Heimnick





## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 200-06

Direction: West

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/22/10

Surveyor: Maury Shattuck

### NAME

Historic Name: Abby Gould Block

Common Name: Page Plug Cellular/It's A Deli Thing/Martial Arts/vacant

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1898

Source of Date: City Directories

Style: Georgian

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: block

Walls: brick

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

The east half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> story brick painted, top half of window opening boarded over, bottom half, aluminum. West side of building has original brick and windows appear to be in good shape. There are additional store fronts on N. Ball.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

All windows have a "V" shaped stone center. Center top with vertical bricks to edge of window opening on both sides. First story of entire building has been remodeled with a different style.

### HISTORY

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2196994

Directory: Photos Block 4

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 201

Direction: West

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/15/10

Surveyor: Maurice Shattuck

### NAME

Historic Name: Shippee & Smith

Common Name: Scrubs Medical Uniforms

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1880 ca.

Style: blonde brick, single story block

Engineering, City Maps,

Source of Date: Research

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

2 story. 1<sup>st</sup> story front remodeled. 2<sup>nd</sup> story window openings original.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES:

### HISTORY

A Saloon in 1900's. Anderson's Floral Company in 1920.

Formerly housed Shippee & Smith Sporting Goods.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2197042

Directory: Photos Block 7

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 203-13  
City/Village: Owosso

Direction: West

Street: Main  
Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/4/10

Surveyor: Maury Shattuck

NAME

Historic Name: --

Common Name: Various Businesses

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1924

Style:

Source of Date: Directories

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

1 story. Front remodeled and recovered.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

None, all remodeled, modified an muddled to non-original state.

HISTORY

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2197041

Directory: Photos Block 7

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 208

Direction: West

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/22/10

Surveyor: Maury Shattuck

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: vacant (formerly LaBella Salon & Spa)

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built:

Source of Date: City Directory

Style:

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: Brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

2 story building. 1<sup>st</sup> story partially remodeled.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2196998

Directory: Photos Block 4

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 210

Direction: West

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/22/10

Surveyor: Maurice Shatluck

NAME

Historic Name: ?

Common Name: Siminski Chiropractor

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1871

Source of Date: Research

Style: Blonde brick, single story block

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

2 story

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

Constructed as a livery stable in 1870's by John Evens, who also very successfully brokered cattle for the East coast trade. Livery served the Knill Hotel across the street.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2196999

Directory: Photos Block 4

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 212-14

Direction: West

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/4/10

Surveyor: Maury Shattuck

### NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Fortune House Restaurant

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built:

Source of Date: City Directory

Style:

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

2 Story, 1 Building. 1<sup>st</sup> story front remodeled, 2<sup>nd</sup> story appears to be mostly original.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

Constructed as a movie theater. Later, the Lawrence Department Store. Currently, Chinese Restaurant.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2197000

Directory: Photos Block 4

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 215

Direction: West

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/15/10

Surveyor: Maury Shattuck

NAME

Historic Name: Woodard Offices

Common Name: Ruthy's Cleaners

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1891

Source of Date: Cornerstone

Style:

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

2 story building. 1<sup>st</sup> story - remodeled, 2<sup>nd</sup> story - window openings original.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURE

HISTORY

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2197039

Directory: Photos Block 7

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 216-18

Direction: West

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/4/10

Surveyor: Maury Shattuck

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Radio Shack/Security Alarm Co.

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1910

Source of Date: Histories

Style: Prairie Style (vaguely)

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

1<sup>st</sup> story has been remodeled and covered.

2<sup>nd</sup> story appears to be original except windows have been filled in.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

Built as a theatre.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2197001

Directory: Photos Block 4

Photographer: Paul Heimnick





## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 220

Direction: West

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/4/10

Surveyor: Maurice Shattuck

### NAME

Historic Name: Crowe & Payne Implements – Shippee & Smith

Common Name: Urban Antiques & Art

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1899

Source of Date: Histories

Style: Two Part Commercial Block

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls: brick

Roof:

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

2 story, brick. 1<sup>st</sup> story partially remodeled. 2<sup>nd</sup> story appears to be original including window openings. Windows have been replaced with vinyl windows.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

Housed Thompson Carpets, Shippee & Smith Dry Dock.

Rebuild after a fire which destroyed three major businesses, including Mueller Bros. Brewery and Woodard Furniture & Planing Mill. This was the business of Crowe & Payne Farm Implements.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2197019

Directory: Photos block 4

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 300

Direction: West

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 7/10/2010

Surveyor: Lorraine Weckwert

### NAME

Historic Name: Mueller Brothers Brewery

Common Name: Matthews Building

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1899

Source of Date: History/Newspaper

Style: ?

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: stone and concrete block

Walls: mostly brick

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

This is a melding of four distinct buildings connected together constructed of brick and painted in a grey color.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

Constructed after a fire which destroyed several buildings in 1898. This was the site of the Mueller Bros. Brewery which also burned and was rebuilt a year later. The name of the building is from Judge Matthews who owned the building for many years.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2197007

Directory: Photos block 4

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 301

Direction: West

Street: Main

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/18/10

Surveyor: Lorraine Weckwert

### NAME

Historic Name: City Hall

Common Name: City Hall

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1924

Source of Date: Records

Style: Classical Beaux Arts

Property Type: Municipal Building

### MATERIALS

Foundation: cinder block

Walls: brick & Indiana Limestone

Roof: flat

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

The site of this building was very influential to the development of Owosso due to the river which flows on the West side of the property, which held a planing mill. Later the planing mill developed into a large furniture factory called Woodard's.

### COMMENTS

Original blueprints called for a dome to be placed over the center entrance but it never happened.

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: ebay1 221

Directory: Photos Block 1

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



**EAST MASON STREET**

**GROUND LEVEL SURVEYS**

## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 120

Direction: East

Street: Mason

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 7/10/2010

Surveyor: Lorraine Weckwert

### NAME

Historic Name: Knapp & Smith Funeral Home

Common Name: Nelson-House Funeral Home

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1928

Source of Date: owner

Style:

Property Type: commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: block

Walls: brick now covered in a stucco-like material

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Building has been modernized with a covering of stucco-like materials and new windows. A large square, two-story building with centered double-entry doors. Balanced windows.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

Built as a funeral parlor, the first in Michigan, with reused brick from the old Armory which stood on this location.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name:

Directory:

Photographer:



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 201

Direction: East

Street: Mason

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 6/25/10

Surveyor: Lorraine Weckwert

### NAME

Historic Name: American Legion Hall

Common Name: same

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1924

Source of Date: Blueprints/History

Style:

Property Type:

### MATERIALS

Foundation: concrete block

Walls: brick

Roof: flat, tar and asphalt

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

New porch/covered walkway added in 2010. Brown brick almost square building, concrete lintels and sills around windows which are evenly spaced on three sides of building. Front entrance facade has been altered, other than the new porch.

The cornerstone of the original building has been half covered by an addition to the front of the building.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

First American Legion Hall built in Michigan in 1924—addition being made in 1955

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name:

Directory:

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



**WEST MASON STREET**

**GROUND LEVEL SURVEYS**

## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 114

Direction: West

Street: Mason

City/Village Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 6/4/10

Surveyor: Lorraine Weckwert

### NAME

Historic Name: First Baptist Church

Common Name: same

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1896

Source of Date: Church history

Style: ?

Property Type: Church

### MATERIALS

Foundation: brick

Walls: brick

Roof: asphalt

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Church building has had obvious changes in its recent history, some due to the cyclone of 11/11/11 which struck Owosso at 11 minutes after 11:00 o'clock, and destroyed the steeple and a part of this church, which had also occurred at other churches in town. The church also suffered a fire in 1942 which destroyed a great portion of the building. The rebuilding did not duplicate the original structure. Recent additions also change the building.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

This is the third building for the First Baptist Church on this site. A fire in February 1942 destroyed half of the church, which was subsequently rebuilt in somewhat different fashion than the original.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P4070014

Directory: Photos Block 10

Photographer: Paul Heimnick





**NORTH PARK STREET**

**GROUND LEVEL SURVEYS**

## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 218

Direction: North

Street: Park

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/14/10

Surveyor: Shaffer Fox

### NAME

Historic Name: Mark Woodbury Building

Common Name:

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1922

Source of Date: Plate inset in building

Style: Commercial/ Retail

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: unknown

Walls: brown brick

Roof: flat tar

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Beautiful building. Four peaks on four short brick towers. Five windows on second floor, three business doors on first floor.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Modern windows and doors on first floor. New brick was installed under modern windows.

### HISTORY

This building was constructed as a metal fabrication business downstairs and a business school on the second floor, along with four apartments.

### COMMENTS

The metal finials on this building were removed and copied exactly, then reinstalled by Woodbury Sheet Metal & Fabricating.

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P4070005

Directory: Photos Block 3

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 220-22  
City/Village: Owosso

Direction: North

Street: Park  
Township:

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/14/10

Surveyor: Shaffer Fox

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: William Ketch, DDS., Building

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1960's  
Style: Office/Commercial

Source of Date: Owner  
Property Type: Professional Office

MATERIALS

Foundation: unknown  
Walls: tan-orange brick  
Roof: shingles-tar

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

Built by a dentist, Dr. Wade, for his offices. Expanded by current dentist in 1970's.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name:  
Directory:  
Photographer:



**NORTH WASHINGTON STREET**

**GROUND LEVEL SURVEYS**

## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 100-02

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

### NAME

Historic Name: The Miner Bldg./Storrer's

Common Name: Carpenter's Corner Bldg.

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1912

Source of Date: History

Style: ---

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: brick

Walls: brick

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

3<sup>rd</sup> floor windows have been filled in with metal inserts. Cornices are disintegrated and in danger of falling off building on South Side. Brick exterior.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Elegant contemporary entrance with brass double doors from when Storrer's owned the building.

### HISTORY

A fire in 1911 destroyed the original building on this site. This building was constructed for Seldon S. Miner in 1912. Storrer's Men's Clothing Store was a long term occupant from 1966-late 1980's. Known as Carpenter's Corner during the late 1980's-90's – a home furnishings and accessories business.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186937

Directory: Photos Block 6

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 101-03

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

### NAME

Historic Name: The Thomas Block

Common Name: Courtside Cafe

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1888 by George Thomas

Source of Date: History

Style: Three Story Corner commercial block-victorian

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: ?

Walls: brick

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Building is in good repair on exterior except for changes at street level façade.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

The site of an early dry goods store, the building was constructed by George Thomas, an early entrepreneur who owned The Junction House hotel and cafe in Westtown and built this structure as well as the next five buildings to the immediate west of this building.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2196968

Directory: Photos Block 5

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 104-08  
City/Village: Owosso

Direction: North

Street: Washington  
Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

### NAME

Historic Name: The Wesener Block

Common Name: same as above

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1886

Source of Date: History

Style: Three part, three-story brick commercial block

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: brick

Walls: brick

Roof: non-existent due to fire

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Fire damage is rampant. Luckily the facade remains mostly untouched except for the psuedo-tudor additions which were imparted by the John Wesley College era of ownership of this building.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

Built by Hugo Wesener in 1886. Hugo Wesener came to Owosso in 1875 and purchased the C. L. Goodhue Dry goods store stock. He also bought the Commercial Hotel from L. E. Woodard as well as Woodard's House on the S.W. corner of Main and Elm. Sundry businesses occupied the three storefronts through history including a druggist, shoe stores, dry goods, and at 108 the Osmer Company Grocery did business from 1921-1951. During the 1960's and 70's this was the administration building for John Wesley College. Social Security Administration offices were here during the 1980's as were the executive offices of the Ann Arbor Railroad on the second floor. An arson fire in 2008 destroyed the building, starting in the apartments on the third floor, killing a twenty-one year old man. This was the second fire this building suffered in its history.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186935

Directory: Photos Block 6

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 109  
City/Village: Owosso

Direction: North

Street: Washington  
Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

### NAME

Historic Name: Kresge's—The Jupiter Store  
Common Name: currently Treasures

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: Approximately 1952  
Style: Has none

Source of Date: Directories  
Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: ?  
Walls: Brick with another type of brick as a facade  
Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Window walls facing east.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

Original building evidently demolished as this is not the same building we see in old photos. According to directories, there was nothing in this location during the 1940's, but in about 1952 we have an S. S. Kresge's Five and Dime, which was also located here during the 1930's. In the 60's this was The Jupiter Store, which was the prototype for a new store to be called "K-Mart." This building was gutted on the interior and reworked to become a mini-mall during the 1980's by Jerry and Jane Idle.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186905  
Directory: Photos Block 5  
Photographer: Paul Heimnick





## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 110

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

### NAME

Historic Name: The Williams Block (along with 112)

Common Name: Storrer's (now vacant)

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1855

Source of Date: History

Style: early Victorian commercial

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: ?

Walls: brick

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Brick with stone sheathing as a "slipcover" to modernize the building.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

This was one of Owosso's very earliest commercial buildings and in fact was the first brick building constructed downtown by A. L. and B. O. Williams, the founding family of Owosso.

The first tenants were a hardware store on the first level while on the second level the Williams Brothers had their real estate offices. The third floor was a hall or community room which was used by Masonic Temple Association. The long time business of Storrer's Men's Clothing was at this location twice in their history.

### COMMENTS

This part of the two-part commercial block looks nothing like its twin next door at 112 due to attempts at modernization. 112 is perfectly preserved.

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186934

Directory: Photos Block 6

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 111

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

### NAME

Historic Name: Kresge's—The Jupiter Store

Common Name: Healthfirst Pharmacy

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: Approximately 1952

Source of Date: Directories

Style: Has none

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: ?

Walls: Brick with another type of brick as a facade

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Window walls facing east.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

Original building evidently demolished as this is not the same building we see in old photos.

According to directories, there is nothing in this location during the 1940's, but in about 1952 we have an S. S. Kresge's Five and Dime, which was also located here during the 1930's. In the 60's this is The Jupiter Store which was the prototype for a new store to be called "K-Mart."

This building was gutted on the interior and reworked to become a mini-mall during the 1980's by Jerry and Jane Idle.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186905

Directory: Photos Block 5

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 112

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

### NAME

Historic Name: Williams Block (along with 110)

Common Name: Schmidt's Jewelry Store

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1855

Source of Date: history

Style: early Victorian commercial two part block

Property Type: commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: ?

Walls: brick

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Perfectly preserved early Victorian commercial three story building. Decorative wood sheathing on the street level entrance facade.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Steve Schmidt is a collector of all things Owosso memorabilia and displays much in his shop.

### HISTORY

Built by the founding brothers of Owosso, A. L. and B. O. Williams, this was the first commercial brick building in downtown Owosso, built in 1855. The Williams brother's real estate offices were on the second floor, while on the third floor were community rooms used by the citizenry for social functions, and for a time by the Masons as they were becoming organized in Owosso.

The first floor was a dry goods store for most of its history.

Steve Schmidt's father bought the building in 1971, and Steve purchased the building in 1985.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186933

Directory: Photos Block 6

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 113  
City/Village: Owosso

Direction: North

Street: Washington  
Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

### NAME

Historic Name: ----

Common Name: Funny Pages Hobby Shop

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: circa 1894  
Style: Victorian commercial

Source of Date: Directories  
Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: brick  
Walls: brick  
Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Brick with wood facade at street level – second story survives intact with windows in-filled with plywood.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

First listing for this building is 1894 when it was F. H. Banister Staples and Fancy Grocery Store, next Hookway & Sons Grocers in 1899—1906. Then the building was owned by Willis E. Hall & Son Grocery. Willis was the city of Owosso Treasurer in 1908. Murray and Terbush, a men's wear store long positioned in Owosso was here from 1910 through at least 1928. From 1936-1945 Kroger Grocery and Baking Company did business here. In the 1950's and 60's this was a ladies wear store.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186904  
Directory: Photos Block 5  
Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 114

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village Owosso

Township:

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

NAME

Historic Name: ----

Common Name: Images Forever Photographer

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1892

Source of Date: Directory listing

Style: Victorian two story commercial

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation: brick

Walls: cement block

Roof: ?

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Street level facade greatly altered.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

Paul Roth Merchant Taylor was doing business here in 1892 and by 1896 Lyons and Pond Dry Goods store was here until 1928.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186932

Directory: Photos Block 6

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 115  
City/Village Owosso

Direction: North

Street: Washington  
Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

### NAME

Historic Name: Laubengayer Block  
Common Name: currently Edward Jones Investments

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: early 1870's  
Style: Victorian

Source of Date: History  
Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: brick and stone  
Walls: brick  
Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Most exuberant building with excellent brick work. Windows are filled in with plywood on second and third floor, but original windows exist under plywood.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

Theodore Laubengayer moved to Owosso in 1857 and shortly thereafter bought the drug business of Dr. Bag, who died in 1864. Sometime in that time period, Laubengayer opened his drug store in Owosso, and built the Laubengayer Block of buildings at 115 and 117 N. Washington. While the buildings look as if they were built at the same time, photo evidence indicates they were not, but are a remarkable match speaking to the workmanship of the masons involved.

Laubengayers lived above the business at 115 N. Washington.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2196965  
Directory: Photos Block 5  
Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 116

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

### NAME

Historic Name----

Common Name Aldrich's Art Supply

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: ?

Source of Date:

Style: Victorian, two Story

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: brick

Walls: brick

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Two Story painted brick Victorian commercial building with peaked stone lintels over the well balanced second story windows.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

This was yet another saloon in town during the late 1800's, but became a clothing store from 1905 until 1931 under various owners. This was also the location of an auto accessories store from 1932 until 1945 and in 1948 became the location of Cook's Paint and Wallpaper Store until the 1980's.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186931

Directory: Photos Block 6

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 117

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

### NAME

Historic Name: Allison's

Common Name: Norm Henry Shoes

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: prior to 1898 probably 1870's

Source of Date: History/Directories

Style: High Victorian commercial three story block

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: brick

Walls: brick

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Most beautiful brick work. Third story windows in-filled with plywood street level facade altered considerably.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Matches the building at 115 North Washington - its perfect twin.

### HISTORY

1898 C. S. Allison opened his jewelry store at this address. In 1924 Allison sold his store to an employee, L. Paul Ball. In 1931 Mr. Ball moved the jewelry business to 110 West Main, when this became the location of W. R. Knepp until 1948, when Knepp's moved to 113. During the 1970's this was the Ruth Shop, ladies and children's clothing. Norm Henry shoes expanded into this space during the 1980's.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2196964

Directory: Photos Block 5

Photographer: Paul Heimnick





MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 118

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

NAME

Historic Name: Steck the Jeweler

Common Name: Game Knights Entertainment

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built:

Source of Date:

Style: Victorian two story

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation: brick

Walls: brick, painted

Roof: ?

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Wonderful window lintels in a peak over each evenly spaced window on second floor.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

At the turn of the last century this was the jewelry store of T. O. Christian, brother of Daniel Christian who owned the department store in town. John Steck bought the store from Christian in 1910 and Steck's operated with many family members until August of 1984.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186930

Directory: Photos Block 6

Photographer: Paul Heimnick.



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 119

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

### NAME

Historic Name: Owosso Savings Bank—The Keeler Block

Common Name: Norm Henry Shoes

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1874

Source of Date: Directories/History

Style: Victorian Commercial

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: brick

Walls: brick

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Three stories high, an impressive building with beautiful arched windows on the second floor.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

The first occupant of the building was Murray & Terbush, a venerable men's furnishings company. We have photos of them here during the 1880's. The Shiawassee Savings Society was located here as well as the Owosso Savings Bank. This building then housed F. W. Woolworth from 1915-1945.

Immerman Shoe Company moved here in 1948 from its previous location at 114 W. Main. In 1959 Norm Henry bought the shoe company that he and his father had worked for many years.

### COMMENTS

This building is largely unchanged on the exterior except for the entry way, but is in need of restoration.

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2196963

Directory: Photos Block 5

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 120

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

### NAME

Historic Name: -----

Common Name: vacant (former Avon)

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: prior to 1890

Source of Date: City Directories

Style: Victorian

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: brick

Walls: brick

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Part of a beautiful row of Victorian Commercial buildings with decorative window lintels. Changes to the street level facade at the entrance are evident.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

J. C. Johnson, Druggist from 1899—1921, then Fulmer Drugs, Graham Pharmacy and Jap & Mac Drug Store in 1930-31. Jasper M. Peru, Patented Medicine in 1931—1936. Joseph Lebowski had his men's clothing store here during the 1940's. Joseph Lebowski is the Owosso businessman whose family donated the Montgomery Ward Building and the Capitol Theatre to the City of Owosso and the Community Players have the now named Lebowski Theatre for their venue. Larry Coy's Toggery was doing business here during the 1970's and 80's.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186929

Directory: Photos Block 6

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 122

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

### NAME

Historic Name: Brown and Gray Cigar Store

Common Name: New Vision Bldg.

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1861

Source of Date: History

Style: Victorian

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: brick

Walls: brick

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Original iron columns at entry with original double doors. Hooded window lintels on second and third floor

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Painted brick

### HISTORY

Built in 1861 by Henry Knill. Storrer's Men's Clothing Store was located here at the turn of the last century. Building was a cigar manufacturing location followed by Brown and Gray's Cigar and Billiards Hall.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186939

Directory: Photos Block 6

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



# MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

## ADDRESS

Number: 123

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

## SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

## NAME

Historic Name: Citizen's Bank

Common Name: Bank

## DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1896

Source of Date: History

Style: ?

Property Type: Bank/Commercial

## MATERIALS

Foundation: likely brick

Walls: original brick/slipcovered with stucco material

Roof: ?

## DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Original brick building has been obscured with a "slipcover" of concrete or stone slabs. We have an old photo of the original beautiful building.

## OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

The original windows remain on the third floor.

## HISTORY

Built as the Keehler Block after the bank president's name. Bank closed during the Depression in 1936 and never reopened under that management. During the 1950's Woolworth's Five and Dime Store operated in part of the bank building.

## COMMENTS

Picture from 1909



## PICTURE INFO

File Name: P3167250

Directory: Photos Block 5

Owosso 1909 Book

Photographer Paul Heimnick

## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 200-08

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

### NAME

Historic Name: Murphy's Five and Dime Store

Common Name: Springrove Variety Store / title office

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1960's by Perrin Construction for Robert Brewer

Source of Date: History

Style: contemporary

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: concrete block

Walls: blond brick

Roof: flat

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Plain blond brick contemporary building with window walls facing west and south.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

None

### HISTORY

This was the site of the Salisbury Opera House. All historic buildings on this entire block were demolished to make way for the contemporary stores.

Built as Murphy's Five and Dime Store

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186938

Directory: Photos Block 3

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 201-03

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

NAME

Historic Name: The Stuart Block/Gute's Drugs

Common Name: Wells Fargo

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1860's

Style: ?

“Past and Present of  
Source of Date: Shiawassee County”

Property Type: Commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation: Stone

Walls: Brick and other materials

Roof: ?

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Stucco exterior.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

This building's history is rich, but ruined by a fire in the 1940's which largely destroyed the original Stuart Bank Block. The building at the time was owned by Gute's Drug Store and was rebuilt immediately in the one story structure currently in place. It has been remodeled on the exterior and interior with each subsequent owner.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P3167259

Directory: Photos Block 2

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 205  
City/Village: Owosso

Direction: North

Street: Washington  
Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/15/10

Surveyor: Maury Shatluck

NAME

Historic Name: --

Common Name: Wachovia Securities

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1948

Style:

Source of Date: directories

Property Type: commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation:

Walls:

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

1 story building.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Very non descript

HISTORY

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name:

Directory:

Photographer: Paul Heimnick





## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS: 207-09  
City/Village: Owosso

Direction: North

Street: Washington  
Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor James Eaton

### NAME

Historic Name: Shattuck Block—along with 209 N. Washington

Common Name: Bake Shop

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1891

Source of Date: History

Style: Victorian three story block originally

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: Brick

Walls: Brick & rusticated stone

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

This is now a two story building, the third floor having been removed during the 1980's. Rusticated stone front is unique in Owosso. Street level facade greatly altered.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Large original windows on the second floor. Original stairs from the street level to second floor.

### HISTORY

Built by J. R. Shattuck in 1891 for his "Music House". He sold bikes, Victrolas, talking machines, sewing machines, musical instruments. Originally a remarkably beautiful building.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name

Directory

Photographer Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 210

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

NAME

Historic Name: JoAnne Fabrics

Common Name: same as above

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1970's

Source of Date: city records

Style: contemporary

Property Type: commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation: concrete block

Walls: block and brick

Roof: flat roof, asphalt?

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Blond brick contemporary building with window walls on the west side of building.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

No features---it's contemporary!

HISTORY

The entire block of historic buildings was demolished to make way for these blond brick buildings.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P3167246

Directory: Photos Block 3

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 211

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

### NAME

Historic Name: Parkhills Drug Store--Voight's

Common Name: ---

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: prior to 1868

Source of Date: history

Style: ? Greatly altered and slipcovered

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: ?

Walls: ? A slipcover of some modern material is in place obscuring the original structure

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Has been so altered that one cannot tell there is an old building under the "slipcover."

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Not discernable.

### HISTORY

Charles Parkhill came to Owosso and started a drug store at this location in 1868. This had been a drug store since that time until the 1990's, most recently known as Voight's and then Sobak's until Sobak sold his interests to a chain drug store, Rite Aid. The Owosso downtown drug store ceased to exist.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186894

Directory: Photos Block 2

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 213  
City/Village: Owosso

Direction: North

Street: Washington  
Township:

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

NAME

Historic Name: ---

Common Name: Jay's Tux and Bridal Boutique / Striking Dragon

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1856  
Style: ?

Source of Date: directories  
Property Type: commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation: ?  
Walls: ? Covered by modern skin of unknown materials  
Roof: ?

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Been so remuddled that one cannot discern the original building due to the awful covering which is on the entire front facade of the building.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

This was the home of the Tannehill Bakery and Confectionery in 1899 through 1906 when Tannehills moved across Washington Street until the 1920's. George Caruso Confectioner took over in 1911. Gabriel's Womens and Misses Shop was here from 1921—1931. Harwell & Har Shoe and Rubber did business here from 1915 until 1942 when the business changed hands to the Watcher Shoe Company through 1957. This building became a part of the expansion of Voight's Drug Store and Sobak's Drug Store in the 1980's and 1990's.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name P2186894  
Roll No./Directory Photos Block 2  
Photographer Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 217-19  
City/Village Owosso

Direction: North

Street: Washington  
Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 6/4/10

Surveyor Loraine Weckwert

### NAME

Historic Name: Gould's Hall/Osburn Bldg./ Pabst Bldg.  
Common Nam: Demis Accounting

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1868 by Amos Gould

Source of Date: history

Style: Three Story Double Commerical Block-Victorian

Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: Brick

Walls: Brick

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

This well-preserved and well-maintained Victorian commercial building, with painted brick exterior has three floors of hooded windows, not likely are the windows original. Street level facade has been altered.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Fine exterior architectural window treatments which have been preserved.

### HISTORY

Built in 1867 by one of the town's most notable pioneers, Amos Gould, who also in 1854 had built the building next door to the north as his bank and social hall. This building's first occupant was Osburn & Sons Dry Goods Store who moved in January, 1868 and conducted business at this location until the 1920's. Mr. Demis bought the building in 1979 and has done some extensive interior remodeling and restoration.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2186897

Directory Photos: Block 2

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 221-23

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: Lorraine Weckwert

### NAME

Historic Name: the Original Gould's Hall/Gould Bank / El Fournu/ White's Bakery

Common Name: Northside Realty

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1854

Source of Date: history

Style: altered/unknown except for old photos

Property Type: commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: ?

Walls: Brick and other modern materials

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

The Second and third floors of this building were removed during the 1950's by Mr. White of White's Bakery who was the current owner. The building appearance has been greatly altered over the years and with subsequent owners. Original photos do exist of this, our earliest commercial building.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

None worth mentioning

### HISTORY

Built as the original Gould's Hall by Amos Gould, Owosso's first banker and foremost citizen. in 1854. This was the site of D. Gould's Bank (Amos' nephew) which evolved into the First National Bank of Owosso ten years later. Upstairs was Gould's Hall which was the site of many social activities in early Owosso. Gould later (1868) built another larger building next door to the South – hence the next Gould's Hall.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P3167240

Directory: Photos Block 2

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 300

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/21/10

Surveyor: Lorraine Weckwert

NAME

Historic Name: Shiawassee

Common Name: Council on Aging

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1982

Source of Date: City Records

Style: modern

Property Type: commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation: poured concrete

Walls: brick (dark brown)

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Modern building

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Broad entrance and courtyard.

HISTORY

Built to serve the senior population of the area, offering aid with taxes, property issues, etc.

COMMENTS

This facility serves hot meals daily and provides socialization opportunities.



PICTURE INFO

File Name: P6227022

Directory: Photos Block 10

Photographer: Paul Heimmick

## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 301  
City/Village: Owosso

Direction: North

Street: Washington  
Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/21/10

Surveyor: Lorraine Weckwert

### NAME

Historic Name: Masonic Temple  
Common Name:

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1925  
Style: modern

Source of Date: Cornerstone  
Property Type: Commercial Lodge

### MATERIALS

Foundation:  
Walls: brick  
Roof: flat

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

4 story building. 3 medallions inset at cornice level of building.

### HISTORY

Masons had a presence in Owosso since 1856 in various locations until finally constructing their temple on this site.

### COMMENTS

Windows on North aspect of building were filled in with closely matched brick. Urns on the parapet were a feature of the original building.

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P3167275  
Directory: Photos Block 10  
Photographer: Paul Heimnick





## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 307-13  
City/Village: Owosso

Direction: North

Street: Washington  
Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/21/10

Surveyor: Lorraine Weckwert

### NAME

Historic Name: Laverock Block  
Common Name: various businesses

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1910  
Style: Undetermined

Source of Date: Directory Research  
Property Type: Commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: cement block  
Walls: brick  
Roof: flat

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Single story non-descript buildings, but obviously constructed as a block of buildings.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Each address has a slightly different façade.

### HISTORY

Built as the Laverock Block by James Laverock

### COMMENTS

Style has drastically changed after a 1982 ? which destroyed much of these buildings. Second floor of these buildings was removed.

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P4207726  
Directory: Photos Block 6  
Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 308

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/21/10

Surveyor: Lorraine Weckwert

### NAME

Historic Name: The Eagles Lodge 851

Common Name:

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1850/1904

Source of Date: Cornerstone

Style:

Property Type: Club/Lodge

### MATERIALS

Foundation: Poured concrete

Walls: Brick

Roof: flat

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Back, older building, hardly visible from front aspect. Windows at ground level filled in with un-matched brick.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

This building was built when the original building burnt. This building, built in 1904, had an addition to the front in 1950.

### HISTORY

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P4207713

Directory: Photos Block 10

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 319

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/21/10

Surveyor: Lorraine Weckwert

NAME

Historic Name: U.S. Post Office

Common Name:

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1961

Style: modern

City Records at

Source of Date: Engineering Department

Property Type: Government

MATERIALS

Foundation: cement block

Walls: stone and stone block

Roof: flat

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES:

Large window wall across the front of building.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P4270007

Directory: Photos Block 10

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 320

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/21/10

Surveyor: Lorraine Weckwert

NAME

Historic Name: Jaynes/Struber/McKnight/Strong

Common Name: Strong's Family Practice

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built:

Source of Date: City Records

Style: Italinote

Property Type: Residence/

Professional Office

MATERIALS

Foundation: Stone

Walls: Wood covered with vinyl

Roof: Tar paper shingles

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Original brackets still in place. Porch and front entry appear to have been changed.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Addition on back of house.

HISTORY

Built by Jaynes, owned next by Struber, a show store owner; Struber lived here for fifty years. Dr. McKnight then conducted his medical practice here, as well as it being his residence.

COMMENTS

Vinyl siding in place over original clapboards.



PICTURE INFO

File Name: P4270002

Directory: Photos Block 10

Photographer: Paul Heimnick

## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 326-28

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/21/10

Surveyor: Lorraine Weckwert

### NAME

Historic Name: Knapp House, Patterson House, Shattuck House

Common Name:

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built:

Source of Date: Records

Style:

Property Type: Residence

### MATERIALS

Foundation: Brick

Walls: Wood clapboards

Roof: Tar paper shingles

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Carriage house in back. New garage style doors have been added to the carriage house.

### HISTORY

Built for Dr Avery Knapp, an early Owosso Physician. Dr. H.B. Peterson, Dentist, bought the house from Dr. Knapp. The Shattuck's have owned the house since the 1960's.

### COMMENTS

The house has been divided as a duplex. Wonderful, pristine condition except for two replacement windows.

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P4270001

Directory: Photos Block 10

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 327

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/21/10

Surveyor: Lorraine Weckwert

### NAME

Historic Name: Congregational Church

Common Name: Stone Church

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1891

Source of Date: Church records

Style: Neo-Romanesque

Property Type: Church

### MATERIALS

Foundation: Concrete block

Walls: Stone

Roof: Tar shingles

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Entire façade is stone.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Used local stone in its façade construction.

### HISTORY

This church was constructed in 1891 replacing an earlier, smaller brick & frame church on this site. Stained glass windows dedicated to ?

### COMMENTS

Detroit architects Malcomson and Higginbotham designed this church in the Neo-Romanesque style.



### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P4207725

Directory: Photos Block 10

Photographer: Paul Heimnick

MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 330

Direction: North

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 4/21/10

Surveyor: Lorraine Weckwert

NAME

Historic Name: Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church

Common Name:

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1893

Style:

cornerstone

Source of Date: church records

Property Type: church "Kirche"

MATERIALS

Foundation: stone-cut stone

Walls: brick

Roof: tar paper shingles

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Close to original condition. Addition on back of building to house offices.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

New brass ? front main doors.

HISTORY

Site of first school house in Owosso. When new Union School House was built in 1858 the Lutherans bought the first school building and worshipped there until 1893 when the old schoolhouse was moved and replaced by the present edifice.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P4207716

Directory: Photos Block 10

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



**SOUTH WASHINGTON STREET**

**GROUND LEVEL SURVEYS**



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 111

Direction: South

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

NAME

Historic Name: -----

Common Name: American Speedy Print

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: prior to 1894

Source of Date: directories

Style: Victorian two part, two story commercial block

Property Type: commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation: brick

Walls: brick

Roof:

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

During the 1980's, the 111 building was restored by the daughter of the previous owner revealing the original stained glass over the door.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

Louis Steadman sold cigars and wine here in 1894 and lived above the business. John T. Walsh purchased the building and ran a candy and tobacco shop here from the 1920's. The business passed to John's son Harry and Harry ran the shop until 1950. Mrs. Jane Walsh Barton restored the building along with her husband David.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P1236391

Directory: Photos Block 9

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 112

Direction: South

Street: Washington

City/Village Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

### NAME

Historic Name: Richardson Block

Common Name: Nail Boutique

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1898 ca

Source of Date: city directory

Style: Three story single block - Victorian

Property Type: commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: brick

Walls: brick

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

North facing wall is parged because it was originally an interior shared wall with a building to its north which was demolished. Brick exterior.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

The first listing for this building is in 1898 as Richardson's Grocery Store. Subsequently it remained a grocery store for several more years. From 1945 this was Walter's Shoe Store until the 1980's.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2196973

Directory: Photos Block 8

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 112

Direction: South

Street: Washington

City/Village Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

### NAME

Historic Name: Richardson Block

Common Name: Nail Boutique

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1898 ca

Source of Date: city directory

Style: Three story single block - Victorian

Property Type: commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: brick

Walls: brick

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

North facing wall is parged because it was originally an interior shared wall with a building to its north which was demolished. Brick exterior.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

The first listing for this building is in 1898 as Richardson's Grocery Store. Subsequently it remained a grocery store for several more years. From 1945 this was Walter's Shoe Store until the 1980's.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2196973

Directory: Photos Block 8

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 113

Direction: South

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

NAME

Historic Name: ----

Common Name: Big City Dogs

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: prior to 1894

Source of Date: directories

Style: Victorian

Property Type: commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation: brick

Walls: brick

Roof: ?

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Twin to 111 next door. Restoration done to 111, don't know about 113.

Brick two story building.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

HISTORY

Bartz's Meat Market in 1928.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P1236390

Directory: Photos Block 9

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 114

Direction: South

Street: Washington

City/Village Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

### NAME

Historic Name: Moses Keyte Harness Shop

Common Name: Nail Boutique

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1892 ca.

Source of Date: city directory

Style: three story commercial block - victorian

Property Type: commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: brick

Walls: brick

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Stone windowsills, stained glass in upper portions of windows. Brick exterior has been painted to simulate red brick.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

Moses Keyte, believed to be the first occupant of this building, had a harness shop here until 1921. This then became the Amos Juhl Billiards parlor from 1921 through 1938. This was the long time business called Irving's Men's Clothing Store until the 1980's.

### COMMENTS



### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2196975

Directory: Photos Block 8

Photographer: Paul Heimnick

MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 115-17

Direction: South

Street: Washington

City/Village Owosso

Township:

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor James Eaton

NAME

Historic Name: J. C. Penney's

Common Name: Risto's

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1922

Source of Date: history

Style: two story commercial block

Property Type: commercial

MATERIALS

Foundation: concrete block

Walls: brick with window walls facing west

Roof: ?

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Plain front with some wood sheathing on second story.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

none

HISTORY

Built in 1922 for J. C. Penney's. Purchased by Risto Nicevsky and his wife, Betty, in the 1980's for their restaurant and bar.

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name: P1236389

Directory: Photos Block 9

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 116

Direction: South

Street: Washington

City/Villag: Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

### NAME

Historic Name: Freddie's

Common Name: Freddie's

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1899 ca.

Source of Date: city directory

Style two story single commercial block

Property Type: commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: brick

Walls: brick

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Brick exterior, windows at street level replaced with modern display-type windows at some time in building's past. This building is largely unchanged from its earliest history because of the long-term occupant Freddie Spaniola and his J. Spaniola, Grocery store.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

Originally a saloon in 1899. In 1914 John Spaniola moved his family—all 12 children—into the second floor and began a confectioners shop on the street level. His business evolved into selling fruit and then groceries. His son Freddie continued the business here under the same name, "J. Spaniola, Grocery" until Freddie's death in 2008.

### COMMENTS

The new owners, Dawn and Vince Gonyou, have restored as much as possible in the interior of this long-time downtown grocery store using the oak ice-boxes and oak candy counters.



### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2196977

Directory: Photos Block 8

Photographer: Paul Heimnick

## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 118

Direction: South

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

### NAME

Historic Name: ----

Common Name: ----

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: ??? prior to 1880

Source of Date: City Directory

Style: Victorian two story commercial block

Property Type: commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: ?

Walls: brick

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Incised carving on building's parapet.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

This was a long -time saloon, as was the building to the south of it and at some time the building to the north of it as well! From our records this was a Saloon from 1896 until 1914 when it became a dry goods store. In 1921 a family named Spagnuolo bought the building and had a fruit market on the street level, while living upstairs. This family was no relation to the Spaniola family who lived at 116 South Washington.

### COMMENTS

From early photos, we know that this remaining building is only a part of the original building which was probably demolished with the building to the South of it to accommodate the new Sears Store in 1963.

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P2196978

Directory: Photos Block 8

Photographer: Paul Heimnick





## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 120

Direction: South

Street: Washington

City/Village Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: James Eaton

### NAME

Historic Name: Sears Store

Common Name: Jade Buffet

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1963

Source of Date: citizen

Style: modern, commercial

Property Type: commercial

### MATERIALS

Foundation: concrete block

Walls: blond brick

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Blond brick, glass walls facing south and east, with an indented center entry.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

None.

### HISTORY

Built for Sears Roebuck in 1963 by Perrin Construction for Robert Brewer who had to demolish the historic buildings at this location for the new construction. Sears utilized this store for catalogue orders and pick-up as well as an appliance sales center.

### COMMENTS

None

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P1296979

Directory: Photos Block 8

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 121-25

Direction: South

Street: Washington

City/Village: Owosso

Township:

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 5/25/10

Surveyor: Lorraine Weckwert

### NAME

Historic Name: Wildermuth Hotel

Common Name: Indian Trails Building

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1871

Source of Date: history

Style: Victorian

Property Type: commercial/hotel

### MATERIALS

Foundation: ?

Walls: brick

Roof: ?

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Third floor windows different than rest of building. Third Floor windows have stone hoods.  
Storefronts at street level obviously not original to the building, but modern commercial adaptations.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

The Wildermuth Hotel was built in 1871 to replace the Schneckelburger Hotel which had just burned the year before. Wildermuth Hotel was well known for their wonderful meals state-wide. The hotel was enlarged in 1909 by the addition of a third floor, by the son-in-law who had assumed management of the hotel, Edward Hoffman. Indian Trails rented depot space for their bus line since 1928 and purchased the building in 1952. More interesting history about Indian Trails Bus Lines, itself to be found in historic district research.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name: P1236388

Directory: Photos Block 9

Photographer: Paul Heimnick



**NORTH WATER STREET**

**GROUND LEVEL SURVEYS**

## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 201

Direction: North

Street: Water (behind 215)

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/14/10

Surveyor: Shaffer Fox

### NAME

Historic Name: Owosso Armory

Common Name:

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1915

Source of Date: Histories

Style: Armory style with parapets

Property Type:

### MATERIALS

Foundation: probably concrete

Walls: red brick

Roof: 80% tar shingles, 20% flat tar

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

Housed the National Guard Units since its construction until a new armory was built in Corunna in 2008.

### COMMENTS

This building also served as a community center during the 1920's and 1930's. Over many years it was also the site of large social events.

### PICTURE INFO

File Name:

Directory:

Photographer



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 215

Direction: North

Street: Water

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/15/10

Surveyor: Shaffer Fox

### NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Shiawassee Regional Chamber of Commerce Building

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1968-69

Source of Date: Chamber

Style: Pre-fab

Property Type: Office Building

### MATERIALS

Foundation: probably concrete block

Walls: wood/windows on brick base

Roof: tar shingles

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

2 story building.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

### HISTORY

It was thought in the 1970's that the Armory in back of the Chamber Building would be demolished. That didn't happen and the Chamber Building intrudes on the Armory yet today.

### COMMENTS

Built in front of the Armory, intruding visually & physically on the Armory site.

### PICTURE INFO

File Name:

Directory:

Photographer:



## MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

### ADDRESS

Number: 219

Direction: North

Street: Water

City/Village: Owosso

Township

### SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/14/10

Surveyor: Shaffer Fox

### NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Owosso Middle School

### DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1929

Source of Date: Cornerstone

Style:

Property Type: School

### MATERIALS

Foundation: concrete block

Walls: red brick

Roof: flat tar

### DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Magnificent school building in great condition.

### OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES:

### HISTORY

This building was constructed as high school. When a larger high school was built in the early 1960's, this building became the junior high school. It is now the middle school, housing the educational classes for sixth, seventh and eighth grade.

### COMMENTS

### PICTURE INFO

File Name:

Directory:

Photographer:



**SOUTH WATER STREET**

**GROUND LEVEL SURVEYS**

MICHIGAN ABOVE-GROUND SURVEY FIELD FORM

ADDRESS

Number: 209

Direction: South

Street: Water

City/Village: Owosso

Township

SURVEY INFO

Survey Date: 3/14/10

Surveyor: Shaffer Fox

NAME

Historic Name:

Common Name: Owosso public Safety Building

DATE/PROPERTY TYPE/STYLE

Date Built: 1969

Source of Date: City Records

Style:

Property Type: Public Building

MATERIALS

Foundation: concrete

Walls: brick

Roof: flat tar

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Modern building which houses the Owosso Fire & Police Departments.

OTHER BUILDINGS/FEATURES

Hold barn for fire trucks adjacent to City Hall & Police Station with accompanying offices.

HISTORY

COMMENTS

PICTURE INFO

File Name:

Directory:

Photographer:





**NORTH BALL STREET**

**INTENSIVE LEVEL SURVEYS**

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 114 N. Ball Street  
**Site:** Community Evangelical Presbyterian,  
Community Outreach Services  
**Date:** 1921 ca.  
**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

This small two-story brick structure may have been built as an independent building or it may have originally been a portion of the larger three-story building at 121-123 W. Exchange, its neighbor to the north. The masonry, second-floor windows and friezes of alternating stepped bricks all match, and the absence of a prominent pier on the left side of 214 N. Ball indicates that structural support is derived from the building on W. Exchange.

The street level façade has been altered in the twentieth century, but probably maintains much the same configuration as originally built. The three second floor windows are of uniform size, although the bays are asymmetrical. The frieze, with its stepped brick motif, extends out to the parapet, which is capped by a cornice molding.

The right front corner of the building, abutting an alley, features a puzzling design element. On most masonry buildings in downtown Owosso from this era, sidewalls emerge as piers on the façade, running the full height of the building. On the right corner of this building, however, the pier is not present until halfway up the second floor, at which point the bricks step out incrementally from the façade to meet the parapet. This element meets no apparent practical or aesthetic purpose, confusing an otherwise simple and dignified façade.

### History & Significance:

1921	Orison C. Whitney, optometrist. This entry in the city directory for 1921 is the earliest known historical reference available for this building.
1928-1938	Neal Thane Real Estate
1938	C. G. Kercher Life Insurance Company
2010	Community Evangelical Presbyterian, community outreach services

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 209 N. Ball Street

**Site:** Savas Travel Bureau

**Date:** 1890 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This small two-story brick late-Victorian commercial building features an asymmetrically-positioned projecting bay window on the second floor and a simple stepped brick frieze below the parapet which, along with the solid brick piers on either end, frames the building. The first floor has been completely reworked in the twentieth century.

### History & Significance:

1900 Cadwallader, Lord & Hahn

1921-1945 Henry Poland Truck and other associated truck lines

1945 Heagle Trucking Company

1953-1963 Collier Printing moved over from the building next door at 207 N. Ball.

1970-1980s Harold Kercher Insurance

2010 Savas Travel Bureau

### Photos:



## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 211 N. Ball Street

**Site:** Solutions Spa

**Date:** 1895

**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

One must look past more recent alterations to recognize this building as it was originally built. It is a wide, plain two-story late Victorian brick commercial building, three bays wide on the second floor. The windows appear to be original, with a shallow-arched brick lintel over each one. The first floor of the building has been extensively reworked.

The stepped brick frieze and solid, slightly projecting brick parapet match those of addresses at 200 W. Exchange Street and 207 N. Ball Street, structures with which the southern portion of 211 N. Ball form an integrated complex of structures. This southern section of 211 has been treated to enhance its sense of connection with the other buildings, having been painted the same distinctive colors and altered to include a matching entranceway. A matching window and arched lintel have even replaced the southernmost window on the second floor. These twentieth-century changes, visually assigning the building's southern portion to adjoining structures, leaves 211 N. Ball appearing smaller than it was originally built in the nineteenth century.

### History & Significance:

1894-1900 F. Manning, blacksmith

1905-1908 F. C. Wickham, blacksmith

1910-1915 Water Works Repair Shop

1921-1924 George Charlton, contractor

1928-1936 John Kelly, plumber, expanded into the building from 213 N. Ball, where he had been located since 1905.

1942 Bert Gaylord, locksmith

1948-1953 G. H. Warner & Sons Electrical Appliances moved next door to 213 in 1953.

1952-1955 Owosso Business Service

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 213 N. Ball Street

**Site:** Happy Tails

**Date:** 1890 ca.

**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

This two-story brick late-Victorian commercial building is three bays wide, retaining on the second floor its three tall, narrow windows surmounted by elaborate Renaissance Revival lintels. The building is framed on both sides by raised brick piers. Because it was probably built as a single structure with 215 N. Ball, the right side wall of 213 is actually the center wall shared by the two buildings, supporting their second floors. The whole is capped by a stepped brick frieze and projecting cornice. The reworked first floor retains its entrance door to the second floor stairwell.

### History & Significance:

- 1900 A. F. Hollis, plumber, and H. Hetchler, repair shop
- 1905-1945 Kelly & Douglass Plumbing and Heating. John Kelly eventually expanded his businesses into the addresses at 211 and 213 N. Ball.
- 1936 Pulver & Bush Apartments were located on the second floor of the building.
- 1936- 1942 John Kelly purchases the buildings at 211 and 213, renaming the second floor apartments “Kelly Flats,” one of which he occupies himself.
- 1942-1945 Ball Apartments (second floor)
- 1945- Wiley Apartments (second floor)
- 1950s G. H. Warner & Son Electrical Appliances

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 215 N. Ball Street

**Site:** Stewart Graphics

**Date** 1890 ca.

**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

This two-story late-Victorian brick commercial building features projecting brick piers, a stepped brick frieze and projecting wood cornice. The second floor façade includes two windows: a double-hung window surmounted by an arched brick lintel on the right, and a bay window on the left. The window on the right may represent one of an original three evenly spaced across the façade, with the bay window replacing the original two on the left.

This building may have been built as a single structure with its neighbor at 213 N. Ball Street and later divided into the two separate addresses. Both buildings are the same height, feature the same projecting brick piers and stepped brick ornamental friezes. The brickwork is aligned and the wood cornice consists of a single continuous element. On the other hand, the single arch-topped second floor window at 215, apparently original, differs in style and size from the taller, flat-topped window openings, capped with decorative lintels, at 213. The reworked first floor retains its entrance door to the second floor stairwell.

### History & Significance:

1905 Amos F. Hollis

1907-1910 Edward Carr, real estate

1921 Ellis Cleaners and Dyers

1924-1930 Peerless Cleaners and Dyers

1932 Consolidated Dry Cleaners

1942-1945 The Trading Post, second hand clothing, owned by Mrs. Ida Black

1948-1950 The Laundrette

1948-1960s Wiley Auto, Oldsmobile and Cadillac Dealership, occupied this building, along with the remainder of the block.

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 217-27 N. Ball Street

**Site:** Shiawassee Copier

**Date:** 1907 ca.

**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

This large two-story masonry building, located at the southwest corner of N. Ball and Mason Streets, is unusual in downtown Owosso because of its large block construction evident on all three exposed elevations. This block features a flat section at the edge, abutting the mortar, then a bevel all the way around the face, and finally a large flat, raised section in the center.

On the main facade, facing N. Ball, the building is visually divided into two sections, each four bays wide, with raised piers in the center and at the corner facing the intersection. The first floor street level facade has been heavily reworked in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, but probably originally featured entrances and large glass windows for storefronts. The side elevation, facing W. Mason, is probably as originally built.

On the principal facade, the second floor windows are of uniform size and are asymmetrically spaced. Just below the sills of these windows runs a thin egg and dart molding. This molding is also repeated at the top of the building, just under the frieze and cornice, both of which are made of the same material as the building blocks.

The side elevation features two windows, an entrance door, and a car entrance, the last consistent with the building's original use as an auto center. These bays, and the four windows on the second floor, are all rather haphazardly placed, indicating this elevation was considered much less important to the designer and builder.

### History & Significance:

#### 217 N. Ball

Mr. James H. Laverock, the builder of this block of apartments and stores had his real estate office here in 1907-1908. Previously his office had been in the Keehler block in 1905. He lived at 409 N. Ball. We surmise he moved his office into the new building he had just constructed.

1910            The building is listed as vacant in the directories

1928-1936     Frank Phillips Agricultural Implements and also in 221 N. Ball

1928-1930s Farm Bureau is located here and in 221 N. Ball

1940- State Farm Insurance

1948 John Ressner is doing business here

### **221-23 N. Ball**

The Phillips & Taylor Transfer Company is listed as doing business here in 1915, which was the founding name of the company which would become Indian Trail Bus Company.

This company started as a livery service for the Owosso hotels and the three train stations which existed at the time in Owosso. The cost was twenty-five cents for a passenger and luggage. Soon the taxi was so full of passengers that a truck had to follow along behind to transport the luggage. The livery service expanded to Flint for workers in the auto factories who lived in Owosso. By 1924, the bus company operated to Lansing, Battle Creek and to Saginaw. In 1928, the buses traveled to Chicago, Kalamazoo, and South Bend, Indiana. Mrs. Taylor was a student of American Indian culture and soon named each bus after an Indian Chief. After Mr. Taylor's death in 1954, Mrs. Taylor took over the Presidency of Indian Trails until 1971. Mrs. Taylor was also the first woman issued a chauffeur license in the State of Michigan in 1911.

1928-1936 Frank Phillips Agricultural Implements is doing business here.

This building becomes the Wiley Oldsmobile and Cadillac Dealership with a garage in the back part of the building with an entrance on Mason Street. Montgomery Ward used the same garage for their auto repair and tire installation during the 50s and 60s. The garage is still in existence as Melentine's Auto Electric Repair. The office at 223 N. Ball is currently that of Shiawassee Copier, a computer repair business

The building is currently owned by Randall Smith.

### **Photos:**





## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 224 N. Ball Street

**Site:** Thomas Dignan law office

**Date:** Residence: 1850 ca  
Addition: 1940 ca

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

The original building on this site sits on the northern-most corner of the property and is one of Owosso's early wooden Greek Revival structures, with quoins of wood and eave returns, although the original windows have been replaced. Applied to the western façade is a layer of brown brick, presumably to marry it with the newer building to which it is attached on the south. The modern asphalt single roof on both buildings enhances the sense of a unified structure. The newer building features mullioned windows, most of which are six-over-six, a bay on the west façade, and eighteen pane windows flanking the front door.

### History & Significance:

- 1890 The Sanborn insurance map from 1890 represents the lot as vacant, suggesting that this earlier building was probably moved here from another site. A few other buildings in this style, among the earliest in Owosso, from the 1840s and 1850s, survive on nearby King Street. The building may have been relocated from this area of downtown, or from Park and Exchange Streets, where homes from this era were built.
- 1910 Drs. Arthur and Harold Hume, father and son, were listed as practicing at this address in 1910, probably in the Greek Revival residence that had been moved here sometime after 1890.
- 1940 ca. The brown brick addition to the Greek Revival building was constructed to accommodate the medical practice of Arthur and Harold Hume, and was built by Arthur's other son, Robert, a construction tradesman. This building has since served a succession of the city's medical and dental practitioners.
- 2010 The building is owned by Thomas Dignan, whose law practice is housed there.

**Photos:**



**SOUTH BALL STREET**

**INTENSIVE LEVEL SURVEYS**

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 110 S. Ball Street

**Site:** Elliott's Family Hair Styling

**Date:** 1960s

**Status:** Non-contributing



### Description:

This modest one-story building with pitched shingle roof and synthetic siding occupies a small corner lot consistent with its original use as a gas station.

### History & Significance:

This building was originally a gas station that stood at the southwest corner of Ball and Exchange Streets and was moved to this location in the 1950s by Ernie Meier, who remodeled it for use as the office for his insurance company. Joel Elliott bought the building in the 1970s and refitted it for use as a five-chair hair salon.

Joel sold the business to Ed Dickerman, his son-in-law, who operated it for another ten years. The current owner, since 1994, is Kelly Butcher, a former employee of Joel Elliott's.

### Photos:



**EAST COMSTOCK STREET**

**INTENSIVE LEVEL SURVEYS**

## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 123 E. Comstock Street

**Site:** Sunnyside Florists

**Date:** 1955

**Status:** Non-contributing

### Description:

A one story commercial block, the building is covered with a stucco-like material and then painted. The building has display windows on the east and two display windows on the south side with the entrance to the business centered between the two windows on the south. There is a formed cornice line around the perimeter of the building which is painted in contrasting colors to the body of the building. On the rear of the east side of the building is located a garage which serves the business as storage as well as access for their delivery vehicle.

### History & Significance:

1952 The city map noted this as the location of a Studebaker garage, complete with gas pumps and repair pit.

1953 ca. The property was purchased by George Hoddy, who razed the garage and built the structure that stands today. George Hoddy, who died in 2010 at the age of 105, was one of the city's most prominent and contributive citizens. Hoddy and his brothers founded Universal Electric Company in 1936, employing more than 3,600 people worldwide, including 1,000 in Owosso, and others in India, Mexico, Canada, England, Australia and Thailand. The company produced small electric motors and related devices that were key elements of U.S. combat aircraft during World War II. Hoddy also worked as an engineer on the Manhattan Project during the war. It is not an understatement to say that Hoddy was, at one time or another, a central participant in virtually all of the community's core institutions, including the Alvin M. Bentley Foundation, Memorial Healthcare, Key State Bank, the Owosso School Board, Baker College (established in Owosso mainly through his influence) and countless others.

[dates?] Sunnyside Florist, a centennial business, arrived at this location after years of moving among various addresses in town. John S. Schlieder opened the store at 201 W. Main Street in 1894, with the greenhouse at the corner of Washington and King Streets. Subsequent addresses included 215 and 216 W. Main, 119 W. Main, and others. Owners of the business have included Schleider (1894-1912), Maurice A. Herrick (1912-1920), Ignatius Fortman (1920-1924), Arnold and

Pauline Passmore (1944-1972), David and Judy Johns (1972-1989), Stephen and Vickie Watkins (1989-1991), and Donna Hill (1991-present).

2010

The building is owned by the Owosso Community Players, who operate a portion of it as an extension of their performing arts facility, the Lebowsky Center/Capitol Theatre (currently under reconstruction after a fire). The OCP installed a door on the Park Street façade and obtained an address change to 160 N. Park Street.

**EAST EXCHANGE STREET**

**INTENSIVE LEVEL SURVEYS**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 108 E. Exchange Street

**Site:** Body Shop

**Date:** 1880 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

Twentieth century modifications to this two story brick commercial building (some of them easily reversible) obscure much of what might otherwise be known about its original condition. The first floor entry and windows have been altered, a cantilevered metal awning added, and the second floor façade is covered by a large metal screen, which also conceals a second floor walkway across the alley to the east.

The building's age and bricks visible on the rear elevation, however, closely resemble those of 110 E. Exchange, the neighboring mid-Victorian building from which it is separated by the alley. In turn, 110 E. Exchange closely resembles the large building with three storefronts located around the corner at 116-120 N. Washington. The resemblances among these buildings and their proximity to one another (they are all separated only by the building at 122 N. Washington) suggest that the character of 108 E. Exchange may be similar to those of the other buildings, as described elsewhere.

The building's current owner reports that the upstairs walls and original windows remain intact. It is hoped that future rehabilitation will restore this Victorian era façade to Owosso's streetscape, hence, we have determined this building as contributing.

### History & Significance:

1905 A. G. Fry Meat Market

1910-1990s Dorr H. Day, photographer, operated Day Photography, later Day Camera Shop, providing photographic services and selling camera equipment until his death in 1957, after which his business partner, Burdette Shattuck, continued the business until the early 1990's. Burdette Shattuck and his wife resided at 326 N. Washington, restoring the building to its original Victorian design.

Present Body shop salon

## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 110 E. Exchange Street

**Site:** George's Beauty Salon

**Date:** 1885 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This two-story mid-Victorian brick commercial building is a near-twin to those around the corner at 116-120 N. Washington, with a somewhat narrower stepped brick parapet and different designs on the lintels. The building was built as an independent structure, with thick brick side walls fronted by plain raised brick piers that transition, via curved sections, into a solid brick parapet, under which runs a stepped brick frieze. The second floor includes three symmetrically-spaced, long, narrow double-hung windows capped by elaborate cast iron Renaissance Revival lintels. The second floor façade remains largely intact more than one hundred years after construction, although missing the wooden cornice that old photos show was once attached to the plain brick parapet.

The first floor façade may well be original, including the horizontal band of textured glass blocks that span the width of the building. Above the band of blocks is a horizontal wooden panel that perhaps once served as the building's marquee, topped by a decorative wooden cornice molding beneath the second floor sills. The large display windows and two front doors, one of which provides access to the second floor stairwell, may have been refitted, but their configuration may be as originally built.

### History & Significance:

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 1894      | E. A. Alinghams & Company Meat Market  |
| 1899      | Shiawassee American newspaper, relocated here from 117 W. Main   |
| 1905-1910 | A saloon owned by Michael H. Rourke was, by 1910, selling "soft drinks" due to a city-wide prohibition from hard liquor. |
| 1915-1921 | Consumers Power business office  |
| 1928-1932 | Chandlers & Mann Electricians  |
| 1936      | Shattuck Music House relocates to this address from N. Washington Street.  |

1942-1953 Walter B. Hollis, plumber, also lived in an apartment upstairs.

1955-2008 George's Beauty Salon operates at this address until the mid-2000s.

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 114 E. Exchange Street

**Site:** Firestone Tire Store

**Date:** 1940 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

Built for Kroger of light-colored brick, the single-story façade features window walls on the north and east elevations. The original glass block windows remain intact from that time. Overhead doors have since been added to accommodate the automotive trade of Firestone Tires.

### History & Significance:

1940-1959 Kroger Grocery Store

1959-present Firestone Tire Store moved to this address from their former, smaller location at 209 N. Washington Street. Firestone has operated here ever since, interrupted briefly when Boland Tires purchased the building in 1998, shortly after which Firestone reacquired it. Firestone is currently owned and managed by Steve Gill and Jerri Knox.

### Photos:



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 201 E. Exchange Street

**Site:** The Argus-Press

**Date:** 1891 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This two-story Victorian brick commercial building is comparatively plain, with minimal ornamentation consisting of a stepped brick frieze and simple lintels fashioned from vertical brick. The lintels have been painted a contrasting color, accentuating their profile. There are traces on the parapet of what may have been a large cornice that is no longer present. Given its original use as a livery stable, the building's simplicity is understandable.

The first floor has been extensively reworked and expanded in the twentieth century, presumably altering the original arrangement of windows and doors. The E. Exchange façade was originally built to include two separate storefronts, with piers at the left and right corners and one running down the middle. This division is now only discernible on the second floor, where the broad piers rise to meet the parapet, under the frieze. Beneath the frieze, between the piers, are three evenly spaced windows, the center one of which is wider than the windows on either side.

The longer plain sidewall facing N. Park repeats the wide piers at the corners, adding two more between, irregularly spaced. Contributing to this asymmetry are the unbalanced window bays of uneven width. There are modern additions on the north and east elevations.

### History & Significance:

1894 Union Transfer Company, Hack and Omnibus Line. The livery for this early transportation service, owned by Joseph Amos and Albert Sax, housed carriages and horses on the building's ground level. The second floor stored feed and hay.

1905 Huron Transfer Company

1919-present The Evening Argus merged with Press American newspaper in 1916, becoming The Argus Press. In 1919, Campbell moved the paper from 200 W. Exchange Street to larger quarters at 201 E. Exchange, where it has continued to publish under Campbell ownership and editorial control since that time.

1965 An addition was made to the eastern side of the building to accommodate a new press, as the paper made the transition from hot lead to offset printing.

### **The Argus Press**

The Argus Press is descended from The Owosso American, founded by Charles Shattuck in 1854 and owned by him until 1856, published in the National Hotel, in downtown Owosso. The Owosso American was purchased in 1856 by Ephriam Gould, who managed it until 1858, at which time he sold it to John Ingersoll, who desired to publish it as the best Republican newspaper in the state. Ingersoll renamed the paper The Owosso American and Peninsular State Times, which it remained until he moved in May 1861 to nearby Corunna, of which he became postmaster. Ingersoll merged the American with the Corunna Democrat and rechristened it the Shiawassee American, selling it to George Bowen in 1889. Bowen renamed the paper the Daily American, selling it to George McIntosh in 1898.

John Ingersoll became Owosso's first city clerk in 1859, and served as State Senator from Shiawassee County from 1861 to 1862. He and his wife were members of Christ Church Episcopal, where Ingersoll taught Sunday School classes. Ingersoll was also elected mayor of Corunna after his move to that town.

In 1890 H. Kirk White purchased the Owosso Press American, and promised it would remain firmly Democratic. The Evening Argus was established in Owosso on July 23, 1892 by J. N. Klock and E. Eisley. George T. Campbell acquired the Evening Argus on February 15, 1895, operating briefly in the basement of 119 W. Exchange before purchasing the brick block at 200 W. Exchange in October and moving the paper into that building, where it remained until 1919. In the summer of 1895, M. L. Izor, Campbell's brother-in-law, joined the company as printer and co-manager, a partnership that lasted one year before Campbell resumed sole control of the plant. Izor purchased the Durand Express newspaper and published it for many years.

George T. Campbell was born in Louisville, Kentucky on December 27, 1864. His family moved to Kansas, where George worked at a newspaper, and at the YMCA in Wichita. Campbell came to Owosso in 1891 to serve as secretary of the Owosso YMCA. In 1893, he married Harriet Evens, with whom he had three sons. Following George T. Campbell's death, management of newspaper operations was assumed by his sons, George W. Campbell and John Evans Campbell. They were, in turn, succeeded by George T. Campbell, now deceased, and Richard E. Campbell, recently retired. The Argus Press is currently managed by Thomas E. Campbell, the son of George T. Campbell, and the fourth generation of the family to run the newspaper.

### **Photos:**



**WEST EXCHANGE STREET**

**INTENSIVE LEVEL SURVEYS**

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 110 W. Exchange Street  
**Site:** Owosso Community Pharmacy  
**Date:** 1892 or earlier  
**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

This 2-story brick late-Victorian commercial building must have been built after its neighbor, 112 W. Exchange, as it has only one thick brick sidewall, on the east side. Although this throws off the symmetry of the street façade, the second floor façade is rich in architectural detail, exhibiting the mason's expertise.

There is a strong verticality to the second floor façade with three thick, plain piers running from below the sills of the windows up to the plain frieze. (Visually, the eye uses the pier from the neighboring building to create the symmetry lacking because of the missing west pier.) There are three bays, with single double-hung windows to the left and right and a pair of double-hung windows in the wider, center section. These bays, and the brick ornamentation above them, are all recessed so that the piers dominate.

In each of these recessed brick sections, moving upward, are the following components: a rusticated stone sill stretching from pier to pier; the double-hung window; a smooth stone lintel just a tad wider than the window; some small stepped brick detailing; a transom the same width as the window below; a wider, smooth lintel running from pier to pier; a flat panel of brick with a smaller inset panel of textured brick the width of the transom; then a row of raised stepped brick designs; and finally a horizontal row of another brick design. When the building's brick was unpainted and these various stone accents were their natural color, these bay openings would have been much more interesting.

The plain, raised piers rise to meet a plain brick parapet, with a shallow cornice running the width of the building (excepting the east pier). The top of this pier has been decorated with (probably metal) ornamentation, rising above the cornice line, and topped with a metal decoration that looks rather like a crown. In an attempt to create symmetry at this level, someone applied a matching detail (sans crown) onto the raised pier of 112 W. Exchange, which is a 3-story building. If both these buildings were unpainted brick, the effect would be much more convincing.

The first floor has been reworked in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, though the street-level door to the second floor remains.



## **History & Significance:**

- 1905-1907 N. A. Goodyear Meats
- 1910-1921 Bowers & Underwood Meats
- 1921-1930 Bartz Meat Market
- 1932-1953 Owosso Dairy Store
- 1953-1972 Family Optical later Owosso Optical, along with
- 1970-1983 J. & R. News Center Book and Newspaper Store
- 1983-1991 The Printed Word Book and Newspaper Store owned by Marcia Wert and Diane Cuter, who also owned the building from 1983-1989.
- 2000 Owosso Community Pharmacy owned by Dave Lerner and Jane Baker, pharmacists. The building is owned by Thomas Simington.

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 112 W. Exchange Street

**Site:** Sobak's

**Date:** 1895 ca.

**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

This three-story brick late-Victorian commercial building exhibits design characteristics that indicate it dates from near the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when advances in steel construction allow for larger spans of windows. The second floor facade is dominated by a large arch, under which four abutting windows once occupied the space; this area has been filled in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century by metal windows and brickwork. The third floor façade features four large square-topped, double-hung windows (currently boarded over) separated by thin brick dividers, probably more decorative than structural.

Ornamentation includes thin slabs of rusticated stone extending the full width of the building, serving as sills for the second and third floor windows. Raised piers, with insets of brick designs and capitals of stepped bricks, rise up along both sides of the building. There is a large expanse of textured, beveled brick around the second floor arch and another thick bank in the frieze.

There is a design element in the surround of the third floor windows that deserves mention. Above each window is a decorative wooden trim piece, cut into a swoops and point design that seems Pennsylvania Dutch in style. It is an incongruous element in an intricate Victorian façade.

The first floor has been reworked in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century though the thick sidewalls are still evident on the second level.

### History & Significance:

1905 Bunting and Miller, grocers

1905-1908 G. B. Hiller , dentist, with practices on the second floor.

1910 E. L. Bunting, grocery

1910 Flora Price, Hair goods

1911-1928 William A. Sherman, notions

- 1924 Thomas A. Viet Restaurant operates in the basement of the building
- 1928-1931 Bitting Grant Company, dry goods, operates on the main level. U. S. Home Restaurant does business in the basement.
- 1960-1969 Wachter Shoe Store
- 1970-1975 Ken's Shoes
- 1989-present Sobak's Home Health Supplies

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 113 W. Exchange Street

**Site:** The Fletcher Block

**Date:** 1905 ca.

**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

This wide three-story brick commercial building exhibits some design elements suggestive of the Chicago School of architecture. The ornamentation is restrained and somewhat neoclassical, contrasting with the exuberant detailing of the neighboring late-Victorian buildings. Although the first floor has been reworked in the mid-twentieth century, the second and third floors feature light stone details set into dark red brick walls.

Built with a thick brick sidewall on the eastern face of the building, the opposite side abutted an existing sidewall for its late-Victorian neighbor at 117 W. Exchange. The builders of 113 (three stories) added a third story sidewall atop 117's existing East sidewall in order to marry the two buildings. While this slightly skews the rigid symmetry of the façade, it is only noticeable on close scrutiny.

The second and third floor façade is organized around three large window openings on each floor, with each opening containing a pair of windows. (The current windows are later replacements.) The overall emphasis of this façade is horizontal, with smooth stone stringcourses running under the window openings and spanning the distance from sidewall to sidewall on both floors. The lintels are simple, straight rows of bricks, with smooth square stones at each corner and in the middle, in place of a keystone. Above the second floor lintels, one centered over each window opening, is a smooth diamond-shaped stone, further accenting the horizontal emphasis. Above the third floor lintels, in a broad, flat parapet and centered over each window opening, are three rectangular brick frames, not quite as wide as the window openings. Inside the left and right frames are plain brick expanses, while the center frame contains a smooth stone panel on which is incised FLETCHER.

At the top of the parapet a stepped brick design acts almost as a cornice.

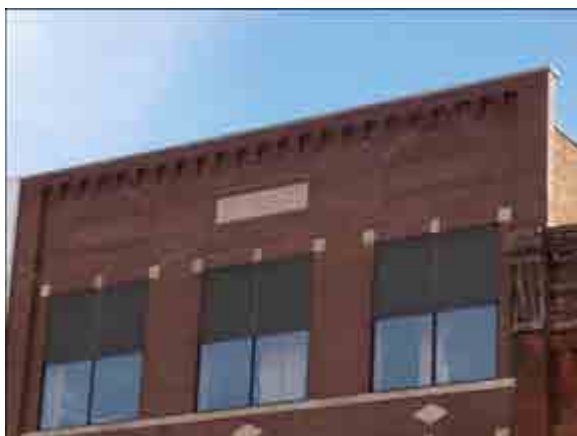
This brickwork bears some resemblance to that of the neighboring Victorian buildings although, on the older buildings, this stepped brick pattern usually decorates the frieze.

### History & Significance:

1905-1911 Singer Sewing Machine Company

- 1907-1908 Oakes and Tone Chinese Laundry
- 1910-1911 O. C. Whitney, optician (upper floors)
- 1924-1931 Morris Five and Ten Cent Store  
Knights of Pythias Hall
- 1936 The Outlet Store

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 114 W. Exchange Street

**Site:** Sobak's

**Date:** 1895 ca.

**Status:** Non-contributing



### Description:

The three-story facade visible today is the result of a mid-twentieth century remodeling. The street level facade features huge windows on either side of a recessed entry. There is a flat metal overhang jutting over the sidewalk. Just above this overhang, a mezzanine level is evident, with small metal windows set in a section of cream-colored aluminum siding. From this mezzanine up to the roofline, the blue tiles present an unbroken wall; this blue tile has been continued to the ground as ribbons of blue flanking, left and right, the mezzanine and street level.

By examining the facade from inside the upper floors, it has been determined that the original high-Victorian brick facade has been completely removed and replaced with a blank wall of concrete blocks. Therefore, this building has been rated non-contributory, as the architectural integrity of the building has been completely compromised.

Vintage photos show that this address's original facade matched that of its neighbor, 116 W. Exchange. In fact, it is extremely likely that these two addresses, 114 and 116, were built as one structure with two storefronts. The facades matched in almost every detail the twin facades at 115 and 117 N. Washington and the single building at 112 S. Washington.

### History & Significance:

1872 Dwight Dimmick has a crockery and dry goods store at this address which evolves to Dwight Dimmick & Son Grocery and Baker. The business was likely not in the building extant today. Dwight Dimmick continues to own this property as he signs a party wall agreement with his neighbor at 116 in 1890, which is the likely construction date of this building. In 1872 Dwight Dimmick lived at the southwest corner of Exchange and Park. His business dealings evolved into real estate which is where he made his fortune. His son and heir, Guerdon Dimmick developed the area from the River north to Oliver Street and from Gould Street close to the downtown into residential properties. The measure of their success is evident in the fine brick home built for Guerdon at 713 W. Oliver in 1876. The

Dimmick's also owned 107 N. Washington, known as the Dimmick Block; in 1907, according to local newspaper accounts, he purchased the Williams Block at 109 and 111 N. Washington as well.

Dwight Dimmick was born in Plymouth, New York in 1813 and died ninety-one Years later in 1897 while living at his son's home on Oliver Street.

- 1892-1894 Nicholas Goodyear Meats, moved from 110 W. Exchange.
- 1900s early G. N. Finch, dentist, practices on the second floor.
- 1905-1908 Harry Putterville Bazaar
- 1910-1921 Star Bargain House Store operates here before moving to 113 W. Exchange.
- 1921 Owosso Cooperative Association of Grocers
- 1926-1942 Grant's Hat Shop, Ladies Wear and Furniture subsequently move to 111 W. Exchange.
- 1930-1932 Lee & Candy Wholesale Grocers
- 1945 Carl Bekofski operates a bowling alley upstairs.
- 1960-1963 Sears Roebuck & Company Mail Order Center
- 1965-1972 Owosso Typewriter Company
- 1972-1988 Shattuck Office Supply
- 1989-2010 Sobak's Medical Supply

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 116 W. Exchange

**Site:** The Strawberry Patch

**Date:** 1890

**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

This three-story brick high Victorian commercial building features one of the most elaborate and exuberant facades in Owosso (with near twins at 115-117 N. Washington and 112 S. Washington). The second and third floors, each 3 bays wide, were designed to imply strong verticality, an effect created by constructing four strong piers running from the sills of the second floor windows to the tops of the third floor windows, not including the demilune transoms. The outside piers are the fronts of the thick masonry sidewalls. The vertical effect is accentuated by the tall windows, with the center windows wider than those flanking, and the third floor windows taller than those on the second floor. An inset field between the top of the second floor windows and the bottom of the third floor windows reinforce the upward visual sweep. The original windows on the upper floors survive intact.

Horizontal accents, including rusticated stone stringcourses act as partial sills for the three second and third floor windows, with horizontal inset panels of textured brick between the second and third floor windows. This distinctive textured brick appears to feature a flat surface interspersed with various round projections. The impression from the street below is of rocks affixed to a smooth surface, although the round projections are in fact integral to the brick.

The façade is divided horizontally by two contrasting bands of smooth stonework (cream against the red brick). A continuous band runs the width of the building at the tops of the second floor windows, acting as lintels. Matching pieces act as capitals for the four piers at the tops of the third floor windows beneath the ornamented brick lintels (with rusticated stone keystones) over the three demilune transoms.

The masterful brickwork on the second and third floors includes a large textured field of brick set with corners projecting outward, creating a uniform, rhythmic pattern between the outside piers and above the three demilune transoms. There is even a brick pattern inset into the brick lintels. The building is capped by a plain brick parapet.

This building and its near twins on Washington Street are some of the best surviving examples of high Victorian commercial structures in Owosso. While the first floor has been extensively reworked, the upper floors remain largely in their original state.



## History & Significance:

Prior to 1890 when Joseph Schuknecht constructed the building, the property was owned by many early Owosso people including, of course, the Williams brothers who, in essence, owned the entire town by land grant transfer, The Dimmicks, Mrs. Ebenezer Gould (Irene), Seraphine LeValley, who was the second wife of Guerdon Dimmick, Dr. John B. Barnes are among the names on the abstract.

- 1890 Joseph Schuknecht enters into a party wall agreement with Guerdon Dimmick and Charles Duff, which indicates the date of the construction of this building, Dimmick owned a grocery and dry goods store at 114 W. Exchange and Charles Duff his wholesale tea and coffee business at 118 W. Exchange.
- 1894 M. A. Stanhope, dressmaker
- 1896 Crowe Brothers Shoes and Boots
- 1898 Foster Furniture Company and Hardware
- 1905 E. W. Main, books and H. W. Main, wallpaper with R. D. Crawford, Real Estate
- 1908 C. W. Danforth, Jeweler, Ida M. Hook Stationery, H. F. Schulter, Tailor and Singer Sewing Machine Company.
- 1910 J. F. Hartle 5 & 10 cent Store
- 1915 John Lebowski, clothing and Emma M. Shaw, Milliner and at 116-1/2 May Jacobs, Milliner
- 1921-1944 The Salvation Army headquarters
- 1923 Joseph Schuknecht and Matilda Schuknecht sell building to Salvation Army for \$9,700
- 1944- The Salvation Army sells the building to David and Sylvia Bowman
- 1945-1951 the United Auto & Aircraft Workers Local 4743
- 1953 Scott Sales, Company, selling tires
- 1955 Josling Tire and Appliances
- 1959-1983 Bowmans lease the building to Montgomery Ward's, Inc. of Chicago, Ill. Montgomery Ward's primary location was two doors to the West at 120 W. Exchange, but they also leased the 118 building as well as 116 W. Exchange to

expand their business floor space. This building housed their tire and automotive product line, and later their catalogue store.

1884-2007 Dr. John and Joanne Morovitz purchase the building. Mrs. Morovitz's business called "The Strawberry Patch," featured yarn, stitchery and artist's supplies, as well as holding instructional classes. Dr. and Mrs. Morovitz are ardent supporters of The Owosso Community Players, she for years making and storing the costumes in the basement of the building, and Dr. Morovitz designing and constructing the sets for the productions.

2010 John and Sue Hankerd purchase the building for their Hankerd Sportswear business with the tee-shirt printing factory in the basement.

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 117 W. Exchange Street

**Site:** Jackson Block / vacant

**Date:** 1895 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This two-story brick late-Victorian commercial building is distinguished among Owosso buildings by its width, with four bays on the second floor. The façade of the second floor remains unpainted and retains its original design elements. Strong vertical piers frame the building, culminating in applied metal ornamentation. Three raised brick piers run vertically between the four window bays, rising to meet a plain brick frieze on which is overlaid an ornate metal frieze and cornice.

The wide, double-hung windows are original, retaining their upper panels of stained glass. The rusticated stone sills under each window are matched on the side piers, but not on the three piers between the windows.

Above the lintels of wide, smooth stone are inset panels of patterned brick. These panels feature a smooth surface and raised circles, identical to those on buildings around the corner, in the 100 block of N. Washington. Above these panels are stepped bricks in shallow, corbel-like formations, meeting the base of the metal frieze.

The wide horizontal metal frieze features half circles, a strong horizontal line and an elaborate floral pattern. An ornate metal cornice crowns the width of the building.

117 W. Exchange retaining its metal ornamentation and original elements, stands as an important component of downtown Owosso's architectural heritage.

### History & Significance:

1907-1936 Lulu Ruess, milliner, was succeeded at this location by a family member, Dora Ruess.

1941-1948 Singer Sewing Machine Agency

1941-1955 Vogue Beauty Salon

1953-1980s Upham's gift shop was operated by a couple and their son who owned the building.

The bar of the Owosso City Club, on the second floor, was accessed from Exchange Street via a long staircase.

2010 The building is currently owned by Leon and Marilyn Bonner of Northville, Michigan.

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 118 W. Exchange Street  
**Site:** The Duff Building / Raymond James  
**Date:** 1890  
**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

This 3-story brick late-Victorian commercial building features a remarkably well-preserved façade. The thick brick sidewalls form projecting piers, running the full height of the building. On the street level, these brick pilasters frame a wood entranceway, with matching windows to the left and right of a centrally-placed entrance door. This handsome and dignified entry is capped by a wide, flat surface – perfect for displaying the business name – topped by a wooden cornice stopping just below the second floor window sills.

There are thin stringcourses of rusticated stone running just below each row of windows that continue through the piers. These stringcourses also serve as sills for the windows. The arrangement of the fenestration on the second and third floors is unusual among Owosso's surviving commercial buildings: the second floor features two sets of two double-hung windows, square-topped inside a low-arched brick opening. The lintels for these two openings are also unusual in that they span the entire expanse from the tops of the window openings to the bottom of the upper stone stringcourse, forming a sunburst like pattern in brick.

The third floor window arrangement is much more common, with four symmetrical double-hung, square windows under plain brick lintels. More unusual is the band of smooth stone running across the entire width of the building, just over the brick lintels and cut into an unusual pattern over, and slightly forward of each of the four windows. This ornamental stonework is very unusual, though it can also be seen nearby at 112 W. Exchange.

The building is capped by a thin, stepped-brick frieze.

### History & Significance:

The Duff Building was constructed by Charles C. Duff in 1890 (according to his biography in "Past and Present Shiawassee County 1906"). This was the building in which Charles Duff conducted his grocery and wholesale coffee and tea business in 1890 through 1922 when Charles retired. He had previously conducted his grocery business on W. Main and at the southwest corner of Washington and Mason. Charles Duff was born in Monroe County, Michigan, was a

Civil War veteran and fought at Antietam. He moved to Owosso in 1865 and worked at his brother-in-law, Matthias Stewart's, grocery store for five years before striking out in his own grocery business. Charles was known as a supporter of any endeavor that would help make Owosso a better place and was choir master at the Congregational Church for almost thirty years. (B. 1842 - D. 1925)

## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 119 W. Exchange Street

**Site:** Book and Beans

**Date:** 1895 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This 3-story brick late-Victorian commercial building is unusual in downtown Owosso because it is easily identifiable as an in-fill building, constructed between two existing structures. Both sidewall piers, left and right, are obviously part of the neighboring buildings, with their ornamentation intact. Only the left, or East wall, on the third floor of this building was constructed for this building.

Although the first floor has been reworked in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, the second and third floors, each three bays wide, display all the original design elements except window sashes. There are rusticated stone sills under each window, running in a continuous line from sidewall pier to sidewall pier. There are open holes which were once graced by wide double-hung windows and transoms, topped by a band of smooth stone serving as lintels. After a horizontal band of plain brick is, under the three windows, another course of rusticated stone, this one narrower than its counterpart below. The original windows on third floor were double-hung windows with transoms above, mirroring the second floor; currently, the spaces are occupied by smaller, modern windows and plywood in-fill. The third floor window openings are also topped by a smooth stone bandcourse.

After a frieze of stepped brick ornamentation rises an impressive applied, intricately-patterned metal frieze. As the builder constructed the left sidewall atop the existing right sidewall of 117 West Exchange Street and capped it with an impressive metal ornament, faced with the existing sidewall to the right and having no other place in which to end the wide cornice, he was forced to place the right side metal ornament at the end of this building, not atop a pier. This throws off the symmetry of the top of the building but is barely noticeable from below.

### History & Significance:

1904-1916 O. C. Whitney, optometrist

B. S. Gaylord, jeweler

F. B. Holman, opticians

- 1905-1915 Charles Jackson Insurance Company
- 1910-1911 U. S. Post Office
- 1921 Knapp and Smith, undertakers  
Wren Jewelers
- 1921-1924 George B. Gilbert, optometrist, adding “& Sons” in 1928.
- 1930s-1970s Gilbert Madison, optometrist
- 1945 U.S. War Price and Rationing Board
- 2010 Book Mark bookstore occupies the building, which is currently owned by Leon and Marilyn Bonner of Northville, Michigan, who purchased the property from the widow of William Upham.

**Photos:**





## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 120-22 W. Exchange Street

**Site:** The Grow Block

**Date:** 1890

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This 3-story brick late-Victorian commercial building features a remarkably well-preserved facade. The thick brick sidewalls form projecting piers, running the full height of the building. On the street level, brick pilasters frame a wood entranceway with matching windows flanking a centrally-placed entrance door. This handsome and dignified entry is capped by a wide, flat surface, topped by a wooden cornice beneath the second floor window sills.

Thin stringcourses of rusticated stone run below each row of windows that continue through the piers and serve as sills for the windows. The arrangement of the fenestration on the second and third floors is unusual among Owosso's surviving commercial buildings, as the second floor features two sets of two double-hung windows each, square-topped inside a low-arched brick opening. The lintels for these two openings are also unusual in that they span the façade from the tops of the window openings to the bottom of the upper stone stringcourse, forming a sunburst-like pattern in brick.

The third floor window arrangement is more common, with four symmetrical double-hung, square windows under plain brick lintels. More unusual is the band of smooth stone running across the entire width of the building, just over the brick lintels and cut into an unusual pattern over, and slightly forward from, each of the four windows. This distinctive ornamental stonework can also be seen in the building three doors to the east at 114 W. Exchange. The building is capped by a thin, stepped brick frieze.

### History & Significance:

This site, shortly after the founding of Owosso in 1836, was the location of Moses' Store and Owosso's first post office. A ten year-old-boy, Ebenezer Gould, nephew of Col. Gould, son of Daniel Gould, was the first mail carrier, carrying mail to Chesaning and Lyons, covering hundreds of miles some weeks on an Indian pony.

Also in 1890, Mandeville Grow and his wife, local farmers, constructed the building next door at 120-122 W. Exchange, "The Grow Block." The third floor of the building was used for meetings and social gatherings.

The Owosso Business College was located on the second floor of the Grow Block from approximately 1905 to 1921, during which time the U.S. Post Office occupied the west storefront. Alexander Johnson, a former slave and color bearer during the Civil War, settled in Owosso and established a barbershop in the basement of the Grow Block, beneath the post office. In 1906, Johnson advertised that his redecorated barber shop had been “fitted up with new furniture and mirrors for the comfort of farmers, laborers and businessmen. All served alike.” Johnson lived a block away at 202 W. Exchange and is buried at Oak Hill Cemetery in a place of honor with other Civil War veterans.

Willis E. Hall (b. 1859) moved his store, Hall Bros., from 113 N. Washington to 120-122 W. Exchange in 1910, renaming the establishment W. E. Hall & Son, operating there until 1924. Willis Hall was a director of the Citizens Savings Bank and president of the Burnett Knitting Works. He served two terms as city treasurer. A contemporary description of his store reads: “The stock consists of a complete line of groceries, dry goods, boots and shoes—in brief, a general store. The firm keeps two finely equipped wagons on the road, selling through the country and gathering up produce.” The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan met in the building’s third floor during this period.

The Montgomery Ward Company department occupied the Grow Block from the 1930s until around 1980. When Ward's lease expired, the building was donated to the City of Owosso. The building restoration was purchased by David Juneau of Midwest Restorations, who began the renovation. Sam McClaren, an Owosso businessman, completed the effort.

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 121-23 W. Exchange Street

**Site:** The Connor Block

**Date:** 1890 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This prominent three-story brick commercial building at the northwest corner of Ball and Exchange Streets features distinctive architectural elements characteristic of high Victorian style and appropriate to one of the city's main intersections. The elaborately ornamented façade on W. Exchange is carried over onto the façade on N. Ball until halfway down the block, at which point the features become less ornate.

The structure is framed by thick masonry sidewalls and another such wall in the middle, effectively dividing the building into two units. The visible portions of these walls on the W. Exchange façade constitute strong piers with rounded brick and prominent ornamentation. Integrated into these piers between the second and third floors are stone carvings and rusticated stone blocks, above which the brick construction resumes, with ornamental insets. The piers flanking 121 W. Exchange extend above the roofline, a treatment not repeated at the corner of 123.

The first floor façade on W. Exchange has been extensively remodeled in the twentieth century, but the exuberant masonry work on the second and third floors survives intact and unpainted. The original windows on the upper floors have, unfortunately, been replaced with smaller ones. A wide rusticated stone stringcourse runs just below the second floor windows, serving as sills. The prominent central window bay is flanked by smaller bays, separated by substantial brick piers. A smooth stone band spans the façade, serving as lintels for the second floor windows. Above this band runs a course of staggered, stepped bricks, surmounted by another stringcourse of rusticated stone that serves as sills for the third floor window bays.

The third floor window openings on the W. Exchange side have been filled with plywood into which have been set four small windows. The corresponding arch-topped opening on the N. Ball elevation has been bricked in. In place of lintels, these arched openings feature elaborate sunburst brickwork extending to the frieze which is, in turn, ornamented by more staggered, stepped brick.

The cornice has been lost from 121 W. Exchange, exposing the thin brick parapet to which it was once attached. The cornice still caps the building at 123, extending around the corner onto the N. Ball façade.

The plainer section of the N. Ball elevation consists of brick with symmetrically spaced windows on the upper floors, simple lintels of vertical brick, a frieze of stepped brick and a simple cornice.

## **History & Significance:**

### **121 W. Exchange**

- 1890-1924 C. A. Conner constructs this building and opens Conner's Café, a.k.a. The Popular Café Restaurant. The Connor family also operated, around the corner on Ball Street, the Conner Ice Cream and Dairy Company, once the largest distributor of ice cream in Michigan. The dairy was housed in a barn on Ball Street at the corner of the alley, a building previously associated with the Exchange Hotel (later the Hauck Hotel) which was, in turn, located on the southwest corner of Exchange and Ball Streets. The barn was probably built by George Fauth, the hotel's proprietor, who made many improvements to the property during his tenure.
- 1910-1911 YWCA operates on the upper floors of the building.
- 1924-1930 Will E. Lovett's Café
- 1930-1932 Sweet's Home Bakery
- 1940s-50s U. S. and Michigan State Unemployment Compensation
- [date?] The second floor of the building was incorporated into the Owosso City Club, serving as the women's dining room, the ladies' lounge and the men's club room in the back.
- 1990s Home Sweet Home restaurant, owned by Mrs. Elliott, features home-cooked meals.
- 2010 Consignment shop

### **123 W. Exchange**

- 1890 ca. The building was constructed by Ludwig Struber, who was born in Waldeck, Germany in 1827. Struber and his brother came to Owosso in April 1857, opening a boot and shoe store in a frame building built on land they purchased from Luther Comstock. He operated the business on W. Main from 1873 to 1923. Struber lived in a home at 320 N. Washington.

- 1905-1908 Henry Clay Barber
- 1907-1908 Ferris Brothers Dry Goods
- 1910-1911 Marble Bros. Electronics
- 1915-1924 James E. Everden Hard Goods and Furniture
- 1930-1932 Miller Jones Company shoe store
- 1948 Urick-Friess Appliance Company
- 1950-1951 Surplus Mart Men's Clothes
- 1950s Knoll's Merchandise Mart
- 1970s –now Forrester's Paint Store
- 2010 The building is owned by Leon & Marilyn Bonner of Northville, Michigan.

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 200 W. Exchange Street (Also includes 207 N. Ball Street)

**Site:** Cadwallader-Lord-Hahn Insurance

**Date:** 1890 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This two-story brick, Victorian commercial building was erected on a corner site, with a slightly taller section with primary façade on W. Exchange and a service wing running parallel to N. Ball. It is believed that, originally, a storefront faced W. Exchange and family quarters were on the second floor. Over time, the rear section of this building housed various business enterprises so a separate address, 207 N. Ball, was assigned to the side entrance of the building.

The W. Exchange façade features three symmetrical bays on the second floor, with each window capped by a strongly-arched Italianate brick lintel. There was probably a comparable span of windows on the first floor, with an entry door on the surviving cut corner. The N. Ball Street façade is five bays wide with five windows placed asymmetrically from front to back. The five bays on the first floor are also irregularly placed. A large brick lintel on the N. Ball side of the building is the vestige of a likely larger opening, perhaps a doorway or loading dock, now bricked-in, including a window placed to the right of center.

On the service wing, facing N. Ball, there are four symmetrically-balanced windows on the second floor elevation. The first floor, however, has been reworked for the businesses that occupied the rear section. There is now a glass entrance door and large window, both framed by a wooden surround that covers (or replaces) the original brick. It is presumed that, as originally built, the first floor mirrored the 4-bay design still evident on the second floor. This theory is supported by the one surviving first-floor window, which is exactly in alignment with the second-floor window above. Where the front and rear sections meet, there is a raised brick pier running up to the roofline.

An exterior railed stairway descends to a basement level entry on the N. Ball side, a feature once common among the city's buildings. A second large brick lintel is visible above the grating that now covers the stairs at sidewalk level, reflecting a large lower entrance to this commercial building, perhaps to a basement store room. Raised brick quoins at the building's corners rise to an elegant stepped brick cornice. A small brick parapet surmounts this entire section.

## **History & Significance:**

The first building to occupy this site was a cabin built by Daniel Ball, a millwright who was born in New Hampshire, moved to New York State and then to Owosso. He and several other families, referred to as “Ball's Colonists,” came to Owosso in the late summer of 1836. Ball and his “colonists” built the town’s mill race and dam in 1837, and a sawmill on the current site of the Owosso Armory in 1838. The Ball family moved to nearby Chesaning in the 1840s and later to Grand Rapids, where they were influential in civic development.

The family of John Judson Bagley lived in this cabin for a year or two around 1846, when the future governor of Michigan was about fourteen years old. The cabin burned in 1876.

From 1895 the building was home to the Argus Publishing Company and the Izor Printing Company until 1916 when the newspaper moved to the current location at 201 to 205 West Exchange. Izor Printing remained in this location until the 1950's. George T. Campbell, owner of the Argus Press, was related via his sister, Mrs. Manford Izor, to the Izor family that also published the Durand Express in nearby Durand, Michigan. An original printing press from these enterprises, apparently too cumbersome to move with the publishing businesses, remains in the basement of the building.

The building has been the home of Cadwallader, Lord and Hahn, an insurance firm founded in 1903, since 1924. The company was later owned by partners Jack Bremer, Jim Bremer and Dick Reynolds. It is now owned by Michael Ardelean.

## **Photos:**





## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 202 W. Exchange Street

**Site:** New York Style Salon

**Date:** 1890 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This two-story brick Victorian commercial building features a raised brick pier on the west side of the façade with no counterpart on the east end, indicating this building was built after 200 W. Exchange and that this building relies on 200's masonry sidewall for support. The façade features a stepped brick frieze and plain brick cornice.

The two original windows have been replaced by small modern windows, with the remainder bricked in. The outlines on the façade of the second floor indicate that the windows were probably arch-topped and may have had arched lintels.

The first floor has been completely reworked some time in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

### History & Significance:

1905-1916	Pacific Express Company
	United States Express Company
	Wells Fargo & Company Express
	Western Express Company
	Domination Express Company
1921	Godard & Blair, painters
1928	Orser's Printery
1941-1942	Owosso Wallpaper & Paint Company
1948	Cheney's Appliances





- 1950s Christian's Garage, occupying portions of 202 and 204 W. Exchange, provided parking for customers of Christian's Department Store, across the street.
- 1950-1955 George Robbins Linoleum & Title Company  
The Navy Club (201 1/12, upstairs)
- 1960s Gordon Graham, artist and decorator
- 2010 New York Style Salon, owned by Robert Dedic.

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 204 W. Exchange Street

**Site:** Dr. Angela Bhadra

**Date:** Unknown

**Status:** Non-contributing



### Description:

This two-story commercial building has been substantially remodeled, effacing its resemblance to the Victorian buildings that flank it on both sides. The altered façade features medium brown brick, painted wood trim and a mansard-style roof that elevates the building above its neighbors. Large-scale dentil molding runs beneath the eaves across the width of the building.

The first floor windows are tall and narrow, paired within what are probably the two original window openings. The entry door at the eastern corner was probably, as originally configured, the street-level entry to the second floor stairwell. The second floor windows, with shutters and awnings, appear to be of later origin.

### History & Significance:

1905-1911 C. S. Gilbert, Shoemaker

1921 Union Telephone

1950-1955 Christian's Garage, occupying portions of 202 and 204 W. Exchange, provided parking for customers of Christian's Department Store, across the street.

Christian Science Reading Room was located in a small area at the front of the building.

2010 Owned by Michael Ardelean, occupied by the medical practice of Dr. Angela Bhadra.

## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 208-12 W. Exchange Street

**Site:** J. Oliver's Restaurant

**Date:** 1883 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

There are three two-story brick buildings on the 200 block of W. Exchange Street which are unique among Owosso's commercial architecture. It is obvious that these buildings were built as separate structures (there are visible seams between each building) and history records they were built at different times, but the builder or builders made great attempts to match the facades. Other buildings are one structure, with matching facades dividing the building into sections. These buildings on Exchange are the only surviving buildings built separately but designed to form a cohesive unit.

Each building is two stories tall and three bays wide on the second floor. (The first floors of all three buildings have been massively reworked.) On the Western-most building, there is more space between each bay, so this building must be slightly wider than the others. The construction is fairly simple and reflects mid-Victorian architectural traits: heavily-arched brick lintels with stone keystones over round-topped windows (since replaced), a simple brick dentil design several rows above the keystones, an alternating pattern of stepped brick design on the frieze, and a very simple cornice.

Close observation shows the builder tried to visually tie the three buildings together by repeating the dentil moulding and the rhythm of the alternating stepped brick frieze.

### History & Significance:

The first floor of this row of buildings is currently vacant, but has until recently been the site of J. Oliver's Restaurant. The current owner of the buildings is Jane Idle. The name of the restaurant is a reference to James Oliver Curwood, a notable writer who lived in Owosso in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### 210 W. Exchange

1884 Owosso Gas Light Company installed seventy gas lights in Owosso at a cost of \$1,073.73.

1905-1908 F. G. Smith, Upholsterer

1905-1911 G. H. Bedford, Sign Painter

1921 Smith and Greenwald Implements Company

1924 Shiawassee Printing Company

**212 W. Exchange**

1905-1906 H. W. Martin Harness (later at 216 Exchange, 1921-1928)

1921-1924 Mrs. Anna E. Martin, rug weaver

1945 Calvary Baptist Church

1948-1951 Al's Electric Motor Service

1953 Schafer Tobacco and Candy Store

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 214 W. Exchange Street  
**Site:** J. Oliver's Restaurant (west end)  
**Date:** Unknown  
**Status:** Non-contributing

### Description:

This three-story brick late-Victorian commercial building exhibits design characteristics consistent with architecture of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, when advances in steel construction allowed for larger spans of windows.

The second floor facade is dominated by a large arch, under which four abutting windows once occupied the space, filled in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century with metal windows and brickwork. (Surviving photos from the early 1900s and surviving windows and frames in the nearby Wesener Building provide instructive points of reference.)

The third floor facade features four large square-topped, double-hung windows (currently boarded over) separated by thin brick dividers, probably more decorative than structural.

Ornamentation includes thin slabs of rusticated stone extending the full width of the building, serving as sills for the second and third floor windows. Raised pilasters serve as quoining, with insets of brick designs and capitals of stepped bricks. There is a large expanse of textured, beveled brick around the second floor arch and another thick band in the frieze.

The first floor has been reworked in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

### History & Significance:

1883 Alexander Johnson is reported in the Owosso Press, dated January 10, 1883, to have rebuilt his house at 214 W. Exchange, a building which predates the current one. Johnson had been a former slave and color bearer during the Civil War, who settled in Owosso and established a barbershop in the basement of the Grow Block, at 120 W. Exchange, beneath the post office. In 1906, Johnson advertised that his redecorated barber shop had been "fitted up with new furniture and mirrors for the comfort of farmers, laborers and businessmen. All served alike." Johnson had also (previously?) lived at 202 W. Exchange. He died in 1907 and is buried at Oak Hill Cemetery in a place of honor with other Civil War veterans.

1948-1951 John's Brothers Wholesale Produce Company expanded in 1953 to include 216 W. Exchange.

1955 Automatic Laundry Self -Service

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 216 W. Exchange

**Site:** Dr. C. A. Trethewey, podiatrist

**Date:** 1906 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This asymmetrical second floor windows in this early twentieth-century, two-story brick commercial building appear intact and original, consistent with the variable window configurations often favored by post-Victorian architects. The thick flanking brick sidewalls are marked by raised, plain piers that run the full height of the building. These piers meet the raised parapet, under which is a frieze with stepped brick designs acting as shallow corbels. Squares of vertical bricks set in the horizontal masonry parapet lend the façade a vaguely Mission flavor. The piers rise above the parapet, while a raised brick section, a merlon between two embrasures, creates crenellation atop the parapet. The configuration of windows and doors may be original, although the first floor has been otherwise reworked.

### History & Significance:

- 1911 George W. Martin Harness Company (moved from next door at 212 W. Exchange, where they had operated 1905-1911). This longest surviving harness shop in Owosso was passed from George Martin to his son.
- 1945-1948 Chandler's Studio Photography
- 1955 U.S. Post Office annex
- 1989-present Dr. C. A. Trethewey, podiatrist



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 224 W. Exchange Street

**Site:** Verizon Telephone

**Date:** 1950s

**Status:** Non-contributing

### **Description:**

This monolithic blond brick building was originally built to house the offices of the General Telephone company and is now used solely for the storage of equipment by Verizon Telephone.

### **History:**

See above.



**EAST MAIN STREET**

**INTENSIVE LEVEL SURVEYS**

## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 100 E. Main Street

**Site:** Chemical Bank

**Date:** 1907

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

Sited at the southeast corner of Main and Washington Streets, this handsome two story brick Beaux Arts bank building sits at the very heart of downtown Owosso. Built as a bank in 1907, the structure presents a long, dignified façade on E. Main and a narrower, more modest elevation on S. Washington. Using classical elements and rigid symmetry, the design exudes a sense of power and stability perfect for a financial institution. The Beaux Arts effect is somewhat diminished, however, due to the building's construction in orange brick.

Eight two-story, round-topped window bays are arranged in a row across the E. Main façade, spaced symmetrically, separated by wide pilasters crowned with capitals. Seven windows feature square-topped windows on the first floor and dramatic rounded windows on the second floor, with no division between the two stories. The eighth window, the third bay from the right, includes the main entrance doors. The purely decorative pilasters, constructed of alternating raised panels, create an added sense of rhythm.

Brick string courses run the length of both facades. A plain frieze rises to a decorative cornice, above which the wide brick parapet is divided into sections matching the bays below. The building was recently renovated by the current owner, Chemical Bank, with welcome sensitivity to preserving its Beaux Arts character.

### History & Significance:

1839 ca Benjamin O. Williams erected a log cabin on this site sometime between 1838 and 1840, when it served as headquarters for local supporters of Harrison and Tyler in that year's presidential campaign.

The cabin was also used to imprison a band of Pottawatomie who had been captured by General Hugh Brady in nearby Rush Township while attempting to escape removal to a reservation along the Mississippi River. As additional natives were captured and incarcerated "for a considerable time," according to a contemporary source, one local woman records being kept awake by the

prisoners' moaning and chanting. The natives were subsequently transported out of Owosso by wagon, ponies, and on foot.

- 1857 The map of Owosso from this year shows that the log cabin had been replaced by a simple wood-frame building.
- 1867 James A. Beebe's Grocery, Saloon, Provisions and China Store occupy the wood-frame building.
- 1871 Henry Knill operated a bakery and confectionary here, as listed in the Detroit-Milwaukee Railroad Directory for 1871.
- 1892 Coles Autographic Cash Register Company shares the site with C. H. Cole, Jeweler, and Stewart Beebe (son of James Beebe), Photographer.
- 1895 Dorr Days, Photographer; May's Restaurant; and Curwood's Cobbler Shop were all doing business at this address.
- 1900 The portion of the building at 101 S. Washington functioned as a grocery store owned by L. D. Wilson, while the section at 103 S. Washington housed the New Paris Café and Hotel, which had twelve guest rooms.
- 1906 The wood-frame building was moved to Comstock Street to make way for construction of the State Savings Bank, and served for decades as a grocery store operated by its owner, Charles Rhodes. In 1945, it became home of the Owosso Canvas Company, owned by Leslie M. Wood. The building was demolished in 1982 to make way for a J. C. Penney's store, movie theatre, bowling alley complex, and parking lots to accommodate these businesses.
- 1907 The structure on this site was built to house the State Savings Bank.
- 1909 The bank becomes the Owosso Savings Bank, with a capitol stock of \$100,000 and a surplus of \$17,000. The bank would subsequently pass through successive ownership by other corporations, including Key State Bank, before becoming Chemical Bank, which it is today.
- 1926 The New Paris Café and Hotel was demolished to permit an expansion of the bank building.
- 2008-2009 Chemical State Bank undertook a rehabilitation of the building at a cost of more than one million dollars. The bank later deeded a portion of the building at its east end to the Owosso Community Players, whose own facility, The Lebowsky Center (formerly The Capitol Theatre), had been destroyed by an arson fire in February 2007. This annex has become the OCP headquarters as they rebuild the Capitol Theatre.

**Photos:**



*This building originally stood on the southwest corner of Washington and Main Streets. It was purchased and moved to the southwest corner of Constock and Sabine Streets by Charles H. and William H. Rhodes about 1906. It is now the Overton Canvas Company building. (Tweety inside.)  
This photograph taken approximately 1897*

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 111 E. Main Street

**Site:** Civile Insurance

**Date:** 1890

**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

This three-story brick late-Victorian commercial building features the larger span of windows made possible by advances in steel construction during the late nineteenth century. The plain, raised brick piers running the full height of the structure suggest the thick brick sidewalls beneath, and have survived later remodeling of the first floor façade.

The second floor façade is dominated by a large arch surmounting four flat-topped, double-hung windows closely grouped above a continuous stone sill. An ornately incised wooden expanse fills the area between the tops of the windows and the underside of the arch. The third floor facade features four windows and stone sills identical to those on the second floor. It is hoped that the original brickwork and frieze remain intact beneath the wooden cover that has been installed above the third floor windows.

### History & Significance:

1892 Insurance company on the second floor.

1900 Insurance company on the second floor.

1915 Nutson and Wright, Grocers

1924 Charles Jeffords, Meats

1928 Byerly Meats

(date?) Conrad Mellenbacher, who lived on the second floor of the building, owned several saloons in the neighborhood, including one at 118 S. Washington from 1894 through 1900; and the Opera House Saloon in 1906.

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 113-15 E. Main Street

**Site:** Charles Lamp Studio

**Date:** 1885 ca.

**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

This three-story brick late-Victorian commercial building was built as one structure divided into two storefronts by a thick masonry wall. It features sturdy brick piers and an ornate brick façade. The second and third floor facades of both addresses display identical design elements and no seam between them.

113 E. Main retains much of its original nineteenth century façade, with a deeply recessed entrance door bordered by transom and sidelights, although the brick bases beneath the display windows are of a later date. A flat wooden panel above the display windows, likely a business marquee, is capped by a decorative wooden cornice. Large decorative corbels at the juncture of the cornice and sidewalls lend the piers the appearance of pilasters. The street-level façade of 115 E. Main is masked by a wooden cover.

The second and third floors of each address feature two windows paired in the center, flanked by a single window on either side. Strong brick piers run from the rusticated stone sill beneath the second floor windows up to the plain brick parapet at the top. Rusticated stone lintels crown the second and third floor windows, matched by a similar sill beneath the windows on the third floor. The façade is enhanced by inset panels of textured brick and a stepped brick frieze of alternating designs. The parapet above the frieze has apparently lost its crowning wooden cornice, with visible color variation in the brick outlining the shadow of the missing piece.

### History & Significance:

#### 113 E. Main

1892 Globe Billiards Hall and Nolan and Company Saloon

1894 I. G. Curry, purveyor of groceries and tinware, added hardware, bicycles and paint to his inventory by 1900. Ira G. Curry was born in Fenton, Michigan on June 2, 1863 and graduated from the University of Michigan in 1886. He moved to Owosso in April 1887 and purchased the hardware stock of Hopkins and

Gould, operating at 108 N. Washington before moving to this address. Curry served as Owosso's mayor in 1896, and later as its treasurer. His residences included 327 N. Hickory and 520 East Main Streets. He was active in the Methodist Church.

1924-1930s Herman Dignan's Hardward Store. Dignan served as state representative 1935-1938; state senator 1939-1942; and Michigan Secretary of State 1943-1946. He resided at 620 Ada. The store later became an annex of the Arthur Ward Company, headquartered at 100 N. Washington. The interior of the store remains largely unchanged since the 1920s, retaining its wood floors, tin ceiling, oak cabinets, bins and drawers.

1968-present Charles and Lillian Schwab purchased 113 E. Main and opened Charles Lamp Studio. Schwab, an upholsterer by trade, preferred to repair and create lighting fixtures, and especially to restore antique lamps. The shop has been managed by the Schwabs' daughter, Marilyn Jones, since Charles' death in 1999.

### **115 E. Main**

1899-1900 Owosso & Corunna Electric Company and Electric Railroad. Streetcar tracks extending into Corunna were laid in 1893. The line was powered by steam during its first two years of operation, then switched to electricity in 1895. The Owosso-to-Corunna Railway was discontinued in 1926.

1920s Milliner's shop

1977 Albert Lieberman owns the building at 115 E. Main, leasing to "Jane's Card Shop."

### **Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 114-18 E. Main Street

**Site:** Owosso Community Players Annex

**Date:** 1954 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

The existing façade of 114-118 E Main Street was reconstructed following a fire in the 1950s, and it is fortunate that this was conducted to achieve stylistic harmony with the neighboring historic buildings. The result is a well-considered addition to an important central block in downtown Owosso that blends with the earlier structures without creating an effect of “false history.”

The building’s orange brick is a near-match for that on the handsome turn-of-the-century bank next door at 100 E. Main. Height is consistent with that of the flanking buildings, creating a smooth roofline for the entire block front. The design even replicates the decorative cornice of the bank and repeats the brick parapet above, slightly modified.

The symmetrical façade features two sets of window bays—one three windows wide and the other two windows wide—on each side of a central doorway. The prominent brick surround about the doorway complements the appearance of the bank, the entry bay of which projects slightly from the surface of the façade. While the aqua-toned inset panels of the window are consistent with their origin in the 1950s, the window bays echo those of the beautiful two-story bays on the bank building.

### History & Significance:

1906 ca. These addresses were built as three adjoining frame structures by Seldon S. Miner, attorney. It was known at the time as the “new Miner Building,” to distinguish it from another that Miner had built previously on the northwest corner of Washington and Main Streets, after the Pierce and Ward Building on that site burned in 1911.

Seldon Miner had practiced law in Corunna and was a prosecuting attorney for Shiawassee County from 1882 to 1889. When Miner moved to Owosso in 1892, he built the house on the northeast corner of King and Pine Streets, which he occupied until 1922, at which time he moved to a house at 318 W. Oliver Street.



- 1908 The three buildings were leased from Seldon Miner by Charles A. Lawrence, who had operated the New York Company (a.k.a. New York Racket Store) at 121 East Main Street since 1898. Lawrence's business was the largest department store in Shiawassee County, consisting of three complete stores and three additional storefronts. The entire enterprise was moved to 212-214 West Main Street in June, 1929, making room for the Kline and Co. Department Store.
- 1945-1960s Kline Bros. Department Store
- 1953 The "New Miner Building" was ravaged by fire in October, 1953, suffering \$100,000 worth of damage.
- 1956 ca. The current building was constructed.
- 1970 Greenly's Furniture, TVs and Appliances
- 1977 James Miner, attorney, was the building's owner of record and the occupant of its second floor.
- [date] The building was purchased by, and annexed to Key State Bank, later Chemical Bank.
- 2007 Chemical Bank deeded the annex to the Owosso Community Players after fire destroyed the Capitol Theatre, next door, now being rebuilt. Chemical Bank was at the time undertaking a million dollar rehabilitation of their main building and found it beneficial both to themselves and the Community Players to give the annex building away.
- 2010 Owosso Community Players Annex

#### **114 E. Main**

- 1900 D. F. Blair & Sons, Machinists

#### **116 E. Main**

- 1900 James Moran Curwood, Shoemaker. James M. Curwood was the father of James Oliver Curwood, author. The elder Curwood was born in England in 1836 and served with the 5th Ohio Cavalry during the Civil War. He moved from Ohio to Owosso in 1878, then back to Ohio to practice farming and shoemaking, apparently without success. He returned to Owosso in 1890, buying a house built in 1865, now gone, near the future site of the Curwood Castle.

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 117 E. Main Street  
**Site:** Tri-City Trading Post  
**Date:** Unknown  
**Status:** Non-Contributing



### Description:

This single-story blond brick building is devoid of ornamentation. It is unknown if any portion of the original building on this site remains in the current one, although it appears to be an infill building constructed in the mid-twentieth century.

### History & Significance:

- 1900 Revenaugh & Nicols, barbers
- 1936 The city directory does not list this address, suggesting that Burke's Hall, as it was known, may have been removed by this date, prior to construction of the current building around 1950.
- 1945-1969 Williams Drug Store
- 1950 ca Structure was built to replace Burke's Hall, the fate of which is unknown.
- 1970-1980 ca The Pantry Shelf, a convenience store, was operated by Peter Kokkinakos, who still owns the building.
- 1981 A fire wall in the newer building stopped a fire in January that destroyed two other buildings to the east.

### Photos:



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 122 E. Main Street

**Site:** South West Corner of Main & Park-The Lebowsky Theater

**Date:** 1925

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

(A tragic fire in 2007 spared the box office and second floor office suite, but devastated the theater and backstage areas. Currently under reconstruction, this description addresses the building as it appears today.)

Built in 1925 at the height of popularity for Vaudeville and silent films, the Capital Theater was designed as a temple of the arts, intent on impressing the theatergoer with a dramatic exterior and lush interior. While the entrance façade is essentially a large rectangle of dark brown brick, some expense was allowed for dramatic and ornate molded stone details which were laid into horizontal stringcourses across the second floor. The budget must have been lean, however, as all these stringcourses end after they wrap around the corner of the building; no such ornamentation appears on the long S. Park elevation. As viewed today, the first floor of the Main Street façade is covered in red tiles which extend up to the sills of the second floor window groups. This covering was probably a 1940s or 1950s ‘update’ of the entry, which historic photos reveal was originally clad in white stone that matched the applied ornament above. There was a large and ornate rectangular marquee over the entrance, which is in the middle of the street façade; today’s triangular marquee probably dates from the heavy-handed façade remodel that introduced the big red tiles. In these vintage photos, there are small businesses in the areas to the left and right of the center entry.

The second floor of the main façade survives as built. There are three groupings of windows; the center bay is five windows wide, and each side group contains three windows each. Each bay is highlighted by vertical white stone bands on each side. There is a continuous band of stone in a rope pattern across the top of the windows bays, serving as a continuous lintel; this row of stone is also decorated by four lions’ heads centered over the marquee. A narrow band of stone intersects the plain brick wall above, culminating in thick, projecting cornice. It is interesting to note that this building continues the cornice line of the other buildings on this E. Main block front, creating a continuous horizontal plane from S. Park to S. Washington. A plain parapet rises above the cornice and is capped by the final bandcourse of molded stone.

The long and plain wall of the S. Park elevation rises higher than the lobby area facing E. Main. Heavily damaged in the 2007 fire, this wall is partially destroyed, but it is still possible to see some of the tall and graceful round-topped indentations that graced this wall. The rear

section of the theater, four stories tall to accommodate the curtains and stage sets, is constructed of the same brown brick and lacks ornamentation of any sort. This was a utilitarian section of the theater and the exterior proclaimed as much.

### **History & Significance:**

The first City Hall building was constructed in 1885, at the southwest corner of Main and Park Streets. Park Street did not then extend south beyond Main Street (heretofore, City Hall was on the second floor of Gould's Hall at 217-219 N. Washington). At street level, were the fire barns which held the two horse-drawn fire engines and the horses themselves. In 1870, the town's first fire company was organized and its equipment consisted of a hook and ladder truck drawn by hand, a two wheeled hose cart drawn by horses and eight fire extinguishers. Frederick Wildermuth was foreman of that fire company. In 1873, the fire department was described as consisting of a good engine house, a Babcock patent steam fire engine and a hook and ladder company. The department purchased in 1876 a Silsby steam fire engine. Water was supplied by the Shiawassee River, the mill race and two large cisterns. Upstairs were the offices for City officials.



This building was torn down to make way for the Capitol Theatre , which was constructed in 1925, by Joseph H. Lebowsky, a prominent clothier and businessman. The grand opening was March 4, 1926. The latest technology and only the best of materials was used in its construction. The theatre's one thousand seat capacity plus the big time entertainment it scheduled made it a major attraction for the Owosso area. In 1952, the theatre was remodeled to accommodate movies, but the dressing rooms, the backstage and balconies remained.

On March 25, 1985, the theatre was purchased by The Christian Independent Fellowship, for use as a worship venue.

### **Lebowsky History:**

The theater was designed by leading Detroit architect, George J. Bachmann, and it featured performers from the famous B.F. Keith Vaudeville Circuit. The Capitol Theater did not host live acts for long; it was soon converted for “talkies” and films were shown there until 1985 when it gave way to modernization and the multiplex cinema concept.

Today, the Capitol Theater is Owosso’s last remaining historic theater — a remnant of an age when going to the movies was an event and the theater itself, the architecture and décor, was part of the spectacle.

With the help of the Lebowsky family in 1990, the Capitol became the home of the Owosso Community Players and was renamed, in honor of its builder, the Lebowsky Center. By giving new life to the old building, the community preserved the eastern gateway to downtown’s historic central business district and created a desirable venue, not just for the Owosso

Community Players, but for numerous performing artists, musical groups, and civic organizations.

The devastating fire that swept through the Lebowsky Center in February 2007 destroyed most of the original Capitol Theater. The molded plaster details, decorative painting, original seats and balcony are all gone.

The Lobby is unrecognizable and only one arch remains over what used to be a series of three box seats on the west wall. Newly purchased theatrical and building systems were also completely destroyed. The ensuing demolition removed the precarious roof and remaining east wall. Only the Main Street facade and the magic of the Theater remain intact.

Enough remains, in fact, that Owosso's last historic theater can be reconstructed and will reopen as the Lebowsky Center for the Performing Arts—a multipurpose community facility dedicated to live theatre, culture, and film. The Center for the Performing Arts will remain the home of the resident troupe—The Owosso Community Players—who will continue to manage the building. The opportunity exists to redesign the interior of the theatre building so that it better meets the needs of its 21<sup>st</sup> century patrons and artists. Not only will the damaged portions of the theatre be rebuilt, the entire complex will be re-imagined. When the reconstruction is complete, the Center for the Performing Arts will be the only venue of its kind in mid-Michigan.

Sources: Linda Keenan, President of the Community Players, Owosso Bicentennial Book; Owosso Historic Home Tour booklet.

**Photos:**



**WEST MAIN STREET**

**INTENSIVE LEVEL SURVEYS**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 102-12 W. Main Street

**Site:** 102-04 W. Main Street, Treasures Back Door  
106 W. Main Street, Spagnuolo Chocolate Shop  
108 W. Main Street, Soy Beam Candle Shop  
110 W. Main Street, Cerveney Jewelers  
112 W. Main Street, Mootsies Gallery

**Date:** 1886

**Status:** 102-04 Non-contributing  
106-12 Contributing

### Description:

The mid-block storefronts in this block of W. Main, framed by large, three-story anchor buildings at each corner, are the remnants of a larger row of buildings. When built in 1886, there were seven storefronts, each with tall narrow windows surmounted by Renaissance Revival lintels and tall parapets with ornate cornices. A trio of three bay storefronts on the west end were balanced on the east end by four narrower storefronts, each two window bays wide. As early histories refer to this row as five buildings, it is possible that each three bay storefronts was a stand-alone building and the other two buildings were divided into two storefronts each.

As originally built, the street level of each storefront featured a recessed entrance and display windows set in wood construction. There are some elegant Renaissance Revival details on the piers framing the first floor facade at 106 W. Main which are thought to be original. It is therefore assumed that these details were repeated on each sidewall pier across the facades. A wide and plain marquee ran across the top of each; in the 1910 photo large canvas awnings cover all but one of the marquees. Businesses used these awnings to display their names, since the marquees were not exposed. Just above each marquee ran an elaborate cornice, mimicking the even grander cornice on the parapet. Only one section of this lower cornice survives on 108 W. Main. (There is a simpler replacement of this cornice on 106 W. Main.)

On the second floor, each storefront is outlined by raised brick piers that segue into the flat parapet with an intricate but narrow band of brick design as a frieze in each section. The tall and narrow windows on the second floor were framed left and right, by a raised row of brick down each side, and were capped with heavy, slightly arched lintels. Old photos show, and outlines on the buildings themselves confirm that the lintels once included pedimented tops. The flat and plain parapet visible today on three of the storefronts was once graced by an elaborate cornice. (Both parapet and cornice are plainly visible in the 1910 photo.)



The reader has by now noticed there are seven storefronts in the 1910 photo but only three storefronts survive today that are recognizable as part of that block. In the photo of the current block front, the facade of the far right two story building is a bland 50s blonde brick nonentity, just the width of 106 and 108 W. Main combined, with a modern entrance and small modern windows. Owosso history is unclear about the fate of this section of the block under discussion; given the height of this section exactly matches the 1886 buildings to the West, the original 1886 building (102 and 104 W. Main) may well survive under the current mid-century facade.

The street level facade of 110 W. Main has been completely reworked. This work was carried out in 1930, when L. Paul Ball Jewelers commissioned the stunning and intricately beautiful entry that graces their storefront to this day.

The plain and dignified brick facade for 112 W. Main, currently housing Mootzie's is radically different from its neighbors to the East, but it is in fact one of the original seven stores. (In the 1910 photo, this was the middle three-bay building, with the exposed marquee.) The far left three-bay building was razed, and the site incorporated into the massive building to the West, long known as Christian's Department Store. The darker brick facade seen today at 112 W. Main is a direct result of that construction project. When the far left building was razed, circa 1947, history records that the shared center support wall and the old brick facade at 112 W. Main crumbled with it. Therefore, the facade at 112 W. Main was refaced with the restrained facade we see today.

So, the view of the 100 block of W. Main we enjoy today may well incorporate six out of the seven two-story mid-block buildings we see in the 1910 photo.

## **History & Significance:**

### **102-04 W. Main – Treasures Back Door**

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 1928-1967 | part of Kresge's Dime Store, which also had entrances on Washington   |
| 1967-1977 | Jupiter Store with entrances as well on Washington. Jupiter was the forerunner and test store for K-Mart owned by Kresge                          |
| 1980's    | Mini-Mall entrance linking several stores together with an entrance on Washington Street as well. Developed by Jerry and Jane Idle and Bill Davis |
| Present   | An entrance/part of store for Treasure's Antiques and Cafe.   |

### **106 W. Main - Spagnuolo Chocolates**

This building and four other adjacent were constructed by George Thomas, the owner of the Thomas Block on the northwest corner of Main and Washington. (See the history for 101 N. Washington).

George Thomas was born in 1812 in London, England. George came to Owosso in 1869, purchasing the junction house from James Apted. By 1871, he had constructed a new Junction House across the tracks from the original one. The Junction House was the depot/dining room

servicing the trains which came through town. In 1886 he built five business houses on West Main on property which he had purchased, just west of Washington street, while he lived on the northwest corner of Main and Washington in one of the oldest frame houses in the city. The frame building was C. L. Goodhue's Grocery Store and is found on the 1857 map of Owosso. Thomas tore down the old frame building to construct his new three story brick building on this corner in 1888. George Thomas also did business in real estate and owned and developed an entire subdivision (The Thomas Addition) in southwest Owosso. He also sold ten acres of his land for the Catholic Cemetery at South and Chipman Streets for \$1,313.24. He continued to operate the Junction House, as well; Owosso at this time was a city of over 4000 people.

- 1892            Another Saloon
- 1900            L.H. Sanderhoff Saloon at 106 & 108 W. Main. Sanderhoff played on Owosso's famous World's Championship Indoor Ball Team.
- 1910            Real Estate Office of L.J.Kime
- 1915            F. Charles Leitch, Barber
- 1924            John B. Graymer Shops
- 1928            Alabama Cotton Shop
- 1932            Newark Shoe Store
- Late 30s        McGillvray's Drug Store
- 1990s          Funny Pages Hobby Shop before relocating to 113 N. Washington.

**108 W. Main - Soy Beam Candles**

- 1900            L.H. Sanderhoff Saloon and at 106 W. Main
- 1908-1910     Marvin & Symes Saloon, with Fred H. Peterson selling wines and liquors
- 1915            James Spagnuolo and George Caruso, fruit vendors
- 1924-1932     D.H. Wren Jewelers
- 1977            Campbell Jewelers, purchased by Joe Cerveny and operated under that name until moving into Cerveny Jewelers at their present location at 110 W. Main

**110 W. Main - Cerveny Jewelers**

- 1892            Meat Market of Edward Webb, in 1894 Vitale Domiano, Confectioner
- 1894            Vitale Domiano, Confectioners

- 1898-1900 E.G. Westlake 5 & 10c Store
- 1921-1930 Candyland Chocolates and Restaurant, subsequently moving to 112 W. Main
- 1930 Re-designed by C.H. Maliskey, Contractor and L. Paul Ball

This building was remodeled by Leo Paul Ball for his Jewelry Store and Optometric Practice. L. Paul Ball helped to design the store with sweeping staircases, a second floor fireplace, case brass window frames with arched tops, leaded glass windows, and onyx facing under the windows and plaster in relief forms for the facade over the ground floor.

H. Maliskey and Son of Owosso was the contractor to L.P. Ball for constructing his storefront. Maliskey had his offices in the New Miner Building and was also the contractor of record for Curwood Castle, Memorial Hospital Nurses Home, Johnson Buick Garage, and The Paris Hotel in Owosso. The original Chandeliers and showcases are still being used, while other showcases have been stored in the second floor of the building. These stored display cases, according to Joe Cerveny, were made by the Owosso Casket Company. They are made of quarter-sawn oak, beautifully carved with glass fronts. The glass

### **112 W. Main - Mootsies Gallery**

- 1890-1895 Otto L. Sprague purchased the stock of S.B. Pitts, druggist at this location, and was doing business here from 1890 until 1895 when he moved to Washington Street. Otto Sprague served two years as City treasurer, one year as Owosso City Clerk, served on the Board of Education and was the Department of Oil Inspector (sic).
- 1895-1906 Roth and Sullivan, Merchant Tailors and Haberdashers could be found at this address while J.H. Waite, Physician, had his offices upstairs.
- 1932-1950s Candyland, a candy making shop and restaurant, owned by Bill Trenkis, who was a candy maker. George Skestos partnered with Mr. Trenkis and operated this business. These newly arrived immigrants from Greece along with several other Greek families came to Owosso to explore the American dream and did so successfully. Their first location was next door at 110 W. Main from 1921 until 1932 when they moved to 112 W. Main, making room at 110 W. Main for L. Paul Ball, Jeweler, who had just purchased the building at 110 W. Main.

The chocolates were dipped on the second floor and stored in a pantry in the basement to ripen. There was a very long soda fountain on one side of the store and booths and candy cases on the opposite side. People came from as far as Detroit on a regular basis to purchase the hand made chocolates and home made ice cream, according to a former employee, now in her 80's, Donna Hebert.

Eventually John Krust became partners with Skestos until 1945 when Skestos retired while Krust continued with the restaurant for another decade. John Krust also developed the subdivision south of the High School in 1962 after the new school building was erected.

- 1970s Lura Lee Dress Shop was the occupant and then Pro-One All Sports which was owned by John Krust.
- 1991-present The building is currently owned by Don and Jody Marrah, who undertook a massive rehabilitation of the building including beautiful new black walnut floor boards, elegant chandeliers, and rebuilt entry which Don says were not original. A previous owner told him in 1947, when they were reconstructing the building next door at 114, which was for over fifty years the Struber Shoe Store, to be included as Christian's Department Store Men's Shop, the party wall almost totally collapsed damaging the front of 112 and thereafter changing the facade. At this time the Marrah's are still working on the second floor with the thought to make it an apartment for themselves. The current business is "Mootsie's Gallery which is an art gallery and martini and wine bar owned by the Marrah's.

## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 113-23 W. Main Street

**Site:** True Value Hardware

**Date:** 1871

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This two-story brick mid-Victorian commercial building occupies the southeast corner of W. Main and S. Ball Streets, with six store fronts on the long W. Main façade. The side elevation on S. Ball is more utilitarian and features a minimum of ornament. A vintage photo shows this building in its original state, with 113 and 115 each two bays wide on the second level, and the other addresses are three bays wide.

The store fronts at 113, 115 and 117 have been completely sheathed in mid-20<sup>th</sup> century tiles, totally screening the historical facades. The possibility exists that this was built as one structure with six storefronts or that it is comprised of two buildings with three store fronts each. The street level fronts of the next two store fronts, 119 and 123, have been covered by a solid brick wall and a mansard-inspired metal overhang, but the original Victorian second floor façade survives. Finally, the first floor of the westernmost store front, at 123, has also been heavily reworked in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, but this remodeling did not include the removal of the original, ornate cornice which graces the area between the first and second floors. The second floor of this section features a cut corner; the vintage photo shows the street-level façade originally featured the angled corner, with a window.

The W. Main second floor façade still evident above 119, 121 and 123 features three bays in each of the three sections, with a single window in the cut corner area. These window bays are very tall and slender, square-topped, symmetrically spaced, and capped by heavy, flat-topped Renaissance Revival lintels. The projecting vertical piers rise up to meet the projecting parapet; these junctions are marked by slightly curving detailing. Under the slight projection of the parapet, the masons included a narrow band of projecting bricks to form a dentil pattern.

Happily, the ornate wooden cornice has survived, with a deep projection and elaborate corbels projecting down into the plain brick walls over the windows. These downward projecting corbels are evenly spaced to sit visually exactly between each window bay. Because of the cut corner, the front section of the far right section is narrower than the others. The builder chose to continue the three-bay pattern in this smaller section, forcing the windows (and the corbels, etc) to be much closer together. On the cut corner, the single window is the same dimensions as the others and carries the same lintel; the brickwork above the lintel bears a charming half-round design, with dentil trim.

The side elevation along S. Ball is a solid and unvarying brick wall pierced by five evenly-spaced window bays on each floor; these windows are the same dimension as those found on the front façade, including lintels. There is a slight adjustment downward in the building height. The elaborate wood cornice of the W. Main façade and the cut corner ends just after the cut corner, further accentuating the different treatments of the two street elevations.

### **History & Significance:**

#### **113 W. Main**

1871            The structure was built by Andrew Patterson.

1901-1915      Charles C. Duff sold groceries, fruits and teas, advertising that he would pay cash for butter and eggs. Duff was a Civil War veteran who served with the New York Infantry and fought at the Battle of Antietam. After the war, in 1865, he moved to Owosso and worked for five years in the store of his brother-in-law, Mathias Stewart, before commencing his own business. He established himself as a wholesale and retail grocer who packaged coffees and teas under his own label. He conducted business in Owosso from 1870 until 1922, in the end doing so at the building he had constructed at 120 W. Exchange. He served the Congregational Church as choir director for thirty years.

1928            The Lincoln Billiard Parlor is so named for its proximity to the Lincoln Theatre, next door to the east. Other tenants included Roy Amos, who sold cigars, and Mr. Beehler, who operated a barbershop.

The Lincoln Theater would have been located in the driveway and parking lot to the east of the present True Value Hardware store. The theatre was built as the Lincoln, in about 1916, renamed during the Depression years the Minter Theatre, and in the forties the Center Theater. It was torn down in the late 1950's. The Temple Theater at 117 W. Main was dismantled by Fred Patterson, and the materials from the Temple recycled into the Lincoln Theater. Fred Patterson was the son of the builder of this commercial block, Andrew Patterson, and the owner of the National Hotel on the southwest corner of Main and Washington.

#### **113 W. Main**

1900            Owosso Outfitting Company, which was a second hand store selling furniture

#### **117 W. Main**

1900            Globe Lunch Room and Billiards owned by W. H. Tripp moved from its previous location at 113 E. Main in 1892. C. H. Blizzard was the previous owner, also selling cigars and tobacco.

1906 Dora Kenyon and Company selling millinery upstairs at the Temple Theater.

### **119 W. Main**

1900 E. Arkles Restaurant

1906 N. L. Lucas restaurant Also one of the building's tenants was the Postal Telegraph-Cable Company in the same year

1977 Conover Hardware with the building owned by William Upham

### **121 W. Main**

1900 Blackwood Brothers Hardware Store

1977 Triangle Dell Paint & Wallpaper, building owned by William Upham

### **123 W. Main**

1870 Mr. Payne was listed as operating a harness shop at this address, but it is uncertain whether his business was located in this, or a prior building, on this site.

1899 N. F. Reinsberg, saloon

1906 Nicholas Miesen, saloon, and owner of the Muskegon Brewery at this location, one of three operating in Owosso at this time.

1915 Young Women's Christian Association

1950s-1990s Julie K's, a women's clothing store, was operated by Julie Ackerman, while the building was owned by William Upham.

2010 The building is owned by the Gilbert family and used by them as part of the True Value Hardware store, which they own and operate.

### **Additional Information:**

Andrew Patterson was born in Monroe County, New York, moving to Lapeer, Michigan with his parents and learning the trade of printer. He came to Owosso in 1856 with John Ingersoll with the purpose of founding a Republican newspaper.

Patterson purchased the National Hotel from George Knill in 1871 and in that same year constructed "three fine brick business houses" directly to the west of the hotel for income property. Arthur B. Patterson, Andrew's son, was born in Owosso in 1860 and became the proprietor of the National Hotel. The National Hotel was torn down to make way for the new Owosso Hotel which was constructed in 1920's, and torn down in 2006 due to major

deterioration. Previous to the National Hotel was Knill's Hotel owned by George Knill, which succeeded the Union Hotel owned by Stillman Harding, which was shown on the 1857 map of Owosso.

**Photos:**





## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 114-16 W. Main Street

**Site:** Vineyard Church Office / Dollar Daze

**Date:** Various

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

The three-story masonry structure at 114 W. Main presents a unified facade with long rows of symmetrical window bays on the second and third floors, a repetitious frieze of stepped bricks, a large parapet, and a smooth applied outer shell of (probably) cement over brick. To generations of Owossoans, this was the venerable Christian's Department Store. However, the building today masks a great deal of history under its uniform facade: the progressive expansion by Owosso's most successful dry goods merchant on this site from a six-bay wide store to a fifteen-bay wide behemoth.

The vintage photo (in appendix A) shows the block front of 100 W. Main in about 1910. From the left, one sees a large three-story brick Victorian building with eight large window bays facing W. Main and a cut corner entrance (over the cornice of which appears a marquee for HALL BROS., testifying to an even earlier history for this building) with windows facing the intersection of W. Main and N. Ball Streets. The storefront behind the cut corner and the first two windows (easily discernable by the light awnings and white paint on its various wood components) was occupied at this date by Byerly's Grocery. The rest of this impressive building, with its wide, flat-topped windows and beautiful wide cornice with classical ornamentation, was the D.M. Christian store. Mr. Christian chose to paint his various architectural elements in a very dark color, which helps to visually separate his business from Byerly's. Christian's also occupied the two-story building to the right, which was built in the exact style of the three-story building next door. From this point, moving to the right, we see a long row of mid-Victorian two-story buildings: this is the 1878 Thomas Block, with seven store fronts, three fronts three windows wide and four fronts two windows wide.

Christian's was so successful that, within the next 15 years, the two-story section of the store has been raised to a full three stories. (The second vintage photo, circa 1925, presented here shows the same block front from the other corner.) It is interesting to note, on close inspection, that the new third floor has been built to match the late Victorian design of the original three-story building, even including the wide and elaborate cornice (which was probably removed and reapplied). By the 1920s, this Victorian style was considered hopelessly out of style, so Mr. Christian must have made the decision that matching his existing building was more important. It is also possible to surmise, from comparing these vintage photos that Christian's expanded into

the Byerly's section during this 15 year interval; the 1925 photo clearly shows the window trim and cornice of the Byerly section has been painted a dark color to match Christian's trim color.

At some point before 1943, Christian's needed to expand again. Acquiring the westernmost of the two-story buildings in the Thomas block (identifiable in the 1910 photo as the three-bay with the darker window surrounds and cornice), it was either demolished or heavily rebuilt as a three story structure attached to the Christian building. People who remember Christian's as Owosso's finest department store will remember this section as the men's department. The heavy masonry wall that had been Christian's easternmost support wall was left largely intact, probably without choice. There were only two openings between the men's department and the rest of the store. Thus, the men's department was largely separate from the rest of the store, which had been opened up to one huge room on the first floor. (The assumed date of 1943 for this addition comes from information pertaining to 112 W. Main, which is discussed in the section pertaining to that address.)

At some point after the 1920's photo was taken, and quite possibly at the time that the Thomas block building was rebuilt as a three story addition, an attempt was made to unify the various components (and to reduce the Victorian elements) that comprise the now fifteen bay wide W. Main facade, giving us the street elevation we see today. At this point, the elaborate cornices must have been removed, the window bays filled with glass block, and the parapet built or retrofitted. The bricks were covered by stucco or concrete, creating a clean surface and hiding some wonderful Victorian brick detailing, like inset panels of textured brick over the upper floor windows. It is likely that the sidewalk level of both street-facing facades were modernized at this point, with the insertion of huge expanses of plate glass window walls. Interestingly, the locations of the original sidewalls are still evident today as the masonry piers between each display window. The parapet is either a reworked version of the one under the elaborate cornice or was built to give cohesion to the roofline. There are stepped brick designs in the frieze which appear to be original to the Hall Bros. building; the 1910 photo shows the stepped brick frieze clearly.

The cut corner at W Main and N. Ball Streets was at some point rebuilt as a 90 degree corner, resulting in the slightly narrower window bay at the Western end of the building. Fourteen bays appear to be uniform in width; the narrowness of the far left window bay testifies to the former presence of the cut corner. This is also true on the N. Ball facade, where the corner pier and another pier a few feet down N. Ball create a section from the cut corner infill.

The N. Ball elevation is much simpler than its counterpart on W. Main, with the far smaller and simpler windows surviving from the earliest date of the Hall Bros./Byerly's era, probably in the 1870s.

The large building we see today is very unusual for downtown Owosso. Most businesses, when faced with the need for more space, built a new building and moved. Christian's in its key location in the heart of downtown, chose to expand into existing buildings and/or to construct additions. Further, while nearly all of Owosso's century old buildings have been 'modernized' on the street level, few owners sought to undertake structural alterations involving the facades of the upper floors. (Owosso has several wonderful Victorian facades that have been totally covered by screens or false fronts; we have chosen to call these applied fronts 'slipcovers.') Today, in 2010, the building we see at 116 W. Main is the culmination of, and an important reminder of, more than 100 years of Owosso's mercantile history.

## History & Significance:

Louis C. Hall was born three miles south of Owosso on August 31, 1862. In 1892 he associated himself with his brother Willis Hall and under the name of Hall Bros., they purchased a bankrupt stock of groceries and from March 4 of 1891 they engaged in the grocery business, which they conducted until 1901 when they sold to Frazer Bros. After disposing of the retail business, the wholesale grocery firm of Hall Bros, Nicols & Dutcher was conducting two elevators. Louis Hall bought back the retail grocery business of Frazer Brothers, and entered into a partnership with J.S. Byerly, his brother-in-law, in 1902.

Upon the sale of the wholesale grocery firm, by their terms of their agreement, L.C. Hall attained two elevators. L.C. Hall's main focus was his elevator business and in his first year in business, 1908, he increased the volume from \$75,000 to over \$200,000. "Mr. Hall handles all kinds of grain, but makes a big specialty of beans, employing from 25 to 30 girls during the season in hand picking this product for the eastern markets. He also conducts with the Owosso elevator an extensive wood and coal business, keeping two delivery teams busily engaged. "(1908 Souvenir of Owosso) Willis Hall continued in the grocery business and later had a grocery store located at 113 N. Washington, and he lived for many years at 430 Genesee Street.

This building eventually became enfolded into the Christian's Department Store (118-120-122 W. Main). In 1900 E.M. Christian, dry goods had his store located here while on the angled corner entrance at 122 W. Main could be found Hall Brothers Groceries. (1900 Polk Directory) Christians Department Store continued in this location through the 1980's when the business was sold to Winkleman's Department Stores. That department store closed in the late 1980s or 1990s ending a very elegant and illustrious era of shopping in Owosso. This building then housed a mattress company and now a dollar store, surely a sign of the times.

D.M. Christian was born July, 1857, Chagrin Falls, Ohio. Married Huldah Donsereaux at Chagrin Falls, June 21, 1879 and had a son Leigh Hugh, B. May 1882. Daniel founded the D.M. Christian Department Store in Owosso in 1885. His brother, Thomas, had already located in Owosso, and had a jewelry store at 118 N. Washington. They were Methodists and active temperance advocates. They resided at 600 N. Water until Sept. 1917 when they moved into the C.L. Goodhue house on the northwest corner of Oliver and Water Streets. D.M. Christian continued to reside at 600 N. Water, his son moving across the street. Leigh Hugh Christian inherited his father's department store. Christian's was a three story department store with elevators from basement to top floor. The basement level had a snack bar ad coffee shop, while Christian's Restaurant, a very elegant spot to meet, was located on the second floor of an adjoining building and connected to the main store with a passageway over the alley, or through the millinery department mezzanine level through double doors. During Prohibition, Leigh Christian had the idea to form a "City Club"—a private club in which people could legally drink alcoholic beverages in his restaurant space. The Owosso City Club was born and expanded to encompass the entire second floor of the building located on the southeast corner of Ball and Exchange. (120 N. Ball) and the second floor of 123 and 121 W. Exchange. The Owosso City Club, the site of many elegant social events and business lunches and dinners, consisted of a bar and large card playing and cigar smoking were; a Main Dining Room, which could seat 200 people; and two other smaller dining rooms which would probably seat fifty dining guests. A large kitchen area completed the purpose of the establishment. The Owosso City Club membership consisted of the most socially prominent families in Owosso and surrounding areas

and thrived until the 1970's when membership declined and being "exclusive" was not so popular a thought. It closed in 1984.

The City Club bar and lounge and one entire dining room were furnished with Woodard wrought iron furniture in the Chantilly rose pattern, made in Owosso, probably in the 1960s. The Woodard brothers and their families were, of course, members of the City Club.

### **114 W. Main**

This building was built by Ludwig Stuber and his brother, E. Stuber, 1873 and rebuilt by Leigh Christian in 1947 for the expansion of Christian's Department Store.

Ludwin Stuber and his brother, E. Stuber came to Owosso from Waldeck, Germany in 1857 and themselves built a frame building in which to sell shoes and boots. He and his brother also constructed this brick building. From 1873 until 1923 he operated the shoe store at this address, until the business was sold to Dr. Immerman, a dentist who bought it as an investment. The Immerman's Shoe Store was managed by Guy Henry, father of Norm Henry who eventually bought this show business and expanded it to five other towns in Michigan. Refer to the history for 119 North Washington.

The storefront was acquired by Lee Christian to expand the Christian's Department Store by opening the wall between the department store and the shoe store in 1947. Construction was begun and the shared party wall between 114 & 112 W. Main collapsed nearly ruining the building next door as well. This building was known for years as Christian's Men's department.

This is currently used by the Vineyards Church as their meeting place.

### **Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 200-06 W. Main Street  
(also includes 107-11 N. Ball Street)



**Site:** Abbie Gould Block

**Date:** 1898 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This substantial structure on the northwest corner of Main Street, at the corner of Ball Street, originally contained businesses with addresses on both streets. The building displays an almost Georgian simplicity and elegance, with understated window surrounds, elegant quoins, and absence of Victorian detail. A build date during the Victorian period, however, is supported by the fact that the building's Victorian neighbor at 208 W. Main was built *after* 206, appended to the wall of the latter building. (Interestingly, the cornice of 208, with its Adam-style detail, was extended onto the façade of 204-206, sitting squarely atop the quoins of the latter building.)

While the four sets of three-window bays on the second floor suggest that the elevation on W. Main originally contained four storefronts, twentieth century alterations have reconfigured the space into two smaller storefronts on the corner of N. Ball and two larger ones to the west. These square-topped windows feature simple brick lintels and gray stone keystones. A frieze of brick dentils is laid above a narrow brick stringcourse, topped by a wide brick parapet that shows evidence of a cornice no longer present.

The second floor façade is visually divided into two distinct halves by a row of quoins separating two sets of six windows, and by the fact that each set of six windows shares a single unifying sill of rusticated stone. The distinction between the dual storefronts is reinforced by recent replacement of brick in the façade of the western section. This repair work stabilized some dangerously deteriorated masonry and was, fortunately, skillfully carried out to replicate the original brickwork, creating a dramatic contrast with the painted brick in the section of the façade to the east.

The street level of the façade on N. Ball (containing 107, 109 and 111 N. Ball) has been extensively reworked, while the second floor remains largely intact, although sans cornice. The second floor windows match those on W. Main Street, accompanied by the same quoins, dentil frieze, brick stringcourse and brick parapet. The first storefront on N. Ball begins far enough down the block to accommodate depth of the storefront at 200 W. Main.

**History & Significance:**

**204 W. Main**

1932 J. L. Byerly, grocers

**204 & 206 W. Main**

1898 Knapp & Smith Funeral Services

1907-1924 Jennings and Foster, furniture

**206 W. Main**

1931 Wm. H. Ross, Wallpaper

1932 Mark's Stores, Inc.

**107 N. Ball**

1915 Benson Whitely, tailor

1921 Shiawassee Motor Sales

1924-1963 Fred Fricke, Shoe repair (107-1/2)

1928 Orison C. Whitney, optometrist

1928-1936 Harold Johns, barber

1941-1945 Alden Soper, barber

1948 Oak Hill Florist

1950-1955 Howe Real Estate

1960-1970s Joe's Barber Shop

**109 N. Ball**

1915 Dr. Jesse Parker

1924 Sunnyside Florist

1928 Sweet's Bakery

1941-1953 Frank Wondal, shoe repair

1953-1964 Milton Eicher, chiropodist

**111 N. Ball**

1915 No such address

1932 Owosso Fish Market

1936-1950 Family Beer and Wine

**W. Main Photos:**



**N. Ball Photos:**





## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 201 W. Main Street

**Site:** Shippee and Smith Building / Scrubs

**Date:** 1910 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This two-story brick commercial building dates from the first quarter of the twentieth century, constructed of a rough textured dark brown brick that was not employed locally until well after 1900. Fronting on W. Main with a side elevation on S. Ball, the brickwork is more sedate than that of its neighboring Victorian-era buildings.

The street-level façade and entrance have been reworked, but the upper portion of the building appears unaltered from its original state. Above the contemporary entry and covered first-floor façade, a course of vertical brick runs the width of the building. A second such row runs parallel above the second floor windows, serving as lintels, and a third row runs just below the stepped brick frieze.

Two pairs of double-hung windows with stone sills are symmetrically positioned in the second floor façade. A little flourish is provided by a diamond-shaped stone inset above each pair of windows, between the second and third bandcourses of vertical brick. Three stepped rows of projecting bricks form a simple frieze beneath the parapet.

The side elevation facing S. Ball appears to retain its original configuration of windows, suggesting apartments located on the second floor. Two original doorways from the street are apparent, but have been bricked in. The first floor windows on this side of the building are small and square, high enough to ensure privacy. The second floor façade features four large single windows, a small window (perhaps opening from a bathroom), and an attractive large oriel bay with three windows. The stepped brick frieze, plain parapet and all three bandcourses of vertical brick continue around this side of the building.

The west wall of the structure, the second floor of which is now exposed above the roof of its neighbor to the west, is constructed of brick that is different and older than that of the rest of the building. It may be that this west wall was originally part of a building located immediately to the west of 201 W. Main, at 203, originally the site of a blacksmith's works.



**History & Significance:**

- 1900            C. R. Barie Saloon is located here, next door to H. D. Hanes, blacksmith,  
                  at 203 W. Main.
- 1920's           Anderson's Owosso Floral Company
- 1977-1999      Shippee & Smith Sporting Goods, owned by Clarence Smith

## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 203-13 W. Main Street

**Site:** Various Businesses

**Date:** 1925 ca.

**Status:** Non-Contributing

### Description:

This single-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building was originally built with six small store fronts. Since then, the façade has undergone significant alterations. Each small storefront has a large display window and recessed entrance. The only building which has any significant style would be 209 which has a white painted wood front and a stylized country home type of door.

The building's original appearance and construction dates have not been determined. A photo dating from the 1910s shows the buildings on this site were little more than wooden shacks. It appears the building may have been constructed in the 1920's as these are the first city directory listings at these multiple addresses. The rear elevation looks like it is built of older brick, so one theory may be that the building was constructed using recycled brick.

### History & Significance:

#### 203 W. Main

1899- H. D. Haines, blacksmith was located at this site

1906 J. J. Ash conducted his bicycle repair business at this site

1924 ca The row of single-story buildings at 203, 205, 207, 209 and 211 W. Main were constructed, replacing the very modest wood frame buildings previously on this sight.

1970's Little Dutch Shoe Store

2010 Building is currently owned by Joe Cerveny, jeweler

#### 205 W. Main

1921 Sinclair Refining company and also Watson & Steven, contractors

1952 Bakery  
1960's Cerveny's Jeweler's before moving across the street to 110 W.Main  
1977 Little Dutch Shoe Store

### **207-09 W. Main**

1924 Charles L. Beehler, barber (209)  
1927 Fern Café (209)  
1928 Baxter and Bowers Office Supplies occupied 207 and 209, followed by Baxter and Larsen then Central Office Supply, finally Selleck's Office Supply.  
1932 Boston Cafe (209)  
1980s-1990s Robert Selleck, son of William, bought the company from his father and continued operating the business. Eventually Selleck's encompassed 209, 211, 213 W. Main. They closed in the mid-1980's.

### **211 W. Main**

1921 A. E. Hollis, Plumber specializing in steam heat  
1924-1938 Miller's Creamery

### **213 W. Main**

1938 Sherman-Ross Gulf Gas Station

### **Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 208 W. Main Street

**Site:** La Bella's / vacant

**Date:** 1895 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This two-story brick late-Victorian commercial building is simpler in some respects than its local three-story counterparts from the same era, but it possesses a single significant attribute unique among them: a large, elaborate cornice with delicate, beautiful Adam-style swag ornamentation. This classical detail atop a heavy Victorian storefront is surprising and helps to date the building to the late 1890s, when the White City at the 1893 Columbian Exposition turned Victorian architecture on its ear.

208 W. Main was constructed after 200-206 W. Main, its immediate neighbor to the east, onto the west sidewall of which 208 is appended. The aforementioned Adam-style cornice abuts awkwardly across the shared wall into the neighboring building to the depth of its westernmost pier, a disruptive feature, as the two buildings' masonry does not match, and the quoins at the corner of 200-206 are not balanced on the opposite corner of 208.

The first floor façade remains mostly as originally configured. The entrance has been somewhat restyled, although the recessed portal and door to the second floor stairwell remain intact.

The second floor brick facade includes a row of three symmetrically-placed windows capped by transoms and separated by piers. The double-hung windows sit upon simple stone sills. A wide stone bandcourse crosses the façade, running through the left pier, but not the right, disrupting the building's symmetry.

Three rows of bricks above this band of stone, there are three rows of darker bricks of a most unusual finish; these rows do not continue into either sidewall pier. These bricks appear rough, like rustication on stone. Then, after a few rows of regular bricks, there are three panels of this rough brick, the same width as the window bays and seven or eight rows high. The introduction of this shadow and texture is unusual for Owosso buildings. Other than the wide band of stone and the Adam cornice, these areas of rough brick are the primary ornamentation on this building.



### **History & Significance:**

- 1892 Converse & Sons, Meats.
- 1900-1908 Jacob Barie's Meat Market advertises the sale of fresh and salted meats, as well as on-premises slaughter of cattle and hogs, and the rendering of lard.
- 1917 The city map from this year indicates a wooden building and covered shed behind this building at the back of the lot, perhaps the slaughterhouse or smokehouse. Then the map describes to the east on the alley, a wooden building owned by E. A. Gould, an empty lot and then a brick building on the corner of Ball and Main referred to as Abbie Gould Allison's brick building. Abbie Gould Allison was the wife of jeweler Charles Allison and the daughter of Ebenezer Gould, early pioneer of Owosso.
- 1977 Lena Pelio School of Dance and the building is owned by Glen Gale.
- 2010 Currently the building is empty after serving as a beauty shop for three or four years.

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 210 W. Main Street

**Site:** Dr. Roger A. Siminski, Chiropractor

**Date:** 1875 ca. (later remodeling)

**Status:** Non-Contributing



### Description:

This two-story brick commercial building initially appears to have replaced an earlier building between its taller red brick late-Victorian neighbors. The historical record and an examination of the rear of the building, however, indicates that this building is actually a survivor from the 1870s, although nothing remains of the original façade. The entrance area has been altered in the twentieth century to include large contemporary display windows at the street level. The second floor has been clad in yellow brick, with two symmetrically-placed windows and shutters. The only masonry ornamentation surrounds the two second-floor windows, where raised bricks are placed at the outside edge of the shutters. Large green awnings are in place over the entry on the first floor and over the windows on the second floor.

The residential appearance of today's street façade probably dates from the 1940s or 1950s.

### History & Significance:

This "brick livery" is shown on the engineering map from the City of Owosso dated 1898-1899 and on the Sanborn Fire Map from 1880.

John Evens had at different times three livery stables in Owosso. John Evens came to Owosso in 1868, from Oakland County, Michigan. This livery stable serviced the clients of The National Hotel, across the street. John Evens was the town Marshall, Deputy Sheriff, and a fireman with the City as well. He dealt extensively and successfully purchasing livestock to be shipped to eastern markets. John Evens built the house at 408 N. Water in 1882. His daughter, Harriet, married George T. Campbell, who became the editor and owner of the Owosso Argus, later the Argus Press, a local newspaper since 1895. The house at 402 N. Water, next door to her parents, was built for his daughter and her husband.

He sold this livery stable at 210 W. Main to William Jopling. Jopling was a veterinary surgeon as well as a livery stable owner and was a graduate of the Agricultural College of Geulph, Ontario in 1879, graduated from veterinary college in 1883, came to Owosso in 1884.

Montgomery's Pharmacy was in this building for several years during the 1970s. Currently these are the offices of Siminski Chiropractic, and owned by Dr. Roger Siminski.

## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 212-14 W. Main Street

**Site:** Fortune House

**Date:** 1898 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This 2-story commercial building is a very simple brick structure with a minimum of masonry detail. Lines are straight, vertical piers are plain, window bays have a minimum of detail, and the parapet is a solid wall with no frieze. Elaborate wooden ornamentation has been applied on top of this plain brick building, with the plain brick clearly evident underneath all the Edwardian trim. As originally built, the façade facing W. Main was divided into two store fronts. The street-level façade has since been reworked for a business occupying both halves.

There are thick masonry sidewalls which project out to create vertical moldings at each end of the building. On the first floor, fluted boards have been applied to the brick piers, giving them the look of pilasters. This effect is enhanced by flattened capitals (employing dentil molding); these pseudo-capitals are applied where a wide band of wood, capped by cornice molding, runs across the front of the building from pier to pier just below the second floor windows.

On the second floor, the end piers are joined by a third plain brick pier in the very center, visually dividing the space into two equal sections, each three bays wide. Here, the piers are plain brick, without wood accents. These piers are also treated as pilasters with flattened capitals at the point where the piers meet the substantial and delightful Adam-style wood cornice. Frothy with swags and pendant designs against a plain background, this board is then capped by dentil molding, which is surmounted by a wide cornice molding. All this applied wooden ornament is Edwardian in spirit and detail, the result of the sea change in architectural tastes sparked by the White City at the 1893 Columbian Exposition.

Interestingly, the plain brick parapet rises up above, and obviously behind, this wooden cornice, reminding one that this is a plain brick build whose ornamentation has been applied on top of, not incorporate into, the brick. The garish red and vivid yellow paint colors currently marring this handsome building only serve to enhance the differences between the brick structure and applied wooden ornaments.



## History:

- 1898-1915 Schleider Florists changed their name in 1907 to Sunnyside, a centennial business that has moved around Owosso through the years and continues to do business in the city.
- 1911 Grinell Brothers Music Merchandise
- 1920s-1932 Charles Lawrence developed the City Market, a precursor to the supermarket, where consumers could purchase multiple types of goods in one place. The City Market incorporated Rumsay Meats, Gorte's groceries, and coffees sold by Mr. Chappell.
- 1921 Nacaroto & Orlando, Grocers
- 1921-1924 Lietzen & McEntee, Auto Accessories
- 1924 Maher's Dance Academy, upstairs
- 1928 Wolverine Stores, Inc.
- 1929-1942 Charles Lawrence (see above) moved his department store to this location, replacing the City Market. The Lawrence Department Store was one of the largest department stores in the state at this time and well known among discriminating shoppers. Lawrence's Department Store occupied all three floors including the basement of the building according to his 82 year old granddaughter Anna Pennington, who was employed there during her high school years.
- 1980s Jerry and Jane Idle purchased this building and remodeled it for use as a Chinese restaurant operated by Robin and Lurea Lam.
- 1993 The building and restaurant were purchased by Kapao and Kaying Hang.

## Photos:



## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 215 W. Main Street

**Site:** Ruthy's Cleaners

**Date:** 1891

**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

This two-story mid-Victorian brick commercial building fronts upon the long edge of a triangular plot of land just across the street from City Hall. Because the remaining plot of ground was too small on which to build another structure, the building was guaranteed a prominent location with maximum exposure and great natural light on both floors.

Historical photos of the building reveal details mostly lost in the intervening years. The expanse of bricks below the second floor bay once featured a dignified wooden cornice ornamented at the corners. The plain, shallow parapet once supported a grand, heavily detailed cornice, capped by vertical ornaments. The result was a handsome building well suited as the business office for the Woodward family industries.

The surviving building is in fine repair, but stripped down to comparatively modest details, including the stepped brick frieze, narrow brick parapet, sunburst brick lintels, and a simple arch over the second floor window. The first floor façade facing W. Main has been substantially reworked in the twentieth century, but the second floor remains structurally intact, welcoming future restoration of the decorative wooden elements.

### History & Significance:

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| 1891  | The structure is built by the Woodard Brothers company to house the business offices for the Woodard Manufacturing Company on the first floor, and the Owosso Casket Company on the second. |
| 1952  | Donovan's Sporting Goods and an ice cream store shared the building at this time.   |
| 1970s | Stoner's Cleaners was owned by Catherine Fischer, who lived in the upstairs portion of 213 W. Main Street.  |
| 1990s | The building was purchased and restored by Ruth and Bob Marx, a project that removed metal tiles from the façade to reveal its brick-outlined, arched triple windows.                       |

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 216-18 W. Main Street  
**Site:** Radio Shack & Security Alarm  
**Date:** 1910 ca.  
**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

This two-story brick commercial building, with restrained brickwork and vaguely Prairie-style details, dates from the early twentieth century. It was built as a single structure divided into two storefronts of equal dimensions, with thick masonry sidewalls and another dividing the two sections. The first floor storefronts are framed by brick piers, with display windows and recessed wooden entryways that, though reworked, appear to retain their original configuration.

Above the entryways and showcase windows are panel areas, used now, as was perhaps originally the case, to accommodate business marquees. A stone stringcourse marks the division between the first and second floors.

The second floor façade of each storefront features a bank of four matched windows in wooden frames, currently boarded, above a stone sill that runs the width of the building. Surmounting each bank of four windows is a second bank of six offset transoms, also currently filled in. The banks of windows in each building are capped by projecting cornices that nearly meet at the center pier.

Above the two cornices are matching inset brick panels, the tops of which are adorned by a stepped brick frieze. A deep projecting cornice is mounted to the parapet above the frieze.

### History & Significance:

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 1910 | Coliseum Theatre (The building was absent from the city directory for 1908.)   |
| 1915 | Family Theatre   |
| 1928 | YWCA Business & Professional Women's Club  |
| 1928 | Lawrence's City Market – A new concept of one stop shopping with a meat market, tea and coffee vendor and general groceries and fruit market all under one roof. |
| 1932 | C. H. Gorte, Grocer.   |

1938 Fulmers Drug Store at 216 W. Main. The Paramount Café at 218 W. Main.

1980s-present Radio Shack

## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 220-22 W. Main Street

**Site:** Crowe and Payne / Urban Antiques & Art

**Date:** 1899

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This two-story brick Victorian commercial building occupies the prime northeast corner of W. Main and N. Water Streets, with the original primary street façade and store entrances facing Main Street. The building is solid and boxy, relying on a few masonry details for ornamentation. The W. Main façade was originally divided into two storefronts, with heavy masonry walls on both sides and another dividing them down the middle. These sidewalls are evident on the front façade as projecting vertical piers running up to the parapet.

The street-level façade has been extensively reworked, with a single entrance door installed in the middle, requiring removal of the center pier on the first floor. The middle pier is still evident on the second floor, where the piers divide the façade into two halves, each two bays wide. The window sills are made of rusticated stone, a bit uncommon in Owosso. The lintels over the arch-topped window bays are formed by vertically-laid bricks in a spreading sunburst pattern upon a horizontal base. The simple piers meet the unadorned parapet, with alternating stepped brick designs in the frieze beneath the parapet.

The elevation on N. Water is visually divided into three sections of varying widths, each outlined by vertical piers matching those on the W. Main façade. The height of the building varies along its length on the N. Water side. Other than the entrance in the center section of the west sidewall, which might well be original, the doorways on the first floor appear to have been altered during the building's long commercial life. Each section of the second floor features three symmetrically balanced window bays. As in the front façade, the vertical piers meet the parapet, with the same alternating stepped-brick designs in the frieze.

The second floor of the west elevation presents a few design incongruities. While the lintels over the three windows in the front most third of the wall feature the same sunburst pattern as those on the building's front, those in the center third display simple arches that follow the curve of the bay tops. In the rearmost section, the center window is surmounted by the sunburst, while the flanking pair features the simple arches!

The stepped brick ornamentation in the frieze also varies in each section—but not in the expected manner. The anticipated design pattern for three sections with reducing roofline

heights would have been to maintain the same number of bricks in all sections or to reduce the number of bricks as the building's height declined. Here, however, the first section—ostensibly the most important—includes a stepped brick pattern six bricks high, while the center section features four bricks and a narrower parapet, and the last section—presumably the least important—has seven bricks and a wider parapet! Thus, the most complex ornamentation in the smallest area renders the rear section the most ornate of the three portions of the side elevation.

The recent renovation of this building has greatly improved its stability and appearance. Despite the remodeled front entry and modern windows, it stands as a strong contributor to the historic integrity of Owosso's downtown.

### **History & Significance:**

- 1898 A fire in September destroys the Crowe and Payne building on this site, along with the Woodard Mill, across from the present site of City Hall; and the Mueller Brothers Brewery, across Water Street.
- 1899 The present building is built for Crowe and Payne Attachments/Implements, who are listed as its occupants in the 1900 edition of the Polk Directories for Owosso. Crowe and Payne sell farm equipment and supplies, including “a complete line of agricultural implements, etc. such as threshers, carriages, surreys, wagons, harness, robes, blankets and occupy the largest agricultural house in the state” (Past and Present, Shiawassee County 1905),
- 1924 The building is sold to Justin W. Shattuck, as Mr. Payne departs to spend the winter in Florida.
- 1920s-1990s Shippee & Fischer operate an automobile accessory business, followed by Shippee and Smith Dry Goods and Sporting Goods, which had a sister store at 201 W. Main.
- 1999 The building is purchased in October by Mark Hanna, a commercial real estate attorney, who subsequently undertakes its remodeling and rehabilitation. The first floor houses Urban Art & Antiques, a business operated by Mr. Hanna.

### **Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 300 W. Main Street

**Site:** Matthews Building

**Date:** Various

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

The Matthews Building, fronting on W. Main and extending from N. Water to the Shiawassee River, is actually an aggregate of several buildings dating from the end of the nineteenth into the early twentieth century. The individual buildings are distinguishable according to their variable heights, different window trims, and variations on the stepped brick frieze. The extensive remodeling that has occurred over time, including multiple coats of paint and the application of various covers to the façade, challenges the observer to sort out a coherent description of its appearance.

The structure consists of at least four distinct, linked buildings. Three abutting buildings form the N. Water elevation, with fluctuating building height, four unadorned window bays and Victorian stepped-brick friezes. The fourth building, the oldest of the group, faces the river. Once a brewery, it is a two story Victorian with tall, narrow windows with shallow arches at top and simple brick lintels. Large gray panels have been affixed to this façade, although some of these have fallen away to reveal the masonry beneath.

An undistinguished two-story building has been constructed at an indeterminate date, apparently during the pre-war period, to serve as a connection between the buildings. Large window walls were, at some point, added along the street level of the Main Street façade. The latest coat of paint applied throughout has been chosen to match the gray panels cited above.

### History & Significance:

1898 The Mueller Brothers Brewery, the original building on this site, burns to the ground in a large fire that also destroys the nearby Woodard Planing Mill and Furniture Factory, and Crowe and Payne Agricultural Implements business. Mueller Brothers and Crowe and Payne rebuild on their original sites, but the Woodard enterprise moves to a new location on Elm Street. The Mueller Brothers Brewery was one of four such concerns operating in Owosso at this time, the other three being The Good Beer Brewery, the Muskegon Brewing Company and The Owosso Brewery, founded by John Gute.



Edgar Ingersoll is the architect who designed and rebuilt the brewery for Louis and Charles Mueller and was also the project's superintendent of construction. Ingersoll was born in Monroe County, New York, came to Owosso in 1885 and soon established an excellent reputation in his field. His other projects in town include the Conner Building, constructed of shiny cream-colored brick to reflect the dairy business of his clients; the opulent home of Dr. Colin McCormick, on Exchange Street; and the Asbury Methodist Chapel on the corner of Stewart and Shiawassee Streets, the building and lot for which cost \$1310.

Later

The Matthews Building has expanded through the years, both through construction of additions and annexation of adjacent buildings, which have included a tinsmith's shop and, in the 1920s and '30s, the offices and garage of the Consumers Power Company. The large building has been home to numerous other businesses over the years, including doctors, attorneys, railroads, photographers, political campaigns, and non-profit organizations.

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 301 W. Main Street

**Site:** Owosso City Hall

**Date:** 1924

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

A classically-inspired building in the Beaux Arts tradition, Owosso's City Hall, faced with Indiana limestone and brick, stands two full stories above a raised basement. The configuration of elements on all sides is strictly symmetrical.

The building's main façade, facing north towards W. Main, features a strong entrance portico with four two-story stone columns fronting a three-bay section. The corbel-supported balcony is trimmed with an iron railing. Matching two-bay sections project from either side of the portico, each two bays wide with double-width windows in each opening. There are stone pilasters between each bay, with a stone stringcourse running under the second floor windows in between. The entrance door, elaborately framed in stone, is centered on the first floor beneath a double-width window on the second floor. Single-width windows to the left and right of the entranceway, set in curved-top stone, match the windows above them on the second floor. A broad stone frieze trims the cornice on the east, north and west sides of the building. Above the projecting cornice sits an impressive stone parapet with a functioning clock inset above the building's main entrance.

Given the impressive use of stone and the grand design of the building, it is jarring to note that the walls between the pilasters and the stringcourse are built of a decorative yellow brick. This lends the building a somewhat parochial appearance, perhaps hinting at an insufficient budget to execute the architect's intentions.

The interior features a wide central staircase, wainscoting of gray Tennessee marble and terrazzo floors. The chairs and benches placed in service in 1924 are still in use at City Hall, with the receipt intact among the city records.

### History & Significance:

As originally envisioned by Detroit architects Lane, Davenport & Peterson, this structure was to have been capped by an impressive dome, an element eliminated by the city council to compensate for cost overruns during construction. The cornerstone ceremony on July 10, 1924,

employed the trowel used for the identical purpose in laying of the State Capitol cornerstone in 1873.

The site of City Hall occupies a stretch of bank along the Shiawassee River that has been central to Owosso's civic life since its earliest days. In the 1830s, flour, woolen and planing mills clustered along the river and millrace.

- 1856        White Brothers planing mill
- 1866        The planing mill is purchased and operated by Woodard brothers Lyman, William, Henry and Warren.
- 1871        Woodard & Faulkner (brother-in-law to Warren Woodard) manufactures doors, sashes and blinds.
- 1885        Two stories are added to the Woodard Planing Mill to support furniture manufacturing.
- 1890        Lyman Woodard buys out his younger brothers' interest in the planing mill, after which the other brothers went on to other businesses. Lyman manufactures furniture at the mill, mostly for the bedroom.
- 1898        In September, a great fire destroys the Woodard Planing Mill and, across Main Street, the Mueller Brothers Brewery and Crowe and Payne Implement Company. Woodard rebuilds the planing mill and factory four years later at Cass and Elm Streets, west of downtown.
- 1922        The Argus Press reports on May, 22, 1922: "Last night several hundred people gathered on West Main Street, to see the big Woodard chimney fall. The chimney had been left standing since the Woodard factory burned in 1898".
- 1924        The City Hall Building is erected on the former site of the Woodard Planing Mill.

**Photos:**



**EAST MASON STREET**

**INTENSIVE LEVEL SURVEYS**

## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 120 E. Mason Street

**Site:** Nelson House Funeral Home

**Date:** 1929

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This large two-story masonry commercial building, has been parged in later years, making it impossible to designate its original style of construction.

The symmetrical façade on E. Mason Street features massive quoins at each corner. The first floor bays include the central entrance and two sets of double windows. The second floor contains five single windows centered over the bay below. A wide stringcourse runs the width of the building just below the second floor windows. Two distinct, parallel stringcourses run above the windows, culminating in a crenellated parapet. Rather than adhere to battlement style, with regularly spaced merlons and embrasures, the merlons at the corners give way to embrasures followed by more merlons. In the center, above the entrance, two merlons flank a higher one between them.

The longer elevation facing N. Park is plainer, with asymmetrically-spaced windows on both floors. In the half of the façade toward the front of the building, there are windows and two side entrances on the street level. In the half of the façade toward the back on that level there are no windows and a single side entrance. Second floor windows are present across the full expanse of the second floor. The three stringcourses and parapet caps noted on the entrance façade continue around onto this elevation, although the pattern of merlons and embrasures is executed with haphazard abandon.

### History & Significance:

1929-1947 Fred Smith, of Knapp and Smith Undertakers, purchased the armory building on this site following construction of the new one that now stands on Water Street. Smith's builders demolished the old armory and constructed his new building reusing bricks from the old one. Smith's was the first commercial building in the state designed specifically to accommodate funerals, at a time when families were ceasing to conduct services in their own homes. Smith deliberately planned the interior of the mortuary with a center hall opening onto rooms at either side so that, in case the commercial mortuary didn't resonate with the public, he could

refit the building for office rentals. Knapp sold his interest in the business to Smith retained the traditional name of the company. Smith retired at the end of a 34 year career in the funeral business in Owosso. Harry Smith, Fred's son, continued in the business until 1947.

1947-1980 Harry Smith sold the funeral business to Paul W. Ruggles, who continued in this location until selling in 1980.

1980-2010 Ruggles sold the business to Harold House and Robert Nelson, who are cousins and the current owners.

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 201 E. Mason Street

**Site:** American Legion Post #57

**Date:** 1924

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This building is one story over a raised basement, built of brown brick construction, with a flat roof, and evenly spaced windows on the main level on all sides of the building. The front facade at one time had a broad stairs and a portico supported by Doric style columns for its entrance. During a 1955 remodel, this portico was encased to become an interior room of the building, changing the appearance from a temple-like building to a block without ornamentation. In 2010, the Ladies Auxiliary paid to have a porch—perhaps more a covered walkway, constructed on the Mason Street facade, which sits at the sidewalk level, with small columns as support.

### History:

- 1918 The Patterson-Dawson Post 57 of the American Legion was founded, named in honor of Sgt. Arthur Patterson and Sgt. Albert Dawson of Owosso. The Ladies Auxiliary was organized in 1920.
- 1924 The first American Legion Post in the state of Michigan was constructed in Owosso with J. P. Walters, the Architect, North & Benson the builders, and Arthur Hinspeter, plumbing, wiring and electrical systems. The Ladies Auxiliary paid for a part of the construction of the building as well as for all of the furnishings. Dedication was held the following year.
- 1942 During World War II, the American Legion gave to the American Red Cross the of the entire building as their headquarters with the only stipulation being that the building be returned to the American Legion after the end of the war and in good condition.
- 1955 An addition was made to the building with Architect C. William Palmer of 409 Griswold Street in Detroit designing the new space in the basement, removing the columns from the portico and enclosing that space which changed the appearance of the original building.

The American Legion Post #57 merged with the Corunna American Legion Post #419.

The American Legion at one time owned the golf course called Corunna Hills in Corunna, Michigan.



**WEST MASON STREET**

**INTENSIVE LEVEL SURVEYS**

## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 114 W. Mason Street

**Site:** First Baptist Church

**Date:** 1895

**Status:** Non-contributing

### Description:

This building of dark brown brick has been beset by multiple circumstances which have altered its original appearance, an historic photo of which is included below. The building's appearance has also been altered by the construction of additions in recent years.

### History & Significance:

- 1837 The earliest Baptist services in Owosso occurred when pioneers began meeting under the leadership of Judge Elias Comstock in the little log building now known as Comstock Cabin, preserved in Curwood Castle Park.
- 1856 A group of local Baptists drafted articles of faith and a church covenant, which were adopted on November 15, 1856, establishing the First Baptist Church.
- 1860-1877 The congregation of the First Baptist Church met in a wooden building erected for that purpose in an orchard on the southernmost grounds of the Buckminster house, located at the southeast corner of E. Oliver and N. Washington. The building measured 24' x 50', constructed at a cost of approximately \$600.
- 1877 The First Baptist Church wooden-frame building was moved to the back of a lot at the corner of Mason and Ball Streets, where it served as a chapel to a new brick building built at a cost of \$35,000.
- 1896 When the Baptist congregation constructed the current church building, the little wooden chapel was moved a third time to N. Ball, where it served for many years as the Hughes Laundry before being torn down in 1935..
- 1911 The brick church building was severely damaged by Owosso's infamous cyclone of 11/11/11, which destroyed the steeple, part of the roof and a supporting wall. This tornado, which occurred at eleven minutes after eleven o'clock, wrought

widespread destruction among the city's homes and commercial buildings. The church was rebuilt, minus its steeple, after the disaster.

1942 In February, the church was ravaged by a fire that destroyed half the building. Once again, the church was rebuilt, with modifications.

2005 The First Baptist Church undertook a remodeling of the building, adding a vestibule and entry from Mason Street. The church is currently served by Ray Strawser, who has been its pastor since June 1993.

**Photos:**



**NORTH PARK STREET**

**INTENSIVE LEVEL SURVEYS**

## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 218 N. Park Street

**Site:** Woodbury Building

**Date:** 1922

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

The dignified, symmetrical two-story brick façade of this early twentieth-century commercial building is visually divided into three sections, each with its own entrance. Strong vertical piers at either end extend upward past the handsome cornice moulding and culminate in flat-topped platforms supporting large spheres. Matching piers and the parapet wall in the center section extend even higher, supporting identical platforms and spheres. The original first floor windows were replaced in the past decade.

The street level façades of all three units indicate modern adjustments (the bricks beneath the front windows do not match those in the rest of the building) but the arrangement of entrance door and abutting windows may well be original. The door and windows of each unit are capped by a slender band of cornice moulding.

The uniform windows in the second floor façade are symmetrically positioned within each section. The windows have no lintels and their sills consist of a simple row of bricks. In a departure from the otherwise symmetrical design of the façade, the left and center sections each have two windows, while the right section has three that are more closely grouped within an area of the same size. Above the seven second floor windows, placed almost into the frieze, are individual round air vents set within a row of brick circles, a delightful addition that imparts a flavor of Federal style to the façade, unusual, though not unique among Owosso's surviving downtown buildings. Above the air vents, plain, handsome cornices terminate at the piers.

The taller center section of the façade is enhanced by two panels of text. A panel centered within the row of air vents states the building's completion date, 1922.

A second panel centered above the first, just below the cornice, bears the name of the original owner, MARK WOODBURY. In the 1990s, Bill Winchester, a longtime Woodbury employee, removed the building's rusted finials and crafted replicas which have replaced the deteriorated originals.

This building is unusual among those in downtown Owosso, built after Victorian flourishes had fallen out of style, and before Modernism had entirely stripped such buildings of classical

detail. This solid, well preserved façade, is lightened and rendered less severe by the inclusion of the seven round air vents and fine cornices.

### **History & Significance:**

1922 The building is constructed by Mark Woodbury at a cost of \$85,000, as home to Woodbury Sheet Metal Company, which Mark had founded in 1914 above Jefford's Meat Market at 113 E. Main Street. When the company moved into the new building, occupying the first floor, the second became home to the Owosso Business School and four residential apartments.

Mark Woodbury was born in 1878 in Laingsburg, where members of his family had settled, and where one of the primary north-south roads in Shiawassee County now bears the family name. He began plying his trade making cookware in the basement of Pierce and Gerow's building, which was later owned by Arthur Ward. Woodbury later fabricated such diverse items as stove pipes, eaves troughs, copper wash boilers and dairy farm utensils.

Woodbury lost his building during the Depression, but moved operations into a garage next to his house around the corner on Exchange Street. When the business grew, the house was demolished to make way for expanded work facilities, where the work continued under subsequent generations of the family, including Mark's sons, Joseph and Carl, and his grandson, John. The company provided custom metalworking services to local factories in Michigan, as well as to customers in Russia, China, Sri Lanka and various countries in South America. The Woodbury Sheet Metal Company was sold to a new owner in 2005.

1945-1980 Ross Buick, car dealership, and later, Ross Automotive Parts, both owned by Harlan Ross, occupied the building.

1958-1958 YMCA occupies the second floor before moving into their current facility on W. Main Street.

1960-1980 Owosso Graphic Arts did business here before moving into their own building on Delaney Road.

1980s-2005 The Woodbury family reacquired the building, converting the remaining office space on the second floor into apartments, in addition to the original four. The first floor was used as storage space for the sheet metal business on E. Exchange.

2005- New owners have converted the ground floor into three small store fronts.

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 220-22. N. Park Street

**Site:** Dr. William Knecht

**Date:** 1955 ca.

**Status:** Non-contributing

### Description:

This single story, ranch-style building is constructed of light-colored brick, with a single gable front.

### History & Significance:

This modest structure was built in the mid-1950s by Dr. Leonard Wade to house his dental office, where he operated until June 1968, at which time he sold the practice and property to Dr. William Knecht. Dr. Knecht was born in Los Angeles, California, in 1936, and graduated from Loma Linda Dental School in 1968, after which he opened his practice in Owosso. Dr. Knecht's practice currently includes his son, Dr. Roger Knecht, and Dr. Phillip J. Wolf.

The original building consisted of 900 square feet. An additional 500 square feet were added in 1974. In 1978, Dr. Knecht purchased the business next door, Orsers Printery, which he demolished to rebuild a second addition of 1400 square feet, bringing the total area to 2800 square feet.



**NORTH WASHINGTON STREET**

**INTENSIVE LEVEL SURVEYS**

## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 100-02 N. Washington Street

**Site:** Arthur Ward Store / Carpenter's Corner /  
Classy Closet / vacant

**Date:** 1912

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This four-story brick commercial structure is one of the largest buildings in downtown Owosso, dominating the central intersection of Washington and Main Streets. While the first floor has been reworked in the twentieth century, the upper three stories are unaltered and remarkably well preserved. It is also one of the few, and the most important, examples of the Chicago School of Architecture, reflecting technological advances such as the use of steel framing to achieve open expanses of interior space. The design is reminiscent of the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, with its horizontal lines, severely limited ornamentation and low, wide overhanging eave.

Both the N. Washington and E. Main facades display a rigid symmetry of design.

The N. Washington facade including the entrance is the shorter side of the rectangular building. The second, third and fourth floors each feature three large window openings, filling the area between piers, with three double-hung windows in each opening. The piers run the full vertical expanse of the upper floors, from smooth stone plinths through inset panels between the floors, to restrained stone capitals, creating an effect of pilasters.

The longer facade facing E. Main features six window openings, with four windows grouped together in each. The design elements are the same on this side, reflecting the equal importance afforded to both facades. The only thing marring this symmetry is the later addition of an overpass connecting the upper floors of this building with its neighbor to the east, constructed to avoid blocking the entrance to the public alley below. Although this structure features contrasting brick and different windows, an attempt was made to blend with the older building by placing the windows at the same level and running the cornice across the width of the entire facade. An angle cut linking the two sections of cornice is visible. The weight of the cornice lends a satisfying substance to the building, and emphasizes its horizontal sweep.

## History & Significance:

- 1890 Osburn & Sons Dry Goods began their decades long business here, then moved to 217-19 N. Washington in 1891
- John Osburn moved to Owosso with his wife Jane Morris Osburn and sons Morris, James, Fred and Charles, in 1857. Children Emma, Arthur, and Arianna were added to the family later. Arianna became the first wife of Guerdon Dimmick.
- Morris Osburn, the eldest son (b. 1838) was the first to arrive from Meadville, Pennsylvania, joined soon thereafter by his father and his younger brother. In the 1860s and 70s, Morris had sawmills under the name of The Gould-Osburn Company. (Morris had married Amos Gould's daughter, Mary Francis) He was financially involved in the Owosso Woolen Mills, of French, Osburn and Knill. The Owosso Woolen Mills burned twice and finally went out of business in 1873, the date (according to The History of Clinton and Shiawassee County 1880), after the second woolen mill burned. The last mill had been built by the government to make uniforms for the Union army.
- The Osburn Dry Goods Store was owned by Morris, James and Fred as well as their father. John, James and Fred later became partners
- 1892 Woodard & North, Furniture and Undertakers, moved from its previous location at the northwest corner of Ball and Main Woodard's house at 201 S. Michigan which many years later was remodeled to house the Grace Bible Church.
- 1899 firm of Woodard & North expands to Woodard, North & Jennings
- 1908 Pearce and Gerow Store, founded in 1897 by joining the hardware store of Frederick W. Pierce with the undertaking business of Daniel G. Gerow, who had bought out Knapp & Smith Furniture and Undertakers.
- 1911 The Pierce and Ward Building on this site burned to the ground. Seventeen other buildings in town were also damaged by this fire.
- 1912 Constructed by Seldon S. Miner after the Pierce and Ward building, located at this site, burned in 1911. The building was thereafter known as the Miner Building.
- Seldon Miner was a lawyer, and prosecuting attorney for the county in 1888-1892, starting his law practice in Corunna. In 1892 he moved his law practice to Owosso, building a house on the northeast corner of Pine and King. Mr. Miner Expanded his business interests to include real estate.
- 1912-1965 Arthur Ward Company, furniture and department store which also extended its

Various departments to include the E. Main buildings to the rear of the Ward Company's main store.

1966 Storrer's Men's Clothing Store

Fred Storrer founded the men's clothing business called Wicking & Storrer's in 1891, eventually becoming solely Storrer's. In the 1900 directory they are located at 121 N. Washington and 105 E. Exchange with entrances on both streets. The store was moved to 114 N. Washington and then to 110 N. Washington and then in 1966 to this location at 100 N. Washington, where it remained until the 1980's. The business continued under Jim Storrer, son of Robert, at 110 N. Washington, one of the original locations for this business, until 2007.

1980s-1990s Carpenter's Corner, home furnishings and gifts owned by Harry and Dee Kurtz.

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 101-03 N. Washington Street

**Site:** The Thomas Block / The Courtyard Cafe /  
WJSZ-FM Radio Station

**Date:** 1888

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This three-story Victorian brick commercial building occupies the northwest corner of the most important intersection of downtown Owosso. While the street level of the façade has been completely reworked, the upper floors received a thorough restoration several years ago, revealing the incredible details created by the master masons, who contrasted the warm brick with light stone to create intricate patterns and great visual appeal.

Recognizing the important of the building's location, the architect gave equal consideration to both the Washington Street and Main Street facades. While the Main Street elevation is longer, with eight evenly spaced windows on each floor, the Washington Street elevation contains six matching windows per floor. Visually, the Washington Street side is divided into two sections, with raised brick piers at each corner and another rising up through the middle, visually separating this elevation into two equal halves, each three bays wide. The Main Street elevation is handled differently, with raised brick piers at both corners and one pier visually separating this façade into one section (that nearer the corner) with six windows, and another much smaller section, only 2 bays wide, to the left. More than likely, this unusual treatment indicated the store spaces on the ground floor as originally built.

Like many Victorian buildings in downtown Owosso, a bandcourse of stone runs along the bottom of the second and third floor windows, serving as sills. Here, however, a second band of stone sits atop the first; interrupted at each window opening, this second band of stone creates a strong impression to the brick piers running between each window opening. Again, at the top of each pier, even with the tops of the windows, more stones have been grouped in a rectangular design. The second floor windows have very shallow arched tops, with brick lintels and stone keystones. The tops of the shallow arched brick lintels are capped by thin stones that highlight each arch.

There is a wide band of plain brick between the tops of the second floor windows and the stone bandcourse under the third floor windows. The piers between third floor windows have the same second band of flat stone, interrupted by each window. On the third floor, however, the windows are round-topped and the stonework at the top of each pier between the windows for a 'U' and not a rectangle.

Just above the keystones over the third floor windows, a stepped brick frieze supports a broad, plain wooden band running just under the shallow cornice. The frieze on the Washington Street elevation is further enhanced with long pendant-like designs dropping down into the area between each round-topped lintel.

Old photos reveal that a broad wooden parapet once graced the top of both street elevations. Today, the Washington Street parapet survives, although it lacks the two shallow pediments visible in the old photos. The Main Street section of the parapet is completely missing.

### **History & Significance:**

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 1857        | The city map identifies this as the site of the Charles L. Goodhue Dry Goods Store, a wood frame structure also known as the “Brown Store.”             |
| 1888        | George Thomas erects the current structure replacing Goodhue’s wooden building.   |
| 1899-1900   | Tillaman & Company Restaurant operates on the first floor of the building, while physicians D. H. Lamb and S. C. Phippen practice medicine upstairs.    |
| 1899-1912   | Murray and Terbush, Clothiers   |
| ? -1904     | Elk’s Lodge #357 conducts their meetings the second floor of the building prior to purchasing the Merrill Hotel for that purpose in 1904.               |
| 1912-1938   | Owosso Savings Bank occupies this address before moving to the southwest corner of N. Washington and W. Exchange, replacing the Citizen’s Savings Bank. |
| 1921        | William Cadwallader Insurance Company   |
| 1945        | Cunningham’s Drug Store   |
| 1970s-1990s | Hope’s Hallmark Store   |
| 2010        | The first floor is occupied by the Courtside Café, a restaurant, while the upstairs is home to radio station WJSZ-FM.                                   |

Charles Lyman Goodhue was born in Syracuse, New York, in October 1818. He came to Owosso with his parents in 1838. Sometime thereafter, he opened his dry goods store at 101 N. Washington Street, which was known as the “Brown Store.” In 1840, Goodhue married Rhoda Gould, sister of Amos Gould. Rhoda (whose wedding dress and French leather slippers are in the collection of the Owosso Historical Commission) died in 1844. In 1846, Goodhue married Maria Gould, Amos Gould’s cousin, who died in 1851. Goodhue married at least twice more and fathered six children, all of whom died in infancy or early childhood. He prospered

supplying the needs of Owosso's early settlers and, in 1860, built a fine 6000 square-foot home at 302 W. Oliver.

George Thomas arrived in Owosso in 1869 and purchased the Junction House, also known as the Railroad Dining Room. Two years later, he built a new Junction House across the Michigan Central railroad tracks from the original one. He lived for a time at the corner of Washington and Main Streets, in one of the oldest frame houses in Owosso, which at one time was the Goodhue store, later torn down to make way for his new brick block. George Thomas was the great-grandfather of Thomas E. Dewey, Owosso native, Governor of New York, and presidential candidate.

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 104-08 N. Washington Street

**Site:** The Wesener Block / vacant

**Date:** 1886

**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

This three-story brick Victorian commercial building constitutes one of downtown Owosso's most significant block fronts. Built as one structure in 1886, it was divided structurally and visually into the three addresses by which it is known today. The northern unit at 108 is a bit wider than the other two sections of the building, and the first floor facades of all three storefronts were extensively modernized in the twentieth century, but their origin as a single building is still readily apparent.

The second floor façade of each section is dominated by a large arch over horizontal rectangular window openings and shallow transoms that conform to the arch. The window openings in 104 and 106, the narrower units, each contain three windows and three transoms. The window area in 108 is wider, accommodating four windows and transoms. The arched lintels are composed of vertical bricks arranged in a sunburst pattern, punctuated by rusticated stone insets and keystones.

Stone stringcourses run between the raised sidewall piers, one each serving as a continuous sill and lintel for the third floor window bays, which are separated by brick piers. The wider façade of 108 accommodates correspondingly wider windows on the third floor. Above the topmost stringcourse alternate rows of stepped brick ornaments resembling corbels and decorating the frieze, lending it depth, texture, and support to the overhanging cornice. Metal boxes serve the piers as capitals, creating an appearance of pilasters. A parapet is set back from the projecting cornice, even with the façade. Old photos of the building reveal decorative round metal orbs arrayed along the top of the parapet.

The building once served as part of a local college that used Tudor design elements to brand its buildings around town, explaining the appearance of the street-level façade and incongruous dormers built onto the ends of its awning roof. The derelict condition of the building results from a devastating arson fire in 2007.



## History & Significance:

1886 Hugo Wesener built this structure, historically known as “The Wesener Block.” Ira Curry Hardware was one of the building’s first tenants, although Curry later relocated to 113 W. Main. Hugo’s son, August Wesener, operated a shoe and boot store at the 106 N. Washington address for over a decade.

Hugo Wesener was born in Wurtemberg, Germany and immigrated with his mother, sister and brother-in-law to Saginaw, where they opened and operated a dry goods store for nearly three decades. Wesener came to Owosso in 1875 and purchased the dry goods stock of C. L. Goodhue; Later that year he bought from Lyman E. Woodard both the Commercial Hotel and Woodard’s residence at the southwest corner of Main and Elm Streets.

### 104 N. Washington

1899-1921 Davis Dry Goods

1905-1906 Joslin & Brewer, engineers (upstairs)

1906 Brown & Mahaney, groceries

M. A. Gauntlett, hairdresser (upstairs)

1910-1911 Minnie E. Drake, dressmaker (upstairs)

1924 C. Z. Robinson Company

1928 Jay-N-Farrell Restaurant

### 106 N. Washington

date? Butch (Bert) Dutcher, tailor (upstairs)

1898-1910 August Wesener, shoes

1910-1916 Rolla L. Chase Shoes

1921-1951 Chase Boot Shop

### 108 N. Washington

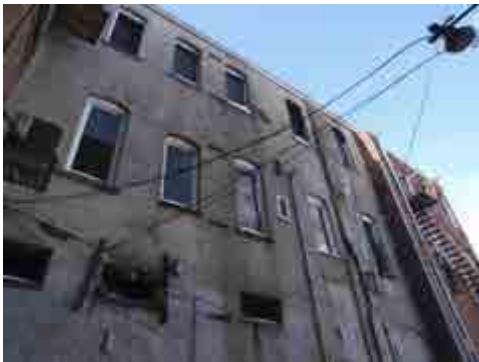
1899-1900 H. A. Blackmer, druggist

G. E. Sprinkle, milliner

1905-1911 Hunt & Martin, milliner

- 1906 F. H. Bannister, groceries
- 1907-1950s A. E. Osmer Company Grocery began in this location after purchasing the stock of E. L. Devereaux.
- 1921 The Elite Hat Shop
- 1924 The Style Shop
- 1930s-1940's beauty shop
- 1960s-1970s This was the administration building for John Wesley College. The facade of this building, like all of those owned by the college, including the hotel across Main and Washington Streets, was altered in an English Tudor motif.
- 1980s Social Security Administration (first floor)
- 1984-1987 Ann Arbor Acquisition Company (Ann Arbor Railroad, second floor)
- 2007 An arson fire, still unsolved, gutted the building, killing a 21-year old man, a guest in an upstairs apartment, and destroying the Lura Lee Bridal Shop on the first floor. The owner at the time, David Miller, had done substantial work to rehabilitate the building.

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 105-11 N. Washington

**Site:** Treasures / Health First Pharmacy

**Date:** 1890's ca. (with later alterations)

**Status:** Non-contributing

### Description:

(Note: Circa 1900, this site was occupied by four three-story Victorian store fronts and used the addresses of 105, 107, 109 and 111 N. Washington. However, several storefronts were combined in the twentieth century, merging 105 through 111 N. Washington. Since the storefronts were again separated, the building currently occupying this site has been referred to as 109 N. Washington. For the purposes of this report, we will call it 105-11, so that our historical information is correctly applied.)

As viewed today, the façade on this site is the result of multiple remodeling efforts. One sees a single-story structure with contemporary brick on the lower half and rough-sawn cedar boards in a chevron pattern above. The first floor includes large display windows facing N. Washington

It is believed, however, that the structure dates back to the late 1800s, when two handsome mid-to-late-Victorian three-story buildings occupied this site. A streetscape photo dated 1953 shows both buildings still standing. An aerial photo taken just two years later shows the roof of the one-story building we see today. So, in 1953-1955, it is believed the upper two stories were removed and the street level façade was completely reworked in the 1950s style. At that time, a succession of five-and-ten stores occupied the revamped building. The current façade was applied in the early 1980s, when the interior space was reworked into a mini-mall.

At the far left of the façade, a set of doors opens from the sidewalk directly onto a stairway leading to the basement. The basement is obviously a remnant of the two Victorian structures that once graced this lot, and has helped to develop the theory discussed above.

### History & Significance:

#### 105 N. Washington

1901-1936 Thome, Frisbe Shoe Store, Lawyers offices above R & G Shoe Company

1941-1945 R & Shoe Company

### **105 & 107 N. Washington**

- 1928-1967     The building occupied by S. S. Kresge 5 & 10 cent store Kresge's removed the top two floors of this building in a modernization attempt.
- 1967-1977     The Kresge business was rebranded as a Jupiter store, precursor to K-Mart, also owned by the S. S. Kresge Company.
- 1980s           Mini Mall developed by Jane and Jerry Idle and Bill Davis

### **107 N. Washington**

Known as the Dimmick Block, owned by Dwight Dimmick. Dimmick also owned 114 W. Exchange. Kresges also incorporated this building in 1928.

- 1900           Dimmick Block

### **109-11 N. Washington**

109 and 111 N. Washington in every old directory was called The Williams Block. The Williams' after which these two buildings were named were no relation to the founding Williams family, who constructed the early two buildings across Washington namely 112 and 114 N. Washington.

The Williams of 109 and 111 came to Owosso in 1904 and established the Columbia Candy Works at 111 which served "soda water" at a marble-topped "soda fountain" on the north edge of the store while candy could be purchased on the south side of the store and tables and chairs were placed in the back portion of the building for "theater parties and other guests". The Williams' Columbia Candy Works is a feature in "Souvenir of Owosso 1908" with a photo of the interior of the store.

Sometime after 1908, 109 and 111 N. Washington was purchased by the Dimmick's who owned the neighboring 107 N. Washington as well.

### **Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 110 N. Washington Street

**Site:** Storrer's Men's Clothing (vacant)

**Date:** 1892

**Status:** Non-contributing

### Description:

We know that this is a three story brick commercial building, dating from the mid-to late Victorian period, from examining the rear elevation facing an alley. All evidence of its original facade has been shorn off and replaced with a mid-twentieth century street level facade with glass display windows and door, small tiles covering the bulkhead under the display windows, piled field stone covering the left and right support walls and the projecting piers, a flat wooden canopy cantilevered over the sidewalk, and an unbroken expanse of blonde brick covering the front of the second and third floors.

Vintage photos do not offer a very clear image of the original facade but it is evident that the second and third floors each featured three window bays set in a brick facade, and that the building was capped by a very elaborate wood cornice with an arched or rounded upward protrusion in the very middle.

Today's blonde brick facade is flush with the brick facades of its Victorian-era neighbors. The current owner confirms that the original front was separating from the building and had become a danger; the owner's father removed the collapsing facade and replaced it with the front we see today. This has earned this building a "non-contributing" ranking, despite the existence of a more-than-century-old structure beneath the facade.

### History:

This building's last occupant, as it is currently vacant, was Storrer's owned by James Storrer, grandson of Fred J. Storrer who founded the business in 1891. After dissolving the partnership with his brothers at the large store located at 100 N. Washington, James returned his business to one of the previous locations of his family's business. James and his wife, Fayenne, operated the store at 110 from the mid 1980's until a fire in the next building in 2007, which closed the Storrer's business.

1892            The Famous Bazaar



1894 Sutherland Dental Parlor

1899-1900 W.H. Bell Department Store

1905-1911 Kaufmann & Meinstein Clothing and upstairs the YMCA during the same years

1915 Capitan Brothers Confectionery and the Carpenter's Union Hall on the second floor.

1928 Telfers Meat Market moved from a previous location at 111 N. Washington

1930-1936 Blue Bird confectionery

1941-1966 Storrer's Men's Clothing. This business moved to 100 N. Washington and then back to this building in the 1980s.

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 112 N. Washington Street  
**Site:** The Williams Block / Schmidt's Jewelers  
**Date:** 1855  
**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

This three-story brick commercial building, with its restrained Greek Revival ornamentation, is almost unique in downtown Owosso. Built in 1855, it is perhaps the oldest surviving commercial structure. While the first floor and the windows have been altered, its dignity and serenity are in marked contrast to the exuberant high-Victorian buildings across Washington Street. The first floor wooden storefront was modeled on an old photograph by the current owner, replacing a mid-twentieth century configuration of recessed door and plate glass windows.

The second and third floors are each three bays wide. Judging from indications in the brickwork, the current replacement windows are the same width as, but shorter than, the original tall, narrow, widely-separated windows. The lintels resemble stone, but are fabricated from fiberglass.

A single course of raised bricks crosses the façade midway between the third floor lintels and the simple cornice, a projecting wooden board. Several courses higher, the brick has been painted a cream color. Beneath the frieze, consisting of a wide board, runs a dentil molding of vertical bricks.

### History & Significance:

This building was constructed by one of the two brothers who founded the Owosso.

Benjamin Oliver Williams came to Owosso in 1833 accompanied by an Indian guide, Esh-ton-e-quet, "Little Bear," known to the French as "Mon Cousin." Williams had established a trading post, The Exchange, in southern Shiawassee County, and was traveling on the Indian trail along the Shiawassee River to Saginaw. He tells of stopping on the high ground over the Big Rapids (where the Owosso Middle School is now) and remarking on the site's wealth of water power. He also noted the rose-willow plains and the abundance of oak on the other side of the river. When he returned to The Exchange after his journey to Saginaw, Benjamin told his brother Alfred about his discovery. Alfred L. Williams subsequently traveled to Detroit and, on August 2, 1833, the first land in the surveyed township transferred to individual ownership was

entered in the names of Alfred L. and Benjamin O. Williams. The brothers acquired more money later in the year and purchased an additional two hundred acres in November 1833.

Benjamin continued to operate his trading post for many years, later trading with the local native peoples at his home in Owosso. Mrs. Williams told tales of finding Native Americans sleeping on her kitchen floor on cold winter mornings when she arose to make breakfast. Benjamin and Alfred left Owosso to participate in the California Gold Rush, returning two years later.

The brothers exchanged one third of their property in Owosso with Daniel Ball for a mill race in 1837 and a saw mill which he finished in 1837. Daniel Ball had come to Owosso from Rochester, New York in 1836. Messrs. Ball and Green erected the first grist mill in Owosso for Amos Gould in 1839.

When Benjamin Williams completed the building at 112 N. Washington, Eli Gregory established a hardware store there. Eli Gregory was born in New York in 1823. The map of Owosso from 1857 notes that Gregory was living in a home on the southeast corner of Main Street and Michigan Avenue. He later moved to 416 Genessee Street, in a residence which still stands. In 1859, Eli was one of Owosso's first aldermen from the fourth ward, and in 1871 he served as Mayor of Owosso. Gregory was the uncle of Mrs. Matthias Stewart, who operated a dry goods store across Washington Street from his hardware store. Eli Gregory died on November 20, 1884, at the age of 61.

Following Gregory's death, 112 N. Washington became the site of the Southard & Densmore Hardware store, advertisements for which touted stoves and hardware. The Argus Press on March 19, 1923, reported "M. W. Southard and S. L. Densmore of 112 S. Washington sell to C. J. Weisenberg, of Chesaning. Southard had been running the business, Densmore continues with the Sugar Company." Weisenberg was still conducting his hardware business at the address in 1928, but eventually moved his store to 104 N. Washington, where it continued until 1948.

Immediately prior to its purchase by the Schmidt family, the building was owned by Judge and Mrs. Linden managed the Linden Dress Shop.

The Schmidt family traces the jewelry business now housed in this building back to the late nineteenth century, when it was begun at 117 N. Washington by C. S. Allison. Allison sold the business in the early 1920s to L. Paul Ball, who moved it to 110 W. Main. The Schmidts purchased the business from Ball and operated on Main Street until 1971, when they moved to the current location at 112 N. Washington. Steve Schmidt, the current owner, joined the firm in 1977. Schmidt's is known not only for its jewelry sales and repair, but for the historic memorabilia displayed in the store, and for Steve Schmidt's web site about Owosso history.

**Photos:**





## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 113 N. Washington Street

**Site:** Funny Pages Hobbies

**Date:** 1880 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

There is a three-story Victorian building concealed beneath the enameled metal tiles applied to its façade, also hiding all windows on the upper floors save two modern aluminum retrofits cut into the tiles on the second floor. An asphalt shingle awning has been added above the recessed entry, which features aluminum framed display windows.

### History & Significance:

1894 F. H. Banister Staples and Fancy Groceries Store

1899-1906 Hookway & Sons Grocers

1907 Business and building purchased by Willis E. Hall & Son, the business in which he had clerked for five years, learning the grocery business under F. H. Hall and his brother Louis built the store on the ne corner of Main and Ball as their first grocery store. Their interest expanded to purchase the stock of Hookway & Sons, two grain elevators, and eventually into the wholesale grocery business. Willis Hall was the City of Owosso Treasurer in 1908.

1910-1928 Murray & Terbush Men's Furnishings

1928 Bartz Meat Market

1936-45 Kroger Grocery and Baking Company

1955-1975 Knepps Women's clothing

1990's The Curiosity Shop antique store

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 114 N. Washington Street  
**Site:** Images Forever Photography Studio  
**Date:** 1880 ca.  
**Status:** Non-contributing



### Description:

The street façade of 114 N. Washington has been so extensively altered over time, covering or otherwise obscuring its architectural details, that it is impossible to establish the original appearance. The building retains its recessed entry and window placement, although the doors and windows have been replaced with modern materials. The rear elevation of the building is a uniform, elegant, mid-Victorian façade with symmetrically-balanced, evenly spaced large windows with simple brick lintels, provides the only hint to probable construction date

The original brick front has been purged and painted, although it is likely that the original masonry skin survives beneath. The three upper story windows and transoms have been filled with wood panels onto which decorative wood moldings have been applied. The windows have been fitted with fabric awnings. The motif of decorative moldings is also applied to the borders of the façade, covering the original brick piers and bulkheads beneath the first floor display windows. The applied masonry material covering the original brickwork obscures the division between the second and third floors. Between the windows and parapet, this applied material conceals any frieze or other ornamentation that may have been present in this area of the façade.

### History & Significance:

1892-1894 Paul Roth, Merchant Tailor, resided at 402 W. Williams Street.  
1899-1921 Lyon & Pond Dry Goods Store  
1921-1928 Lyon & Sons  
1928 William F. Juhl, Billiards  
1950s R & M Shoe Store  
1998-present Images Forever Photography Studio, owned by Mary Ruhl

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 115 N. Washington Street

**Site:** Edward Jones Investments

**Date:** 1890 ca.

**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

This three-story brick commercial building (along with those at 117 N. Washington, 112 S. Washington and 116 W. Exchange) features one of the most elaborate high Victorian facades in Owosso. In fact, the addresses at 115 and 117 N. Washington were built as a single structure separated by a thick masonry dividing wall. While the first floor has been extensively reworked (though preserving its recessed entrance) the upper floor appears remarkably intact under a coat of white paint.

The second and third floors are three bays wide. A strong sense of verticality is achieved by four two-story piers and two floors of tall windows. The wider center windows and tallest topmost center window enhance the vertical effect, as do the demilune transoms over the third floor windows. The windows are boarded over, and while the condition of any surviving window sashes beneath is unknown, the building's near-twin on Exchange Street retains its original windows and transoms for comparison. Horizontal accents include rusticated stone stringcourses acting, in part, as sills for the second and third floor windows, and horizontal inset panels of distinctive textured brick between them.

While the façade of 115 N. Washington has been painted, its unpainted twin at 117 features deep red brick and two contrasting bands of cream-colored stonework that span the façade beneath and between the third floor windows, over which ornamented brick lintels with rusticated keystones frame the demilune transoms. Decorative textured brick is used throughout the second and third floors to create intricate, pleasing patterns in the masonry. There is even a brick pattern inset into the brick lintels. While the building is now capped by a plain brick parapet, old photos show that it was once adorned with fanciful wood cornices.

### History & Significance:

18?? The addresses at 115 and 117 N. Washington are built as the Laubengayer Block. John Frederick Laubengayer was born in Wurtemberg, Germany in 1834. He moved with his family to Ann Arbor in 1834, and to Owosso in 1857. Laubengayer purchased the drug business of Dr. Bagg sometime before the latter's death in 1864. John Laubengayer practiced as a druggist at 115 N.

Washington, where he and his family lived above the store. John's son, Theodore Laubengayer, continued the family business in this location.

- 1892 The addresses at 115 and 117 N. Washington are listed in the city directory as the J. C. Williams Block.
- 1899-1911 B. S. Sutherland, Dentist (second floor)
- 1899-1921 W. E. Collins and Company, Druggist
- 1907-1908 Jennie Ferguson, Dentist (second floor)
- 1910-1916 Odd Fellows (second floor)
- 1921-1924 Foresters (second floor)
- 1924-1932 King's Drug Store
- 1930-1932 Locomotive Engineers Hall (second floor)
- 1936 Skinner & Company Meat Market
- 1990-2010 Peter Key purchased the building from Mel Rosengard, who managed Herbert's Women's Clothing. Key, a native of Australia, and a resident of Owosso, manages Edward Jones Investments, along with his son, Rory. Mr. Key reports that the building's basement contains an antique pill press, used for compounding medicines into tablet form.

## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 116-20 N. Washington Street

**Site:** 116 Aldrich Art & Supply

118 Game Knights Entertainment

120 Winers & Loafers / Avon / Vacant

**Date:** 1880 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This two-story late Victorian brick commercial building is divided into three separate units, perhaps built on spec or investment. The fenestration and raised brick pilasters divide the second floor façade into three distinct sections, while they are simultaneously united by the raised brick frieze, continuous brick parapet, uniform windows and cast iron lintels. Each division of the building features three long, narrow, evenly-spaced windows capped by elaborate Renaissance Revival lintels. Each is also outlined by raised brick pilasters that widen into the solid brick parapet, under which runs a stepped brick frieze.

It is regrettable that the unity of the three sections of the building is obscured by the paint that renders each in a different color, but the second floor of the facade remains remarkably well preserved more than a century after its construction. The first floor facades appear to have all been altered in different ways, but retain their large windows and recessed entryways.

### History & Significance:

#### 116 N. Washington

1892 Bullard & Hagan Trunks and Valises shares space with Glynn & Monroe Crockery.

1899 A. E. Williams Saloon shares space with Al Rindge, barber.

1900-1904 J. Gerson Clothing

1905-1930 Bullard & Hagan Clothing Store

- 1931 Bullard -Wills Clothing Store
- 1948-1980s Cook's Paint and Varnish Company
- 1998-present Aldrich Art & Supply, owned by Tamara and Michael Aldrich, offers art classes on the second floor and gallery displays on all three floors of the building.

### **118 N. Washington**

The four owners of this building have been Mr. Loring, John H. Steck, George Hoddy, and Michael and Misty Jordan.

- 1881-1910 The structure was built and owned by Charles Loring, who conducted his insurance business here. Loring's wife taught lessons and operated a china painting studio on the second floor. T.O. Christian, jeweler, the brother of D. M. Christian, of Christian's Department Store, began his own business at this address repairing jewelry in the store's window.
- 1910-1984 Christian sold the jewelry store to John H. Steck, who arrived in Owosso by train from Washington, Iowa, on New Year's Day, 1910. Steck had heard from a traveling salesman that a jewelry business in booming Owosso, Michigan, was for sale. John Steck, a veteran of the Spanish-American War, became active with the local National Guard unit, and was appointed company commander in 1917, during World War I. Steck remained in Germany for a year after the war with the Allied occupation force. John's brothers, Henry and Fred, moved to Owosso and joined him in the family jewelry business. Steck's was the authorized watch inspector for the Ann Arbor Railroad. The Steck family operated their business here until 1984, almost seventy-five years. General John Steck died in April 1961 at the age of 84.
- [dates] The building was owned by George Hoddy, local industrialist.
- 2010 The building is owned by Michael and Misty Jordan.

### **120 N. Washington**

- 1899-1921 J.C. Johnson, druggist, is the earliest recorded occupant of this location.
- 1921 Vernon L. Fulmer Drugs
- [date] Grahams Pharmacy
- 1930-1931 Jap and Mac Drug Store
- 1931-1936 Jasper M. Peru Patented Medicine Shop  
T. J. Horsman, attorney (upstairs)

W. E. Ward, physician (upstairs)  
L. C. Dean, draftsman (upstairs)

1940s Joseph Lebowsky operated his men's clothing store here during this decade. In the 1940's. Lebowsky had built the Capitol Theatre at the corner of Main and Park Streets in 1925. The theatre was later renamed in his honor. (See the history for 120 E. Main).

1980s Larry's Toggery, a men's clothing store

2010 The building is owned by Suzanne Carpenter, who lives above the store. The commercial space on the street level is vacant.

**Photos:**

120



118



116



## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 117 N. Washington Street

**Site:** Norm Henry Shoes

**Date:** 1890 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This three-story brick high Victorian commercial building features one of the most elaborate facades in Owosso, with a matching building next door at 115 N. Washington and near twins at 116 W. Exchange and 112 S. Washington. The second and third floors, each three bays wide, were designed to imply strong verticality, an effect created by constructing four strong piers running from the sills of the second floor windows to the tops of the third floor windows, not including the demilune transoms. The outside piers are the fronts of the thick masonry sidewalls. The vertical effect is accentuated by the tall windows, with the center windows wider than those flanking, and the third floor windows taller than those on the second floor. An inset field between the top of the second floor windows and the bottom of the third floor windows reinforce the upward visual sweep.

There are horizontal accents, including rusticated stone stringcourses serving, in part, as sills for the three second and third floor windows, and horizontal inset panels of textured brick between the second and third floor windows. This textured brick is extremely unusual in that it appears to be flat brick with various round formations projecting out. From below, it gives the impression of rocks applied to a smooth surface, although the bricks were cast with these round, raised designs.

There are two contrasting bands of smooth stonework (cream against the red brick): a continuous band runs the width of the building at the tops of the second floor windows, acting as lintels, and there are matching pieces acting as capitals for the four piers/pilasters, at the tops of the third floor windows before the start of the ornamented brick lintels (with rusticated stone keystones) over the three demilune transoms.

The brickwork on the second and third floors displays a master mason's touch. The intricacy of the masonry is especially evident on this building because it is in its original unpainted condition. In addition to the previously-mentioned textured brick panels atop the second floor windows, there is a large expanse of textured brick (this brick was cast to look like rusticated stone) between the piers and above the three demilune transoms. There is even a brick pattern inset into the brick lintels. The whole of the building is capped by a plain brick parapet; historic photos of this building show an elaborate wooden cornice once graced the top of this building, explaining the plain parapet.





The windows on the upper floors are currently boarded over, but the original windows, in sad condition but extant, are said to be in place beneath the boards.

This building and its neighbor to the south are some of the best surviving examples of high Victorian commercial structures in Owosso. While the first floor has been remodeled, the space may adhere to its original configuration. The facades of the upper floors retain much of their original integrity, providing a sound foundation for a spectacular future restoration.

**History & Significance:**

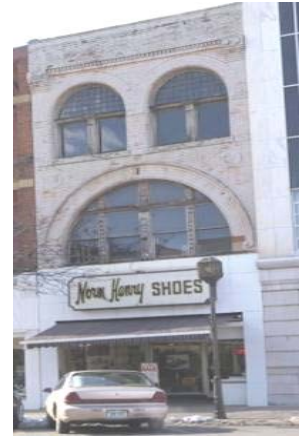
- 1874-1894 J. C. Williams Shoes
- 1899-1916 Michigan Telephone Company headquarters occupied the second floor of the building, along with lawyers, a book store and Earl H. Palmer’s Coal Company.
- 1899-1923 Allison Jewelry. Charles Allison and his wife, the daughter of Ebenezer Gould, lived in a house at 603 N. Water Street. Allison sold the business to an employee, L. Paul Ball, in 1924.
- 1924-1931 Ball Jewelry. Ball moved the business to 110 W. Main in 1931.
- 1977-1980 The Ruth Shop, a ladies’ clothing store
- 1980-present Norm Henry Shoe Store, previously known as The House of Shoes.

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 119 N. Washington Street  
**Site:** Norm Henry Shoes (north half)  
**Date:** 1890 ca.  
**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

This three-story brick late-Victorian commercial building features a grand façade that is unique among downtown Owosso’s surviving buildings. Erected as a stand-alone building with thick masonry sidewalls and flat façade, its character is defined and dominated by an immense lunette window on the second floor. The lunette is framed by a substantial brick arch trimmed with a raised feature that terminates in elegant, curved Art Nouveau-like ornaments.

Above the arch, a stringcourse of rusticated stone runs the width of the building, serving as sills for the two arched windows on the third floor. Each of these windows is divided by a single mullion and capped by a demilune transom which is comprised of many small, square glass panes set into a grid of wood. Above the third floor windows, a shallow frieze of stepped bricks transition into a simple parapet that old photos portray as bearing an elaborate wooden cornice. Rectangular blocks with small circles cap the topmost corners of the broad frieze.

The street level of the building has been reworked in the twentieth century, but the second and third floors remain largely intact. The original windows are in place, though deteriorating. Now painted, the dark red brick once contrasted with its white stone accents.

### History & Significance:

- 1883 Murray and Terbush were doing business at this location before moving to a storefront in the Thomas Block, at Washington and Main Streets.
- 1885-1912 Owosso Savings Bank incorporated at this address, moving to 101-103 N. Washington in 1912 and 123 N. Washington in 1936.
- 1915-1945 F. W. Woolworth’s
- 1948-1959 Christians Department Store expanded their business into 114 W. Main, displacing Struber Brothers Shoe Store, which had been established in 1873 and purchased by Dr. Imerman, a local dentist. Dr. Imerman moved the store to 119 W. Main, where it was managed by Guy Henry, assisted by his son, Norm Henry.

1959-2010 Norm Henry's shoe store has been in continuous operation at this location throughout this time. Norm and Rosalyn Henry bought the business in 1959 and operated as the Economy Shoe Store until 1981, when the name was changed to Norm Henry Shoes. The Henrys also purchased the House of Shoes, located across Saginaw Street from Lansing Mall, and expanded under that name into seven shoe stores in Ionia, Lansing, Durand, St. Johns, and Saginaw. Norm Henry also bought the Muhlhall and Erb lumber yards, now known as Valley Lumber, with locations in Owosso, Alma, Fenton and Lansing. The shoe business is now managed by the Henrys' daughter, Carla Henry Merrill, operating in adjacent storefronts at 117 and 119 N. Washington.

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 122 N. Washington Street

**Site:** New Vision Optical

**Date:** 1868

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This three-story, mid-Victorian era brick commercial building occupies the southeast corner of the prominent intersection of Washington and Exchange Streets. It features: solid brick construction; long, narrow, hooded windows with cast iron, pedimented Renaissance Revival lintels; and retains its ornate cut-corner, street-level wooden façade facing Washington Street. The corners of the building are outlined by raised, flat brick. The iron front entrance surrounds original double doors that open into a tiled vestibule and a second, interior pair of entry doors. Excepting a few elements (bricked-in windows on Exchange Street, a missing cornice and several missing lintels), the building has survived in its original configuration for the last 142 years.

The N. Washington elevation serves as the building's primary façade. Fenestration on the upper levels is balanced and symmetrical, with three bays per floor on N. Washington and one on the angled corner wall, above the cut-corner entry. The seven windows each on the second and third floors of the E. Exchange side are aligned vertically, but are unevenly spaced across the façade from east to west, probably according to the room layout of the upper floors. It is likely that this asymmetry reflects the builders' lesser regard for the importance of the N. Exchange side. A railed exterior staircase from N. Exchange descended to an entry at the basement level, bricked-in outlines of which, with accompanying windows, are visible from inside the basement.

The corners of the building are outlined by raised, flat brick piers that transition, with a small curved detail, into a flat brick parapet, under which are simple stepped brick friezes, three bricks tall. The flat parapet once supported an elaborate wooden cornice.

### History & Significance:

1850-1860 Charles Shattuck and Matthew Tillotson conducted a trading post on this corner throughout the decade. Mr. Shattuck spoke the local native language fluently and was known to them by the name, "Gosh-ga-ta." (In 1891, Shattuck and his son constructed the Shattuck Music House at 207-209 N. Washington Street.)

1867 A report in the Owosso Press in November notes: "H. C. Knill, Esq., has purchased the property on the southeast corner of Washington and Exchange and is making arrangements to erect, next spring, a three story brick building for his hardware business."

H. C. Knill was born in England in 1829. He lived in a home on the southeast corner of Park and Exchange Streets and owned one quarter of that block. (The Detroit, Milwaukee Railroad directory for 1871 listed Knill as operating a bakery and confectionery at the corner of Washington and Main, a block to the south of 122 N. Washington.)

Matthew Tillotson was born in New York State in 1800 and moved to Owosso in 1844, making his living as a fur trader.

1899-1900 J. L. Topping, lawyer

1899-1915 August Stephan Cigar Manufacturing

1899-1916 Albert Taft, optician

1899-1924 F. F. Hoyer, dentist, practices on the second and third floors of the building, with the entrance to his offices in the building located around the corner at 106 E. Exchange Street. Dr. Hoyer, born in Niagara County, New York, on April 15, 1857, lived in a house with a Mansard roof at 435 E. Oliver Street. Dr. Hoyer was born in Niagara County, NY

1915-1936 Brown and Gray Cigar Store and Billiards Hall changes its name to Gray's Cigar Store in 1932. James Oliver Curwood, noted author, is reputed to have been a steady billiards customer here during the 1920s. Agnes Huber Newman, a local woman, remembers that her mother instructed her to always cross the street when approaching the pool parlor, as no decent girl should be seen near it.

1916-1924 Clarence G. Taylor, barber, practices his trade somewhere within the building, succeeded by barbers Boyle and Maxted in 1928, and yet another unnamed barber in 1932.

1921-1924 E. M. Rohrabacher insurance

2010 Nu Vision Optical (building owned by James Civile.)

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 123 N. Washington Street

**Site:** Fifth/Third Bank

**Date:** 1896

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

The bank structure found on this site today has been “slipcovered”, but we have a photograph of the building shortly after it was built as the “Keeler Block” (Keeler was the president of the new bank and presumed to be the builder) in 1898 for the Citizens’ Savings Bank of Owosso which was established in 1896. The brick for this building was made at Fred Tick’s brick plant on Corunna Avenue. The bank was operated by the Keeler brothers of Grand Rapids. Isaac Keeler came to Owosso in 1895 from Grand Rapids and built a house at 218 W. Oliver. On the third floor of this bank building the Masons met at one time as even in current day the lodge symbols are painted on the ceiling. This building still has all three floors done with maple boards, and the windows from the original construction are still intact on the third floor with wide and wonderful wood trim. The gas lights are still in place on the third floor as well.

In 1960 the bank undertook an extensive remodeling. Expansion and improvements continued at the Main Office and by 1970 the bank had acquired the use of two buildings that opened onto Exchange Street.

### History & Significance:

In 1838, Ebenezer Gould and David Fish opened the first general store in Owosso on this corner.

Ebenezer Gould, brother to Amos Gould, was born 1817 in Fleming, New York, came to Owosso in 1837, and started a business with his brother-in-law David Fish first with this general store and a year later they rented and ran a grist mill. In 1850 Ebenezer studied law in his brother Amos’ office and was admitted to the Bar in 1851. In July 1862, Ebenezer accepted the position of First Major in the 8th Michigan Cavalry. Promoted in 1863 to Lieutenant Colonel he was in the regiment attached to General Hooker’s Army of the Potomac, in General Custer’s brigade. He became a Colonel in Michigan’s fighting 5th, discharged because of disability and returned to Owosso in 1865 to become a partner in law with Gilbert R. Lyon.

In 1869 Matthias Stewart owned a grocery store on the southwest corner of Washington and Exchange Streets. According to the book “History of Shiawassee and Clinton Counties 1880” he was already banking at the store he erected in 1869 at this address. (A puzzle—the Matthias Stewart building appears on the Owosso Map of 1857, yet in the book History of Shiawassee and Clinton Counties 1880, it says “a store he erected in 1869”. Did he perhaps build yet another building between 1857 and 1869?) In 1882 he built his bank, across the street, on the northwest corner of Washing and Exchange Streets. Before he built the bank he had been long accommodating other merchants in town with the big safe he had in his store. (See the story of Stewart’s Bank at 201 N. Washington).

Matthias resided at 308 N. Washington, which later became the Eagles Lodge (burned in 1949)

The current banking company has undergone several name changes from D. Gould Bank, the first bank in Owosso, to the First National Bank, to the Second National Bank, then the Owosso Savings Bank in 1891. In 1938 the Owosso Savings Bank moved to the southwest corner of Washington and Exchange Streets, the former building of the citizens Savings Bank which never reopened after the depression. Pacesetter Bank, Old Kent Bank and now Fifth/Third Bank are the more recent operational companies.

**Photos:**





## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 200-08 N. Washington

**Site:** Springgrove Variety / Midstate Title Company

**Date:** 1956

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This modern single-story blond brick structure with a flat roof features a cut-corner entrance and a wall of windows facing west onto N. Washington. The exterior of this building remains as built, with its pure 50's streamlines design.

### History & Significance:

Once the site of the Salisbury Opera House (later the Strand Theatre), The row of historic buildings shown in this vintage photo was razed in 1953. The current building was erected in 1956. Murphy's, a fine-and-ten, occupied this building for decades. Springgrove Variety store, maintained in the style of the older store, now occupies this location.

1899-1900 J. H. Copas & Sons meat market was initially located here, but operated at 218 N. Washington from 1908 to 1911. The Copas slaughter house was located at the present site of the Owosso Fire Station on S. Water.

1915-1921 Henry Brown bowling alley

1930-1931 John Carr billiards parlor

1932-1953 Recreation Billiards

1956- This site was cleared in 1953 for construction of the current commercial building, which was build by Perrin Construction Company.

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 201-03 N. Washington Street

**Site:** Wells Fargo Investments

**Date:** 1948

**Status:** Non-Contributing

### Description:

This one-story stucco building on the northwest corner of N. Washington and W. Exchange Streets features a row of residential-style “picture windows” along both street facades beneath a contemporary metal awning. Cloth roller awnings are in place above each window. The angled entrance onto the corner recalls the Victorian structure on this site that burned in 1948. The current building is an extensively remodeled remnant of the Art Modern structure built here after the fire. A recent change of signage revealed that at least some of the late 40’s façade survives beneath the current banal exterior. A recent change of signage revealed that at least some of the late 40's facade survives beneath the current banal exterior.

### History & Significance:

- 1883 The Matthias Stewart Bank was built on this site by Matthias Stewart. The bank closed in 1904 because it had overextended its assets via a loan to the Owosso Carriage & Sleigh Company.
- 1900 Second floor office tenants included Seldon S. Miner, attorney; Dr. Gaylord N. Finch, dentist (until 1916); and Walsh & Pardee, architects.
- 1906 Economy Drug Store occupied the site, succeeded by Gute’s Drug Store.
- 1948 Fire destroyed the building on February 11, after which Frank Gute rebuilt his drug store and operated it at this location until 1962. The building that stands today dates from this rebuilding. (Following Frank’s death in 1976, his estate distributed more than \$700,000 to local church and charitable organizations.
- 1960 Stone’s Drug Store succeeds Gute’s and operated here until the early 1980s.
- 2010 Harold and Peggy House, owners, lease the building to Wachovia Securities/Wells Fargo Investments, previously A. G. Edwards.

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 205 N. Washington (now part of 201 N. Washington)

**Site:** Wachovia Securities

**Date:** 1948

**Status:** Non-contributing



### Description:

This structure is now annexed to the one story stucco building on the northwest corner of Washington and Exchange Streets featuring a row of residential-style “picture windows” along both street facades beneath a contemporary metal awning. Cloth roller awnings are in place above each window. The angled entrance onto the corner recalls the Victorian structure on this site that burned in 1948. The current building is an extensively remodeled remnant of the Art Modern structure built here after the fire.

### History & Significance:

1887 Knapp and Smith made furniture and conducted funerals here, later moved to an address on W. Exchange Street, and finally to the southwest corner of Park and Mason Streets.

1903-1989 Capitan family food businesses operated in this location for more than half a century.

Harry Capitan immigrated to the U.S. from Greece in 1900. He came to Owosso in 1903, when Owosso’s population numbered 7000 persons. He rented this location and opened the Sugar Bowl, a candy-making business that initially consisted of a counter, four shelves and a set of glass storage jars. Capitan purchased a player piano and made \$110 in one week at a nickel a tune.

Peter Capitan came from Greece to join his brother Harry in 1907. Together, they transformed the candy store into a restaurant. They were the first business in town to sell ice cream year round instead of just in the summer.

Peter’s sons, Alex and James Capitan, took over the business in 1945. A fire destroyed their store and Gute’s Drug Store, immediately to the south, but they rebuilt and reopened within eight months. The sign outside what had been the Sugar Bowl now read “Capitan’s,” an iconic family eatery in Owosso for more

than three decades. The building was extensively remodeled in 1948 and 1960. James Capitan, who became the business's full proprietor in 1975, was mayor of Owosso during the 1980s and later Shiawassee County Commissioner.

[date] Jerry Voight purchased the building, removed walls and incorporated it into Voight's Pharmacy and Gift Shop.

[date] Currently the wall placement has been reversed to open into the adjoining building to the South, the Wachovia Investments , to serve as office space.

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 207-09 N. Washington  
(Current owner uses 207 for lower level and  
209 for second floor)

**Site:** The Shattuck Block / The Bake Shop

**Date:** 1891

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

Because of its handsome and rugged façade of rusticated stone, this building is stylistically unique among Owosso’s surviving commercial buildings. The massing and details of this building seem a little ‘off.’ Old photos reveal this building once stood a proud three stories tall. This photographic evidence shows the original building in glorious Romanesque Revival style, made famous by H.H. Richardson, with a third floor façade enlivened by large windows, a center arch (always a strong component in Romanesque Revival architecture), and a strong and bold parapet. There was a keystone emblazoned with ‘1891,’ the construction date.

In the 1980s, the entire third floor and the interior staircase and elevator were removed to ease maintenance.

The second floor (once the middle level) features another unique feature in Owosso commercial architecture: a row of five window openings of alternating shapes. The windows at each end and in the center (windows 1, 3, and 5) are square, with flat tops. The others (windows 2 & 4) have rounded tops. There is a row of orange stones that form a continuous lintel over these five windows, following the shapes of the window tops. These orange stones form an interesting contrast to the grey stones that comprise the rest of the facade.

Stone quoins highlight the sides of the building and orange stones punctuate the parapet. There is a series of long, thin stones at the base of the second floor, acting as a sill for the windows; this is balanced by a like band across the very top of the parapet.

### History & Significance:

1891 Charles and J. C. Shattuck build a double, three-story business house which is described by a Detroit newspaper as “the finest front of any business house between Detroit and Grand Rapids.” This building serves as new home of ‘The Shattuck Music House,’ an enterprise started in 1869 by C. E. Shattuck, who turned over management to his son, J. C. Shattuck, in 1890. The Music House sold a wide variety of items, including “bicycles, large stock of pianos, organs,



sewing machines, phonographs, moving picture machines, small musical instruments of all kinds, sheet music and musical merchandise.” The business operated at this address at least through 1930.

The Special Edition of the Argus Press printed for Owosso's centennial featured the Shattucks in an article: “Pioneers in everything they handle, the Shattuck Music House Company sold the first sewing machine in Owosso, the first organ, the first piano, the first bicycle, the first phonograph and they operated the first radio station here. (They also owned the first car, driven by Mrs. Shattuck!) Not only this, but Charles F. Shattuck, founder, made the brick from which St. Johns UCC and the Congregational Church were built. Elder Shattuck came to Owosso from New York State in 1844 at the age of 12 years and was the sole support of his mother. His first job was in the grocery store operated by Dr. J. B. Barnes. He also worked at the Stewart Company bank. As a young man, he owned the brick yard on Corunna Avenue. Shattuck bought a newspaper business in 1863 - The Shiawassee American - and operated it for one year.” Mr. Shattuck died in 1900.

- 1899-1900 M. A. Springer, Milliners
- 1910 Scott T. Bennet, Physician
- 1928-1942 Graham-Paige automobile dealers do business at this address before moving up the street to 223 N. Washington in 1942.
- 1928 Holland Furnace Company occupies at 209 N. Washington.
- 1932 Great Atlantic & Pacific Texas Company conducts business at 207 N. Washington.
- 1952 Firestone Tires is located at 207 N. Washington, with Rexall Drug Store, owned by Jerry and Connie Voight, located at 209. The Rexall store became Voight's Drug Store and, later, Sobak's Drug Store.
- 1980s The building's owner removed the third floor of the building, including its building date in the cornice line, and its elevator.
- 2010 The Bake Shop, owned by Susan Treen, is open at 207 N. Washington.

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 210 N. Washington Street

**Site:** Jo-Ann Fabrics and Crafts

**Date:** 1980 ca

**Status:** Non-contributing

### History & Significance:

1899-1900 J. M. Rose Restaurant & Tobacco Store

1905-1906 W. O. H. Lee Laundry

1907-1953 Tannehill and Grant Bakers

1980's Original buildings on the block were razed and the current structures built.

2010 Joann Fabrics is leased from Robert Brewer.

The parking lot was the location of the Merrill House, a hotel which later was occupied by the Elk's Lodge.





## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 211 N. Washington Street

**Site:** Owosso Floral

**Date:** Unknown

**Status:** Non-contributing

### Description:

Although the store front housing Owosso floral at 211 N. Washington appears to be one building, it seems likely that the unattractive mid-twentieth century facade is masking the presence of two separate buildings. A 1955 aerial photograph of downtown Owosso reveals two very different buildings on this site (with easily identifiable buildings on either side), and the current configuration does suggest two store fronts. The ‘remuddling’ effort, probably executed in the 1960s, created a large and open retail space within, but completely destroyed any remainder of the street level facade on either building.

The street level facade seen today is composed of a large window wall with glass double doors at far left. This wall of display windows, set on a brick support wall, has been reset a few feet back from the original facade. There are two giant brick arches across the front, about where the original facade ran. These inappropriate arches create a shallow recessed area and seem to serve as unintended reminders of the two store fronts that once graced this site. The second floor has been completely covered in some material (aluminum) which is pierced in one place by a small modern metal window.

Further thwarting the search for any hint of the two buildings is the fact that the back walls, facing an alley, have been completely covered in modern building materials.

### History & Significance:

#### Note:

In researching this property, we determined that there are two distinct buildings under this mid-century wrap. These buildings bore the addresses 211 and 213 N. Washington. The modern materials completely envelope the structures and make it impossible to determine the age or appearance of the original buildings. In the second half of the twentieth century, a local business expanded into four store fronts, stretching from 207-09 to 215. When the spaces were later subdivided, the original street numbers became confused. The two buildings at 211 and 213 remain one store front and use the 211 mailing address. The building at 215 is now called 213.

To avoid any further confusion, we have maintained the current numbering system. However, to present the site and building histories correctly, we have listed the histories for 211 and 213 in the section labeled 211, and have presented the history of 215 (one of our oldest surviving buildings) in the section called 213.

Although the store front housing Owosso Floral at 211 N. Washington appears to be one building, it seems likely that the unattractive mid-twentieth century facade is masking the presence of two separate buildings. A 1955 aerial photograph of downtown Owosso reveals two very different buildings on this site (with easily identifiable buildings on either side), and the current configuration does suggest two store fronts. The 'remuddling' effort, probably executed in the 1960s, created a large and open retail space within, but completely destroyed any remainder of the street level facade on either building.1868

1868 Charles Parkill established a drugstore, which it would remain, under various owners, until the 1990s. Parkill, age 19, arrived in Owosso with his parents in September 1841. He began to study medicine with Dr. Pattison, of Owosso, in 1843 and graduated from Willoughby Medical College, in Ohio, in 1846. He practiced medicine in Bennington, Michigan until 1868, when he returned to Owosso and opened his drug store. In ensuing years, ownership of the store passed from Parkill to his son, Stanley, and thence to a sequence of owners including Wade Camburn, Lloyd Owens, Samuel Voight, Jerry Voight (Samuel's son), and Dick Sobak, who sold the store in the 1990s, ending its existence as a drug store.

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 213 N. Washington Street

**Site:** Jay's Tux and Bridal Boutique / Striking Dragon

**Date:** 1856 ca.

**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

This three-story brick commercial building is among the most plain and dignified of easily, to great effect. Owosso's surviving downtown buildings. The façade, with minimal ornamentation and lacking the projecting piers from thick masonry sidewalls common on later local buildings, marks this as one of Owosso's earliest extant downtown structures.

The building is three bays wide on the second and third floors. A smooth stone stringcourse runs the width of the building just below the second floor window sills. The two flanking windows on the second floor have been replaced, while the center window on the second floor and all three third floor window openings have been filled with cement block. This later masonry work has been poorly executed, leaving telltale marks on the brick indicating that the windows on both floors were previously capped with pedimented lintels.

A projecting brick stringcourse runs above the bricked-in third floor window openings, surmounted by a simple brick parapet featuring three oblong indentations, one over each window. The façade is crested by a run of simple brick ornamentation in the dentil pattern.

The first floor has been extensively reworked in the twentieth century, but the restoration of windows and pediments on the second and third floors of the facade could be accomplished.

### History & Significance:

1899-1906 G. Tannehill Baker and Confectioners subsequently moved to 210 N. Washington, where the business operated from 1928 to 1953.

1905-1906 Glennie-Ferguson Company

1910-1911 George Caruso Confectioners

1915-1942 Hartwell and Hart Shoe and Rubbers later changed its name to Watcher Shoe Company.

1921-1931 Gabriel's Woman and Misses Store shared space at this address.

**Note:**

In researching this property, we determined that there are two distinct buildings under this mid-century wrap. These buildings bore the addresses 211 and 213 N. Washington. The modern materials completely envelope the structures and make it impossible to determine the age or appearance of the original buildings. In the second half of the twentieth century, a local business expanded into four store fronts, stretching from 207-09 to 215. When the spaces were later subdivided, the original street numbers became confused. The two buildings at 211 and 213 remain one store front and use the 211 mailing address. The building at 215 is now called 213.

To avoid any further confusion, we have maintained the current numbering system. However, to present the site and building histories correctly, we have listed the histories for 211 and 213 in the section labeled 211, and have presented the history of 215 (one of our oldest surviving buildings) in the section called 213.

**Photos:**

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 217-19 N. Washington Street  
**Site:** Gould's Hall / Demis Accounting  
**Date:** 1868  
**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

This very wide 3-story brick commercial building is obviously one of downtown Owosso's earliest structures, with design elements pointing very definitely to the Civil War era. The placement of the 5 very tall windows on the third floor, with a suitably grand and expansive open space presumed within, indicates this building relies on its sturdy masonry construction for support, as such open interior spaces were only possible on top floors in this pre-steel support era.

The first floor has been completely reworked, although a broad, decorative wood band survives, spanning the width of the building just below the second floor window sills.

The second and third floors are each 5 bays wide. On the second floor, 5 single window openings contain the original double-hung windows. These windows, wide and tall for the era, are flat-topped and capped by small (probably cast iron) decorative lintels. These light and frothy lintels are significantly smaller than the later Renaissance Revival lintels decorating the facades of other Owosso buildings of a slightly later date.

The third-floor windows are the glory of this building. Each of the 5 openings contains two round-topped original windows within an arched opening, the spaces between are filled with wood trim. The lintels over these wonderful openings are simple brick arches following the outlines.

There is a simple raised brick stringcourse several rows of bricks above the tops of the third-floor windows, above which is a brick parapet with five inset brick panels directly above, and wider than, each window opening. In accordance with architecture from before the Civil War, the brickwork on this building is very simple; these inset panels and the arched brick lintels were the only chance for the mason to demonstrate his talents.

Happily, the wide and elaborate wooden cornice survives, attached to the top of the parapet.

The design of this building demonstrates a visual trick employed by the architect/builder to offset the strong horizontal emphasis of the massive cornice. Starting on the second floor, the single windows are of normal width; then, on the third floor, are the paired windows in much wider openings, followed by the still-wider brick inset panels. Extending downward from the

flat part of the wooden cornice (against the parapet) onto the brick are the bottoms of six massive corbels. This configuration of smallest to widest moving up the building helps create an uplift which helps move the eye upward, creating a sense of height.

This building is a treasure in downtown Owosso which, above the first floor, has survived in remarkably fine and original condition for more than 150 years.

### **History & Significance:**

Built in 1868, by Amos Gould, one of Owosso's early and foremost settlers the second floor became a social center for the community. Owosso first commencement was held at Gould Hall; it was a meeting place for the active men during the Civil War; the site of many parties, and became the knights of Pythias Hall from 1932 at least until 1945 according to the Polk directory. The building was known as Gould's Hall, but in reality it was the second Gould's Hall, the first being the building directly to the north. The second Gould's Hall, at this address, was opened in January, 1868, with a fancy dress party held in the large upstairs hall. Osburn and Sons, successors to J. Osburn & Company and M. Osburn & Company, were to remove during the week to the new double store finished for them on the first floor (Owosso Press: January 22, 1868)

Amos Gould arrived in Owosso in 1843. He was the last of his family to arrive in Owosso, and he partnered with his brother Ebenezer in some business ventures. Amos was a lawyer who studied law in the office of William Seward who later became Secretary of State under President Lincoln. He served as attorney for the Detroit, Grand haven and Milwaukee Railroad (later the Grand Trunk Railroad) and also for the Amboy, Lansing, and Traverse Bay Railroad, which was nicknamed the "Rams horn" because of the curve of its tracks. This rail line was also known jokingly as the "Almighty Long and Tremendously Bumpy Railroad". Amos was one of the founders of the first congregational Church of Owosso. He served as State Senator from 1852-55 and Probate Judge in Shiawassee County in 1860. As Owosso was incorporated at a city in 1859, he became Owosso's first Mayor. In 1865 he organized the First National Bank of Owosso and remained president until his death on May 14, 1882. He had timbered land "up north", sawmills owned by family members, trains to haul the timber, a farm east of Owosso that encompassed 1200 acres. In short a very wealthy man. The city of Owosso purchased Gould's house at 600 N. Washington in 1979 for its museum.

Osburn and Sons Dry Goods business was located here 1868-1921 (approx.) according to the directories for those years. Osburn and Sons were the first occupants of this building. Pabst Brothers Furniture was another long time business at this location from 1960 thru 1970s.

John Osburn came to Owosso 1857 and "immediately established his dry goods business in Owosso (1895 Shiawassee County Atlas) with a compete line of dry goods, carpets, etc. and a general line of clothing and "gents" furnishings. They occupy both floors and basement of a large double store and employ over twenty people." Mr. Osburn is quoted as saying "This firm buys all its goods for spot cash and are thus enables to give their customers the benefit of a cash purchase".

John M. Osburn came to Owosso in 1857 from Meadville, Pennsylvania along with his wife Jane Morris. They had seven children, one of whom died in infancy and a daughter who died as a very young woman having five sons to be in the Osburn and Sons Dry good business. Their

daughter, Arianna, married Guerdon Dimmick, businessman in Owosso, and died eighteen months later. The Osburn's lived at 318 W. Williams, the location where Matthew Tillotson, early settler, had first lived in a house which was demolished before the construction of the Osburn home. The east stained glass window of the congregational Church was given in memory of John M. Osburn, 1812-1891 and Jane (Morris) Osburn (1819-1891) by their sons. John and Jane died three days apart and are buried in the same grave in Oak Hill Cemetery.

217 & 219 N. Washington was purchased by James Demis, Certified Public Accountant in 1979, from Marvin and Joe Pabst, who had given up the furniture business. The building in 1979 had already been converted to offices and Mr. Demis had been renting space in this building since 1977. After purchasing the property, he rehabilitated the entire second floor, installed an elevator and restructured the first floor to accommodate more office space. He related that the second floor of the Gould Building was also the location at one time of the City Hall Offices, probably in the 1870s and 1880s as the first City Hall was erected in 1885 at the southwest corner of Main and Park Streets. The office structure and vaults remain to this day.

## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 221-23 N. Washington Street

**Site:** Northside Realty

**Date:** 1854

**Status:** Non-Contributing

### Description:

The one-story building that stands at this site is the remnant of an historic brick structure erected in 1854 as Gould's Hall. The main façade on N. Washington and the side elevation on W. Mason have undergone extensive remodeling since the upper two floors were removed, completely enveloping the historic brick building in contemporary materials. The current appearance features a curved mansard roof, a façade surfaced with fishtail cedar shingles, two entrance doors and two sets of shuttered arched windows. The side elevation, on W. Mason, features split timber décor on the front half of the façade and uncovered brick at the back.

### History & Significance:

1854 The structure on this site was built by Amos Gould, the first mayor of Owosso. The first floor contained the Banking House of D. Gould and Company, which became the First National Bank of Owosso on October 10, 1865; and later evolved into Pacesetter, Old Kent, and now 5/3 Banks. The second and third floors were occupied by the original Gould's Hall, used for public meetings and social events. The second Gould's Hall, built by Amos Gould in 1868 at 217-219 N. Washington, survives next door. Amos Gould arrived in Owosso in 1843, the last of his family to arrive here, and he partnered with his brother Ebenezer in some business ventures. Amos was a lawyer who studied law in the office of William Seward who later became Secretary of State under President Lincoln. He served as attorney for the Detroit, Grand Haven and Milwaukee Railroad and also for the Amboy, Lansing and Traverse Bay Railroad. Amos was one of the founders of the First Congregational Church of Owosso. He served as State Senator from 1852-55 and Probate Judge in Shiawassee County in 1860. As Owosso was incorporated into a city in 1859, he became Owosso's first mayor. In 1865 he organized the First National Bank of Owosso, an outgrowth of his bank D. Gould and Company, and remained president until his death on May 14, 1882. The City of Owosso purchased Gould's house at 600 N. Washington in 1979 for its museum.



The Old Gould's Hall was the social gathering spot in early Owosso offering entertainments of all varieties. Paid entertainers gave concerts and reading and Tom Thumb and Minnie Warren appeared here. The Ladies' Mount Vernon Association held fun-raisers here to purchase the home and tomb of George Washington; Mrs. Jorley's Wax Works held a showing to the amazement of all. The Owosso Dramatic Society gave plays and skits in the large rooms of the third floor.

- Pre 1890      Duff's grocery store operated in this location before Duff moved to the new structure he built at 118 W. Exchange Street.
- 1907-1908    L.O. Underwood Meats
- 1910-1911    Robert C. Raatz Meats
- 1915-1916    Wilbur & Son Meats
- 1921-1996    Howard White had started in the bakery trade at Tannehill's Bakery in 1916 across the street from this site before starting up his own bakery at 221 N. Washington in 1921. Howard's son, Robert White, took ownership of the bakery in 1945 upon his return from World War II. In the late 1960's, Robert removed the second and third floors of the building, including the apartments where members of his family had lived above the store. The bakery passed to Robert's son, Mike, who operated it from 1973 until 1996, when the business closed its doors. (White's Bakery eventually expanded their business at other locations in Flint and St. Johns during the 1970s.) The Il Forno Restaurant at 223 closed in 1971, after which White's Bakery expanded into that space. The many fires at Il Forno, Owosso's first pizza parlor, left their mark on the charred beams which were exposed during subsequent remodelings. The remodel joining the two buildings was done by Perrin Construction in 1976.

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 300 N. Washington Street

**Site:** Council on Aging

**Date:** 1982

**Status:** Non-contributing



### Description:

This is a 1980's modern building constructed of light-colored brick with cement block foundation. The building has long and narrow windows evenly spaced on the south facade. The front entrance facade features a geometric angle constructed of the same building brick to catch the eye and direct a visitor to the front door, while at the same time serving as a wind-break. The doors and windows are metal-framed as might be expected in a building of modern construction.

This building houses services for the aging clientele of the county, including help with their taxes, property problems, etc., as well as social activities and noon time hot meals served daily.

## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 302 N. Washington Street

**Site:** Masonic Temple

**Date:** 1925

**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

This extremely large, four story brick building was constructed in 1925 as Owosso's third Masonic Temple, a purpose it serves to this day. The architect was probably faced with a commission for a large building to serve a variety of functions, to be constructed within limited means. Further, the Masons conduct their rites with a certain degree of pomp and required suitably grand surroundings. Finally, Masonic headquarters are called "temples" and certain of their buildings (such as the grand Masonic Temple in Alexandria, Virginia) had actually been built to resemble temples. In Owosso, with a strict budget, the architect created a simple yet elegant design that accomplished all of these requirements.

The finished design, which survives fairly intact more than 82 years later, created a vast rectangle whose design relied on simple materials for construction and applied ornamentation for the details. Faced with the construction and maintenance of their headquarters, the Masons wisely set aside the ground and second floors for office space for rental income. The Masons, a society with secret and sacred rites, were probably relieved to have their spaces elevated well above ground level; the third and fourth floors were devoted to their exclusive use. (At a later date, some of the office space along the ground floor facing W. Mason was converted to retail spaces. It was at this time that large display windows and glass doorways were placed on the W. Mason elevation, replacing window bay.)

The architect designed the exterior to reflect this division of internal spaces. Therefore, the brick facade is visually divided by a wide bandcourse of stone between the second and third floors. The first two floors, through the use of raised sections of brick, are designed to simulate what would have been heavy, rusticated stone at the base of a marble, sandstone, or granite building. The applied stone details were reserved for use on the Masonic, or third and fourth, floors.

The applied stone ornaments are used to highlight certain areas and to create a "temple" effect on flat brick walls. On both street-facing elevations four rows of flat stones rise in vertical rows from the aforementioned bandcourse up to a matching bandcourse above the fourth floor and below the wide parapet. The N. Washington, or primary, facade is five bays wide, so the four rows of vertical stone separate each window bay. The N. Mason elevation, seven bays wide across a much wider expanse, has two window bays outside the vertical rows and then one bay

between each vertical row in the center. These vertical rows extend past the higher bandcourse through the parapet and up to the wide stone band that caps the top of the brick walls. On both parapets facing streets, in between each of the four vertical rows, are three large round bas-relief insets. It is presumed these insets display Masonic-themed scenes. The same three insets appear on each of the primary facades. On the N. Washington facade, in the higher bandcourse is incised "Masonic Temple."

Other than a few large display windows on the street level on N. Mason (Later additions, as mentioned), the fenestration on the first three floors is consistent: each window bay is filled with two double hung windows side-by-side. The fourth floor windows are narrow horizontal slits, symmetrically balanced but oddly out of proportion given the large expanse of brick wall. The selection of these windows by the architect (and vintage photos show them to be original) is unexplained; one might think they were required by the use of the space behind them, but an exploration of the fourth floor door disproves this notion. The tiny fourth floor windows do help to give the exterior an added visual boost, as the unbroken brick walls between the vertical rows of stone seem to give the facades added height.

Vintage photos reveal the existence of large torches evenly spaced around the roofline. Amazingly, these torches were fueled by gas and were lit for important events. This must have been quite a sight in its day and the loss of the torches is certainly lamentable. As it stands today, the Owosso Masonic Temple is still a handsome building of noble proportions and clever ornamentation.

### **History & Significance:**

The Masons have been a presence in Owosso since 1855. They occupied various second and third stories of buildings in the downtown until the Masonic Temple was constructed in 1926. The first floor on the Washington Street side held private businesses, while in the back portions of the first floor was a hall in which dances were held, especially during World War II. The second floor was a recreation area which included card tables and pool tables, while on the third floor are the official lodge rooms and on the fourth floor can be found the kitchen and dining area and women's meeting rooms yet to this day. In modern day, the first and the second floors are totally rented out, but the third and fourth floor remain the domain of the Masonic orders.

From 1915, on the ground floor level, this had been the address of Osborn's Dry Cleaners and Dye Works until 1969 and then the address became the Abitt Cleaners in 1970 & 71. The current owner of the building is Thomas Simington.

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 307-13 N. Washington Street

**Site:** Laverock Block

**Date:** 1910

**Status:** Non-contributing

### Description:

The four store-fronts included in this brick building. The Laverock Block, have lost the second story due to a fire in the 1980s. Each store front has been altered in a different manner from its original state. Each business has display windows which face the east, and flat entrances. Original brick is evident on some at street-level. The physical evidence of the second story's existence is still visible on the building next door to the south, the Masonic Temple, where one can see the outline in tar used to seal the building's roof etched on the exterior north wall of the Temple.

### History & Significance:

#### 307 N. Washington

An early engineering map from the City of Owosso shows that this property in the early 1900's was owned by E.P. Joslin, who was the City Engineer. The map indicates no buildings on this site.

1910	Norris Albert Merchant Tailors
1915-1921	Ernest F. Hayward, Painters
1920-1931	Marshall-Wolverine Furnaces
1932	Lewis O'Berry Plumber
1941-1955	Robert F. Ash, Auto Parts
1957-1968	The Chamber of Commerce office
1969	Michigan surplus supply Company which carried upholstery and drapery fabrics, owned by Irene Babbitt, Meltha Cobb worked for a time for Irene Babbitt sewing draperies and Meltha's son, Greg Cobb being a college student, picked up extra by doing the upholstery for this business. Greg obtained his teaching degree, was

a substitute teacher for two years when he and his mother approached Mrs. Babbitt inquiring if she would sell the business to the Cobbs. Mrs. Babbitt agreed and retired and the business of MEL (Meltha) CO (Cobb) was born in Sept., 1976. Rosemary Walker was their one and only employee and subsequently worked for Melco for years. Margaret Kerwin owned the building at the time. Meltha retired in 1984 and Greg buying out his partner/mother, became the sole owner of Melco. Melco is known for upholstery and draperies and refinishing and repairing furniture and is still in business at this writing.

The second floor of this building was removed due to damage from a fire on March 18, 1882. A tenant of the building was killed in that fire.

### **309 N. Washington**

- 1910           Owosso Floral Company, cut flowers. They later moved to 201 W. Main
- 1915           Egbert M. Miller Insurance Company
- 1920s          Marble Brothers Electric Supplies and Wiring.
- 1932-1980s    Tony Bompezzi opened a liquor and sundries store in 1982. This store became a family business started by father Tony, and employing his sons Steve and Joe, and Vince, sisters Margaret and Mary and eventually Margaret's husband John Sinnott, who became a partner with Vince Bompezzi. Joe's Store held the first license to sell beer in Owosso and later the first business to hold a liquor license as well. In 1945 the business became just Joe's Store, which closed in 1982 due to a fire, but reopened with the partners Vince and John at the helm. They retired, selling the business to Mike Selleck. Joe's Store operated only a few years after the sale of the store. The Laverock block burned on March 18, 1982, killing a second floor tenant of the building. The second floors of the block were destroyed in the fire and subsequently removed.

### **311 N. Washington**

- 1910-1911     Charles H. Jewell & Company Plumbing, for steam and hot water heating
- 1915           Harry Dudley, general contractor for his offices
- 1921           Norris Albert Tailors
- 1930           Bob Ash Auto Parts Wholesaler, were here until they moved next door to 307 N. Washington in 1941
- 1941           Christian Science Reading Room

### 313 N. Washington

1915 James H. Laverock Coal and Wood. Mr. Laverock was also into real estate and loans, and in fact built a row of tenement houses on the south side of Mason between Ball and Water Streets around the corner from this apartment house. Those tenements since have been demolished. He also constructed the Laverock Apartments in the 200 block of N. Ball, corner of Mason. He constructed an addition to the city of Owosso as reported by the December 12, 1899 paper "J.H. Laverock has graded a new street on his addition. It is an extension of Galusha and extends from Ball to Adams Street, across the old fair grounds. "He also built an addition to the city along Mason Street, east of downtown, in the Mason Street Historical District.

James Laverock was born in Spicerville, Michigan on April 11, 1858, and came to Owosso in 1878. He worked for three years at Woodard's Furniture Company and then he manufactured cigar boxes for six years. In 1882, he went into business for himself and sold his cigar factory to F.E. Beebe six years later.

James was, for a time, a partner with Daniel Gerow, selling "ten cent sheds". This business temporarily shaded the horses and watered them while people were in town either shopping or conducting business for ten cents. He successfully transitioned into supplying coal and wood for heating and cooking and later into real estate development. He resided at 409 N. Ball. James Laverock died in 1920.

1920s Matteson, notary public

1928 Tudeno Real Estate office was here until through the 1930s. Mr. Tudeno was brother-in-law to Mr. Laverock and was affiliated with him in the coal and wood business. The Tudeno home for thirty five years was at 110 W. Oliver.

1941-1953 Gilbert Taylor Insurance Agency was here when Roy Spiess and son took over this location selling insurance until 1982, when the name changed to The Selleck Agency. Richard Selleck had partnered with Roy Spiess in 1967 and after Spiess' death; Selleck continued the insurance business under the same name until 1982. There was a fire which destroyed the second story of the block in March of 1982, killing a tenant of the building. After the reconstruction necessitated by the fire, Selleck changed the name of the business to the Richard A. Selleck Agency, and added real estate sales to the insurance business. The Selleck Agency continues today with Richard and his son Michael Selleck.

1920s The Ladies' Library occupied one of the second floor rooms for several years in this block. The ladies' Library and Literary Association was conceived in the parlor of Mrs. Ebenezer Gould. This effort was the foundation of the Owosso Public Library. The Ladies' Library also occupied several other buildings in Owosso before a library building was finally built.



## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 308 N. Washington Street

**Site:** Eagles Lodge

**Date:** 1950

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This bulky rectangular building of light tan brick with double-hung windows, cast cement sills, a cement cap at the cornice line and bands of glass block is otherwise undistinguished by stylistic detail. And, yet, it does reflect 50's architectural style. It contains a bowling alley, banquet hall, kitchen and bar.

### History & Significance:

The Owosso Eagles Aerie #851 had its inception on September 21, 1904. They purchased a house at 308 N. Washington for their headquarters in the same year, which was the former home of Matthias Stewart. Matthias Stewart was an early pioneer to Owosso, first opening a dry goods store on the S.W. corner of Washington and Exchange. While operating his dry goods business, he expanded his interests to become a banker for other businesses in town and provided them with the use of his very large safe. In 1882, he constructed his own bank on the N.W. corner of Exchange and Washington, opposite his store, known as the Stuart Bank. In 1906 the bank overextended its capital with a loan to the Owosso Carriage company, which caused the bank to close its doors.

The wooden Italianate Style house was heavily damaged by fire on March 1, 1949. The eagles built their new "home" in 1950, according to the cornerstone. The basement of the building has six bowling lanes. The main level consists of a hall, a kitchen and bar facilities.

### Photos:



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 319 N. Washington Street

**Site:** United States Post Office

**Date:** 1960

**Status:** Non-contributing

### Description:

This long, one-story government building with flat roof is constructed of brick, stone and cement block, with a wall of windows facing N. Washington.

### History:

This post office was constructed to replace the exquisite, 1906 Beaux Arts post office on the northwest corner of Park and Exchange Streets. The location remains a parking lot today. The demolition of the earlier building remains a vivid object lesson in the value and practical wisdom of historic preservation, one with great resonance especially for the city's older residents.

The first post office in Owosso was established with the founding of the town in 1836, located in Moses Store on the northeast corner of Exchange and Water Streets.

Owosso's first "mailman" was Ebenezer Gould, (son of Daniel Gould and nephew of Colonel Gould), a ten-year-old boy who rode a route from Lyons to Saginaw on his Indian pony, sometimes covering hundreds of miles in a week.

### Photos:



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 320 N. Washington Street

**Site:** Dr. Douglas F. Strong, M.D.

**Date:** 1875 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

Under the vinyl siding, behind the altered front porch, is a square wooden house with the wide overhanging eaves and large wooden corbels indicative of Italianate architecture. As that style was prevalent in Owosso in the 1870s, it is likely that the house, then on the northern border of downtown, dates from that era. The first floor retains its original configuration of four windows evenly spaced across the front, with the entrance centered among them. The asymmetrical placement of windows on the second floor probably result from later remodeling, as do the siding, the conversion of the expansive original front porch to interior living space, and replacement of the material in the frieze between large corbels.

### History & Significance:

1875 ca. This residence was built by a family named Jayne, according to the memoirs of Lena Estelle Gregory published in the Argus Press on March 16, 1931.

1880 ca. The home is the only known residence in Owosso of the Ludwig Struber family, who occupied it for most of the sixty years they operated a shoe business in town. Ludwig Struber and his brother, E. Struber, both shoemakers, emigrated from Germany to the United States in 1857, settling in Owosso in 1864. The brothers purchased property from Luther Comstock and they themselves built a frame building that served as the first home of their shoemaking enterprise. Sometime prior to 1881, the brothers built a two-story brick building, again, doing the construction themselves, at 114 W. Main, where they did business until 1942. In that year, Struber sold the store to Dr. Immerman, an Owosso dentist, who purchased it as an investment. Immerman employed Guy Henry as the store's manager, and Guy's son, Norm, under whose eventual ownership the business evolved into the Norm Henry Shoe Store.

1930s-1981 The house was purchased by Dr. Edwin McKnight's for use as the physician's office and family residence. Dr. McKnight died in July 1981. Mrs. McKnight died in May 1984.

1982 Selleck Insurance Agency briefly occupied the first floor of the building after their offices across the street were destroyed by fire.

1985-2010 Dr. Douglas Strong purchased the home, which he found in a deteriorated State, and renovated its interior to serve the needs of a modern medical practice while preserving the character of the old house. Fred Beyers, of the Wood Wool Company, served as general contractor for the project. The ornate Victorian oak and tile fireplace was preserved and relocated to the waiting room. French doors discovered in the basement were refinished and installed.

Douglas Strong is a native of Flint, Michigan, who graduated from Central Michigan University in 1977, received his medical degree from Wayne State University, and completed his family practice residency at Oakwood Hospital in Dearborn. Dr. Strong opened his practice at 918 Corunna Avenue in Owosso in 1980 before moving to his present location. Dr. Strong's family ties in Shiawassee County date back to 1842.

## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 326-28 N. Washington Street

**Site:** Burdette Shattuck House

**Date:** 1875 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This two story wood-clapboard frame Victorian residential building presents a symmetrical façade to N. Washington Street, with porches on either side and gables facing north, south and west. Stylistically, it is consistent with the characteristics of Carpenter Gothic, with steep pitched gables and decorative bargeboard. The windows are placed symmetrically and most appear to be original to the house. Those on the second floor are trimmed at the top with a decorative band.

### History:

[date] The house was built for Dr. Avery R. Knapp, one of Owosso's earliest practicing physicians.

[date] Dr. H. B. Peterson, a dentist from New York State who came to Owosso in 1869, bought the house from Dr. Knapp. Dr. Peterson's wife was Jennie LeValley, sister to Seraphine LeValley, the second wife of Geurdon L. Dimmick. The Dimmick family owned the stately Dimmick House on W. Oliver Street.

[date] The house was owned for a time by Dorr Day, photographer.

[date] The Shattuck family acquired the house and restored its exterior, including its lovely Victorian gingerbread trim. The property retains its original carriage house, few of which otherwise survive in Owosso.

## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 327 N. Washington

**Site:** First Congregational Church

**Date:** 1891-92

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

Designed by the firm of Malcomson & Higgenbotham, this Neo-Romanesque church with towering spire was built with a fieldstone base that segues into cut stone walls. The stones vary in size and color and are laid in a random pattern. The church features one grand pediment facing N. Washington, while the lesser W. Williams elevation features a greater and a lesser pediment. The church is ornamented with many stained glass windows of great beauty.

### History & Significance:

First Congregational Church UCC began as a Presbyterian Church on March 7, 1840, at a meeting in the home of Erastus Barnes. Meetings were held in homes, and later in the Owosso School Building on the southeast corner of E. Williams and N. Washington. The church became a Congregational Church in 1853 and a lot was purchased on the southwest corner of W. Williams and N. Washington. Work began on a white brick meeting house and continued into 1855 with a total cost of \$2,400. Amos Gould gave the church bell; the City of Owosso paid \$75. a year to have it rung to indicate time, including curfews and fire alarm. This building was torn down in 1891 and the corner stone of a new meetin house was laid on July 28, 1891. The new building was dedicated on September 21, 1892 and included a unique 'Pioneer Window.' Source: First congregational Church history.

### Photos:





## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 330 N. Washington Street

**Site:** Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church

**Date:** 1893

**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

This red brick church building sits upon a stone foundation at the northern boundary of the Downtown Owosso Historic District. It is mid-Victorian in character, with Gothic influence evident in the tall, narrow, arch-topped windows and the steep pitch of the roof. The entrance façade is centered in the base of a tall, square tower that rises into and above the steeply pitched gable roof to culminate in the church's steeple. There are six tall windows in each of the long north and south elevations, and another two taller ones in the façade facing N. Washington, flanking the entrance. The double entrance doors are surmounted by a transom set in arched bays that match those of the windows, and a pair of smaller windows.

Brick buttresses are sequenced along the long side elevations, between the windows and at the corners, punctuated by stone ornamentation. Stone keystones are set at the apex of each pointed-arch lintel. The stepped brick frieze is applied on the side walls between each buttress, at the top of the steeple, and even along the slanting front walls as the brick façade follows the roofline. This particular frieze, in which the bricks are arranged in a pendant design, is unique among Owosso's surviving Victorian buildings.

The entranceway has recently been reworked to include a heavy stone balustrade. There are other twentieth century additions at the rear of the building, and a modern side entrance at the front of the E. Williams elevation.

### History:

Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church was founded September 13, 1869, under the leadership of Pastor Johann Haas. But even before that time, the congregation had been meeting in Owosso's first public school building, built in 1840, which was located on the site of the current Salem Lutheran Church. The Methodist Society purchased the frame building in 1857 and in 1867 sold it to Mr. and Mrs. Struber, who in turn sold it to the Evangelical Lutheran Society. The present brick structure began with the laying of a cornerstone in July, 1893, containing a New Testament, history of the church, hymnal, church and synod constitutions, The Argus Press and several other newspapers, a list of members and officers of the church, a list of the members of

President Cleveland's cabinet and several religious periodicals. With a steeple standing 140 feet high, the building was erected at a cost of \$10,000. The tornado of November 11, 1911, devastated the church's steeple and roof; a shorter steeple was erected. In 1964, an area was added to serve the administration and educational needs of the church. (Source: Salem Lutheran Church Anniversary Book)



**SOUTH WASHINGTON STREET**

**INTENSIVE LEVEL SURVEYS**

## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 111-13 S. Washington Street

**Site:** American Speedy Print / Big City Dogs

**Date:** 1885 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This two-story brick late-Victorian commercial building was built as a single structure, divided in half for two store fronts. The façade of the second floor reveals raised brick piers outlining the distinct addresses, with the six narrow windows grouped symmetrically into two sets of three. Uniting the two addresses as a single building are the unpainted façade, brick parapet, patterned brick frieze and rhythm of the piers and bays.

The façade of 111 S. Washington features one of the best-preserved street-level entrances in downtown Owosso. Above and around the minimally reworked entrance and display windows are an elaborate Victorian façade, inset with four original stained glass windows. If this feature was repeated in the building at 113 S. Washington, it has since been lost.

Two one-bedroom apartments occupy the second floor of the building.

### History & Significance:

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 1894      | Louis Steadman lived above his cigar and wine shop at this address.  |
| 1899-1900 | Good Speed Bros. Shoes   |
| 1905-1921 | Pond and Hamper, lawyers, practiced from offices on the building's second floor.   |
| 1924      | Warren Peirpont, lawyer  |
| 1928-1956 | John Walsh moved his cigar store to this location from 102 W. Main, where it had operated since April 1904. He did business here until his death, after which his son, Harry Walsh, operated the store until 1956. |
| 1965      | Princess Dress Shop  |
| 1965      | Color Printers   |

1980 The Argus Press newspaper reported in its edition of July 10: “ John Walsh's Cigar Store is being restored by his granddaughter, Margaret Jane Walsh Barton and her husband David. Mid-Michigan Construction Company is the contractor and Elmer Manson of Lansing the architect. Mr. Manson specializes in historic restorations. The interior had to be almost completely gutted. The original interior woodwork was missing and had to be recreated.”

1982-present Speedy Print, owned by Greg Bennett, operates at 111 S. Washington.

2010 Big City Dogs, a restaurant, operates at 113 S. Washington.

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 112 S. Washington Street

**Site:** Nail Boutique / The Richardson Block

**Date:** 1890 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This three-story brick high-Victorian commercial building, three bays wide, features one of the most elaborate facades in Owosso. This façade achieves a strong verticality through its four piers; tall windows on the second and third floors, with the widest in the center; and transoms over windows on both floors, of demilune style on the third floor. The inset masonry panels between the second and third floor windows, fashioned from distinctive textured brick, further draw the eye upward across the façade.

A rusticated stone stringcourse serves as sills for the third floor windows.

Contrasting bands of smooth, cream-colored stonework, somewhat obscured by paint, span the façade above the second floor windows, acting as lintels, and above the third floor windows, between the demilune transoms and paternd brick lintels, serving as capitals for the four piers. Other masterful masonry touches include rusticated keystones set into the lintels and an expanse of textured brick, resembling rusticated stone, above the demilune transoms. The plain brick parapet originally anchored an elaborate wooden cornice, now absent.

While the first floor has been extensively reworked, the upper floors are unaltered and remarkably well preserved. Together with similar buildings at 115 and 117 N. Washington and 116 W. Exchange, these are some of the best-preserved and most visually appealing historic buildings in Owosso.

### History & Significance:

1890-1908 W. A. Richardson grocery store

1908-1915 B. M. Dawes & Company, grocers

1915-1921 William Finkelstein, clothing store

1921-1938 Hornus and Hahn Clothiers

1924 Horace C. Calkins, restaurant (upstairs?)

1928-1931 Van All Chain Stores

1945-1980s Walter's Shoe Store

2010 Owned by Vincent and Dawn Gonyou

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 114 S. Washington Street

**Site:** The Keyte Block / The Nail Boutique South

**Date:** 1890 ca.

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This high-Victorian building may feature downtown Owosso's most elaborate two-story facade, with ornate brickwork every bit as intricate as that of the three-story buildings on the north side of Main Street. Most remarkably, it retains its original street-level façade, with recessed entryway and wood-framed display windows.

This building was constructed later than its neighbor to the north at 112 S. Washington, onto the south sidewall of which the newer building was attached. The resulting sense of asymmetry is heightened by the fact that 112 is painted, while 114 retains its unsullied brick front. Restoring some balance to the façade of 114, however, is the ornate cornice of 114 that extends to the sidewall pier of 112.

The chief glory of the first floor façade is the horizontal band of textured, translucent glass block that runs across the face of the building between the brick sidewalls. Above this band of blocks is a wooden panel (a business marquee?) topped by a decorative wooden cornice molding that spans the width of the building below the second floor sills.

The second floor façade is divided into four strong vertical piers: one at each vertical corner and two more positioned between the three window bays. These piers stand in raised relief bordering shallow wells that contain the window bays and ornamental masonry. The central bay and window are larger than those flanking them on either side, with rusticated stone sills running beneath each window from pier to pier. The windows are capped by transoms which are, in turn, divided by mullions into patterns of squares and rectangles. Capping the bays is a wide, smooth bandcourse serving as lintels, running the width of the building and continued on the three left piers (although not on the one shared with 112 W. Washington).

Inset into the flat brick section above each window is a panel of the textured bricks which this building shares with so many others in downtown Owosso, and which are found even in the Westown neighborhood a mile to the west. Set several courses above these inset panels is a frieze of stepped brick ornament, three bricks high, increasing in size from bottom to top, culminating in a narrow band of angled brick. At this point, via a row of round-edged bricks, the frieze projects out to meet the parapet, which holds the wide wooden cornice that caps the building.

## History & Significance:

- 1892-1921 Moses Keyte, who may have built the structure, trades here as a harness maker, also selling robes, blankets, whips, trunks and valises. In its early years, the building also houses a restaurant run by Mrs. Abraham Donough.
- 1896 Cross & Harrison's Restaurant
- 1921-1945 Juhl's Tavern, presided over by Amos Juhl, includes a lunch room, billiards parlor and cigar counter.
- Home Furnace Company occupies the second floor of the building during a portion of this time, reflecting a shift away from coal and wood-fired fireplaces and stoves to central heating.
- 1948-1980s Irving's Men's Store
- 2010 Building owned by Vincent and Dawn Gonyou. Dawn's business is the Nail Boutique & Hair Salon.

## Photos:



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 115-17 S. Washington Street

**Site:** Risto's Bistro

**Date:** 1922

**Status:** Non-contributing

### Description:

This building was constructed of dark brown brick in 1922 for J. C. Penney Department Stores. A wall of windows faced west onto S. Washington, with a recessed center entrance. The building's one and one-half stories accommodated a mezzanine inside.

The façade is now covered in roughsawn wood, with exposed original brick painted to match. A two-story addition at the back serves as the residence of the current owner.

### History & Significance:

- 1922-1984 J. C. Penney conducted business here until moving to a new location down the street in 1984, one of five such new stores built by the company that year in an attempt to reestablish their base in American towns. The Owosso store has been consistently profitable for J. C. Penney.
- 1990's-2010 Risto's Bistro, a restaurant and nightclub with live entertainment, is owned by Risto Nicevsky.



## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 116 S. Washington Street

**Site:** Freddie's Party Store

**Date:** 1895 ca.

**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

The presence of a thick masonry sidewall and projecting pier on the south end of the building, and the absence of one on its north end, abutting 114 S. Washington, indicates that 116 was built onto and after the structure at 114.

The first floor was extensively reworked in the twentieth century to provide large glass windows for the small grocery/convenience store which has occupied this street level storefront for decades. A large modern metal awning is cantilevered over the sidewalk. In the expanse above this awning and below the second floor windows, a later metal covering has hidden the brick wall, and any ornamentation or architectural detail, from sight. It is hoped that the original brickwork and details, including the sills for the second floor windows, survive intact under this applied metal covering.

The second floor façade features four tall window bays with separate bands of smooth stone lintels over each window. (This is distinct from the continuous band of stone, spanning from side to side, more commonly found among Owosso buildings from this era.) Individual inset panels of textured, beveled brick are situated above each second floor window, several courses of brick above the lintels, providing a nice touch of texture in an otherwise smooth façade. Beginning several courses of brick above the inset panels, a previous owner has covered the rest of the building's façade with another metal covering that extends up to the roofline, obscuring details, such as frieze and parapet, which may remain beneath.

Although only a portion of the original façade is visible today, what can be seen of the second floor, with its handsome windows, stone lintels and inset panels of textured brick, definitely contributes to the historic character of downtown Owosso. It is hoped that, with access to tax incentives, the owners, who have recently carried out an extensive, historically sensitive interior renovation, might be prompted to explore beneath the building's applied metal coverings.

### History & Significance:

1899            A. E. Willover Saloon, with Mr. Willover residing upstairs.

- 1905-1906 Gillette and Drown Saloon
- 1906-1908 Burt Nolan Saloon
- 1910 The Wildermuth Café operated under the auspices of the Wildermuth Hotel.
- 1914-1921 John Spaniolo, confectioner, made candy here from 1914. The Spaniolo Family, including twelve children, lived on the second floor above the store.
- 1921-2008 The family business, now J. Spaniolo Grocery, expands to include the sale of fruit and groceries in 1921. One of the children, Fred Spanuolo, continued the business under that name until his death in 2008. Fred sold groceries, fruit, alcohol, cigars, newspapers and other sundry items, seven days a week. He was an excellent source of historical information about downtown Owosso.
- 2010 “Freddie’s,” a purveyor of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages and specialty foodstuffs, has been opened in this location by new owners Vince and Dawn gonyou, who have retained and rehabilitated the store’s oak floors, ice boxes, shelving, candy counters, walk-in cigar humidor, and other features original to the store.

**Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District

**Address:** 118 South Washington Street

**Site:** vacant

**Date:** 1875 ca.

**Status:** Contributing



### Description:

This two-story brick mid-Victorian brick commercial building is shorter and simpler than its more exuberant high-Victorian counterparts on the north side of Main Street. The structure's masonry sidewalls indicate that it was constructed as a stand-alone building. The building's dimensions, two round-topped windows on the second floor and their Italianate arched brick lintels suggest a construction date sometime after the Civil War. Indeed, the Dimmick House, on W. Oliver Street, constructed in 1873, features design elements remarkably similar to those seen here.

Surviving first-floor remodeling in the twentieth century are brick piers on both sides and a matching projecting pier near the left end. The asymmetrical spacing of these piers, defining a narrow area between the left and middle piers, and a wide section between the middle and right piers, visually divides the façade. This configuration frames the entrance door to the second floor in the smaller space on the left and the storefront in the larger space to the right. This unusual arrangement is explained by consulting old photos of the 100 block of S. Washington. The original building on this site was nearly twice as wide as the building that now stands at 118 S. Washington. With an identical storefront and pair of second floor windows located immediately adjacent to the south, centered on the entrance to the second floor stairwell, this building presented a balanced, symmetrical façade.

The second floor of the surviving building contains two wide windows and half-round transoms along with the round brick lintels matching those on the first floor. Each brick lintel is punctuated by a handsome stone keystone, and a stone feature is inset at the bottom of each brick arch, before the brick pendants start downward. Each window sits atop a stone sill. The frieze is simple, with a single row of projecting bricks forming a dentil pattern, surmounted by two rows of stepped bricks extending out to meet the low projecting parapet, only five or six courses of brick high.

### **History & Significance:**

- 1892-1895 Charles Gabriel Saloon
- 1896-1897 A. G. Sax Saloon. Sax operates another saloon at 102 E. Exchange beginning in 1899.
- 1899 Conrad Mehlenbacher, formerly employed at Estey Manufacturing, buys the saloon and lives upstairs.
- 1905 C. Hoyt buys the saloon from Mehlenbacher, who moves his establishment to 111 E. Main, living upstairs.
- 1907 Gustave Lueckermann takes ownership of the saloon.
- 1910 Earl Bellerbaum, soft drinks
- 1915 Mild C. Lathrop Dry Goods
- 1921-1976 John Spagnuolo purchases the building for his grocery store, which is still listed as Charles Spagnuolo Grocery Store in 1976.
- 1979-1990s Betty's Too Donut Shop

### **Photos:**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 120 S. Washington Street

**Site:** Jade Buffet

**Date:** 1963

**Status:** Non-contributing

### Description:

This modern one-story building is constructed of blond brick featuring walls of large windows facing east onto S. Washington.

### History & Significance:

1963 The structure was built by Robert Brewer

1963-1983 ca. Sears Roebuck Company operates an appliance sales room and catalogue order desk.

2005-2010 Jade Buffet, a Chinese Restaurant, does business at this address. The building is owned by Thomas Symnington.

## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 121-25 S. Washington Street

**Site:** Wildermuth Hotel / Indian Trails

**Date:** 1871

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

Occupying the Northeast corner of Washington and Comstock Streets, this three-story brick commercial building features its main street façade facing Washington and a simple, unadorned elevation on E. Comstock. The main façade is visually divided into three sections by projecting vertical piers. The first floor, or street-level, façade has been totally reworked in the mid-20th century, but an indication of the original entry level design may be found in the simple yet elegant wood entrance on Comstock.

To the educated eye, the various architectural elements of this structure are somewhat puzzling. Lintels over the second and third floor window of the main façade are radically different, the bricks on each floor appear slightly different in color (this is especially evident on the side street elevation), strong horizontal lines are introduced at odd places, and the general proportions and design features just seem ‘off.’ When one reads that this 1871 building was originally two stories and only later (1909) raised to a full three stories, the differences make sense.

Some questionable decisions were made during the 1909 addition. The very heavy, Renaissance Revival pedimented lintels from the second floor were apparently removed and then reused to cap the new third floor window bays. On the second floor, the builder inserted long stone lintels in a design unique among Owosso buildings: extending from pier to pier, each lintel features a flat surface from which rusticated sections project, flat on the top and bottom but cut at angles on the sides to suggest keystones and lintels. These stone lintels are far too wide for the (modern replacement) windows that sit under them, especially given that the light stone sills are only slightly wider than the bays.

The original, second floor elevation features the aforementioned piers, and these piers are then repeated between each window bay. Another unusual feature is that the left and right sections are each three bays wide, but the middle section is only two bays wide on the second floor and three bays wide on the third. There is a pier separating the two bays of the second floor of the middle section. All this may well have been a product of the 1909 expansion, but it doesn’t help to create the balanced, cohesive exterior one expects from the post-Civil War era.

The builder of the 1909 addition did continue the four projecting piers (with indentations down the middle) from the two outside walls and the two interior support walls, but did not choose to continue the smaller piers between each window bay. Between the four piers, long smooth stone bandcourses were placed at the top of the original second floor wall to help mask the transition to the new third floor, creating a jarring horizontal line at an unexpected point. The third floor windows, with simple stone sills and the original lintels from below, are spaced three to a section and, although not precisely uniformly spaced, they help give the main facade some balance. There is a simple row of stepped bricks in the small frieze, immediately capped by another thin band of stone along the roofline.

The simple elevation facing E. Comstock is much more successful, even with the transition line between the 1871 and 1909 bricks. There are simple window bays, with simple stone sills and lintels, regularly spaced down the plain brick wall, with a matching simple stepped brick frieze. The previously mentioned original side entrance occupies the back section of the first floor.

### **Updated Information:**

The above architectural description addresses the three storefronts at 121-25 S. Washington. When it was written, it was presumed that this was a single structure. However, vintage photos have surfaced that show a mid-Victorian (probably built in the late 1870s) commercial building at the southern end of this block, at today's 125 S. Washington. The building at 121-23 was obviously built first, and then raised to three stories in 1909 (as is discussed in the text). At some point afterward, the corner building at 125 was replaced by a new structure that matched the façade of 121. The various architectural elements, especially the distinctive lintels, were matched so well that it is only with great difficulty that one can detect hints that the southern section was built decades later. (The brick used on the new section is a very close match to the older section, but just a little different.)

An historian for Indian Trails provided the committee with vintage photos that seem to date from 1916-20, with the bus line's impressive fleet of vehicles lined up along S. Washington. In these photos (one is provided below), the mid-Victorian corner building is gone and the three store gone and the three store front building we see today is present. Therefore, we can determine that the older building was razed or burned to the ground between 1909 and 1920, at which point the corner was filled with a new structure that was very carefully crafted to match its neighbors to the north.

### **History & Significance:**

1857 ca.-1871 John Rudolph Schnekelburger, a tanner, purchased this site when he came to Owosso from Ann Arbor in 1857. Here he built Sneckelberger's Hotel, a wood-frame eight-room boarding house that he operated until his death in 1863. His widow and daughters took over management of the hotel until it was destroyed by fire in 1871.

1871-1929 ca. The Wildermuth Hotel was built on this site following destruction by fire of Sneckelberger's Hotel, replacing the wood frame building with a two-story brick structure.



J. Fred Wildermuth was born in Wordumberg, Germany in 1841, and came to the United States with his parents in 1850. They settled in Buffalo, NY, where J. Fred learned the cooper's trade. [text?] continues the story:

“In 1863 he came to Owosso, and for the first two years of his residence here worked at his trade, then going to work in the old Exchange Hotel, where he remained for nearly nine years. After leaving the Exchange Hotel he started a restaurant where his hotel now stands, one year later converting it into a hotel. Mr. Wildermuth owns a farm only about one mile distant from the hotel and from this he secures all of his vegetables, milk, butter, etc. and the hungry traveler finds set before him a meal to which he can do full justice.”

The Wildermuth Hotel and Restaurant were widely known for their excellent fare and superbly furnished rooms. A typical menu offered golden plover, venison, roast beef, soups, a variety of cakes and pies, and nuts for fifty cents.

Mr. Wildermuth's wife was a member of the Sneckelberger family.

- 1909-1918 Edward Hoffman, son-in-law to Fred Wildermuth, took ownership of the hotel and enlarged the building into the three story structure that stands today, increasing accommodations by thirty rooms.
- 1918-1936 A. G. Berner purchased the hotel from Edward Hoffman and continued its operation until at least 1936.
- 1928-present Indian Trails continues to operate in this location as the downtown Owosso depot for its passenger bus service, which celebrates its centennial year in 2010. The company was founded by Cora and Wayne Taylor and Mrs. Taylor's parents in 1910 as a baggage transfer service known as the Phillips-Taylor Livery Service. In 1912, the families bought a Model T. taxicab, and the enterprise evolved into the Phillips and Taylor Jitney Service, located at 219 N. Ball Street. Both Taylors drove the taxi to transport automotive workers to and from Flint, and Cora Taylor became the first woman in Michigan to be issued a chauffeur's license. The Taylors bought their first bus in 1915 and rented space for their bus depot in the Wildermuth Hotel, growing the company into the Owosso-Flint Bus Lines and, in 1940, the Indian Trails Bus Company, which operates throughout Michigan and the Midwest. Indian Trails purchased the Wildermuth Hotel in 1952. The name of the bus company is attributable to Cora Taylor, who was a student of Native American history, and each vehicle in the line bears the name of a distinguished Native American chief.

**Present  
Photos:**







**Vintage Photos:**



**NORTH WATER STREET**

**INTENSIVE LEVEL SURVEYS**

## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 201 N. Water Street

**Site:** The Armory

**Date:** 1915

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

Built in one of downtown Owosso's most prominent locations, at the foot of Exchange Street, on the banks of the Shiawassee River, the Armory was constructed with a strong sense of civic pride. The building's military origins are expressed in its deliberate resemblance to a Tudor castle: solid, heavy and imposing. The Owosso High School subsequently built to the north of the Armory adopted this style, though the Tudor elements are there less ponderous, even carved in stone.

The Armory is an immense rectangular brick rectangular structure, three stories high, capped by a gabled roof. The front section of the building, on the street side, houses its offices, while the much larger back section, toward the river, consists of an enormous single interior space, encircled by a balcony, resembling a gymnasium and/or ballroom, with a proscenium stage at the far end. A complex of utilitarian spaces subdivide the basement, which occupies the entirety of the building's footprint.

The front section of the building, containing the offices, is two stories high, with a bank of steps rising to the prominent main entrance on the elevated first floor. This entry is surmounted by a shallow arch, with projecting bays at either end, and groupings of windows set between the piers. Bands of smooth stone run between the piers, above and below the windows on the upper floors, serving them as sills and lintels. Small round-topped niches are inset into the angled walls of the projecting bays, imparting a bit of lightness and detail to the otherwise somber building. The crenellation that crests the front section of the building eschews the standard, rhythmic merlons and embrasures, arranged rather to highlight specific architectural details below. The merlons are especially prominent and dynamic on the end bays, where the parapets are taller, lending a distinguished touch to the façade. The larger rear section of the building is also constructed of brick, consisting of windowed sections between piers that support the enormous roof.

It is unfortunate that, in the 1960s, when it was believed the Armory was outmoded and would soon be razed, a small, modern ranch-style commercial building was erected by the Shiawassee Chamber of Commerce directly in front of the Armory, to house the Chamber's operations. Forty years later, renewed recognition and appreciation of the venerable Armory prompt a rising consensus in the community that the Chamber building should be removed as

part of efforts underway to restore and adaptively reuse the Armory, and to revitalize the west end of the downtown business district.

### **History & Significance:**

Owosso's first armory building was built on another site at the southwest corner of Mason and Park Streets in 1892. It was dedicated with a grand ball on October 20 of that year and razed in 1912. Images of this building survive in construction photos of the post office being built nearby. It was from this original armory that the National Guard accompanied Governor Edwin B. Winans to the dedication of the World's Fair in Chicago, in 1892, and from which troops departed for the Spanish American War in 1898.

The first building on the site of the current armory was the Dewey and Stewart Mill, constructed in 1855 and destroyed by fire in 1896. At the north end of the site was the S. D. Emery Poultry Company, a poultry farm owned by Seavy D. Emory, poultry dealer and onetime Owosso mayor. The Polk Directory also lists the Dudley Butter Company at this address in 1907-1908.

The current armory building was built at 201 N. Water Street in 1915. It was from this armory, during World War I that Company M sailed for France, on February 7, 1918, to take part in the Battle of Argonne-Seuse. These soldiers were among the first American troops to set foot on German soil during the war.

During the 1920s, the armory served as a community center which a promotional booklet described as offering "full privileges of the gymnasium and swimming pool. The gymnasium privileges include the formal class work, marching and calisthenics to music, recreative games, leagues tournaments, efficiency tests, etc." The Board of Directors of the center includes many of Owosso's foremost business leaders of the time. See copy in appendix A.

More recently, the armory has been the home of the 144<sup>th</sup> National Guard unit. The building has been vacant since National Guard operations moved to a newer armory building built in nearby Corunna in 2008.

## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 215 N. Water Street

**Site:** Shiawassee Chamber of Commerce

**Date:** 1969

**Status:** Non-contributing

### Description:

This ranch-style single-story building, prefabricated of synthetic materials, features a pitched roof and single large “picture window” facing the street, with additional narrow windows spaced evenly about the rest of the perimeter. The basement is constructed of concrete block.

### History & Significance:

The Shiawassee Chamber of Commerce had, for many years, moved through a sequence of rented or donated office spaces before constructing the present building, which was dedicated on May 21, 1969. Dr. Phillip Moore was president of the Chamber at that time.

The unfortunate placement of the building at the riverside end of W. Exchange, partially obscuring the aesthetically pleasing and historically significant Armory building, was based on an assumption that the Armory would be demolished, which has not, luckily, been the case.

### Photos:



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 219 N. Water Street

**Site:** Owosso Middle School  
(Formerly Owosso High School and Owosso Jr. High School)

**Date:** 1929

**Status:** Contributing

### Description:

This sprawling building, constructed as Owosso's high school, was designed and built in what might best be described as Institutional Tudor. Positioned at the edge of downtown Owosso and constructed on one of the city's most historic sites next to the Shiawassee River opposite James Oliver Curwood's scenic castle, the building today houses Owosso's only middle (or junior high) school. While the sides and rear elevations are much less elaborate and more utilitarian, the three story brick façade facing North Water Street, with the section containing the huge auditorium jutting out to the sidewalk, was designed to be impressive. It still impresses today.

Built of brick and ornamented with stone stringcourses, the main body of the front elevation is 3 stories tall, pierced by six large window bays (now filled with modern windows) on each floor, and capped with a wide, solid parapet. The most striking design element of the entrance façade is the tower containing the main entrance doorway, with a handsome point-topped Tudor arch surround in stone, and a massive oriel window, built of stone and bearing impressive stone detailing. (Behind this window is the dramatic main staircase connecting the three floors.) The parapet above the oriel (and much of this façade, for that matter) is enlivened by a criss-cross pattern created by the masons using a darker colored brick. The top of the parapet is crenellated, the rhythm of the merlons and embrasures interrupted by a little tower, taller than the merlons, at the left corner.

To the right of the entrance tower is a wall running perpendicular to the front façade and extending to the sidewalk. Then, abutting N. Water, a large brick wall rises impressively up from the sidewalk. This large expanse of brick frames three massive window bays containing Tudor-themed point-topped arch windows within ornate stone frames. These huge windows indicate the presence within of a grand auditorium.

An appraisal of the city's school properties dated April 1, 1949 describe this building as follows:

"Constructed with concrete two feet thick to grade, above grade walls of brick one foot ten inches thick faced with rough texture mingled shade face brick, trim, sills, and coping of Indiana

Limestone. Floor with linoleum and terrazzo finishes. 121,900 square foot interior, blackboards are of natural slate, bathroom partitions are of marble with doors on both boys and girls toilet partitions, windows are Austral double-hung with interior trim and doors of birch. Balustrades and marble newels on main stairs.”

When constructed, this school building was a symbol of Owosso’s civic pride. Today, more than 80 years later, it remains one of our architectural treasures.

**History & Significance:**

Owosso High School was designed by Warren S. Holmes Company, Architects, of Lansing, and constructed of brick and Indiana limestone. It was dedicated on February 10, 1930, with the first class graduating there in June. Enrollment at the school the following September was 741. The building continued to serve as Owosso’s only high school until a new high school was constructed in 1961 at the northern edge of the city.

The former high school was then rechristened The Owosso Junior High School, a function it continues to serve today under the name The Owosso Middle School.

**Photos:**



**SOUTH WATER STREET**

**INTENSIVE LEVEL SURVEYS**



## Downtown Owosso Historic District



**Address:** 209 S. Water Street

**Site:** Public Safety Building, City of Owosso

**Date:** 1969

**Status:** Non-Contributing

### Description:

This rectangular single-story building is constructed of blond brick on the front facade and concrete block on the remainder. A cornice of simple white metal siding encircles the whole. Large bays at the front of the building, flanked by narrow windows, serve as egress for the fire trucks alongside a lower section on the north side housing the police station. A central entrance with vestibule opens onto Water Street.

### History & Significance:

1885 The combined Owosso City Hall and Fire Station is built at the southwest corner of Main and Park Streets. These two institutions move to their Water Street sites in 1925, at which time the Capitol Theatre is erected at Main and Park.

1925 The Fire Department of the City of Owosso moves into what had been a slaughterhouse owned by J. H. Copas.

1969 The current Public Safety building, housing the fire and police departments, is constructed at this site.

### Photos:



Owosso Downtown Historic District  
City of Owosso  
Shiawassee County

August 2010

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Appendix



Woodard Employees in Parade - Casketparade.JPG



Curwood Castle under construction - Castleconstruct.JPG



Michigan Central Depot 8-11-17 – cmrrdepot.jpg



Dewey Stewart Mill  
Built by Daniel Ball @ present location of the Armory  
intersection of Exchange & Water - dewey\_stewartMill.JPG



Durand Depot - Grand Trunk RR – duranddepotgood.JPG



200 block East side of N. Washington – elkstempleowosso.JPG





Copyright 1906 by the Kellogg Co.

A 7802 Furniture Warerooms, Estey Mfg. Co., Owosso, Mich.

*Before the Fire.*

Estey Furniture – Located at the west side of the intersection of Corunna Ave. & Washington



Estey111111.JPG



Estyfactory.JPG



Estymfgeployes.JPG





Circus comes to Town - fillian2.JPG



Grandunionteaagent.JPG



Grand Trunk Depot Owosso MI - Gtepotowo.JPG



Hotel Owosso SW corner Washington & Main –  
hotelowosso.JPG



House Moving on Exchange Blvd. - house1.JPG



National Hotel  
ca, 1907





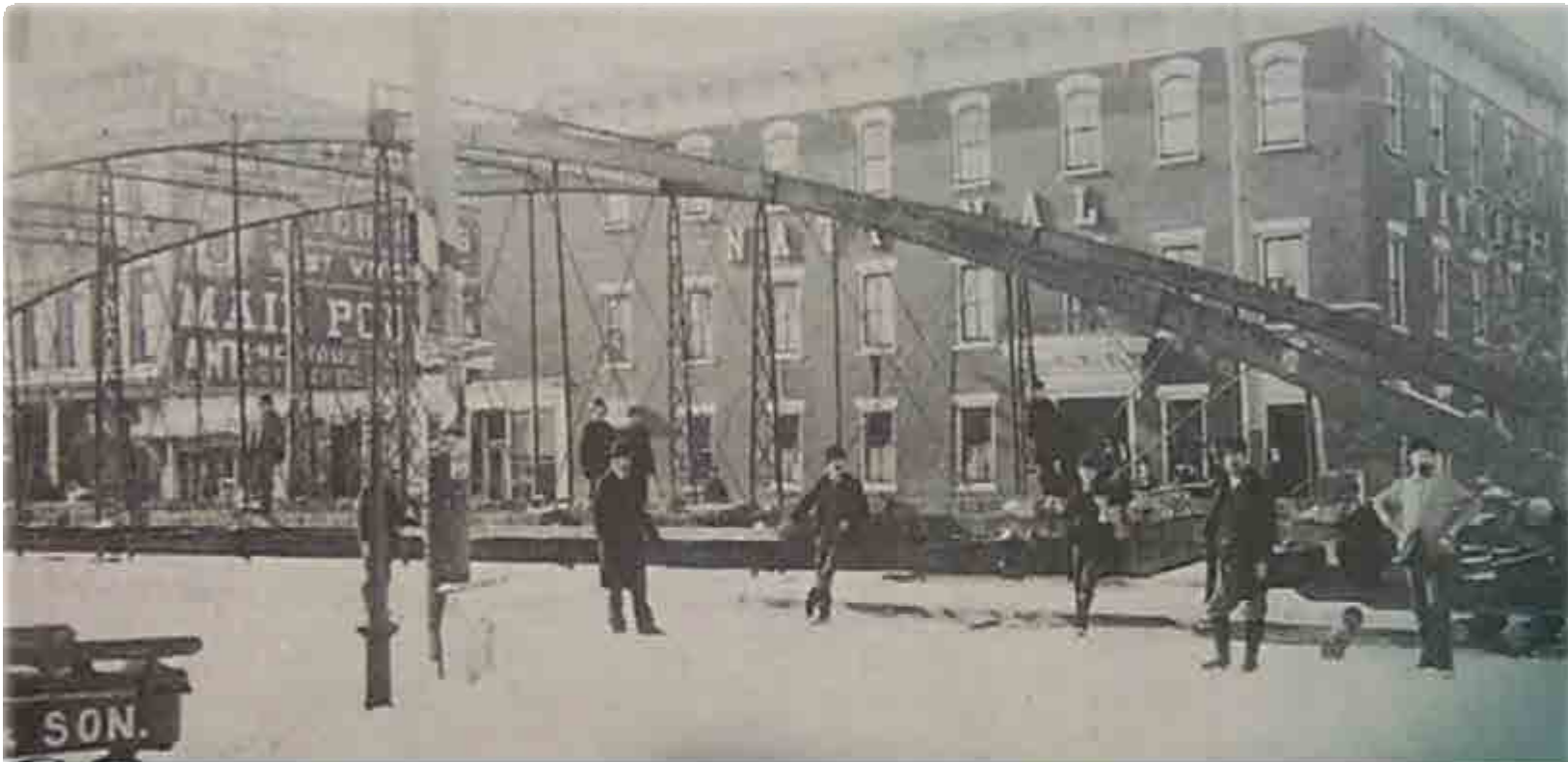
Interior Lobby National Hotel – insidelobbynational.JPG



Office of the National Hotel.



Dining Room of the National Hotel.



Moving the bridge down Washington in front of the National Hotel SW corner of  
Washington & main.



N.E. Corner Main St & Water looking east - Farm Implement Show. Crowe & Payne Building burned in 1898 - McCormickDay1900.JPG





Owosso Brick & Tile employees





W. Main from Ball east to Washington - Main 1913.JPG



Birds Eye view of S.E. corner of Main & Washington -  
Mainandwashsehigh.JPG



Mainparklookingwest.JPG



The L. Ball Clock in the 100 block of Main across the street  
from the Lincoln/Minter/Center Theatre -  
OldCenterTheater.JPG



Owosso City Hall - owocityhallold.JPG



Old Armory at southwest corner of Mason & Park  
Current location of Nelson House



Old Armory on Mason Taken over by Oddfellows -  
Owoioof.JPG





Carrie Nation visits Owosso July 17, 1909 near 118 S Washington St  
118 S Washington FS.JPG



Owosso Motor Company Advertisement - Owomomain.JPG



Comstock Cabin at its original location on M-21 & Main  
near the bridge



Downtown Businessmen - Owosso1871.JPG



South side of Main looking east- Owosso1910.JPG





Owosso Casket Company  
Business Card  
owossocasketcard1



The Circus comes to town - owossocircus1898



The Memorial Hospital  
OwossoHospital.jpg



Public Library NE corner of M-52 & M-21  
OwossoLibrary.jpg



North Side Main St. 100 Block - Owossomain1925.JPG



Owossomfg.JPG



owossomichwater



owossopostoffice2





Owossosept201955.JPG



Owossowashschool1915.JPG



Owossowatersthighschool.JPG



Salemtornado.JPG



Washington & Main looking South East  
Washingtonst1910owosso.JPG



Washington Street looking North  
Washnorth.JPG



Washington Street looking North  
Washst81910.JPG





Washington North From Main



Washington South from Main



Washington Looking North - Washnorth.jpg



Wildermuth Hotel - Wildermuth 1-Edit.jpg



Wildermuth Hotel corner of South Washington & Comstock Looking North East -  
Wildermuthhotel.JPG



Wildermuth Hotel Lobby - Wildermuth 2-Edit.jpg



Wildermuth Dining Room - Wildermuth 3-Edit.jpg



The Connor Building  
Current location is the SE corner of the Exchange St. parking facility





*S W corner. Washington & Exchange Streets. (before 1896).*



Interior of Citizens' Savings Bank of Owosso.



Citizens' Savings Bank Building, Southwest Corner of Washington Avenue and Exchange Street.





Office of J. H. Laverock, 217 North Ball Street.



Strand Theatre & Majestic Theater at the NE corner of W Exchange & N Washington.  
Current location of Springrove Variety. (Old Post Office is visable at far right.)



CITY HALL and FIRE STATION



*City Hall and Fire Department  
East Main Street, OWOSSO, Michigan  
About the Turn of the Century*



SE corner Washington & Main.  
Current location of Chemical Bank





NW corner of Washington & Main



100 Block N Washington  
1953



Belle Isle Creamery Owosso Michigan

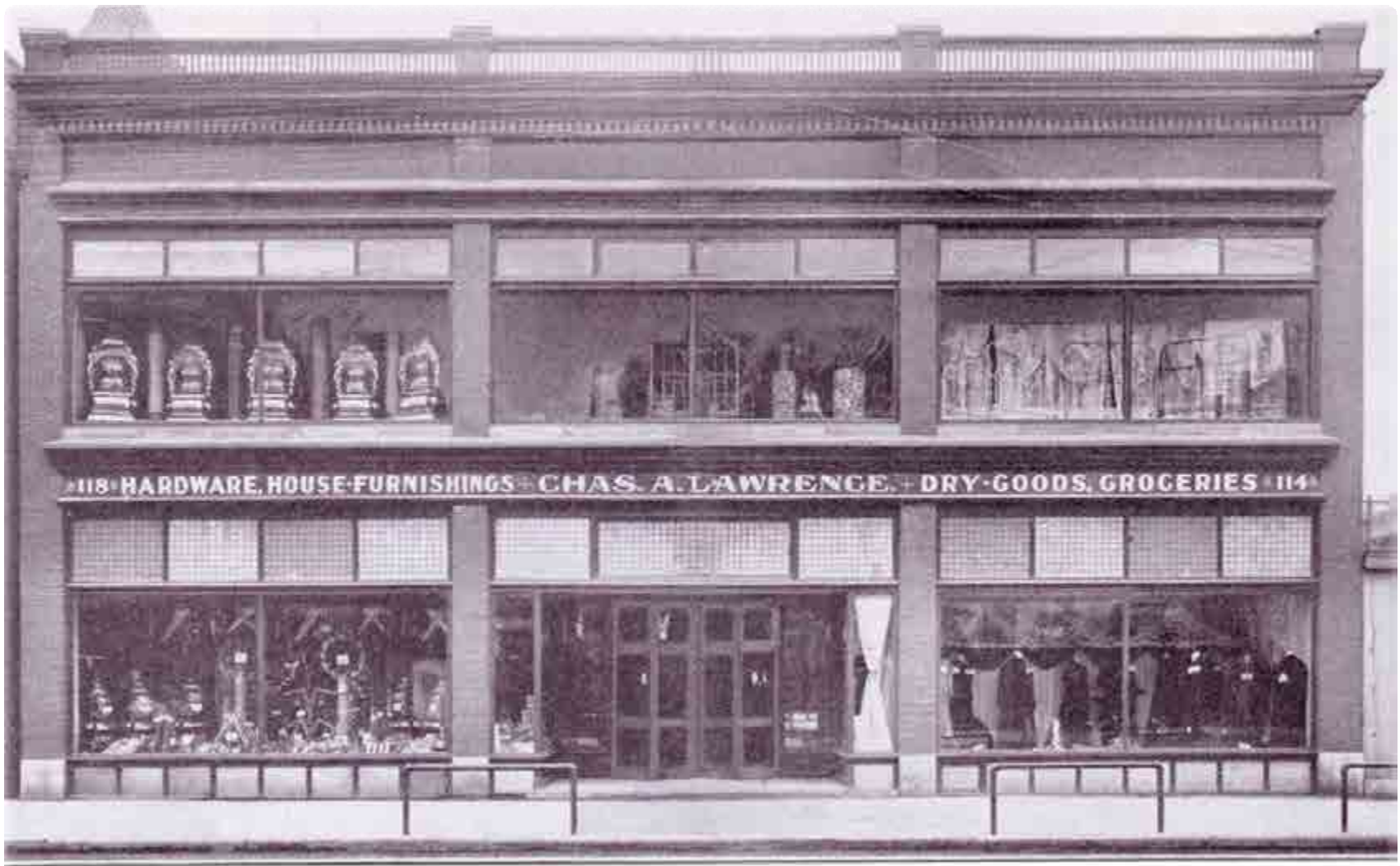


Woddardtornado.JPG





Interior View of the Shattuck Music House, 307-9 North Washington Avenue.



Stores of Chas. A. Lawrence, 114, 116, 118 East Main Street.



Chas. A. Lawrence  
At 118 E. Main



Chas. A. Lawrence at 212 W. Main  
Second Store





Interior of Chas. A. Lawrence  
212-214 W. Main





Stores of F. W. Pearce, northeast corner of Washington Avenue and Main Street



Store of Hall & Byerly, northeast corner West Main and Ball Streets.



Interior of Store of Hall & Byerly.



Hauck Hotel SW Corner  
Ball & Exchange St. - Cornerhotelhauck\_1909.JPG





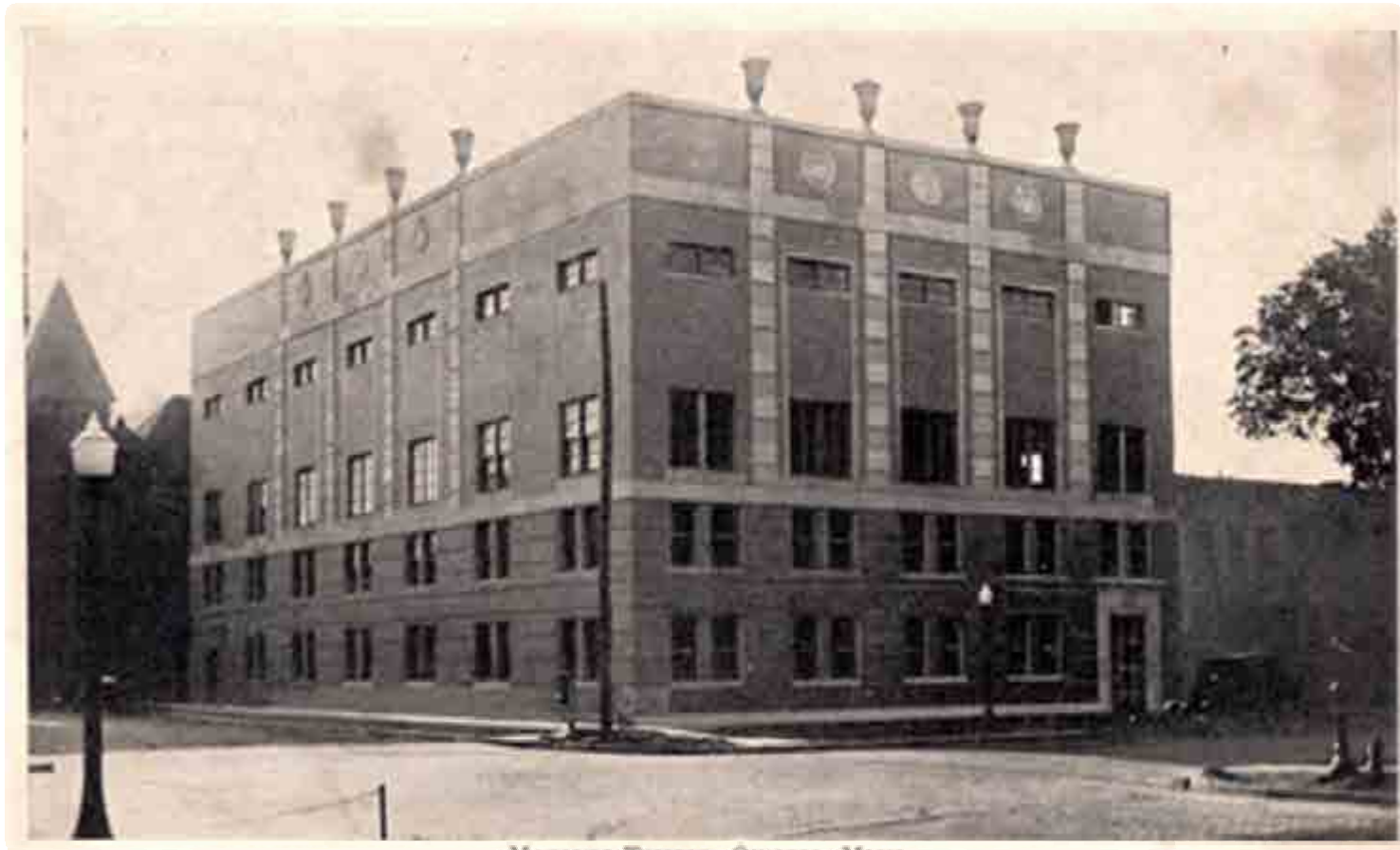
Office of the Hotel Hawk.



Office of the Hotel Hawk.



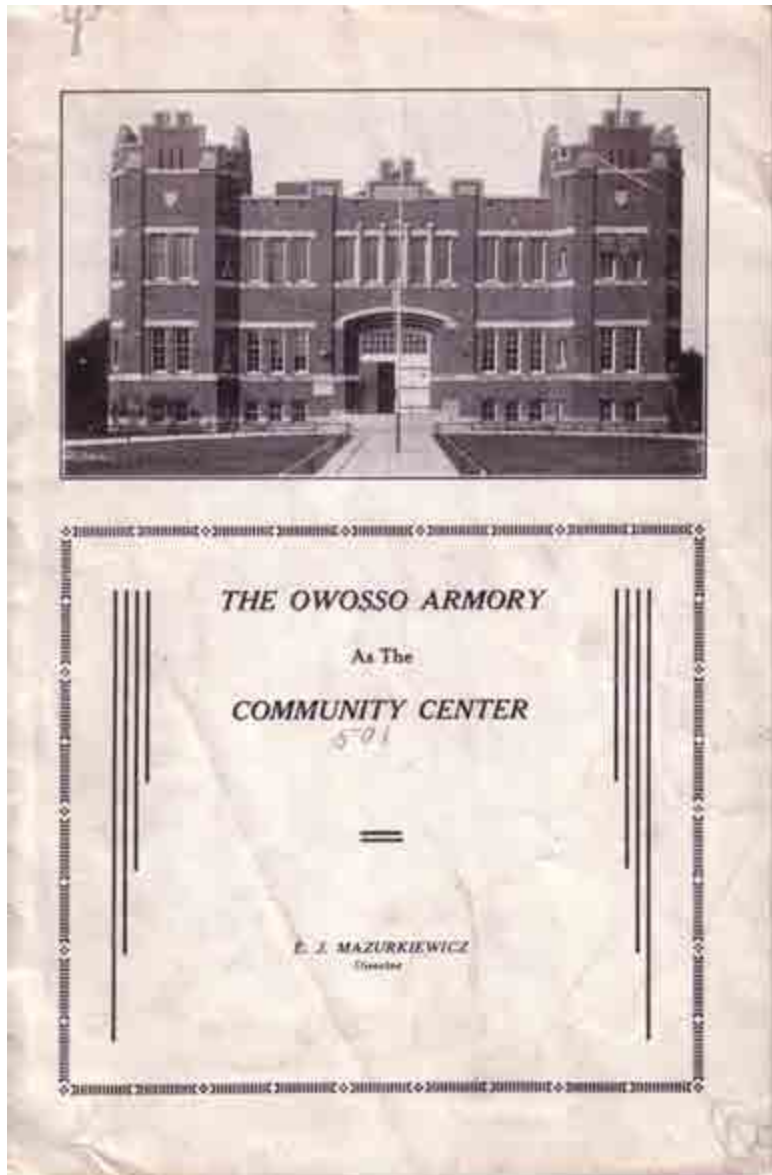
Hartshorn Farm Implements. Later Welte Auto Sales  
The Times building on the left corner is now Taco Bell



Owossotemple.JPG



Lebowski Before the Fire



I would like to have a little less, or much less, destruction and more resources for construction in America. I would like to have less toil to maintain armies and navies and more of play to hearten the American people. I don't believe the best of success comes out of the constant grind. I would like an America where there is some becoming leisure and opportunity for recreation, not for just a few people, but for a fortunate American people in which all may participate.--Warren G. Harding.

Owosso Armory As The Community Center  
Front Cover



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JOHN J. McDONALD ..... Chairman  
 E. J. WILLMAN ..... Vice Chairman  
 FRANK FREEMAN ..... Secretary-Treasurer  
 E. J. MAZURKIEWICZ ..... Director  
 JAMES OLIVER CURWOOD      DR. HAROLD A. HUME  
 SIDNEY DOWLING              CAPT. JOS. A. MAC DONALD  
 DR. GAYLORD FINCH          JUSTIN W. SHATTUCK  
 MRS. F. H. WILLIAMS

### Executive Committee

J. J. McDONALD, Chairman  
 E. J. WILLMAN  
 FRANK FREEMAN  
 J. O. CURWOOD  
 CAPT. J. A. MAC DONALD

### House Committee

J. J. McDONALD, Chairman  
 CAPT. J. A. MAC DONALD  
 J. O. CURWOOD  
 L. H. PARKER

### Physical Division Committee

DR. H. A. HUME, Chairman  
 SIDNEY DOWLING  
 DR. G. N. FINCH  
 J. W. SHATTUCK

### Educational Division Committee

E. J. WILLMAN, Chairman  
 J. O. CURWOOD  
 DR. G. N. FINCH

### Social Division Committee

L. H. PARKER, Chairman  
 J. W. SHATTUCK  
 FRANK FREEMAN

### Women's Division Committee

MRS. F. H. WILLIAMS, Chairman  
 MRS. J. E. ELLIS  
 MRS. J. W. SHATTUCK  
 MRS. C. C. SACKRIDER  
 MRS. J. C. MULLANEY  
 MRS. GEORGE YOUNG  
 MISS CORA BOWER  
 MISS JEAN CHRISTIE  
 MISS CLARA TUBBS  
 MINNIE MC CORMICK

### Dramatic Council

REV. HARVEY WAITE, Chairman Pro Tem  
 MRS. LEE WOODARD, Secretary Pro Tem  
 MRS. GEORGE R. FAUTH  
 MRS. FRANK GREENMAN  
 MRS. F. E. SCHRAMM  
 MRS. CATHERINE RIGLEY  
 MR. DANIEL CRANE  
 MR. E. H. HAYWARD

## OBJECTIVES OF THE OWOSSO COMMUNITY CENTER

- To develop citizenship and character through leisure time activities.
- To promote music and organize the community in singing.
- To develop the drama and give opportunity to all who desire dramatic self-expression.
- To promote a sound recreational life in the community through games. "Play for Everybody."
- To co-operate with all forces striving for the improvement and betterment of our community.

## MEMBERSHIP

Gymnasium and Swimming Pool Privileges  
 Under Trained Direction

Any boy, girl, man, or woman may become a member of the Owosso Community Center upon payment of annual dues. Membership entitles one to the full privileges of the gymnasium and swimming pool. The gymnasium privileges include the formal class work, marching and calisthenics to music, recreative games, leagues, tournaments, efficiency tests, etc.

An enjoyable and worth-while feature of the swimming privileges lies in the fact that membership includes swimming instruction under competent and trained direction. On Tuesdays and Thursdays the gymnasium and swimming pool are reserved exclusively for the members of the Women's Department.

Physical examination will be required of each applicant before membership cards will be given. Blanks will be provided.

Owosso Armory As The Community Center

Page 1-2



**The Gymnasium**

**EXERCISE FOR HEALTH**

On the spacious drill floor of the Armory will be held the gymnasium work for all classes. Courts for handball, basketball, indoor baseball, volley ball; light apparatus such as dumb-bells, Indian clubs, weights, jump standards, pole vault, 12-pound shot, etc., for the running off of indoor track meets are included in the equipment that will be used in the gymnasium. Healthful recreative games will be stressed.

**THE DAY'S ORDER**

All gymnasium classes in both the women's and men's departments will follow a definite day's order calculated to give everybody a thorough period of exercise. The hot cleansing shower and the cool plunge in the swimming tank winds up each class period.

**Order of Exercise**

**MEN'S DEPARTMENT**

1. Marching to music
2. Maze Running "
3. Callisthenics "
4. Circle and line games.
5. Relay races.
6. Team games:
- League tournaments—
- (a) Basketball
- (b) Volley ball
- (c) Indoor baseball

**WOMEN'S DEPARTMENT**

1. Marching to music
2. Maze Running "
3. Callisthenics "
4. Folk dancing.
5. Recreational games
6. Relay games.
7. Team games:
- (a) Basketball
- (b) Volley ball
- (c) Indoor baseball
- (d) Netball
8. Marching.
9. Breathing.



**The Swimming Pool**

**SWIM ALL WINTER AND SUMMER**

Fifty-thousand gallons of pure, clear, filtered, sterilized water, pumped day and night through the filters and constantly recirculated awaits the members an one of the privileges of membership in the Owosso Community Center. The tank measures 50 feet long and 21 feet wide, 2 1/2 feet deep in the shallow end and 7 1/2 feet in the deep end. The water is maintained at a temperature of 75 degrees by means of a Sims superheater which has a capacity of heating 4,500 gallons per hour.

**GYMNASIUM AND SWIMMING POOL DRESS**

**Men's Department**

Gymnasium wear for all classes in this department shall be uniform:

- White tennis shoes      White track pants
- White cotton sleeveless jersey.

In the swimming pool members of the Men's Division may wear trunks, if they wish, but these trunks must be either of tulle or muslin, commonly called track pants. Trunks may be rented from Locker Box Clerk for five cents each rental. This fee covers cost of laundering.

**Women's Department**

Gymnasium wear for all members of this department shall consist of:

- Black tennis shoes      Black bloomers
- White middie      Black stockings

For the swimming pool any regulation bathing suit will be permitted. It is strongly recommended, however, that cotton or silk suits be worn in preference to wool for use in the pool. Where members already may own wool suits the purchase of other suits will not be insisted upon.

**GYMNASIUM WEAR MAY BE PURCHASED FROM LOCKER ROOM CLERK**

**CLASSES IN  
GYMNASIUM  
COMMENCE  
OCTOBER 2**

**JOIN NOW!**

**MODIFIED  
SWEDISH SYSTEM  
USED IN ALL  
CLASSES  
IN THIS  
DEPARTMENT**

**CLASSES**

**Men's Department**  
E. J. Maszkiewicz, B. P. E., Director

**BUSINESS MEN'S CLASS—**  
For men over 25 years of age.  
Annual dues ..... \$10.00  
Semi-annual dues ..... 10.00  
Gymnasium class three times weekly. Instruction in swimming by appointment. Membership includes free towel and soap.

**SENIOR CLASS—**  
For men over 18 years of age.  
Annual dues ..... \$5.00  
Semi-annual dues ..... 5.00  
Gymnasium class twice weekly. Instruction in swimming by appointment.

**HIGH SCHOOL CLASS—**  
For boys 15-16-17 years of age.  
Annual dues ..... \$3.00  
Semi-annual dues ..... 3.00  
Gymnasium class twice weekly. Instruction in swimming after gym class.

**JUNIOR BOYS' CLASS—**  
For boys 12-13-14 years of age.  
Annual dues ..... \$3.00  
Semi-annual dues ..... 2.00  
Gymnasium class twice weekly. Instruction in swimming after gym class.

**MIDGET BOYS' CLASS—**  
For boys 9-10-11 years of age.  
Annual dues ..... \$2.00  
Semi-annual dues ..... 1.50  
Gymnasium class once weekly. Instruction in swimming after gym class.

**Women's Department**  
Gladys Blair, Director

**WOMEN'S CLUB—**  
For women over 25 years of age.  
Annual dues ..... \$6.00  
Semi-annual dues ..... 4.00  
Gymnasium classes twice weekly. Instruction in swimming after gym class.

**BUSINESS GIRLS' CLUB—**  
For women over 18 years of age.  
Annual dues ..... \$5.00  
Semi-annual dues ..... 3.00  
Gymnasium classes twice weekly. Instruction in swimming after gym class.

**HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS CLUB—**  
For girls 15-16-17 years of age.  
Annual dues ..... \$3.00  
Semi-annual dues ..... 2.00  
Gymnasium classes twice weekly. Instruction in swimming after gym class.

**JUNIOR GIRLS' CLUB—**  
For girls 12-13-14 years of age.  
Annual dues ..... \$2.00  
Semi-annual dues ..... 1.50  
Gymnasium classes once weekly. Instruction in swimming after gym class.

**INDIVIDUAL BATH AND POOL—Both Departments**  
This privilege provides opportunity for use of the showers and swimming pool to persons who may not hold membership in any of the above classes. The fee for this privilege is twenty-five cents per swim.

**FALL AND WINTER GYMNASIUM SCHEDULE  
CLASSES START OCTOBER 2**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Business Men.....	11:30-1:00 Noon		11:30-1:00 Noon			
Senior Class.....			7:00-8:30 p. m.			7:00-8:30 p. m. See 3:00-4:30 p. m.
Women's Club.....	(A) 9:00-10:00 a. m. (B) 8:30-10:00 p. m.		(A) 9:00-10:00 a. m. (B) 8:30-10:00 p. m.			
Business Girls' Club.....		7:00-8:30 p. m.		7:00-8:30 p. m.		
H. S. Boys' Class.....		3:45-5:00 p. m.			3:45-5:00 p. m.	
H. S. Girls' Club.....		3:30-5:00 p. m.		3:45-5:00 p. m.		
Jr. Boys' Class.....			3:45-5:00 p. m.			1:00-2:30 p. m.
Jr. Girls' Club.....						8:00-9:30 a. m. 10:00-11:30 a. m.
Midget Boys' Club.....						
H. S. Basketball Practice.....		5:00-6:00 p. m.	5:00-6:00 p. m.	5:00-6:00 p. m.		
H. S. Basketball Games.....						See 7:00-10:00 p. m.
City League Basketball and Com. Center Basketball Pract.....			6:00-7:00 p. m.		6:00-7:00 p. m.	
City League Basketball.....			8:30-10:00 p. m.			
Community Center						
Indoor and Basketball.....						7:00-10:00 p. m.
Community Center Dances.....						8:00 p. m.

\* Until January 1st. See After January 1st.





**The Locker Room**  
Shower Room in Background

**LOCKERS  
FOR ALL**

The Kansas Locker system is used to take care of the needs of the membership. Sixty-four full-length steel lockers and three hundred locker boxes comprise this equipment which can be readily expanded as the membership increases. Reed settees and rubber matting on the floor insure dressing comfort. For the convenience of the members of the Women's Department additional equipment has been installed so that individual dressing and shower booths are provided.

**The Shower Room**

**LOTS OF  
HOT WATER**

Eight showers have been installed in this room adequate to the needs of large classes. To supply hot water there are two steel tanks of a capacity of 1,000 gallons. Included in the shower room equipment is a controller valve which controls the temperature of the hot water entering the shower heads. This device precludes the possibility of anyone scalding himself since only water at 110 degrees reaches the shower heads.

**The Club Rooms**

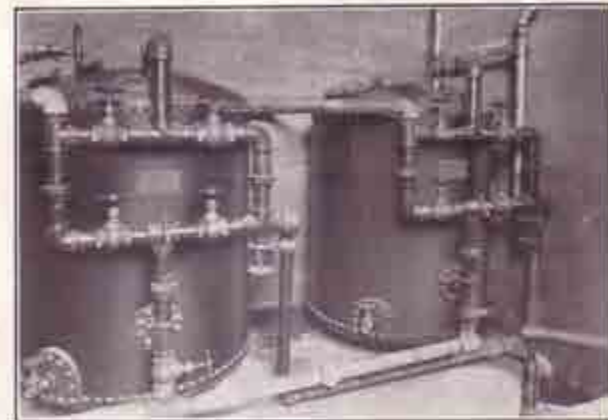
**ENJOY THIS  
SOCIABLENESS**

The upper parlors of the Armory have been arranged as club rooms for the membership. Chess and checkers, ping-pong, a reading room and other similar equipment will make the rooms a pleasant place to spend a few moments before and after classes.



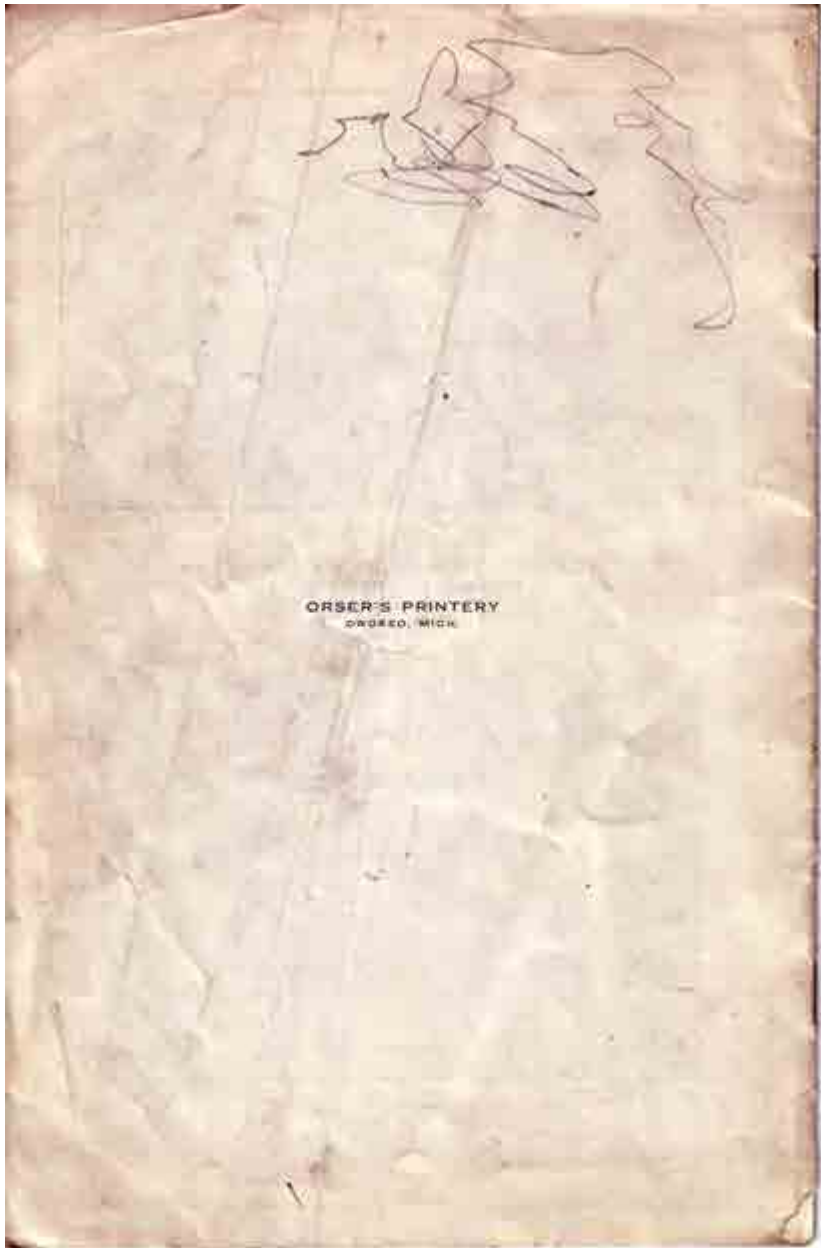
**MEN'S LOCKER ROOM**

Ventilation of Swimming Pool, Locker and Shower Rooms calls for six air changes each hour



**FILTERS**

Entire contents of pool pass thru above filters twice each 24 hours



Owosso Armory As The Community Center  
Back Cover

Owosso Downtown Historic District  
City of Owosso  
Shiawassee County  
Michigan

August 2010

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Steve Schmidt

Linda Keenan

Marilyn Jones

Robert Marks

Brian Cerveny

Kaying Hang

Ruth Rossman

John Woodbury

Richard Campbell

Ward Coon

Rev. Ray Strawser

Owosso Public Schools

Ginger Hume Manausa

John Downs

Misty Jordan

Phil Jenkinson

City of Owosso Engineering Dept.

City of Owosso Tax Assessors Office

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Shaffer fox

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