

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-20th 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-20th 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, chiroprapist

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:

