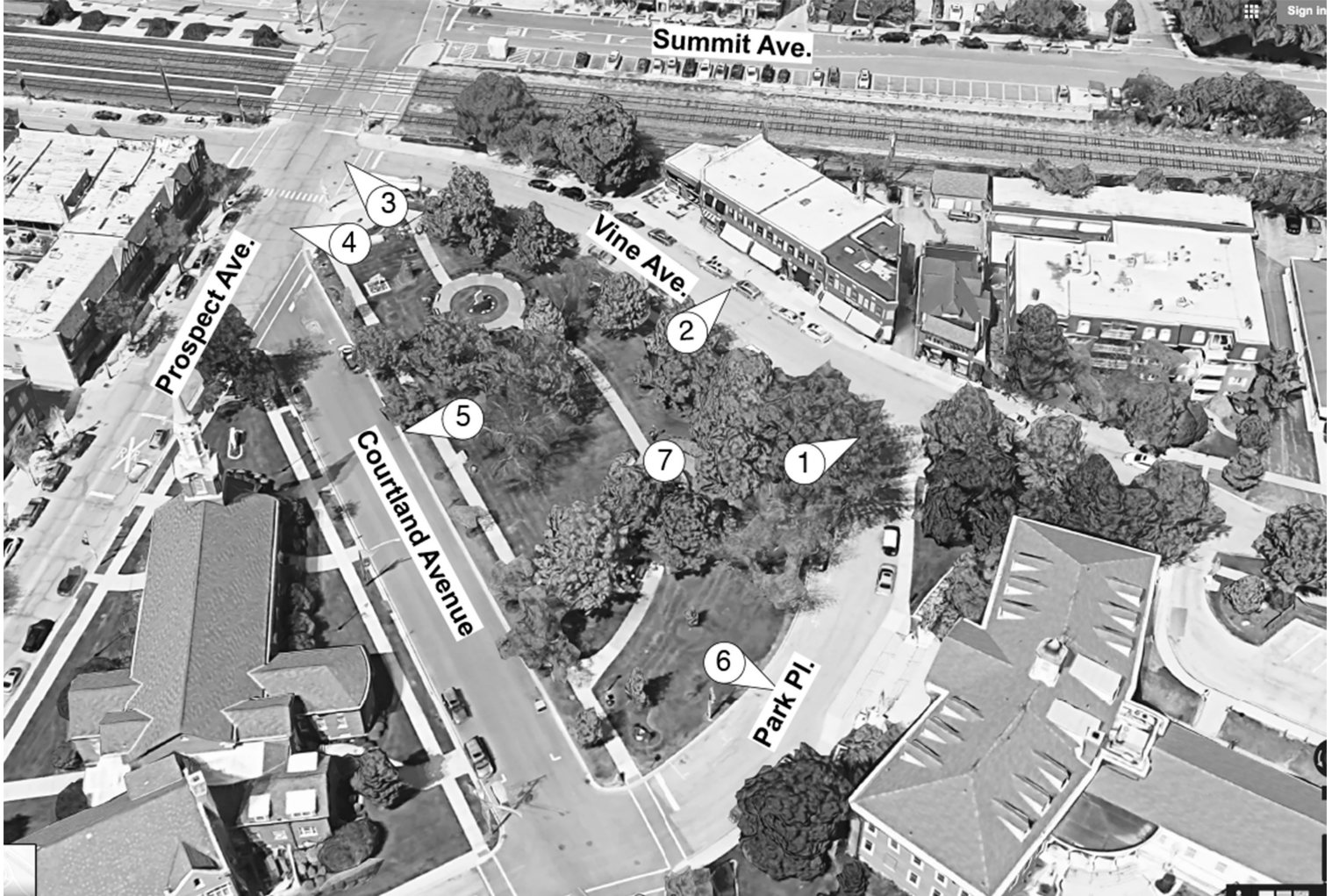




PARK RIDGE

HISTORICAL SOCIETY



'View of History Tour'

**A Park Ridge Historical Society Walking Tour around Hodges Park
On Buchheit Day, May 24, 2019**

HODGES PARK

Leonard Hodges, land developer, laid out a large section of property south of the railroad tracks from Courtland to Belle Plaine Avenues just as we became the Village of Park Ridge. He donated a small portion of this land to the Village for use as a Park, later named after Mr. Hodges. In 1875, the Park was empty except for trees, a pile of rubble from the Chicago Fire, and a bandshell. Later came a display of artillery from World War I, later given up to the scrap metal drive during World War II. In the park now is a VFW memorial to those Park Ridgeans lost to our nation in military service.

This self-guided tour starts at the Corner of Butler Place and Vine Avenue

Stop 1



221 Vine Avenue - is the location of Dr. **Alfred Buchheit's** house, moved there from the site of our present City Hall in the 1950's.



209 Vine Avenue - was the location of **Ridge Theatre Building** (now demolished.) The Ridge Theatre was the first commercial motion-picture theatre in Park Ridge and built in 1924 at this location. It closed in 1936 but reopened briefly in 1955 as the Park Avenue Cinema. Through the early 1970s it was an ice-skating rink, and then demolished to make way for the condominium building you see here now.

Stop 2



147 Vine Avenue - was the home of **Weyrauch's Market**. This is the first commercial building south of the tracks. Until the 1990's, it housed Bob Rowe's Evening Pipe Shop and then the Brickton Art Center. It is now the location of the DeVine Salon. The very small shop attached to the east side of the building, now vacant, was previously the home of a shop for doll house accessories, a candle shop and a computer repair business.



Buchheit Building - Dr. Buchheit built this venerable structure at 137 Vine Avenue to accommodate his dental practice. Originally one story, the building was soon expanded to two stories to accommodate residential apartments. Another expansion enlarged his building to the east. The ground level retail spaces have been home to many tenants over the years, including our Post Office, a bakery, a paint store, bicycle shop, a camera store and the Scharringhausen Pharmacy. In 1928, the Pharmacy expanded into the one-level building extension to the west to accommodate an ice cream parlor, now occupied by a delicatessen.

Stop 3



Railroad Depot

The above photo shows the 1880's passenger depot in the Central Business District. This is where the first city election was held in 1910. The modern depot view today is the fourth passenger depot. This commuter rail line uses a unique and rare 'left-hand main' orientation, in which the trains operate in the British manner of driving an automobile on the left side of the street.



Park Ridge Public Library, site of Central School [Destroyed by fire] - Just beyond the current Railroad depot is our Public Library, completed in 1957 on the site of one of our early grammar schools. Central School was built in 1893 and served until 1930 when it was destroyed in a fire. Beyond the current Library is the Park Ridge Carnegie Library, on the northwest corner of Northwest Highway and Prospect. It was our first library, built in 1913 with the assistance of funding by philanthropist Andrew Carnegie.

Stop 4



Park Ridge Hotel, Corner of Main and Prospect (Demolished) - The hotel was built at this site in 1873 by Leonard Hodges to accommodate guests of real estate developers who wished to promote the pleasant scenery and rural atmosphere of Park Ridge to prospective land and home buyers. Later, it was the Swedish Old People's home, and then the site of the Fred Gillick Real Estate Office. A Real Estate office continues to occupy this historic corner and building. Various retail shops occupy the first floor, in the spaces previously occupied by Moheiser's clothing store, and the original site of Bachmann's Hardware Store.



Middle States Telephone Company Building (116 South Prospect) - Even into the 1980s, telephone service in Park Ridge and Des Plaines was provided by an independent company, first known as the Middle States Telephone Company. When the Middle States offices and exchange moved to larger quarters on Fairview Avenue at Garden Street, it became known as the Central Telephone Company, and finally Centel. The original building was then converted to use as a Savings and Loan Association for many years until 2009, when it was renovated for use as an annex for the American Society of Nurse Anesthetists, whose headquarters is just to the south along Prospect Avenue. The original Middle States building is shown in the above photo, left of the alley.

Stop 5



Park Ridge Congregational / Community Church. - Built on land set aside by Leonard Hodges, this church community dates to 1843. It became known as the Congregational Church in 1868, and as the Park Ridge Community Church in 1917. The original Gothic-style sanctuary was replaced in 1951 with the current Church building. Alphonso Iannelli, well-known sculptor living in Park Ridge, added to the exterior design on the Great Hall, built in 1925 and attached to the Church along Park Place.

Stop 6



Dr. Gustav Fricke Home

In addition to Dr. Buchheit's residence, the land just north of Hodges Park was also the site of another elegant early house, that of Dr. Gustav Fricke, a physician and the town doctor for many years. This is the site of his second home in Park Ridge (the first was across from the Town of Maine Cemetery). The pharmacy that was originally attached to this residence still stands as an architectural feature on a house nearby on Stanley Avenue.

Current Site of Park Ridge City Hall

Butler Place, originally Park Place, is named in honor of Park Ridge Mayor Martin Butler, who served from 1973 until 1991. The current building was constructed on this site for the All-American Life and Casualty Insurance Company, and has been the site of Park Ridge City Hall since the mid-1950s. Note the Park Ridge City Flag. It was first displayed on July 4, 1960 at Maine East High School athletic field as part of an Independence Day celebration.

Stop 7



Camp Fire Girls Fountain - A Camp Fire Girls Fountain has been located at this place in Hodges Park since 1927 (Seen in photo above). It was replaced in 1965 with the current fountain following the plan of local sculptor Alfonso Iannelli. The fountain was renovated in 2007, again according to Iannelli's original plan. Thirty-three history tablets naming an important person, place or event in Park Ridge History now surround the fountain.