

'View of History Tour'
A walking Tour around Hodges Park developed for
Buchheit Day, May 24, 2018

We acknowledge Milt Nelson of the Park Ridge Heritage Committee for the inspiration and development of this 'View of History' tour. **(2018 Revision)**

** This self-guided tour starts at the Campfire Girls Fountain in Hodges Park **

1. Campfire Girls Fountain



Original Camp Fire Girls fountain on its dedication day in 1926

An early Park Ridge Campfire Girls Fountain was located on this site, and replaced in 1965 with this fountain, following the original plan of local sculptor Alfonso Iannelli. The fountain was further renovated in 2007, again according to Iannelli's original plan. Thirty history tablets now surround the fountain, twenty-nine of which name an important person, place or event in Park Ridge History.

2. & 3. Current Site of Park Ridge City Hall



A very early look across Park Place (Butler Place) shows Dr. Buchheit's and Dr. Fricke's houses right next to each other, with Weyrauch's Market in the distance.

Butler Place, originally Park Place, is in honor of Park Ridge Mayor Marty Butler, who served from 1973 until 1991.

The current building was constructed on this site for an insurance company and has been the site of Park Ridge City Hall since the late 1950s.

Note the Park Ridge City Flag. It was first displayed by the City on July 4, 1960 at Maine East High School athletic field as part of Independence Day celebration.

2. Original site of the Dr. Albert Buchheit home, moved to 221 Vine Avenue

Dr. Buchheit lived many years in this graceful frame residence, which was moved from Park Place (now Butler Place), at the site of our current City Hall, to 221 Vine Ave. in the early 1950s.

3. Dr. Gustav Fricke home

In addition to Dr. Buchheit's residence, this parcel was 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).

3. Ridge Theatre Building, 209 Vine Avenue [Demolished]



A look at the old Ridge Theatre building from Hodges Park in the 1970s.

The Ridge Theatre, the first commercial motion-picture theatre in Park Ridge, was 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 now.

5. Stinton's Store (Weyrauch's Market), 147 Vine Avenue

This is the first commercial building south of the tracks. Until the 1990's, it housed Bob Rowe's Evening Pipe Shop, and then Brickton Art Center. It is now the location of the de VINE beauty salon. The very small shop attached to the east side of the building now houses a computer repair business. It was previously the home of a shop for doll house accessories and, more recently, a candle shop.

6. Buchheit Building

Dr. Buchheit built this structure to accommodate his dental practice, at 137 Vine Avenue. Originally one story, the building was soon expanded to two stories, to accommodate residential apartments. Another expansion enlarged his building to the east. Note the limestone on the west-facing the retail space has been home to many tenants over the years, including our Post Office, a bakery, a paint shop, Bob's Bike Shop, a camera shop and the Scharringhausen Pharmacy. In 1929, Scharringhausens' expanded into the one-level building extension to the west, now a deli.

8. Railroad Depot

We are viewing the fourth passenger depot in Uptown Park Ridge. From a very small, one room station where the first City election was held 105 years ago, to the modern facility now in use. This commuter rail line uses 'left-hand main' orientation, in which the trains operate in the manner of driving an automobile on the left side of the street.

Railroad Service to Pennyville/Brickton/Park Ridge

The first service by the Illinois and Wisconsin RR dates to 1856, when Brickton, Illinois was incorporated. There was only single-track service. The first depot was added soon thereafter to accommodate the shipment of bricks from the Penny and Meacham brickyard. The I&W RR later was purchased by the Chicago, St. Paul, & Fond du Lac RR, which soon enough was bought by the Chicago and North Western Railroad in 1859. In all of 1862, 944 passengers boarded a train in Brickton, and 748 arrived in Brickton, average of two/three per day. This was a very small town then!

Park Ridge Public Library, site of Central School [Destroyed by fire]

Just beyond the Railroad depot is our Public Library, constructed in 1958 on the site of our first grammar school, Central School. This 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.

9. & 10. Park Ridge Hotel, Corner of Main and Prospect [Demolished]



Prospect Avenue side of the Park Ridge Hotel

The hotel was built 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 house purchasers. Later, it was the Swedish Old People's home, and then the site of Fred Gillick's Real Estate Office. A Real Estate office continues to occupy this historic corner and building.

Various retail shops occupy the first floor, in the space previously occupied by Moheiser's clothing store, and the original site of Bachmann's Hardware Store.

11. Middle States Telephone Company Building

Until the 1908s, telephone service in Park Ridge was provided by a small independent company, with several names over the years, but known as Middle States Telephone Company when operations were located here. When Middle States moved to larger quarters on Fairview Avenue, the building was used as a bank for many years until 2009, when it was renovated for use as an annex for the American Society of Nurse Anesthetists, with headquarters just to the south along Prospect Avenue. The original Middle States building is still present behind the new façade.

12. Park Ridge Congregational / Community Church.

Built on land set aside by Developer Leonard Hodges. The congregation dates to 1843, and became known as the Congregational Church in 1868, and finally 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 sculpture living in Park Ridge, added to the designs on the Great Hall, built in 1925 and attached to the Church along Park Place and Prospect Avenue.