



STEUBEN COUNTY HISTORICAL TOUR GUIDE

Steuben County Historical Society

This guide should be used along with the Steuben County Historical Tour brochure, which contains a map to all the sites. This guide and the brochures are available at area antique shops, local libraries and at the Steuben County Tourism Bureau. It's also downloadable at www.lakes101.org. The sites chosen herein are a sampling of historical sites across Steuben County. They were chosen based on historical significance, visibility and available information. Some areas have their own local historical interest groups, such as the Angola Historic Preservation Commission (210 N. Public Square, Angola) and the Fremont Historical Society (102 W. Toledo St., Fremont). In Orland, the Joyce Public Library has a copy of the recent book The History of Orland. It is worth noting that some areas have more sites than listed here. Angola's historical tour will likely add to our list by including the restored Brokaw Theatre, the wedding chapel behind the First Congregational United Church of Christ and the old Opera House. In addition, the recent book A History of Lake James contains a history of Pokagon State Park, which has a number of structures built by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

We encourage you to embark on your tour by consulting the map and visiting sites in close proximity to each other. Suggestions regarding the sites may be sent to Steuben County Historical Society, c/o Jim Somers, 75 Lane 150C Lake James, Angola, IN 46703.

Steuben County History Tour

Soldier's Monument

Perhaps the most unique and recognizable feature about Angola is its picturesque monument in the center of town. In early Angola, the public square was used as a hitching post, town water pump, and for livestock and political rallies. In the 1880's there was a call to have a memorial for the 1,280 Steuben County soldiers who fought in the Civil War, of which 280 never returned. Steuben County had furnished more men in proportion to the county's population than any other county in the state.



The display began with white wooden markers placed in the ground around the square. By 1916, petitions and a public vote led to the raising of money to construct a monument. The architect was J.C. Ayers of Mansfield, Ohio, and the builder was E.M. Hetzler of the Angola Monument Company. The life-sized soldiers (Army, Navy, Infantry and Cavalry) were ordered from the Mullins Catalog Company in Salem, Ohio. A cooperative agreement had the city owning the land and the county owning the monument.

The monument has a base of 18 feet 6 inches, with a 70-foot column and an 18-foot figure (Columbia) atop. She weighs 1,000 pounds and ended up facing east rather than west due to an entanglement of wires while being positioned. The entire monument, weighing 300,000 pounds, is constructed of Barre granite. A simple metal handrail with ball finials on its posts is located at the base of the monument. Sidewalks extend from the monument across the road to each of the four quadrants of the public square, which is surrounded by commercial buildings.

The mound is always smartly dressed in memory of Steuben County's Civil War soldiers. In the spring, volunteers plant flowers. Little flags are placed on the Fourth of July and lighted garlands extend from the top during the Christmas season. Using a bow and arrow to send the garland wire through Columbia's wreath had unknowingly caused damage over the years to the stone figure. In 1993, it was taken down and refurbished.

On the west side of the monument the inscription reads, "Erected 1917 by the grateful citizens of Steuben County to commemorate the valor and patriotism of her soldiers in the Civil War 1861-1865." The southern inscription honoring those who never returned contains a quote from Thomas O'Hara: "On fame's eternal camping ground their silent tents are spread and glory guards with solemn round the bivouac of the dead." On the north side is a quote from President Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address that..."these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom." On all four sides of the monument are plaques listing Steuben County's Civil War soldiers by regiment, with dots indicating those deceased in service.

On the east side is an inscription to persons not in battle, but equally valued. Can you find who that is?

Steuben County Courthouse

The brick courthouse in downtown Angola was built in 1868 at a cost of \$27,000. It replaced an 1841 wood frame building. The Patterson and Wakefield plans for the new courthouse were said to have been modeled after Boston's Faneuil Hall. The contractors were Miles and Holmes of LaPorte, Ind. An addition was added to the rear in 1937.



The building was constructed from materials native to Steuben County.

The mortar for the bricks was made from blue clay and marl from Lake James. The bricks also were made locally. The foundation walls are of field stone; three courses of hand-shaped stone blocks rise above them. Oak beams 84 feet long were milled locally as was other lumber. It had a slate roof and the bell in the belfry was rung whenever court was in session. Originally there were no restrooms and each room had a wood-burning stove and spittoon.

On the exterior, the four sides of the courthouse are each divided into five bays separated by wide brick pilasters which form arches around the tall windows. A later addition to the rear has matching arches. The front center bay has two wooden entry doors below. A two-paned wood transom is above each door capped by a stone lintel. Above the center entry is a cast iron balcony with decorative spindles and railing. The gable wall at the top has a recessed circular wood window with nine panes; to each side are recessed panels. The gable roof has pairs of massive wood brackets supporting the roof extension.

The square base for the cupola has a balcony supported by pairs of brackets. There is a railing with decorative iron spindles and corner posts with finials. The octagonal cupola has arched windows and a domed metal roof. At the top, there is a metal weather vane in the shape of a fish. This is fitting, since Steuben County is home to 101 lakes.

Former Steuben County Jail and Sheriff's Residence

This structure one block south of the public square actually began in 1837 as a 12 by 12 hewn log jail. However, it was unable to hold the notorious horse thief Silas Doty, who escaped through a hole in the floor. When he was recaptured, he sawed through the window bars. He claimed to have taken from the rich to give to the poor, but that included him.



The old jail was replaced in 1877 with this Italianate villa building at a cost of \$21,144.

The front rooms and upstairs served as the sheriff's office and residence. Two small cells on this level housed women and children. The main jail was to the back and lower, with mentally ill inmates in the basement. The north porch was enclosed in 1961 and a south addition was made in 1971, resulting in a mix of architectural styles.

The main entrance on South Wayne Street enters through a four-story tower. It is constructed of orange brick on a rough limestone base

with banded trim and buff colored brick detailing the eaves. There are a pair of four-panel doors in an arched entry. Above the entry is a wood balcony on carved stone brackets with a carved wood railing. At the second story are a pair of tall slender windows with the date 1877 in a block between them. Above that is the cupola base with paired windows and the cupola with its weather vane. The loggia to the right of the entrance is accessible only from the inside through its low windows. Above the loggia is a balcony similar in design to that above the door.

The structure ceased being a jail in 1990 when a new jail was built one block east. It has housed a variety of agencies and currently is used by Steuben County Community Corrections.

Question: on the exterior of the building, in plain sight, is something a prisoner would like to have. Can you find it?

Steuben County Historical Society Museum

The Cline House was built in 1891 for Anna Osborn as directed by her father's will. The builder was Gid Finch. Two of Anna's siblings had similar homes in Angola but they have since been torn down.



The house was sold in 1905 to Congressman Cyrus Cline and his wife Jennie. Their daughter Carrie was 19 at that time. Cyrus maintained a law office in the home. In 1923, Cyrus died and Carrie, a school teacher, married widower Dr. Don Cameron, who founded Cameron Hospitals in Angola and Bryan, Ohio. He brought to the marriage four children, all under the age of five. They began residing in the home with Carrie's widowed mother. The house passed from Jennie to Carrie in 1931. Upon the deaths of the Camerons in 1972 and 1974, the home was bequeathed to the Steuben County Historical Society. It is used as a museum and is open Sundays from 2 to 4 p.m. or by appointment. Local organizations also enjoy holding occasional meetings there.

The Victorian home has a large porch with 12 columns that have Doric scrolls. There is a carriage barn in the back. On the house's east side is a carriage port with steps mounting to the front porch. On the west side is what is known as a 'kissing porch' with doors leading to the kitchen and dining room. It has arches, balustrade and decorative skirt. A decorative bronze doorknob opens the front door to the vestibule and then to the interior, with its parquet floors and period furniture. The woodwork in the front rooms is butternut. Pocket doors separate the front room, dining room and library. The fireplace has decorative tiles depicting Romeo and Juliet. Cyrus's office is intact, including his books. There is a broad, ornate stairway with a carved banister leading past a ruby glass window. Upstairs, the rooms are laid out in period motif with quilts, clothing and furniture. Carrie's room contains her toys that her step-children would have enjoyed. Many historical items can be found upstairs. Dr. Cameron's medical effects have been moved into a display case at the hospital across the street.

The Cline House is located at 313 E. Maumee St., Angola.

Angola United Methodist Church

Methodism came to Steuben County in 1836. Circuit preacher A.B. Young conducted services in barns, one-room log cabins and even groves of trees. In 1855, Preacher John H. Hutchinson gathered support to construct a church building on the northwest corner of Broad and West streets in Angola. It was a 50 foot by 35 foot structure, with a belfry and spire. In 1875, the building was moved to its present location on West Maumee Street. When the church was destroyed by

fire in 1888, a second Methodist church was erected on the site. In 1948, fire again struck the church and a third church was built. Great care was taken to preserve the stained glass windows. With the addition of an educational wing in 1966 and a total remodeling in the 1990's, the church has passed its 150th birthday.

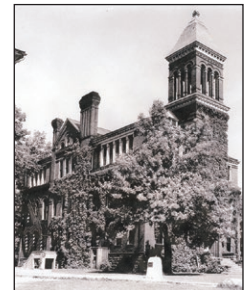


The physical structure of the church that we see today is a testament to the enduring nature of its congregations. The women of the church organized the Martha Society, which through its quilting, sewing and food offerings raised money for the church's needs and many charitable projects. They would often have a booth at the Steuben County Fair. When the younger women started the Dorcas Society, the groups eventually merged under the name of Women's Society of Christian Service. The men of the church also have raised money for many charitable projects. The church has started a soup kitchen, which provides dinner for more than 100 people Thursday evenings. The church and the neighboring First Congregational United Church of Christ share the Cahoots Coffee Café project for teens. The church is located at 220 W. Maumee St.

What dates do you find in a stone marker on the exterior of the church?

Trine University

Trine University was founded in 1884 as Tri-State Normal College. It was created by the citizens of Angola as a co-ed college. The first class of 36 students pursued studies in only two departments: literary and commercial. The 1902, the School of Engineering was added and four years later the college was renamed Tri-State College.



In 1930 a fire completely destroyed the three-story administration building. It was then rebuilt as a two-story building. In the 1960's there was a huge building boom at Tri-State due to all the baby boomers beginning college. During this decade, Tri-State added a library and seven residence halls for students, along with Best Hall and Hershey Hall.

The sports teams have been named the Engineers, Trojans and most recently, Thunder. In 1971 Zollner Golf Course was built on campus. It's used by the university's golf program and team as well as by community members. In 1975, the name was changed to Tri-State University and in 1995, a football team was added.

During the 2000's, Tri-State saw another building boom along with a name change. In honor of local philanthropist and board member Ralph Trine, the school was renamed Trine University. Along with this name change came the building of new residence duplexes for students, a new football field and sports complex. Trine also boasts a new dining facility for students and a bookstore that has doubled in size. A new performing arts center, T. Furth Center for Performing Arts, is located at 500 W. Maumee St., Angola.

Along with these physical changes in the facilities, there have been many changes and additions to the different departments. Today Trine has well-known engineering, business and education schools and has several regional campuses.

Trine University is located along U.S. Highway 20 (Maumee Street) in Angola.

Powers Church

In 1837, four Powers brothers came from New York to what became York Township in eastern Steuben County. When two of their young children died of scarlet fever, Clark Powers donated the land for the burial. Through community efforts, Powers Church was built in 1876 next to the cemetery. It was constructed from oak trees hewn from the site. Originally intended as a free church, it was non-denominational. However, as the York Methodist Church provided support such as furnishings, it eventually affiliated with the Methodist church, using a circuit minister. It was used regularly into the 1920's and used occasionally into the 1950's. At its centennial in 1976, the Powers family and others decided to restore the little colonial revival style church. It retained its 1880 wallpaper, along with kerosene lamps, two cast-iron wooden stoves and a pump organ.



In keeping with its origins, the restored church has no electricity or central heat. It is actively used for special services, weddings, funerals and holiday events. In 1983, it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Powers Church is located 1/4 mile north of U.S. Highway 20 East on Old Road 1. There is a donation box inside the church.

The Toledo War

Originally the northern border of Indiana was to be a line running due east of the southernmost tip of Lake Michigan. Congress realized this would prevent Indiana from having access to Lake Michigan. The Enabling Act of 1816 moved Indiana's northern border 10 miles north of the southern tip of Lake Michigan. However, this did not move the northern border of Ohio with Michigan. The result was the Toledo War.



The Toledo War (1835-36), also known as the Michigan-Ohio War, was the almost entirely bloodless boundary dispute between the state of Ohio and the adjoining territory of Michigan. Originating from conflicting state and federal legislation passed between 1787 and 1805, the dispute resulted from poor understanding of geographical features of the Great Lakes at the time. Varying interpretations of the law caused the governments of Ohio and Michigan to both claim sovereignty over a 468-square mile region along the border, now known as the Toledo Strip. When Michigan sought statehood in the early 1830's, it included the disputed territory within its boundaries. Ohio's congressional delegation was in turn able to halt Michigan's admission to the Union.

Beginning in 1835, both sides passed legislation attempting to force the other side's capitulation. Ohio's Governor Robert Lucas and Michigan's 24-year-old 'Boy Governor' Stevens T. Mason were both unwilling to cede jurisdiction of the strip, so they raised militias and helped institute criminal penalties for citizens submitting to the other's authority. The militias were mobilized and sent to positions on opposite sides of the Maumee River near Toledo, but besides mutual taunting, there was little interaction between these two forces. The single military confrontation of the 'war' ended with a report of shots being fired into the air with no casualties.

During the summer of 1836, Congress proposed a compromise whereby Michigan gave up its claim to the strip in exchange for its statehood and approximately three-quarters of the Upper Peninsula. The compromise was considered a poor outcome for Michigan; nearly all of the Upper Peninsula was still Indian territory. Voters in a state convention soundly rejected the proposal. Later that year, the Michigan government, facing a dire financial crisis and pressure from Congress and President Andrew Jackson, called another convention (labeled the 'Frost Bite Convention') which accepted the compromise that resolved the Toledo War. The discovery of copper and iron deposits and the plentiful timber in the Upper Peninsula more than offset Michigan's economic loss in surrendering Toledo.

Look for the Indiana Northern Border Historical marker on State Road 120 between county roads 700 and 800 East. The marker is on the north side of the road. Please do not park on State Road 120; use the intersecting road.

The Unknown Potawatomi

The complete explanation of this commemorative site is given on the metal plaque attached to the stone in the Covenanter Cemetery, which is located at the corner of county roads 700 East and 750 North. The bushes in the background of the stone are a clue to its location in the cemetery.



Old Mill Shoppes

This site is unique because of the many buildings that have been moved here. At one time, Ray's commerce prospered from six daily passenger trains. In 1929, a fire destroyed a number of downtown buildings. This, along with a shift from trains to automobiles, led to a gradual commercial decline.

The McNaughton family that founded the town decided to save a few of the structures by moving them in the 1990's to this site just a short distance south of the town of Ray. Two McNaughton buildings (1870 and 1904), originally known as the Ray Mill that had stood near the railroad tracks and were part of a grain shipping business, were moved. Also moved was the 1914 McNaughton-built brick post office and a 1926 farmhouse. Original to this placement site are a milking parlor and sheep barn. This era is thought to be similar to the farmhouse.



The buildings, some with hewn walls, are open during summer weekends for browsing. Brick inlaid floors and 1920 Munich Studios stained glass from Chicago serve to decorate the rooms. Various items are for sale at the Old Mill Shoppes, 6770 E. 750 N., Fremont.

Vistula Trail

Fremont was founded on the Vistula Trail (now State Road 120) which was originally an Indian trail running from Fort Duquesne (Pittsburg, Penn.) through South Bend, Ind., and around the south shore of Lake Michigan to Green Bay, Wis. It was used extensively in the 1600's and 1700's by French missionaries and fur traders. The road gained its name from Vistula on the Maumee (now Toledo, Ohio), an important trading post at the mouth of the Maumee River on Lake Erie.



For a short time in the early 1700's, Spain claimed this area. In 1763 this oldest trail across the Northwest Frontier fell under the authority of Great Britain. It remained under British control and was known as Territorial Road (it's still known as that today in Michigan), until the region was won by the Americans during the American Revolution and secured in the War of 1812. The road was established as a state road in 1833 by the act of the Indiana legislature, with final approval in 1835. It's a matter of local family history that Joseph Smith and his Mormon followers used the Vistula Trail on their migration west in the 1830's.

The Vistula Trail marker is in Fremont, just east of the downtown, at the junction of State Road 120 and Ray Road.

Michael/Sullins Home

Enos Michael was born in 1824 to Phillip and Susannah (Fitting) Michael in Dauphin County, Penn. He and Barbara Dunkel had nine children. In 1848 he moved to Brockville (now Fremont) and eventually built a home one block east of the center of town.



Enos was a coverlet weaver. At that time, a coverlet could cost up to \$10 and a tradesman would earn about \$1.50 for working 12 hours. As a weaver, Enos recorded the town's name change from Brockville to Fremont. His work is mentioned in the book "Indiana Coverlet Weavers and Their Coverlets." One of his coverlets is in the Henry Ford Collection. Enos died in 1890 and Barbara in 1894. They both are buried at Lakeside Cemetery south of Fremont.

The two-story home was built in 1848 and the single story at the back was added between 1910 and 1920. The garage was built by Ron and Leta Sullins when they purchased the home. The couple did much research and used care in the restoration using such things as old bricks, windows, doors and hardware from that time period. Many hours were spent removing layers of wallpaper and painting, stripping floors and staining to maintain the original character of the home. It's a private residence and not open to the public. It was placed on the Indiana Registry of Historic Sites as well as the National Registry of Historic Sites.

The First Hospital in Steuben County

Robert L. Wade began his practice in Fremont in 1907 as a physician and surgeon. He gave the community not only the benefit of his individual service, but founded the first hospital in Steuben County.



Dr. Wade was a self-made man and earned most of the money himself to take him through medical school. He spent his boyhood days on his father's farm in Springfield Township and attended district schools. Later he finished the teacher's course at Tri-State Normal College in Angola. It was his work as a teacher for six years in his native LaGrange County that enabled him to enter and complete his work in the College of Physicians and Surgeons in Chicago.

He graduated in 1907 and moved to Fremont. In 1914, he built a modern hospital at the corner of Toledo and Pleasant streets and moved his office there. This was one block east of the town center. He also owned a residence on East Toledo Street. Dr. Wade was one of the organizers of the First State Bank, which bought the Bank of Fremont. He served on the board of directors at the bank.

In 1898 he married Lura Talmadge, the only child of Charles and

Emma (Joyce) Talmadge. Dr. and Mrs. Wade had three daughters. Their daughter Mildred Joyce was a 1917 graduate of Fremont High School and assisted her father in his office.

In 1922 he opened a hospital in Coldwater, Mich., which was named Wade Memorial Hospital in memory of his father. It was the first modern medical facility there. The hospital was destroyed by fire 15 years later. Dr. Wade's wife died in 1938 and he died in 1960. Both are buried at Oak Grove Cemetery in Coldwater.

The Farnham House

When New Yorkers Avery Farnham and his brother Erastus brought their families to Fremont in 1835, it was known as Willow Prairie. In 1837, it was platted as Brockville, but the name was later changed to Fremont to avoid postal conflict with another Brockville. During the 1840's it is assumed one of the brothers erected this residence on the southern edge of town. Avery may have been the more likely builder as he was a successful businessman who owned large tracts of land south of Fremont. He also established the mill at nearby Nevada Mills. He invested in town businesses and for a time owned the railroad station in Fremont. His son Erastus was named after his brother.



Avery was a strong anti-slavery man, and his home was often used as a stopping place on the Underground Railroad. There were two frequent paths through Steuben County for runaway slaves: one through Orland and another through Fremont. Avery reportedly said if anyone tried to interfere with him while aiding a slave, he would kill them on the spot. Sojourner Truth, who had been a slave in New York, was a famous speaker who traveled from town to town. The Farnham house provided her lodging when she spoke in Angola, Orland and Fremont.

The other brother Erastus was a teacher and became a surveyor when he reached Indiana. He also was an anti-slavery man. This attitude was formed from him witnessing cruel treatment in the slave states. His son Avery was named after his brother. These accounts of the seniors Avery and Erastus are from the writings of Erastus's great-grandson Maurice McClue.

The Farnham house's cupola would have afforded a fine view of the developing town and anyone approaching that might be a threat to the hidden slaves in the house. The home, with its high ceilings, arched doorways and wide baseboards, contains a ballroom on the second floor.

The house is owned by Mavis Church and is located at the intersection of State Road 827 and County Road 550 North (Swager) in Fremont.

Collins School

This old-fashioned one-room school began as a small log cabin on land owned by the Collins family. In 1877, when funds were collected to build the brick school, the family donated the property to the school corporation. The school remained in continuous operation for more than 60 years, until school consolidation forced its closing in 1943.



For a number of years the school stood alone, neglected and forgotten. In 1947, the old school was purchased by June Collins, a former student and teacher. With that purchase, the land and school returned

to the care of the Collins family. In 1966 and 1967, June restored the school with help from her family, friends and former pupils.

The school is open Sundays from 2 to 5 p.m. June through August and by appointment. Note the desks inside, the recitation bench near the teacher's desk, the ink wells, wood stove, McDuffy Readers, slates, maps and the rope to ring the bell in the belfry.

Collins School is on State Road 120, one-half mile west of County Road 350 West.

Tombstone Corner Roadside Grave

Just a short distance east of where John and Jacob Staynor, along with Gideon Langdon, first settled Steuben County in 1831, there is a small grave beside the road. It sits along the north berm at the corner of county roads 800 West and 350 North (Kimble Road.) The marker reads: Fowler E., son of Albert & Lovina Robinson. D. July 29, 1848. AE 1 yr. 3 mo. 22 da.



As of 1880, the Robinsons owned most of the land around this intersection, which places the grave on their land. Albert is buried at Lake Gage and Lovina is buried at Memorial Gardens. The stone was removed by vandals many years ago but has been replaced. Since Fowler died before the U.S. Census began in 1850, he does not appear in that record. All we have is the tombstone inscription.

Why was Fowler buried beside the road, instead of in a graveyard or family plot? Local lore regarding the grave presents a plausible explanation. Due to the early date, it is surmised the child died while the family was traveling by wagon heading west. Being unable to delay their trip, they received permission to bury the child beside the road near an intersection so they could later find the grave. It is suggested the Robinsons later returned and decided to settle near the gravesite. Flowers have been placed on the grave as far back as anyone can remember.

First Congregational Church, Orland

Like a wise old sage, this church has been witness to many events in Orland. The town was originally known as Vermont Settlement because of the origin of its early settlers. Captain Samuel Barry, Alex Chapin, Cyrus Choate and John Stocker were the first to see the town of Orland platted in



1834. After log cabins were built and crops planted, a school was built. This was used both for schooling and worship. Four denominations (Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist and Congregationalist) held services there. After the Baptists left for their own church, the others decided in 1852 to build a union church on this site. Over the years, various denominations have joined with others by calling this home, but it continues to be known as the First Congregational Church and since 1970 has been non-denominational. The church is located at 202 E. State St.

Orland has an understandably rich history because it was the first town in Steuben County. The town name was chosen from a hymnal. As early as 1834 there was strong anti-slavery sentiment in Orland. Captain Barry established an Underground Railroad station run by at least 12 abolitionists. When several of them were arrested by a local southern sympathizer under the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, there was

an outcry. Over 1,000 people gathered in Orland to protest the arrest. The trial was moved to Indianapolis where all were found not guilty except Benjamin Waterhouse. He was fined \$50 and ordered to stay in the courtroom for one hour.

Captain Barry's home has since been modernized and is located one block north of the town's main intersection, on the northwest corner of Barry Street. The prominent influence of the St. Joseph Valley Railway can be seen in the mural on the side of the 1903 Joyce Public Library. The library has a copy of the 2014 book "Historical Reflections of Orland and the Surrounding Area," which traces many additional features of Orland.

Pleasant Lake

Four miles south of Angola is charming little Pleasant Lake. It's only 53 acres but has a big history. Native Americans called it 'Nipcondish,' which means pleasant waters. In 1835, a tiny village began and in 1851 a post office was established. Patrons on the Lake Shore Railroad could not resist stopping at the picturesque scene and by 1935, the expanding lake community had groceries, barber shops, restaurants and poolrooms. In addition, there was a hardware store, drug store, produce station, blacksmith shop, lumber yard, six service stations, a burial vault company, hotel, tourist camp and later a bank and car agency.



On the west side of Pleasant Lake was the Jacob Van Orden Ice House, which provided ice to Fort Wayne residents. Jacob attempted to lure his wife from Toledo by building her what he described as "the finest home in Steuben County." His wife Catharine died three weeks before its completion in 1875. The Italianate home has been restored and can be seen on the west shore.