



Ingersoll

ARCHITECTURAL WALKING TOUR



Park in the Oxford Street municipal parking lot, east of the Ingersoll Library, continue walking south on Oxford Street



181 Oxford Street

This cement block house was built for R.A. Skinner who owned and operated Skinner's Livery on the north side of Charles St. at the corner of Oxford Street. A round bandshell veranda was removed by a former owner but the beautiful oak interior woodwork has been preserved with two fireplaces. Several large windows topped with crescent shaped stained glass panels plus the tall french doors from the hall to the living room give the rooms a bright spacious appearance. This home was the scene of many elaborate house parties, the form of entertainment that made up the fabric of social life in times past. The Skinner Livery, sometimes referred to as the Bon Ton Livery maintained vehicles for pleasure driving, business trips, weddings, funerals, etc.

185 Oxford Street

This one storey cottage is over one hundred years old. Originally it had had six rooms and a summer kitchen at the rear belying it's small appearance. Its most attractive features are the front porch with the decorative fascia board, molded brackets and interesting railing construction and the two crescent shaped stained glass panels in the front windows. This house was built for his sister by F. Richardson, lumber dealer and owner of a planing mill. He became involved in the lumber business around 1885 and erected or supplied lumber for numerous buildings in the area. This home has no fireplace and when purchased by a local family in 1927, a furnace was installed as the cookstove in the kitchen had been the only source of heat.



189 Oxford Street

This large brick building, one of the older homes in this section of Oxford Street was erected by the Christopher Brothers and occupied by Aaron Christopher for a number of years before moving into a new house at 276 Oxford. The broad bracketed eave of the Italianate style was common in Ontario around 1860. The white marble fireplace in the living room is similar to the one in the Christopher house at 276. The Christopher Brothers were well known Ingersoll Contractors, who built the Anglican Church, as well as many quality homes.

206 Oxford Street

This attractive white frame home has been in the same family for three generations. Although the exact building date is not known it is well over one hundred years old. Decorative spoolwork and bracket accents can be found on Ontario verandas dating back to the 1830's. Verandas were introduced into Ontario in 1925 by retired British officers who had served in India and along the Mediterranean where this feature was an integral part of the house. They supposedly originated in Portugal. The gable end of this particular veranda suggests Greek Revival design.





212 Oxford Street

The unusual clustering of the slender, fluted columns gives this red brick house a distinctively dignified air. It was purchased by the George family in the late 1800s and later sold to Mr. F.H. Adams, an engineer who worked for a diamond mine in South Africa. He recounted many tales of the cruel treatment of the black African workers.

218 Oxford Street

This beautiful red brick home was built in 1896 for Henry G. Boyse. He owned and operated a farm near Verschoyle where he was born. The roofing is the original Welsh Slate as is the iron work around the roof top and porch railing. The original wrap around veranda has been replaced by one of fieldstone. The scalloped cornice adds a distinctive and delicate touch. The interior woodwork, including the beautiful upper bannister carved by F.P. Leake has been restored. The work of Mr. Leake, an outstanding Ingersoll wood and furniture carver appears in many of Ingersoll's finer older homes. At one time the house was divided. A study for the Anglican Church Organist was located in the apartment on the upper floor.



244 Oxford Street

This white frame Victorian style house was built by Justus Miller in 1895. In the 1880s he and his brother became successful contractors, constructing such large public works as canal locks, docks, etc. After moving to Mount Elgin, he became engaged in the lumber business. The mass production of thin studs and joists replaced the massive timbers needed to frame a house. These homes were termed "Stick Style". This house incorporated a whimsical tower, bay windows, interesting roof angles and a veranda with softly curved arches and fancy woodwork. The interior carvings were crafted by Frank Leake.

250 Oxford Street

Decorative bargeboard (gingerbread), taken from designs found in windows of medieval churches, became a popular addition to houses in the 1860's. It was cut from three inch thick pine boards. The earliest bargeboard was more board than space but later took on a lacy look, indicating that this dwelling was built circa 1880-1890. The gables of this Victorian home are further emphasized by the addition of the finials. The original yellow brick has been painted. Before being converted to a triplex, the house had seven bedrooms and three fireplaces of which one remains.



270 Oxford Street

The corner stone of this red brick Victorian home built in 1897 was discovered during renovations and bears the name "Buchanan". The property was purchased in the early 1900's by Mr. & Mrs. G. Bartlett, clothing merchants in Ingersoll for many years. The home with its eleven foot ceilings has four bedrooms, the original "maids" staircase and an elegant winding cherry staircase in the front hall. Also many of the other features have been preserved such as the pine woodwork, the fretwork design paneling and the bevelled glass in the front door and in a number of upstairs windows. A more recent addition is the solarium. The original lilac and fruit trees still flourish on the one acre lot.

276 Oxford Street

This large yellow brick Italianate Villa style home was built circa 1880 by the Christopher Brothers and was the residence of Aaron Christopher. The design was introduced in England at the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign as a model suburban housing for the rising mercantile class. Its main feature is the central Tuscan Tower with its tall rounded Italianate style windows and eaves. Although this building has been changed to accommodate a retirement home, some of the original interior features have been retained. These include the white marble fireplace in the living room, the oversized mirror, with its intricately carved wooden frame and the low marble topped table in the front entranceway.



298 Oxford Street

This yellow brick house was built in 1875 for a prominent Ingersoll furniture proprietor. Its five marble fireplaces could be used for burning wood or coal. The original stain glass window above the front door was broken and replaced in 1878. The layout is based on the central hall plan and was originally a sixteen room house. Because of the spacious thirty foot double drawing room, it was the scene of many elaborate parties. Before Guy Lombardo and his Royal Canadians became internationally famous, they played here for parties while still working out of London. In the 1930's the main house was divided into a two family dwelling.



304 Oxford Street

This red brick house was built in 1903 for James Kerr, a partner in the business of Smith and Kerr, men's clothing store, Thames St.. George Smith opened the store in Ingersoll in the late 1870s and was joined by Mr. Kerr around 1907. The two storey board and batten carriage house at the back and a large pasture extending to Wonham Street, accommodated his horses. Three of the interior walls in the home are wide enough to accommodate sliding wooden door panels. A veranda at the back of the home has been enclosed for an office.



310 Oxford Street

This Neo-Gothic style home referred to as the "Gayfer House" was built in 1863 by Noxon, the same builder as the Elm Hurst Inn. Except for the removal of a wrought iron fence, the house from the front appears as it did when first built. In the early 1900s the rear wing was demolished and a sun room, pantry and rear vestibule were erected using the original brick. The original roofing was slate. Guy Lombardo played in this house for the "Coming Out" party of Dorothy Gayfer with over 200 invited guests. What was the tower used for? According to a granddaughter of Gayfer, it was used for learning to smoke! The land and premises were purchased by druggist, John Gayfer in 1881 and remained in the family until the 1960s.



316 Oxford Street

Many of the features of a Tudor style house have been incorporated in this home, including the patterned brick work, interesting chimney treatment, groups of rectangular windows, and complex roof line with many gables. The wood paneling in the den and the wainscoting in several of the rooms are other examples of the Tudor influence. The home was built in 1937 and given to Harold & Lorna Wilson by his father E.A. Wilson as a wedding present. The Wilson family owned the Ingersoll Machine & Tool Company and were also involved in speed boat racing. In 1939 Harold won the President's Cup with his craft "Miss Canada", making the first time in U.S. boat racing history that the cup was won by a foreigner. Harold is included in the Canada's Sports Hall of Fame.



320 Oxford Street

This red brick house was built for William Thompson circa 1890. Later he added the section at the rear enlarging the house to accommodate six bedrooms. The two large crescent shaped stain glass windows and the two storey veranda have been restored. In 1905 the house was purchased by D. G. Cuthbertson Insurance Agent, whose office was located in the east half of the Norsworthy Building, Thames Street, later occupied by Dunlop's Barber Shop.



319 Oxford Street

This house was built in 1888 for Stephen Noxon, treasurer of Noxon Brothers Agricultural Works. He was a great supporter of the hospital project, naming a ward in Alexandra Hospital after his wife Jessie as well as furnishing a ward in memory of his daughter, Louise, who died very young. Originally this home had an archway at the rear to accommodate a horse and carriage. The extended gable at the front protects the bay window section from inclement weather. Soldiers returning from World War I duty were entertained in the large living room. A dance floor was improvised by stretching linen tightly over the rug and fastening it securely along the walls.



315 Oxford Street

This brick dwelling was once owned by John Banbury, former Minister of Agriculture. At the rear of the property was a small barn used to stable his horse. To reach this building, he used, as a driveway, the road allowance which ran from Dufferin Street northward between the properties on Oxford and Thames Streets to Cottage St. Farmers also used this lane when making deliveries of vegetables, meat, eggs, milk, etc. This street was once used frequently by home owners in this section, however, is now a right-of-way in name only.



309 Oxford Street

Built in 1928 by Jack Eidt, the rafters and the stain glass window in the rear sunroom came from the Ebenezer Church located one mile north of Verschoyle. The removable oak panels protecting the front entrance during the winter were originally the front doors of the same church. The hand cut stone window sills were made by using stone from the St. Mary's Quarry. Many of the beveled glass windows are further highlighted with a cut glass cornflower design. On the wall above the mantle, is a mural of an old English castle scene which was created by a Dutch painter using paint tinted with marble dust to help reserve the rich colours. The upper part of the garage at the rear of the property was used as a chicken and brooder house in connection with his feed business.



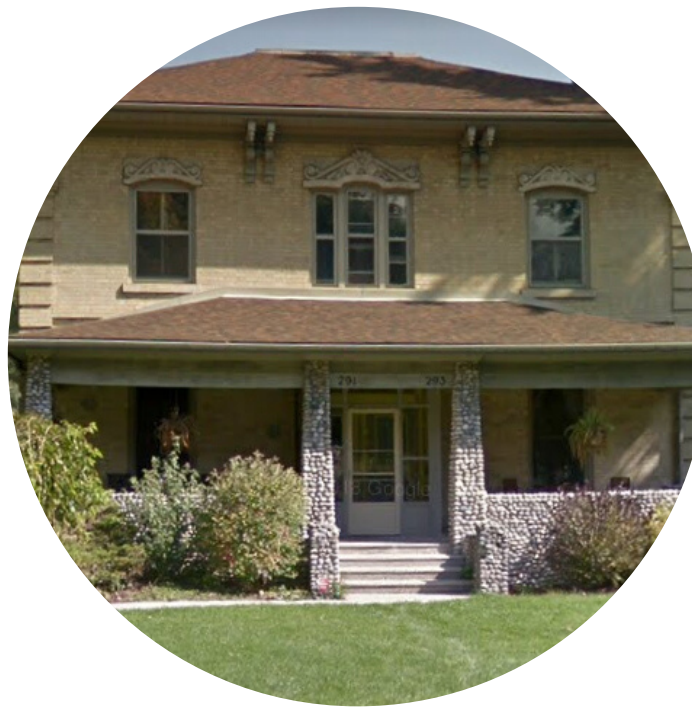
305 Oxford Street

This yellow brick Victorian home, built circa 1865, features a two storey detached barn where the original occupants stabled their horses and carriages. Mr. Richard Seldon and his daughter, Annie, who lived here from 1894 to 1967, served as Clerks for the Township of North Oxford. Between 1918 and 1967 residents came to the house to pay their taxes in what is now the formal dining room. High ceilings, elaborate moldings, wide baseboards and pine floors grace each of the formal rooms in the main part of the house. The brass chandeliers in the dining room and lower hall are original, as is the fireplace in the parlour. The servants quarters were located in the rear portion of the house along with the summer kitchen which retains its original painted tin ceiling.



293 Oxford Street

This fine old home was built around 1880 and illustrates the typical broad bracketed eaves of the Italianate style, popular in the mid to late 1800's. Fred J. Stone was one of the earliest occupants of this yellow brick house. He joined Wm. Stones Sons Ltd. in 1907 as manager of the Ingersoll branch. The operation started as a hide and wool business but soon developed into a fertilizer plant, later expanding to make livestock feed. In the 1920s it passed into the possession of W.A.C. Forman, a family relative. At this time the house was divided to accommodate two units. His father owned a store at 126 Thames St. South which sold dry goods and household furnishings and utensils.



269 Oxford Street

The present home erected in 1926 replaces the original red brick house built before the turn of the century. The first dwelling was located behind the present one leaving a large spacious lawn facing Oxford St. which was used for a bowling green. Much of Ingersoll could be viewed from the cupola and during a fire the occupants would scurry aloft for a ring side seat. Originally the home was owned by Sheriff Brady and later purchased by Reverend Hutt, first minister of St. Pauls Presbyterian Church. He was an avid gardener and established a beautiful sunken garden. The garage was originally the office of the Ingersoll Machine Company, and old company records were discovered in the attic by the owner's children.



261 Oxford Street

This house built circa 1882 was one of the first to be constructed of the smooth red brick which became available at this time. C.W. Riley, "Cheese King of Western Ontario" was an owner. On the south side was a green house which was replaced by a sunroom. A dumb waiter, allowed food to be raised to the kitchen from the basement. Originally the house had five fireplaces. Carved woodwork adorns the remaining mantles as well as the banister railing. In the front hallway a colourful stain glass window with a bird motif greets visitors. In the men's smoking room, now the living room, a likeness of William Shakespeare is incorporated in the stain glass panel over the window.



253 Oxford Street

This home, built by Foster Wilson, a prominent Ingersoll builder, is similar in style to the one at 114 Frances St. by the same contractor. Chestnut woodwork, which was becoming popular, is used extensively throughout the house.



249 Oxford Street

One well known resident to occupy the house was James Stevens, mayor from 1891-1893. Later it was owned by Mrs. F.W. Staples, whose husband, was one of Canada's earliest Ford Dealers. This house and 218 Albert St. were built by the same contractor and were almost identical. The front porch has since been enclosed. Much of the wide pine trim around the interior windows and doorways remains. The old fireplace mantle was replaced, utilizing a beam from the old Skinner Livery stables. The bathroom had a old water closet toilet with a tank mounted on the wall, activated by a pull cord. The house had a automatic oil fired hot water heating system plus a locomotive washing machine. Both innovations were considered rare at that time.

