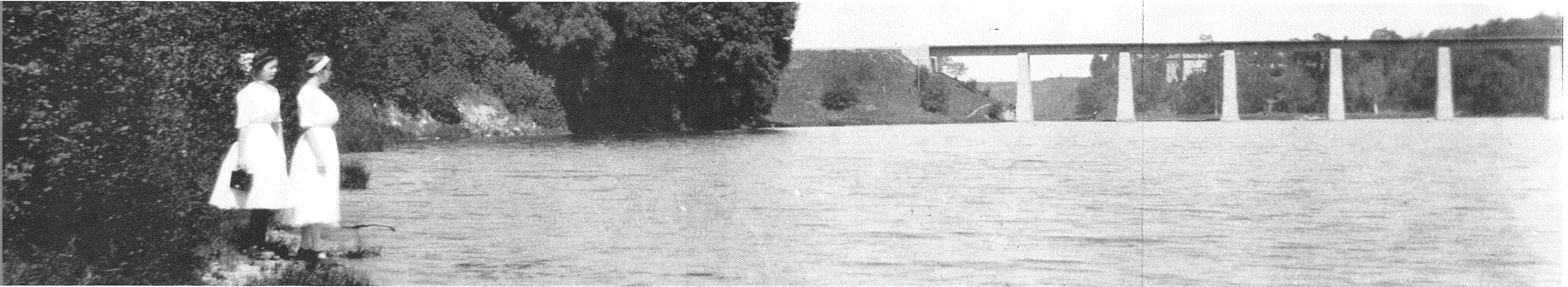


For photos, articles,
and information
about upcoming
exhibitions visit
St. Marys Museum at
stmarysmuseum.ca

*Photo: Thames River and
Sarnia Bridge, c. 1904.
Today the bridge is a
striking part of the
Grand Trunk Trail.*



*The walking tour starts at the
Town Hall. A map is included on
the back to help you find your way.*

1| TOWN HALL 175 QUEEN STREET EAST

Fire destroyed an earlier frame Town Hall on this same site in 1890. Town Council called for proposals for a new building and Toronto architect George W. Gouinlock's plans were chosen. Using St. Marys limestone trimmed with imported red sandstone, the replacement was built at the cost of approximately \$15,000. The structure officially opened June 1892.

The Town Hall has a variety of medieval details including its main tower with the bell chamber, stone porches, turrets and steep gables. The sandstone trim creates an interesting checkerboard pattern on the facade. It is still the administrative centre of the Town, housing the council chamber and offices for the CAO, other municipal officials and support staff. There is a public gallery complete with stage on the upper floor – the perfect setting for many a “Town Hall Meeting.”

2| PUBLIC LIBRARY 15 CHURCH STREET NORTH

The Public Library was built in 1904-1905 with a \$10,000 grant from the Andrew Carnegie Foundation. J. A. Humphris, a local architect, was able to adapt the standard Carnegie design so that it could be built in St. Marys limestone to complement the neighbouring Town Hall. An addition to the east, containing new offices and a children's area, was completed in 1988.

3| DOWNTOWN QUEEN STREET

Designated as a Heritage Conservation District in 2013, downtown St. Marys is a good place to study the vernacular architecture of 19th century Ontario. As you walk down the main street, notice the sloped roof tops, the dormer windows, the elaborate trim and other features original to many of the structures. Unique to St. Marys are the solid, limestone commercial blocks, built using local stone. The intersection of Queen and Water has a 19th century limestone building on each of the four corners. Look

for the bronze plaques on some of the store fronts. These buildings have been designated and the plaques provide information about their historic and architectural importance to St. Marys.

Additional information on these stores can be found in “The Stories of the Stores.”

*From Queen Street, turn north
onto Water Street and walk to the
green-painted, steel bridge over
Trout Creek.*

4| WATER STREET BRIDGE

This steel truss bridge was built in 1899. From its walkway, there is a pleasant view of other picturesque bridges and of the Thames River as it is joined by Trout Creek and falls over the old mill dam. On the opposite bank is Milt Dunnell Field, where generations of St. Marys residents have enjoyed sports and special outdoor events.

5| RIVERVIEW WALKWAY OPERA HOUSE

The Riverview Walkway leads from the Water Street Bridge along the creek and the old millrace. It crosses Queen Street

and follows the Thames River beside one of the town's most famous buildings. The Opera House was built from St. Marys limestone in 1879 for the Independent Order of Oddfellows. Its impressive architectural details and fine stonework are enhanced by the more restrained design of the two limestone commercial blocks that flank it.

The Opera House was designed to have stores at ground level, a concert hall above and the Oddfellows' lodge rooms on the top floor. In its years of activity, many plays, concerts, lectures and political rallies were held on its stage. Sir John A. Macdonald, Canada's first prime minister, campaigned here in 1891 during his last election.

The Oddfellows had difficulty keeping up with the cost of maintaining the building and eventually were forced to sell it. In 1919, the entire block became part of the St. Marys Milling Company's operations. The Opera House was used as a flour mill for 50 years and then stood derelict for more than a decade. Rescued in the 1980s

through the intervention of the St. Marys Lions Club, its interior was rebuilt and converted into apartments and stores. The exterior retains many original features.

6| THAMES RIVER

The north branch of the Thames River, designated a Canadian Heritage River, flows through St. Marys and is the heart of the town. St. Marys' early economic success depended on the mills, powered by the water in this river. The town's prosperity was also helped by the presence of accessible limestone, taken in blocks from the riverbed and from quarries along the riverbanks. This limestone has provided the town with its characteristic appearance and earned it the nickname, “Stonetown.”

*From the Riverview Walkway,
take Park Street to Cadzow
Park at the corner of Church
Street.*

7| CADZOW PARK 177 CHURCH STREET SOUTH

The St. Marys Museum is located in Cadzow Park, once the private grounds for the owners of the old limestone house. It was built in 1854 for George Tracy, one of the town's earliest settlers. At that time the house was by far the largest stone residence in the area and was nicknamed “Castle in the Bush.” Some years later, the park was given the name Cadzow after an estate in Scotland, near the birthplace of subsequent owners of this property.

Cadzow has been a community park since 1926 and George Tracy's house has been the St. Marys Museum since 1959. It contains a fine collection of artifacts and resource materials relating to this area. If you would like more information about the sites on this walking tour or about any other aspect of local history, come in person for a visit to the Museum's research area.

*Take Church Street northward
toward the downtown area.
As the name suggests, several of the
town's oldest churches are on this
street.*

8| CHURCH STREET CHURCHES

The United Church, 85 Church Street South, was built in 1879 as a Methodist Church using yellow – called “white” – Ontario brick. It replaced a smaller 1850s limestone building on the same site. A portion of the original exterior wall of this stone structure can still be seen at the back of the church. The church tower once supported a graceful spire but it was struck by lightning in the 1940s and not replaced. The interior of this church is a wonderful open space, with a view to the pulpit and magnificent organ unrestricted by pillars or partitions.

Across Elgin Street is St. James Anglican Church. The oldest portion of this church was built in the late 1850s from St. Marys limestone, a simple, rectangular building. In the mid-1880s, extensive renovations raised the roof and added the square tower, the buttresses and the west entrance porch. The parish hall to the north was added in 1907. The grounds were landscaped by an early rector and are cared for by members of the congregation.

9| ELGIN STREET HOUSES

One of four mansions built by George Carter, a prominent 19th century mill owner, is at 67 Peel Street (at the corner of Elgin Street). This house was built in 1883 for George's only son, James. William Williams, a local architect, designed steep gable roofs, tall windows and chimneys with decorative brickwork – features to draw the eye upward and to emphasize the building's height and presence.

One block east, the home at 253 Elgin Street East was also designed by William Williams and built in 1886 for Alfred H. Lofft, a dry goods merchant. For many years, the walls of this house were covered with thick ivy that hid most of the lovely red brick decoration that is such a striking contrast to the predominant white brick. Recent owners removed the ivy to reveal this attractive feature.

10| JONES STREET HOUSES

The house at 236 Jones Street East is another of the four Carter houses, this one built as a wedding gift for George's daughter, Charlotte, and her husband Henry Lincoln Rice. Its strongest features are the tower with wrought iron cresting, the complex windows in the mansard roof and the gracious veranda. Its current owners call it Lionvale.

The other two Carter houses are: 224 Jones Street East, the oldest, built in 1869 for George Carter himself, originally taking up the entire large corner lot and across the street, 217 Jones Street East, built in 1875 for George's daughter, Harriet, and her husband, Clarence Freeman. This lovely white brick house features curved window arches and intricate wood trim.

11| LIND PARK, ARTHUR MEIGHEN STATUE, FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

CHURCH AND JONES STREETS

The park was a gift to the town in 1934 from John Grieve Lind, one of the founders in 1912 of the St. Marys Cement Company and an advocate for a municipal park system. A statue of Arthur Meighen, ninth prime minister of Canada, has been placed in the northeast corner of Lind Park.

Arthur Meighen was born on a farm near St. Marys and attended schools here. After a distinguished career in politics and business, he died in 1960. This statue was originally intended for Parliament Hill in Ottawa but its impressionistic style did not appeal to all and it was kept in storage until the death of his widow, Isabel, in 1985. After that, the Town of St. Marys with the assistance of

MP Harry Brightwell arranged for its installation here. For more information about Meighen's career, please see the plaque beside the statue. There are two other plaques commemorating Meighen in St. Marys. In the west ward, a plaque in front of 524 Elgin Street West marks the family home when Arthur and his siblings were in high school. Parks Canada has also marked Meighen's gravesite, in the St. Marys Cemetery.

Across the street from Lind Park is another of the lovely Church Street churches, First Baptist Church. The Baptist congregation has been in St. Marys since the 1850s; this church building has been on this site for more than a century. If you look carefully, you will find the cornerstone, laid in July, 1902.

You are now within sight of your starting point, the St. Marys Town Hall. If you wish, continue north on Church Street over the double-arched stone bridge (built in 1888) and climb the steep hill to the two limestone churches on Widder Street.

12| WIDDER STREET CHURCHES

The two tall church steeples on the north ward hill are landmarks for miles around. At 147 Widder Street, the St. Marys Presbyterian Church rises majestically, its stone buttresses, lancet windows, turrets and 139-foot tower and steeple all pointing heavenward. It was opened in March, 1881, replacing a much more modest frame structure on the same site since 1852.

Two blocks to the east, Holy Name of Mary Roman Catholic Church opened a decade later in 1893. It too replaced an

earlier church building on the same large property. Holy Name is built from St. Marys limestone in the Gothic Revival style, popular in the 19th century to imply a return to the vigorous Christian faith of the Middle Ages. Its magnificent central tower is 69 feet high topped by a 61 foot steeple.

These additional attractions are outside the core, but well worth a visit.

13| ST. MARYS JUNCTION STATION

In the late 1850s, the Grand Trunk Railway, moving westward from Toronto, prepared to construct two lines through St. Marys, one going southwest to London and the other directly west to Sarnia. In 1858, a limestone station was built at the junction of these two lines on the northeastern limits of the town. This station was abandoned by the railway and later purchased by the Town of St. Marys. As a fine example of early railway architecture and as a symbol of that 19th century enterprise, it has been designated a national historic site. A local volunteer committee has worked countless hours to stabilize and restore the building and to prepare it for an eventual new use.

14| GRAND TRUNK TRAIL

The original Grand Trunk Railway line to Sarnia was abandoned by the Canadian National Railway in 1989. By 1993, the Town of St. Marys had purchased the right-of-way through town and in 1996 a volunteer committee was formed to raise money to convert the line, including the high-level Sarnia Bridge, into a

community walkway. The Grand Trunk Trail was officially opened in 1998 and, largely because of the view from the trestle bridge, has remained one of the town's most popular recreational areas.

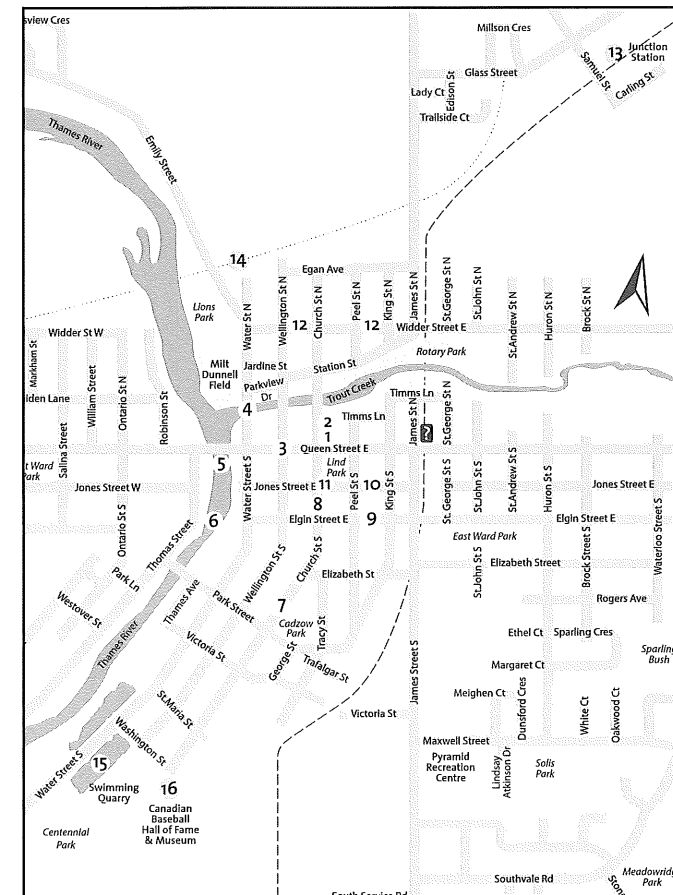
For a map of the trails, see "Trails for All Seasons."

15| THE QUARRY

Limestone has been important to St. Marys since its founding. Stone from early quarrying operations provided building material for many of the oldest homes, churches and commercial buildings in the town. Today, the quarries along Water Street South, out of production since the 1920s, are filled with fresh, spring water, one used for swimming and the other for fishing. A swim in the quarry can be enjoyed from Father's Day weekend in to Labour Day. A bit farther south on Water Street is the St. Marys Cement Company where limestone still has a vital industrial use.

16| CANADIAN BASEBALL HALL OF FAME & MUSEUM

The entrance to the grounds of this popular tourist attraction is off Church Street. A must for baseball fans, even those with a passing interest will enjoy the variety of displays in the museum house and be impressed by the premier diamond, a beautiful ball field set in a natural amphitheatre in the centre of the 32-acre property. The museum is in an 1860s limestone house set on a hill with a splendid view of the town.



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ST. MARYS STONETOWN

SELF-GUIDED WALKING TOUR



A unique limestone town with historical treasures, specialty shops and home-grown hospitality, St. Marys was first settled in the early 1840s. The new town was on the banks of the Thames River and Trout Creek where water fell in little falls over a series of limestone ledges. The falls provided power for mills to make flour from the grain produced in the surrounding rich agricultural farmland.

Much of the history of St. Marys can be learned from its buildings, landmarks and plaques. This self-guided tour takes you on a walk around the core area and suggests ideas for exploration of attractions a little further from the core, such as the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, Grand Trunk Trail and St. Marys Museum.