

# A Walking Tour of Burlington Downtown by the Burlington Historical Society

*You can begin your tour by parking in the parking garage at the visitor centre at 414 Locust St. Maps are available at the centre.*

## **1. Queen's Head Inn - Corner of Elgin and Brant Streets**

Peter M Zimmerman originally built this house and rented it to a Peter Evans to run as a first class hotel. Peter was a descendent of the Zimmerman family who emigrated in 1794 from New Jersey. The family first settled in Beamsville but some came to Halton County by 1814. An area of Appleby Line north of Dundas developed into the village of Zimmerman named for Henry P. Zimmerman. Henry represented the Canadian Branch of the family at a special meeting in Pennsylvania in 1867 when the North American Zimmerman family became heirs to a \$35 Million German Estate. Peter M. Zimmerman was the son of Matthias who settled at Wellington Square. Peter took over the family farm after his father Matthias died and with his sons did have other enterprises besides farming, including selling bootleg liquor (for which they got caught from time to time) and also being involved in horse trading and getting the best of an unwary buyer. The County Atlas of 1877 describes this hotel: "the Zimmerman house, a fine, handsome three-storey brick veneered building, erected at a large cost by one Peter M. Zimmerman, - a first class resting place for the weary traveller." The top floor has dormer windows in its high-hipped roof and heavy brackets support the boxed cornice. At one time there were verandahs around two sides of the building. As the Queen's Hotel later in the century, it was a stop for the electric cars of the radial line that ran from Hamilton to Burlington and Oakville. By the late 1800's it was known as the Queen's Hotel, Later on - by the 1950's (maybe earlier) it was known as the Sherwood, later became the Queen's Head.



## **2. Burlington City Hall - 426 Brant St.**

Burlington City Hall was designed by the architectural firm of Schneider and Stevens, and the design was described as a "lens shape." The original structure cost \$857,000. At the time, it was by far the tallest building on Brant Street. Then called Town Hall, it was officially opened on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 1965. When Burlington became a city on January 1, 1974, it was renamed City Hall. In 1986, an \$8,000,000 expansion added 60,000 square feet to the building. The architectural firm of Sveda, Koyanagi and Yamamoto designed the expansion, which added a three-floor extension beside the existing eight storey office tower. The front was embellished with the City Crest. Also added was a concrete and brick civic square. The drinking fountain, erected in honour of the visit of the Prince of Wales in 1860, was brought to the present site in 1977 and restored to its former elegance. The Bronze Statue at the north side of City Hall was originally erected in 1922 at was then known as LaSalle Park and now Spencer Smith Park as a memorial to the soldiers who fought in WWI. After WWII additional names were added. It was moved to its current location in 1986 at the time of the addition to City Hall. It is reputed to be one of the haunted areas in Burlington. A fountain was installed in the square in Spring 2000 as a millennium project donated by King Paving along with the clock in front of City hall was donated by Burlington's sister city Itabashi, Japan.

*Walk north on Brant St.*

### **3. Masonic Temple - 463 Brant St at Maria.**

This building was built by James Allan a wagon maker and general merchant in the 1870's. At the turn of the century it was part of a thriving business proprietor John Kentner who had a lumber yard, planing mill and cider press. In 1908 the Masons would take it as their home and later added an addition to the south. The older part is a two and a half storey building with high-hipped roof, the gable end facing Brant Street. Under the gable is a round window known as the Bull's Eye window of neo-classic style. It could symbolize a porthole in a shipping village.

*Cross Maria St and walk east.*

### **4. Maria and Elizabeth Street corner – several homes.**

The block north on the east side consists of a row of typical homes of the 1870's. Each has been altered over the years but still retain their charm. #497 was the home of James Allen the carriage maker who built the building now known as the Masonic Temple. The Pikley House a youth residence.

The next three houses behind the creek were built by James C. Bent around 1860. The first is believed to be the first Baptist Church in Wellington Square. Mr. Bent was a staunch Baptist, and early records of the Baptist meetings were found in the attic by the late William McCulloch when he owned the house.

*Walk south along the west side of Elizabeth Street*

### **5. 490 Elizabeth Street.**

Upper Canada neo-classical design built in 1873 for Jacob Harmon Fisher. Originally 1 ½ stories, it has been enlarged without detracting from the early style. The typical doorway adds charm to the entrance as does the semi-elliptical fan transom with sidelights around the door. Some of the glass is the original made by hand. The windows are symmetrical, with six over six panes, square headed without surrounds. A large two-storey porch graces the front elevation. Jacob Fisher was an Aldershot farmer who retired to the village and became a close neighbour to James Allen.



### **6. Elizabeth Street - 482, 478, 472.**

#482 - built in 1855 by James Laing and later owned by Dr. Speers in the early 1900's who was the Medical Officer of Health in 1915 and it was his job to convince council of the necessity of sewers. Later the building was used as the library. The town purchased the property in approx the 1950's and did renovations to give better service until the new library was built on New Street.

#478 was built in the 1860's as the Wesleyan Methodist Manse.

#472 was built for lake ship captain Daniel Henderson in the 1860's who in 1877 owned a

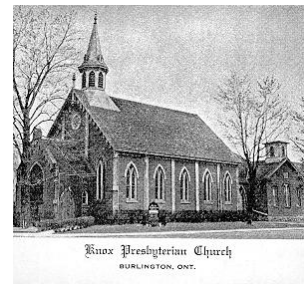
boat called the Mary Jane whose capacity was 22,000 bushels.

### **7. 458 Elizabeth at corner of James**

John Taylor, a mason built this red brick cottage in 1876. Typical of early Burlington, its charm and dignity have survived. The front door has a glass transom, and the windows are segmented with shutters added at a later time, as was a board and batten addition. The property has also had lovely gardens and one owner, John Heritage was awarded a prize for growing a black rose. As well the property has many types of trees and a pear tree grafted to produce 5 varieties of pears.

### **8. Knox Presbyterian Church**

Andrew Gage (son of Burlington's founder James Gage) and his wife Martha made the gift of land on which this church was built. The first church was a small frame one built in 1845 but by 1877 a larger church was needed and the original church was moved back on the lot to serve as a Sunday school. The property has had an interesting history with changes like that. The windows were ordered from Scotland and shipped in Molasses. Part of the history of the church includes the time in the 1920's where the congregation voted to become part of the new United Church but discrepancies in the voting required a vote a few month's later when the church once again became a Presbyterian church and not part of the United Church.



### **9. 451 Elizabeth St. Sea Cadet Hall**

This building was built in 1858 as the first Methodist Church in the village. The Methodists moved to larger quarters in 1889 and St. Luke's Anglican Church purchased the property to use as a Sunday School for 30 years. It was then turned over to the Trustees of the Burlington Great War Veterans Association and later the Canadian Legion, Trustees for the Navy League of Canada. It is a red brick structure of rectangular shape with a high gabled roof, and a Bull's eye window below the pitch. On each side of the front entrance are gothic windows which at one time held stained glass.

### **10. 437 and 423 Elizabeth Street.**

#437 is believed to have been built by Richard Mortimer a butcher in 1855 and this building has had many alterations. #423 was built later in the 1880's by Joseph Redmond who was Land Agent and later a shoemaker. The lacework frill about the eaves and other ornaments are gothic revival. The main door has side lights and a three piece transom with leaded glazing and heavy articulation.

### **11. 421 Elizabeth Street**

Part of Village Square - Originally built in 1850 as a frame cottage by Joseph Stinson it was bricked after John Morrone purchased it in 1888. John's youngest daughter Nellie lived in the house until 1976 when she died at the age of 100. The front door is at the south gable side where there was a porch. All windows have circular arched shape of twelve panes and arched shutters to match. This house and the one to the north have been incorporated into Village Square by Carter and Chamberlain Architects. The project demonstrates the feasibility of converting housing to commercial uses and filling in to provide economical, interesting

space.

*Walk through Village Square*

### **12. 435 and 431 Pearl Street.**

Aaron Bates a harness maker and his wife Catherine built these two houses on the same lot in approximately 1887. #435 is particularly attractive with its symmetrical lines and semi-circular window under the peak.

### **13. 416 Pearl Street**

Sylvester Ingelhart built this brick house in the late 1870s. He was of a pioneer family which moved from Pennsylvania to Nelson Township in the early 1800s'. Sylvester was a carpenter and left to his daughter three lots on Pearl street. The Mitchell family owned the brick house during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century with large barns out back for the horse and delivery cart. The house has a very interesting shape with recessed doorway and symmetrical wings angling out on each side providing a partly enclosed front porch.



*Turn left at Pine Street*

### **14. 2085 Pine Street**

Believed to have been built in 1847 by Nelson Ogg a cooper. It is a fine example of an Ontario cottage in a working class area of Wellington square. By 1857 when the Ogg family had grown to include 12 children, a larger house was needed. Nelson built a new home which still stands at 687 Brant St. James Clark purchased it and descendants lived there until 1949. Originally a frame house, it was bricked in about 1870. It is a one and a half-storey building with cottage or hip roof with a gable over the front door. Originally a square plan, the kitchen wing was added later.



### **15. 2093 Pine St at corner of Pearl St.**

Jabex Clark, son of James sold the easterly lot to John Dalton, a fruit package manufacturer in 1886 from the original parcel of land. The house was frame, a typical handsome cottage with semi-circular window in the gable over the front door.

### **16. 393 Pearl Street**

This house was built by George McConnell, a tailor, around 1872. It was bought by Frederick Galloway in 1885. He ran a general store on Brant street and his father was a partner in Galloway and Baxter's feed and general store. The family occupied the house until about 1967, enjoying the orchards which surrounded the building to as far as Martha and Pine streets. The house is another version of the vernacular classic, with a little peaked gable, gingerbread and a handsome double door with transom.

### 17. 383 and 385 Pearl Street – The Pearl Street Café

These brick semi-detached houses were built by William Ackland a florist, about 1880. They were rented until the death of his son Joseph in 1915 when they were sold to separate owners. The architecture suggests an earlier date with the nicely carved supports under the roof and bay windows, the firewalls at the ends of the roof and between the two units and the intricate brick detail over the semicircular windows.



*Turn right on Gore St. and then Lakeshore*

### 18. 2021 Lakeshore Road - Waldie's Store

Built in the 1860's is one of the oldest commercial establishments. It lost its second story to fire quite a few years ago. Extensively renovated in 1966 when three retail establishments opened on John Street. William Kerns was a partner of John Waldie (who was the first Reeve of Burlington) for 20 years. William bought John's share of the business after John became a Lumberman.



### 19. 2013 Lakeshore Rd - Hume Theatre

The first movie theatre called the Crystal Theatre in Burlington was on Brant Street opposite Ontario Street which was later converted to commercial premises. The Hume Theatre on Lakeshore opened approximately 1931-1932 and later became the Roxy and then the Odeon Theatre. It was closed in 1981 due to competition of the multi-screen theatres. It was the last single screen theatre to be in Burlington. At one time it was a place for Vaudeville style shows with a stage.

*Take time to enjoy the many dining and shopping areas downtown and the beautiful waterfront at the foot of Brant St. Dining and shopping guides and waterfront information is available at the Visitor Centre. Visit **Tourism Burlington** for books on local history, postcards and art cards depicting local heritage buildings.*

### **Tourism Burlington**

414 Locust Ground Floor, Burlington, ON L7S 1T7

Ph: 905-634-5594 \* Toll Free: 1-877-499-9989 \* Fax: 905-634-7220

Email: [info@tourismburlington.com](mailto:info@tourismburlington.com) \*Website: [www.tourismburlington.com](http://www.tourismburlington.com)