

The Livermore Heritage Guild began in 1973 when a group of concerned citizens recognized that the town's 1892 Southern Pacific depot should be saved for the future. Beginning with that successful effort, the Guild has broadened its purpose to coordinate the preservation of all those historical resources that represent the heritage of the Livermore area, and to supervise their organization and use for the education and enjoyment of the community.

To learn more about us and to view some interesting exhibits, please visit the History Center in the Carnegie Building on Third Street, open Wednesday through Sunday 11:30 am to 4:00 pm. We hope you will join us and

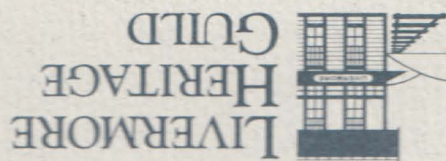
"Help Save Yesterday for Tomorrow"

First Printing, June, 1990

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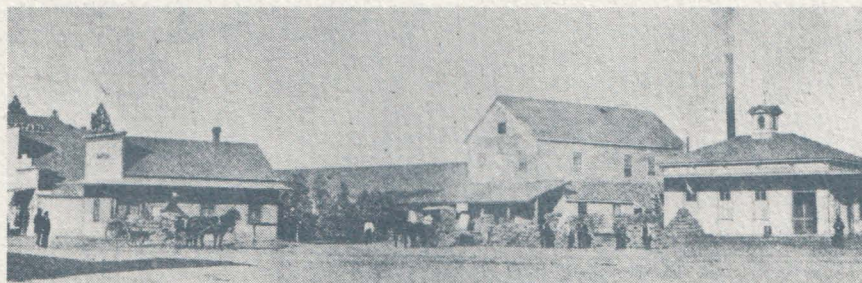
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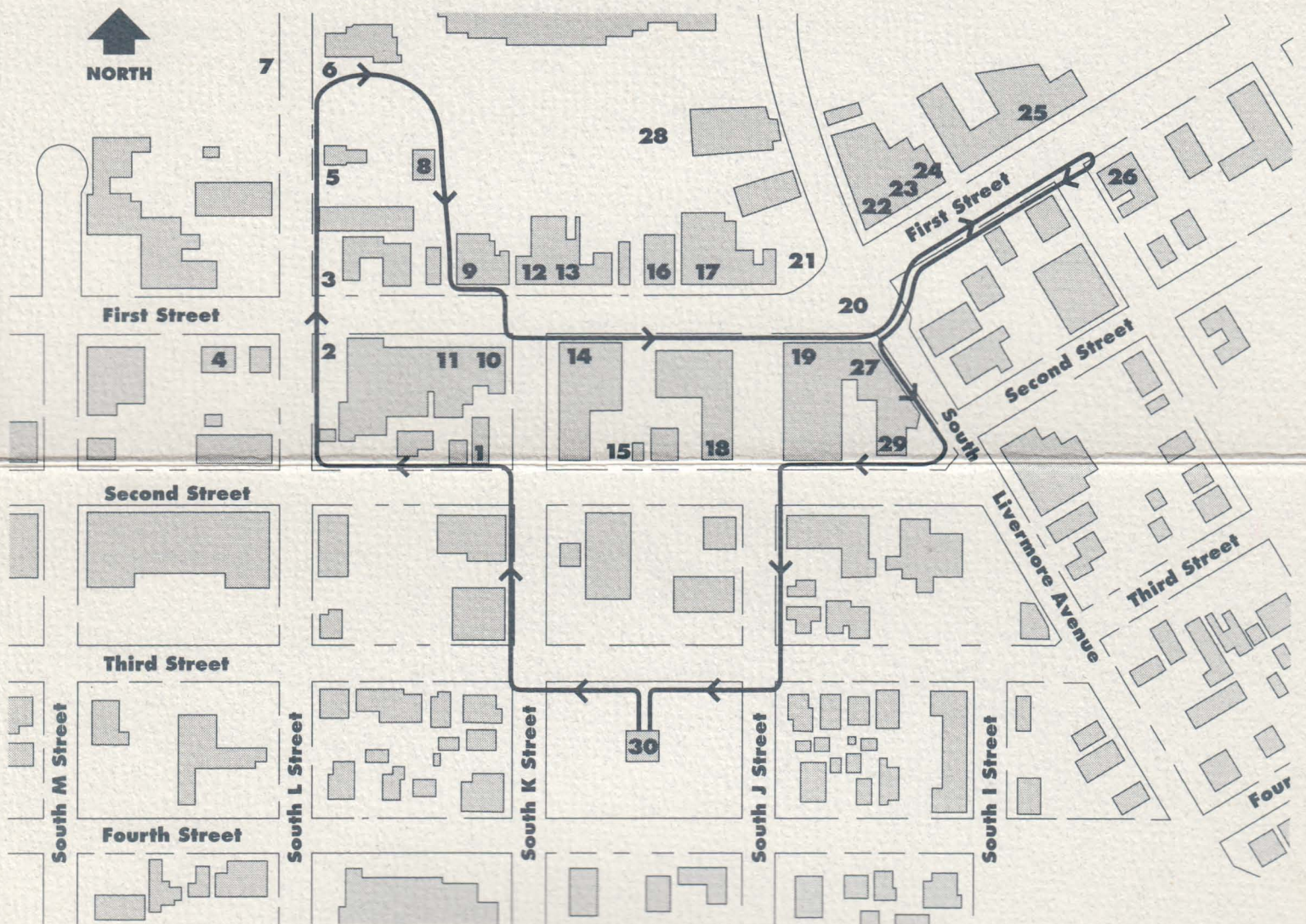
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A Self-Guided Walking Tour of

Historic Livermore





Since

the city's beginnings in 1869, Livermore's economic center has been the 12-block area bounded by L Street on the west, Railroad Avenue on the north, McLeod Street to the east and Second Street on the south. This area was initially occupied by agriculturally oriented commerce such as a flouring mill, hay and grain warehouses, small stores, and hotels.

After the turn of the century, the downtown business composition changed: several banks served the financial needs of the community; stables were replaced by auto repair shops; small business interests felt the impact when national chain stores arrived.

Some buildings dating from near the founding of the town still exist in the commercial core.

In almost all cases these buildings have been modernized, but beneath their cosmetic facade one may find the bones of an 1870-era building.

We invite you to walk this area.

1. Proceeding from the Carnegie Building, our first stop will be at the southwest corner of Second and K Streets. In the 40 years before Prohibition became law (in 1920), the Valley's wine industry reached its apex. Among the vineyard workers who came here in the 1880's were Charles and Peter Raboli. Starting with a small vineyard plot, they began making wine in a shed on Second Street, between K and L Streets. By 1910, their business so prospered that they built the structure at the K Street corner as a winery. That building now houses Knodt's Flowers (**2074 Second Street**). Beneath the stucco covering there still exists the brick facade the Raboli brothers had built. (The Peter Raboli family home is at 2046 Second Street.)



2074 Second Street

2. Let's move now to the southeast corner of First and L Streets. This intersection was the focal point of Livermore's economy prior to 1900. On three of the corners were located hotels for the commercial traveler, and on the fourth, now occupied by Groth Brothers, was the town's largest hay, grain and mercantile dealer, the **Anspacher Brothers**. Just to the north was the Southern Pacific (then the Central Pacific) Railroad depot.

3. As you stand on this corner, the parking lot on your right (and the adjacent quonset building), marks the site of the **Washington Hotel**, operated by Anton Bardellini. Its doors opened in 1870 and remained open, albeit under other names like The Palace and Mally's Hotel Annex, until the building was demolished in 1940.

4. As we walk north, crossing the street, toward Railroad Avenue, looking back to your left across L Street, you will see the last remaining piece of the **Valley Hotel**. In 1874, when it was built by Frank Grassi and was known as the Morning Star and later as the Commercial, the hotel originally occupied the corner lot. The annex, which you now see, was constructed in 1908. In 1962, the corner building was torn down.



20 South L Street

5. Let's continue north toward Railroad Avenue. Imagine another hotel where the Canteen and Kentucky Fried Chicken are now located. That was the **Farmers Exchange Hotel**, also built in 1874, and demolished in 1960. It, too, was known later by another name: the Traveler's Hotel. The oldtimers remember that, from 1923 on, it was the local bus depot.

6. Continuing up the street, we come next to the Southern Pacific Railroad Depot (**20 South L Street**). In the years before the automobile, this area was one of the busiest places in town. A number of passenger trains carried townspeople to and from Oakland or San Francisco. In fact, with completion of the Transcontinental Railroad in 1869, one could board a train in Livermore and travel all the way to the East Coast.

6. (continued) The depot building you see was built in 1892. (An earlier depot had been sited to the west across L Street **(7)** amidst a complex of railroad sidings, a turntable, and a locomotive barn.) The rail tracks ran along the north side of the depot building, and across the tracks were the water tank and the cattle corrals. (The collapse of the water tank was one of the few casualties Livermore suffered in the 1906 Earthquake.)

8. Walking now to the short alleyway that will return us to First Street, we pass over the site of three **Chinese wash-houses** that could be found here in 1882, interesting precursors to the dry cleaners here now. When we arrive at First Street, let's pause as we reach the curb.



2062 First Street

9. The street-side appearance of the large two-story building immediately on our left (**2062 First Street**) has been changed drastically since its construction in 1887. Known as the Marx-Rosenthal Building, it originally had a large square false front in the Italianate style, pierced with bay windows. This structure has housed a variety of business enterprises: tailor, restaurant, millinery shop, dry cleaners, and even a boarding house (upstairs).

10. Almost directly across the street at the corner of First and K Streets (**2083 First Street**) is the Schoenstadt Building. Built in 1877, it is among the oldest buildings in the commercial district. Its occupants over time have been a number of saloons including the Magnolia, the Cuckoo, the Central Saloon and Billy Sinkwitz's Fat Boy Bar; a clothing store; and several restaurants. The rooms on the second floor were initially a family dwelling and later a boarding house. This building was also originally in the Italianate architectural style; the remains of the original decorative elements are still under the eaves on the west side.

11. The small buildings you see along the south side, to your right, were built from 1910 to 1930 to house small markets, candy stores, and clothing shops. The building (**2029 First Street**) now occupied by Baughman's was constructed by J.C. Safford in 1909 to house his rapidly growing furniture business. In 1930 the building was remodeled to accommodate a J.C. Penney store that did business there for over 30 years.

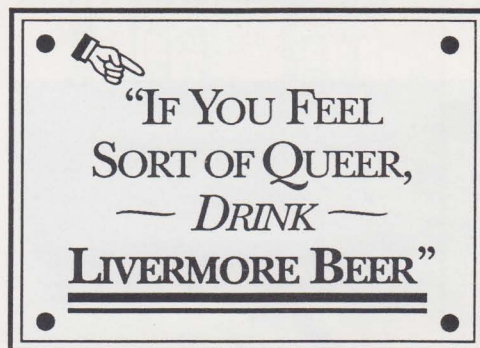


2029 First Street

12. Let's move now across First to the southeast corner of its intersection with K Street. Looking directly across (**2106 First Street**), you see a single story brick building that was built in 1930 to house Hagstrom's Market (grocery) and the Sprouse Reitz 5-and-10 cent store.

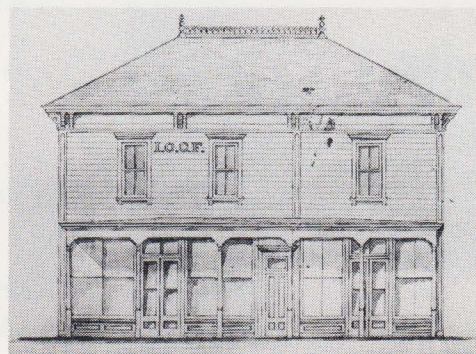
13. Two stores east, the small pitched-roof building (**2136 First Street**) was built in 1878, and it housed Livermore's first public library. (In 1911, the books were removed to the new Carnegie Library.) Then, this building had a variety of tenants including a print shop and an ice cream parlor.

14. Walking east on First Street, we see, in the sidewalk in front of **2127 First Street**, the word "BREWERY". This was the site of Wendell Jordan's Livermore Brewery from 1874 until the building burned in 1907. The Brewery produced about 400 barrels of ale per year. Although Jordan died a tragic death in 1901 (he drowned in a beer vat), the business was continued by Dennis Bernal until the 1907 fire. The buildings you now see here date from 1908.



15. As you walk along First Street to the mini-park, note the small brick building on Second Street. After the 1907 brewery fire, Dennis Bernal salvaged some of the undamaged brick to construct this structure (**2152 Second Street**).

16. At **2160 First Street** is the Odd Fellows Building dating from 1874. It was built for the princely sum of \$4500 to the design of local architect, J.L. Weilbye. The street floor of the building has housed numerous commercial enterprises: harness and furniture shops, variety stores, jewelers and even at one time the Post Office. The upper floor has always remained the IOOF Lodge hall.



2160 First Street

17. Of some interest is the triple-storefront brick building immediately to the right of the IOOF Building (**2190-2200 First Street**). Constructed to replace a livery stable, the "1915 Building" (named for the year it was erected) was built as one structure on three pieces of property, each storefront a separately owned entity. Note the art-glass skylight under the canopy at 2200, advertising "Victor and Baughman", who occupied these premises after 1922.

18. As we pause at the J and First Street intersection, let's look toward Second Street: note the Foresters Hall on the right (**187 J Street**). This imposing structure was built in 1914 to plans by Henry Meyers, another local architect, among whose other Livermore works are the Fifth Street School and the Veteran's Memorial Building. Del Valle Mercantile Company occupied a large portion of the street floor for a number of years.

19. Let's continue along the south side of First Street and pause near the next corner. After 1900, much of the new building in the commercial community took place within a one block radius of this point. We have seen Foresters Hall. We have just passed the Schenone Building (**2211 First Street**), one of Livermore's first reinforced concrete structures, and dating from 1914. The Masonic Temple on the southwest corner of this intersection was built in 1909, on a site that had been occupied by M.S. Anthony's Tin Shop since 1869; his marker is still in the sidewalk. American Trust company and Wells Fargo Banks occupied the first floor premises for many years, as did the the City Planning Department.



View towards the Southwest

20. The **flagpole** in the small streetpark was erected in September, 1905, having been floated upriver to Martinez and brought by wagon from there. Its original height was 116 feet.

21. The **fountain** at the northwest corner of this intersection commemorates Lizzie Oliver, an early-day town eccentric. Livermore Avenue, until 1927, was named Lizzie Street, believed to have been so-named by William Mendenhall for his daughter Elizabeth when he laid out the town in 1869. Popular legend claims a more colorful origin: that it was called Lizzie Street because anyone going to the southeast went past Lizzie Oliver's house at the corner of Lizzie and Second, "down Lizzie's street."

22. To the east, across South Livermore Avenue, stood the Livermore Hotel. Looking to the north we see the Bank of Italy building (**2250 First Street**), erected in 1921 on the site of the 1880 McLeod Building, and more recently used as the City Hall.

23. Let's cross South Livermore Avenue and continue east. The structural part of the building next to the Bank of Italy (**2262 First Street**) dates from 1886. It was originally a part of the three-story McLeod Building which stood on this site until 1920. Its first occupant after renovation in 1921 was Louis Schenone's fruit and vegetable market. The present appearance of the building is believed to have been the result of that renovation.



2288 First Street

24. The next building to the east (**2288 First Street**) was the home of N.D. Dutcher's Hardware Store, established here in 1887. Dutcher retired from business after 41 years in the same location, although the business continued operation into the 1950's. A recent rehabilitation to this building has returned it to an earlier architectural style.

25. Continuing east on First Street to McLeod, we pass by the location, on the north side of the street, of Livermore's first automobile showroom, the R.C. Anderson Motors Garage (**2332-2350 First Street**). Anderson built this structure in 1926, where he sold Dodge and Plymouth cars and trucks and later became dealer for Graham-Paige automobiles.

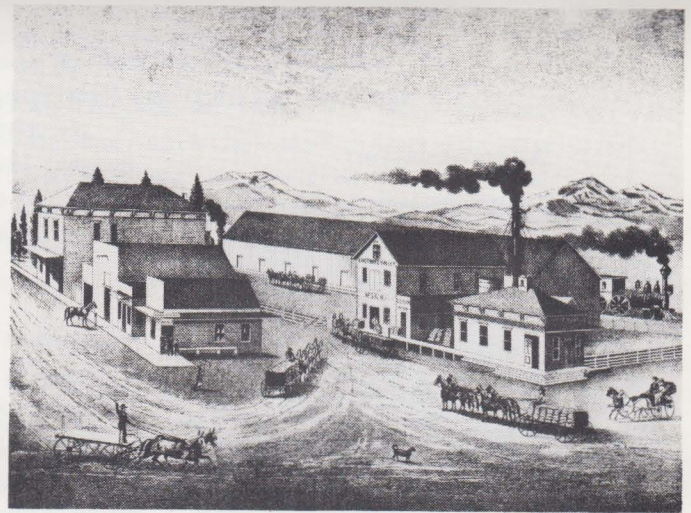


2365 First Street

26. We are now at the corner of First and McLeod Streets. The two-story Art Deco building (**2365 First Street**) on the opposite corner has held this appearance only since 1938, when it was refurbished by the WPA. Previous to that time, it was red brick. Built by F.H. Hawley in 1882, it housed the Bank of Livermore for some years before it was purchased by the City in 1903 as the City Hall. In 1974, when the new Civic Center was completed, ownership was returned to private hands.

27. Now we will return to the corner of First and South Livermore for a rest at Mill Square. This gives us another view of the **Masonic Hall** and the Schenone Building, one that reinforces the importance of these structures in the streetscape.

28. In the space behind The Lizzie Oliver Fountain to the northwest of this intersection, now occupied by a shopping complex, was located Livermore's first industry, **Calvin J. Stevens Flouring Mill**. With the advantages of a ready supply of grain from the Valley's newly opened farming lands and the new railroad for transportation, Stevens opened his mill in 1869. The mill itself burned in 1882, but Steven's complex of warehouses along the railroad tracks were still in use as late as 1940. (The alleyway by which you made your way from the railroad depot to First Street was the alternate entrance to the Stevens mill.)



BLOCK 1. LIVERMORE, PROPERTY OF **C. J. STEVENS.**
ALAMEDA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA.

29. Let's walk now to the corner of Second and South Livermore, cross to Second Street, and visit the building known as the Mall (**2222 Second Street**). This structure originally was the auditorium and stage section of the Bell Theatre that opened in 1914. The entrance and ticket booth were on First Street in the Schenone Building.

30. From this point, we'll walk to J Street, getting another perspective of Foresters Hall, and turning left at this corner, return to the **Carnegie Building**. In 1902 Livermore was the first community in the state to take advantage of a new state law allowing Sixth Class cities to organize tax-supported, municipal libraries. In the same year, having heard of the grants being made to libraries by steel magnate Andrew Carnegie, the Library Board made an initial attempt to gain such a grant. The project simmered until 1908 when Mrs. Dell C. Savage became President of the Library Board. Mrs. Savage worked resolutely to keep up interest in libraries and led a campaign to obtain a Carnegie Building for Livermore.



The Carnegie Building

Funds were raised in the community and by the spring of 1909 a lot at the corner of Fifth and K Streets had been purchased, and the Town Trustees had agreed to contribute \$1000 per year for ten years to support the library (the latter a proviso required by Carnegie). Approval of the grant from Carnegie was accomplished in October 1909, and a bond election was scheduled in December of the same year. The bond election passed with only 18 dissenting votes. There followed months of planning and consultations to design a building and to have the design (by architect William H. Weeks) approved by Carnegie.

Since opposition had developed to the Fifth and K Street site, another site nearer the center of town was selected: the McKeaney Block (the present site). Work began on the building in June 1910, and it was completed and opened for use in May 1911.

The building remained the Livermore Library until Labor Day weekend in 1966 when the books were moved by the staff and by members of the Job Corps to a new building on South Livermore Avenue in the Civic Center. The portrait of Andrew Carnegie which hangs to the left of the main entrance was donated to the building in 1935 by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, moved to the new library, and then returned to this location where it rightfully belongs.

For several years after the library moved, the building served as the headquarters of the Livermore Area Recreation and Parks Department, which remains responsible for its maintenance.

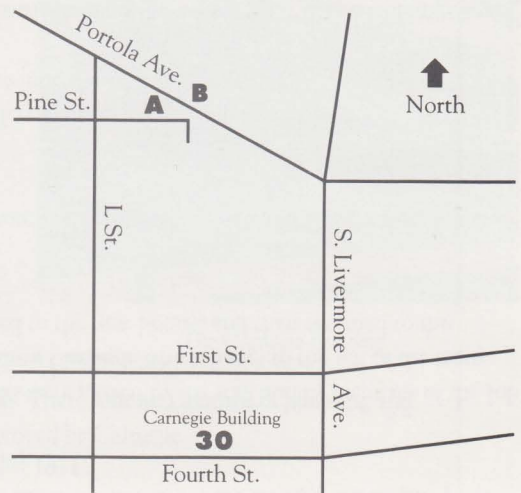
Since September, 1974, the Carnegie Building has housed the Livermore Art Association Gallery and the History Center of Livermore Heritage Guild. In 1989, the Livermore Cultural Arts Council leased one of the two rooms downstairs to use as its office.

At one time there were over twenty-eight hundred Carnegie Libraries in English-speaking countries around the world. Many of the buildings have been demolished. Livermore's Carnegie Building is one of a very few remaining in the Bay Area, and the community takes justifiable pride in its continuing use as a cultural center.

Other Points of Interest to Drive By

To The North. The Duarte Garage (**A**) was built in 1915 along the then recently completed Lincoln Highway, the first transcontinental roadway in the U.S. (It began in Times Square, New York City, and ended in what is now Lincoln Park, San Francisco.) In September, 1976, the Livermore Heritage Guild assumed responsibility for the restoration of the garage and initiated its operation as a museum. As such, it houses several vintage fire trucks, agricultural equipment, and a small print shop.

The Robert Livermore Monument (**B**) designates the approximate location of Livermore's Rancho Las Positas which played an important part in the early days of the California gold rush. Many eastbound travelers enjoyed the hospitality of the Livermore family and later wrote about their visits in books that gained wide recognition. Robert Livermore died several years before the community which bears his name was founded by William Mendenhall in 1869.



To The South. The first building to occupy the Civic Center was the Library (**C**), opened in September, 1966. It wasn't until 1978 that the Multiservice Center (**D**) was completed and opened its offices for municipal and county services. By October of the following year, the Administration Building (**E**), which serves as city hall and houses the police headquarters as well, was completed. Future plans call for a Senior Center to be built on the north side of the complex in the area called Sunken Gardens (**F**). The Barn (**G**), which dates from the early 1920's, was once the warehouse and armory for the National Guard battery headquartered in Livermore and now is used by many groups in the community for dances, parties, and cultural activities.

The Ravenswood (**H**) story began in 1885 when Christopher A. Buckley, a politician from San Francisco, purchased acreage in Livermore for a "country retreat" and for wine production. After Buckley's death, the estate was sold in 1931 to the Redemptorist Fathers for use as a retreat. Forty years later, in 1971, it was bought by a prominent Livermore developer who deeded 33 acres and all the structures to the City for use as a park. It is now a popular setting for weddings, parties, and public meetings.

