

About

There are few cities of its size in Illinois that have as many rich and elegant private residences as Shelbyville. The Shelbyville Historic District was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on December 22, 1976, and includes most of the original town of 1827. There are several significant masonry homes in the district. The greatest number of historic homes, from the mid-19th century until the time of World War I, are Italianate. French Second Empire and Romanesque are represented. Queen Anne and Victorian are widespread as well.

A beautiful book of illustrations on Shelbyville's historic homes, Elegant Homes from a Past Era by Joann VanDeventer Durbin, can be found at the local Carnegie library along the route of this tour (154 N Broadway St. Hrs: Mon-Fri 9-7pm, Sat 9am-1pm).

This tour is based on A Journey Through the Historic Homes and Buildings of Shelbyville, Illinois, published by the Shelby County Historic and Genealogical Society (SCHGS). There are many more beautiful historic homes listed in the book and around town. For more info, please visit SCHGS (see back for hours and details).



The first home built within the limits of the City of Shelbyville was a cabin, constructed by Josiah Daniel around 1825, located near the old Shelbyville Spring. In 1827, the cabin was bought by appointed Clerk of Shelby County Joseph Oliver. He soon built another log room adjoining the cabin, and opened up his office as County and Circuit Clerk. It also served as his residence, a temporary county courthouse, post office, school, and general store. In the 19th and 20th centuries, local businesses flourished, industries were introduced, and the prominent quietly built their stately homes along Main, Broadway, Morgan and Washington Streets. By 1880, after a 20-year period of bustling activity, the city took on its present shape.

Styles

Folk Victorian

Porches with spindle-work detailing, L-shaped or gable front plan, cornice brackets, details with Italianate or Queen Anne inspiration.

Italianate

Low-pitched roofs, widely overhanging eaves, large and decorative brackets under ornamental cornices, tall and narrow windows, occasional square cupolas or towers, \elaborate wrap-around porches or smaller entry porches with decorative Italianate double columns.

Prairie Tudor

Low-slung open Prairie style, developed in the Midwest, primarily by Frank Lloyd Wright. The Tudor style showcases steeply pitched, multi-gabled roof lines and decorative half-timber framing.

Queen Anne

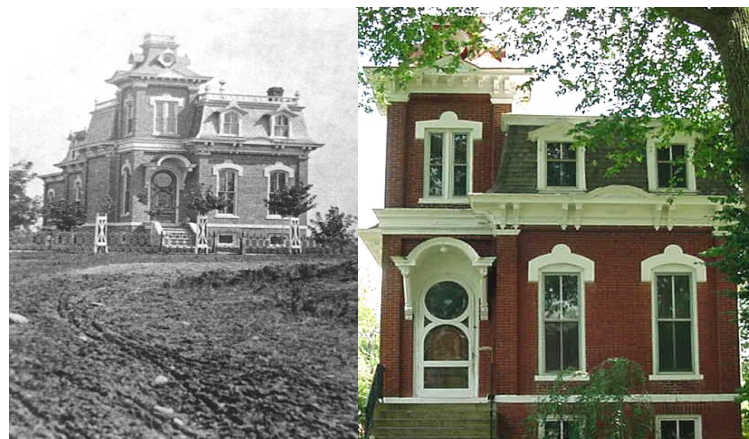
Steeply pitched and irregular roof shapes, dominant front facing gables, patterned shingles, bay windows and decorative ornamentations, partial or full-width porches, multiple gables and dormers.

Second Empire

Italianate style with a Mansard roof, dormer windows in the upper floors. May include a square or central tower, decorative brackets, molded cornices, similar Italianate details on windows and doors.

Southern Colonial

Large front columns, vertical lines throughout the design but especially in the windows, complex designs in the area of the main doorway.



For details go to shelbyvilleillinois.net/downtown-city-walk-victorian-homes-architectural-tour.

CityWalk Series

Historic Downtown

Lincoln Memorial

Painted Figures

Victorian Homes

Located in central Illinois, Shelbyville is home to scenic Lake Shelbyville, the historic Boorman's Roxy Theater, and much more. Shelbyville is easily accessible from US-51 and I-57. It is just 23 miles from Mattoon, 32 miles from Decatur and 59 miles from Springfield. There is also free [Wi-Fi](#) access in the downtown Main Street area.

To learn more about other CityWalk tours, visit:

Lake Shelbyville Visitor Center

Rt 4, Box 128B, Shelbyville, IL 62565

Hrs: 8:30 am-4:30 pm

(217) 774-3951

lakeshelbyville@usace.army.mil

Shelby County Tourism

315 E Main Street, Shelbyville, IL 62565

Hrs: 9 am-4 pm

(217) 774-2244

info@lakeshelbyville.com

Shelby County Historical and Genealogical Society

151 S Washington Street, Shelbyville, IL 62565

Hrs: Tue 5-7 pm, Wed & Sat 9 am-12 pm

(217) 774-2260

shelbycounty@consolidated.net

Special Thanks to:

City of Shelbyville, USACE Lake Shelbyville, Shelby County Tourism, Greater Shelbyville Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Council of Shelby County, Shelbyville High School Welding Team, Corner Copy, Shelby County Historical and Genealogical Society, ShelbyvilleWorks!, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, Lake Land College and IIRA: Western Illinois University.



Photos courtesy of Donna Lupton, SCHGS
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Victorian Homes



A self-guided family fun architectural tour
made possible by:
local residents and organizations of Shelbyville, IL

Tour Directions & Map

A. “J. Thornton Herrick House” - 201 N Washington

Built during the Civil War Reconstruction Era, the Herrick home was completed in December 1893. J. Thornton Herrick came to Shelbyville in 1850 and was a local financier and land developer. This house was Herrick’s first rental property, built at a cost of \$4,000. It was designed in the style of the Italianate Townhouse. Current owner and her late husband Michael purchased the house in 1973, and extensive restoration was done to modernize the home while preserving its historic beauty. Current owner: Janet Murphy

B. “John W. Yantis Home” - 207 N Washington

This Folk Victorian house was built by J. Thornton Herrick, and purchased by John W. Yantis in 1883 as it was near completion. It has a decorated hipped roof with wood fish scale shingles. The round tower with decorative garlands was added after Mr. Yantis purchased the home. The home has remained in the Yantis family for over 130 years. Current owners: Thom and Liz (Yantis) Schafer

C. “J. Thornton Herrick Home” - 219 N Washington

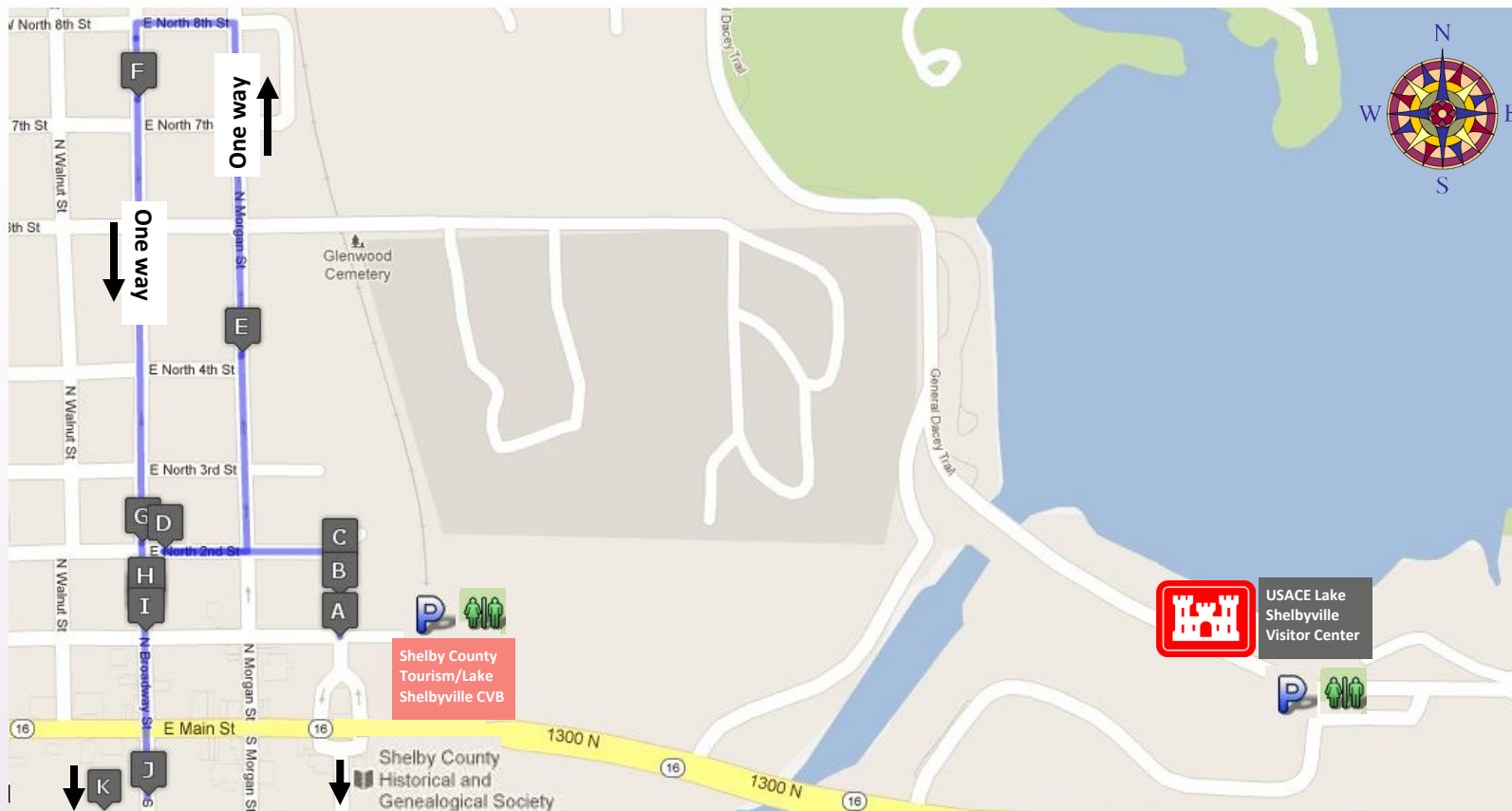
This was the first house built on the block. The Second Empire design is an example of a European-influenced architectural movement that swept the United States from 1860 to 1880. Over the last century, the exterior has changed very little. The front door is four inches thick, and is 450 pounds of oak with walnut trim. Later, this was the home of Judge Edward C. Eberspacher and family. Current owners: Dr. Russell and Nancy Bodner.

D. “General W. Thornton Home” - 121 E North 2nd

This was the home of one of the most influential and prominent men to have lived in Shelbyville. General Thornton served as Captain of the Calvary in the War of 1812. He was also a member of the Whig Party. Gen. Thornton moved to Shelbyville in 1833 and engaged in merchandising, banking, and brokerage. Beginning in 1834, he served several terms in the State Legislature, and was one of the original Commissioners of the Illinois and Michigan Canal. General Thornton died two years before the Italianate house was completed in 1875. Current owner: American Legion Unit 81

E. “The Walker House ” - 518 N Morgan

Built in 1893 by Wallace E. Walker, the house is of the Victorian Queen Anne Style with spindle work and a wrap-around porch. Mr. Walker was respected as one of the most spirited and enterprising citizens of Shelbyville. He began as a farmer, and went on to serve several years as Township Supervisor and County Treasurer. Afterward, he successfully pursued a career in real estate and the stock market. The house was next occupied by his son, C. Earl Walker, and wife, Ruby. The house remained in the Walker family for more than 80 years. Current owners: Larry and Dorothy Dilley



F. “The Scovil House ” - 822 N Broadway

This house was built in 1872 by the prominent miller and land owner, Charles C. Scovil. In 1867, he erected the largest flour mill in the west in Shelbyville. The Italianate Victorian home was remodeled in 1966 by Dr. Wiseheart, who replaced the original long narrow porch with a two-story columned porch to give the home a more stately appearance. The current owners purchased the house in 1992. Current owners: Dr. Rick and Hope Brown.

G. “The W.S. Middlesworth House ” - 304 N Broadway

President William Howard Taft once stayed here. This house was built in 1909 by architects Spencer and Powers in the Prairie Tudor Style. The house was purchased by Mr. Middlesworth, who was one of the leaders of the City’s business community; he was a major landowner, and president of the First National Bank, Shelby Loan and Trust. Current owners: John and Barb Shambo.

H. “The Truman E. Ames House ” - 219 N Broadway

Built circa 1890 by Truman and Dora Ames, this house is of the Queen Anne Style. The red granite was brought in from Ames’ family home in St. Lawrence County, New York. Mr. Ames moved to Illinois in 1871, and began reading law under Moulton and Chafee in Shelbyville. He was admitted to the bar in 1877 and became a prominent lawyer of Shelby County for several years. Previous owner, Lena Monti, used to rent the house to the Sparks College girls. Current owners: Troy and Rebecca Throneburg

I. “The Tackett House ” - 216 N Broadway St

This Victorian home was built in 1875 by Mr. Tackett. It has locally cut walnut trim, beveled glass windows, and the original brass and copper light fixtures. Mr. John A. Tackett was a native of Shelbyville. Born here in 1832, he later became the vice-president of the Shelby County State Bank. Current owner: Jacqueline Eberspacher

J. The Cochran House ” - 148 S Broadway

This house was built circa 1875. In 1886, in a woodshed at the back of the property, Josephine Cochran invented the first automatic dishwasher. Her invention won the highest award at the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago. The patent was later, sold to KitchenAid®. Details can be found at the stone marker on site. Current owner: Joanne Bogart

K. “Dr. J.C. Westervelt House ” - 301 S Broadway

Built circa 1875, this Victorian home has a wrap-around porch and a rear sun-porch. Dr. J.C. Westervelt lived to be 100 years old, and was a practicing physician for 75 of them. He served four successive terms as Mayor of Shelbyville, and helped to establish the lake and the auditorium at Forest Park. Current owners: Clint and Leslie Richter