

Tour through time from Sawdust City to the 'Swan Lake'

SAWDUST CITY — AND SWAN LAKE

It was the timber that drew the first settlers to the mouth of the Ottaway River, but it was the lumber that was sawn from the timber that "created" Traverse City. Today the old city remains much as it was at the turn of the century. There are a few new buildings — and new facades on the old buildings — but the charm of an era long past remains as you travel the sawdust trails of Traverse City; circa 1900. This tour also will visit with the majestic mute swans of Boardman Lake and explore the river that was once a vast conveyor of pine logs; a conveyor that floated the logs down to the sawmills of the city.

We begin this tour of Traverse City at the municipal marina, location of the city docks where ships unloaded passengers and supplies — and loaded lumber, potatoes, fruit and passengers for the return voyage. There was a train station to your right, and another to your left beyond where the zoo is now. A sawmill operated in this zoo location and there were many other wood-using industries between this location and the river ahead of you. The skyline of the city remains much the way it appeared to the tourist arriving by boat during the early 1900's.

As you exit the Marina, set your odometer at 0 and drive south on Union Street and turn left at the second traffic light (State Street).

As you cross Front Street (first traffic light) you can see the City Opera House to your left. This Opera House was one of two such facilities in Traverse City during the 1890's, and has been preserved as it was at its opening performance on Christmas, 1891.

This was the first street built in Traverse City and the original plan was to build it 20 feet wider. Those plans were vetoed because of the work required to pull tree stumps along the street. If you have time to explore the two blocks on your left by walking along Front Street, you will find many interesting shops and restaurants located in these century-old buildings.

Turn left on State Street.

(0.3) State Street was Traverse City's "livery row," where you could rent a horse and buggy for a ride in the country — or rent a team of horses to pull stumps or haul a load of lumber. The Park Place is the "Dean" of Traverse City hotels and has been in business since 1873. Around the turn of the century the rooms rented for \$2 per night, and the menu offered a variety of impressive treats for the traveler. At the top of the hotel's tower is a restaurant where one can dine and watch the sunsets over the bay.

Continue past the hotel, keeping to the right, and cross Boardman Avenue. Go one block and turn right on Wellington.

(0.6) You are now traveling through one of the oldest residential neighborhoods in Traverse City. The home on the Southeast corner of State and Wellington was the home of the daughter and son-in-law of one of the early industrialists in Traverse City. To your left, on the corner of Wellington and Washington, was the home of that industrialist, Henry Hull of Oval Wood Dish Co. — and across the street, to your

right, was the home of his son, making this (almost) a family block. These large old homes usually had a "ballroom" on the third floor for social gatherings, game rooms for recreation, ornate woodwork and furnishings. Today many of these old homes and their carriage houses have been converted to apartments.

Turn right on Washington St.

The house at 436 Washington is generally considered by historians to be one of the oldest remaining houses in Traverse City, dating back to the 1850's.

(0.7) At 427 Washington, you will see a gnarled oak tree with a marker at its base. The marker proclaims this to be an "Indian Trail Marker Tree" — but there is some disagreement among historians as to the authenticity of that claim. The Indians would mark their trails by bending a young tree in the direction of some landmark and weighting it down so that, as it grew, it would "point" towards that landmark. The last remaining trail marker tree in the area; the only one that all historians agree on, it located on the grounds of the Grand Traverse County Civic Center on East Munson Avenue.

(0.8) When the lumbermen arrived, they found large "mounds" of earth where today the courthouse is located. Perhaps the early planners did not know what these mounds were when they began excavations for this courthouse in the 1890's, but it was soon evident they were ancient burial mounds of the Indians of pre-history; probably of the Hopewell Culture of 600-1500 A.D.

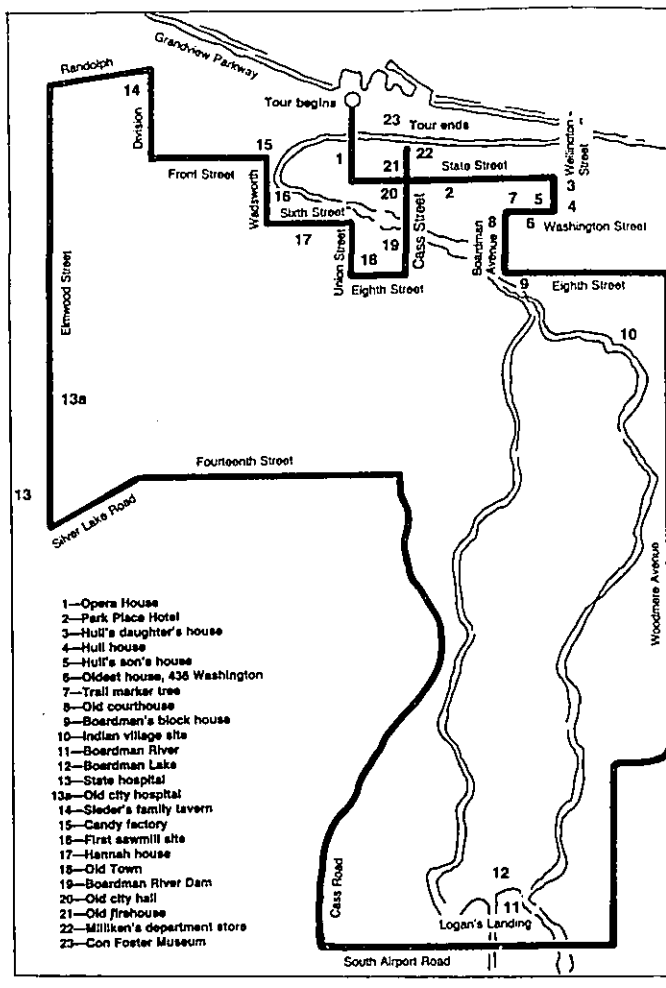
The courthouse was completed in 1899, and there is no record of the artifacts that were uncovered or what happened to them. Behind this courthouse you can find the "Church Row" of the late 1800's. The Baptist Church was built in 1874; the Episcopal Church in 1876; the Synagogue in 1885; the Presbyterian, now the Salvation Army, in 1897; and the Congregational Church in 1900.

Turn left on Boardman Avenue and drive to the stop light on 8th Street.

(0.9) It was here, at the corner of 8th and Boardman, that the first "house" was built in June of 1847. It was built by Horace Boardman and his employees to shelter them during that first winter, and they also built the first bridge; a crude pole structure, where the present bridge to your right is located. The river was known as the Ottaway at that time but was later renamed to honor the family of this first pioneer in the Traverse City area. Boardman came here to harvest the pine trees that grew so profusely in the river valley — and most of the land that we have traveled thus far during this tour was once covered by a majestic pine forest.

Turn left on 8th Street and drive to the first stop light and turn right on Woodmere.

(1.4) This railroad station is "new"; built in the 1920's to replace one of the depots along the bayshore. Back of this station, where the land slopes to the lake, was the site of a small Indian fishing village when the settlers first arrived. When lumbering began along the upper Boardman valley this lake soon became choked with the pine logs that were floated down to the sawmills of the city. The



HOW TO USE THIS TOUR GUIDE

The tour contains 20 historic "Sites" and scenic "Sights." The "Mile Marker" is the distance along the route and does not include the mileage incurred during a side trip.

IMPORTANT: These mileages are approximate and will vary with vehicles and/or odometers. You should allow for as much as a 10 percent variation in mileage readings.

It is suggested that you set your odometer at zero at the beginning of each tour and adjust the mileage markers to include the additional miles accumulated during your side trips — or use the mile marker figures as merely a point of reference between illustrated sites.

Route directions are in bold face type and it is suggested that you preview both the tour map and all of the directions before you begin the tour.

CAUTION: All tour routes have been designed to avoid, where possible, left-hand turns and other potential traffic hazards. Please proceed along these routes with caution and, because you will be passing through residential areas, allow faster moving traffic to pass. If there is a "site" or a "sight" that you would like to explore in more detail; pull off the road and well out of traffic.

BON VOYAGE

railroad tracks that we are following are no longer used, but they were first laid in 1872 and carried the lumberjacks to "Hell" for a night of drinking, brawling — and consultations with the professional women of Walton Junction.

Follow Woodmere along the east shore of the lake where it will curve right to cross the railroad tracks and become Park Avenue. Continue to the stop sign at South Airport and turn right.

(3.4) Turn right at the foot of the hill and enter the Logan's Landing Shopping Center. Three-tenths of a mile is allowed for

this side trip so that you may adjust your future mile marker readings.

You are now between the old and new channels of the Boardman River. The old channel was crossed as you descended the hill to the east, and the new channel before you was dug in the 1870's to provide for "a straight shot" for the logs that were floated down the river. Today the logs and lumbermen have been replaced by swans, ducks and a variety of quaint little shops — and a restaurant that provides a beautiful view of the river as you dine.

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