

Waseca, MN Historic Places

Local Buildings

Waseca is home to many beautiful buildings and homes.

NOTE: Most of these buildings are private residences and are not open to the public. Please respect these properties and view from the sidewalks.



W.J. Armstrong residence - 331 State Street North

This house was built in 1919 by W.J. Armstrong who operated the Southern Minnesota Grocery Warehouse (See Miller-Armstrong Building) in the early 1900s. Armstrong managed the early EACO sponsored baseball teams who were state champions in 1901. This is a private residence.



Ira Trowbridge residence - 106 4th Avenue N.E.

This house was built by Waseca's founder, Ira C. Trowbridge, however, he died before the house was finished. His wife and family did live here for many years. The house didn't always face 4th Avenue! Until around 1913 the house faced west. It was hoisted onto huge timbers on a wagon and literally turned to face the north with a new address on 4th Avenue. Why? Because the family was building a band shell in the park across the street in memory of Ira C., and they wanted the view of the park. They were also offered a sum for their lot facing State Street. Trowbridge built the first hotel in Waseca, bought and sold real estate, and helped bring the railroad to Waseca.



Odd Fellows Hall - 3rd Avenue at 2nd Street N.E.

The Odd Fellows Hall or I.O.O.F. Lodge was originally a Baptist church in the late 1800s. It was sold to the Odd Fellows in 1905 who raised the building to add a heightened main level for a dining hall. The building has served many purposes. Currently it is apartment residences.



Waseca County History Center - 315 2nd Avenue N.E.

This former Methodist church building built in 1917 became the WCHS museum in 1964 when Edgar and Ethel Johnson, and his brothers and wives helped purchase and convert the church into a permanent home and museum for WCHS. It houses the exhibits, collection storage, offices, processing, gift shop and program spaces. Currently the museum is open Tues-Fri, 9-5 and Thursday evenings until 8 p.m. This is a free museum and is ADA compliant.



Carl Sommerstad residence - 608 Elm Avenue East

Carl Sommerstad was a banker at First National Bank in Waseca. This house was built in 1916 in the classic Arts & Crafts-style.



Edward O. Herter residence - 615 Elm Avenue East

This photograph shows the house in 1988. It was built in 1906 in the Victorian style, three-stories of bay windows, wide veranda, multiple fireplaces, beautiful oak interior woodwork and flooring throughout. Ed Herter operated the department store, Herter's, all his life. It evolved into Herter's, Inc, by his son George Leonard Herter. George Herter put Waseca on the map by becoming a consummate merchandizer of sporting goods world-wide. He started tying flies as a teen-ager, and then involved his friend Wayne Brown, who first printed Herter's catalogs.



Rinehart Miller residence - 621 Elm Avenue East

Rinehart Miller operated one of the first general stores in Waseca. He built this classic Italianate style home in 1900 for his beloved Julia. The house originally had a wrought iron fence, front porch railing, window shutters and “widow’s walk” on the roof. Miller was a Prussian immigrant who served during the Civil War and was imprisoned at the infamous Andersonville. His Civil War diary is part of the WCHS collection.



Charles Leuthold residence - 824 Elm Avenue East

Leuthold Brothers Clothing was a large clothier with 14 stores across southern Minnesota, South Dakota, Iowa and Wisconsin. He was married to Josie Preston in 1894. They built this Victorian wood-frame in 1900. It is accented with double columns on the wide front porch, and a convenient port-au-cochere at the side entrance.



George Strong residence - 825 3rd Avenue N.E.

Jennie Aughenbaugh married George W. Strong in 1898. They built this house in 1900 next door to her parents’ home. There was a story that there was a tunnel between the homes. Yes, it no longer exists, but it provided for cables linking the wiring between the homes. Strong worked for EACO and his father-in-law.



Charles A. Smith residence - 801 3rd Avenue N.E.

Smith was born in Wilton in 1866. His family moved to Waseca in 1870. He worked in the office of the Waseca Radical newspaper, served as Deputy County Treasurer from 1889-1901 and was elected mayor for six terms, ending in 1903.



George Leonard Herter residence - 929 3rd Avenue N.E.

This lot was purchased in 1906 by E.A. Everett and J.W. Aughenbaugh (EACO Mill), then sold to Ray Moonan in 1936. Old structures were razed and this house built in 1939. About 1945 Waseca native, George Herter bought it and brought his Belgian war bride home to Waseca to live. The Herters traveled all over the world bringing home new ideas to re-create and sell at Herter’s, Inc. He employed hundreds in the stores, catalog production, product production, and sales. The house interior was paneled to simulate the appearance of a ship’s staterooms.



John Moonan residence - 610 State Street North

Built in 1916 by John Moonan after the wood frame home originally built on this lot was moved to a spot at 7th Avenue N.W. and 3rd Street N.W. His son Joseph Moonan lived in the house with his wife Ethel until her death in 1962. Then sister Helen Moonan Sullivan and husband Dan owned it until they sold to the Gene and Kate Culligan Driessen family in 1966. The Driessens owned the Culligan Water Company in Waseca. The Moonans were well-known lawyers in the state.



Historic Maplewood Park - On Clear Lake at Highway 14 East

Maplewood Park is a remnant of the “big woods” forests that dominated much of central and northern Minnesota before settlement began in the early 19th century. It is located at the highest point on Clear Lake, both still exist to offer water and woods to a prairie town for well over 150 years. Maplewood Park was the site for the annual Chautauquas beginning in 1883 until the Maplewood Hotel situated overlooking the lake, burned down in 1899. During those years, the park was quite civilized with spur tracks and carriages delivering visitors to the Maplewood Hotel and campsite, as well as a few cottages owned by wealthy residents. In the 1930s, the Park became home to the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. In the 1960s the Bell Museum of Natural History was inspired to create a diorama of the “Maple Basswood Forest” by our Maplewood Park. It is most beautiful during the spring and fall months. The pavilion and trails are managed by the City of Waseca Parks Department.