

MIDDLETON LANDMARKS ...

1. First High School, 7739 Terrace Ave. This brick building was Middleton's first high school. It was built in 1878 for a cost of \$1,000. The high school was located close to a two-story frame building that housed the lower grades. The first high school teacher was paid \$200 to teach a three-month term. In 1903, Middleton built a new high school at the corner of Middleton and Franklin Streets. The former high school was then remodeled into a private home and more recently into a child-care facility.

2. Little White Church on the Hill, 1720 Aurora St. This frame building was constructed jointly by Middleton Baptists and Methodists in 1870. The two congregations held separate services but a common Sunday school. From 1908 to 1926, the building was used by the English Lutheran Church, and from 1936 to 1956 it housed the non-denominational Middleton Community Church. It later housed the local youth center and the American Legion meeting hall. Currently, this Middleton landmark is a two-family residence.

3. W. F. Pierstorff House, 7457 Terrace Ave. This Queen Anne style house was built in approximately 1890 by William F. Pierstorff, a local community leader. In addition to his career as the owner of the Middleton Lumber Yard and founder of the Bank of Middleton, Pierstorff was the first president of the village of Middleton, a long-time head of the Dane County Board, and a Democratic candidate for statewide political office. The house originally on the site was built in 1865 by Richard Green, a prosperous businessman. Pierstorff moved the old house in two sections to 1719 and 1725 Henry St. where they are still occupied as private residences.

4. Depot, 1811 Parmenter St. There was no settlement at what is now downtown Middleton until 1856 when the Milwaukee & Mississippi Railroad selected that location for its new rail line and depot. Development then shifted from the Pheasant Branch area, which had been a thriving settlement. Businesses spurred by the depot included three hotels, stockyards, and warehouses. Until the 1870s, large quantities of wheat were shipped to market from the Middleton station. The present building, which was built in 1895, is the third depot. The depot continued as a passenger station for the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul Railroad until 1960 and as a freight depot until 1975. In that year, Middleton purchased the building for a senior citizens center. More recently, it has housed the city tourism offices and a museum. The depot was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1995.

5. Opera House, 1827-1833 Parmenter St. The original building on this site was constructed by Fritz Hoffman in 1885. It was destroyed during the Great Fire of 1900. In its place, John Albrecht in 1903 built the Elks Hotel, which was designed by Madison architects Rawson & Paunack. Despite its formal name, the new building, like its predecessor, was familiarly known as the Opera House because of the large hall and stage on the second floor. Under a succession of owners, the Opera House hosted many community events such as dances, political rallies, and high school graduations. The first floor contained bars, a drug store, and a soda fountain. More recent owners have converted the building into apartments and retail space.

6. Weinberg-Schroeder Building, 1828 Parmenter St. This building was built in 1868 as a store and saloon briefly operated by Charles Weinberg. He was one of several German-born Jewish merchants who did business in early Middleton. The original false front boomtown appearance of the building is documented in an 1872 photograph taken by Andreas Dahl. Later remodeling for a residential addition produced the current more Queen Anne style appearance. In 1869, John Green purchased the business. After retiring from politics around 1879, State Senator Romanzo E. Davis operated a general store at this location until 1887. In 1888, Salome Schroeder, a Civil War widow, became the Middleton postmaster, and she established her office and a confectionery store in the building. The post office appointment continued in the Schroeder family for 31 years with Mrs Schroeder's daughter Emma DuFrenne serving as postmaster until 1919. In 1924, Burmester & Kruse opened their mercantile business in the building. Thanks to support from Erna Kruse, the Women's Club started the Middleton public library at this location in 1926. The building was also the first telephone exchange of the Farmers Union Telephone Company.

7. American Hotel, 1904 Parmenter St. Built in 1867-1870 with a later addition to the rear, the American Hotel was first operated by John Colton, then by Gerhard Aussem, and from about 1884 to 1950, by several generations of the Stricker family. Over the years, the establishment earned a renowned reputation for its inexpensive chicken dinners. Local tradition also holds that the hotel served alcohol when other establishments were "dry." After closing as a hotel, the building became the office of Dr. Marvin F. Stricker. More recently, this brick Gabled-Ell building has been an art gallery and restaurant.

8. H. G. Wolf House, 7426 Elmwood Ave. Built in 1868 by wagonmaker and wheelwright Henry G. Wolf (1837-1903), this Gabled-Ell frame house narrowly survived the 1900 fire that destroyed much of downtown Middleton. Local tradition holds that Wolf removed carpeting and fabric from his house and hauled it to the roof where he kept it wet in order to prevent the house from catching fire. The Wolf house was a designated Century Home because it was in a single-family ownership for more than 100 years. The family made some changes including the second story dormers to the original exterior.

9. Rowley House, 7410 Hubbard Ave. This Gabled-Ell cream color brick house was built by Dr. Newman C. Rowley in 1868 at a cost of \$800. After Dr Rowley died, his son, Dr. Antinous A. Rowley, lived in the house and continued the practice. His son, Antinous G. Rowley, who built an attractive home at 7238 Elmwood Ave. in 1909, became the third generation of Rowley doctors to practice in Middleton. Those doctors served Middleton and western Dane County for many years. They traveled to their rural patients by horseback, buggy and eventually by car. In 1989, the Middleton Area Historical Society purchased the home from the Rowley heirs with a gift from lifelong Middleton resident Gilsie Techam. Now a museum about Middleton history that is open to the public, the Rowley House is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

10. Schwenn House, 1703 Middleton St. Built in 1902 for John and Mary Durkopp Lubeke on property originally owned by Henry and Ida Rohl Schuster, this home is associated primarily with the Schwenn family. Charles Schwenn (1850-1928), an early German immigrant, moved to the house from his farm in 1911. Active in local business and government, Schwenn served as village treasurer, town chairman, member of the Dane County Board, and president of the Middleton Power and Light Company. His wife, Henrietta Schenck (1853-1925), was a daughter of Karl Schenck, one of the earliest pastors of the First Lutheran Church. The house is built on a foundation of locally quarried stone and exemplifies the Queen Anne style. Key elements include a steeply pitched roof, a prominent front gable (note the unusual curved-hexagonal shingles contrasting the narrow clapboard siding), an asymmetrical façade, and wrap-around front porch. Although several exterior alterations have been made, the basic structure and architectural details of the house remain unchanged

11. Stricker & Tiedeman Ponds Area, Sweeney Drive & Middleton Street area. Middleton's pioneer settlers knew the area had been frequented by early Native Americans because they easily gathered arrowheads and other artifacts from the soil surface. However, the habitation was not proved scientifically until 1977 when excavations by the State Historical Society found pottery with Aztalan decorations near Stricker Pond. That evidence dated the Middleton occupation to the late Woodland era, approximately 1000 A.D. In 1979, the site was added to the National Register of Historic Places. The city of Middleton now protects the ponds as a park and nature conservancy.

12. Lemcke House, 1007 Rooster Run. When Heinrich and Katherine Lemcke settled in the Town of Middleton in 1861, they were among the first Germans in the area. But unlike the majority of the German immigrants who came to Middleton from the Mecklenberg area, the Lemckes were from Hanover. Later generations of Lemckes continued to farm the same land, eventually earning the property the designation of a Century Farm. Over time, the property changed from a rural 160-acre farm to a city home located on one of the busiest traffic corridors in western Dane County. The Queen Anne style house, now sympathetically altered, was built by Heinrich's son William Lemcke in 1901. The farmhouse was remodeled as part of the Rooster Run Condominiums. As a result, the street address was changed from Gammon Road to Rooster Run.

13. Whittlesey House, 6517 Elmwood Ave. Thomas T. Whittlesey (1798-1868) was a prominent political leader in Connecticut before settling in Pheasant Branch about 1847. He came to the area to take advantage of the 1,200 acres he purchased while still living in the East. Whittlesey went on to become one of western Dane County's most influential residents. He practiced law, engaged in farming, and platted the village of Pheasant Branch. In 1853 and 1854, he served in the Wisconsin Senate. About the same time, he began construction of this 19-room Italianate house of cream-colored brick, which was completed in 1855. At that time, the house fronted what was the main road from Madison to Sauk City. Middleton's University Avenue was once named Whittlesey Street in his honor.

14. Heim Effigy Mound, 6300 Mound Dr. The Heim Effigy Mound, which is thought to represent a fox or a wolf, is one of many mounds that once existed in the Four Lakes area. It was constructed about 750 to 1000 AD. This location was chosen for its proximity to Lake Mendota, which had spiritual importance for the mound builders. In 1937, Frederick Heim donated the mound to the Wisconsin Archaeological Society making it the first mound to be legally preserved in Wisconsin. In 2004, the Heim Mound was named to the National Register of Historic Places.

15. The Triangle The grassy intersection of Branch Street and University Avenue was named a city landmark in 1986 to commemorate Middleton's history as a destination for dining and recreation. The area's origins as dining spot started in 1905 when Felix Dushack began sponsoring community picnics at the property. About the same time, he constructed the building at 1915 Branch St. later known as The Club. In 1911, Duschak leased the building to Frank A. Hoover, an African-American chef from Madison who opened Ye Olde Tavern. It was Hoover and his fried chicken dinners that first made Middleton a destination for dining among college students and Madison residents. Hoover became so well known that the spot was known as Frank's Place and Frank's Park. In 1917, Hoover built a new restaurant, the Auto Club, also known as Frank's Place, on Parmenter Street that operated until 1930. In 1976, the Club Tavern on Branch Street became famous as the subject of *Blue Collar Aristocrats*, a book by University of Wisconsin sociologist E. E. LeMaster.

From the 1920s through the 1950s, several other restaurants and nightclubs, many of them famous in their own day, were located near the Triangle. Among them were Broadway Gardens (6622 University Ave.) and The Top Hat (1905

Branch St.). The latter was established about 1935 to replace an earlier establishment known as the Octagon, which was destroyed by fire. Albert Loesser's rustic log cabins and restaurant, which stood nearby at 6611 University Ave., were built in 1931. In addition, Charles Sakrison opened Sak's Restaurant and Cheese House in 1940 at 6705 University Ave.

16. Ehrman Lustron House, 7120 North Ave. This house is perhaps the most unusual of the many small homes built in Middleton during the post-World War II housing shortage. It is notable because the house was fabricated from enamel-coated steel panels, manufactured by the Lustron Co. of Columbus, Ohio, that were then assembled onsite by the Findorff Company in 1949. The original owners, Alban & Ellinore Ehrman, both state employees, paid \$7,500 for their two-bedroom, 1,024 square foot home. The design featured an efficient floor plan, pocket doors, and innovative radiant floor heating. The enameled steel exterior made it a low maintenance residence. A drawback, however, was the difficulty of altering the original design.

17. Pheasant Branch School, 6710 Century Ave. Beginning in 1861, the children who lived in the Pheasant Branch area were educated at a school at this location. In 1896, the present frame building replaced that earlier structure. After instruction ended in Pheasant Branch in 1951, Middleton's veterans purchased the building as a meeting hall and named it in honor of Middleton resident William "Sonny" Simon who died in action during World War II.

18. Palmer-Gault House, 6707 Century Ave. The first house on this site was built by Isaac Palmer in 1847, but he soon moved to Lodi. Most notable of the owners who followed Palmer was Frank Gault, who was born in Belfast, Ireland, and arrived in Wisconsin in 1848. Gault built the present Italianate style brick house after a disastrous 1869 fire. In addition to farming, Gault, a Democrat, served in the Wisconsin Assembly and was elected to several Dane County offices. He was also associated with several business men prominent in early Pheasant Branch history. He operated a large flour mill with William A. Wheeler and collaborated with William G. Slaughter in a vain effort to exploit the extensive peat beds in the area. After Gault moved to Kentucky, the ownership passed to William Koepke. A photograph from that era shows the cupola that once adorned the roof.

19. Stamm House, 6625 Century Ave. The Stamm House was built in 1847 by Milo K. Cody and Horace A. Winston. The building was enlarged with limestone by John A. Roloff in 1858. The Stamm House is the oldest hotel in Dane County. During its early history, the hotel and tavern served travelers on what was then the main route from Madison to Minneapolis. Under later owners, it was a post office, dancehall, and restaurant. One local legend holds that the Stamm House was a stop on the Underground Railroad before the Civil War, but no evidence supports this tradition. During the 1920s, the building was dubbed the Stamm House from the German "stammtisch," or gathering table. Another local legend contends that the Stamm House was a speakeasy during Prohibition. In 2013, the Stamm House was extensively remodeled and the original stone exterior restored.

20. Blacksmith Shop, 2645 Branch St. This stone building was built by Karl Strohecker, an immigrant from Wurttemberg, Germany, who arrived in Pheasant Branch about 1857. Strohecker was not the area's first blacksmith, however. Already established when Strohecker arrived was John Prien, who later moved his business to downtown Middleton. Tax records from 1867 document the reconstruction of Strohecker's original shop as the present stone building.

21. Boathouse Association, 5767-6049 Lake St. The 21 small boathouses on Lake Street near Lake Mendota have one of the most unusual histories of all of the lakefront properties in the Four Lakes area. The Boathouse Association was a cooperative formed in 1897 to 1898 by a group of recreational fishermen who purchased 300 feet of shoreline from the state. This ownership arrangement continues to the present. Each of the two-story cottages has only a 13-foot lake frontage. The buildings may only be used for seasonal living, and they are seldom offered for sale because they are considered to be personal property rather than real estate.

OTHER HISTORICAL BUILDINGS ...

A. DuFrenne Building, 1834 Parmenter St. When the Dufrenne family built this brick mercantile store in 1898, the family already had a long history in Middleton business. Their story began in 1869 at the corner of Hubbard and Parmenter Streets when Frederick F. Dufrenne, Sr., a German-born Civil War veteran, established partnerships first with Samuel Thuringer and subsequently with David Lyle. Dry goods and hardware were sold on the first floor of the new DuFrenne building while the second floor provided offices for Charles F. Allen, a physician, and Erwin Schuster, a dentist. The Dufrennes eventually moved to Madison. Under subsequent owners, the building served many commercial purposes. It was a grocery store, furniture store, hardware store, funeral home, printing shop, bakery and now a gift shop.

B. Prien Building, 7460 Hubbard Ave. The Prien building is one of the substantial business blocks constructed after the disastrous 1900 Middleton fire. It reflected the community's desire to build fireproof structures. Before the fire, blacksmith Henry F. Prien owned a shop at the location. Undaunted by his loss, Prien rebuilt, hiring the Madison architects Rawson & Paunack to design the building. Originally a small semi-circular pediment on the cornice bore Prien's name. After Prien became the superintendent of the Dane County Home, the building housed a succession of businesses, most notably Doc's Tavern, operated by veterinarian Albert M. Teckam and a soda grill run by his wife.

C. St. Bernard's Catholic Church, 2015 Parmenter St. The first Catholic church on this site was built in the English Gothic style in 1889. Until 1940, St Bernard's parish was served by visiting priests, but in that year Father Ferdinand A. Mack received a permanent assignment. In 1948, the growing congregation built a church school designed by Flad & Associates. In 1958, the congregation again turned to Flad to design its new sanctuary. The result is what is considered today an exceptionally fine example of Modern Movement architecture. The design is based on the traditional cruciform shape, although the church was constructed of parabolic arches made of laminated wood, then an innovative building material. The abstract mosaic behind the altar was designed by Gene Marrggraff and assembled by the parish school students.

D. First Lutheran Church, 711 N. Pleasant View Rd. This Gothic Revival church, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was the second church constructed by Middleton's German Lutherans. The first church at this location was a log cabin built in 1854. In 1866, the congregation built a second church. That building was enlarged in 1884. A steeple also was added to the belfry and other improvements were made. No longer housing an active congregation, the First Lutheran Church, which was sometimes referred to as "The Big Church on the Hill," is now a popular site for weddings. It is managed by volunteers.

E. Valecia-Pet Building, 7777 Elmwood Ave. This utilitarian concrete block building, now renovated as 19 condominiums, represents a significant period in Middleton's economic history. The building was completed in 1914 as a plant to process evaporated milk. Attracting the plant was the first major success of Middleton's Commercial Club. Perhaps expanding too rapidly, the Valecia Corporation went bankrupt. During the bankruptcy proceedings some fraudulent activity was revealed, and the owners were convicted in federal court. In 1915, the Valecia company was reorganized by W. R. Montague of La Crosse. With headquarters in Madison, the company was operated by Montague's son Theodore and Ernest Eckstedt. For many years, Victor Schwenn, who was also prominent in Middleton politics, was the plant manager on site. The Valecia company prospered during World War I. It provided employment for many Middleton residents and helped the growth of the local dairy industry. In 1927, Theodore Montague, who went on to become an important chief executive of the Borden Company, facilitated the sale of Valecia to Pet Milk. Over the years, production at the factory changed from evaporated milk to milk powder that was used to make ice cream. The economic fortunes of the plant also fluctuated. In 1924, the producers' troubled relations with the company over milk pricing led to the formation of the Middleton Milk Producers Association. During the 1940s, Pet employees were organized by the Teamsters' Union and wages improved. For many years, shipments from the Pet factory constituted the largest commercial customer at the Middleton depot. In 1967, Pet closed its Middleton factory, then the largest employer in the city, which was a blow to the local economy. After the plant closed, the building served as a warehouse for the Ford Motor Company. In 2004, the building was transformed into the attractive Valencia Lofts as part of the city master plan for downtown redevelopment.

OTHER HISTORICAL SITES ...

F. Rowan-St Cyr Trading Post, 5101 St Cyr Rd. The rock marker at this site (on private property) commemorates the small trading post established by Wallace Rowan about 1832 and used by Michel St. Cyr until 1837. The two were among the first white inhabitants of the Four Lakes area. During the Black Hawk War, Henry Dodge and the Wisconsin Militia met with the Ho-Chunk near the trading post in an attempt to determine tribal sympathies. St. Cyr later sold the land to William B. Slaughter, who platted the property and named it the City of Four Lakes in the vain hope that his "paper city" might become the Wisconsin capital. The marker was erected by the Wisconsin Archaeological Society in 1914.

G. Black Hawk Encampment, Pheasant Branch Road. On July 20, 1832, Black Hawk and his starving band of followers camped near this location during their attempt to escape from the militia. Some of Black Hawk's men were undoubtedly posted on Fredrick's Hill, the prominent elevation in the Pheasant Branch Conservancy, to better observe their pursuers. The next morning Black Hawk fled northwest to the Wisconsin River where his men engaged the militia at the Battle of Wisconsin Heights. The historical marker was erected by the Wisconsin Historical Society in 1998.

H. East End Historic District, Parts of Elmwood, Hubbard and Park streets. The East End Historic District is a neighborhood of 43 modest, single-family residences, all of which were built between the 1920s and the 1940s. All of the homes are either bungalows or examples of the revival styles of residential architecture popular during the period (Colonial, Tudor, and Dutch). Among the homes of special note are those of Mayor William H. Pierstorff (7014 Elmwood Ave.), physician Charles F. Allen (7014 Hubbard Ave.), restaurant owner Albert Loesser (1916 Park St.), dentist A. H. Muehlmeier (1727 Park St.) and service-station proprietor Alfred Teidemann (1906 Park St.). The neighborhood was named to the National Register of Historic Places in 2003.

OTHER HISTORICAL HOMES ...

I. Joseph Heim House, 1818 St Dunstan Dr. Now within the Madison city limits, this two-story red brick house was once part of the Town of Middleton. The house was built in 1860 by Bavarian-born Joseph Heim, who came to Wisconsin with his extended family in 1848 and purchased a large farm west of Lake Mendota. In 1880, the Heim farm was valued at \$8,000. The handsome porch of this Gabled-Ell house is oriented toward the Old Middleton Road, which was once the main road west from Madison to Middleton. In 1958, the property was purchased by St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church for use as a rectory. The modernist church building also located on the property was designed by Middleton architect Norman Kenney in 1964.

J. Herbert & Katherine Jacobs House (Jacobs II), 3995 Shawn Trail. This striking National Landmark house in the Town of Middleton is the second home designed by Frank Lloyd Wright for Herbert Jacobs and his wife, Katherine, in response to the couple's desire to move to the country. In the years since its completion in 1948, the semi-circular earth-bermed stone residence has been gradually surrounded by urban development.

K. A. B. Kingsley House, 7509 Terrace Ave. This side-gabled frame house was built in about 1868 by Almond B. Kingsley (1832-1920). Photographs taken by Andreas Dahl in 1872 document its original Italianate details and beautiful ornamentation. A carpenter himself as well as a lumber dealer and sawmill owner, Kingsley was involved in the actual construction. A.B. Kingsley moved to California during the 1880s.

L. A. B. Parmenter House, 7503 Terrace Ave. This house was built in 1869 by Amos B. Parmenter, a painter by trade. The house was probably built in response to Parmenter's 1865 appointment as postmaster, as he moved the post office from its former location and conducted the business in his home through the 1880s. Parmenter also served as justice of the peace, and his account of Middleton in the 1877 Dane County history makes him Middleton's first historian. Parmenter's otherwise exemplary career was ended in 1887 by allegations that he had illegally increased his official compensation through the cancelation of state *IOOF (International Order of Odd Fellows)* mail through the Middleton post office.