

14. YOHE BUILDING, 1904 400 W. Main St.
This building illustrates how two phases of Monongahela’s growth are related. The 1904 structure was built next to and over a small, and much older structure that can still be seen embedded in the Fourth Street side of the building. The older building is from a time when all buildings on Main Street were two stories high, and when this section of town was residential. This part may be one of the oldest brick buildings in town.

Cross 4th St., turn right and proceed to Chess St. and cross Chess St.

15. POST OFFICE, 1915 312 Chess St.

The first Post Office for this area was established in 1782 by Joseph Parkison. The current Monongahela Post Office was dedicated in 1915 by William G. MacAdoo, Secretary of the Treasury and James A. Wetmore, Acting Supervising Architect. The Post Office has remained virtually unchanged in the 100 + years since it was built, with beautiful marble stairs, rich woodworking and brass post office boxes.

The Hiker Monument- Sculpted by Allen George Newman, it came to Monongahela in 1915, one of at least 20 copies to be found around the nation. It honors the Soldiers, Sailors and Marines who took part in the Spanish-American War, the Philippine Insurrection and the Boxer Rebellion.

Return to Main St. via Third St., turn right and continue on Main.

16. LINN BUILDING, 1870 230 W. Main St.
This is the best preserved of Monongahela’s Italianate style commercial buildings. Its round-fronted cornice resembles the one that once crowned the Odd Fellows Building. This storefront retains its original composition of high doors, high windows, and wood panels. Other notable features include stone quoins (the stones in the corners of the brick walls) and incised keystones over the windows. On the side of the building is a sign that reads “Vittorio Abate – biglietti maritime da Italia” (Victor Abate, sea fare tickets to Italy). Below this, the sign once included the same message in several Slavic languages. It is a mute testimony to the thousands of immigrant coal miners who returned with their earnings to the “Old Country.”

Cross 2nd. St.

17. MONONGAHELA CITY TRUST BUILDING, 1927
Corner W. Main and 2nd Sts.
Neo-Classical style; this granite-faced steel structure was the third home of the People’s Bank, later known as the Monongahela City Trust Company. The bank was closely affiliated in management with Monongahela’s old and prestigious Alexander and Company Bank. In 1931, both banks failed and never re-opened.

Proceed to Park Ave., turn left and cross Main St.

18. WHISKEY POINT SIGN Corner W. Main and 1st Sts.
Whiskey Point was one of the most significant sites associated with the Whiskey Insurrection of 1791-1794. During the rebellion, representatives met here on three occasions to plan their activities, formulate declarations, petitions, demands, and most importantly to consider and vote on accepting the oaths declaring their loyalty to the newly formed federal government under President George Washington.

19. ONE EXTRAORDINARY STREET SIGN
The story of a Park Avenue neighborhood is told in a feature documentary by filmmaker and native, Laura Magone.

Continue to 2nd St.

20. ODD FELLOWS BUILDING, 1869 175 W. Main St.
Monongahela’s first building in the Italianate style (round-topped windows, flat roof, etc.). Odd Fellow’s lodges dominated many towns in this area during the nineteenth century. Although most of the exterior detailing is lost, the second story hall is still relatively intact. In this room, the first commencement exercises of Monongahela High School were held on May 9, 1878. It was previously the home of the Monongahela River Buffs Museum.

Turn right and proceed down 2nd. St. to Railroad St. and cross the tracks.

21. AQUATORIUM, 1969 2nd and Railroad St.
The Noble J. Dick Aquatorium was constructed in 1969 by Frank Irey, Jr. Inc. to commemorate Monongahela’s 200th anniversary. The 3,700-seat arena has become a civic and cultural center for the numerous town-held events such as concerts and celebrations. It was the

first of its kind in the U.S. This area has also served as the transportation hub for the city. The wharf and railroad station were here.

Return to Main St. via 2nd. St. Turn right and proceed down Main St. to 3rd. St.

22. ODELL BUILDING, 1925 Corner W. Main and 3rd Sts.
An excellent example of a colorful, early twentieth century Eclectic styling. This building was built by an immigrant Italian grocer who is perhaps best remembered for the peanuts and popcorn balls he sold to people going to the Anton Theater that was then just around the corner. The top center window is a combination of a Palladian (three-part) window used in classical architecture, and the arched and keystone top used in the Italianate style.

Continue down Main St. to 5th. St.

23. MONONGAHELA MARKER 449 W. Main St.
The Monongahela River, the states 2013 River of the Year, was the “super highway” in the early days of the region. Its ties to the Ohio and Mississippi rivers made it ideal for pioneers traveling west of the Appalachian Mountains.

Return to the Historical Society

Be sure to stop into our gift shop and take home a Monongahela memento.

Thank you for visiting. We hope you will come again.

Sponsored by
The Monongahela Area Historical Society
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www.ma-hs.org

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MONONGAHELA HISTORIC DISTRICT



SELF GUIDED

WALKING TOUR

Welcome!

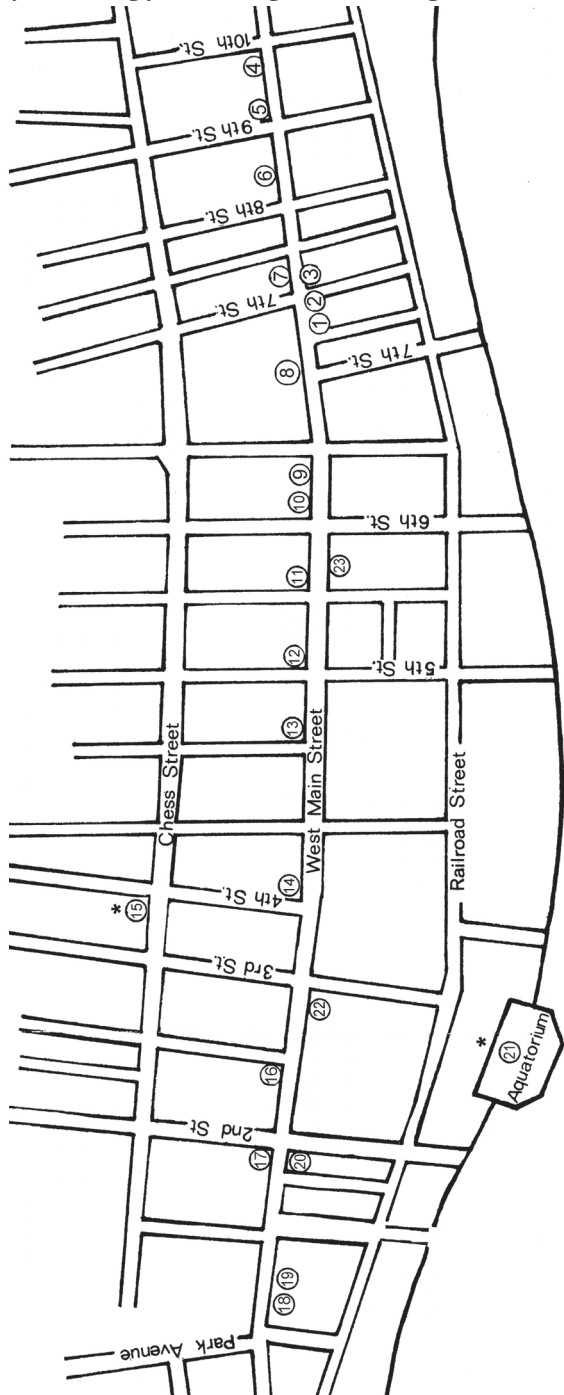
What is now the City of Monongahela was founded in 1769 on a tract of land near the confluence of Pigeon Creek and the Monongahela River. It is the oldest settlement in the Monongahela River Valley and most likely the oldest in Washington County.

Joseph Parkison, who operated a ferry on the west bank of the Monongahela River, is recognized as the founder of Monongahela. In 1782, the town was officially recognized as Parkison’s Ferry. The name changed to Williamsport on February 23, 1816, when it merged with Georgetown.

On April 1, 1837, Williamsport was given the name Monongahela City and in 1893 shortened to Monongahela.

It is the second smallest city in Pennsylvania. The word Monongahela is Native American in origin, meaning “falling banks.”

***Use your phone camera or download the QR reader app to your smart phone in order to use the QR codes.* Scan each smart code for videos, historical photos and additional information on each site. Videos are also available on YouTube by searching for Monongahela Walking Tour.**



1. THE LONGWELL HOUSE, 1872 711 W. Main St.
One of John Blythe’s first houses, built here by a riverboat captain, David Longwell, whose original house was closer to the river. The Captain built this house because, when the railroad came through, it ran too close to the older house. It is listed in the Pennsylvania Register of Historic Houses for its architectural style. It is now home to the Monongahela Area Historical Society.



Facing Main St., turn right and proceed to next building.

2. ANAWALT-TAYLOR HOUSE, 1850 715 W. Main St.
Built in two phases, before 1850 and around 1872. The barn behind this house and the original Longwell house (both now demolished) were used as stations on the underground railroad, where this home’s owner, Mrs. J.B. Taylor served as a conductor.



3. KERR-LAYMAN HOUSE, 1854 717 W. Main St.
Layman House, the left portion of the building, was built around 1854. It is a very early example of a double row house. The Kerr House addition was built in 1890, and was designed and built by architect John Blythe.



Proceed to 9th St, cross to opposite corner then cross Main St., turn right and proceed to third house from corner.

4. ACHESON HOUSE, 1885 908 W. Main St.
Edward Goodrich Acheson, an inventor born in Washington, PA and a one-time employee of Thomas Edison, bought this house in 1890 after choosing Monongahela as an ideal place to introduce electric street lighting. At night, Acheson sold the electricity from his plant to the city. During the day, he used it for his experiments. In 1891, he invented carborundum, the hardest man-made substance. A few years later, he moved on to harness the power of Niagara Falls, and from there he founded several corporations, including Union Carbide. This house is now a National Historic Landmark.



Return to corner of 9th St.

5. BYERS HOUSE, 1900 900 W. Main St.
A fine Colonial Revival style house, though much altered. Mrs. Theodore Byers bequeathed the home to the city as a library. Many still recall moving day from the old library to the new one now across the street. Volunteers formed a human chain across Main Street and handed the books, bucket-brigade-style, to transport them from one bookshelf to another with the librarians directing the process.

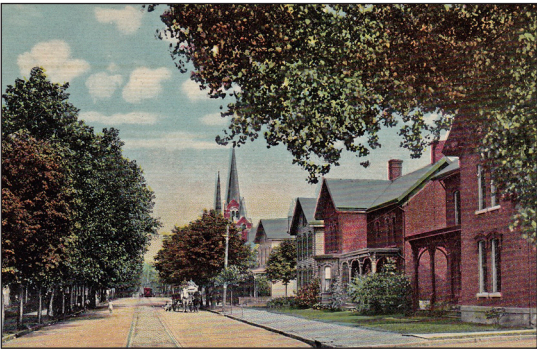


Cross 9th St.

6. JOHN & JAMES BLYTHE HOUSES, 1870
808 and 814 W. Main St.
The house on the left was built in 1870 and served for a time as the Christian Science Church. It is still as it was in the 1870’s. This was the residence of architect and builder John Blythe. The house on the right, also built in 1870, was the residence of James Blythe who served as general contractor for his brother, John.



7. BETHEL A.M.E. CHURCH, 1871
Bethel African Methodist Episcopal church is one of the oldest African American congregations west of the Alleghenies. The A.M.E. church began with the Free African Society and was born in protest against slavery. This Neo-Gothic structure, like the First Presbyterian Church, was designed by John Blythe and is listed in the Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places. The original steeple was destroyed by fire in 1987 and reconstructed based on an 1876 atlas drawing.



8. CHESSE PARK, 1923 Corner 7th and W. Main Sts.
At the turn of the century, Mary Wickerham Chess Miller’s house was the clubhouse of one of the city’s oldest and most active civic and cultural groups, the Friday Conversational Club. In 1923, the Chess Homestead, then in very bad repair, was razed and the land was donated to become a city park. The WWI Winged Victory monument, and monuments to other wars are here. The Civil War cannons were donated to the city after the war. The Sister City plaque was placed here in 2014. Originally the park had a fountain which was replaced in 1980 by the present Gazebo. It is a favorite spot for weddings and wedding pictures among brides from all over the Pittsburgh area. Christmas carols have been sung by the whole community around an evergreen here for decades.



9. MCCURDY HOUSE, 1884 612 W. Main St.
An Italianate house with Eastlake influence. This structure is believed to have been designed by John Blythe. T. S. McCurdy was a local hardware merchant. His home previous to this caught fire in the spring of 1884. It was the first fire answered by the Monongahela Fire Department.



10. FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 1871
A fine Neo-Gothic style structure designed by John Blythe and listed in the Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places. This congregation began in 1784 and built at least three other churches before this one.



11. WICKERHAM HOUSE, 1834 516 W. Main St.
William Wickerham built about half of this house in 1834 on land his father had laid out in 1807 as the town of Georgetown. In 1816, this section became a part of Williamsport which changed its name in 1837 to Monongahela City. The house was expanded in the 1870’s to its present size.



12. SAMPSON HOUSE (SCOTT’S ACADEMY), 1860 500 W. Main St.
This building was the home of a prosperous Monongahela insurance agent who later founded the Peoples Bank. The smaller attached part of the building to the right was used as part of Monongahela Academy, also known as Scott’s Academy, Monongahela’s “Prep School,” which was operated out of this building, as well as others in town.



13. FIRST METHODIST CHURCH, 1873
The church was designed by Philadelphia architect, Joseph C. Hoxie, in a variation of Victorian Romanesque known as Rundbogenstil (German for “round-wheeled style”), and built at the then phenomenal cost of \$45,000. In 1925, the original steeple, which nearly doubled its present height, was removed and the present belfry was built to house a set of eleven chimes known as the “McShane Bells.” This is said to be the closest thing to a full carillon in Western Pennsylvania. In 2013, the bells were restored and their beautiful chiming can be heard throughout the day.

