



Places That Were

The City of Welland Heritage Advisory Committee

PLACES THAT WERE

According to the National Trust for Canada: over the past 30 years, Canada has lost 23 percent of its historic buildings in urban areas and 21 percent in rural areas. This rate of destruction is disturbing in terms of lost heritage, increased environmental waste and loss of tourist dollars.

Every Community has its own unique culture and heritage. These places, spaces and stories enrich and inspire our community and guide its growth. Cultural sites are part of our collective memory and bring our past alive.

The City of Welland is the outgrowth of a settlement which started about 1788 along the Welland River. In 1829 a wooden aqueduct was built to carry the Welland Canal over the Welland River and the core of urban Welland grew up in that location. Known as "Aqueduct", the name was changed to Merrittsville in 1844 to honour canal founder William Merritt. The settlement took in part of Thorold and Crowland townships and was incorporated as the Village of Welland in 1858. Welland became a Town in 1878 and a City on July 1, 1917.

This booklet showcases memorable lost properties built on the foresight, toil and perseverance of our forbearers. Many of the photos in this booklet originated from the Welland Historical Museum and the Welland Public Library historical collections.

The City of Welland Heritage Advisory Committee's previously published "Historic Welland" booklet depicts our surviving properties with cultural heritage value in Welland, including those designated under the Ontario Heritage Act.

We hope that you will enjoy browsing through "Places That Were".

COVER PHOTO: WELLAND COUNTY FAIR 100th ANNIVERSARY, 1953

The cover photo shows a young boy looking eagerly at the posters on the ticket gate at the old Welland County Fairgrounds on Denistoun Street. The first fair in the County was held in Thorold in 1832. The Province of Ontario accredited the Welland County Agricultural Society in 1853. The fair was held at Port Rob-inson until moving to a permanent 6 acre site on Denistoun Street in Merritts-ville (now Welland) in 1858. Residents looked forward each September to the Fair's displays and competitions for animals, arts & crafts, baking & canning, sewing, local businesses, grandstand musical & thrill shows and midway rides & games. The Fair became the Niagara Regional Exhibition and was moved from the Denistoun Street location to north Niagara Street in 1975.

Places That Were

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1. THE WELLAND CLUB, 1 GRIFFITH ST. (FACING MERRITT PARK)

1911-2011

When the Welland Club was incorporated on October 18, 1909, it was an example of something that will probably never be seen again: a social and recreational club for men from the upper economic and social levels of Welland. Local architect Thomas L. Nichols designed it in a mix of the then-current Edwardian Classical style and the older Shingle Style. Completed in July of 1911, it was opened with a grand ball on New Year's Eve, 1911-12. Women were not allowed to join until after 1970. After its sale the Club was left empty and burned down in July of 2011.



2. MERRITT PARK BANDSHELL

1914-1955

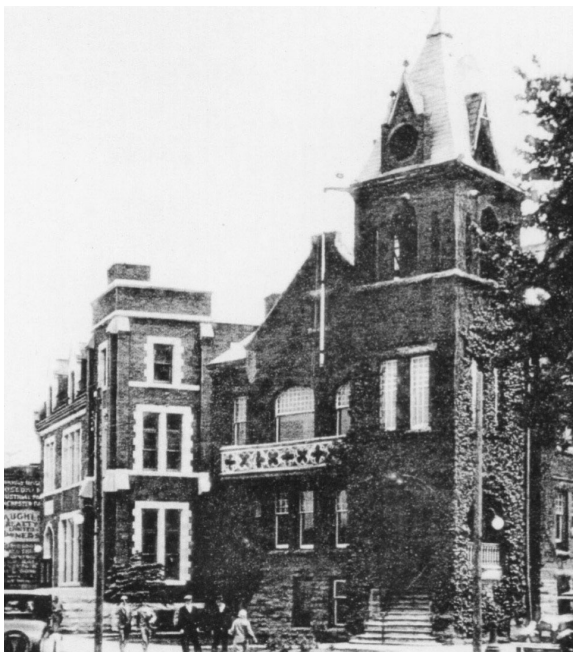
The bandshell at Merritt Park was installed shortly after the turn of the 20th century as photos show troops massed in front of the bandshell in Merritt Park during the First World War (1914-18). The park itself is named for William Hamilton Merritt, the founder of the Welland Canal and is located on what was at one time a swampy area in a narrow strip of land on King Street next to the third canal (now the recreational waterway). The park was developed thanks to the efforts of the MPP of the time William Manley German. The bandshell was demolished in 1955 and replaced by a fountain, also since demolished.



3. GREY GABLES, AQUEDUCT STREET

1917-1992

Shortly after industrialist Thomas J. Dillon arrived in Welland from Indiana in 1906 he started Canada Forge Ltd. which produced shells for the Canadian Army during World War I. In 1918, he founded the Dillon Crucible Company, forerunner to Atlas Steels, and later acquired Standard Steel in Port Robinson. In 1917 he had this large Tudor style mansion built, replete with half timbering, slate roof, stone gargoyles, leaded windows, and marble baths. After returning to the United States he left "Grey Gables" to the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto. It became a boarding school in 1931 and later housed the School Sisters of Notre Dame. Grey Gables was demolished in August of 1992.



4. OLD CITY HALL, KING AND DIVISION STREET. 1901-1958

After Welland's incorporation as a Village in 1858 local government held their meetings in various locations, but when Welland became a Town in 1878 a dedicated Town Hall was needed. The first Council meeting held here was on August 30, 1901, chaired by Mayor Crowell Reilly. Designed by Toronto architect Ellis and built by local contractors Vanderburgh and Cutler, it was executed in the Late Victorian Romanesque Revival style with round arches and paired, multipaned windows with heavy stone lintels. An 83 foot (25 metre) high tower held the original town bell. It also housed the public library. The Old City Hall was demolished in 1958.



5. JAIL GOVERNOR'S HOUSE, CROSS STREET

AFTER 1856, DEMOLISHED 1953

1915 Photo shows from left: jail attached to Court House, Welland County Courthouse, Jail Governor's residence behind trees and first Fire Hall. Located next to the Welland River adjacent to the Welland County Court House, this was the residence of the Governor of the Jail located in the Court House. The first staff consisted of the jail's governor, a turnkey assistant, and three guards. With a maximum capacity of 72 prisoners, 60 male and 12 female, each block contained five cells with a single open toilet. There was also a "death cell" for those condemned to die. The 1861 Census listed James Lawrence as Jail Governor and John Willson as Turnkey. That year there were 51 male prisoners, 4 of whom were under sixteen years old, and 5 female prisoners.



6. WELLAND FIRE HALL NO 1, CROSS STREET

1877-1913

This first wooden Fire Hall was built in 1877. It was constructed of wood frame with a central tower and sat at the north end of Cross Street next to the Welland River and adjacent to the Welland County Court House. Before it was built, residents battled fires with buckets of water. Tender for construction of the hall was let to Mr. Hodgson in November of 1876. That year the village also purchased a new fire steamer for \$3150.00 and the first volunteer fire and hose company - Merritt Fire Company No.1, named after William Hamilton Merritt - was formed with 31 members. Welland is one of the few communities to have had fires in two of its Fire Halls. This first Fire Hall burned on two occasions. In 1884 a fire destroyed it along with some adjacent buildings. The town bell, which also served as the fire bell, was lost. In the next century, a fire in 1962 severely damaged the tower of the fire hall that replaced this one: Central Fire Hall (built 1920) on Hellems Avenue.



7. OLD REGISTRY OFFICE, 140 EAST MAIN

1880-1976

The Registry Office for Welland County housed all records of land transactions, wills, deeds, etc. Originally located in Fonthill (Pelham) when Dexter D'Everardo was appointed County Registrar of Deeds in 1852, it was moved to the Welland Court House in 1872. It remained there until 1880 when this Italianate style building was completed east of the Courthouse. Registry Office functions moved back to the Courthouse around 1954. This building became the T. Eaton Co. catalogue office in 1960 and was demolished in 1976.



8. ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION, 275 EAST MAIN

C. 1880's-1969

Photo from 1949 - Royal Canadian Legion 275 East Main. The Royal Canadian Legion was established in Welland after World War 1 ("the Great War") in 1917 by returning servicemen as a branch of the Great War Veteran's Association. In 1921 they purchased the David McEwing home on East Main Street, built in the late 19th century. Veteran's groups across Canada allied in 1925 as the Canadian Legion and the Welland Branch incorporated in 1927. Queen Elizabeth II gave her assent to use the prefix "Royal" in the organization's name in 1960. The captured German artillery field gun in the photo was a gift from the Federal Department of Militia. After World War II as returning veterans swelled its ranks the house eventually became too small. It was demolished in 1969, and a new Legion building built on the site. The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 4 is currently located at 383 Morningstar Avenue in Welland.



9. WELLAND HIGH, CORNER WEST MAIN AND DENISTOUN STS.

1914-2011

Photo on left from 1915, photo on right circa 1920's. In 1854 a Grammar School (high school) was established in Merritsville, as Welland was known then, in a log cabin on River Road. Due to the increased numbers of high school aged children a brick High School opened on Denistoun north of West Main in 1879. It was replaced by a new building in 1914. A new innovation, night classes in vocational training, began in 1916. In 1927 an expanded vocational/commercial department and a large auditorium were added. The newly renovated Welland High and Vocational School opened on Oct. 11, 1930. Later upgrades included expansion of the vocational wing in 1945 and a front extension in 1968-9. The school closed in 1999 and sat vacant until it burned down in 2011.



10. QUEEN STREET SCHOOL, QUEEN AND HOOKER STS.

1914- 2007

First known as Public School #2 and later Queen Street school, this was designed in the Edwardian Classical style by Welland architect T. E. Nichol and built in 1914 of red brick with stone trim over a cut limestone foundation. It had decorative eave brackets and a large main entrance on the east side with flanking stairways and roofed pediment which was removed in 1967. Inside on each floor were four large classrooms around a central hall with Principal's Office on the main floor and playrooms and washrooms in the basement. An Industrial Arts room was added in the 1930's and a Home Economics room in the 1940's. Due to declining enrollment, the school was closed in 1981 and it became home to the Welland Historical Museum in 1984. It was demolished in 2007 after the Museum relocated to the former Carnegie Library on King Street.



11. CENTRAL SCHOOL, MARKET SQUARE

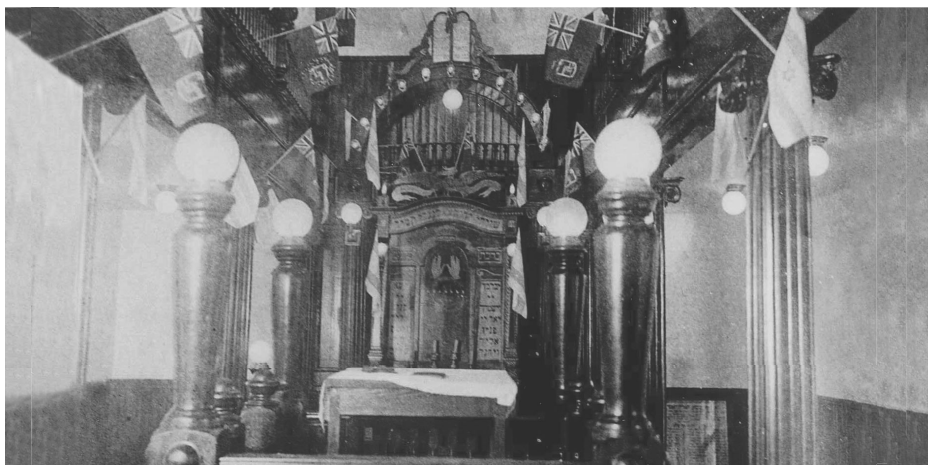
1901-1968

The name “Central School” was an accurate description of this school’s purpose and function. Before it was constructed in 1900 at a cost of \$14,500, public school classes were scattered all over the city. The school opened on New Year’s Day, 1901. Constructed of red brick with stone foundation and a hipped roof, the round arches of its main floor windows, the projecting frontispiece of the main entrance and the central cupola proclaimed the late 19th century Italianate style. This was the site of the first kindergarten started in Welland. It remained a prominent landmark downtown on Division Street next to Holy Trinity Church until it was demolished in 1968 for a parking lot.



**12. HOLY TRINITY UKRAINIAN GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
46 FOURTH ST., 1918-1969**

Photo from 1919. The first Ukrainian parish in Welland was founded in 1914 and this first wooden church was erected at 46 Fourth Street in 1918 on land donated by the Plymouth Cordage Company. The church was built entirely by members. Most Ukrainians who came to Welland in the early 20th century were farmers and labourers. This was the first Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church in the Niagara area and served Ukrainians from all areas of the Niagara Peninsula including Hamilton. It began as a mission founded by Ukrainians from the Russian Greek Orthodox Church of Sts. Peter and Paul in Buffalo New York. At the time of the First World War a significant number of Ukrainians had begun to move here from Buffalo. The congregation remained under the Russian Greek Orthodox denomination and was served by travelling priests from that city until 1948, when it became Ukrainian Greek Orthodox and was served by priests from Toronto. Services were in Latin until 1948 and Ukrainian after that. In 1969 a new church was constructed at 125 First Street. The second church was closed in January of 2017.



13. FIRST JEWISH SYNAGOGUE, FIFTH STREET

1917- AFTER 1946

Photo from 1917. Jewish settlement in Welland began after the turn of the 20th century. Early Jewish businesses were mostly located in Welland South (Crowland) around South Main (King Street) and Ontario Road. In 1914 a building was purchased on the north side of Fifth Street, converted into a synagogue and dedicated in 1917. The Jewish community was small but supported a dynamic cultural and religious life centred around the synagogue. Another wave of Jewish immigrants arrived in the late 1920's and early 1930's with the rise of Nazi supremacy in Germany. The old synagogue was sold in 1942 and later demolished. After relocating for a time on Garner Avenue, in 1955 a new synagogue was built on Summit Avenue but it too has subsequently been demolished.

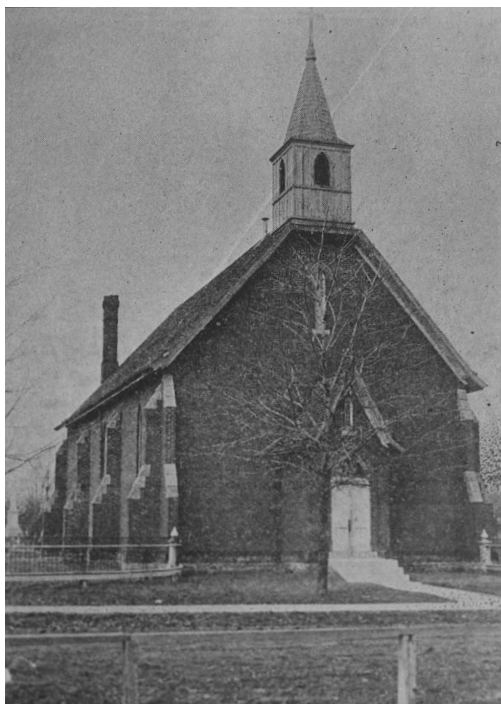


**14. SECOND ÉGLISE DU SACRÉ-COEUR,
66 EMPIRE STREET, 1934-2015**

Photo from 1935. French Canadians began arriving here about 1915 but the nucleus of Welland's French community came in 1917 with the arrival of a group from St. Gregoire de Montmorency, Québec, hired by the Empire Cotton Mills for their weaving expertise. They settled near the mill on Queen (Empire Street), Duncan, Cosy and Bugar Streets, an area that became known as "French Town". The parish of Sacré-Coeur was founded in 1920. This brick church designed by Father Rosario Tanguay and several parishioners was built by Gardner Construction and consecrated on Oct. 28, 1934. Executed in the Gothic Revival style, it had pointed arched windows and doors with stone sills and moulding, stone trim at eaves and corners and solid stone-capped buttresses. Paired stained glass windows were donated by parishioners. After 1960, when the new Sacré-Coeur church was built next door, it served as a parish hall and later home of Club Colombien Chevaliers de Colomb Conseil 8296.

**15. CHURCH OF THE JAPANESE MARTYRS
CORNER CHURCH AND AQUEDUCT STREETS
1871–1947**

The Church of the Japanese Martyrs was the first Roman Catholic church in Welland. The Rev. Father McDonough of St. Catharines was the first Roman Catholic priest to visit the area in 1844 to say mass and administer the sacraments. In 1861 property was purchased on Church Street to build a new Roman Catholic Church. It was dedicated in 1871 to the Japanese Martyrs, a group of 26 Christians who were executed on Feb. 5, 1597 by crucifixion in Nagasaki. A typical small Gothic Revival style church, its interior was painted and frescoed. It remained a mission church of Thorold and later Port Colborne until the first resident parish priest, the Rev. Thomas Cruise, was appointed in 1910. The church was in use until 1921 and the building was demolished in 1947. The cemetery associated with the church is still located at the corner of Church and Aqueduct Streets.



16. HOLY GHOST GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH AND HALL, 77 GOLDEN BOULEVARD WEST

1954–2018

In 1954, sixty families from Welland's Slovak community formed a new parish for local Slovak Greek Catholics. For more than 50 years Holy Ghost Slovak Greek Catholic Church and Hall on Golden Boulevard West figured prominently in the City's spiritual, ethnic and social life as a place of worship, religious services and culture for the city's Slovak community. The hall was a venue of choice for bingo when Welland was the province's bingo hot-spot and it was a favourite location for wedding receptions, stags, showers and dances. Following its closure in 2004, its art, altar and vestments were donated to the Welland Museum along with two parchments. A bag was found in the cornerstone containing a silver dollar and 25, 10 and 5-cent pieces minted circa 1955. Traditionally, in some European countries, a token gift was left during construction projects "for good luck."



17. SLOVAK HALL, 162 HAGAR STREET

1951-2004

This became the home of the Canadian Slovak League Branch 23 in 1951. The earliest Slovaks immigrated to Welland in 1923. In a sea of English speakers, Slovaks gathered together for friendship and support. On October 6, 1940, the Canadian Slovak League Branch 23 was founded to preserve their traditions, heritage, language and love of birthplace. The hall hosted Slovak mass, Slovak plays, choirs, dance groups and radio broadcasts. Sold to Feastivities Catering, it was subsequently demolished. The loss of the Slovak Hall is an example of the continuing loss of many similar ethnic halls across the city, weakening traditions, customs and history for many ethnic groups.



18. QUEEN ALEXANDRA BRIDGE

1904-1930

Photo shows Alexandra Bridge opening April 23, 1904. This swing bridge was located where the East Main Street Lift Bridge is now, prior to the latter's construction in 1927-30, and was the third bridge built to connect East and West Main Streets. In 1901 Welland County Warden Alexander Griffith of Welland brought forward a motion at County Council asking for a new permanent bridge and it was accepted through the lobbying of Welland's M.P. William Manley German, a member of (Sir) Wilfrid Laurier's Liberal Government. Battle Bros of Thorold constructed the substructure and Hamilton Bridge Works built the superstructure. The bridge was named for Queen Alexandra, consort of Edward VII, who ascended the throne in 1901.



19. LINCOLN STREET BRIDGE

1932-1981

Lincoln Street Bridge Bridge #14), 1932. As automobile traffic in the city increased, plans were made for two new lift bridges at East Main Street and Lincoln Street. Construction started in 1925. At the same time the Alexandra Bridge was temporarily moved one block south to Division Street while the new Main Street Bridge was completed. The superstructure of both Lincoln and Main Street bridges were composed of two box form end towers containing counterweights and a central lifting span with operator's house at its centre. The Lincoln Street Bridge was demolished in 1981 and replaced with a fixed link.



20. GRAND TRUNK RAILWAY STATION, EAST MAIN STREET

1903-1930'S

Welland's slogan "Where Rails and Water Meet" came about due to its location on the Welland Canal where north-south and east-west rail lines crossed. The first north-south line named the Welland Railway was constructed in 1864, later taken over by the Great Western Railway, then the Grand Trunk Railway in 1882, at that time the world's largest railway system. This station built in 1903 on the south side of East Main Street at Ross Street was a single storey wooden structure with a bellcast hipped roof, decorative corner turret and single gable facing the track. Inside were a passenger waiting room, ticket office and freight area. The Grand Trunk Railway became part of Canadian National Railways in 1923. The station stood on East Main Street until the 1930's.



21. M.C.R. STATION

1909-1976

Photo shows M.C.R. Station in 1910. Nine years after the construction of the Welland Railway, W. A. Thompson (later M.P.) promoted a new east-west line between Bertie Township (Fort Erie) and Windsor. This Canada Southern Railway line opened for traffic in 1873 and included a branch from Welland Junction. In 1882 the line was leased to Michigan Central Railroad and this new MCR Station was opened on Plymouth Road on January 18, 1909. A single storey structure with a hipped roof and gable dormer facing the track, it boasted up to date hardwood floors, oak ceiling, electric lighting and steam heating with a connected baggage and customs building. Demolished in 1976.



22. DAIN CITY RAILWAY STATION

1904-1970'S

Photo shows Welland Junction Dain City Railway Station 1905. The first east-west rail line in the City's south end at Welland Junction, named for the complex junction of rail lines there (later called Dain City), was a line constructed by the Canada Air Line Railway to link Fort Erie and Detroit in 1873. This was a division of the Great Western Railway Company. It was taken over by the Grand Trunk Railway in 1882 and Canadian National Railways in 1923. This station was constructed for the Grand Trunk Railway in 1904. It was made of wood frame with bell cast roof and corner octagonal operator window topped by a tower. It stood at its original location until the 1970's.



23. AQUEDUCT SWIMMING POOL, BEHIND CIVIC SQUARE 60 EAST MAIN

1946-1984

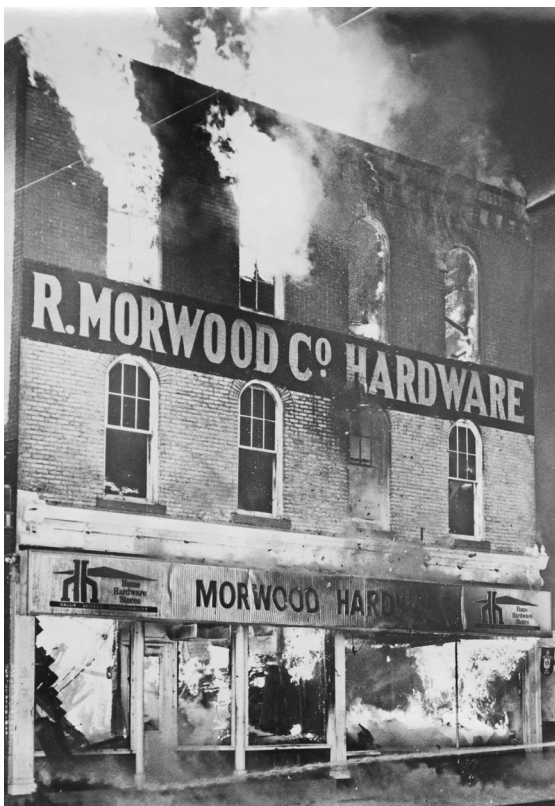
Photo shows Aqueduct Swimming pool, 1952. The first urban settlement of Welland came about due to the necessity to construct an aqueduct over the Welland River and was known as "Aqueduct". The Welland Canal Second Aqueduct located between the Civic Square and the Recreational waterway was built between 1842 and 1850 during construction of the Second Welland Canal. Constructed of thousands of cut stones of approximately one ton each, its four stone arches carried the Welland River beneath the canal and supported a large trough through which the canal and ships passed. The Aqueduct became redundant after completion of the Fourth Welland Canal and in 1946 was converted into a swimming pool where generations of children learned to swim. In 1948 it was the largest filtered pool in Canada. The Aqueduct still exists but the pool has since been filled in.



24. A&W DRIVE-IN, 123 RIVERSIDE DRIVE

1962-1976

A&W Restaurants is an American fast-food chain known for its burgers and its "frosty mugs" of draft root beer. It was founded in 1919 by Roy W. Allen who partnered with Frank Wright to open their first restaurant in Sacramento California in 1923. The company name came from the initials of their last names - Allen and Wright. Evolving into a franchise in 1926, the company expanded into Canada in 1956. Food and drink was served to occupants of cars by "carhops" - waiters and waitresses who carried the food outside to cars on trays.



**25. MORWOOD'S HARDWARE AND CHINA SHOP,
31 WEST MAIN STREET 1856-1968**

Morwood Hardware Store Fire, Dec. 6, 1968. Richard Morwood was born in Oneida County, New York state, in 1831 and emigrated with his brother James to Welland in 1856. Richard went into partnership with an established merchant, James McCoppen, then with his brother-in-law Hugh Rose until 1864 after which he became sole owner. R. Morwood and Company remained in the Morwood family until it was destroyed by fire in 1968. The store originally had three departments - dry goods, groceries and hardware - but really functioned as a general store. At the time it burned it was the longest continuously operated retail business in Welland. Richard Morwood served as Village Reeve and later Town Councillor and was elected Mayor of Welland four times. He donated property adjacent to his Young Street home for Central School, the Welland Market Square and the Methodist Church (now Central United).



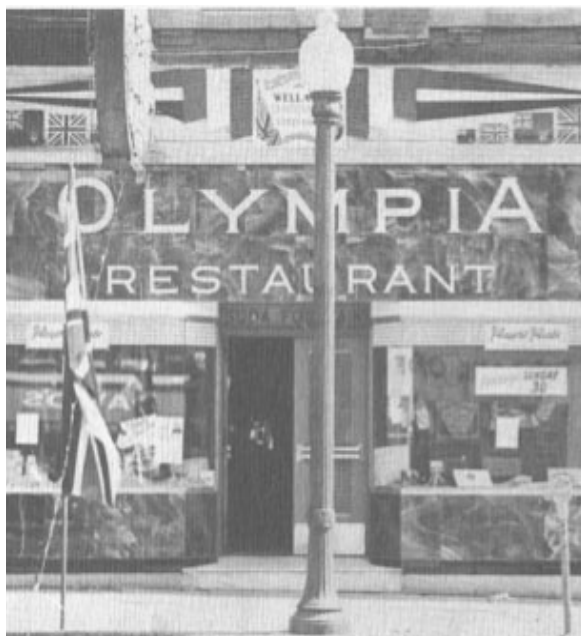
26. A&P GROCERY STORE, 52 EAST MAIN STREET

C. 1948-1974

A P, East Main Street, 1950's. The Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company, better known as A&P, was an American chain of grocery stores that started in 1859. They opened their first store in Canada in 1927 and had stores in 200 communities here until 2009 when the company was rebranded as Metro Inc. From 1915 through 1975, A&P was the largest grocery retailer in the United States.

**27. OLYMPIA RESTAURANT,
37 EAST MAIN STREET 1923-1961**

Greek immigrants to Welland began arriving as early as 1913 and tended to make their livelihood in the restaurant, confectionery and bakery businesses. About 1923 John Zarafonitis and Y. Yurchuk opened the Olympia Candy Store at 37 East Main Street. It was advertised as the "Home of Sweets". After Mr. Zarafonitis bought out his partner, it became the Olympia Tea Room, both a restaurant and confectionery. The candy was all hand made, with special candies for holidays. About 1946 Mr. Zarafonitis opened another restaurant on West Main Street, known as the Normandy. The Olympia was in operation until it burned down in April of 1961.



28. IMPERIAL BANK OF CANADA, 22 KING STREET

1910-C. 1960's

Photo shows Imperial Bank of Canada 1948. The Imperial Bank was founded in Toronto in 1875. This branch, located first in the Welland County Courthouse and later in Molson's Bank, was the fifth Imperial bank branch started in Canada. In 1910 the bank moved into this Beaux Arts style building on King Street characterized by its imposing frontispiece with arched entrance and contrasting corner quoins. Beaux Arts Classicism, popular between 1900 and 1945, was a style that originated with the École des Beaux Arts in Paris. In 1961 the Imperial Bank merged with the Canadian Bank of Commerce to form the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC), after which this building was replaced by a sleek modern structure with granite and steel façade which housed the CIBC until March of 2017 and which currently houses the Bank Art House.



29. VAUGHAN SEED COMPANY, 111 VICTORIA STREET

1909-2008

The Vaughan Seed Company, completed in 1909, was established by Marshall “Mark” Vaughan, who served as Mayor when Welland became a city in 1918 and later as MPP for Welland. Vaughan Seed, a remnant of Welland’s agricultural past, provided high quality seed for farmers and gardeners, specializing in Kentucky blue grass. Vaughan seed developed the special Victoria Park Lawn Seed for the Niagara Parks Commission. The early 20th Century saw a shift in style of industrial buildings to one where the use dictated the form of the building. The exterior of Vaughan Seed was simple while the interior featured rows of wooden seed bins, a seed separator and an office with sliding glass windows to allow employees to handle transactions without leaving the office. Vaughan Seed was unoccupied when it burned down on June 8, 2008.



30. SUNNYSIDE DAIRY, 20-24 SEVENTH ST. CROWLAND

1930-1990

Photo shows Sunnyside Dairy 1940's. Sunnyside Dairy was founded in 1930 by Paul E. Pietz and Gus Fielder. Paul Pietz also served as Deputy Reeve and Warden of Humberstone Township. The dairy started out in a former slaughterhouse on 7th Street in Crowland. It had a fleet of horse-drawn wagons used to deliver milk door to door every morning. These wagons delivered dairy products to local homes until the early 1970s, even after other dairies had switched to truck delivery. Paul Pietz passed Sunnyside Dairy down to his son, Allan Pietz and daughter Edith Rominger who continued to run it for almost 35 years. Allan Pietz served as a local Councillor, Humberstone Warden, Mayor of Welland, Member of Parliament and Regional Councillor.



31. MCCABE HOUSE HOTEL, CROWLAND

1850-1950'S

Located in Crowland near the bank of the old canal (now recreational waterway) and subway under the New York Central Railway line old swing bridge, it was built circa 1850 by James Tufts. The hotel was operated for many years by Tufts and his wife Charlotte (Brailey). Originally a large sign on the six-post two storey verandah said "The Travellers Home" with pictures of a stagecoach and horses and the tow horses that pulled the barges in the canal. Tow horses were stabled at the hotel. It had a large ballroom on the second floor. James Tufts owned 2000 acres of land, forest and marshland and employed a number of men who had escaped slavery in the southern U.S. One of these was Jim Wilson, a well-known local resident, who was married here. The hotel became known as the McCabe House during the time it was run by Tuft's great-granddaughter Addie McCabe. In addition to transient guests, it catered to disabled pensioners who received room and board for \$8.30 per week. It was demolished in the 1950's and replaced with single dwellings.



32. STATION HOTEL, 619 KING STREET

1875-2010

Photo on the left from early 1900's, photo on the right circa 1960s. Built circa 1875, the Station Hotel located on south King Street was by the mid 20th century one of the oldest hotels in Welland. First called the MCR Hotel, it became known as the "Station Hotel" about 1921. Records indicate it was purchased in 1904 by Hamilton native Frederick William Kilgour who served in WWI, as Welland Warden and as a member of City Council, lending his name to Kilgour Avenue. His son Fred Jr. took over in 1953 and expanded and modernized the hotel. The Kilgour family sold the hotel in 1980. By 1996 it was a strip club as well as a bar. The hotel was closed for renovations in 2008 and burned down on New Year's Day of 2010.



33. REETA HOTEL, 90 EAST MAIN STREET

1922- JUNE 1997

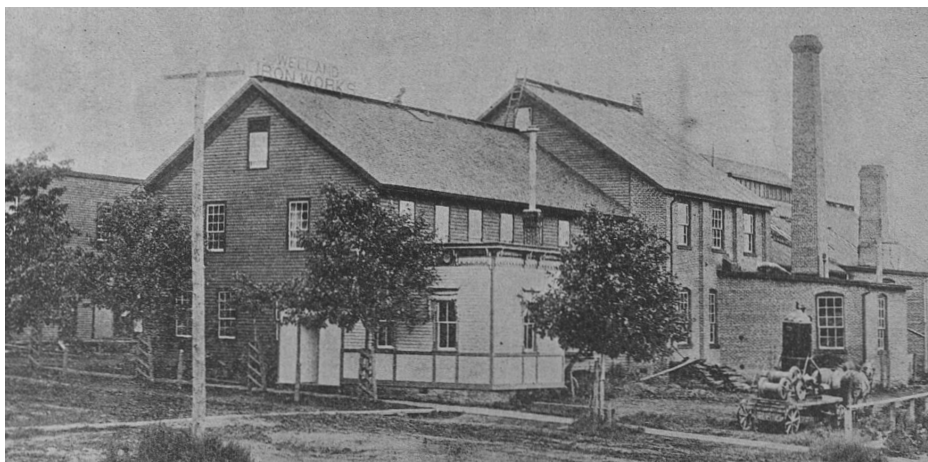
Photo: Reeta Hotel circa 1920's. The Reeta Hotel at the corner of East Main and Cross Streets stood where the Civic Square is currently located. It was constructed in 1922 by Samuel Lambert, replacing the Arlington Hotel that stood there previously. Francis Cutaia owned the hotel from 1955 to 1983. It had a bar and a busy coffee shop that was a downtown gathering place. In the 1970's draft beer sold here for 20 cents and hourly wages for a waiter were \$1.35. After it was demolished in June 1997, one hundred of the building's bricks were sold to raise money for downtown revitalization.



34. CAPITOL THEATRE, 88 EAST MAIN STREET

1925-1978

Welland's Capitol Theatre was constructed by Samuel Lambert in 1925 and opened in 1927 as an extra amenity for its neighbour the Reeta Hotel. It was the largest theatre in the Niagara Peninsula showing motion picture and vaudeville performances. It boasted an elegant interior with crystal chandeliers and plush seats. Despite its immediate popularity with the community, it fell victim to the Great Depression and declared bankruptcy in 1934. It was sold to Famous Players Theatres and brought back to life the same year. The Capitol Theatre came under new ownership once again in 1973 with the sale of the Reeta Hotel. With the motion picture industry taking a dive in the 1970s and unable to transition to other entertainment industries, the Capitol Theatre was demolished in 1978.



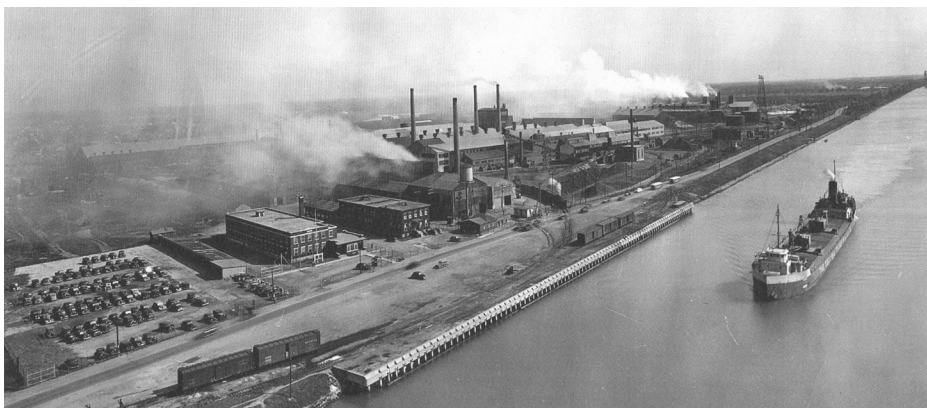
35. M. BEATTY AND SONS - WELLAND IRON AND BRASS, NIAGARA ST (NORTH MAIN STREET) 1860-1995

Photo shows M. Beatty and Sons 1892. Welland's location at the junction of major waterways and rail lines made it attractive to industry. Matthew Beatty, born 1809, started Welland's first iron foundry in 1860, later renamed M. Beatty and Sons. Beatty emigrated from Ireland to the U.S. and became a marine engineer in Buffalo N.Y. before settling in Welland. The plant, covering 14 acres on the Welland River, started out manufacturing agricultural implements but switched to dredging equipment for deepening the canal during the construction of the 3rd Welland Canal. In 1866 they built the first dredging machine wholly constructed in Canada. The plant was leased to British American Shipbuilding to build cargo ships during World War I. In 1918 it became Welland Iron and Brass, then in 1920 Mead Morrison and later part of United Steel. The office stood on the site until destroyed by fire January 3, 1995.



36. PLYMOUTH CORDAGE COMPANY, PLYMOUTH ROAD 1905-1969

Photo shows Plymouth Cordage Company, 1930's. Welland's genesis as a factory town started in 1898 with construction of the Frost Wire Fence Co. plant but the "boom years" really began when the Plymouth Cordage Company of Massachusetts located a branch here in 1905. In the next five years twenty-two more factories followed, turning Welland into a major industrial town. The core of Welland's Italian community was established from 1905 to 1909 by Cordage employees of Italian descent recruited from Plymouth, Mass. to come to Welland for the new plant. When the first labourers arrived, their homes were ready for them. The company constructed houses for their employees along King, Lincoln and First Streets and Plymouth Road. The Company provided welfare and social benefits including cheap rent, pensions, the first industrial nurse in Canada and a company recreational centre on Plymouth Road.



37. ELECTRO METALS/UNION CARBIDE, CANAL BANK STREET

1907-1974

Photo shows Welland South Dock on Canal with Union Carbide and Page Hersey.

Founded in 1907 by Robert Turnbull, Emile Darte and Walter Gaston, Electro Metals Company was located on the east bank of the Welland Canal and helped contribute to Welland becoming a specialty iron and steel manufacturing centre. It was the first factory in Canada to manufacture carbon electrodes for steel furnaces and graphite rods for use in nuclear reactors. In 1914 Union Carbide of Canada built a plant on the property and operations were combined in 1923 with the name changed to Union Carbide of Canada Ltd. in 1954. During World War Two 2200 people were employed at El Met producing ferrochrome and graphite electrodes for the war effort. The last furnaces, some dating to the company's founding, were taken out of service in 1974. Recently the site was purchased for a new plant to reuse waste carbon from the site for electric car batteries.



38. PAGE HERSEY, ONTARIO ROAD

1910-2014

Photo shows Page-Hersey Tubes, 1955. In 1907 Page-Hersey Iron Tube and Lead Company, established in Montreal in 1888, purchased an 11-acre parcel with a Grand Trunk railroad spur line on a site at Ontario Road and Dain Avenue in Crowland Township. Construction started May 10, 1909 and was completed March 1910. Page Hersey became a major supplier of essential pipe and six-inch shells during WWI. During WWII the Federal Government funded a cold draw facility to produce precision tubing for frigates, corvettes and destroyers and pipe for aircraft frames in addition to shells and mortars. Concerts for Canada War Bonds were held at the Wallace-Near Memorial Auditorium on site. In 1950 Page Hersey supplied pipe for the Alberta-Ontario pipeline. Page Hersey amalgamated with Stelco in 1956 and became Stelpipe in 1987. Sold to Lakeside Steel in 2005, then JMC Steel/Energex tube, the last shipment left the plant in 2014.



39. JOHN DEERE, CANAL BANK STREET, DAIN CITY

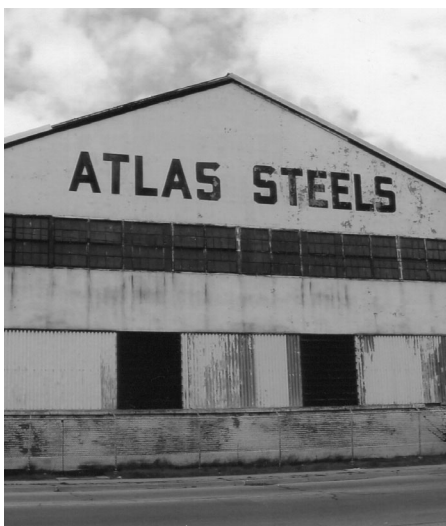
1909-2008

Photo shows John Deere Plant 1948. Founded in 1909 as Dain Manufacturing Company by Joseph Dain, who patented a new type of hay handling equipment, this plant supplied the increasing demand for the product in Eastern Canada. It soon lent its name to that area of south Welland known as "Welland Junction" from its railway heritage and it became known also as "Dain City". In 1837 John Deere of Illinois invented a new type of steel plow. Deere & Company took over Dain Manufacturing in 1911, erecting new assembly, painting and warehousing buildings by 1913. Increased demand for Deere farm machinery led to major expansions in 1947, 1965 and 2002. John Deere Welland produced bulldozers, tractors, wagons, loaders, rotobooms and an all-terrain vehicle, the Gator. In 2008, the plant, employing over 900 people, closed when the parent company moved its operations to the U.S.



**40. ATLAS STEELS. EAST MAIN STREET,
1928-2010**

Atlas Steels buildings on East Main Street - now site of new Welland Fire Headquarters. Atlas Steels was established in 1928 by R. H. Davis who was at that time plant manager for a U.S. steel company. He refitted a small plant in an ideal location with access to water and rail transportation, hydro electric and manpower. By 1948 it was the largest specialty steel company in Canada, exporting to 53 countries. Rio Algom purchased the company in 1963 and operated it until 1985, when it became Atlas Specialty Steels. In 2000 Atlas and its assets were sold to Slater Steel, then closed in 2003. It was bought by MMFX Steel of Canada in 2006, then by ASW Steel Inc. in 2010, when most of the buildings on the site were demolished, including the iconic buildings on East Main Street with the large "Atlas Steels" logo. Ampco-Pittsburgh Corp. purchased the site in 2016 and continued to produce specialty steel. It was sold to Valbruna Canada Ltd. in 2019 when it became known as Valbruna ASW Inc., producing carbon, stainless and other specialty steels.



The City of Welland Heritage Advisory Committee

*The City of Welland Heritage Advisory Committee
is a committee of citizens appointed by Municipal
Council to advise and assist Council on all matters
related to the Ontario Heritage Act, including
conservation of heritage properties and areas.*

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www.welland.ca/heritage