



Before Obi-Wan Kenobi contemplated the force, he lived in Stratford.

\$2

Boasting the largest park land per capita, Stratford's main park system contains approximately 115 acres of formal parkland and nearly 60 acres of natural area. Enjoy the parks, the architecture, and the personalities that are a part of one of Canada's best preserved heritage communities while touring **The River Walk Personalities tour**.

**STRATFORD
ARTS
THE ARTS
ARE WHAT
WE ARE**

Stratford Tourism Alliance
519-271-5140 or 1-800-561-7926
47 Downie Street, Stratford, ON N5A 1W7
visits Stratford.ca



Boasting the largest park land per capita in Canada, Stratford's park system promises more than a pretty picnic. Cross over North America's only automotive double-arched bridge to a world of architectural and anecdotal wonder. From sceptre to light saber, Obi-Wan began pondering the universe during Stratford's inaugural theatre season. Along the way he inspired one of Canada's most celebrated writers. Stratford's Shakespearean gardens, district wards and area schools were named for the Bard, long before any tent was raised. Discover a progressive business man with a thirst for change who championed the cause to separate Stratford from the County of Perth as well as Canada's medical genius who was interning and delivering babies. Re-discover Stratford's heritage on one of two river walk tours.

BEGIN THE TOUR AT THE YORK STREET VISITOR'S INFORMATION CENTRE LOCATED AT THE BASE OF YORK STREET AND VETERANS DRIVE. WALK TO YORK STREET AND TRAVEL WEST.

You are looking at The Mill Block, the oldest extant commercial block in Stratford. It was designed to the lay of the land with three stories at the front and four stories here along the back, originally reserved for deliveries and stables. Numbers Four & Six Ontario Street as well as Number 55 (along the front) were constructed during the 1850s, with the buildings in between replacing original structures during the 1880s and later. Built on a natural cliff exactly one storey below the back of the Mill Block is York Street. During the 1980s, York Street became a boutique area transforming the original delivery service entrance to what you see today.



1 The Perth County Court House 1 Huron Street

Built in 1885-87 in the most commanding position of Stratford, this masterpiece of the Queen Anne Revival Style was designed by London architect, George F. Durrand who also designed the Stratford Jail. Known to have the best display of terracotta in Canada it opened in 1887 on Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. That was also the year that electricity first came to Stratford, and by way of celebration, electric lights in the Perth County Court House were turned on.



THE SHAKESPEAREAN GARDENS ARE LOCATED BESIDE THE COURT HOUSE.



2 Shakespearean Gardens

Opened in the 1930s, these gardens contain a sculpture of Shakespeare designed by Canadian, Cleve Horne. Interestingly, this bust arrived in 1949, prior to the Stratford Festival. The gardens rest on the site of Duffon's Woollen Mill. All that remains of the building is the chimney, which is now a

bird tower. The original roses were a gift from Queen Mary, who had also donated roses to the garden in Stratford-Upon-Avon in England.

THE HURON STREET BRIDGE IS TO YOUR RIGHT.



3 A North American Treasure

The only double-arched aqueduct road bridge in North America still in use by automotive traffic, the Huron Street Bridge was intended to be a triple arch, but the river was too narrow. It was built in 1885, the year that

Stratford officially became a city.



CROSS ONTARIO STREET AND TRAVEL ACROSS THE BRIDGE. IN FRONT OF THE LIONS POOL YOU WILL SEE THE DUTCH MEMORIAL.



4 Perth Regiment Gives Hitler the Boot

After the occupation of Holland by Nazi armies in WWII, seven hundred free men of Dutch birth used Stratford as a military training base. This memorial was a gift of appreciation from the Netherlands for Stratford's hospitality. The participation of the Perth Regiment in the liberation of Holland in 1945, adds to the close bond between our countries. The pair of hands symbolizes Canada's support; the dove is symbolic of the Netherlands.

CONTINUE UP MORNINGTON STREET TO ST. JAMES CHURCH.



5

A Royal Beauty

Built in 1870, St. James is the official church of the Crown and is the third church building on this site. The tower, added in 1905 is home to 11 bells, the largest nicknamed Big Joe, weighs 955 kilograms (2,100 pounds). God's Holy Acre, a cemetery used between 1844 and 1871 is located beside the church. The gravestones, including one of the Sargint family (owner of the Shakespeare Inn), have been laid flat to reduce deterioration.



TRAVEL NORTH ON MORNINGTON TO CHARLES STREET.



6

The Force Was With Him 108 Mornington Street

Much to his chagrin, the role of Obi-Wan Kenobi from the Star Wars Trilogy, is undoubtedly one of Guinness' most famous. Trained in classical theatre, he moved to Stratford Ontario to join his friend Tyrone Guthrie at the Stratford Festival Theatre in 1953. Guinness was in the Festival's first performance as Richard III on July 13, 1953 (pictured on the front panel).



7

Monte Goes to Ottawa 186 Mornington Street

From 1957 to 1963 J. Waldo Monteith or "Monte" as his friends called him served as the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Monteith also became financial critic and chairman of the Progressive Conservative caucus. In the 70s Monte ventured back to his hometown Stratford and was awarded the Silver Jubilee Medal for contributing to his community. Monteith retired peacefully to Stratford and died December 19, 1981.



8

Stratford's Mayor Leads the "Wets" to Separate from County 198 Mornington Street

One of Stratford's best known and most prominent and progressive citizens, Mayor William Gordon championed the cause to separate Stratford from the County of Perth. A controversy that had been raging for 20 years. Perhaps the biggest issue in 1885 was prohibition. The "wets" afraid that the county would go dry and take Stratford with them it, won by an overwhelming 1,162 in favour and 322 opposed.



AT THE INTERSECTION OF MORNINGTON AND WATERLOO STREETS, TURN RIGHT AND TRAVEL SOUTH ON WATERLOO STREET.



9

Juno Award Winner Loreena McKennitt Saves Historical Building

In the mid 1800s Stratford named its city wards relating to Shakespeare. The former Falstaff Public School was one of nine public schools in Stratford. On a generous act of historical preservation, acclaimed Stratford-based Celtic singer/composer Loreena McKennitt purchased the property in 2000. Since that time, more than one million dollars has been invested in the extensive renovation to convert the building into the Falstaff Family Centre.



CROSS WILLIAM STREET TO #4 WATERLOO STREET.



10

Canada's Most Respected Classical Actor, William Hutt 4 Waterloo Street

Mr. Hutt joined the Stratford Shakespearean Festival during its inaugural season in 1953 and continued to tread the boards until 2005. Appearing in over 100 plays, Hutt was the consummate actor playing both fools and kings, and tragic as well as comic leads. He won every major theatre award in Canada, as well as a Governor General's Award for lifetime achievement, and was made a companion of the Order of Canada. William Hutt died at the age of 87 in 2007.



WALK BACK TO WILLIAM STREET AND TRAVEL EAST.



11

Stratford's Knight – 203 William Street

Sir John McLennan was instrumental in discovering the use of radium for cancer treatment. He also developed a process for liquefying helium in large amounts and discovered the yellow-green ray in the aurora borealis. He came to Stratford in 1867. After teaching at a number of Perth County schools, he entered the physics program at the University of Toronto, eventually becoming head of the department. The McLennan Physical Laboratories are named after him. He was knighted in 1935 and died later that year.

CONTINUE EAST ON WILLIAM STREET.



12

The House That Healed 300 William Street

Built by local architect Alexander Hepburn in 1873, this large Italianate mansion was first owned by Chief Justice John Ldington, a judge in Canada's Supreme Court. He sold the mansion to the Hyslop sisters in 1909 who converted it into the Ancrum Brae Hospital which operated until fire destroyed the tower and third storey in 1923. With its original entrance off James Street, the creek out front is known as Ldington Creek. It has been a private residence since 1925.



13

China's Saint, Canada's Medical Genius – Norman Bethune – 342 William Street

Relieving Dr. Robertson, one of Stratford's most prominent doctors, the now famous Dr. Norman Bethune interned at the Ancrum Brae Hospital in Stratford for several summers around 1919. One of Dr. Bethune's many achievements was the set up of the first mobile blood transfusion service during the Spanish Civil War in 1936. It became the model for the later development of Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (MASH) units. He remains a Chinese Communist-era martyr for giving his life in the service of the Chinese revolution.



14

Chicken Ranch Liberates The Netherlands – 480 William Street

This area was developed in 1936 as the Delamere Subdivision. The family of the first land owner, Colonel Delamere, gave the land between William Street and the river to the city to be used as parkland. Originally

a chicken ranch, his farm house still stands. This parkland was used as a military training base during WWII by free men of Dutch birth who came to Stratford to form a battalion.

TRAVEL SOUTH TOWARD THE RIVER CROSSING AT THE FESTIVAL BRIDGE. FOLLOW THE SIDEWALK UP SNAKE HILL.

15



Stratford's Reigning Beauty

Under a canopy of mature trees, approximately 6 acres in size sits Stratford's most prominent park. Queen's Park was obtained by the town in 1877, and was redesigned by Canada's leading landscape architect, Frederick G. Todd in 1905. The unusual pattern of diagonal tree placement as well as the park's pavilion make it the most scenic and popular park, then and now.

16



Festival Theatre 55 Queen Street

Second only to the Ringling Brothers circus tent in size, the tent designed to house the Festival Theatre in 1953 was replaced with a permanent building by the 1957 season. A scheduled architectural contest was cancelled when architect Robert Fairfield submitted his design for a building reminiscent of the tent. Construction beginning at the end of the 1956 season, was completed in only 9 months.



WALK ACROSS UPPER QUEEN'S AND NOTE THE HERITAGE SIGN LOCATED BESIDE THE "BRIDGE TO NOWHERE" REFLECTING THE HISTORY OF THE PUMPHOUSE.

17

The Bridge to Nowhere and Confederation Park

The knoll at the highest point of the garden is the former site of the city's water tower. The Boy Scouts planted the Norway spruce and White Pine trees in 1937 to commemorate the coronation of King George VI. The stairway behind you, known as the Bridge to Nowhere, was an overpass when a former railway line ran through this section of the park. The area was re-designed in 1967 into a park by a Japanese Canadian landscape architect from British Columbia, to commemorate Canada's 100th birthday. In 2017 the Ted Blowes Pollinator Garden was built below the bridge to commemorate Canada's Sesquicentennial.

MAKE YOUR WAY BACK TO THE RIVER AND WALK WEST ALONG LAKESIDE DRIVE.

18



The Grand Old Hockey Shrine - 15 Morenz Drive

Built in 1924, The William Allman Memorial Arena, "a perfectly preserved relic of a bygone age" is touted as the longest



continuously operating arena of its kind in the world. It is one of the last remaining examples of the so called "Ice Palaces" built in North America during the 1920s and 30s, which took advantage of new technologies permitting the installation of indoor artificial ice surfaces. From Howie Morenz to Tim Taylor, over 30 NHL stars started their careers in the arena.

19

Tom Patterson Theatre 111 Lakeside Drive

In 1971, the Stratford Shakespeare Festival opened a new venue known as the Third Stage. It was renamed in 1991 in memory of its founder. In 2018 a 100-million-dollar campaign supports a new theatre and education facility designed by architect Siamak Hariri.



CONTINUE ALONG LAKESIDE DRIVE AND CROSS AT THE WATERLOO STREET INTERSECTION. LAKESIDE DRIVE HAS NOW BECOME VETERANS DRIVE.

20



It's Not Easy Going Green

R. Thomas Orr, was the driving force behind this city's parks system, including the Shakespearean Gardens. He led the controversial yet successful crusade to save the Avon riverfront and millpond from



railway development, overseeing the transformation of the industrial area into parkland. His legacy is maintained in the present day gardens that are routinely finalists in Canada's Communities in Bloom.

CONTINUING ALONG VETERANS DRIVE, YOU WILL SEE THE WAR MEMORIAL.

21



Right Versus Might - Stratford War Memorial

Designed by Canada's most famous sculptor, W.S. Allward, the cenotaph is of national importance. The dramatic style was the precursor to the famed Vimy Ridge Memorial to World War I Canadian soldiers in France. His other works grace the Supreme Court in Ottawa. This work was completed in 1922 and features the classical theme of right versus might. The two cannons date from the 19th century. One, a captured Russian cannon from the Crimean War, the other from the War of 1812.

CONTINUE ALONG VETERANS DRIVE TO ONTARIO STREET.

22



Timothy Findley - 70 Ontario Street

Known to many as "Tiff", Toronto-born novelist and playwright Timothy Findley was a member of the first company of the Stratford Shakespearean Festival in 1953. As well as a Governor General Award winning novelist for *The Wars*, four of his plays, including *Elizabeth Rex*, were produced by the Festival in Stratford. Findley and his partner lived for several years at 70 Ontario Street, the site of



Stratford's original Shakespeare Inn constructed in 1832.

TRAVEL WEST ON ONTARIO STREET.

23



Edison Gets His Wake Up Call - 46 Ontario Street (above Edison's Cafe)

This small apartment is where a teenage Thomas Edison lived when he worked in the Grand Trunk Railway station in Stratford and the Junction Station in St. Marys. As a night telegraph operator Edison was to send a special signal on the hour to ensure he was alert. Testing a new invention, Edison rigged his "6 call" to run like clockwork signalling every hour allowing him to read or catch a few winks. He was fired when he slept through an incoming message to warn the engineers of two trains that they were on a collision course narrowly averting disaster.



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www.perthcounty.ca/stratford_perth_archives

The St. Marys Museum, 177 Church St. South, St. Marys 519-284-3556

www.stmarysmuseum.ca

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