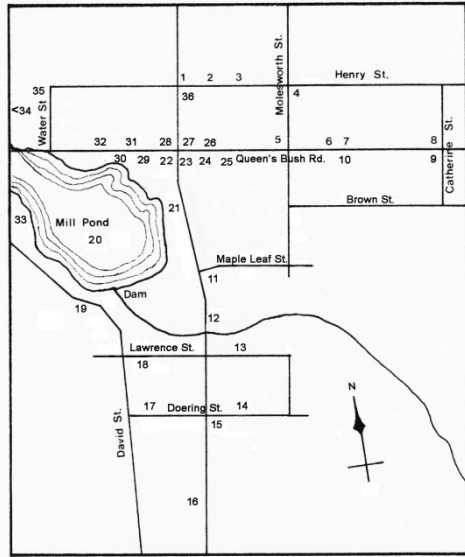


# Wellesley Walking Tour

Most of the buildings on this tour are privately owned.  
Please respect the rights of the owners.



## 1. 1137 Henry Street – The Old School



This 1898 two-storey school is an example of secular architecture with both Victorian and Georgian characteristics. A wide central hall is flanked by two large classrooms on each floor. A grand staircase leads up to a second-floor

mezzanine. It was used as a school until 1965 when the new school was built.

## 2. 1129 Henry Street

This 1859 stone structure was Wellesley's third school; replacing two earlier log buildings. The building was originally symmetrical, with two classrooms flanking a central hall. Early in its history, a brick extension was added to the east wing and the exterior walls were stuccoed. The building has an 'ecclesiastical' look due to its Gothic Revival arched windows.

## 3. 1123 Henry St - St. Mark's Lutheran Church

This 1927 brick church replaced an earlier frame church built in 1876 on land provided by John Zoeger.

## 4. 1065 Molesworth St.



Built in the Gothic revival style this house was constructed around 1872 by John Berscht, a local carpenter. It is built of the attractive yellow coloured bricks found on many of the village's early structures. Of particular note are the double Gothic windows at the front gable.

## 5. 1167 – 1173 Queen's Bush Road

This is the former site of the Wellesley Hotel, built in 1848. It was erected by John Zoeger, who operated it as a hotel and general store. This simple Georgian structure originally had a long porch along the front of the second-story balcony. The front section was replaced due to fire damage. The apartments at the back were created in what was the hall behind the hotel.

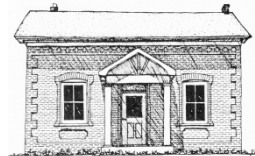
## 6. 1153 Queen's Bush Road

This large, handsome Georgian house was built around 1863 by John Zoeger, owner of the Wellesley Hotel. The brick detailing is particularly interesting with contrasting red and white bricks, raised quoining (corner detail) and recessed brick, lozenge-shaped panels under the windows. Red brick appears only on the front of the house, probably because it had to be brought in from outside of the village (and was therefore more expensive), while the yellow brick was produced locally.

## 7. 1149 Queen's Bush Road

This house, one of the oldest in Wellesley, is one of several log houses still standing in the village. It was built by John Fleischauer, a local wagon maker. He owned the North Waterloo Carriage Works located across the street, at 1180 Queen's Bush Road (#25).

## 8. 1121 Queen's Bush Road



This small 1 ½ storey Georgian house was built by John Zoeger around the same time as he built his own house (#5). It was probably built for a family member. The similarity of brick detailing with #5 is apparent, except that no expensive red brick was used, rather an attempt was made to employ darker yellow bricks for contrast on the corners. The same recessed lozenge-shaped panels (as seen on #6) are under the windows. The brick freeze with indented crosses is unique.

## 9. 1122 Queen's Bush Road

This is a good example of Queen Anne style architecture, which is noted for verandahs which often wrap all the way around the house.

## 10. 1148 Queen's Bush Road

This is the former site of the foundry operated since the 1870s by Knechtel and Schaub, manufacturers of agricultural implements and bells. According to Parsell's County Atlas of 1881, the Wellesley Bell Foundry was unsurpassed in Canada.

## 11. 3685 Nafziger Road

This structure was part of John Reiner's woolen mill/general store business. The exact date it was built is not known, but it was probably around 1880. Immediately behind it is a parking lot on which the knitting factory once stood and across from it, where the gas station now stands, was a large woolen mill. In 1894 Reiner employed 50 people in this business. The relatively unaltered front façade contains some interesting details rendered in the Italianate style, such as the decorated frieze with large brackets, and on the windows, hood moldings with drop details and sills of cast-iron. An addition has been added on the right side.

## 12. 3677 Nafziger Road – Feed Mill



The feed mill was built by the Doering brothers in 1856. The original two and half storey section at the back was enlarged around 1910 with the addition of the third storey and the entire front portion. The structure is made of massive timbers, held together with mortise and tenon joints, with brick in-fill (known as half timbering). It is set on a stone foundation 2 ½ feet thick. This type of mill is relatively rare as most existing gristmills in Southwestern Ontario are made of either stone or brick. Changes in technology saw the mill shift from waterpower to steam and finally electricity.

## 13. 3 Lawrence Street

This building was Wellesley's first arena, constructed in 1908 by the Faber brothers. They owned it until 1947. The structure which has been slightly altered is interesting as it consists of a light wood frame tied together with steel cables.

## 14. 1027 Doering Street

This frame house with its many gables was most likely built in the late 1870s. It was owned by E. Steiner who was a partner in John Reiner's flourmill. Note the drop and finial moldings in the gable peaks and the pediment (peak) above the transom on the front door.

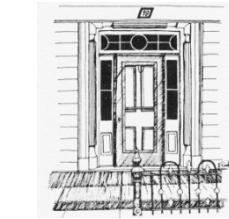
## 15. 3639 Nafziger Road

Land at the corner of Nafziger Road and Doering Street was donated by the Doering family for the Swedenborgian Church. The white frame church was built in 1858. Land for

a cemetery, beside that of the Lutheran church across the street, was also donated by the Doerings. After the death of the Swedenborgian pastor in 1901, the congregation dispersed and the building served several other congregations over the years. It has been converted to a 2-unit apartment

## 16. 3620 Nafziger Road - First St. Paul's Lutheran Church

The present brick church, constructed in 1876, replaced an 1854 frame church which burned down. Built in the Gothic Revival style, so typical for the time, it has interesting brickwork under the eaves.



## 17. 1063 Doering Street

This interesting house, built half of brick and half of stacked 2 x 6" planks, was constructed in about 1867 by John G. Reiner, sometimes called the "Builder of Wellesley." The brick section

predates the plank section by a few years as the latter was added as a boarding house for some of Reiner's workers. When this part was added the main entrance was shifted from the middle bay of the brick section to its present location. The front porch (which formerly extended along the entire front façade) and the even spacing of openings along the front, tie together the variations in texture and detailing. The front door, with fluted quarter-round columns is a good example of the vernacular style, in which the builder freely interpreted traditional classic patterns.

## 18. 20 & 22 Lawrence Street

These two simple Gothic revival houses were most likely built by John Reiner. He is reputed to have built 32 structures of various types in Wellesley, many of which, it is believed, were erected for his workers to inhabit

## 19. 73 David Street

This 1½ storey Georgian house, set high on a stone foundation, was built by John Schmidt (Smith), considered to be the founder of Wellesley. It was possibly built soon after he arrived in the area in 1847. The house has been extensively renovated.

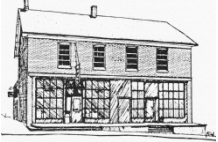
**20. Wellesley's Mill Pond**, which you see ahead, was created in 1845 when James Ferris built the dam across Firella Creek. It covers the site of a former swamp. Numerous mills and commercial enterprises have been located along its banks.

### 21. 3700 Nafziger Road



This is a good example of the “Boomtown storefront” typical for southern Ontario in the late 19th century. The structure was likely built just before the turn of the century, replacing an earlier coopeage on the site. It first served as the Leis Harness Shop. The elaborate brickwork and substantial cornice supported by decorative brackets are noteworthy.

### 22. 1200 Queen’s Bush Road



This handsome Georgian structure, originally owned by Lawrence Doering, dates from the 1860s and still serves its original function as a retail establishment. Around the corner on Nafziger Road, attached to the store, is shed-like structure that was built around the turn of the century to house the village’s hand-drawn fire wagon pumper. Also note the ends of the tie rods on the gable ends.

### 23. 1192 Queen’s Bush Road

This building has operated as a store since it was built in 1894, owned by William Kelterborn and Art Reiner, among others. It was originally built as a two storey structure but was partially destroyed by fire in the 1950s and became a one-storey structure.

### 24. 1188 Queen’s Bush Road



The former Ottman Block was built in 1903 by Charles Ottman sr. The main floor housed his saddle shop and the tailor shop of his brother-in-law Charles Koehler. Charles Ottman jr had a photo studio and gallery on the second floor.

### 25. 1180 Queen’s Bush Road

The structure is typical of small factory buildings of the 1850s and 1860s. It was owned by John Fleischauer who operated the North Waterloo Carriage Works beginning in 1856. A second-storey double door is located at the rear from which carriages were brought down via a ramp.

### 26. 1189 Queen’s Bush Road

This is simple Georgian house of fieldstone has had a two-storey cobblestone porch added to it. It was built in about 1858 by John Schneider who was a shoemaker.

### 27. 1193 Queen’s Bush Road

This hotel dates from circa 1857 when Peter Berdux opened an inn here. The original structure, which has been considerably altered, was probably of the typical Georgian style. During the 1880s it was renovated in the second Empire style, characterized by a mansard roof.

### 28. 1201 Queen’s Bush Road

This two-story building, built by Michael Wilhelm is typical of commercial blocks at the turn of the century. It replaced an 1848 store erected by Peter Schmidt, who operated a general store there.

### 29. 1206 Queen’s Bush Road

This is a good example of a corbelled brick commercial building. It was owned at one time by John Zoeger Jr. who operated it as a butcher shop. It was later owned and operated by Harry Kelterborn.

### 30. 1208 Queen’s Bush Road

This home has remnants of its original Italianate style with its decorative frieze and brackets.

### 31. 1211 Queen’s Bush Road

Another example of Italianate architecture, this building served as Wellesley’s first Post Office. It was later the residence and medical practice of Dr. William Glaister.

### 32. 1215 Queen’s Bush Road

This 1855 Georgian hotel was first owned by James Freeborn and later by William Doersam, who operated it as the Blackhorse Hotel. The original westerly (left hand) portion of the structure is fieldstone with an early brick addition on the right. It is reported that school classes were held in the hotel for a short time, prior to the completion of the school in 1898. Of all the hotels in the township, the Queens is probably in the most original condition.

### 33. 34 David Street

If you have time, walk around the pond to see the salmon - colored brick Georgian house on your left. This house operated as a brewery, started by Peter Doersam in 1865.

### 34. Note the bank of the millpond to the right of the bridge.

This was the site of Jantz Arnetz’s brickyard which produced the brick of which many of Wellesley’s early structures were built.

### 35. 24 Water Street

This large residence is a good example of the Victorian style, characterized by a variety of building forms such as projecting bays, hipped roofs, and elaborate frieze and bracket details. The house was built in the late 1880s by

Conrad Becker, a successful Wellesley carpenter. The large front porch replaced an earlier one of smaller portions.

### 36. 3741 Nafziger Road

This house in the Georgian style was built in about 1860, and had a storefront added in the mid-1870s. It was built by Charles Achtenberg who operated a merchant tailor business here, known as the “Wellesley Emporium of Fashion.” Of particular note is the well-maintained storefront with attractive wood detailing.

## WELLESLEY VILLAGE HISTORY

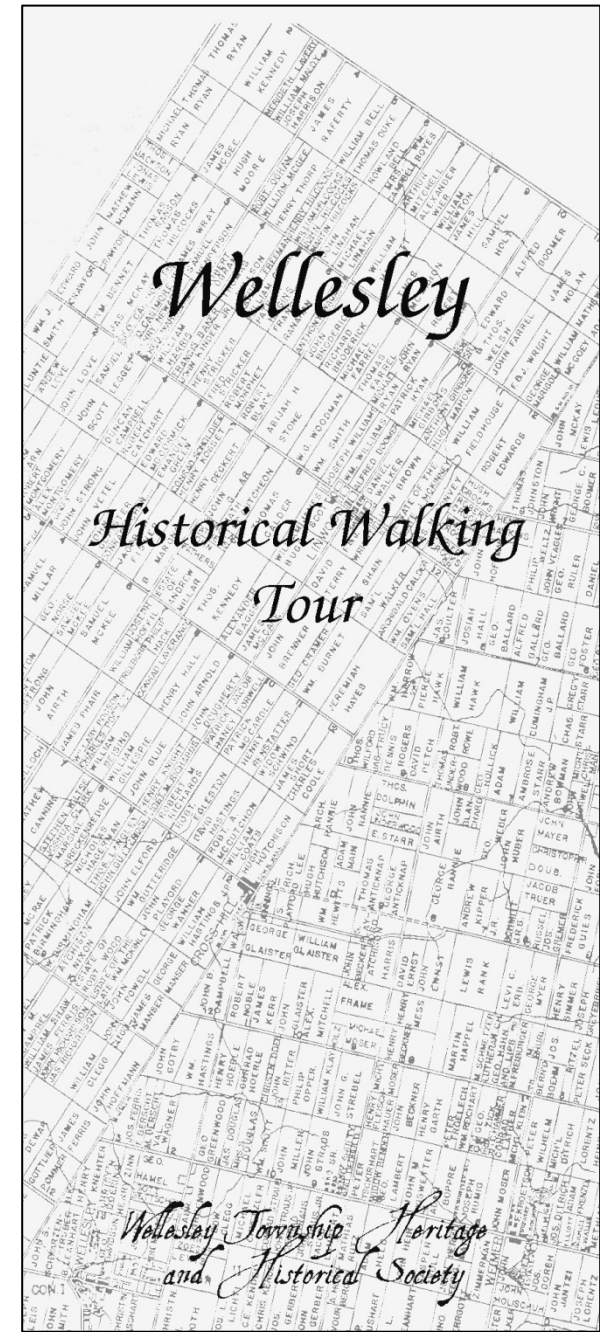
Wellesley Township was within an area known as the “Queen’s Bush,” which stretched to Lake Huron in the west and Georgian Bay to the north. It was the last section of Waterloo County to be surveyed as it had been set aside by the government as a Clergy Reserve. Once the survey was completed in 1843, the population grew at a rapid pace.

The village of Wellesley was originally known as Schmidtsville or Smithville, after one of its first settlers, John Schmidt. With the help of James Ferris, he is credited with establishing the dam site which provided the impetus for the growth of the village. Another early squatter in the area was Christian Burgher. The majority of the original settlers were of German background, with such families as Zoeger, Reiner, Doering and Doersam playing important roles in Wellesley’s development.

In 1848 Wellesley village was a small hamlet consisting of eight buildings. Within a decade there were 250 residents and numerous commercial enterprises. By the mid-1860s, the population had almost doubled to around 500. Many of the buildings on this tour dates from this flourishing period of Wellesley’s history.

As in most southern Ontario settlements of the period, Wellesley had the industries to make it a self-sufficient community, including flour, saw, flax, and woolen mills, a foundry, coopeage, blacksmiths, brickyard, along with tailors, shoemakers, merchants, and at least four hotels. When the railroad by-passed Wellesley Township, the area declined in importance while other regional centers such as Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge flourished.

The slow pace of development in the village has resulted in the preservation of many of the buildings that played an important part in Wellesley’s history. Much of the scale and atmosphere of this picturesque settlement as it was in the last century has been maintained.



Produced by the Wellesley Township Heritage and Historical Society, 2019

[www.wellesleyhistory.org](http://www.wellesleyhistory.org)