

self guided walking tours

pureludington.com

Explore more history in Pure Ludington

Mason County Historical Society & Research Center
130 E. Ludington Ave.
masoncountymhistory.org
(231) 843-4808

"A step back in time where history is fun" is the promise of Historic White Pine Village and Port of Ludington Maritime Museum. Get a dual ticket to both museums for double your family fun! "Best of its kind...authentic and sweet" is how recent visitors describe their experience.

Historic White Pine Village
1687 S. Lakeshore Dr.
historicwhitepinevillage.org
(231) 843-4808

Historic White Pine Village offers a family-friendly, fun-filled tour of a late 19th - early 20th century pioneer village. The village boasts 30 historic exhibit buildings that contain thousands of authentic artifacts and archives depicting the rich lumbering and agricultural history of its area.

Port of Ludington Maritime Museum
217 S. Lakeshore Dr.
ludingtonmaritimemuseum.org
(231) 843-4808

The Port of Ludington Maritime Museum brings history to life with digital storytelling, authentic images and artifacts, and engaging interactive exhibits that entertain and inspire a deeper appreciation for the region's maritime history.

Mason County Sports Hall of Fame (Beyond the Game)
Located at Historic White Pine Village
1687 S. Lakeshore Dr.
masoncountysportshalloffame.org

The Mason County Sports Hall of Fame (MCSHOF) is dedicated to honoring those who have made outstanding contributions to sports in the Western Michigan area, particularly in Mason County.

Cultural trails in and around Mason County

Spearheaded by Mason County's Cultural Economic Development Task Force, a network of cultural trails has been designed to guide you through significant cultural and historic sites throughout Mason County. The five trails include: Agricultural, Barn Quilt, Lumber Heritage, Maritime Heritage, Sculpture.



Each of the trail stops allows visitors to scan a QR Code with a smartphone or dial a phone number to learn about the significance of each stop along the trail.

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Coastline

Landmarks around Ludington

self guided driving tour

3

North Breakwater Lighthouse
420 N. Lakeshore Dr.
Constructed: 1924

The original 1870 lighthouse that once stood in the place now known as the North Breakwater Light consisted of a 30-foot-tall, wooden tower, painted white, that displayed a fixed green light using a fifth-order Fresnel lens. Commanding and exquisite in its new design, standing 57 feet tall, this proud structure was built in 1924 and was designed to break the rough waves that so easily turn up on Lake Michigan as the weather changes. The North Breakwater is operated by Lakeshore Keepers and is open for tours, May-October.



Port of Ludington Maritime Museum
217 S. Lakeshore Dr.
ludingtonmaritimemuseum.org
Constructed: 1933

The United States Coast Guard has been a presence in Ludington since 1879. In 1933, a new station building was constructed and served the Ludington area for several decades. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Today, it is occupied by the Port of Ludington Maritime Museum and includes several exhibits dedicated to Ludington's abundant maritime history. In 2003, a new station was built for the Ludington Coast Guard.

Waterfront Park
200 S. William St.

This 5.3 acre park, located in Ludington's harbor, is home to nine bronze sculptures placed throughout the walkable park. Each sculpture depicts and tells the story of Ludington's rich history. The park is also a popular place for families to enjoy the playground and catch the S.S. Badger returning or departing from Ludington.



Big Sable Point Lighthouse
Ludington State Park
8800 W. M-116
Constructed: 1867

Built in 1867 and over 100 feet tall, the Big Sable lighthouse is set 1.8 miles north of the Ludington State Park. This historically noble, black-and-white navigational beacon sits nestled among sand dunes and jack pines. In 1899, it became apparent that action had to be taken to preserve the deteriorating brick in the tower of the lighthouse, and the following year, the tower was encased in 18 metal cylinders. When the work was completed in June 1900, the metal tower was painted white with its middle third black.

ABOUT LAKESHORE KEEPERS
Lakeshore Keepers is a non-profit that proudly manages five historic lighthouses within a 70-mile stretch of Lake Michigan's shoreline. Lakeshore Keepers also operate a Volunteer Keepers program which allows its members the opportunity to live and work within the lighthouses completely free of charge during the six-month season, May-October.

2 Stearns Park & Beach
420 N. Lakeshore Dr.

Named after influential Ludington businessman, Justus Stearns, Stearns Park Beach offers a family-friendly atmosphere perfect for playing in the water or building a sandcastle. Stearns Park Beach has 2,500 feet of sandy shoreline, a grassy area with plenty of picnic tables and grills, a playground, skate park, mini-golf, volleyball and shuffleboard.

6 MILES NORTH

4

5 S.S. Badger: Lake Michigan Carferry Service
701 Maritime Dr.

ssbadger.com
(231) 845-5555
(800) 841-4243
Constructed: 1952

Constructed for the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway in 1952, the S.S. Badger originally hauled railcars, passengers and automobiles across Lake Michigan. In the early 1990s, the vessel was repurposed to carry only passengers and automobiles and today remains one of the only remaining carferries on the Great Lakes. It is registered as a National Historical Landmark and crosses Lake Michigan daily from mid-May to mid-October.

Landmarks

in Downtown Ludington

self guided walking tour



Rotary Park
500 W. Ludington Ave.

The structure that was originally constructed on this site was one of the area's early boarding houses. By the early 1880s, the structure was known as The Filer House. The grounds were eventually donated to the city for the use as a park and the Filer House was torn down.

For decades, City Park continued to remain a significant focal point of the community. Over the years, the local Rotary Club donated time, money and efforts to ensure that the park remained well-maintained. In 2015, the name of the park was changed to Rotary Park.

1 Masonic Temple
108 W. Ludington Ave.
Constructed: Circa 1890s

While the Masonic Lodge had been located in several different buildings in and around Ludington since its founding in the early 1870s, it would eventually settle at this location in 1890. On January 4, 1945, the building was largely destroyed by fire. However, a short time later, it was rebuilt. Today, the building continues to be home to the local Masons as well as several businesses.

2 Legacy Plaza
@ Ludington Ave. & James St.

After closing the one-way street that was North James Street, this section was transformed into James Street Plaza, which for years was the community gathering place in Downtown Ludington. In 2007, discussions gave way to the transformation of this area into a celebration of heritage, commerce, music and local legacy. Those plans came to fruition in 2021 and today is a focal point of the entire downtown area.



8 City Center Bank
103 S. James St.
Constructed: Early 1900s

Well-known Ludington businessman, Justus Smith Stearns, constructed this massive three-story building in the early 1900s. The structure was originally home to a bank (National Bank of Ludington), and has been occupied by countless businesses over the last 100-plus years.

9 Ludington State Bank
124 S. James St.
Constructed: 1914

This iconic structure was built by local businessmen, Antoine Cartier and Charles G. Wing, in 1914 after a previous bank building was destroyed by fire. Over the decades the building has been home to several different banking organizations.

10 Jamesport Brewing Company
410 S. James St.
Constructed: 1890/1892/1905

Constructed in stages beginning in 1890, the first portion of what is today Jamesport Brewing Company was originally home to the Central House Hotel and a saloon. The next portion of the complex was completed in 1892 as a lobby for the hotel, as well as a dining room and additional rooms for patrons. The remainder of the building was completed in 1905 with the first floor used as commercial space and the upstairs as apartments.

Countless businesses have occupied the building over the decades with Jamesport Brewing Company, a brewery and restaurant, establishing itself at the location in 2000.



About Justus Stearns

Born in Pomfret, New York in 1845, Justus Smith Stearns arrived in Ludington in 1876 and began his involvement in the local lumber industry. By the early 1880s he had built a sawmill in Lake County and later invested in countless tracts of forest land in various states. As the years passed Stearns was involved in multiple local businesses ventures including: The Stearns Lighting & Power Co., The J.S. Stearns Salt and Lumber Company, The Stearns Motor Mfg. Co., Stearns Hotel, etc. His impact on the expansion of Ludington is considered nearly incomparable to his peers. He passed away in 1933.

a Mason County Historical Society & Research Center
130 E. Ludington Ave.
masoncountymhistory.org
(231) 843-4808
Find out more about the city and the county's unique history through awesome exhibits and photographs! Visitors can also work with staff to research aspects of local history.

b Sandcastles Children's Museum
129 E. Ludington Ave.
sandcastleschildrensmuseum.com
(231) 233-9326
Offering a hands-on children's educational experience through special exhibits of all kinds including several Ludington-based displays.

3 Post Office
201 E. Ludington Ave.
Constructed: 1932-1933

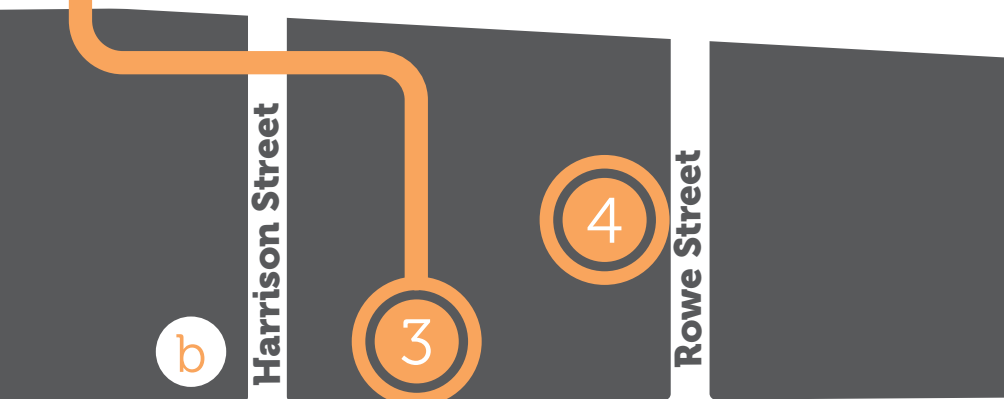
Construction on the post office began on April 14, 1932, with the cornerstone for the new building laid during the summer of 1932. Constructed of Bedford limestone and marble from Tennessee, the building was erected at a cost of approximately \$135,000. A formal dedication for the new postal headquarters was held on March 13, 1933.



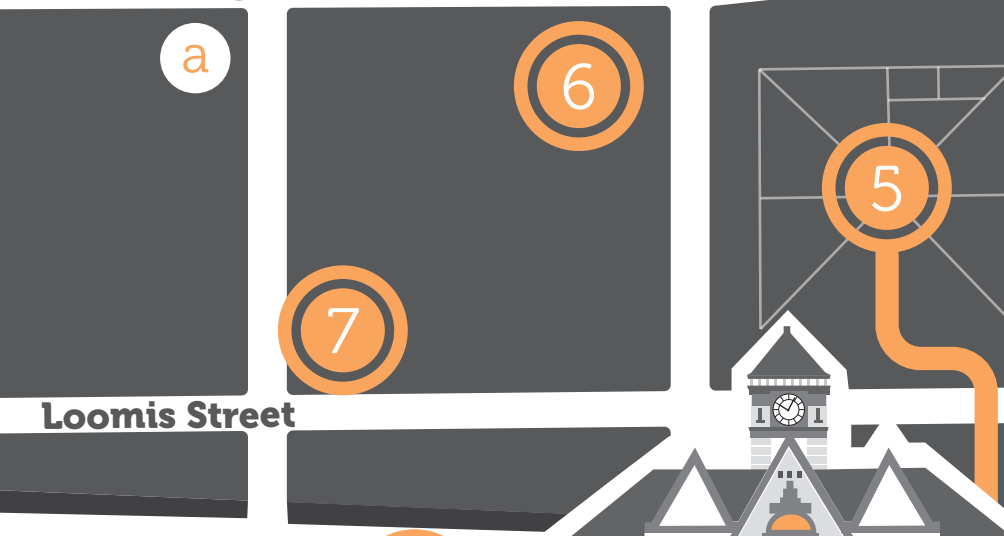
4 Public Library
217 E. Ludington Ave.
Constructed: 1906

The Ludington Public Library building is the main branch of the Mason County District Library. It was constructed largely at the behest of the Pere Marquette Literary Club, who worked to obtain a grant from the Andrew Carnegie Institute.

Construction on the building was completed in 1906. Over the years, aspects of the structure have been updated and remodeled.



Ludington Avenue



7 Ludington Area Center for the Arts (LACA)
107 S. Harrison St.
Constructed: 1894-1895

Originally constructed in 1894-1895 as the First Methodist Episcopal Church, this beautifully designed building would later become home to the United Methodist Church after the Bethany Methodist Church consolidated with First Methodist in 1970.

After the church moved to a new location on Bryant Road, this building would become occupied by the Ludington Area Center for the Arts, an arts centered non-profit organization, in 2008. Today, it facilitates a number of exhibits, workshops and performances.

6 Stearns Hotel
212 E. Ludington Ave.
Constructed: 1902-1903

At the turn of the 20th Century, leading local businessman, Justus Smith Stearns was under the impression that the city of Ludington should have a grand hotel. While several sites were under consideration for the location of this hotel, the site on this corner of Ludington Avenue and Rowe Street was eventually selected.

Completed in 1903, the Stearns Hotel became known far and wide as one of West Michigan's premier hotels. While many alterations have taken places over the years, the hotel continues to maintain many of its original features and has taken its place as one of Ludington's many historic landmarks.



5 Mason County Courthouse
304 E. Ludington Ave.
Constructed: 1893-1894

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Mason County Courthouse was designed by Sidney J. Osgood, a well-regarded architect from Grand Rapids, Michigan. The building, which is of the Richardsonian Romanesque design, utilized sandstone from the Upper Peninsula as well as dark, red brick in its construction. Construction of the three-story structure began in 1893 and was completed the following year.

Historic Homes of East Ludington Avenue

self guided walking tour

East Ludington Avenue has been a prominent residential corridor leading into the city since the town was laid out in 1867. First known as the Village of Pere Marquette, the city formed around lumbering activities, especially those of James Ludington for whom it was later named.



About James Ludington
James Ludington was born in Putnam County, New York in 1827. By the age of 16 he had moved to Wisconsin with his family and became involved in several business ventures including a general store, banking, and lumber. In 1859, he came into the possession of a sawmill located near the mouth of the Pere Marquette River. This mill would grow to become known as the Pere Marquette Lumber Company. Some time later, he decided to plat and sell several hundred acres in the vicinity of the mill which led to the expansion of the community. Ludington never married and spent little time in the town that he founded. As such, it is said that his visits to Ludington were brief. He passed away in Milwaukee in 1891.

In 1873, the town was incorporated and designated the county seat. It is named after its founder. In 2022 the corridor was recognized as a National Register of Historic District by the United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service.

We welcome you to enjoy this self-guided walking tour that will take you along four historic blocks of East Ludington Avenue, visiting the site of 18 beautiful homes that hold a sampling of the architectural history that is contained in and around the streets of Ludington.

1

Blain-Danaer House
401 E. Ludington Ave.
Constructed: 1872
(Alterations: 1910, 1916)

While the house retains its original Italianate-style form, elements of Colonial Revival were added in the 1910s. The home was built by Charles Blain, a local banker. The Danaer family was prominent in the lumber business.



2

Johnson-Taylor-Culver House
405 E. Ludington Ave.
Constructed: 1880
(Alterations: 1893)

This home was originally located in the 300 block of E. Ludington Ave. It was moved in 1893 to make room for the new courthouse building. In the 1890s, substantial ornamentation was added. Wilmer Culver was an officer for several Stearns-related businesses.

3

Catherine & Warren Cartier House
409 E. Ludington Ave.
Constructed: 1903-1904

Designed by noted Saginaw architects Haug & Scheurmann for prominent local businessman, Warren Cartier, the home was constructed in 1903 by builders Freuchtet & Sons. The stonework was done by well-regarded Ludington masons, H.B. Caswell & Son. The home remains today as one of the most lavish buildings and historical treasures in Ludington.



About the Cartiers
Antoine Cartier was born in Canada in 1836. Upon arriving in the United States in the late 1850s he settled in Manistee, Michigan, located 25 miles north of Ludington. It was in Manistee that Cartier developed his skill and know-how of the lumber industry; sorting and driving logs. In 1877, he moved to Ludington and purchased an interest in a logging firm. From there he grew to become one of the area's wealthiest lumbermen and played an integral part in the growth of Ludington.

Following in his lumber baron father's footsteps, son Warren Cartier established himself as a prominent businessman and politician in Ludington. Warren & wife Elizabeth's entrepreneurial spirit is evident in their diverse ventures, including the first telephone company, banks, a car dealership, a department store, and even a watch case manufacturing company. Notably, both Warren and his father served as mayors of Ludington, albeit on opposing political platforms.

4

Antoine Cartier House
501 E. Ludington Ave.
Constructed: 1878

This two-and-one-half story Queen Anne-style home was constructed by local lumber magnate, Antoine Cartier, who was a direct descendant of Jacques Cartier, who claimed Canada for France. Antoine Cartier was elected as the mayor of Ludington in 1880 and once ran for Governor of Michigan.



5

The Starke House
507 E. Ludington Ave.
Constructed: 1873
(Alterations: 1882, 1893, 1928)

Originally constructed in 1873, this home was significantly altered when the Queen Anne-style front section was added in 1882. As the years passed, other alterations followed. One of the owners of this house was Otto Starke, who was a founder of the Star Watch Case Company.

6

Frank Latimer House
701 E. Ludington Ave.
Constructed: 1889
(Alterations: 1960)

Dr. Frank Latimer was a physician and druggist, and this Queen Anne-style house features a front-gabled roof with bay windows and round tower. The home was built by Ludington carpenter August Tiedman.

7

Joseph Sahlmark House
707 E. Ludington Ave.
Constructed: 1908

Constructed in 1908, this two-and-one-half story Prairie-style house was once the home of Joseph Sahlmark, president of Ludington State Bank. The second-story of the home contains two 10-light double leaf wooden doors.



Mason County Historical Society
2 blocks west

East Ludington Avenue



18

The Ely Apartments
402 E. Ludington Ave.
Constructed: 1873-1874
(Alterations: 1905)

Built in 1873-1874 by local businessman, Henry B. Ely, who lived here for many years, this Italianate-Victorian style apartment building contains four apartments and is unusual for this area.

17

Clay F. Olmstead House
504 E. Ludington Ave.
Constructed: 1920

Featuring a low-pitched roof, deep eaves with exposed beams and wood shingle cladding, this two-story Prairie-style house was constructed in 1920 for Clay F. Olmstead who founded the Mason County Abstract Company in 1912.

16

Edward Cotton House
506 E. Ludington Ave.
Constructed: 1885

This two-story vernacular house has a gable front and a wing with weather-board siding. Mr. Cotton harvested and exported ginseng, a popular aphrodisiac at that time in Asia. He would later become a local merchant.



15

Snow House
508 E. Ludington Ave.
Constructed: 1892

This Queen Anne-style home has an asymmetrical form with gables, cornices, recessed and cutaway bays, and bay windows. Samuel Snow was a prominent druggist for over 40 years.



14

Lamplighter Bed & Breakfast
602 E. Ludington Ave.
Constructed: 1894

Dr. George Crosby had this Queen Anne Victorian home constructed in 1894. Several years later it became the home of Charles Cartier, an important industrial figure in Ludington.

By the 1960s, the elegant old house was home to a variety of businesses including the Secretary of State, a dentist's office, a beauty parlor, and eventually a real estate office.

In 1990, the building began a restoration process and also started its life as a bed & breakfast.

13

Ostendorff House
102 S. Washington Ave.
Constructed: 1918

This Craftsman-style house is the only building in the district not oriented toward Ludington Avenue. It was converted into a dentist office in 1969. It remains largely as it was originally built.

12

James Foley House
702 E. Ludington Ave.
Constructed: 1898

This three-story Queen Anne-style house is one of the largest in Ludington's historic district. Mr. Foley owned and operated the Pere Marquette Boom Company for 20 years.



About Daniel Goodenough
Daniel Webster Goodenough was born in Hartford, Michigan in 1842. Arriving in Ludington in the 1870s, Goodenough operated a mercantile store and also engaged in two offshoots of the lumber industry: tan bark and railroad ties. As the years passed, he grew to become a well-regarded businessman and later operated a real estate firm while also serving as an officer on the boards of several local business organizations. It is said that as automobiles became the norm, Goodenough chose his horse drawn carriage as the primary means of traveling around the streets of Ludington. He passed away at his home in 1921.



11

Daniel Goodenough House
706 E. Ludington Ave.
Constructed: 1888

Designed by local architect and builder, Charles Boerner, this two-and-one-half story Queen Anne-style house was built for Daniel Goodenough a local lumberman and friend of presidential candidate, William Jennings Bryan, who visited Ludington in 1902.

About Ludington Carpenter August Tiedman
August Tiedemann was born in Germany in 1851 and came to the United States in the early 1870s. As Ludington was growing from a small village to an active lumber town during this time, Tiedemann's arrival in the area coupled with his trade of a carpenter, meant that there was plenty of work to hone his craft.

By the 1880s, he had emerged as Ludington's "go-to" builder with a reputation for quality construction. Some of his works still stand including the Ole Olsen Home, and a section of today's Jamesport Brewing Company complex located on James Street. Tiedemann passed away in 1921.



8

Ole Olsen House
716 E. Ludington Ave.
Constructed: 1888

Built by Ludington carpenter August Tiedman for Ole and Hattie Olsen, this home features an octagonal tower, unique woodwork and a wrap-around porch.

9

Jaby Buckingham House
712 E. Ludington Ave.
Constructed: 1893

This two-story Queen Anne-style house has a square tower and porch, which wraps around the west elevation. H.L. Cutler, who served as Circuit Court Judge of the 19th District for 18 years, once lived here.

10

Smith Boarding House
710 E. Ludington Ave.
Constructed: 1881
(Alterations: 1937)

This Italianate-style house served as boarding house for lumbermen in the region. It originally featured a wrap-around porch.