

MEDINA TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL DRIVING TOUR

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Medina Township, part of the Connecticut Western Reserve, was first settled in 1815 by the Zenas Hamilton family. They lived at Hamilton Corners alone for nearly two years until several families arrived from New England. Those settling in the Weymouth/Bagdad area in early 1817 built a log cabin which served as school, church, and meeting place. Other township hamlets included Windfall, Northropville and Fenns Corners. The township was incorporated in 1818. By 1820, it was a bustling community with farming, milling and timber industries and later, cheese making and quarrying. The only village was Weymouth with two churches, a school through 8th grade, stores, post office, doctors, hotel, and all necessary trades.

1. Windfall Road just north of Rte 18. WINDFALL CEMETERY When the first settlers arrived in this area, a storm had felled many tall pines, facilitating the building of log homes and creating a name for the area. In the 19th century, Windfall was a community with its own schoolhouse until 1937 and several large farmsteads. There are 80 gravesites here, the earliest from 1827. ***Drive north on Windfall Road. Turn left onto Granger Road.***



2. Stay on Granger to the corner of Nettleton. NORTHROPVILLE SCHOOL was built for \$150 on land donated by Nira Northrop in 1848. In 1854, there were 49 pupils in the tiny one-room schoolhouse. It served local students until 1922, then became a residence. ***Turn west following Granger Road.***



3. Just west of the schoolhouse. Hidden in the trees to the left is the **PRIVATE BURIAL GROUND** of 13 graves of the pioneer Northrop and Nettleton families. ***Continue on Granger; turn right onto Bagdad Road.***

4. The BAGDAD ROAD BRIDGE was the site of a sawmill built in 1820 by James Warner and Stephen Sargent. There was an Underground Railroad stop in this area. It once had a church and general store. ***Turn right onto Hood Road, then left onto Cook Road.***

5. COOK ROAD is an area of natural beauty. The Rocky River runs along the west side. Originally, the Cook farm encompassed the entire east side of the road. Cook house still standing half way along on the right.

6. The house *at the point of Tompkins and Cook Roads* was built by Zachary Dean in 1830. Dean owned the nearby mill and was county surveyor from 1850-56.

7. *Go straight down the hill.* The **COOK ROAD BRIDGE** was the site of the first sawmill in the township, built by Lathrop Seymour and Timothy Doan in 1817. The water was fast moving and grist, saw and woolen mills stood here, as well as a quarry. You can see cut quarry stones to the right. They all closed as the Granger Ditch watering system diverted the water. The hill was originally much steeper (note the exposed layers of stone) and the road was called Christian Hill. *Continue up the hill, then turn right onto Old Weymouth.*



8. *3376 Old Weymouth on the left.* The **WEYMOUTH GENERAL STORE** was built in 1850 to sell groceries, household, and farm goods. Farmers brought dairy and produce here to be taken by wagon to markets in Cleveland. The store, operated as the Weymouth Pantry, closed in 1990. The village watering trough was in the middle of the road nearby. *Follow Old Weymouth to the left around the bend.*



9. *3344 Old Weymouth.* One of the oldest houses in the county. One 24x24" hand-hewn log supports the entire length of the house. Exposed beams and low ceilings reflect the early date. The tiny cellar has a hole allowing ground water to enter, keeping the area cool for fruit and vegetable storage.



10. Continue, look left. Gothic Revival house built by William Harrison Seymour in 1851. He was one of Eliza Northrop's first students and one of the first to be baptized in St Paul's Episcopal Church in 1817. His brother Herschel Seymour was a 49er who died in the Gold Rush. The house on the National Register of Historic Places. **Turn left onto Remsen Road.**



11. Look right. WEYMOUTH CEMETERY The earliest graves were placed on the remains of an old Indian burial ground at the west end of the village. Those graves were moved here in 1856. Eliza Northrop Barnes, the first teacher in the township, is buried here. There is a guide at the entrance. **Turn left onto Myers Road.**



12. Across from the cemetery. This house was formerly a one-room schoolhouse from 1840-1872, attended by children from parts of Medina, Hinckley, Granger and Brunswick townships. It was later used as a stone carver's workshop and is now a home.



13. 3314 Myers Road. WEYMOUTH SCHOOL The original part of this building was a two-room school from 1925 until 1956. It then housed Ohio's first tax-supported school for special needs children. It was restored by the WPS in 2012 for over \$50,000.



14. 3313 Myers Road. This was a one-room schoolhouse built in 1829. By 1840 the community needed a larger school and this became a house. The porch and side addition were added in 1935. **Turn right on Old Weymouth.**



15. 3388 Old Weymouth on right. The two-story building was built in 1859 for the Temperance union, local men who were concerned about the destructive power of alcohol on society. In 1872, they rented the lower floor to the school, which eventually took over the entire building, serving 1st through 8th grades. It closed in 1925.



16. Continue - on right. WEYMOUTH CHURCH, the oldest in the county, was built in 1835 as the Weighmouth Congregational Society. It is listed on the national Historic American Buildings Survey. The portico and belfry were added in 1853. Before the Civil War, the members took a strong abolitionist stand and served the Underground Railroad. The church was restored by the WPS. **Go straight then turn left onto Weymouth Road, Rte 3.**



17. Weymouth Road, on left. Future site of **RITA HOLT NATURE RESERVE**, named for a long-serving public servant. The land was originally part of the Blakslee farm and later the site of Siman's nursery. The park consists of 34 acres, with a variety of wildflowers native to the area. A beautiful section of the North Branch of the Rocky River runs through the park. Future plans include hiking trails, a picnic pavilion and a family baseball field.

18. 3721 Weymouth Road on left. 1820s home of Gad Blakeslee, the one of the township's original pioneers. The architect and builder was his son Burritt Blakeslee who built many homes in the area. **Turn right onto Fenn Road.**



19. On the right. BLAKSLEE PARK is the home of the Medina Township's Athletic Field Complex, the original Bagdad mill stone, and the Hometown Heroes Memorial.

20. Turn right onto Fenn; 3756 Fenn Road on left. Burritt Blakeslee first came to the township in 1816. He was a skilled carpenter who built many local houses in the area. His first house was lost in a fire, and he built this replacement in 1855. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974.

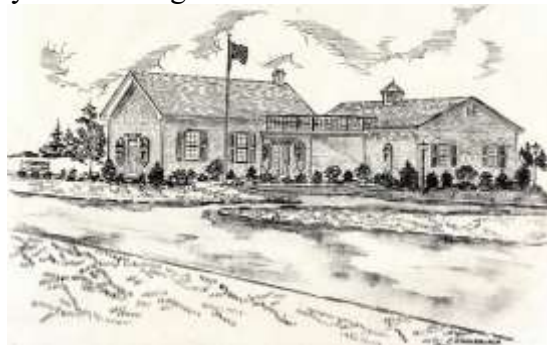


21. On the right. The **MEDINA CENTER CEMETERY** has also been known as Medina Township Cemetery, Fenn Road Cemetery and Bagdad Cemetery. There are 307 interments, many of early settlers. Among the oldest gravestones are the original settlers of the Hamilton, Blakeslee, Welton, Worden, Warner, Pierce, Nettleton and Stoddard families.

22. 3825 Fenn Road on the right. WARNER HOUSE James Warner, owner of the mill at nearby Bagdad, built this house in 1826 at a value of \$420. It was the largest house in the township. Later, some of the property was given for the town hall and cemetery.



23. Fenn at Huffman Roads. This area was known as Medina Center or Bagdad, the geographical center of the township. **MEDINA TOWNSHIP HALL** was built by John Hatch for \$960 in 1869. There was a one-room schoolhouse across Fenn Road. There were so many farms along Fenn that it was known as Silo Avenue.



24. Go on, look right. 4255 Fenn Road. This large brick Greek Revival house originally stood across Fenn Road on land traced back to Elijah Boardman. It was built by settler John Clark. In 1830, his son Francis B Clark was born here. He trained as a doctor, but returned to manage the farm when his father died. He served many years as township clerk and trustee, county auditor and treasurer. Francis's son Forrest W Clark kept the local weather records for the US government, never missing a day, from 1895 to 1940.



25. Look left. MEDINA MARSH Home to an active blue heron rookery, this 126-acre wetland complex in the floodplain of the West Branch of the Rocky River is part of a large corridor of protected land. The Conservation Center serves as a visitor center and the Medina office of the Western Reserve Land Conservancy. There is a half mile mowed trail.

26. Stright on Fenn, right on 42 to Hamilton. This area, known as **HAMILTONS CORNERS**, was settled by Zenas and Betsey Hamilton and their children. They arrived in 1814. Zenas' son Matthew was the first child born in the township, on June 9, 1815. There was once a schoolhouse here. There are 83 gravesites in the cemetery, dating from the 1820s.

27. 4599 Hamilton Road on the right. John Kennedy's house was built in 1856 by Joe Henry who was paid one hundred silver dollars, room, board and his tobacco supply.

