



## WALKING TRAIL

The 5.8 km (3.6 mi.) Trillium Walking Trail was constructed by the Dresden Horticultural Society as an exercise venue for walking, biking and jogging. More importantly, it was envisioned as a connecting link between the town's many tourism, recreation, shopping, and education features to Uncle Tom's Cabin. We welcome you to discover all Dresden has to offer along the full length of the trail including:"

- Uncle Tom's Cabin
- Dresden Raceway and Slots
- The Tony Stranak Conservation Area (with Sertoma Children's playground and two picnic shelters, ball diamond, and boat launch)
- The Olde Czech Hall community centre and sandlot volleyball courts,
- Dresden Arboretum, Outdoor Education Centre and Tall Grass Prairie Garden
- The Sydenham River eco-system with its many rare and endangered species
- Ornamental Gardens

## HISTORICAL WALK

The Trillium Trail encompasses a shorter Historical Walk of 2.4 km. which can be enjoyed without walking the full trail length. Just use the handy alternative connecting route (1.1 km) for a pleasant stroll through Dresden's old Victorian neighbourhood of "Quality Hill". (see map).

The trail explores the typical early development of a rural Southwestern Ontario Town and the unique history of Dresden from 1820 to 1920 with its close ties to Great Lakes Marine History and of course, the Underground Railroad.

- Full Historical Walk takes approx. 1 1/2 hours.
- Pressed for time? The map at the head of the trail can help you plan to explore shorter 1/2 hour segments.
- 53 historical sites include 22 plaques with photos of key industries and important personalities from the past.
- NO ADMISSION FEE
- FREE PARKING
- Close to restaurants and shopping
- Washrooms available (in season)
- Handicap accessible

### DONATIONS...

for the ongoing maintenance and development of the Trillium Trail are gratefully accepted. Please send donations to:  
Catherine McVean Chapter IODE  
Box 771, Dresden, Ontario, Canada  
N0P 1M0

### The Trillium Trail and the Historical Walking Trail have been made possible through the generosity of the following:

- Trail development:
- The Trillium Foundation
  - Catherine McVean Chapter of the IODE
  - Dresden and District Horticultural Society
  - Rotary Club of Dresden
  - The Town of Dresden
  - The Municipality of Chatham-Kent
  - Millennium Fund
  - St. Clair Region Conservation Authority
  - Town volunteer work crews
  - Dresden Sertoma
  - Knights of Columbus, Dresden
  - Babcock Supply Limited
  - Shell Canada
  - LKCS Student Council
- Gateway Trellis:
- J. Highgate (design & building supervision)
  - Dresden Rotary Club (labour)
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Printing of this brochure has been sponsored by the:



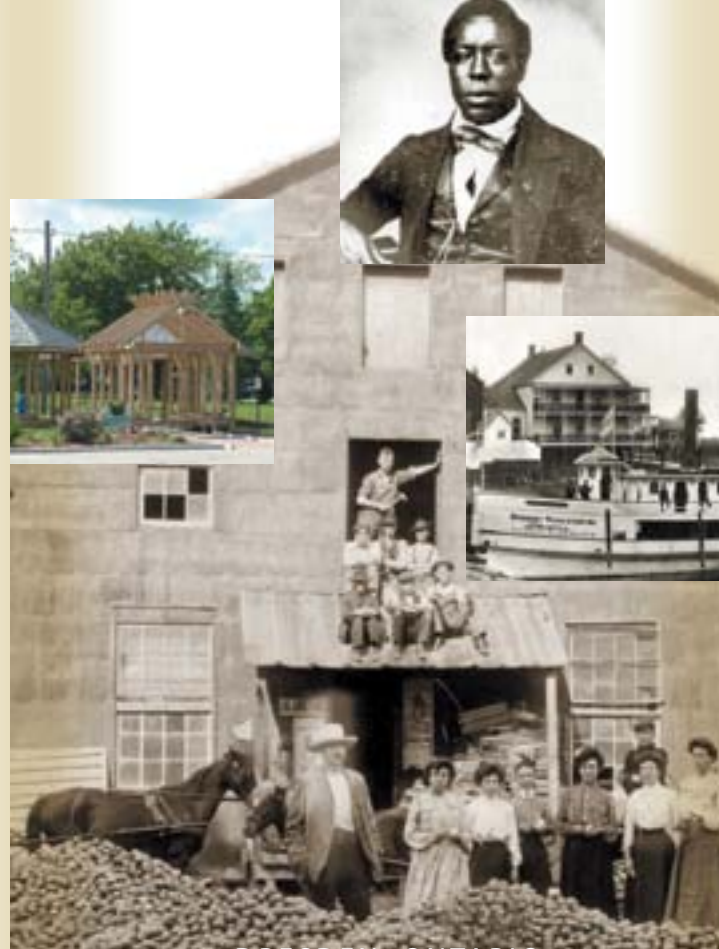
Be Heart Healthy! Take a Walk!

RESEARCH & COPYWRITING: JEFFREY & MARIE CARTER  
DESIGN: DEBRA BUCHANAN

Take a Step Back in Time... along the



# Trillium HISTORICAL WALK



DRESDEN, ONTARIO



# Trillium Trail Historical Walk

Step by Step... Volunteers in our community have built the Trillium Trail. Step by step, we invite you to discover its beauty

NOTE: RED LETTERING DENOTES A TRAIL MARKER

## 1 Rotary Memorial Gardens

Volunteer labour by Rotary Club members is largely responsible for the structures and gardens on this section of the trail.

## 2 Markham Memorial Grove

Many trees planted by the Markham family to commemorate deceased family members.

## 3 I.B. Webster and the Stave Mills 4a Dresden Boat Club early 60's

## 4 Alex Trerice, Townbuilder/shipbuilder

## 5 Tall Grass Prairie Garden

Dresden's Horticultural Society is establishing this area to represent an ecosystem that was once common to the region.

## 6 The Community Ice House

stocked with ice cut from the river, was located near the riverbank here at the foot of Centre Street

## 7 Crappie Store/Clark's Home Hardware,

formerly Clark's Fuel and Supply is a three-generation, family business founded by George Clark in 1921. It's also one of the oldest building sites in town. Freeman Cornelius Charity owned five lots and traded corn here in the 1850s. His brother James Charity operated a store at the bridge. Alexander Trerice and William Wright's sons operated a sawmill on the west end of the property in the 1870s. The old western fronted building may have been one of two Blacksmith Shops operating here c. 1889. The Dresden Foundry and later the Dresden Machine Shop and Moulding Company were located where Clark's bike shop is now located. Flasks (or moulds) for the foundry were piled along the river bank.

## 8 TN Wells and the Dresden Times

## 9 Martha & Sarah Burket's Grocery Store

operated here c. 1860.

## 10 The Weese Family Gardens

Weese family members have contributed three former mayors and Reeves (Gerry, Doug and Walter), artists, newspapermen and gardeners to the town! Their family gardens (on the south side of this site) were planted after the demolition of the Dresden News building left an empty gravel lot. The family gathers here annually to tend the garden and the adjoining parkland. The IODE garden on the north end of the site was planted to commemorate its 80th anniversary.

## 11 The large blue spruce in the centre of the garden was donated by John Veenema to serve as a "Tree of Tribute" which the IODE lights each Christmas



## 12 Isaac Trerice and the First Wooden Bridge

## 13 Sandy McVean and the Dresden Flour Mill

## 14 Dresden Arboretum

was developed by the Dresden Horticultural Society in 1991 as an educational tool. Native trees planted here reflect our unique natural heritage.

## 15 John Blackwood's Warehouse and Store

and the community's first post office were located here as early as 1852.

## 16 Dolly Morden,

wife of Captain Morden, ran a private school in her home near this spot. Her husband was a prominent ship owner.

## 17 Captain Henry Weston and the City of Dresden

## 18 The Grece Apple Evaporator

was one of two in town. They preserved fruit in the days before refrigeration

## 19 The Stringer Elevator

operated on this spot around 1890. It became the White Corn Growers' Co-operative in the 1930s.

## 20 James T. Smith and the Textile Industry

## 21 Peter Kitchen's Store and Ashery

were important links in the economic chain of pioneer era Dresden. Cash strapped settlers brought Kitchen wood and ash. They could then buy or trade for goods at his store. Steamers bringing in goods would purchase cordwood from Kitchen to fire their engines and haul away the pearl ash he made from the ashes at his Ashery. The steamers delivered these to the textile industry in England.

## 22 A major sawmill

operated here in the 1880s. It was partly owned by the French family. The last commercial use of this site over 80 years later would also be as a lumber yard and door and sash factory. The French's meanwhile, are better known for the lumber mill they established north of the river. This would later become the Laird mill. The Laird's timber was shipped in from the Upper Great Lakes on their sailing schooner, the Vienna.

## 23 D.R. Van Allen and the Dresden Survey

## 24 This 1860s Colonial-style Home

may have been built by cabinetmaker Robert Smith who bought the property from D.R. Van Allen. Other owners included tailor Sam Chaffe and the Grece family.

## 25 Jared Lindsley, First Dresden Settler

## 26 Fretz House ,

the oldest frame structure in Dresden, was once an inn owned by William Whipper and later police constable John Fretz. This new home replaced it in early 2000.

## 27 Kirby House

was Van Allen's tavern, likely established in 1846.

## 28 Webster's Store

was operated here after George Webster bought the property in 1852. He died at a young age in 1862. His widow Martha and her 13-year-old daughter ran the store.

## 29 Dr. T.R. McInnes, Dresden's First Surgeon

## 30 Old No. 5

The Canadian Cannery (later Aylmer-Delmonte) operated a tomato canning plant that was built on this site in 1902 by Thomas Dunn. It was replaced by a more modern plant on Wellington Street in 1949.

## 31 The Lawrence and Wakefield Flour Mill



once sat on the site of the former North Kent Leader offices and presently apartment complex. The building was lost in a spectacular fire that broke out on Sunday, October 20, 1921 around 3 a.m.

## 32 Main Town Docks

The slope at the end of main street leads to what was once the main town docks. Dresden had at least five such docks where steamers and schooners loaded and unloaded goods and passengers.

## 33 James Burns Hollensworth and the Freed Slaves

## 34 Dresden Greenhouses

The house on this site began its life next to the Rudd Carriage Factory at the corner of St. George and Robinson). It was moved here around 1904 by John & Emma Slater as part of the Dresden Greenhouse. Art Wachsmuth purchased the two large greenhouses in 1935 and grew flowers there until 1956.

\*\*\*\* We hope you are enjoying our tour. \*\*\*\*

\*\*Continue to follow the red trilliums.\*\*



## 35 The J. Smith Home

This is believed to be the oldest surviving brick home in Dresden. The plaque in the peak reads "J. Smith, 1870". Though more research is needed, it's believed the owner was an early Dresden mason. Dresden's first brick yard, established north of the river in 1870, set off a brick building boom.

## 36 The Wright Mill

Though this elevator is no longer operating, it is possibly the longest continuously running milling site in the town. Rev. Henson and William Wright spirited away the original British American Institute grist mill to this site in the 1850s.

## 37 Bill Chapple's House

The son of an early Dresden postmaster, Chapple was the first person to develop the home of Rev. Josiah Henson as a tourist site named Uncle Tom's Cabin in the 1940's. On retirement he moved from the 3rd concession to this house.

## 38 The Wallaceburg Greenmelk Company

built its Dresden plant on this site in 1947. It produced processed grain and alfalfa into animal feed pellets here until the 1950s.

## 39 William Wright and the Fairport Survey

## 40 John the Baptist, Jack the Ripper and the Railroad

## 41 Dresden's Train Station

was originally located near this corner after the rail line reached Dresden in 1883. More recently it was located next to the fairgrounds, and then moved to the Prince Albert Sideroad where it is a garage today.

## 42 Con Agra is the town's leading industry.

The plant, built here in 1949, was previously owned by Nabisco Brands, Aylmer-Delmonte, Kraft and Canadian Cannerys.

PLEASE TAKE THE CONNECTING ROUTE, AS INDICATED ON MAP, TO THE FOOT OF HUGHES ST.

## 43 Josiah Henson and the British American Institute

## 44 The O. & W. McVean Factory Bell (see plaque)

## 45 Alexander McVean and the Hub & Spoke

## 46 Andrew Rigsby and the Louisville Slugger

## 47 Norm Thomson and the Valkyr

## 48 J.W. Sharpe and the Canning Industry

## 49 Bernie Hind Memorial

Hind was owner of the Sydenham Valley Chick Hatchery which was devastated by the '68 flood.

## 50 William Whipper and the Abolitionist Movement

## 51 Asa Ribble and the Sugar Beet Factory

## 52 The Sugar Beet Factory Offices

Look south across the park. The large brick building you see through the trees is the former office of the Sugar Beet Factory. The substantial building gives a sense of the mammoth proportions of the factory.

## 53 The Sugar Factory flumes

extended through the entire length of the wooded area where you are walking. Pieces of the flume walls and the two railroad spurs to the plant are still visible in this area. The Horticultural Society has been working to regenerate this area with wildflower plantings.