

**Enjoy a jaunt around Montello and learn about the rich history of this charming city.**

1. Start at Krakow Memorial Fishing Area named for Andy Krakow, a Conservation Warden killed while answering a domestic disturbance call. The historical kiosk located here will tell you about the rich history here.
2. The Fox River was the super highway of transportation for thousands of years. Imagine the canoes of Indians, then fur traders traveling this river. Buffalo Lake is a widening of the Fox River. After settlement, it was dredged continuously to keep it open for barges and steam boats. The road you are walking on took shape from the dredge dumped on the shoreline. Wild rice once grew along the edges of the river, harvested by Indians and food for thousands of water fowl. Look for the American Lotus beds that



Dredge on the Fox River

3. Find the Montello Library. It is located in a warehouse building used by the railroad that once came through behind the building. Trains travelled from Packwaukee on the spur to Montello and backed out to return. The station was farther to your right if you stand by the library, along with, in 1880, a large, well appointed hotel, the Perkins House. To the left of the Library down by the lake was a large and busy Norcross lumber yard for many years.



4. Walk to the big cottonwood tree on Underwood Avenue. This was once measured as the biggest tree in Wisconsin, but has lost some of its limbs and no longer holds that title. On the hill behind the tree is the Richter house that is on the National Historic Registry. It was built in 1912 by Charles S. Richter who was the President of the Montello Granite Company. The two Montello granite columns on the porch required 6 months of polishing. Turn and look to the south of the tree and you are looking about where the Perkins House (then Montello House) stood. It burned in 1906. Take a side trip through the Montello Cemetery to view many beautiful monuments made of Montello granite that stand on some of the early settlers' and founders graves. There



Montello House

was once a brick yard located along the lake where the cemetery now is located. Walk out on the point into Well's Park just past the cemetery for a beautiful view of Montello Lake.

5. Now walk along Park Street and stand in front of the Courthouse. This is the second courthouse in Montello (the first burned) for Marquette County and was opened in 1916. The building is on the National Historic Registry as is the jail building behind it. Before the courthouse, there was a hotel on the hill, formerly the home of Stephen and Julia Perkins, owners of the woolen mill. It was known as the Dartt Hotel or Hotel on the Hill.

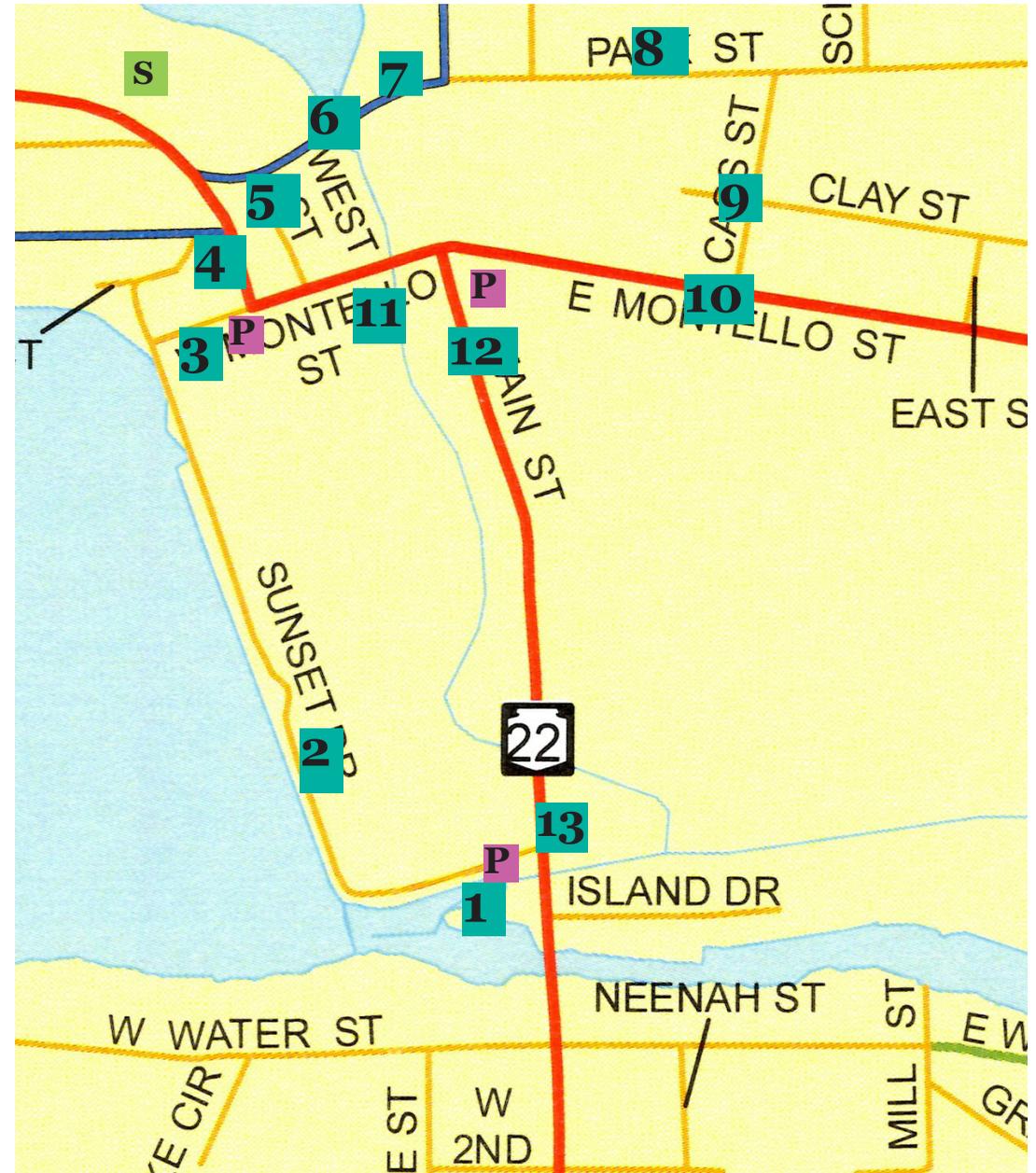


Perkins House

Across the street is the old city hall, today TW Designs.

The building housed a community hall in the upper floor where dances and celebrations were held.

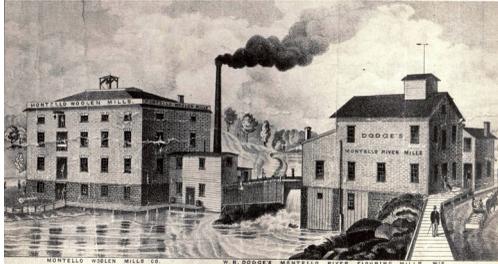
Take note also of the Veterans Memorial that incorporates some of the monuments placed by the War Mothers after World War I.



**P** Parking

**S** Side trip Montello Cemetery

6. Pause at the bridge. Montello Lake is to the north and the Montello River to the south. The lake is really a mill pond. The first dam was built by earliest settler Jason Daniels. The water powered a woolen mill and a feed mill, then the massive machinery of the granite companies. It also provided power to the City of Montello for the first street lights. The hydro building was built in 1914. Today it is a privately owned hydro power plant.



Woolen Mill and Flour/Grist Mill with dam in center. Looking from south to the north.

7. Walk east on Park Street. This area was once all connected to the granite quarries. Men making paving blocks lined the street. The quarry hole was one of three quarry sites in Montello. Different granite companies owned each pit at one time. The quarry hole you see is about 150 feet deep. The small office building on Park and Doty St corner was built in 1919 and housed the granite company office. The 70 foot chimney was built in 1944 and used 23,000 bricks. Today it is used by



Independent workers would set up sheds along Montello Lake and cut paving stones to sell. What is now Doty St.

8. Now take a walk east on Park Street to Clay St. You will pass a granite wall built in 1936 through the Works Progress Administration or WPA. That Montello granite wall put 22 men to work during the depression.

9. Now turn south on Cass St. It's a little climb, but stop at the intersection of Cass and Clay St. The top of the granite hill (private property now) was special to the Indians who inhabited this area for thousands of years. Settlers built a Catholic Church (see photo) there that was sold to the granite company in 1903. A new church was built down Clay St. A High School was built in 1881 that burned in 1895. Another was built in 1896 (see photo) but burned in 1926. The building you see now was built in 1914, the addition in 1939. Memories include sledding down Cass and Clay streets and a set of steps to get to the high school that ran up the granite hill by Kwik Trip today.



10. Walk down Cass to Montello St and turn right/west. The Trinity Methodist Church, now Reader's Realm Books, was built in 1867. Keep walking toward downtown/west and view the Montello Theater. It was built as an opera house before 1878 and was known as Dodge's Opera House. It's been remodeled several times, but has continuously been a theater since it was built.

Many of the houses on this street were built when the quarry was in full operation. Frank Dodge, of Dodge's Opera House lived at 28 Montello St. The photo shows him and his family



on the porch. Frank lost his leg in an accident at the quarry.



Next, stop in Daggett Park and view the quarry. The waterfalls are man made, but the water fills the 80 foot hole naturally. The quarry was started in 1879 and closed in 1976 due to high cost of operation and difficulty of quarrying in the middle of a

city. Numerous monuments are made of Montello granite including General Grant and Mrs. Grant's sarcophagi. At its peak, the Montello Granite Company employed over 200 workers. Citizen, realtor and Christmas tree grower Irv Daggett bought the quarry in 1977. In 1992 he built the waterfalls and placed the land in trust for public enjoyment.

The small waterfall at Hwy 23 and 22 was built by the Montello Lions in 1966.

11. Start at the Montello River and walk toward Buffalo Lake. There used to be a building that hung out over the river. It was the fire department and later a Doctor's office. Next to it is a barbershop that has been continuously a barbershop since about 1909. The building was first a grocery in 1890, then a confectionary. Here are some of the early businesses:

Address	Used to be	Built in
13 W Montello	Barber Shop	Pre 1895
15 W Montello	Saloon	Pre 1895
17 W Montello	Harness	Pre 1895
21 W Montello	Post Office/Jewelry	1900
25 W Montello	General Store	1884
29 W Montello	Saloon	1885
31 W Montello	Restaurant	1884
35 W Montello	Bank	1885
37 W Montello	Store	1886
43 W Montello	Store & Hall	Odd Fellows 1886
47 W Montello	McCudden Furniture	1885
49 W Montello	Millinery	Pre 1895
55 W Montello	JP Vaughn Blacksmith & Hall	1912
Cross the street, south side		
24 W Montello	Saloon	J D Cotter 1950
28 W Montello	O'Connor Farm Store	1905
30 W Montello	J O'Donnell Store	1899
36 W Montello	Mrs. G Krueger Saloon	1899
38 W Montello	M O'Donnell Saloon	1899
44 W Montello	C John Saloon	G W Lange 1894
46 W Montello	H A Freitag Butcher Shop	1893
48 W Montello	Gorske Shoe Store	1894
50 W Montello	Krentz/Wilde Saloon	1901
60 W Montello	Mrs. J Gilroy Hotel	1893
66 W Montello	Czeskleba Hardware	1890
70 W Montello	Weseloh & Just Gen Merchant	1890
30 E Montello	Dodge Opera House	1878?
12. Walk south on Main Street toward Krakow Park		
1 Main	Bank	1899
5 Main	Murphy Bros Saloon	1899
15 Main	Mrs. J Wincell Saloon	1899
17 Main	D Wilde Hotel	1899
29-33 Main	County Court House/Offices	1863/1880
2 Main	M Smart Mercantile	1909
10 Main	M Smart Drug Store	1896
14 Main	H Pahl Bakery	1893
18 Main	Grocery	1893
20 Main	S Griffin Boots & Saddle	1904
22 Main	Masonic Lodge/Furniture	1905
38 Main	Quantius Flour & Feed	1895

# Historic Montello Walking Tour



Brought to you by The Montello Historic Preservation Society

**Enhance your tour with the John Muir Nature and History mobile app! See more historic photos and read more about Montello sites.**

<http://muirboyhoodhome.toursphere.com>

Marquette County John Muir Nature and History Route

© Kathleen McGwin 2019