

# HISTORIC BAILEYS HARBOR



**BAILEYS HARBOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**EXPLORE THE PAST ~  
INSPIRE THE FUTURE**

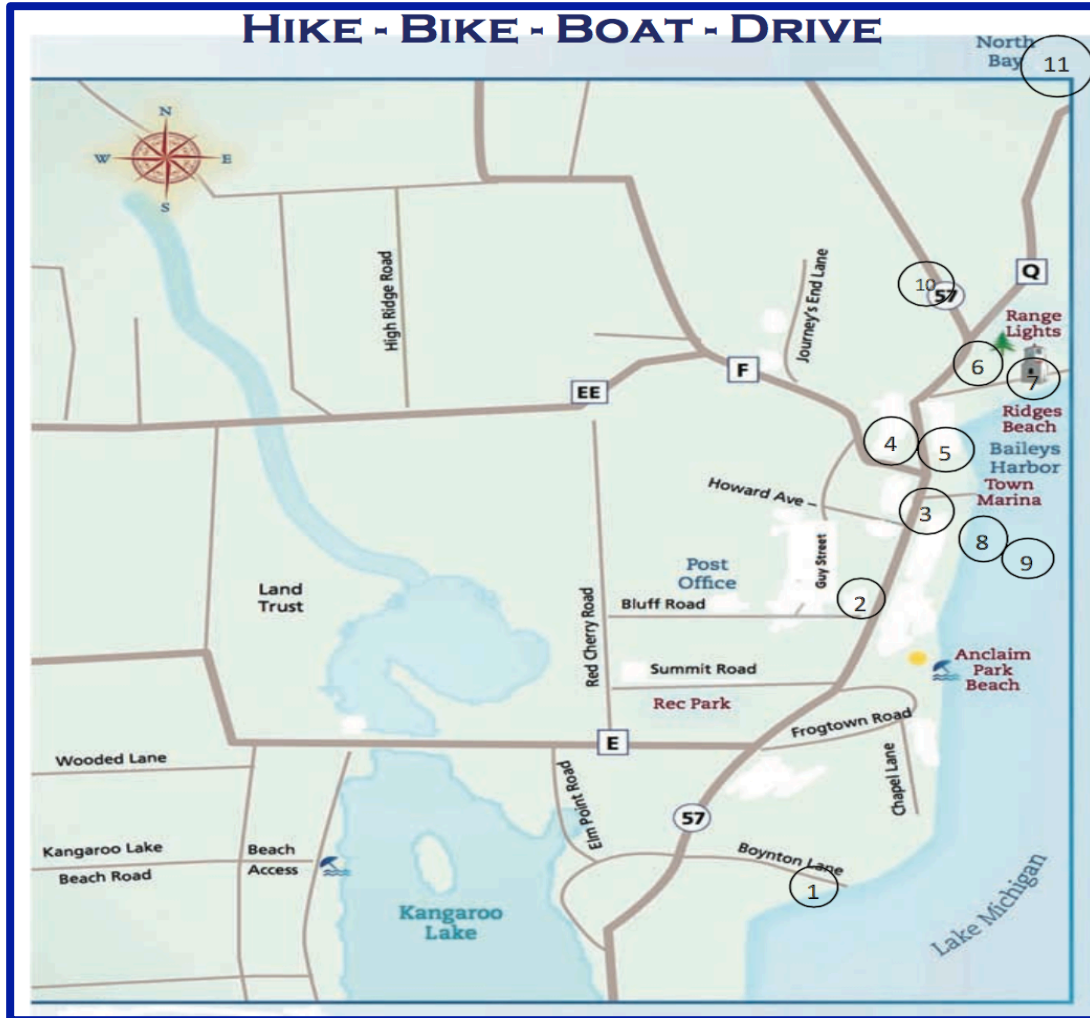


Photograph by Baileys Harbor Historical Society

## **Welcome to the Baileys Harbor Historical Society's Tour of Historic Baileys Harbor**

**For over 150 years, Baileys Harbor has had a lively and interesting history. From the 19th century pioneering families who first cleared the land, built homes, shipped limestone for building cities and risked their lives on Lake Michigan to today's artists, environmentalists and entrepreneurs, Baileys Harbor has been a diverse and welcoming community. We invite you to join us on what we think will be a rewarding and informative journey.**





1. Boynton Chapel at Björklunden

2. Toft House

3. Globe Hotel & Eatough Home\*

4. Town Hall & Mc Ardle Library\*

5. August Zahn's Blacksmith Shop & House\*

6. The Ridges Sanctuary

7. Baileys Harbor Range Lights\*

8. Old Baileys Harbor "Birdcage" Lighthouse

9. The *Christina Nilsson* Shipwreck\*

10. Birds Park\*

11. Cana Island Lighthouse

\* Designates locations that are on the National Register of Historic Places which is the official federal list of sites significant in American History and culture.



Photograph by Lawrence University

## **Boynton Chapel at Björklunden**

A 12th-century stave church in Lillehammer, Norway, inspired Winifred Boynton to create Boynton Chapel as a sanctuary of peace. She was traveling following the tragedy of her first husband's fatal automobile accident.

She later married Donald Boynton, and they, with the help of their children and local craftsmen, built the chapel between 1939 and 1947. Winifred designed and painted the frescoes covering the walls and ceiling. She and her husband created the amazing woodcarvings found throughout the chapel.

The Boyntons bequeathed their estate to Lawrence University, assured that the chapel would be preserved and used for religious purposes on a regular basis. Lawrence maintains a satellite campus at Björklunden, accommodating a wide variety of events. The chapel is open Monday and Wednesday afternoons in the summer.

◆ Björklunden is found south of Baileys Harbor at 7950 Boynton Lane.





Photograph by Baileys Harbor Historical Society

## **The Toft House**

### **Home of the Baileys Harbor Historical Society**

The Toft House is one of the oldest houses in Baileys Harbor. A devastating fire swept through town in 1868 and destroyed the home and shop of cooper Miles Carrington. Following the fire, he built this saltbox house to shelter his family.

Situated next to the Toft family home which was located on the corner of Hwy 57 and Bluff Road, the Carrington homestead was purchased by Thomas Toft in 1900 for \$550. Thomas' daughter, Emma, lived in the house for many years. Following the family tradition of nature advocacy, Emma was one of the founders of the Ridges Sanctuary as well as the Toft Point Natural Area.

The Town of Baileys Harbor purchased the Toft House in 2013, and it is now being used as the town's Visitor Center as well as the home of the Historical Society.

◆ The Toft House is located at 8061 Highway 57 in Baileys Harbor and street parking is available.



Photograph by Baileys Harbor Historical Society

## **The Globe Hotel and Eatough Residence\***

Built in 1867, this structure was originally a general store run by two brothers. Roger Eatough bought it in 1874 and turned it into the Globe Hotel. He was hoping to capitalize on the presence of seamen and others staying in the busy port of Baileys Harbor. It is said that men were housed on one end of the building, and women on the other. Soon, however, it became necessary to turn the hotel into a home to shelter the eight Eatough children. In 1914, Roger's daughters, Lucy and Sarah, opened the Homestead Inn and the house became, briefly, a hotel once again.

Eatough was prominent in business and politics throughout the county and eventually left his Greek Revival homestead to live in Sturgeon Bay. It remains in the family. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982.

◆ The Globe Hotel is found at 8090 Highway 57 in Baileys Harbor.





Photograph by Royal Broil

## **Baileys Harbor Town Hall and McArdle Library\***

The Town Hall and McArdle Library building was bequeathed to the town by Michael W. McArdle, a very successful businessman and inventor. He was raised in Baileys Harbor by Irish immigrant parents.

McArdle's plans included a heating plant, an auditorium, and a library at least sixteen feet square. He also left money to fund and maintain the library. The exterior was to be made of local limestone. The building was to be finished in five years, and was completed August 21, 1938.

The Town Hall has met and exceeded McArdle's expectations, as it has become the center of town: housing town government, a library, meeting rooms and offices as well as hosting town gatherings and special events for groups. The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2000.

The Town Hall is located at 2392 County Highway F.



Photograph by Baileys Harbor Historical Society

## **Blacksmith Inn - August Zahn's Blacksmith Shop and House\***

This site includes the original blacksmith shop (1905) and the Zahn residence (1916-17) just north of the shop. The blacksmith shop retains Zahn's original forge. The floor is notable for its Nicholson paving, consisting of 4 to 5-inch sections of wood blocks set on end and resting on a bed of sand. The walls of both structures are examples of stove wood construction; short lengths of tree limbs are mortared into cords, the ends remaining visible in the finished wall.

Zahn intended to move his blacksmith shop into the residence. Regulations wouldn't permit this, so most of the building was unfinished on the interior for more than 80 years, and the family occupied only a small apartment on the first floor. This site was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2000.

◆ The Blacksmith Inn is located at 8152 Highway 57.





Photograph by Baileys Harbor Historical Society

## **The Ridges Sanctuary**

The Ridges Sanctuary, Wisconsin's first land trust, was established in 1937 as a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving a forty-acre parcel of land that is one of the most biologically diverse ecosystems in Wisconsin. Its ridged topography was formed by successive movements of Lake Michigan over the past 1400 years. In 1934, the Bureau of Lighthouses deeded the Range Light property to the Door County Park Commission.

The Park Commission, perhaps hoping to capitalize on the then current craze for trailer tourism, decided to fill in the swales with rock to level the terrain and thereby create a trailer park. Local people and environmentalists, together with allies from Wisconsin science institutions, were able to protest the plan and establish the Ridges Sanctuary organization. Today, the Ridges protects over 1600 acres of the most critical lands in our community. The Ridges interpretive Center is open year round.

◆ The Ridges Interpretive Center is located at 8166 Highway 57.



Upper Range Light



Lower Range Light

Photographs by  
The Ridges Sanctuary

## **Baileys Harbor Range Lights\***

The Range Lights were built in 1870, consisting of the Upper Range Light, also the keeper's house, and a Lower Range Light 950 feet forward. The house displayed a white light on the lantern room's south side. The Lower Range Light was a small tower displaying a fixed red light on its seaward side. Mariners had to keep the white light above the red light to safely enter the harbor.

Fuel was originally lard oil, then kerosene, then acetylene gas, always using the least expensive fuel possible. The lights were electrified in 1930, then replaced in 1969, when a single directional light was established on a metal tower just south of the Lower Range Light. The Range Lights have been restored, were relit on June 11, 2015, and will remain lit permanently, replacing the directional light. This site was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1989.

◆ On Ridges Road, the Lower Range Light is on the left just before the beach. Looking north, you can see the Upper Range Light through the Ridges Sanctuary.





Photograph by Kraig Anderson

## **Old Baileys Harbor “Birdcage” Lighthouse**

The Old Baileys Harbor lighthouse was erected by Alanson Sweet, owner of Captain Bailey’s ship that discovered Baileys Harbor. Sweet purchased Lighthouse Island and secured the commission to build the lighthouse in 1851, using limestone from his own quarry to construct the tower and a 1 1/2- story keeper's dwelling. Its most notable feature is its birdcage lantern, one of only three in the United States still equipped with this antiquated lantern style.

It marked the entrance to Baileys Harbor, but provided little guidance to vessels seeking anchorage. In December 1869, on the final day of navigation for the season, the light was extinguished for the last time. The Baileys Harbor Range Lights took over the function of marking Baileys Harbor in 1870.

◆ The Birdcage Lighthouse is now privately owned, but can be seen across the harbor through the telescope on the Baileys Harbor town marina.



Photograph by the Wisconsin State Historical Society

### **The Christina Nilsson Shipwreck\***

The Christina Nilsson was built in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, in 1871, at the time that the world famous Swedish operatic soprano was touring the United States. The three-masted schooner was typical of late 19th-century bulk-cargo sailing vessels.

On October 23, 1884, she left Escanaba, Michigan, bound for Chicago with a load of pig iron. Facing a blizzard with tremendous seas, the captain tried for the Sturgeon Bay ship canal, but was forced to turn north and try to shelter in Baileys Harbor. The Nilsson hit a reef near the old lighthouse and sank in 15 feet of water. No lives were lost, the cargo was salvaged, but the ship was a total loss. The Christina Nilsson was listed on the National Register of historic places in 2003.

◆ The wreck is marked by a Wisconsin Historical Society seasonal mooring buoy. The dive site is boat entry only.





Photograph by Don Burkett

### **Birds Park\*: Albert Zahn (1864-1953)**

Albert Zahn came to America when he was 12 years old and spent most of his life as a dairy farmer. Retiring at 60, he and his wife Louise moved to Baileys Harbor and built the cast cement house he called Birds Park. He installed a wind charger on the roof; a gasoline engine provided alternative power.

Zahn, a prolific woodcarver, displayed his carvings of animals, totems, and angels on posts in the yard and on the building. His wife, Louise, painted the carvings. Zahn sold his work for as little as thirty-five cents, price dependent on the time it took to carve an item. Now a nationally known folk artist, his work has been shown at the Art Institute of Chicago, The Guggenheim Museum, The Milwaukee Art Museum, and the Smithsonian. Birds Park was listed on the National Register of historic places in 2003.

◆ Now privately owned, Birds Park is located just north of Baileys Harbor at 8223 Highway 57.



Photograph by Kraig Anderson

## **Cana Island Lighthouse\***

Cana Island Lighthouse was built in 1869. The cream-colored Milwaukee Brick tower was the tallest brick structure in the county, 85 feet above the level of the lake. The first floor was home to the keeper's family. Raging storms sometimes flooded the keeper's house. Harsh conditions eventually caused the tower to be clad in steel plates, which were later painted white.

In 1934, the Coast Guard absorbed the Lighthouse Bureau, and electricity came to Cana Island. The last civilian keeper served to 1941, when the Coast Guard took over at the beginning of World War II. The light was automated in 1944. For a fee, you may tour the lighthouse and even climb the tower. The Door County Maritime Museum has created a museum site with park-like grounds. This site was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976.

- ◆ County Highway Q will take you to Cana Island.



Photograph by Baileys Harbor Historical Society

## **The Baileys Harbor Community Mural**

Inspired by the poem, "Wintergreen Ridge," written by Lorine Niedecker after she toured the Ridges Sanctuary, the mural contains hidden words from the poem that highlight the past, present and future of Baileys Harbor along with images of historic buildings and people, landmarks, indigenous plants and animals.

The project was led by resident and poet Nancy Rafal, and project partners, The Ridges Sanctuary and the Baileys Harbor Historical Society. It was designed and painted by local artist Ram Rojas in 2012-13.

◆ It can be viewed on the north side of Nelson's Shopping Center just south of the town marina at 8124 Highway 57.