

THE VILLAGE OF STOUFFVILLE

Stouffville was founded by Abraham and Elizabeth Stouffer who came from Chambersburg, Pennsylvania in 1804 and purchased land on both sides of the Town Line in Concession 9. Here they built a mill around which this community developed.

Earliest development took place in what is now the east end, around the 10th Line crossroads

A second development focus centred on mills near Stouffville Creek in the vicinity of Mill and Market Streets. The railway line came through in the 1870s and brought prosperity and development further west.



Following the creation of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville in 1971, a crest was developed as a symbol of the Town. Its images represent the three entities which contributed land and population to the new Town, Whitchurch and Markham Townships and the Village of Stouffville. A white church represents the former, the crosses of St. George and St. Andrew symbolize the earliest founders of Markham, and the star and chalice are from the family crest of Stouffville's founding Stouffer family.

THE WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Whitchurch-Stouffville Historical Society was founded in 1987. Its purpose is to make the community more aware of its heritage through entertainment, education and participation. We encourage you to join us at our bi-monthly meetings. Further information is available in the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library.



The Whitchurch-Stouffville Historical Society hopes that you enjoy this walking tour, and asks you to respect the privacy and property of the residents by keeping to the roads and sidewalks.

Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy in this brochure. Corrections and additional information will be gratefully received.



Map and Illustrations by
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STOUFFVILLE VILLAGE WALKING TOUR

1

Stouffville Centre North

covering the residential area
north of Main Street
on Mill, George, Duchess,
Church and Commercial Streets



17/19 Church Street

2nd Revised Edition
Produced by the
Whitchurch-Stouffville Historical Society
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It was in 1804 that Abraham Stouffer saw the potential in the creek running through the woods of this area and felt that he could develop mills in this location. He purchased 200 acres in Whitchurch township on what is now the north side of Main Street from Russell Hoag, a Quaker who moved to the Altona area of Uxbridge township. Stouffer found the ideal site for his gristmill on the south side of Main Street, and purchased 100 acres in Markham township from John Williams in 1808. This foresight led to the development of a small community around the creek. It would be some years before his mills were actually built, but we have record of a gristmill on the south side and a sawmill on the north in 1824.

In May of 1826, David Gibson, Provincial Surveyor, drew up a plan for Stouffer's new town, to be called Stoufferville, which has been shortened to Stouffville. The plan showed the sites of the mill and the mill pond which were on the north side. This brochure covers the residential development on the north side of Main in the centre of town.

In spite of their importance to the early development of the village, both the mills and the millpond disappeared from Stouffville's landscape soon after the arrival of the train.

Mill Street was once the lane that connected the sawmill and the millpond. As you walk north, the first two houses (#18 & #22) are on the site of William "Herbert" Avery's blacksmith shop and home (c.1901-19). Mill buildings had been in this vicinity with a store and post office prior to the blacksmith shop. #18 has replaced the shop. Rev. Morton started to build it, and it was finished by Ambrose Stover in 1938. #22 was moved to this site from the east end, serving as Avery's, then as his successor, Murray Hill's home to 1938.

#28 was the home of H.W. Shaw, a dry goods merchant on Main Street, and Martin Tait, a butcher with a shop across from the clock tower.

Originally Dr. James Freel's home in the east end [built c1850], #48 is definitely older than its renovations let on. It was moved here after 1910 by his grandson Ira to be used as a rental home.

#58/60 is a unique, semi-detached dwelling in the 19th century Gothic style. It was built in two phases with the south part built in 1896 and the north part a year or two later. The considerable additions and board and batten cladding have not



altered the feel. Look behind the porch railing to see the uneven door steps, indicative to the different floor levels within.

Just before the 1990s subdivision we find #77 on the east side. Built in 1911 by William Bruels for a widow, Mrs. Alexander Stewart, this house could well have been purchased from a department store catalogue, possibly with blocks made by *Gormley Concrete Block Co.* (1908-21).

Returning south along Mill, #49 dates to 1888, and the addition to 1907; spruce trees and a fence post remind us that many of the oldest

homes sat on larger village lots, with a barn for the horse, a run for the chickens and a small house with a crescent moon on the door in the yard. The barn still stands at the rear of the lot and can be seen when we walk up the street behind.

#33, built for Elijah Pennock (c.1895), was the residence of Rev. Samuel (Grampa) Goudie for many years. He was well known throughout the provincial Mennonite community, having served as an associate editor of the church newspaper, the *Gospel Banner*.

Turn left onto *George Street*: One suggestion for the origin of the street name is the "George Brothers", who were owners of the sash and door factory on Edward Street (see brochure #8). Mrs. George lived at #67 Church across from George Street.

#69 George St. is another house moved to its current location from the east end where it may have been a commercial building. It has had significant renovations in recent years.

The street takes an abrupt turn to the north.

#63 George has been restored to its original Victorian style, with its touches of ornament and full front porch. It was built c.1876 for Charles Perry, a painter and decorator.

Detour briefly down *Duchess Street*. #22 is one of several traditional Gothic homes on the tour. Others will be found on Church Street at



numbers 80, 126 and 61. Among the features of these simple, 19th century, 1½-storey houses is the central gable which often contains a pointed arch, Gothic window. This particular home was built for Joe Mertens Sr., uncle of prominent photographer, William Mertens.

#25 *Duchess* is another style which repeated several times on Church Street (84, 108, 115, 93 & 47). This high

Victorian look features bayed wings, ornate gingerbread in the gables, coined corners and a belled roof over the porch. Around the corner to the north, back-to-back with this house, #59 *George* has many of the same ornamental features, including the use of two colours of brick. While the former is built on a cross plan, the latter is larger and built on a square plan. They were constructed in the late 1880s for brothers, John and Thomas Casely.

Dominating the area, at the north end of *Park Street* (as this road was called) was one of Stouffville's major early recreation complexes, the *Maple Leaf Rink*. Built by Nathan Forsyth in 1906, it was used until the 1920s, when a new rink was built in Memorial Park.



Turn east past the newer homes of George St., then turn left at *Church Street* noting first the houses on the west side.

Nathan Forsyth (1852-1948) was a local master builder. His distinctive designs include elliptical arch windows (usually with stained glass in the arch), soldier brick or corbelling over the windows, a porch/balcony projection at the entrance in wood or brick, and a sturdy,

square design. Look for Forsyth features in numbers 72, 96, 102, 184, 105 and 60 Church St.

#72 was built in 1893 for Samuel Burkholder, who, with his brother Jacob, operated a local furniture and undertaking business. The house was converted into apartments about 1941 by Frank Bruels. The back of the lot along George St. was subdivided and the "new" houses built in the late 1950s.

A 1½-storey Gothic, #80, was built in 1889 for

blacksmith Isaac Boadway. This was the home of Richard and Frances Brimson, retired farmers from 1895-1917. Archie Stouffer, longtime principal of Stouffville Continuation School lived here from 1926-1951, when it was



purchased by Ormsby and Linda Lehman who sold it in 1986. This is one of the older homes that does not appear to have changed a great deal over the years, when viewed from the front. A look along the south side reveals a large addition that blends well with the original.

The street to the north of #84 was named for the house's owner, Samuel Warriner, a successful merchant of gentlemen's apparel. He is said to have been a firm believer in barter, having paid the workers who constructed his home in 1889 with store credit. Mrs Warriner lived here until 1954.

#96 was the residence of home builder, Nathan Forsyth, [c1890]. It features an interesting **horseshoe window** in the gable (a similar one will be seen at #60). Mr and Mrs E.R. Good ran a maternity home here before opening the *Brierbush Hospital* on Main Street around 1935.

#102, a 2-storey brick home was built by Nathan Forsyth about 1904 as the Methodist church parsonage.



It remained with the church until 1960 and is now in private hands.

The 2-storey, frame, Victorian structure at #108, was built for Hiram Johnson c1889. This home became the residence of Major John R. Button from 1904-1918. Delbert and Gertrude Holden (the Ford car agent) owned it from 1918-1948 when it was sold to Annie and Arthur Heaton who operated a nursing home here.

The Gothic house at the corner of Church and *Frederick*, #126, was built about 1870, before the land around it was divided into small house lots. Edward Wheeler once owned this property, and it has been suggested that he had a house at this location. "Grampa" Goudie lived here from 1918 to 1933 prior to moving to #33 Mill.

A 1930 newspaper column recalling the "olden days" in Stouffville asks if anyone remembers when the fairgrounds were at the north end of Church St. and talks about the annual Fall Fair of the Markham and Whitchurch Agricultural Society being held here, along with baseball games and the occasional shooting match at Thanksgiving. It is likely that these grounds were behind these Church Street houses.

#146 is in a style typical of the 1920s when some infilling began taking place. Paul Boadway, later the manager of the Dominion Store on Main St., had this home built about 1931. The garage and breezeway to the north, which complement the original home, were added in the 1990s.

A cornerstone at the south-east corner of #158 reads "Built by Lud Hoover, July 29, 1897". This is one of three houses (also #166 & #174) thought to have been built by Hoover. Solid like the Forsyth houses, they are less ornate in their detailing. It was purchased by John and Nancy Kendrick in 1899. After Nancy died in 1918 it was purchased by David Stapleton who lived here until 1969.

Built between 1900 and 1907 for Lud Hoover's brother, Levi, #166 was later owned by David Kendrick and then James and Keturah Murison, who purchased it in 1923. The centre gable on the front and truncated side gables distinguish this from the other Hoover-built houses.

#174 was built in the late 1890s for Lud and Levi's



aunt, Elizabeth Carrette. It was purchased by "Shine" Davis in 1922. A real "man about town", he was a very fine tailor who umpired baseball games, had a tobacco shop which was the hub for the male community, and was generally known as a local character.

#184 was built c.1902 for John Bartholomew, retired farmer, who lived here until 1928. You may by now recognize the Nathan Forsyth style.

#194, and #195 and #191 across the street may date from the 1920s and may, like #77 Mill, have been catalogue kit houses. Note the textured concrete block construction.

Retracing your steps to the south, take a look at the homes on the east side of the road. Development on this side was delayed by the swampiness of the area known as "the Willows". #175 and #171 are a matched pair, built after 1931. Nathan Forsyth retired to #171, while his brother-in-law, Rev. Herbert Lee lived in 175.

As you pass #143 a small ditch, visible between the houses, coincides with the original village boundary. The extension of Church St. north of this point was annexed to the village in January 1931, by which time there were seven houses on North Church.

The original frame house at #115, with its beautiful stained glass windows and ornate verandahs with gingerbread trim, was built c1889 for J. Hugh and Margaret McDonald. Their sons Hugh, John and Alex were livestock dealers and operated a butcher shop near the southeast corner of Main and Market streets.

The Forsyth-style house at #105 was built c1893 for John Bartholomew's daughter, Blanche, when she married John Monkhouse, a tailor in the village for over 60 years.

#99 and #97 were apparently built as a double house for rental purposes. There is a story told that it was moved from the east end, got stuck in the mud and was left here. It has been beautifully restored in recent years.

#93 built by David Brownsberger about 1894, was the home of Robert and Rachael Duncan from 1895-1905; he was a carriage builder whose business establishment was located on the north side of Main Street in the vicinity of the creek.

Note the brick-based columns and inset gable with a

finial at the peak on #87 (c.1909). There are other Jacob Heise-built houses in town with the same distinguishing elements and overall appearance.

The stucco house, #81, was built in 1935 for Rev. Young, the United Church Minister.

#75 (above right) is a distinctive grey-brick house and unique on the street. We have reason to believe that the north part was built here c.1895 and was the long time home of Alexander and Agnes Waddell, while the south part is an addition, moved from Edward Street.

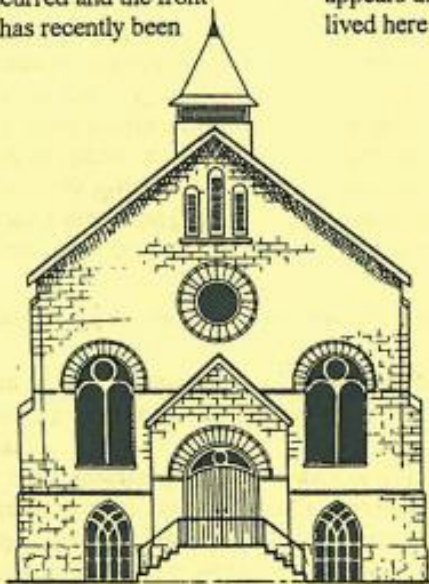
#67 is a 2-storey brick house built c.1883 for Marianne George, mother of the George brothers who owned the planing mill. Other owners have included Abraham Nighswander, Carrie Murchison and Doug Bacon, who had it as a rental property.

Built in 1878 for Frank Saunders, #61 is a simple frame house which had only four owners between then and 1959. In the 1960s a facelift occurred and the front entrance was removed. The house has recently been renewed and the entrance replaced.

#60, on the west side, is a good example of Nathan Forsyth design. Built for Letitia Barkey around 1891, Elizabeth Truman (a sister-in-law to David Stouffer) lived here from 1893 until her death in 1928. Interestingly, this home has long been called the "David Stouffer House", although he never owned it. Stouffer was a grandson of the village founder, Abraham Stouffer, and was regarded as a village historian. #12 George St. was built on a lot severed from this one in 1968.

#55 has been charmingly restored, although how close to the original in character is not clear. Built c1887, Nelson and Mary Connor were the first residents of this home, followed by Alfred and Mary Hoover from 1905-1952.

On the west side, #50 was purchased by hardware merchant, William Silvester and his wife, Charlotte



[Lemon] in 1889, before becoming the home of her sisters, Jessie and Mary from 1937 to 1961. The lot behind, where Stouffville Tribunes's editor Charlie Nolan had his new home built, was sold to him in 1941.

Still on the west side, #46 was built for Robert Curtis, a retired Mongolia (north Markham twp.) storekeeper, about 1927. It remained in family hands for over 55 years.

Notable Victorian features of #47 (east side), including key-arched windows, the lower bayed extension and rounded verandah, are unique on Church St. This large home built for Wm Mason in 1883 became the residence of his nephew, Main Street tailor, Frank Rae, and his sisters in 1915.

One of the oldest houses on Church St., #37, built c1873 for Thomas Tinkler, this house was in the possession of Samuel Burkholder from 1875-1899. It appears that Richard Rowan, physician and pharmacist, lived here about 1891. It then became the home of Ferdinand Dales, MD, from 1899-1930, when it was bought by Cliff and Jennie Pipher, parents of town historian, Jean Barkey.

The United Church (originally Methodist) at #34 was built in 1892 by Nathan Forsyth. Its simple lines appear in the illustration. This was the third building used by the Methodist congregation on this site as they had outgrown the brick church of 1872 and a previous frame building.

Next door, #22 (c.1880) was the first home of R.J. Daley, a successful businessman and property developer, and his wife Lucinda. It was sold to William Hunter and then to Dr. Ira Freely, who likely added the office extension on the south side about 1899.

On the east side, the double house, #17/19 (see cover illustration) was the first school in Stouffville, built prior to 1852. It was used as the Methodist church in 1865, and moved here in 1872 to allow for the construction of a brick church.

Before reaching Main St., turn west on Commercial Street where #21 stands. This unusually large, 2½-storey Gothic house was built c1870s closer to Main St., but was moved back by owner Ed Lloyd in the 1930s to

accommodate additional commercial buildings.

Continuing west on Commercial St. brings you back to the tour start at Mill Street and Library Lane. The 1-storey brick building west of the Mill St. houses, served as the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library from 1977 to 2001.

