

Downtown Circles and Squares!

CLINTON SQUARE – Clinton Square has been the center of entertainment in Syracuse dating back to the canal days and is in fact named after Dewitt Clinton, the father of the Erie Canal. The Erie Canal once ran through its center, which today is adorned by a magnificent fountain. Every weekend during the summer months you will find some type of music or ethnic festival drawing crowds to its center. The summer festival season always kicks off in late May/early June with the Taste of Syracuse event. Other annual favorites include the NYS Rhythm and Blues Festival each July, the Irish Festival in September and many more in between.

During the winter season Clinton Square is transformed into the largest outdoor skating rink in Syracuse and is open daily for the public to enjoy.

The Square's focal point is the Soldiers and Sailors Monument, sculpted in 1910 and recently refurbished.



HANOVER SQUARE – The Hanover Square Historic District includes buildings along the 100 blocks of East Genesee and East Water Streets, as well as the Grange Building, State Tower Building, and City Hall Commons along South Warren Street.



Hanover Square was the site of the village well and Syracuse's first commercial district. It was the main recruiting area during the Civil War, and the site of a spectacular bonfire made from recruiting booths at the War's end. In 1871 a huge crowd gathered here to witness the first recorded hot air balloon ascension in the Syracuse area.

Recently designated a Historic District on The National Register of Historic Places, the Square contains a variety of 19th century buildings, some dating back to 1834 when a fire leveled the original Square. The structures on the north side of the Square were originally canal loft “double-enders.” This allowed merchants to hoist goods up into their stores from barges on the Erie Canal and then lower the goods by pulley and tackle into wagons in Hanover Square. Extensive renovation of the Square was completed in the spring on 1981. Hanover Square now boasts a variety of retail shops, restaurants, bars and real estate.

COLUMBUS CIRCLE – Home of great annual events such as the awesome Arts and Crafts Festival in July and best known for its statue of Christopher Columbus at its center. The Italian immigrants that settled in Syracuse financed the statue, which was sculpted in Italy by Renzo V. Baldi. However, once it was completed the budget was depleted and shipping costs could not be covered. Mussolini himself came to the rescue offering to pay for the shipping dependent on the words “Christoforo Columbo, Discoverer of America” being engraved on the statue. As you can see the statue stands in the center of the circle facing the west, the direction in which Columbus sailed, and does indeed have those words inscribed on it.



ARMORY SQUARE – The Armory Square Historical District is the area bounded by South Clinton Street, West Jefferson, West Fayette Street, and Onondaga Creek. A former warehouse and industrial area, the neighborhood began a renewal in the late 1970’s, when “urban pioneers” began to locate in old, unused warehouses and establish new businesses. Today, an interesting mix of uses abounds in Armory Square, including offices, retail stores, restaurants and nightlife, apartments and condos. At the heart of the Armory Square Historic District is the

Museum of Science and Technology, located in the renovated New York State Armory, which is home to the only domed IMAX® Theater in Upstate NY.

FRANKLIN SQUARE – The park within the square was developed by the Pyramid Companies as payment in lieu of taxes to the city. A larger-than-life bronze statue of Benjamin Franklin stands on a granite base and overlooks the landscaped green space complete with an ornate fountain and a pavilion of stone columns and wooden beams. Many of the old warehouses you see here have been restored for senior housing and businesses. The area will continue to flourish with the redevelopment of the nearby Inner Harbor Waterfront District. Also...Don’t think for a moment that the square is named after Benjamin; it’s because of the Franklin Car that was developed in Syracuse from 1902-1934. You can see one of these grand machines on display at the Onondaga Historical Association’s Museum on Montgomery Street.



Footsteps of History - Armory Square

The *Armory Square* district was part of the historic Walton Tract. Eventually, in the mid 1800's, the millpond that fed Walton's Mill and its surrounding swamp was filled in to assist in the elimination of frequent outbreaks of malaria. The district's land was graded and the streets extended. In the 1970's, after many years of neglect, some foresighted Syracusians began purchasing and renovating these historic buildings. The transformation created a unique area for artists, retailers and business people to develop and grow. Today, Armory Square is alive with people shopping, dining and living.

- 500 S. Franklin Street, MOST: The site of the first Armory was established in 1859 in the oval-shaped Jefferson Park and was designed by Syracuse architect Horatio Nelson White. This was followed by a fire and several additions, all lending it's fortress-like appearance to the current-day Museum of Science & Technology (MOST). The original design was to serve several functions including the storage of arms, equipment, housing of military offices as well as occasional social functions.
- 269 W. Jefferson Street, On-Track Station: Formally the D, L & W Railroad station, this "completely fireproof" streamlined building was built in 1941 to replace an older station built in 1877 and was designed by Frederick B. O'Connor. It is a polished granite base, faced with buff-colored bricks with limestone trim and the interior is trimmed with aluminum with travertine floor. Its modernistic design was symbolic of speed and transportation.
- 416 S. Clinton Street, Hawthorn Suites: This 1927 Neo-Classical building designed by Gustavus Young, has been the site of several hotels. Built with steel-framed construction, it is the tallest structure in the Armory Square District. Note the optical illusion of a 2 dimensional building - stand on the north side of the MOST and walk towards the Hawthorn Suites building; the north side of the building seems to disappear, leaving a 2 sided allusion.
- 318-322 S. Clinton Street, Neal and Hyde Building: Built in 1883 and designed by Asa L. Merrick, this robust Romanesque-style building trimmed in sandstone, originally served as a very profitable dry goods business owned by William Neal and Salem Hyde.
- 120 - 124 Walton Street, Bentley-Settle Building: This building, the former home of the Bentley-Settle Grocery wholesaler, is an imposing figure dominating the north side of Walton Street. Several years after Bentley-Settle's closure in 1973, the building was rejuvenated by area artists in need of affordable studio space and marks one of the earliest efforts in the district's transformation.
- 402-412 S. Franklin Street, Hall-McChesney Building: Originally home to Hall-McChesney Publishing and Printing Company, this 1878 building was built in two sections. It also has the dubious distinction of being the first building in the Armory Square district to have its renovations completed. The first tenant was Syracuse New Times who occupied the building from 1979 to 1987. Since then, the Hall-McChesney Building has been home to several wonderful restaurants.

- 204-210 Walton Street & S. Franklin, Misener Building: The Misener Building (1873), with its ground floor display windows and its U-shaped floor plan, was originally home to Gray Brothers' Boot and Shoe Factory. In the 1920's, Misener Manufacturing purchased the build
- 309-315 S. Franklin Street, Labor Temple Building: Originally bearing the name its builders, the Crouse Building (built by Jacob and Charles Crouse) was home to several local manufacturing facilities including Penfield Manufacturing. The name of the building was changed in 1927 when it became offices for various labor organizations. The Labor Temple Building is richly detailed with brickwork and features the blending of rounded and rectangular windows with a Richardsonian arch in the central section. Currently, it is home to several offices as well as a restaurant.
- 301-307 W. Fayette Street, Crown Hotel: No longer a hotel, this Italianate building represents construction due to the railroads in downtown Syracuse during the mid to late 1800's. The New York Central Railroad Station was once located across W. Fayette Street (currently a parking lot). The building boasts ornate brickwork around the doors and windows as well as metal cornices with paired brackets. Presently, the Crown Hotel is home to a restaurant, offices and apartments.
- 227-237 W. Fayette Street, Piper-Phillips Block: Another by-product of the railroads, the Piper-Phillips block held store fronts on its first floor and the upper floors operated as residential housing for railroad workers. After the railroads left downtown in the 1930's, this hotel was abandoned. It was in service as an office for the Bentley-Settle Company (located behind this building on Walton Street) until 1973.