

Introduction

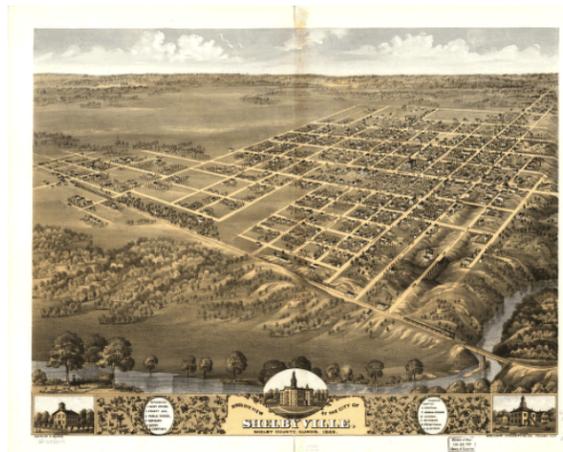
Situated upon the west bank of Kaskaskia River, Shelbyville is one of the old towns of Central IL. It was nestled among the hills and bluffs of the river, and grew for 36 years before it became the village of Shelbyville in 1839. The streets sprawled out from the four-block square that made up the original town, and the town became the City of Shelbyville in 1863. Shelbyville continued to flourish into the 1900s.

As the county seat, Shelbyville has the largest population in Shelby County. Both were named in honor of Isaac Shelby, the Revolutionary War general and Kentucky's first governor. On December 22, 1976, Shelbyville's historic district was placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the U.S. Department of the Interior.



History

Aerial town maps became popular in the mid 1800s. The map below provides a bird's-eye view of 1869 Shelbyville. The map, a panorama from the southeast corner of the historic town, showcases its key assets: river, railroad, and mills. In addition, it features the refinement of the community, and shows the infrastructures that supported its citizens' pursuit of law, education, and religion.



Main Street



The above photo, looking west down Main Street, captures Shelbyville in the 1860s. Most of the buildings in the right foreground were destroyed in a fire. It is interesting to note that in those early times there were six three-story buildings, and wooden canopy over the sidewalks.



The photo above, looking east on Main Street, showcases the city in the early 1900's. The buildings appear much the same as they do today. Most of the three-story structures are now two-story, and the unsightly telephone poles no longer exist. Coal mines and flour mills were prominent in the industrial life of the community. For details go to shelbyvilleillinois.net/downtown-city-walk-historic-downtown-landmarks-tour.

Shelbyville

Shelbyville has over 180 years of history. In 1827 it was selected as the county seat. Twelve years later the village of Shelbyville was organized. In 1863 the village was incorporated as the "City of Shelbyville."

CityWalk is Shelbyville's first self-guided tour series, and was inspired by Anthony Rubano, Project Designer for the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. Each tour is aimed at showcasing the rich architectural, cultural, and historical resources around town. Enjoy the tour!



CityWalk Series

Historic Downtown

Historic Downtown
Lincoln Memorial
Painted Figures
Victorian Homes

Located in central Illinois, Shelbyville is home to scenic Lake Shelbyville, the historic Boarman's Roxy Theater, and plenty more. Shelbyville is easily accessible from US-51 and I-57. It is just 23 miles from Mattoon, 32 miles from Decatur and 59 miles from Springfield. There is also free [Wi-Fi](#) access in the downtown Main Street area.

To learn more about other CityWalk tours, visit:

Lake Shelbyville Visitor Center
Rt 4, Box 128B, Shelbyville, IL 62565
Hrs: 8:30 am-4:30 pm
(217) 774-3951
lakeshelbyville@usace.army.mil

Shelby County Tourism
315 E Main Street, Shelbyville, IL 62565
Hrs: 9 am-4 pm
(217) 774-2244
info@lakeshelbyville.com

Shelby County Historical and Genealogical Society
151 S Washington Street, Shelbyville, IL 62565
Hrs: Tue 5-7 pm, Wed & Sat 9 am-12 pm
(217) 774-2260
shelbycounty@consolidated.net

Special Thanks to:

City of Shelbyville, USACE Lake Shelbyville, Shelby County Tourism, Greater Shelbyville Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Council of Shelby County, Shelbyville High School Welding Team, Corner Copy, Shelby County Historical and Genealogical Society, ShelbyvilleWorks!, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, Lake Land College and IIRA: Western Illinois University.

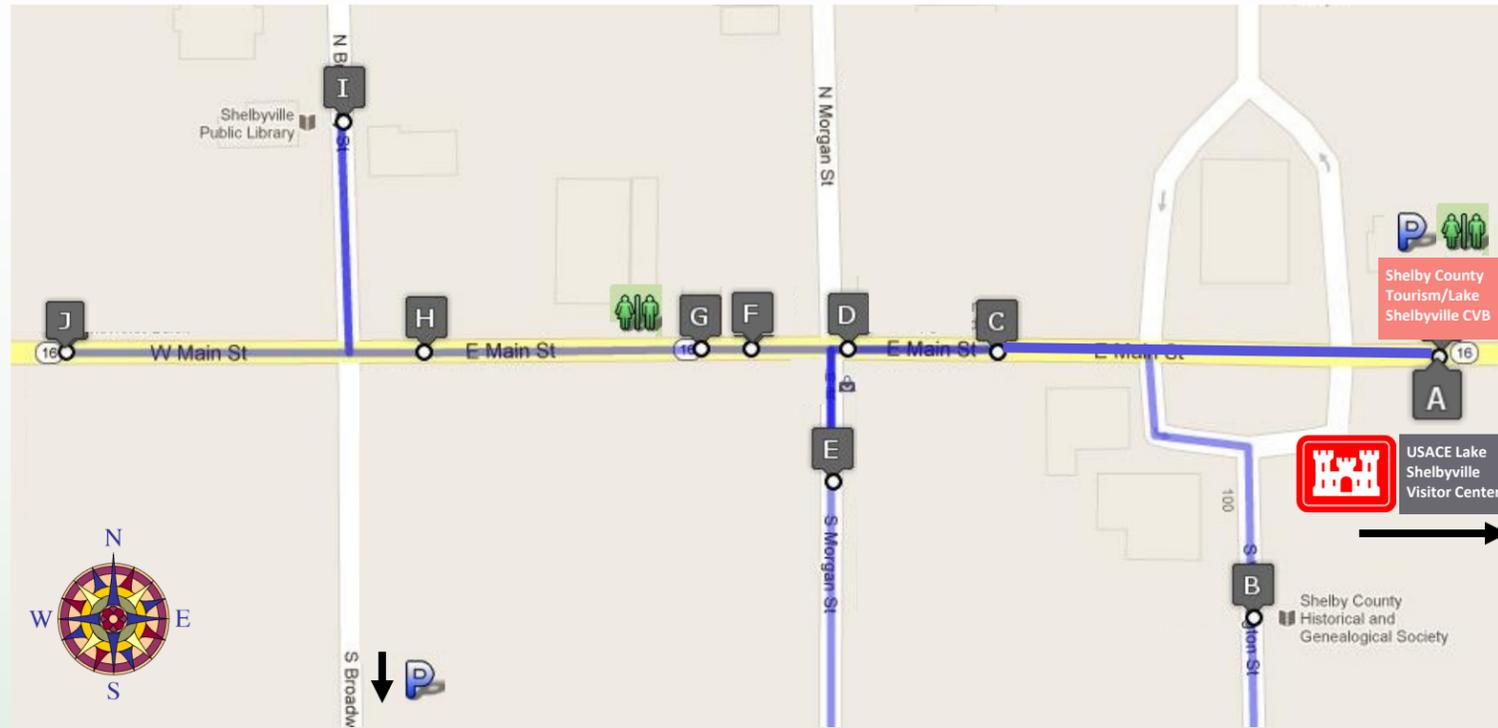


Photos courtesy of Donna Lupton, SCHGS
Brochure Funding by Shelbyville Industrial Development



A self-guided family fun historic downtown tour made possible by local businesses & organizations of Shelbyville, IL

Tour Directions & Map



E. Sparks College - 131 S Morgan St

The Shelby County State Bank Investment Center and Trust Department is located in the historic Sparks College building, which was built in 1915. Sparks College was a well-respected business and trade school, founded by Mr. Henry D. Sparks in 1908. The property was sold to Shelby County State Bank in 1976, though classes continued. Thirteen students were enrolled in Sparks College in 1908 and enrollment grew to over 100 students in the 1960's & 70's. Sparks College closed in 2009.

F. Shelby County State Bank (SCSB) - 155 E Main St

Here you will find Carpenter Management Company, Inc. at the Shelby County State Bank's first location, which opened in 1895. Although Shelby County State Bank is not the first bank of Shelby County, it is the oldest bank that is still in operation today. The building you now see is based on the reconstruction done in late 1917. A fire on New Year's Eve destroyed the original building in 1916. Shelby County State Bank moved to its current location at 130 South Morgan Street in 1965, along with the banjo clock salvaged from the fire in 1916.

G. The Roxy Theatre - 149 E Main St

The Roxy was built in the 1800s. It was originally known as the Playhouse Theatre and featured vaudeville performances. The Roxy closed Nov. 6, 1966 after the last showing - Mary Poppins. 37 years later, the Roxy was brought back to life by the \$100,000 donation from Mr. Boorman, and a group of dedicated business owners and residents who contributed hundreds of volunteer hours and funding to restore the theatre. It reopened on Nov. 6, 2004 with "Mary Poppins." Recognizing Mr. Boorman's leadership, the theater was renamed as Boarmans Roxy Theatre.

H. Herron Building - 105 E Main St

Sponsored in 1885 by Max Kleeman and William Goldstein, this historic building was built by The Christopher & Simpson Architectural Iron and Foundry Company. When the Herron family bought the store in 1912, it was known as the "Double Daylight" because of the numerous windows on three sides. Extensive restoration was done in 1977 to house Barbara's Department Store, but its unique facade has remained.

I. The Shelbyville Public Library - 154 N Broadway St

Opened in 1905, the Shelbyville Public Library was designed by Chicago architects Patton and Miller. Its classic French Renaissance style features golden Roman pressed brick and Bedford sandstone. The construction cost of \$20,000 was equally funded by Andrew Carnegie and local citizens, who also provided a building site and maintenance fund. Due to extensive historic restoration and consistent upgrades, the modernized library appears much as it did on opening day.

J. Downs Chevrolet - 145 W Main St

Leach-Wilson Chevrolet- Buick Co. is a family-owned dealership at the corner of Main and Walnut. The owner's great-grandfather, Mr. Frank P. Downs, commissioned the building in 1936. It features a self-supporting dome ceiling with framework from the 1933 Chicago Worlds' Fair. The building was designed by architect A. F. Moratz of Bloomington, IL.

A. The Armory - 320 E Main St

You will find the first stop at Knearem's Home Comfort Center & Commercial Services. The building was built by John W. Yantis as Shelbyville's Armory and civic center. It was proposed in October 1903 by Mr. Yantis and Capt. R. T. Eddy for Company H, Fourth IL Infantry. In the early 1900's, the Armory held the annual Christmas Ball. It was also used as a skating rink, and rented to the local high school basketball team at 50 cents for games. In April, 1916, the Armory was moved to Sparks College to make way for the Tallman-Beam Garage on the Square.

B. The Shelby County Historical & Genealogical Society (SCHGS) - 151 S Washington St

This historical building was erected in 1893 as the Fourth County Jail. SCHGS moved to this location in 1987. It features rich literature and has several "theme" rooms: Lincoln Room, Veteran Room, Children's Room, and the Robert Root Room. It also offers a tour of the old jail (Hrs: see back). SCHGS was established in 1962, with the mission to establish and illustrate the history of Shelby County. It was incorporated as a NFP in 1968, and amended in 1970 to broaden its genealogical resources and research.

C. Lantz Brothers - 222 E Main St

Buck Stop Archery rents the largest commercial building known in Shelby County history. The Lantz building was erected in 1893 at a cost of \$18,000 by the Lantz Brothers retail firm. It was patterned after Victorian buildings in St. Louis, and was built by The Christopher & Simpson Architectural Iron and Foundry Company. In 1941, the Lantz family leased the building to Sears-Roebuck. The building stands as a monument to the Lantz Brothers' connection to Shelbyville, beginning with the arrival of Philip Sr. in 1855. The building belongs to the owner of Short Furniture on 114 W Main.

D. Beetle's Confectionery - 200 E Main St

The Main Street Quilt Company stands on part of the original Shelbyville township of 1827. General William F. Thornton, a prominent historic figure in the development of Shelby County, once owned the building. In the 1900's, the building was known as the "Syndicate," and housed multiple businesses: Sparks College, and the studio of Robert M. Root, a well-known Midwestern tonalist and impressionist. Unfortunately, a 1927 fire destroyed the offices, classrooms, Root's studio and the third floor of the building. Many remember the building as Beetle's Confectionery, with its popular soda fountain and foot tall ice-cream Tubber.



Historic postcard from the Roger and Cathy Miller Collection



South Side of Main St. east from Morgan, Shelbyville, Ill.