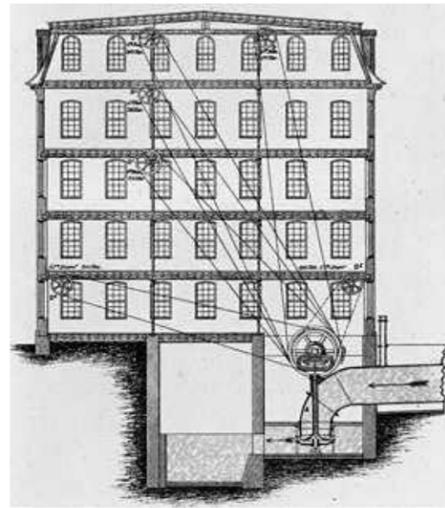


# SELF GUIDED TOUR

## HISTORIC DOWNTOWN

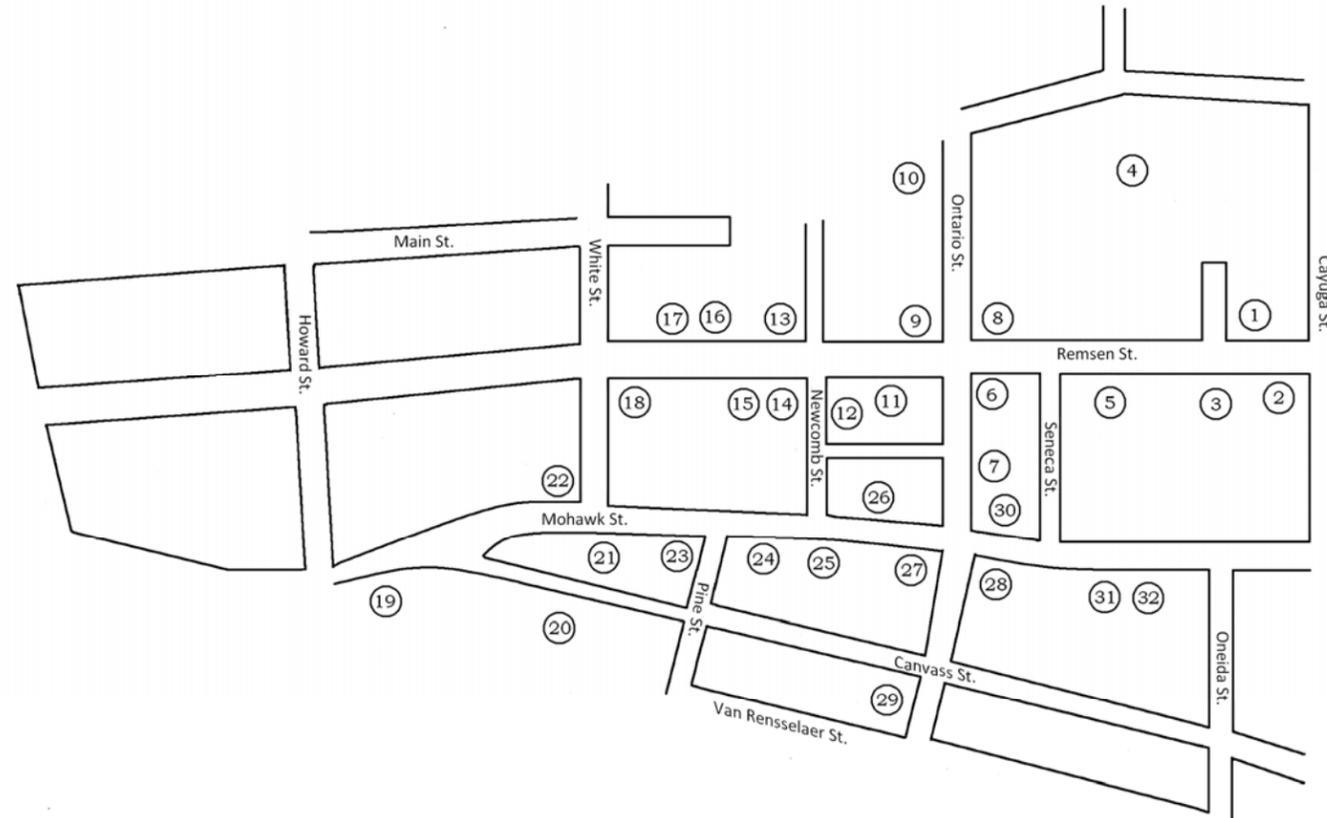
### COHOES



## Spindle City Historic Society

237-7999

[www.spindlecit.net](http://www.spindlecit.net)



#### 1. Cohoes Music Hall/National Bank building - 58 Remsen St.



This building, home to the Spindle City Historic Society, stands at the corner of on Remsen & Oneida Streets on what was originally farmland. The land was purchased in 1826 by the Cohoes Company. Buildings erected on the site were destroyed by fire in 1873.

William Acheson and James Masten subsequently constructed what was known as "The Central Hall Block." (Masten was married to Almeda Arthur, the sister of Chester A. Arthur, the 21<sup>st</sup> President). The building, made of red brick fired in Cohoes, housed the Post Office and three stores on the first floor while the second floor had eight offices. The Music Hall was located on the third floor. The total seating capacity was 475, including four private boxes and a fourth floor balcony. Dressing rooms were located beneath the stage. The grand opening of the hall occurred on November 23, 1874 with a performance of *London Assurance*. The renowned Eva Tanguay appeared in the Hall in *Little Lord Fauntleroy* at age 12. Other notable performers included, Buffalo Bill Cody, John Philip Sousa, Tony Pastor, P.T. Barnum's baby elephant named Hunky Punky, General Tom Thumb and his wife, and Pat Rooney. La Petite Adelaide, who was born in Cohoes, appeared in the hall several times. On July 13, 1882, The National Bank of Cohoes leased the first floor, and took over

complete ownership of the building in 1905. For the safety of the public, the bank closed the Music Hall in 1905 when a roof truss gave way. In 1968, the National Bank of Cohoes ceded the building to the City of Cohoes for \$100. The theater was restored, and reopened on March 7, 1975. Since its re-opening, the Hall has hosted a variety of resident groups and been the site of musical and dramatic performances, lectures and other programs by community organizations.

2. **Carter Block** – 57-63 Remsen St. This building was designed by Cohoes architect Aaron Goddard and it dates from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

3. **Germania Hall** – 65 Remsen St. The first floor housed various businesses, with residences in the upper stories. It was originally home to a fraternal organization. Note the detailed terra cotta work on the upper levels.

4. **Ogden Mill** - This structure is one of the few mill buildings that remain in downtown Cohoes. Ogden Mill was built in two sections – the south building was erected in 1844-1845 and the north building was erected in 1846. The two blocks of brick row houses on Olmstead and Sargent Streets behind the mill were built at the same time for the accommodation of mill workers; these are among the earliest groups of worker housing in Cohoes. The original Erie Canal (which later became a power canal for the



mills) once flowed between the Mill and Olmstead St. In 1859, the Ogden Mill was sold to the Harmony Company, which enlarged and improved the buildings. The Mill became known as Harmony Mill #6. In 1864 the Harmony Company built an addition to the mill, 60 by 80 feet and five stories high, which connected the two original mill buildings and gives the mill the appearance it has today. The Harmony Company ran the mill until 1911, when the Harmony Mills was reorganized under its new owners, the Saco-Lowell Company. In later years, a variety of knitting companies and other businesses were housed in the mill. In 1973, the last of these, the Troy District Shirt Company, closed. The machinery in the mill was sold off, and the mill remained empty until it was converted in 1980 into the Ogden Mill apartments.

5. **Cohoes Savings Bank building** – 75 Remsen St. The Cohoes Savings Institution was chartered and incorporated by the NY State Legislature in 1851. The first bank building, opened in 1853, was at 59 Oneida St., near Remsen St. Industrialist and community leader Egbert Egberts was the bank's first president. In August 1904, a lot at the corner of Remsen and Seneca Sts. was purchased and a new Beaux Arts building was completed in 1905. The Cohoes Savings Institution was renamed the Cohoes Savings Bank in 1922. In December 1923, an adjoining plot at 75 Remsen St. was purchased and an addition to the existing building was erected. In 1933, the bank merged with the Mechanics Savings Bank of Cohoes. In 1950, the interior of the bank was remodeled, with work done by the office of noted Albany architect Marcus T. Reynolds. The project was enhanced by historical murals painted by David Cunningham Lithgow, depicting Native American legends and the Cohoes Falls, the voyage of Henry Hudson, the birth of Cohoes industry, and the discovery of the Cohoes Mastodon during the excavation for Harmony Mill #3. The bank building now contains offices for the Albany County Sheriff.

#### 6. Manufacturers Bank building – 91 Remsen St. This building



was constructed in 1906, replacing what in those days was called "the old clapboard mill." It is now home to the Bank of America. The "old clapboard mill" was built in 1846 and was for years a knitting mill. It was originally erected as a machine shop for construction of equipment for the new Ogden Mill.

7. **Moose Lodge** – 289 Ontario St. This building housed the Cohoes Moose Lodge #1332, established in 1913, from 1924 to 1978. When the Moose Lodge occupied the building, a large moose head hung on the façade of the building between the second and third floors. The moose head now resides in the Cohoes Public Library. In the 1920s, the first floor of the building housed Wagar's Ice Cream Parlor and the Pellerin and Mossey Barber Shop; shops still occupy these locations today.

8. **Barber Shop** – 94 Remsen St. This building was originally the grist mill of J.M. Hayward. Built in 1854, it served the grain and feed business until 1928. For most of its history since then, the building has housed a barber shop, and until 2010 the barber shop's proprietor was Bernie Heroux, who was a

barber for 62 years in Cohoes. The small turbine of the grist mill is still in the basement of the building.

9. **Salvation Army Building** – 300 Ontario St. This structure, at the intersection of Remsen and Ontario streets, was built in 1844 as a supplementary facility for the knitting mill of Egberts and Bailey. Here, knit goods were sewn together and prepared for shipment. Originally two and a half stories high, the building was converted into a store in 1859. The gable roof was eventually removed, with a third floor and flat roof added.

10. **Spindle City Market – Troy Manufacturing Mill** - 302 Ontario St. The present day building was erected in 1864. The lot to the west of the building was the site of the Egberts and Bailey mill, dating from the 1840s. This was the first mill built specifically for power knitting using water powered machinery and it manufactured hosiery and other knit goods. You can still see the ghostly outline of the mill on the eastern side of the 1864 mill.

11. **Woolworths Store** – 109 Remsen St. This three story building, once a Woolworths 5 and 10 Store, retains its original 19<sup>th</sup> century storefront. Its upper façade matches the adjacent building at 103 Remsen. The entire double building was originally constructed by industrialist Charles Adams in 1869. Adams was a significant figure in Cohoes industry and commerce and was elected the first mayor of the city. He served as president of the city Water Board and was president of the First National Bank of the city of Cohoes for many years.

12. **Cataract Firehouse** - 113 Remsen St. (rear of Tables and Chairs, facing Newcomb St.) This building, constructed in 1848, was once the Cataract firehouse. Some original elements of the building, including the frame of the wide door to accommodate horse-drawn fire wagons, are still visible.

13. **National Auto Building** -122 Remsen St. This structure was erected in 1852 as the Mohawk River Mill. At 75' wide, 350' long, four stories high, and employing 600 workers, it was at the time the largest knitting mill in the world. Joshua Bailey was its president. In 1860, the building was purchased by A. E. Stimson of Albany, who organized the Clifton Company, so it became known as the "Clifton Mill."



During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a series of fires reduced the structure's size to its present dimensions. The stone façade was installed during the 1920s. It was for many years a National Auto hardware store, and later would house a furniture store and other retail businesses, as well as professional offices.

14. **Timpanes** – 119 Remsen St. This limestone commercial building, built in the 1930s, was originally the Mechanics Bank. For many years in the 20<sup>th</sup> century it was Timpanes Jewelers.

15. **First United Methodist Church** – 121 Remsen St. The First Methodist Episcopal Society was organized in 1839. In 1840 work was started on construction of a church, located on the west side of Remsen St., almost directly opposite the present church. The church was completed and dedicated in 1841. By

1848, due to the industrial development of Cohoes and an increased congregation, a larger structure was built on the east side of Remsen St. at the site of the present church. In 1859, the Trustees voted to dismantle the existing church and erect a larger one to accommodate further growth in membership. In 1860, the church that stands today was dedicated. The building now houses the Vineyard Community Church.

16. **Masonic Temple** – 128-130 Remsen St.

17. **Cohoes Hotel** – 132-134 Remsen St.

18. **Egberts Hall** – 143-149 Remsen St. This was once the site of Egberts Hall, which hosted lectures by prominent individuals, including Mark Twain, and other events. It was named for industrialist and city benefactor Egbert Egberts. The third story of the building was lost to fire. Around the corner on White St. once stood the Egberts Institute, which was the city's high school from 1868 until 1920.

19. **St. John's Episcopal Church (Cohoes Public Library)** - Mohawk Street. St. John's was organized in 1831. The congregation met for a year in a tiny schoolhouse until a small wooden church was built. In 1868, a site at Canvass and Mohawk Streets was chosen for a new church. One of the best



church architects of the day, Richard Morris Upjohn, was hired and in April 1870 ground was broken. The first services were held in June 1871. The church was destroyed by fire in September 1894. In June 1895, the cornerstone for the third St. John's was laid. By the 1960s, due to loss of population, the congregation of St. John's could no longer maintain the church, so a new structure was built on Vliet Blvd. The third St. John's building now houses the Cohoes Public Library, and has been nationally recognized as a model of adaptive re-use.

20. **Delaware and Hudson Railroad Station** - 127 Canvass St. The rail station was built in 1883 in the Queen Anne style.

21. **First Baptist Church** – 147 Mohawk St. The First Baptist Church was established in Cohoes in 1839. The first meeting house was built in 1840 at the northwest corner of Remsen and Factory (Cayuga) Streets. Many members were mill workers, and church membership varied with the fortunes of the mills. In 1850, a church was constructed on a permanent site on the southern end of Mohawk Street. It was enlarged in 1872 and renovated again in 1911. After discovery of structural problems, the church was rebuilt in 1922-1923 and a center dome removed, giving the building the appearance that it has today.

22. **2-4 White St.** This 1840s Federal style frame house is one of the few buildings standing in the district that predate the city's industrial growth. It is among the oldest houses in Cohoes.

23. **William Moore House** – 135 Mohawk St. This 6,800 square foot, red brick, ca. 1874 Second Empire Victorian house was originally the home of wealthy woolen textile pioneer William Moore. The original ornate iron fence remains largely intact on three sides of the property. Born in Ireland in 1827,

William Moore had his hand in many successful manufacturing and financial enterprises that amassed him a net worth of over one million dollars by the early 1890s.



Moore was the president of the Erie Knitting Mill, partner in the William Moore Knitting Company and the Moore & Tierney Co., and president and a founder of the Manufacturers' Bank of Cohoes. The building was sold by Moore to the Cohoes YWCA in 1892, and served as the YWCA through the 1980s. During the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many of the young women who came from Canada to work in the mills of Cohoes stayed briefly at the YWCA. The building has been restored and today is home to the Spiral Design Studio.

24. **United Church of Cohoes** – 123 Mohawk St. The Dutch Reformed Church of Cohoes was organized in 1837 by groups of Dutch, Swiss, Scotch and English ancestry. These early Cohoesiers were primarily farmers, blacksmiths, carpenters and factory employees. The cornerstone of the first church was laid in 1838. Prior to that time, services were held in the seaming room of the Egbert and Bailey Woolen



Mill, located on the corner of White and Remsen Streets. In April of 1859, the first church was torn down to make room for a new church, which was dedicated on April 11, 1860. The organ in the church was donated by Cohoes industrialists Egbert Egberts, David J. Johnston, and John V.S. Lansing. The Dutch Reformed Church joined with the congregation of the Silliman Memorial Presbyterian Church in 1969 to form the United Church of Cohoes. The Silliman Memorial Church, which once stood on the corner of Ontario and Mohawk Streets, was constructed by Cohoes philanthropist and industrialist Horace B. Silliman. He dedicated the church in memory of his parents, Levi and Clarissa, who were instrumental in founding the Presbyterian congregation in Cohoes.

25. **David Van Auken House** – 115 Mohawk St. This house, built in 1873 for David Van Auken, engineer for the Cohoes Company and architect of Harmony Mill #3, is a brick Second Empire house with Eastlake detail. This section of Mohawk St. up to Oneida St. was where many other notable people of Cohoes lived in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, including David Wilkinson, Daniel Simmons, Hezekiah Howe, and William Caw (President Chester Arthur's brother in law).

26. **Joshua R. Clarke House** – 112 Mohawk St. Joshua Clarke was an architect and builder who came to Cohoes in 1831 from Pawtucket, Rhode Island. He built several factories in Cohoes, including the first building constructed by the Harmony Company and the Egberts and Bailey mill. He also built the first Episcopal Church as well as numerous residential and commercial structures. He held many positions of public service in Cohoes, including trustee of the village of Cohoes and Chief Engineer of the Fire Department. The house was later occupied by H.S. Bogue, industrialist and third mayor of Cohoes.

27. **Post Office** – 101 Mohawk St. The Post Office was erected in the 1920s, after several buildings on the site were demolished. Included in this demolition were two of three identical buildings built in 1849 by F. S. Claxton, engineer and agent for the Cohoes Company. The one remaining is at 113 Mohawk St., which for many years housed the office of Cohoes physician Dr. Edward Vandercar. Dr. Vandercar served as Cohoes City Historian and was among the founders of the Hudson-Mohawk Industrial Gateway.

28. **City Hall** (97 Mohawk St.) was dedicated on September 25, 1895. The land on which it was built was once the Peter Harmony estate. A design for the building was selected from entries submitted to the City Hall Commission, but the public opposed their choice, preferring the second place design, submitted by J.C. Holland and Co. The Commission ultimately decided in favor of the people's choice. The building is a fine example of Norman Gothic architecture, with a Gothic tower in the southwest corner, a turret in the northwest corner and several miniature turrets over the peaked roof. The large blocks of Indiana limestone projected strength and power, and the enduring nature of civic institutions. This was the first building constructed in Cohoes with public funds. In December 1966, the entrance to City Hall was renovated, with a long low wall built. Trees, shrubbery, and lampposts were added near the front entrance stairway. A new plaque commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> year of the City Hall was unveiled and dedicated on June 21, 1995 during the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the city. In August 2007, the building's roof and chimneys were repaired, and the flag pole restored.



29. **St. Bernard's Church** – 250 Ontario St. On November 18, 1847, Bishop John McCloskey, the First Bishop of Albany, laid the cornerstone for St. Bernard's, the first Catholic Church in Cohoes. Father Keveny, the third pastor of the parish, bought the land on which the present St. Bernard's Church is located; the rectory and church building which stand today were built during his tenure. Construction of this church was begun in 1863 and it was dedicated in 1868. The church's steeple was destroyed in a severe storm during the winter of 1876. The present appearance of the steeple dates from 1956-57, when the church was renovated. During the renovations, the tower was lowered in height by twenty feet and a new granite Celtic cross was put in place. The church is currently in private ownership.

30. **Silliman Park** – The park, named for Cohoes industrialist and philanthropist Horace B. Silliman, was once the site of the Romanesque revival Silliman Memorial Presbyterian Church, built in 1896 by Silliman in memory of his parents Levi and Clarissa.

31. **85-87 Mohawk St.** Brownstone boarding houses.

32. **81 Mohawk St.** – Originally the Spartan Lodge, later used by the Odd Fellows, Polish National Alliance, and other fraternal organizations.