

A WALKING TOUR THROUGH HISTORY



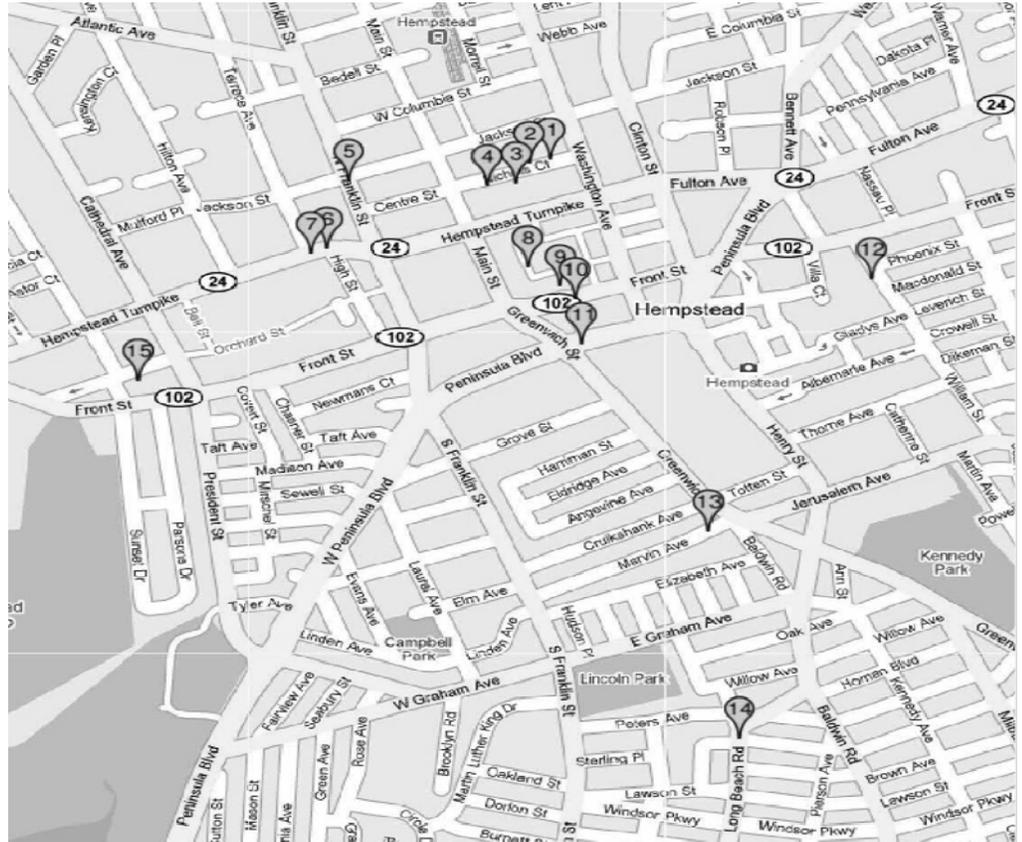
Hempstead Library (1927-1951)  
Fulton Avenue & Front Street

Hempstead Public Library  
Walking Tour

The Hempstead Public Library Walking Tour provides a fun and informative way to help you explore the rich historical facts contained in the Village of Hempstead's past.

You can access the photos shown here and many more by going to the Hempstead Public Library Digital Collection located at the Historic Photos link found on the [www.hempsteadlibrary.info](http://www.hempsteadlibrary.info) webpage.

HEMPSTEAD PUBLIC LIBRARY  
115 NICHOLS COURT  
HEMPSTEAD, NY 11550  
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1. **Hempstead Public Library** 115 Nichols Court

The original library was started by Mrs. Chauncey C. Parsons and Miss Harriet Mulford. At a public meeting, a Founders Committee made up of prominent members of different churches, announced the library was for the general public and adopted the name, The Hempstead Subscription Library. One hundred and thirty subscribers were secured at \$1.00 per year. The library bookcases were installed in a grocery store kept by Miss Mary Smith who also agreed to act as librarian and in 1889, the library was opened to the public. Eighteen years later, in 1907, it was incorporated as the Hempstead Library Association and eventually became the Hempstead Library. On June 24, 1951, the library was reincorporated as the Hempstead



Public Library and opened at its present site.

2. **Village Hall** 99 Nichols Court

Originally a USO during WWII, the mural located in Village Hall's court house is of historical significance. The mural depicts the fall season of 1643, when Robert Fordham and John Carman crossed the Long Island Sound by rowboat to negotiate with the local Indians for a tract of land upon which to establish a new community or "town spot".



3. **Denton Green Park** Across the street from the Village Hall

Located across the street from the Library and Village Hall is the site (as depicted in Village Hall's mural) where representatives of the Marsapeague



(Massapequa), Mericock (Merrick), Matinecock and Rekowake (Rockaway) tribes met with John Carman and Robert Fordham at a site slightly west of the current Denton Green. Tackapousha who was the sachem (chief) of the Marsapeague was the spokesman for the other tribes. The Indians sold approximately 64,000 acres, which makes up the present day towns of Hempstead and North Hempstead, for items worth less than \$100 in today's market.

4. **Old Willets House** 1776 Denton Green (Nichols Court)

Dating back from the late 1700s or early 1800s, this building originally stood at 12 North Franklin Street. The Lord Stirling Chapter of the D.A.R. acquired and moved it to its present location. Currently, it serves as headquarters of the Hempstead Chamber of Commerce.



**5. African American Museum of Nassau County** 10 N. Franklin Street

Opened in 1970, as the Black History Exhibit Center at the height of the black power movement, the museum, through



material and visual culture, disseminates the history of African-Americans on Long Island and the African-American contribution to the social and cultural development of American society. The museum offers art installations, historical exhibitions, film programs, community service events, educational programming, and houses the African Atlantic Genealogy Society, which provides workshops and individual research instruction in family genealogy.

**6. U.S. Post Office-Hempstead Branch** 200 Fulton Avenue

Placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1988, this art deco structure houses



two beautiful WPA murals by artist Peppino Mangravite. One depicts the early settlement of Hempstead and includes three scenes: the purchase of Hempstead from the Indians, English landing in Roslyn and driving their cattle south to Hempstead, and the stockade in Hempstead. The other mural is the arrival in 1919 of British dirigible R-34 that flew from Scotland to Roosevelt Field in four and one-half days with the first air mail delivery. The large murals are oil on canvas and were painted in 1937.

**7. Benjamin F. Thompson Marker**– Fulton Avenue, West of Terrace Avenue

Placed in 1939, the marker commemorates the spot where author Benjamin Thompson wrote the book, *The History of Long Island*. Mr. Thompson is buried in Hempstead.



**8. Duke's Law Convention Marker**–West side Cooper Field parking space between Fulton & Front Streets.

The marker was erected in 1939 and marks the site where the Duke's Laws Convention was held. In 1664, the new settlement of Hempstead adopted the Duke's Laws, an austere set of laws that became the basis upon which the laws of many colonies were to be founded.



**9. St. George's Episcopal Church** - 319 Front Street

Listed in 1973 on the National Register of Historic Places this majestic Federal style church is considered one of the purest examples of Georgian architecture. Built between 1822 and 1823, it replaced a nearby 1734 structure. The master carpenter, William Rhodes, set up a



huge lathe at the site, to turn the 50-foot columns shaped from oak trees cut on Long Island, which support the interior galleries. With its domed octagonal belfry, the tower's clock, was purchased in 1854 from Sherry and Byram of Sag Harbor, L.I. The church's past has played an integral part of the Village of Hempstead's history. In 1735, the church was granted a Royal Patent and Charter from King George II of England that still governs the church today. From 1775 to 1782, during the American Revolution, the church was used as a military storehouse. In 1784, Samuel Seabury, son of the third Rector of St. George's Church, became the first Episcopal Bishop in America.

**9a. Weather Vane on top of St. George's Episcopal Church**

Recycled from the 1734 church, for over 250 years the "Golden Cock" weather vane has been sitting atop the steeple. Used for target practice by Continental soldiers during the Revolutionary War, still visible are the bullet holes.



**9b. St. George's Episcopal Church Cemetery-Tombstone marking**

The peaceful church's graveyard contains the graves of the Pioneers of Hempstead. Note the Revolutionary marker placed on Samuel Carman's tombstone's (presented by) the Daughters of the American Revolution Marker Inscribed: *Revolutionary soldier Samuel Carman 1775-1783*. It was placed by the Lord Stirling Chapter D.A.R.



**10. Hempstead Town Hall** - 350 Front Street

Prior to World War I, the site where the Old Town Hall now stands was a meadowland, with a stream wandering through. It was used by farmers as a marketplace for their produce. Stewart Wagner was the architect of the Town Hall which was built by Thomas Dunn. Captured is the Colonial Revival style of architecture, with a handsome gold leaf clock tower as its crown. The brick and concrete structure was built in 1918-1919. Commencing in 1929, two major additions were added.



**11. Rectory of St. George's Episcopal Church** 217 Peninsula Boulevard

Noted for its architecture, the rectory was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1989. Built in 1822, it displays details common to architecture once found on western Long Island. This five-bay dwelling features a Palladian window and a Dutch-Colonial gambrel roof.



**12. Longman House** - 42 William Street

A designated Town of Hempstead building landmark, built in 1854 by Benjamin Place, the



Longman House was purchased in 1868 by Samuel Longman of Brooklyn, New York for the purpose of "summering" in the country. An example of the popular Italianate features of the period. a frieze decorates the structure's front, while the house's main entrance was built on the side, a design of very late Federal period architecture.

**13. Carman-Irish House (American Legion Post #360)** - 160 Marvin Avenue

A Federal style structure with "Widow's Walk" cupola and hip roof, the building retains evidence of early post and beam construction components both in its basement and attic. This landmark building designated by the Town of Hempstead has eighteenth century and possibly earlier roots. It is said to have been built by a Mr. Nelson around 1700. Mr. Nelson was claimed to have been a personal friend of William Penn who is purported to have spent some time at the home during the early 1700s. It was sold by Mr. Nelson to Tillinghast Irish who having come to Hempstead from Tennessee, added the south colonial appearance. The property was then sold to Samuel Carman, a descendant of one of Hempstead Town's founders, John Carman. In 1840, the house was owned by David Sammis, a member of one of Hempstead Village's most prominent early families. Henry Irish owned the home during the Civil War and it was his heirs that sold the building to the American Legion around 1940.



**14. Fire House, Southside Hose Co. No.2 (WPA Murals)** - Long Beach Road & Bernhard Street

Organized in 1832, the Hempstead Volunteer Fire Department is among the oldest in the state. Painted by artist Carl Noble in 1938, the WPA murals above the paneled dado, cover the walls of the second floor meeting room and depict the history of local firefighting in Hempstead with six subjects: *Pioneer Fire Fighting, Old Time Fire Gong, First Hempstead Hose Cart, Hempstead Riding Academy Fire, Modern Fire Fighting Equipment.*

**15. Clowes Homes** - 52 & 54 Orchard Street

Designated as landmark buildings by the Town of Hempstead, these circa 1868 homes were built by Timothy H. Clowes, an architect and prominent land owner in Hempstead. Originally on a site on Alden Place, north of the Calderone Theater at Franklin Street, the structures are prime examples of Victorian architecture. Moved to their present location in 1946, in 1947, number 54 was converted to a two-family dwelling to accommodate returning World War II veterans. Fine examples of Victorian architecture, the houses are constructed of clapboard, with brick porches, and roofs of a fish scale slate construction known as mansard style.

