Walking Tour

The Way We Were Interpretive Park on Mulholland and Bluff Streets.

Begin your journey at The Way We Were Interpretive Park on Mulholland and Bluff Streets. Pick up a brochure and begin the circular route that will introduce you to Mulholland of yesteryear. At locations noted, you might enjoy collecting a “page from the past,” an Information Sheet, and reminisce with us about the past while enjoying the present.

In 1849, after learning of available homes left vacant after the Mormon exodus, Etienne Cabet and a group of followers from France came to Nauvoo to put their dream of a utopian, communal society into practice. The “Icarians,” as they were called, established Temple Block as the hub of their social experiment from 1849-1856.

The Icarians in Nauvoo 1849-1856

In 1874 five Benedictine Sisters from St. Scholastica Convent in Chicago, Illinois, arrived in Nauvoo to establish a boarding school for girls. In 1879 the Sisters separated from St. Scholastica Convent and became St. Mary’s Academy and Convent.

The Sisters of St. Benedict in Nauvoo 1874 - 2001

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Originally, the Sisters of St. Benedict owned only the building, which had formerly served the Mormons as an arsenal; the Icarians, as a wagon shop; and Frederick Baum, a German immigrant, as a residence prior to their purchasing the building in 1874. The Sisters used the building as their first convent and school, St. Scholastica.

The school was closed in 1997, and in 1999, the buildings were purchased by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Sisters remained until 2001 when they moved into their new monastery in Rock Island, Illinois. The remaining buildings were razed in 2007, leaving behind 127 years of photos and memories.

For additional information on Nauvoo’s History, please visit or contact the Nauvoo Historical Society at the Weld House Museum, 1380 Mulholland Street, or the Rheinberger House Museum, Nauvoo State Park, www.nauvoohistoricalsoociety.org

For more information about the Global Icarian Movement, contact Baxter-Snyder Center for Icarian Studies located on the campus of Western Illinois University, Macomb, Illinois 309-299-2717

For additional information about the Sisters of St. Benedict in Nauvoo contact St. Mary Monastery 2200 88th Avenue West Rock Island, Illinois 61201 email: benedictines@smmsisters.org

For additional information on Hancock County history, contact Hancock County Historical Society 306 Walnut Street Carthage, Illinois 62321 217-357-0043 email: hancockhistory@yahoo.com

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Take a leisurely walking tour of Mulholland's Central Business District and envision The Way We Were. Your circuitous tour route begins and ends here. The circled numbers on the diagram identify pick-up locations for the Information Sheets for the addresses in the numbered list below. (The businesses listed in this brochure are merely a sampling of the businesses once located at any given address.) Stop in, pick up a “page from the past,” and get an idea of what Nauvoo was like c. 1850 to 1960. We hope you enjoy your tour.