

Mile Point 5.3

Olde Avon Village—36840 Detroit Road (Map No. 59)

This charming enclave contains a cluster of historic structures, some in their original position and others moved here to avoid demolition, that provides the visitor with a fascinating opportunity to travel back to 19th century Avon while shopping and dining. The Village includes the 1850s *Alten-Casper House*, 1850s *Gibbs-Binns House*, 1882 Nickel Plate Railroad *Avon Train Depot* with a 1918 *B&O caboose*, the 1840s *Lewis House*, 1830s *Blackwell Barn*, 1840s *George Clifton Barn*, and a replica late 1800s *Main Street*. The Village also features a large glacial-erratic granite boulder, known as the *Rock of Avon*, dated by the Cleveland Museum of Natural History at 2 billion years old.



Rock of Avon commemorating preservation work of Dr. Delbert and Jean Fischer.



Tree House Gallery and Tea Room at Olde Avon Village—36840 Detroit Road.

Alten-Casper House (now known as the *Tree House Gallery and Tea Room*) forms the “front” house of Olde Avon Village. This circa 1850 Georgian Colonial-style brick house was the original farmhouse on the Mathias Alten property. It features a central hallway with four rooms down and four rooms up, along with a full attic and a full basement with a stone foundation. The interior dividing walls are also brick.

Mathias Alten was born in 1819 in the town of Bedlicht, Prussia. He came to Avon with his parents in 1845. On January 29, 1862, he married Gertrude Weber, who was born in 1834 in the Trier Diocese, Palatinate region of Germany. Mathias and Gertrude were married in Avon’s St. Mary Church. They had twelve children, the youngest of which, Rosa, inherited the property. The farm at that time consisted of 35 acres, the main brick house, two barns, and an orchard.

In 1896, Rosa Alten married Peter Casper. They raised a large family—12 children. In addition to being a farmer, Peter Casper ran a grocery store at the northeast corner of Detroit Road and Colorado Avenue. The designation “Alten-Casper House” is used to indicate the first and last families to actually use the house as a family home.

In 1981, Dr. Delbert and Jean Fischer purchased the remaining land and house—thus beginning the first stage in the development of what is now *Olde Avon Village*. In the late 1990s the property was sold to Ron and Kim Larson, and they began the process of adding additional historic buildings to the Village.



Alten-Casper House at Olde Avon Village—36840 Detroit Road.

Gibbs-Binns House, built between 1851 and 1857, was moved from Stoney Ridge Road to *Olde Avon Village* just behind the Alten–Casper House in 1987. This Greek Revival-style home was formerly located on the east side of Stoney Ridge Road, the second building south of the Avon Old Town Hall of 1871 (Map No. 53), on land purchased by Jonathan Gibbs in 1847. Peter Laux, one of the founders of St. Teresa Church in Sheffield, owned the house from 1870 to 1881. His daughter, Gertrude, later married Peter Binns who operated a dry goods store at Avon Center [corner of Detroit and Center Roads] in 1874, dealing in boots, shoes, Yankee notions, hardware, and crockery. Peter Binns bought this house in 1890 and by 1896 he had opened a store on the building. This store also served as an “undertaking establishment.” Peter Binns died in 1901, and Gertrude [née Laux] Binns died in 1921, leaving the property to her daughter, Veronica Binns, locally known as “Fronie.” The store was used as a post office beginning in the 1920s and in 1933, the property was rented to Dr. Taylor Smith, where he began his medical practice, and then in 1968 it became *Smitty’s Barber Shop*.



Gibbs-Binns House at Olde Avon Village (courtesy of Avon Historical Society). This building now houses the French Creek Fiber Arts Studio, carrying fine yarn, pattern books, and sewing accessories, as well as offering a variety of needlework classes.



Avon Train Depot, built in 1882, was once located on Center Road at the railroad tracks, where it served as the station for the Nickel Plate Railroad running from Chicago to New York. This restored Italianate-style depot, as well as a Baltimore & Ohio caboose manufactured in 1918, was moved to *Olde Avon Village* in the late 1990s.



Avon Train Depot at Olde Avon Village (photograph by Ralph D. White).



Baltimore & Ohio Railroad caboose at Olde Avon Village.

Lewis House, built in 1843, This sandstone house was originally located on Center Road north of present day I-90. Scheduled for demolition, it was moved to a location in Olde Avon Village in 2002 also behind the Alten-Casper House. The stone used for the dwelling was brought from *Amherst Quarry*, a journey recorded to have taken eight days. The house was built in a square with a pyramidal roof and walls measuring 21 inches in thickness. The side facing Center Road had two parlors, each with one window facing the road and another just around the corner. Fireplaces were in each of these rooms on the sidewalls. The other two windows on each side looked out from very small bedrooms, four in all. The windows were of the six-light variety, angled on the inside to allow more light to enter the rooms. There was a long central hallway from the main entrance that traveled to a large central family room/kitchen. This room had a huge walk-in fireplace at the back wall, joining the two-story frame portion. All woodwork and doors of the home were “grain-painted” to simulate exotic woods, as was the custom in the 1840s and 1850s. Some of the original doors and baseboards, and one fireplace, still exist, showing what the beautiful graining must have looked like at one time.

This house is reputed to be the only pyramid-roofed, square stone home in Ohio; as such, in 1937, it was listed on the Historical American Building Survey by the Department of the Interior and filed with the Library of Congress. Today it houses a shop, named *Details*, “gifts from the heart and home.”

Lewis House located on Center Road before being moved to Olde Avon Village (1936 photograph by Carl Waite, courtesy of U.S. Library of Congress).



Lewis House, now Details, at Olde Avon Village.



Blackwell Barn, built around 1851, was scheduled for demolition before it found a new home at *Olde Avon Village*. Formerly known as the Ewers Barn, it was constructed of hardwood timbers harvested in central Ohio. The style of the barn is German-Dutch architecture, assembled in the fashion of the pre-Civil War era. It was originally used to raise horses for the Union Army during the Civil War. Owing to its tremendous size and poor condition, the barn was completely disassembled in 2003, hauled to Avon from Fredericktown, Ohio, and reassembled in 2004. Only a third of the building was salvageable due to its deteriorated condition. The Blackwell Barn received the Community Rehabilitation Award in 2004 by the Lorain County Beautiful Award Program. The barn once housed *Birds of a Feather*, supplying shoppers with fabric for quilting, knitting, wool appliqué, and rug hooking. The interior has recently been remodeled and currently the building is home of *Strip*, an upscale steakhouse operated by Ron Larson.



Blackwell Barn at Olde Avon Village.

George Clifton Barn, built circa 1848, was moved from less than a mile away in 2006 and tucked into *Olde Avon Village* between the Blackwell Barn and *Main Street*. The barn was located on the George Clifton Farm at 36368 Detroit Road, where the farmhouse still stands (Map No. 68). This historic structure now houses *Henry's at the Barn*, a restaurant specializing in South Carolina low country cuisine.

In 2008, the *Tree House* owners converted an outlying building behind the main store to a boutique named *Sassy's*, offering one-of-a-kind women's accessories, thus completing the 19th century Village.



George Clifton Barn at Olde Avon Village.



George Clifton Farmhouse, which still stands at 36368 Detroit Road (courtesy of Ralph D. White).

Main Street at *Olde Avon Village* was added in 2005. The main street-style complex features several store-front façades adopted from a typical American small town in the late 1800s. Currently *Main Street* has five shops: (1) *The Littlest Details*, is a baby/mother-to-be shop, (2) *Western Reserve Pilates* [named after German physical fitness specialist Joseph Pilates, 1880–1967] who devised a unique system of exercise utilizing special apparatus), offers group and private instruction in this system, (3) *Jax*, provides unique and upscale apparel, (4) *Endless Summer*, where cruisewear is available year-round, and (5) *The Hen ‘n the Ivy*, is an exquisite florist/gift shop.



Main Street at *Olde Avon Village*.

Mile Point 5.3

Casper's Garage—36816 Detroit Road (Map No. 60)

This concrete-block building is located just east of the Alten-Casper House (now *Tree House Gallery and Tea House*). The Avon Athletic Club baseball team of the 1920s practiced in the field where the building now stands. One of the players, Ed Casper, built an automotive repair business, *Casper's Garage*, on the site in the 1930s and also served as Avon's first fire chief. Later the building was owned by his son, Don Casper, who also served as fire chief. Still later the building housed the *Avon Boat Covers Company*. Recently the building has been renovated as *Whistlers Ice Cream Shoppe*.

Casper's Garage, built in 1930s, later Avon Boat Covers, and now Whistlers Ice Cream Shoppe—36816 Detroit Road (courtesy of Avon Historical Society).



Whistlers Ice Cream Shoppe now occupies the old Casper's Garage building.

Mile Point 5.3

Carriage House—36741 Detroit Road (Map No. 61)

This former Colonial Revival-style residence has been converted to a commercial building. Built circa 1945 by Isadore Gelman, the focal point of this red brick edifice is the elaborate treatment of the entranceway surrounding the front door. *Carriage House Bakery & Market*, an upscale “farmers market” featuring breads, pastries, cheeses, sauces, and pasta, and *Avon Hair Salon* are now located here.



Carriage House, built circa 1945 as a Colonial Revival-style house—36741 Detroit Road.

Mile Point 5.4

Kelling House—36718 Detroit Road (Map No. 63)

This circa 1840 Greek Revival-style residence, also known as “Stone House,” is located very close to the Detroit Road right-of-way. Large blocks of sandstone set up in random fashion with smoothed off faces cover the exterior of this simple house. A large wood framed wing extends to the rear and the small front vestibule are later additions. The original owner is unknown. According to the *Lorain County Atlas of 1874*, J. Kelling owned this house and an adjacent 22-acre farm. This beautiful stone house is listed on the Ohio Inventory of Historic Structures (LOR-90-3).

Kelling House, built circa 1840 as a Greek Revival-style residence—36718 Detroit Road. This is one of four pre-Civil War stone cottages located in Avon. Recently the interior of the house has been remodeled to serve as the home of Catherine’s Chocolates.



Mile Point 5.5

Jameson Homestead—36675 Detroit Road (Map No. 64)

The elegant Vernacular-style home was built in 1906 and displays some elements of Italianate style that was popular in Avon a few decades earlier. This building, and adjacent large barn, has served as an antique dealership for the past 30 years, specializing in fine pieces.



Jameson Homestead, Vernacular-style house built in 1906—36675 Detroit Road.

JL Smith Building—36610 Detroit Road (Map No. 65)



Located in Avon's French Creek District, this 1946 Bungalow was built by the Jameson family. The house has since been renovated as an office for the *JL Smith Tax Advisory Group*. Double front gables, Craftsman-style entrance columns, and scalloped roof shingles are noteworthy features.

Craftsman-style Bungalow, built 1946—36610 Detroit Road. This modestly sized house is typical of those designed for returning World War II veterans and their families.

Mile Point 5.6

Avon Village School—36600 Detroit Road (Map No. 66)

Built in 1924, this brick, three-story school building once held grades 1 through 12. This consolidated school was made possible by the invention of the automobile (and school bus) for transportation, and was considered an improvement over one-room schoolhouses.



Avon Village School, built 1924—36600 Detroit Road. This building was not only Avon's High School, it held grades 1 through 12 in the 1930s.

As a memorial to the old Julian Street School, the 1880 sandstone keystone of the school is embedded in a brick column in front of the Avon Village School. The Julian Street School was located one block south of Detroit Road, a short distance east of Stoney Ridge Road. The school originally served grades 1 through 8. In 1903 the brick Italianate-style building (below) was more than doubled in size to house high school students.



Old Julian Street School keystone.



Old Julian Street School, built 1880 (courtesy of Avon Historical Society).

Mile Point 5.6

George Clifton House—36368 Detroit Road (Map No. 68)

This 1848 Greek Revival/Georgian-style home has been renovated to serve as a commercial office building. This house is unusual in its design in that the doorway is Greek Revival-style, but the detailing, especially the pediment, is of Georgian architectural style. George Clifton (1811–1883) came from Northhamptonshire, England, to establish a farm in Avon and may have modeled his new home after his old homestead in England. Today, several commercial establishments are located in the George Clifton House. This elegant building is listed on the Ohio Inventory of Historic Structures (LOR-97-3).



George Clifton House before conversion to an office building (courtesy of Avon Historical Society). The cornice detail, the full pediment, and the half-round fanlight window are Georgian in style.



George Clifton House, Greek Revival/Georgian-style home built 1848—36368 Detroit Road.

Mile Point 5.7***Countryside Building—36290 Detroit Road (Map No. 69)***

This former Craftsman Bungalow-style farmhouse now serves as an antique shop, *Countryside Antiques*. Built in 1910, this building features a hip roof with a two-window dormer and an enclosed front porch. Both the porch and the main building have gray tile roofs. The exterior walls are covered with cream-colored stucco.



Countryside Antiques, Craftsman Bungalow-style farmhouse built in 1910—36290 Detroit Road.

Countryside Antiques during the summer season—36290 Detroit Road (courtesy of Avon Historical Society).



Mile Point 5.7

Burger King and Avon Fire Station—36240 & 36185 Detroit Road

These two buildings, in Colonial Revival-style, are typical of several commercial and public structures that have been built along Detroit Road in Avon in the last decade. Locally this style has been termed “Western Reserve architecture.” Several of the buildings have been recognized with awards from the Lorain County Visitors Bureau for their exterior design.



Burger King—36240 Detroit Road.

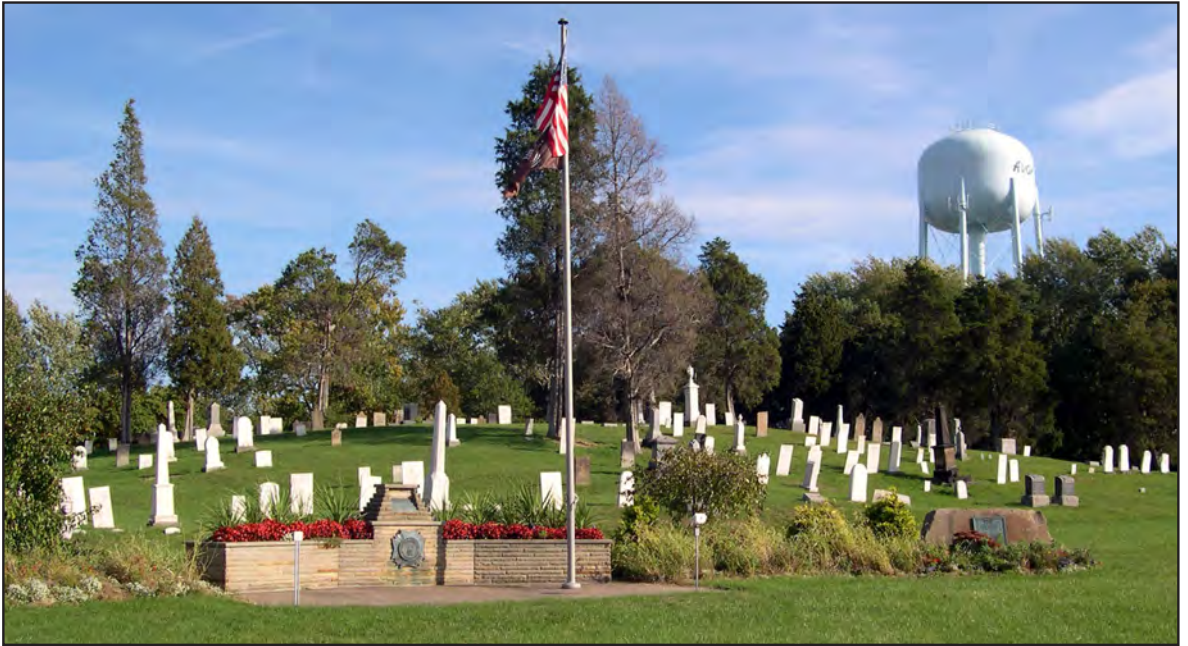


Avon Fire Station—36185 Detroit Road.

Mile Point 6.2

Avon Center [Mound] Cemetery—35995 Detroit Road (Map No. 70)

Avon Center Cemetery (also known as Mound Cemetery) at the intersection of Center Road (Ohio Route 83) and Detroit Road, is unique in that it is believed to be a prehistoric burial mound constructed by the Woodland Indians and later used as a cemetery by white settlers. Cemetery sexton, Alfred Walker, reported recovering several Indian skulls and some beads and arrowheads from the mound in 1900 (Vietzen 1941); however, no formal archaeological investigations have been conducted. Another interpretation is that the mound is the remnant of an ancient sand dune created over 12,000 years ago on the shore of glacial Lake Warren.



Avon Center Cemetery—35995 Detroit Road. Bottom view shows proximity of French Creek Square.

This cemetery is noteworthy for the graves of Revolutionary War soldier John Prentiss Calkins (1752-1836) who served with the New Hampshire Regiment, several War of 1812 veterans, and Dr. Norton S. Townshend. Many of the first settlers of Avon are interred on the mound, including Avon's founder Wilbur Cahoon (1772-1825). The oldest gravestone in the Cemetery (1818) marks the burial site Lydia Williams, age 15 (Kellogg 1980).



Grave of Wilbur Cahoon (1772-1825), Avon's founder.

Oldest gravestone in Avon Center Cemetery, Lydia Williams (1818).



North Ridge at Avon Center circa 1880s (intersection of Detroit and Center Roads). Henry Green's Market is on the right. The market sold feed in sacks. Avon women used the sack material to make dresses. The wooden fence beyond the market enclosed Mound Cemetery (courtesy of Avon Historical Society).

Three other Avon cemeteries are located along the North Ridge Scenic Byway. St. Mary Catholic Cemetery, founded in 1845, is located on the west side of Stony Ridge Road just south of Detroit Road. Holy Trinity Catholic Cemetery is situated on the church grounds near the intersection of Detroit Road and Nagel Road. These churches have complete records of the burials in their graveyards (Kellogg 1980). Elmhurst Park is a private cemetery located on the south side of Route 254 between Nagel Road and the Cuyahoga County line, which has recently been purchased by the Catholic Church and has been incorporated into the new St. Joseph Cemetery.

Avon Center School—35995 Detroit Road (Map No. 71)

This sizable, brick, Italianate-style school building, with elements of Colonial Revival-style, was built in circa 1910 just east of Mound Cemetery. A central entranceway with rounded windows, set in a center-projecting wing, is the focal point of the old schoolhouse. The building was remodeled in the early 1920s as a private residence and is now undergoing extensive renovation as a commercial office building. A previous school built on the same site circa 1857,



was moved across the highway to the Blackwell property and used as a slaughterhouse when the new school was planned. Avon Center School is listed on the Ohio Inventory of Historic Structures (LOR-99-3).

Avon Center School, built circa 1910—35995 Detroit Road. Upper view shows Avon Center School undergoing restoration.



Mile Point 6.4

Smith Building and House—Detroit Road (Map Nos. 72 & 73)

This handsome 1940 Neocolonial-style building at originally housed the medical office of Dr. Taylor Smith. Later it was Country Heirs, a well-known antique store, and then was split from some of the land that became the *Avon Commons* shopping campus. Today it is the *Vintage House Café*, decorated with photos from Avon's grape vineyard heritage. *Christ* and *Klingshirn Wineries*, in nearby Avon Lake, still rely on local grapes. Built in 1936, the attractive Colonial Revival-style house served as the residence for Dr. Taylor Smith.



Smith Building, built 1940 in Neocolonial style—35800 Detroit Road.



Smith House, Colonial Revival-style home built 1936—35750 Detroit Road.

Mile Point 6.7

Pickering Hill Farms—Detroit Road (Map Nos. 74-77)

Farmhouses at Pickering Hill Farms were constructed circa 1920-1930. The more modern barn now serves as a retail outlet for farm produce. For five generations the Pickering family has operated the farm. John Pickering, started farming the site upon his arrival from England in the mid-1800s. Originally it was a ranch and meat business, but his son, Frank, began growing vegetables and selling them to Cleveland's burgeoning west side communities. In the 1930s Frank built the first market building. The present market, completed in 1997, encompasses 6,000 square feet. The farm consists of over 70 acres of fruit and vegetable fields. The market is open June through July. The Pickering family has developed relationship with other Ohio growers, now offering Amish cheeses, butters, jams and pastries as well as locally grown fruits and vegetables like apples, peaches, tomatoes, and grapes.



John Pickering House—35735 Detroit Road, a Colonial Revival-style farmhouse built circa 1930.



LaVern Pickering House—35715 Detroit Road, a Colonial Revival-style house built circa 1930.



Pickering Hill Farms Market, built 1997.



Pickering Hill Farmhouse—35669 Detroit Road, a Bungalow-style farmhouse built circa 1920.



Oebker House— 35651 Detroit Road. This Colonial Revival-style farmhouse, built circa 1920 next to Pickering Hill Farms, shows elements of Tudor Revival style especially in its steeped-pitched roof, front gable entrance vestibule, and full-height masonry chimney.

Mile Point 7.1

Joseph Forthofer House—35290 Detroit Road (Map No. 78)

Located in the Avenbury Lakes complex, this 1911 house was built by Joseph and Elizabeth [née Puth] Forthofer. This three-story farm dwelling has both Shingle-style and Colonial Revival-style features. The east and west gables feature wide overhanging eaves and pronounced end returns. A front gable-roofed dormer is centered on the main (south) façade. Their daughter, Olga Riegelsberger, recalled that the beautiful wood moldings and doors were made from Avon trees. Heavy oak paneled sliding doors with decorative brass pulls divide the downstairs rooms. The Joseph Forthofer House is listed on the Ohio Inventory of Historic Structures (LOR-1375-3).

Entance to Avenbury Lakes residential community. The former Joseph Forthofer farmhouse is now the office of a development corporation in the Avenbury Lakes residential community.



Joseph Forthofer House, built 1911 in Shingle/Colonial Revival style—35290 Detroit Road.

Mile Point 7.2

Forthofer House—34625 Detroit Road (Map No. 80)

This Craftsman Bungalow-style house was built circa 1920 on the south crest of North Ridge. The gables and front dormer are clad with cedar shingles. Across the highway, at 34710 Detroit Road, the Greek Revival-style Herbst House was built on the Ridge's north slope.



Forthofer House, Craftsman Bungalow-style home built circa 1920—34625 Detroit Road.

Mile Point 7.3

Residence—34562 Detroit Road (Map No. 81)

This small two-story Colonial Revival-style house was built on the north slope of North Ridge circa 1900. The location of this house demonstrates the lakeward sloping surface of the abandoned beach ridge. The main section of the building features a beautiful slate roof.



Colonial Revival-style residence built circa 1900—34562 Detroit Road.

Mile Point 7.5

Ridge Bridge Farm—34390 Detroit Road (Map No. 83)

John T. and Rose R. Forthofer were the original owners of this Craftsman-style farmhouse built in 1900. The farm is situated on a 36-acre plot of land that was once part of the large property owned by Dr. Norton S. Townshend, whose life is commemorated on a historic marker at the corner of Detroit and Stoney Ridge Roads (Map No. 48). The farm received its name from the attractive stone-pillared bridge that connects the house with a large bank barn. The bridge and the barn were built several years after constructed of the house.



Ridge Bridge farmhouse, bridge, and barn—34390 Detroit Road.

Johannes Nagel House—3285 Nagel Road

At the intersection of Detroit and Nagel Roads another short side trip three quarters of a mile to the south is highly recommended (turn right). In 1849 Johannes Nagel built this magnificent Greek Revival-style farmhouse from local sandstone to replace his original log house. This sandstone house was built to last for centuries. The Nagel family emigrated from the Kingdom of Bavaria, of what is now southern Germany, in 1840 at about the same time as other emigrants from Germany were settling in Sheffield. Nagel Road was named in their honor and their farm, which focused on the cultivation of grapes, soon expanded to 1,100 acres reaching east to the Cuyahoga County line. Members of the Nagel family lived in the house for one hundred years and descendants still live in the area. Johannes Nagel passed away in 1874 at age 85.

The house is constructed of sandstone blocks that were hauled to the site by a team of oxen from a quarry a “day’s ride” away, probably located in Berea. The blocks were cut and expertly hand dressed on site. The sides and back of the house are comprised of rough chiseled blocks, but the front facade, as is often the case, is finished in a more refined manner. Each block has a bush-hammered texture and the edges or “margins” are tooled in a striated manner. Vertical tooling is also evident on all of the windowsills, lintels and belt course that delineates the division between the first and second floors. The exterior blocks measure 40 inches in thickness in the cellar, 24 inches on the first and second floor, and 18 inches in the attic. In theory no mortar holds the blocks together, only their massive weight. Wooden pegs were used throughout the house. The roof structure is made of hand-hewn walnut beams, the size of tree trunks, with mortise and tenon joints and diagonal cross bracing. The mortise is a recess cut into the beam, designed to receive a corresponding projection [tenon] on another beam so as to join or lock the beams together. The steep pitched roof and arched windows in the end gables show a Germanic-Medieval influence, probably due to the birthplace of the original owner, as opposed to the flat roof of the William Hurst House, whose builder came from England. The Johannes Nagel House still has its original windows, doors, and interior finishes. The Carved sandstone surround at the front door is of heroic classical proportions. The interior walls are of horse-hair plaster.

Johannes Nagel House in summer (courtesy of Joseph Richvalsky). The construction of this home, with its refined design and fine craftsmanship, was an amazing achievement in the Pre-Civil War wilderness of the Western Reserve. Avon Landmarks Preservation Commission member, Joseph Richvalsky, currently resides in the house.



Mile Point 7.6

Residence—34130 Detroit Road (Map No. 84)

This rare Avon example of a Dutch Colonial Revival-style farmhouse was built circa 1900. One of the most prominent features of this architectural style is the gambrel roof that has four inclined surfaces, the pair meeting at the ridge [roof crest] having the shallowest pitch. The alternating widths of horizontal shingle siding is unusual.



Dutch Colonial Revival-style farmhouse built circa 1900—34130 Detroit Road.



Northern slope of North Ridge—Detroit Road, near Nagel Road intersection.

Mile Point 7.8

Residence—34010 Detroit Road (Map No. 85)

This 1900 Craftsman Bungalow-style home features squared and tapered porch columns that extend to the ground and slant inward toward the roof. The deep front porch and wood eave brackets are noteworthy.



Craftsman-style residence built 1900—34010 Detroit Road.

Residence—33820 Detroit Road (Map No. 86)

This 1910 Craftsman Bungalow-style house is well proportioned and symmetrically balanced. The front porch features a distinctive curved ceiling and hefty tapered columns. The slope of North Ridge affords a ground level basement entrance.



Craftsman-style bungalow built 1910—33820 Detroit Road.

Mile Point 7.9

Holy Trinity Church and Rectory—33601 Detroit Road (Map Nos. 87-88)

This early 20th century stone building is an ornate, impressive example of Victorian Gothic Revival-style church architecture. The plan of this church is cruciform [Latin Cross], with nave and transepts, modeled after European Gothic cathedrals. The sanctuary was completed in 1902, utilizing 22,000 tons of sandstone, mostly quarried in Amherst, Ohio. This church is listed on the Ohio Inventory of Historic Structures (LOR-87-3).

Holy Trinity Church has its origin in 1833, when a contingent of Bavarian families arrived in Cleveland Harbor and made their way westward through the wilderness to what is now Avon. As more and more immigrants arrived from Germany and France, the need for a Catholic church with a German-speaking pastor became paramount. The first Catholic mass in Lorain County was celebrated in the home of John Schwartz in March 1841. The first Holy Trinity Church was built on Jaycox Road in 1844.

The circumstances surrounding the construction of the present church are intriguing. By 1900 the parish had outgrown the original wood-frame church. Without authorization Holy Trinity's pastor, Father Anthony B. Steuber, purchased a 19-acre site at the corner of North Ridge [now Detroit] and Nagel Roads from the estate of Dr. Norton S. Townshend for \$1,000—then he told the parish council, consisting of Michael Dietrich, Heinrich Geierman, Peter Klingshirn, and Heinrich Urig. In spite of their surprise, the council quickly approved. The official purchase, as recorded by the Lorain County Auditor transferred the land to Bishop Horstmann of the Cleveland Diocese on April 27, 1900. Mr. Noll was selected as the contractor and the cornerstone was laid August 19, 1900.

Construction of the new church did not go smoothly, however, and the most serious problem was the bankruptcy of the contractor, who was to quarry the stone and do all the



Holy Trinity Catholic Church built 1902 in Gothic Revival style—33601 Detroit Road.



Holy Trinity Catholic Church Rectory.

masonry work—the cost jumped from an estimated \$35,000 to \$72,000. Also, Mr. Noll had quarried the first stone from the Puth farm in West Dover [now Westlake in Cuyahoga County]; but the rest had to be purchased from Amherst quarries. The original stone was surface stone, while the Amherst stone was deep-quarried and much stronger. The two stones weathered differently, resulting in the color difference obvious today. The difference also resulted in a more serious problem. From the beginning, Father Steuber was concerned about the height of the tower, which rose 98 feet above ground. He believed that the difference in weight of the two types of stone would make it unstable and top-heavy. The architect insisted that this made no difference, but he was soon proved wrong as cracks began appearing along the joints shortly after the tower was completed. The tornado of 1924 weakened the tower even more, necessitating the removal of a 20-foot section, leaving the shorter structure seen today. It was a festive occasion when the bells, Saints Benedict and Scholastica, were raised into position by horse-drawn winches. The first mass in the new church was celebrated on Christmas Eve 1902.

The church is 138 feet long, 80 feet wide, and accommodates 550 people comfortably. At the same time the church was being constructed, a 10-room rectory was built. The dual construction forced the parish to go into debt for \$38,000 instead of the originally expected \$17,500. Father Steuber himself

donated more than \$15,000 to the building fund and the parish made many sacrifices to meet this responsibility.

The Holy Trinity Rectory is a large Queen Anne-style edifice, built to house the priest and serve as the parish office. The lower half of this large house and the northeast corner tower are constructed of the same Amherst sandstone as the sanctuary. Holy Trinity School, located a short distance south of Holy Trinity Church at 2250 Nagel Road, was constructed in 1926. The original church school was a one-room log building located about 0.7 mile south at Schwartz Road in 1845. As such, Holy Trinity School is the oldest in the Cleveland Catholic Diocese, even predating the diocese itself.

The tornado of Saturday, June 28, 1924, struck Lorain County and did serious damage to Holy Trinity. The majority of the church roof was destroyed by the storm, however the part over the altars remained intact and there was no damage beyond the communion rail. The organ was almost ruined and the stained glass windows were destroyed. Later, a trade paper known as *The Cement Era* claimed that the solid masonry of Holy Trinity saved Lakewood and Cleveland's west side from the tornado, by causing the storm to veer away from these communities and dissipate in more open areas. Along with the damage to the church and rectory, the storm destroyed a large wooden parish hall, a two-room schoolhouse, and old-buggy shed, and the custodian's house and garage. Cows in nearby fields were killed by flying slate from the church roof. Some of the parish papers were found as far as 35 miles away and many important church records were permanently lost. The pastor, working in his office that day heard his housekeeper scream—an incident she could never later explain. Father rushed to her aid and the moment after he left the office the tornado struck and severely damaged that part of the rectory. This inexplicable incident probably saved him from death or serious injury.

Mile Point 8.0

Nagel Farmhouse—33294 Detroit Road (Map No. 90)

Located just east of the Nagel Road intersection, this Vernacular-style farmhouse was built circa 1900. An interesting feature is the octagon window in the front gable.



Nagel Farmhouse, Vernacular-style farmhouse built circa 1900—33294 Detroit Road.

Residence—33211 Detroit Road (Map No. 91)

This elegant Greek Revival-style farmhouse was built circa 1850. The front porch wraps around the east side of the house; six Doric columns support the porch roof. The massive treatment of the gable molding [bargeboard] is particularly impressive.



Greek Revival-style farmhouse built circa 1850—33211 Detroit Road.

Mile Point 8.2

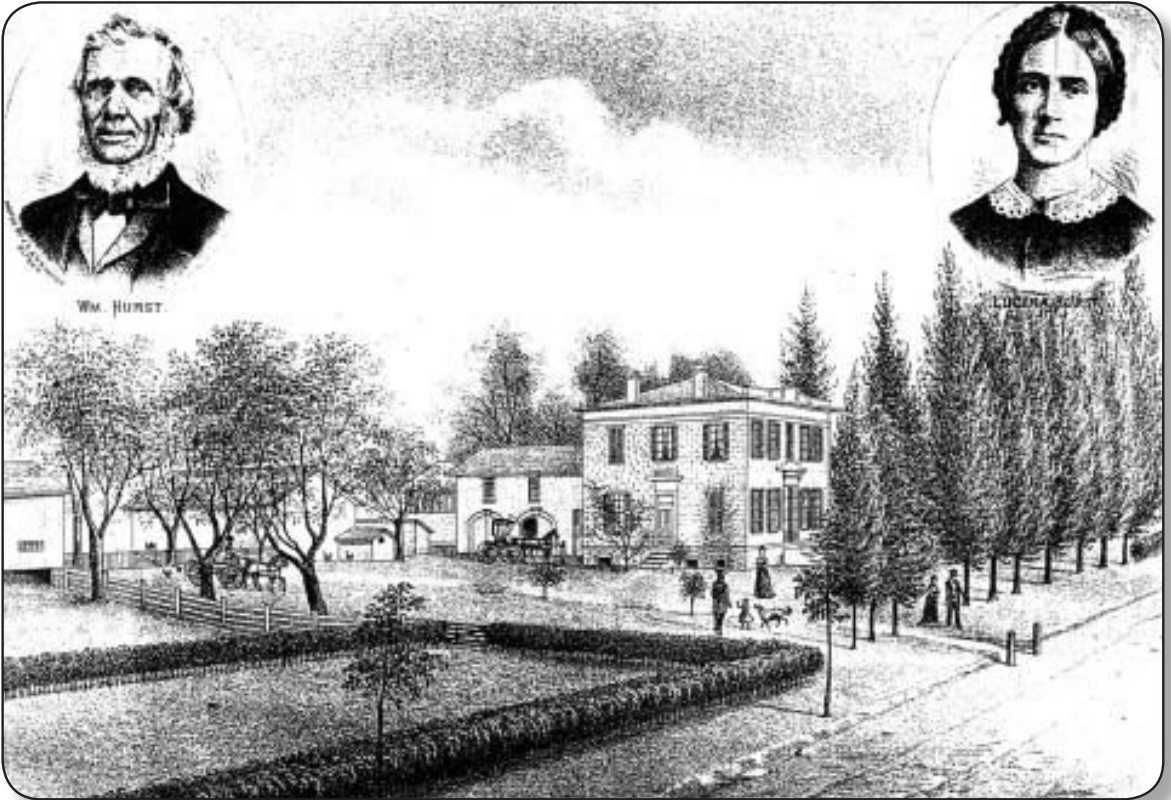
William Hurst House—33065 Detroit Road (Map No. 92)

This impressive 1843 farmhouse, built by William Hurst of England, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The structure is an unusually fine example of a stone masonry house in the Greek Revival-style. Built on over 600 acres of farmland, the house at one time was the largest on Cleveland's west side. Called "Stone Eagle Farm," this handsome stone residence was highlighted by an unusual stone carving of an eagle perched on a globe above the roof line, carrying a ribbon in its bill with the word, *AGRICULTURE*. A massive stone entablature is a continuous feature at the top of the house. The stone enframing around the front entrance is distinctive.

This building has been characterized as the finest stone house in the Western Reserve. Much of the detailing of the Greek Revival-style is believed to derived from Minard Lafever's 1833 *The Modern Builder's Guide*. The interior has been beautifully restored and features several fireplaces, including a large cooking fireplace that is still intact. This impressive country home is listed on the Ohio Inventory of Historic Structures (LOR-96-3). The Hurst family owned the property until 1946. From 1946 to 1949 the land was used for a mink farm and was the Tomes family home for more than 50 years, before sitting abandoned for about three years. Ron Larson of *Olde Avon Village* is now restoring this grand home, including the Stone Eagle.



William Hurst House, built 1843 in Greek Revival style—33065 Detroit Road (1936 photograph by Carl Waite, courtesy of U.S. Library of Congress).



Woodcut of William and Lucina Hurst House on North Ridge in 1870s (from Williams Brothers 1879).



William Hurst House (Greek Revival 1843) at 33065 Detroit Road, Avon, showing service wing built circa 1930s of field stone and sandstone rubble (courtesy Avon Historical Society).



"Stone Eagle" on William Hurst House (courtesy of Avon Historical Society).



East side of William Hurst House (1936 photograph by Carl Waite, U.S. Library of Congress).



William Hurst House undergoing restoration.

Mile Point 8.5

Hardwick House—32681 Detroit Road (Map No. 93)

The red brick Hardwick House with a wood-frame wing to the west was built in 1832. This delightful Greek Revival-style farmhouse was one of the earliest homes constructed on North Ridge.

*Hardwick House—
32681 Detroit Road
(courtesy of Avon
Historical Society).*



Hardwick House, Greek Revival-style farmhouse built 1832—32681 Detroit Road.

Mile Point 8.5***Residence—32678 Detroit Road (Map No. 94)***

This attractive Italianate/Queen Anne-style farmhouse was built circa 1890. The main decorative elements are the three porch roof supports and the circular window in the front gable.



Queen Anne-style farmhouse was built circa 1890—32678 Detroit Road.

Residence—32625 Detroit Road (Map No. 95)

This Italianate-style farmhouse was built circa 1880s.



Farmhouse—32625 Detroit Road (courtesy of Avon Historical Society).

Mile Point 8.7

George Sweet House—32345 Detroit Road (Map No. 98)

This elegant Greek Revival-style farmhouse is known as “Fern Hill.” George Sweet built this fine house in the late 1820s on the site of his original log house. Typical of this architectural style, it possesses a two-story main house with a one-story wing. The main house has six spacious rooms and a beautiful open stairway with large halls on both floors. Some of the walls are as thick as ten inches. Foundation beams are logs 16 inches by 20 inches thick; some still have the bark on them. The pride of the house is the front entranceway and staircase. The recessed door, framed by paneled windows at top and sides, opens into the wide hallway with the stairwell facing it. The newel post is gracefully turned, and tapered balusters are notched into the rail and treads. Avon Landmarks Preservation Commission member Lois Shinko, and her husband Bob, currently reside in the house.



George Sweet House, Greek Revival-style farmhouse built circa 1820s—32345 Detroit Road (1936 photographs by Carl Waite, U.S. Library of Congress). Note elaborate entranceway.



George Sweet House—32345 Detroit Road (photograph by Ralph D. White).

Mile Point 8.8

Residence—32297 Detroit Road (Map No. 99)

This Colonial Revival-style home is located across the highway from the *Avon Oaks Country Club*. Built circa 1900, this house features a full-front porch with Craftsman-style supporting columns.



Colonial Revival-style home built circa 1900—32297 Detroit Road.



Avon Oaks Country Club—32300 Detroit Road.

Mile Point 9.0

Calvin Sweet House—32135 Detroit Road (Map No. 100)

This well preserved Greek Revival-style home was built in 1848. Unlike many of the homes of this style, the main entrance is on the gable side of the building. However, like most of the period, the basic design is “T” shaped with a two-story main section and a one-story wing.



Calvin Sweet House, Greek Revival-style home built in 1848—32135 Detroit Road.

Funeral Home—32000 Detroit Road (Map No. 105)

Located adjacent to the Cuyahoga County line, this Neoclassical-style funeral home was built in 1960. The graceful portico supported by Doric columns two stories tall is the main feature of this building. Originally built as the *Burmeister Funeral Home*, it is now operated by *Busch Funeral & Crematory Service*.



Funeral Home—32000 Detroit Road.