

WHY IS HISTORIC PRESERVATION IMPORTANT?

Historic preservation is the practice of protecting and preserving sites, structures or districts which reflect elements of local or national cultural, social, economic, political, archeological or architectural significance. Preservation has many diverse purposes and rewards, including strengthening of local economies, stabilization of property values, fostering of civic beauty and community pride, enhancement of cultural tourism, and appreciation of local and national history. Historic preservation has a public purpose that advances the education and welfare of citizens, while also providing economic and aesthetic benefits.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

Individuals, property owners or groups can prepare nominations for the Historic Preservation Board's evaluation. Application forms are available.

Additionally, individuals are reporting historic sites that were missed during the 1989 county survey.

Please contact the Monroe County Historic Preservation Board at the Planning Department to obtain or to provide information.

Courthouse Room 306
 Bloomington, IN 47404
 Phone: (812) 349-2560
 Fax: (812) 349-2967

Hours: 8 am - 4 pm, Monday - Friday

www.co.monroe.in.us/planning/hp.html

HISTORIC MONROE COUNTY DRIVING TOURS

Maple Grove Road



- Daniel Stout House
- Owens Farm
- Stone walls
- Maple Grove Church & Cemetery
- Peden Farm
- Double-Pen House
- Victorian Farmstead

HISTORY MAPLE GROVE ROAD

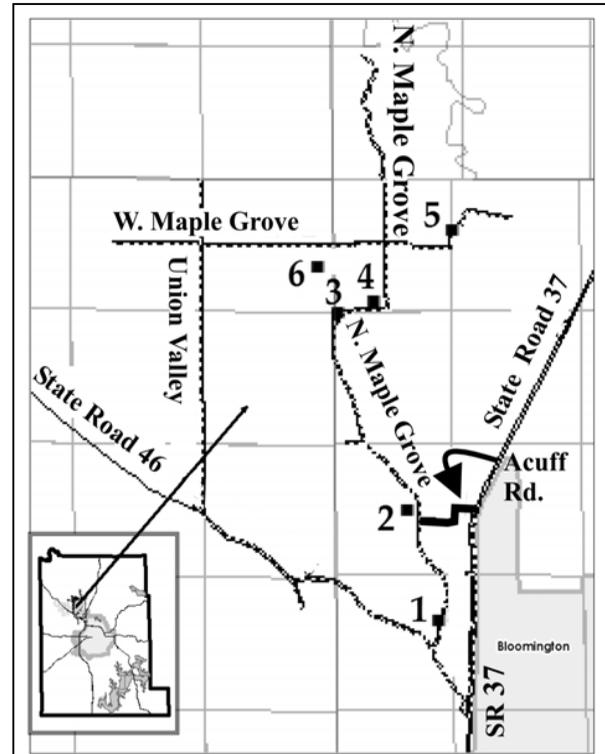
Maple Grove Road, northwest of Bloomington, Indiana, is located in central Monroe County and was an important transportation route in the nineteenth century. The road traverses an area containing farmstead clusters, stone walls, a former school, and a cemetery and church. Rather than quarrying, agriculture was the dominant commercial activity in the area, and many of the farmsteads still exhibit nineteenth century agricultural patterns.

Settlement around Maple Grove Road began in the early nineteenth century, but peaked in the 1870s as families from Virginia, Maryland, Tennessee, the Carolinas, and Ireland moved into the area to farm wheat, Indian corn, and oats. They also brought with them vernacular building traditions and stylistic preferences. However, upon settlement people adapted their building traditions to the local climate, topography, and materials, giving the farms and structures around Maple Grove Road a distinctively southern flavor.

Between the 1880s and 1910, horse farming was the only available technology in the area. Beginning in the 1920s mechanized farming slowly took over agricultural practices, and smaller farmers were pushed out of the area to search for work. Along with mechanization came the depletion of nutrients in the soil, which meant the land became better suited for raising livestock by the 1950s. However, those farms that have survived the technological changes of the twentieth century not only maintain their nineteenth century features, but in some cases are still owned by the descendents of the original settlers.

Twelve houses and farmsteads in the Maple Grove Road area, plus the church and cemetery and stone walls, were listed in 1998 as a historic district on the National Register of Historic Places.

MAP HISTORIC SITES



1. Daniel Stout House
2. Owens Farm
3. Maple Grove Church and Cemetery
4. Peden Farm
5. Double-Pen House
6. Victorian Farmstead

Directions to Maple Grove Road Area, northwest of Bloomington: From State Road 37 watch for a yellow cross-road sign marking Acuff Rd. From State Road 46, look for Union Valley Road.

(These sites are representative of the historic houses, farmsteads, and places in the Maple Grove Road District, but are not an exhaustive list of historic resources.)

Please respect the privacy of the owners by viewing all sites from the road.

More information about the history of the Maple Grove Road area can be found at the Indiana Room of the Monroe County Public Library and the library at the Monroe County History Center.

Daniel Stout House

3655 N. Maple Grove Rd.
Hall-and-Parlor, 1828

In appreciation for his service for his to the Governor William Henry Harrison, President James Monroe awarded a grant of land in Monroe County to the Virginian, Daniel Stout, in 1818. Stout built a two-story house using limestone from the creek below the site. The stone work is even more remarkable for having been completed before technical improvements made quarrying much easier. Today, the house, with its hand-cut 24-inch thick solid stone walls, is the oldest standing stone structure in the county.

Although the house remained in the hands of the Stout's descendants for more than eighty years, the upstairs was abandoned and the entire house had become rundown by the early 1940s. Since then the home has been accurately restored and was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973.



Stone Walls

N. Maple Grove Rd.
ca.. 1870

Maple Grove Road is lined with the finest examples of dry stone walls in the state. Tradition relates that they were built by itinerant Irishmen at the rate of a "perch" or rod (about 16 1/2 feet) a day, for which they were paid \$1.00. The stones for the construction were hauled to the site by ox cart. The walls go down about 2 1/2 feet into the ground - below the frost line - and some stand as high as five feet. Some of the highest and least disturbed walls surround the Owens farmhouse.



Maple Grove Church & Cemetery

N. Maple Grove Rd.
Greek Revival, 1876

The church was built in 1876 on land given by the Wampler family. It replaced an earlier church on Lost Man's Lane where the foundation and cemetery of the older church can still be found. The cemetery that surrounds the current church is much older than the building. The oldest graves in the cemetery face the west wall and are nearly flush with the building, making them difficult to read. Presumably the wall was built when the headstones were already quite old.

One headstone near the southwest corner displays an unusual motif of a carved Civil War soldier and his tent. The tree-stump headstones found in the cemetery date from the Civil War and are a common type often found in south-central Indiana.



Peden Farm

6191 N. Maple Grove Rd.
Gothic Revival, 1880

The house consists of two parts of separate origin. The rear section was once the Wampler Schoolhouse, which stood on the hill overlooking the church just up the road. In 1876, Benny Whisenand's father supposedly moved the schoolhouse down the hill to its present location near the farm spring. It was later divided into two rooms, and the side porch was the site where Rachel Peden chronicled her life on Maple Grove Road for the local newspaper. The steep-gabled front section was added later.

When the Pedens bought the house, it had been endlessly altered by Benny's succession of wives, leading Rachel Peden to declare the house "a superb architectural blunder that could not possibly be corrected." She later mused, "And so I thought I could make peace with the house, in time. It has come true. I love this old house. We are the best of friends."



Double-Pen House

1585 E. Maple Grove Rd.
Double-Pen, ca. 1875

Double-pen houses are named for the two "pens" or sections joined with gables on each end. This style is sometimes called the "dog-trot" because an open space between the pens is often present. In many cases, a double-pen was simply two log cabins separated by a breezeway that would be later enclosed. The home has undergone multiple renovations over time yet remains similar to its original appearance.



Victorian Farmstead

4949 W. Maple Grove Rd.
Gothic Revival, 1876

In 1876, John and Elizabeth Ridge hired the Aiken brothers, well-known local carpenters, to build this house. It is an example of Victorian Gothic architecture with its high front gable and flat roof portico. At the same time, the owners of the farm across the road commissioned a nearly identical house that is no longer standing. Plaster for both houses was made by burning limestone. Originally the house had two rooms downstairs with a central hall and double-end chimneys. Although the house has undergone a number of renovations, the exterior appearance is nearly original.



Owens Farm

4505 N. Maple Grove Rd.
Massed Plan/Greek Revival, 1864

The brick farmhouse was built by Ben Owens in 1864. It is a massed-plan house with a prominent cornice and gable returns; hallmarks of the Greek Revival style. The two-story portico with scroll-cut decoration enlivens the entrance. An early log house, possibly used as a summer kitchen, and an old hewn-and-pegged barn also stand on the property. The dry stone walls surrounding the property were laid in the 1870s.



DEFINITIONS ARCHITECTURE TERMS

Hall-and-Parlor: The hall-and-parlor plan consists of two rooms. One room served as the more formal, public parlor, while the second room was used as the living and sleeping space for the family. The hall was a wide space that could function as a reception area or, more likely, living space for the family.

Gothic Revival: A style marked by the use of decorative windows with pointed arches, as well as exposed timber framing and steep-vaulted roofs. While there are no pure examples of this type in Monroe County, numerous buildings display Gothic Revival features.

Greek Revival: A style characterized by large porches, entryway columns, and a front door surrounded by narrow rectangular windows. Although several homes and buildings display Greek Revival features in the area, no one structure exists as an authentic example of this style.

Vernacular/Builder architecture: A structure built of local materials in a functional style devised to meet the needs of common people in their time and place. Vernacular structures were often built by individuals who lacked formal architectural training. The majority of historic structures in Monroe County are of this type.