

#1 Monroe County Welcome Center - 6 Gall Road - Columbia

The City of Columbia has renovated historic Shoemaker School into a multi-faceted facility that links Monroe County's heritage with its vision for the future. Hammond Shoemaker, the first doctor along the Cahokia-Kaskaskia Trace (one of the busiest byways through Monroe County during the earliest days of European settlement and used by Lewis and Clark as they traveled north to Cahokia gathering men and supplies for the Corps of Discovery in 1803) built a one-room building for his children in 1867. It was used as a public school until 1951, then as a private home for almost four decades. In 1994, the structure was moved to its present location in order to avoid demolition due to the widening of Illinois 3. Today, adaptive reuse of the building allows for visitor services, a Shoemaker School Museum recreating the building's use as a mid-19th century one-room school, and the One Room School Commemorative Plaza before the entrance into the building designating all 60+ one room schools that dotted Monroe County in 1900.

#2 "Spirit of the American Doughboy"-375 E. Locust St.- Columbia

The Spirit of the American Doughboy is memorialized in this statue by Ernest M. Viquesney. Following the Great World War, patriotism was very high in Monroe County. In Columbia, Illinois Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, had been observed by members of the Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) since its inception during the late 1860s. By 1920, the ranks of the G.A.R. were nearly depleted. As a result, the newly formed American Legion Post 581 began organizing the Memorial Day ceremonies. It was felt that a fitting monument should be erected to commemorate the sacrifices made by our local veterans. While the focus of the statue was on the Doughboy of the Great War (WWI) the monument was dedicated to "Our Sons and Daughters who served their nation in freedom's cause" during the six Great Wars: the Revolutionary War (1775-1781), The War of 1812-1814, The Mexican War (1846-1847), The Civil War (1861-1865), The Spanish American War (1898), and the Great World War (1917-1918). During the existence of the memorial, another plaque has been added to the site. As a testament to the continuing struggle for freedom, three more wars have been added: World War II (1941-1945), Korean War (1950-1953), and Vie Nam (1960-1975).

#3 Miller-Fiege House - 140 South Main St. - Columbia

Built in 1852, this historic home is a unique example of a brick one-and-a-half story vernacular German cottage on a limestone foundation. This home, landmarked in 2009, was expanded three times, most of which were in the nineteenth century.

#4 Bellefontaine House - 709 S. Church Street - Waterloo

La Belle Fonatine (translated to beautiful spring) was the second American settlement in the Northwest Territory. It was established in 1782 by Capt. James Moore, an officer of the American Revolution serving with the Virginia militia. The settlement was situated on the Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail. Remnants of the trail, including a small stone - arched bridge can be seen on the Southeast edge of the site, and the trail leads to the location of the cemetery where the Moore family and descendants are buried. Part of the Kitchen area of the current building is believed to be the log structure of the original Moore Homestead. The property is currently operated as a museum by the Monroe County Historical Society.

#5 The Monroe County Courthouse - 100 S. Main St. - Waterloo

The center part of the West side of the current courthouse building was constructed in 1853 and served the county's needs for many years. In 1905, plans were made to add a north and south wing to the original building. No major changes were made until 1995, when a large addition was built onto the east side of the courthouse. Most of the county offices are now housed in this structure.

#6 Peterstown House - 275 N. Main St. - Waterloo

This property was at one time a stagecoach stop, general store and tavern along the Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail. It was also owned by Enoch Moore, with the original part of the current structure being built by Peter Rogers in 1830. Also on the rear of the property are two log cabins that were used by Monroe County families. The property was renovated by the Peterstown Heritage Society, and is now used as a museum by that group.

#7 Hecker Commercial Club - 230 E. Washington St. - Hecker

The Hecker Commercial Club held their charter meeting on April 24, 1962. The first building used as a meeting hall was constructed by the group in the early 1970s, but was destroyed by fire in 1979. Shortly after that, the group built the current Hecker Community Center, sometimes referred to as the "Hecker Dome." This building has played host to countless dances, concerts, weddings and other community gatherings. Many music stars "on their way up" have hosted concerts at this venue. Activity is organized and supported by the many volunteers in Hecker who work to keep the facility alive and well.

#8 St. John Ev. & Ref. Church - Church St. - Fults

This facility was built by the Evangelical and Reformed congregation of the Fults area in 1906. Through the years, many members participated in activities at the church, including weddings and funerals. The church hosted well-attended wurstmarkts for quite a few years. In 1993, the church fell victim to the flood waters of the Mississippi River. Following that event, it was determined that not enough members were around to continue maintenance of the facility. The congregation dissolved, and at an auction in 1994, the church was sold to members and Fults residents, Merrill and Sheryl Prange. They cleaned, repaired and renovated the church to its pre-flood splendor. Now the church is occasionally used for weddings and funerals, and the Pranges host a Christmas service for former church members and folks from the community.

#9 Salt Lick Point Trail - Intersection of Bluff Rd and Limestone Ln. - Valmeyer

Following the 1993 flood, the Village of Valmeyer took over ownership of the former Columbia Quarry complex on the North edge of town. In the years that followed, the Village entered into easement agreements with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission, and they established the Blufftop area as a registered Illinois land and water reserve. On top of the bluff, local volunteers have now developed a trail network containing three separate, but interconnected trails. The first is the Johnson trail - a 1.3 mile long trail along the base of the bluff that is an easy walk. The second is the Salt Lick Point Trail. This one is a bit more challenging, but affords a beautiful view across the Mississippi River flood plain, including the St. Louis skyline. The third trail is the 1.9 mile Newman Trail that connects to both the Johnson and Salt Lick Point Trail.

#10 Maeystown Log Church - 1208 Franklin St. - Maeystown

Sitting just east of St. John United Church of Christ in Maeystown is a small wooden structure that served as the first church building for the Maeystown Evangelical congregation. This was originally built as a log structure and still has the log framework underneath the exterior wood siding. It is the oldest known log structure in Illinois on its original site in continuous use for religious purposes since 1859. The first worship services of the St. John congregation were held in this building from 1859-1867.