

Trekking About in Lansdowne

1 Lansdowne Train Station

When you disembark from the train, take a look at our historic Lansdowne train station. This building was designed by prominent Philadelphia architect Frank Furness and has been in service since 1902. In 1993 a fire damaged the building. SEPTA, in cooperation with the Greater Lansdowne Civic Association, restored it to its present condition. www.lansdownecivic.com

2 Lansdowne Borough Hall

Up the stairs from the station, and north to the center of town, our Borough Hall sits on the SE corner of our main intersection. In its former life it was our firehouse, built in 1903 and used until 1984. The Baltimore Avenue facade shows the framing of two large firehouse doors. The Fire Company used horse drawn carts until 1912. The John Wanamaker store kept a stable in Lansdowne and their delivery wagon horses were made available to the firemen.

The building is open Monday through Friday 9am-8pm. Stop in for directions and maps of the Borough if you have not already printed yours from the website. The first floor conference room houses our bicentennial quilt and the model of Lansdowne Borough circa 1910. Take a break in our beautifully landscaped Borough Green before you continue on your walk.

3 Lansdowne Park National Register Historic District

Entered in the National Register of Historic Places in 1987, the Lansdowne Park District includes West Baltimore Avenue and portions of Owen, Runnemedede, Windermere, West LaCrosse, West Stratford and West Greenwood Avenues.

We suggest walking west on Baltimore until you reach Windermere Ave. Meander down Windermere to Lacrosse, head east on Lacrosse to Runnemeade, south on Runnemedede back to Baltimore Ave., then east on Baltimore Ave., to Owen. There you will find the Mary Owen House at 12 Owen Avenue. Our oldest residence, it was originally constructed in 1732 with an addition in 1790. www.lansdownecivic.com

Tradition tells of Generals Lafayette and Washington stopping here. They were on their way from the Battle of Brandywine at Chadds Ford heading to Valley Forge. Traveling through Chester over Kings Highway, (now Chester Pike) with their troops, they turned onto Darby and Radnor Road, now Lansdowne Avenue.

This district showcases homes constructed between 1889 and 1898, a second, smaller group of buildings were constructed as late as 1912.

The most prominent architectural styles represented are American Four-Square, Dutch Colonial, Georgian Revival, Romanesque, Second Empire, Shingle and Tudor. The district also includes possibly the largest collection of Queen Anne-style buildings in the Philadelphia region.

Lansdowne Churches

The Borough features churches of every denomination, and many of them are historic and beautifully maintained. The first you will pass is **St. John the Evangelist** 4 with its distinctive Lytch Gate. After you stroll among the trees and past the rhododendrons, find your way back to Lansdowne Avenue. Travel north. Feel free to stop for lunch or grab a bottle of water to go as you pass through town and our many restaurants.

Lansdowne Baptist 5, built in 1887, sits on the northeast corner of Lacrosse and Lansdowne Aves. **Trinity United Methodist** 6, built in 1895, resides on the corner of W.Stratford. **Lansdowne Friends Meeting** 7, constructed in 1861, graces the north west corner of Stewart and Lansdowne Aves. **Lansdowne Presbyterian** 8, built in 1886, is farther down Lansdowne at Greenwood Avenue. Visit **St. Philomena's** 9 **Catholic Church** toward the end of the tour at the corner of Highland and Baltimore Avenues.

10 Henry Albertson Subdivision National Register Historic District

Established as a National Register Historic District in 1998, the Henry Albertson Subdivision comprises the boundaries of the property owned by Henry Albertson, a Philadelphia merchant, in the 1880s. The district includes Balfour Circle, Clover Avenue and portions of North Lansdowne, East Greenwood, North Highland, East Stewart and North Wycombe Avenues. For more information see www.lansdownecivic.com While on E. Greenwood Avenue enjoy the many large trees. Various styles of architecture are represented in the 77 houses in the district including American Four-Square, Colonial Revival, Craftsman, Dutch Colonial, Prairie School, Queen Anne, Shingle and Tudor Revival.

11 Pennwood High School, 12 World War I and

13 World War II Monuments

Moving from East Greenwood north on Highland Ave. you see in front of you the profile of the Penn Wood High School (originally Lansdowne High School). The architect was Joseph Linden Heacock, and the builder was John McShain who went on to build the Kennedy Center, The Jefferson

Memorial and The Pentagon. It was opened in 1927 and was considered one of the finest school buildings in the country. Today, it is one of the oldest public school buildings in Pennsylvania, and is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Built in the Italian Renaissance style, the motto carved above the door reads "To Teach the Art of Living Well." Carved in limestone above the motto are a female figure holding a Greek Temple, and a male figure holding a cog.

On the campus you will find our World War I and World War II monuments. Significant examples of monument art, they have been adopted by one of our civic associations, The Greater Lansdowne Civic Association, for restoration and preservation. www.lansdownecivic.com

The World War I monument can be found at the side of the building you viewed first and the World War II monument is a large carved stone plaque which faces the football field behind the building.

14 Sycamore Tree Park

After you leave the High School campus wander back to Greenwood Avenue and continue walking east until you come to Wycombe Ave. Turn right on Wycombe. Head south a couple of blocks and you will find our most famous example of arboreal life. Standing 108 feet tall with a trunk circumference of 22 feet and a crown width of 129 feet, it is the star of its own green space: Sycamore Park. At this point you may want to sit and rest and finish off the beverage you brought with you. This is a lovely space and another example of our Borough Government working with our civic and community groups. www.lansdownecivic.com

From here turn right at the park entrance and walk south on Wycombe Avenue. Continue until you reach Baltimore Avenue. St. Philomena's Catholic Church is on the corner of Baltimore and Highland Avenues. Now look around. You are almost back where you started but you are not done yet! If you started early and need a bit of rest check out one of our fine eateries. We can serve you lunch, hot or cold, to go or to stay.

15 Twentieth Century Club

Your last stop will be The Twentieth Century Club. Back to the center of town, head south toward the train station. When you cross over the bridge there is an interesting old building on your left. It looks like a London shop. In its past life it was a bakery, and then housed the Lansdowne Library until the new building you see next was built. Now awaiting a new owner, it is still pleasant to see.

The Twentieth Century Club across the street, was built in 1911 by and for the ladies of the Twentieth Century Club. It was organized by a small group of women whose objective was to create an organized center of thought and action among women, for the protection of their interests and for the promotion of science, literature and art. Their motto, "Give to the world the best that you have and the best will come back to you." Always greatly concerned with the welfare of the less fortunate, the club raised funds for scholarships and children's charities. Their interest in women's issues was evident by the choice of Dr. Anna Howard Shaw, a great women's suffrage leader, as guest speaker to the group in 1905. In its hey day the club had 500 members. When the costs of maintaining the building proved to be a hardship for the membership, the clubhouse was deeded to the Borough in 1979. It now serves as a community center and is rented for social gatherings.

So there you have it. Along the way you may have noticed numerous examples of stately architecture. Estate homes in what was once an escape from the city for the wealthy of their time. You may also have noticed the pride current residents have in their town. It's a great place to visit and a great place to live.

Walking Tour

- 1 Lansdowne Train Station
- 2 Lansdowne Borough Hall
- 3 Lansdowne Park National Historic District

Lansdowne Churches:

- 4 St. John's Episcopal
- 5 Lansdowne Baptist
- 6 Trinity United Methodist
- 7 Lansdowne Friends Meeting
- 8 First Presbyterian Church of Lansdowne
- 9 St. Philomena's Catholic Church
- 10 Henry Albertson Subdivision Historic District
- 11 Penn Wood High School
- 12 World War One Monument
- 13 World War Two Monument
- 14 Sycamore Tree Park
- 15 Twentieth Century Club