

HISTORIC NORTHWEST WALKING TOUR

Learn fascinating historical and architectural facts about many early buildings at Swarthmore College, as well as about the oldest house in Swarthmore, a National Historic Landmark. Explore the late 19th century area homes built by West Hill Land Development Company, including a house that has a former 1880s water tower. What could be better than sitting on the front porch of a College building and reading about its history and architects, while enjoying the wonderful view!

Theme: History, Architecture

Amenities: Campus Views, Gardens, Benches, Emergency Phones

Surface: Paved; 1.4 miles long

Slope: Mostly Flat, Inclines, 56 ft elevation gain

Hazards: Uneven sidewalks

Emergencies: Use a campus emergency phone (E) or call Public Safety (610) 328-8333

Difficulty Rating: No Sweat - I exercise for fun, not to win contests. I like to explore at an easy pace, stopping to snap photos and smell the roses. Varied terrain doesn't scare me, but let's not do anything too extreme.

Resources shown on the map:

P: The Whittier Lot has limited visitor spaces M-F before 3:30 PM, and in any lot at other times.

P: Street Parking on Elm Avenue.

P: Street Parking on Cedar Avenue.

E: Emergency Phone

Swarthmore Senior Citizens Assn.

<https://swarthmoreseniors.com>

6/12/2020



Waypoints Shown On The Map:

1. Benjamin West House P & R: The oldest building in Swarthmore, built in 1724 as a farmhouse, is the traditional birthplace of American artist Benjamin West (1738-1820) and the boyhood home of industrialist and financier John Crozer. Soon after Swarthmore College purchased the house and 40 acres of land from John Ogden in 1874, a fire gutted it. When it was rebuilt, after North Chester Road was rerouted from the west to the east side of the house, the front facades were reversed. It was named a National Historic Landmark in 1965.

(Parking lot with many 3-hour visitor spaces. Public Safety & Visitor Information's restrooms are open 24 hours, 7 days, with a water fountain in the lobby.)

2. Magill Walk: Named for the second president of the College, this imposing axial walk connects the train station to Parrish Hall. Several of the Swamp White Oaks planted in 1881 to line the 1869 original boardwalk still survive.

3. Clothier Hall F & R: In 1929 Karcher and Smith designed the prominent building as a memorial to Isaac Hallowell Clothier. The Collegiate Gothic Revival style evoked the appearance of a church with bell tower and cloister. The principal portion housed an auditorium. Don't miss the gazing up into bell tower and enjoying the medieval cloisters' fragrant garden and quiet contemplative space. (Essie Mae's Snack Bar is open weekdays with restrooms in the basement.)

4. Scott Amphitheater: Designed by noted Philadelphia landscape architect Thomas Sears and completed in 1942, the schist stone sitting walls incorporate mature tulip poplars and white oaks into the design. The amphitheater hosts approximately 350 graduating seniors and their guests for the annual College commencement.

5. Parrish Hall R: Now non-sectarian, Swarthmore College was established by Quakers in 1864. Architect Addison Hutton designed this earliest campus building in 1868 as his first commission in his new firm and went on to design numerous collegiate buildings throughout his career. In 1881, Parrish suffered major fire damage, reducing the building to its exterior stone walls. It was rebuilt with the current boldly curving roof profile by Philadelphia architects Sloan and Balderston. (Restrooms are on the first floor main hallway with ramp access on east end.)

6. McCabe Library: The college's main library houses the Friends Historical Library, a significant research resource that includes the history of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) and major social reform movements in America. It also houses the Swarthmore College archives, the Swarthmore Historical Society archives, and the Jane Addams Peace Collection.

7. Lilac Collection: Dating to 1931, the Lilac Collection was the first collection planted after the 1929 founding of the Scott Arboretum that encompasses the entire campus. The Arboretum was named after Arthur Hoyt

Scott, class of 1891. He was the second president of Scott Paper Company.

8. Friends Meetinghouse: The Swarthmore Friends Meetinghouse was built in 1879 with funds provided Joseph Wharton, a Philadelphia financier and one of the founders of Swarthmore College. Designed by engineering professor Arthur Beardsley as a simple stone vernacular building rather than in the traditional Pennsylvania meeting house style. In 1911, Wharton also funded a large addition on the north side designed by renowned Rose Valley architect William Lightfoot Price.

9. 3 & 5 Whittier Place: Now joined together as the Lang Center for Civic and Social Responsibility, the two Whittier Place former private residences were designed by Rose Valley architect and Arts and Crafts community founder William Price for his brother-in-law, a college professor. Price's son lived in one of the houses when he attended the college and became an architect after he graduated in 1912.

10. Elm Avenue: The West Hill Land Company, which laid out lots in 1876, developed many of the houses in this area. Note the 1888 date in the eve of the house to the right of the vacant lot with iron fencing. This empty lot once contained a finely detailed stone building in the Egyptian Style. Designed in 1907 for the Book and Key Club, a college men's secret honor society discontinued in the 1950s, the surprising building was demolished in 1967.

11. 540 Ogden Avenue: The three-story square section of this Arts and Crafts-inspired house incorporates the stone water tower building of the West Hill Water Works. Built in 1881, it was used until 1892 when the Water Works Company moved to larger facility, and eventually became known as the Suburban Water Company, now Aqua Pennsylvania.

12. Courtney Smith House: This grand three-story stone mansion designed in the Second Empire style in 1879 served as a sample house for the West Hill Land Development Company. It has been the home of the president of Swarthmore College since 1909.

13. Scott Arboretum P & R: Now the home of the Scott Arboretum since 1970, the Cunningham House was once the residence of Susan Cunningham, a professor of astronomy from 1869 to 1921. Her 1889 home was used continuously as an observatory by students even after the construction of the 1911 Sproul Observatory and the installation of Sproul's 1913 telescope, then the largest on East Coast and one of largest in the world. (The parking lot has limited spaces. Scott's Wister Center on the left has restrooms open weekdays with a hallway water fountain.)

14. Worth and Bond Residence Halls: Worth (1924), along College Avenue, and Bond (1927), along North Chester Road, form a charming, English village courtyard. This dormitory composition was designed by Philadelphia architects Karcher and Smith in a sprawling cottage-like Cotswold style.