The village of Skaneateles lies at the north end of Skaneateles Lake. "Skaneateles" is a Native American word meaning “long water.” The first white resident came to the west side of the lake in 1794 and was soon followed by other settlers. The town was formed in 1830 and the village was incorporated in 1833. As you walk through the business district, you will pass buildings erected from 1796 to the present.

Village Walking Tour

(1) The Sherwood Inn was built in 1807 by Isaac Sherwood as the Sherwood Tavern for a stop on his stagecoach line. The original tavern was removed in 1872 during extensive renovations, including the addition of the east and west wings. It had many names prior to being named the Sherwood Inn in 1946.

(2) Shotwell Park, across the street to the right, contains memorials honoring local war veterans.

(3) Clift Park, across the street from the Sherwood, is named for Joab Clift who donated the land to the village. At one time it was the site of John Packwood’s carriage factory, at 28 Jordan St., was built in 1807 by Isaac Sherwood.

(4) The Packwood House at 14 W. Genesee St. was constructed in 2004 with retail shops on the ground floor and hotel rooms on the upper floors. Previous buildings included the former Post Office location.

(5) The Mill Pond, north of the bridge, is the outlet for Skaneateles Lake. “Skaneateles” is a Native American word meaning “long water.” The first white resident came to the west side of the lake in 1794 and was soon followed by other settlers. The town was formed in 1830 and the village was incorporated in 1833. As you walk through the business district, you will pass buildings erected from 1796 to the present.

(6) The Eckett/Hecox Block, 2-12 W. Genesee St., was built circa 1830-1834. Past tenants included a bank, a Post Office, the first fire station, a cracker manufacturer, trolley station, shoe shop, barbershop, barroom, and even a dance hall on the upper floor. Today it houses retail on the ground floor and residences on the upper floors.

(7) The Methodist Church, at 26 Jordan St., was built in 1859 to offer free seats for all, in opposition to churches that charged pew rent.

(8) The former Hall Brothers carriage factory, at 28 Jordan St., was built circa 1820. It later became a blacksmith shop, an auto dealer, an auto repair shop, and is presently a restaurant with residences on the upper floors.

(9) The Long House, 40-46 Jordan St., was built by the Halls for their workmen. It is now residences.

(10) The Shear/Tucker Block, on the corner of Jordan and Genesee Sts. across from the Eckett/Hecox Block, was built in 1861 on the site of a hotel that burned in 1870. The block has had a variety of businesses through the years, including a harness shop and Post Office. It was remodeled in 1980 with residences on the upper floors and a bank and retail space on the street level.

(11) The Masonic Temple, 11 East Genesee St., was built in 1856 as the home of Freeborn Jewett, a prominent lawyer and first president of the village. It was eventually willed to St. James’ Episcopal Church, who sold it to the Masons. The church still runs a thrift shop on the lower level.

(12) This bank, currently M&T, was built in 1888 for the Skaneateles Savings Bank; the clock tower was added in 1895. The bank has changed hands several times. The Odd Fellows Hall, on State St., was demolished in 1966 for the bank’s drive-in services.

(13) The Baptist Church, 21 State St., was built in 1831 on the Onondaga St. hill, thought to be the closest spot to heaven. It was moved to its present site in 1842, and is said to be the finest example of Colonial Architecture in the village.

(14) The Sphinx, at the corner of State St and East Genesee St., is a small gray stone building built in 1856 as a law office. Now attached to the library, it is used as the children’s department.

(15) The Library was built in 1889, and the Barrow Art Gallery, at the rear, was given by local landscape artist John Barrow (1824-1906) to exhibit his works.

(16) 59 E. Genesee St., now a retail store, is a small woodden building built in 1878 as a millinery shop. For many years it was the Woolcott Bookshop.

(17) 61 E. Genesee St., currently a gift shop, is the oldest house in the village, built in 1796.

(18) 75 E. Genesee St. was built in 1816 as a private home, and is noted for its Salem-style doorway. It became a retail store in 1989 after a number of other owners.

(19) 77 E. Genesee St., dates from circa 1800 and was the home of John Legg, a carriage maker and blacksmith for whom Legg Hall is named (64-92 E. Genesee St.). His son-in-law, Joel Thayer, later lived there. Two funeral directors then occupied it, and it was developed in 2005 as residences known as the Thayer House.

(20) After passing several lovely homes built in the 1800s, the Presbyterian Church, at 97 E. Genesee St., was built in 1891-92 on the site of an earlier (1831) church. The large rear addition was completed in 1959.

(21) Across the street is St. James’ Episcopal Church, whose first building was completed in 1826; this second one was completed in 1874. Several additions and structural changes have been made through the years, including the Parish Hall in 1959.

(22) Austin Park and Thayer Park, next to St. James’ Church: Austin Park is named for Frederick C. Austin, who bought and donated the land to the village in 1929; Thayer Park is named after Joel Thayer, who owned this land and created a beautiful garden when he lived at 77 E. Genesee St.

(23) Legg Hall, 64-92 E. Genesee St. Originally a wooden building containing John Legg’s carriage factory, it was destroyed by fire in 1835, along with all the buildings west to 26 E. Genesee St. It was rebuilt in 1836 and remodeled in 1867 with stores on the first floor and a large hall for entertainment on the second floor, including a movie theater that closed in 1980. The upper floors are now residences.

(24) 46-12 E. Genesee St is comprised of several buildings built in the 1800s, housing a variety of businesses. Most now have residences on the upper floors. Note the Historic Marker at 44 E. Genesee St.

(25) The Lakeview House, at 4 E. Genesee St., was built as a hotel for Charles Krebs (father of Fred Krebs, original owner of the famous Krebs restaurant that opened in 1899 at 53 W. Genesee St.) In 1968 it was converted into retail, office space, and residences; in 2011-12 it was taken down due to structural weaknesses and rebuilt to resemble its original appearance with shops on the first floor and residences above.

(26) 2 E. Genesee St. was constructed in 1928 for the First National Bank of Skaneateles. It is now a gift shop with residences above.

(27) The Mid-Lakes Navigation boats leave from their dock for mail boat service, lunch and dinner cruises, and sightseeing trips.

(28) Across the lake, on the west shore, there is a large pillared mansion clearly visible that was built in 1839. Known as Roosevelt Hall, it was once owned by members of the Roosevelt family (other family members also owned homes in the village), and is now a private residence.