

Langley

Historic Walking Tour

Self Guided



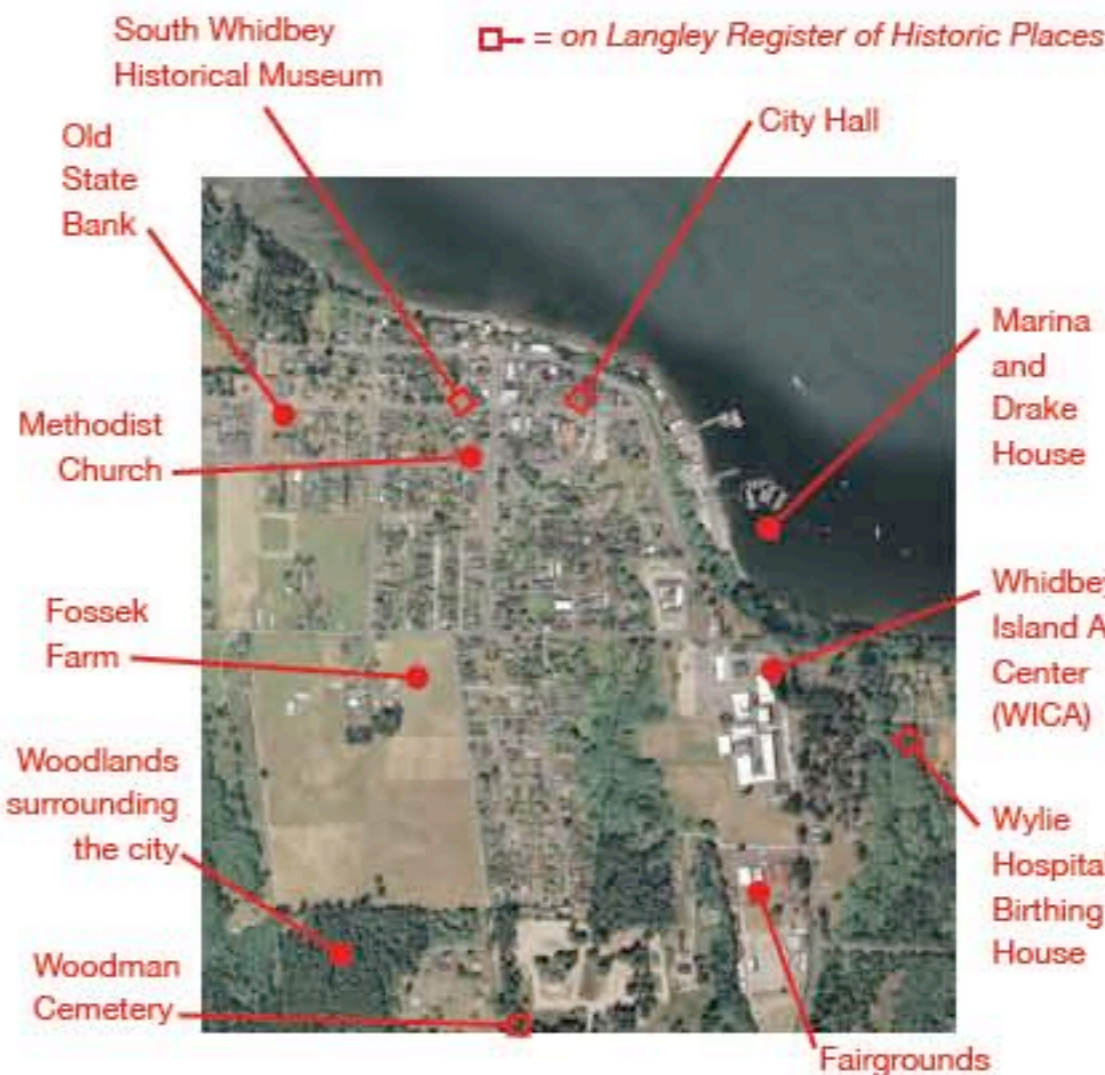
Start your historic walking tour at the Chamber of Commerce. It may take one hour. Refer to map on back.

Historic Village by the Sea

Pamphlet prepared by Langley Historic Preservation Commission



There are many more places to visit. Walk down Wharf Street and check out the marina. Perhaps there will be divers along and under the dock or kayakers exploring the shoreline. Or head back to town to explore the shops, restaurants, and coffeehouses. And if you want to extend your walk, head out to the Whidbey Island Center for the Arts, the magnificent agricultural and woodlands, or other historic buildings in the city.



8 Second Street

Head up the hill and east toward the waterfront. Second street in early years including a jail near the drive through of the U.S. Bank, Fire Hall, and about three little houses. The Island Coffeehouse is an example of one of the houses. Another was the Useless Bay Coffee Company across the street, but you would hardly know it. Behind that steel front is the carcass of another small house. Passing bakeries and coffee houses may difficult but come back after the tour.



Useless Bay Coffeehouse



9 Langley City

On the left is a brick building that used to be the Masonic Temple. In the early 1990s it was rehabbed to be the City Hall. Although there are some modifications to the windows, it looks almost as it did in 1948. You might want to check out the old photos of historic Langley inside.



10 Langley Library

The next building is the library. The original portion on the corner was donated by Helen Coe. In addition to starting the first library in town she became the first woman mayor with an all women council in 1919. Be sure to walk around the corner and check out more sculpture of otters by Georgia Gerber.



11 Overview of Marina and Drake House

Cross the street and first walk the bluff along Cascade Avenue to the point where you can look down at the marina. From the 1900s through to the 1970s the historic marina was the hub of Langley's commerce. Surrounding the dock was a shingle mill, lumber mills, a cannery, electric power plant, dance pavilion, storage and warehouse buildings. The dock was built in the shape of a "U" so that teams of horses and wagons could easily bring the products to the steamers and ferries that arrived here. It was such a popular area that people from Everett and Seattle would arrive by ferry to picnic and for bathing. Yes, bathing along the beach. Off to the left a small resort of cabins was built called Sunrise Beach Resort.

As you look out over the water you can see the Cascade Mountains. Camano Island is off to your left, Everett to the right. The Saratoga Passage was an active place in the early 1900s. It is one the most beautiful vistas in Langley.



Start your historic walking tour at the Chamber of Commerce (1). Follow the red line.

Walk along the streets and through the alleys. You will then understand why Langley is known as a walkable city.

- 6. Commercial Buildings on First Street
- 7. Alleys in Langley
- 8. Second Street Buildings
- 9. City Hall
- 10. Library
- 11. Marina and Drake House

- 1. Chamber of Commerce
- 2. South Whidbey Historical Museum
- 3. Dog House Tavern
- 4. Seawall Park
- 5. Boy and the Dog Park



Jacob Anthes, at the ripe old age of 15 and an immigrant from Germany, arrived in Seattle in 1880. He met a man who needed someone to hold down his homestead on South Whidbey. While exploring the the south end of the island he bought 120 acres of land just west of the present-day Langley and began cutting cordwood to supply the steamers running in the Saratoga Passage. By the age of twenty-one he filed a homestead claim on 160 acres of land and acquired a timber claim as well. A few years later he persuaded Judge J.W. Langley of Seattle to form the Langley Land and Improvement Company to survey and plat a new townsite - calling it Langley.

With money from his logging operations Anthes built a massive dock (at the north end of what is now called Anthes Avenue), 999 feet out into Saratoga Passage, a general store, a home for his family, and then a big tourist hotel. Although the hotel burned in 1908, Anthes did very well in Langley by selling the land he owned in and around the area. By this time Langley had two doctors, one barber, a postmaster and a mail carrier. The primary draw for settlement in the early years was logging, fishing, farming, and servicing and supplying the many steamers running between Seattle and Bellingham.



Many changes have come to Langley over the years due to the varying economic climate and productive, or not so productive markets. Langley continued to be a small village by the sea. Today, tourists find Langley to be the quaint and beautiful town with buildings, some historic, some old, and some newer, but all interesting. And the original layout of streets, alleys, and walkway remain from Anthes original plat providing a walkable and enjoyable place to explore, shop, and eat.



Looking East on First Street

Although his land holdings prospered, Anthes and his family moved to Everett in 1908 and began a new phase of life.

1 Chamber of Commerce



This walking tour will take you to only a few of the historic places. Be sure to explore the courtyards and the "funky" looking buildings throughout the town. Also, try to check out the historic marina, the Whidbey Island Center for the Arts (WICA), and the magnificent vistas of the fields, forests, gardens, and water that surround the village. And take time to sip coffee at our many coffeehouses. You will be glad you did.

2 South Whidbey Historical Museum



This building was constructed in 1902 by Jacob Anthes as a bunkhouse for his employees. They cut brush to ship to Seattle for landfill and also cut cordwood for the Mosquito fleet. Over the years it was a residence until it was willed to the South Whidbey Historical Society by an early Langley pioneer and turned into a museum in 1992. Check out the Georgia Gerber sculpture of a brush hacker.



Return when you can to look at the exhibits of early life on South Whidbey.

3 Dog House Tavern



The intersection of Anthes Avenue and First Street was the early center for Langley. On the southwest corner was the first bank. (Now at the top of Second Street waiting for a home) Across the street is The Dog House, Langley's only building on the National Register of Historic Places. It was built in 1908 to bring

sporting events such as boxing to Langley and to hold matches, movies, and plays. It was originally known as the Olympic Club but also evolved into a mercantile store, a confectionery, and now a tavern / restaurant.

4 Seawall Park

Continue down Anthes and walk down to the waterfront - Saratoga Passage. Imagine the 999 foot dock that emerged out from the end of Anthes Avenue. It was the hub of activity at the turn of the century. Also try to imagine the water's edge extending almost a 100 feet farther out than it does today. Can you visualize a road between the water and backs of the buildings?



Seawall Park

By the 1970's the water was lapping at the foundation of the Dog House and eroding under the other buildings along the waterfront requiring the current seawall to be built. This beautiful and peaceful area along the waterfront is now called Seawall Park. Camano Island is across the Passage. Walk east toward and up the stairs.

5 Boy and the Dog Park

At the top of the stairs is one of Langley's favorite pocket parks. Locals call it the Boy and the Dog Park. The famous local artist, Georgia Gerber made the bronze sculpture. She is also known for sculpting the bronze pig at the Pike Street Market in Seattle. Stop to visualize to the abundance of old steamers running along the shore and look for grey whales. They like to visit and feed along the shoreline at certain times of the year.



6 Commercial Buildings on First Street



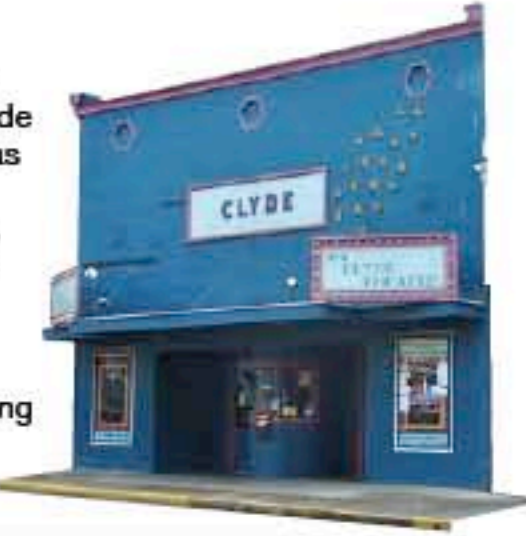
Cafe Langley

Look at the interesting buildings along First Street. To the left (looking east) the Village Pizzeria was once Lee's Drug Store and, later, Blair's Brunch. To the right (looking west) was Charlie Lenz's garage, a blacksmith shop, and a butcher. Across the street is the historic Primavera store, now called the Star Store. Although built as a store in 1918, in 1929 Joseph Primavera rebuilt the store and operated a hotel on the top floor. Along the south side of First street was the feed store, now Moonrakers Bookstore, and next to it the Heron. All are remnants from the Langley old town.



Looking west on First Street

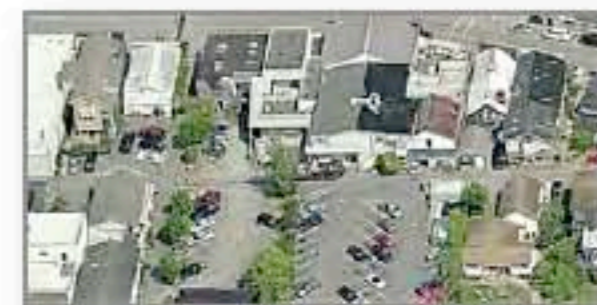
Walk west on First Street to the the Clyde Theater. In 1937 Norman Clyde built a garage on the corner. The gas pumps were where the triangular porch is now. Clyde, loving movies, built the current Clyde Theater next to his garage in 1937 which has continued to be the center of nightlife in Langley. Little has changed to the exterior of the building since it was built. Be sure to check it out some night. It is a real old time movie theater.



Primavera's Store, now the Star Store

7 Langley Alleys

Now back track a bit. Go back to the space between Moonraker Bookstore and the Heron. Langley has many alleys and walkways between and behind the buildings. Check them out when you get a chance. Continue to walk south toward Second Street. Across Second Street is a courtyard called the Langley Village. Although not historic, the Village and adjoining buildings were built in the early 1990s to complement the character of First Street. Mosey through the shops and bakeries if you dare.



Alleys in Langley

Langley Village

