

10 MONROE CENTER

While walking along Monroe Center, take time to remember all the countless women, whose names we do not know, but whose work was essential to the growth of the city: clerks, telephone operators, messengers, waitresses, nurses, stenographers, milliners, teachers, furniture workers...

11 AH-NAB-AWEN PARK

As you gaze at the Grand River from An-Nab-Awen Park, imagine the Native American canoes filled with furs landing at the trading post to do business. Madeline LaFramboise was an Indian-French woman who rose to the top in that competitive field. She could speak four languages, but could not read nor write. When she retired to Mackinac Island, she dedicated herself to the education of all children.

12 GERALD R. FORD MUSEUM 303 PEARL N.W.

Betty Ford created a legacy of courage and candor in coping with personal crisis. During her life as First Lady, and then as the founder and president of the Betty Ford Center, she has set an example for others to follow. Visit the Gerald R. Ford Museum to find out more about this remarkable Grand Rapids woman.

13 (FORMERLY) 210-218 ERIE N.W.

Looking across the river, you can see the site of the Bissell Carpet Sweeper Co. When Melville Bissell died in 1889, Anna Bissell became chief executive officer of the corporation. Known for her progressive labor practices, she developed the company into the largest corporation of its kind in the world. She was also involved in many civic organizations, including Bissell House, a recreation and training program for local youth and immigrant women.



Anna Bissell

14 THE GRAND RIVER

Before leaving the river, consider its importance to Michigan waterways. Joan Wolfe founded the West Michigan Environmental Action Council in 1968. She wanted to translate "concern" about the environment into "action." One of the organization's first victories was stopping the Army Corps of Engineers from putting 17 dams on tributaries of the Grand River! Wolfe went on to be instrumental in establishing Michigan's Environmental Protection Act (1970), one of the first of its kind in the nation.



Joan Wolfe

15 CALDER PLAZA OTTAWA AVE.



Nancy Mulnix Tweddale

La Grande Vitesse has become the symbol of our city. Arts advocate, Nancy Mulnix Tweddale, made the contacts and rallied the support necessary for Grand Rapids to become the first city in the country to receive a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to be used for commissioning a monumental piece of sculpture by an American artist for a specific civic site.

16 ST. MARK'S CHURCH DIVISION AT PEARL

First housed in a more modest frame structure at the corner of Bond and Crescent, a growing congregation and increasing prosperity demanded a bigger and more "suitable" church home. There was only one problem – no money! The ladies sewing circle came to the rescue. They provided the funds to buy the limestone (quarried from the Grand River) to build the "Crown of Pearl Street," which was consecrated in 1849.

LEGACY LANDMARKS WALKING TOUR

WALKING WITH WOMEN WHO LEFT THEIR MARK ON DOWNTOWN GRAND RAPIDS



Emily Burton Ketcham



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1 THE GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC LIBRARY
111 LIBRARY STREET N.E.

Women have always made significant contributions to the growth of the Grand Rapids Public Library. Early librarians such as Lucy Ball and May Quigley worked to build the collections.

Mary Ann Keeler put her stamp on the building. She and her husband, Miner S., were the lead donors in the renovation project which created the Main Library building we know today.

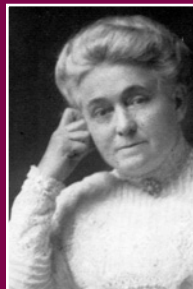
This was one of several ways in which she has helped to change the cultural landscape of downtown Grand Rapids. Keeler was one of the leaders in the effort to create a downtown venue for performance art that culminated in the building of DeVos Hall, and was a major influence in bringing Calder's *La Grande Vitesse* and other works of public art to the city.

2 ST. CECILIA MUSIC SOCIETY
24 RANSOM N.E.

Nine women founded the St. Cecilia Music Society in 1883. A decade later the club had already broken ground for this beautiful building with room for classes, a ballroom and an auditorium. In 1899, the auditorium was the center of national attention. Local suffrage activist, Emily Burton Ketcham, played a key role in bringing the annual convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association to the city. Susan B. Anthony stood on the St. Cecilia stage and challenged the nation to grant women the right to vote.

3 230 FULTON E.

This lovely Greek Revival building was Grand Rapids' first permanent art gallery. It was purchased in 1920 with funds from Emily Clark, a philanthropist and patron of the arts. Paintings from her extensive collection were later donated to the museum and helped to develop the core of its collection.



Emily Clark

4 WOMEN'S CITY CLUB
254 E. FULTON

If you were looking at this building in 1925, you would have seen a "second rate" boarding house. The side porch held broken-down rocking chairs, and a wash tub caught rain from the leaking roof. In 1927, the Women's City Club (which had only been organized three years earlier) raised \$55,000 to purchase the run-down building and then spent another \$30,000 on its rehabilitation, thereby saving this architectural landmark from decline and possible demolition.

5 22 PROSPECT S.E.

Elizabeth Eaglesfield was the first woman to practice law in the city of Grand Rapids. She graduated from the University of Michigan Law School in 1878 and set up her practice here. Later, she went on to get her captain's license and ran a Great Lakes shipping company. This house that she lived in for 30 years still stands as part of the Heritage Hill Historic District, a reminder of her many accomplishments.



Elizabeth Eaglesfield

6 SAINT MARY'S HEALTH CARE
CHERRY/LAFAYETTE S.E.

In the late 1800s, the family of Mary McNamara deeded her house at 145 Lafayette S.E. to Bishop Richter for a hospital. The Sisters of Mercy of Big Rapids sent three nursing sisters to Grand Rapids and in 1901 St. Mary's Hospital was born. In the early days, Sister Mary Ignatius McCord, Sister Mary Anthony McMullen and Sister Mary Baptist Feldner not only provided the nursing care – they also did the duties of housekeeper and janitor.

7 LADIES' LITERARY CLUB
61 SHELDON BLVD. S.E.

The club was organized in 1873 and built its clubhouse at this site in 1887. It was the first structure of its kind in the United States owned by a women's club. The Ladies' Literary Club was instrumental in stimulating interest in erecting a public library and improving school curriculum. Recently, the club has voted to disband, but the building was purchased by Calvin College and will continue to function as a cultural center in the heart of the city.

8 YWCA
25 SHELDON S.E.

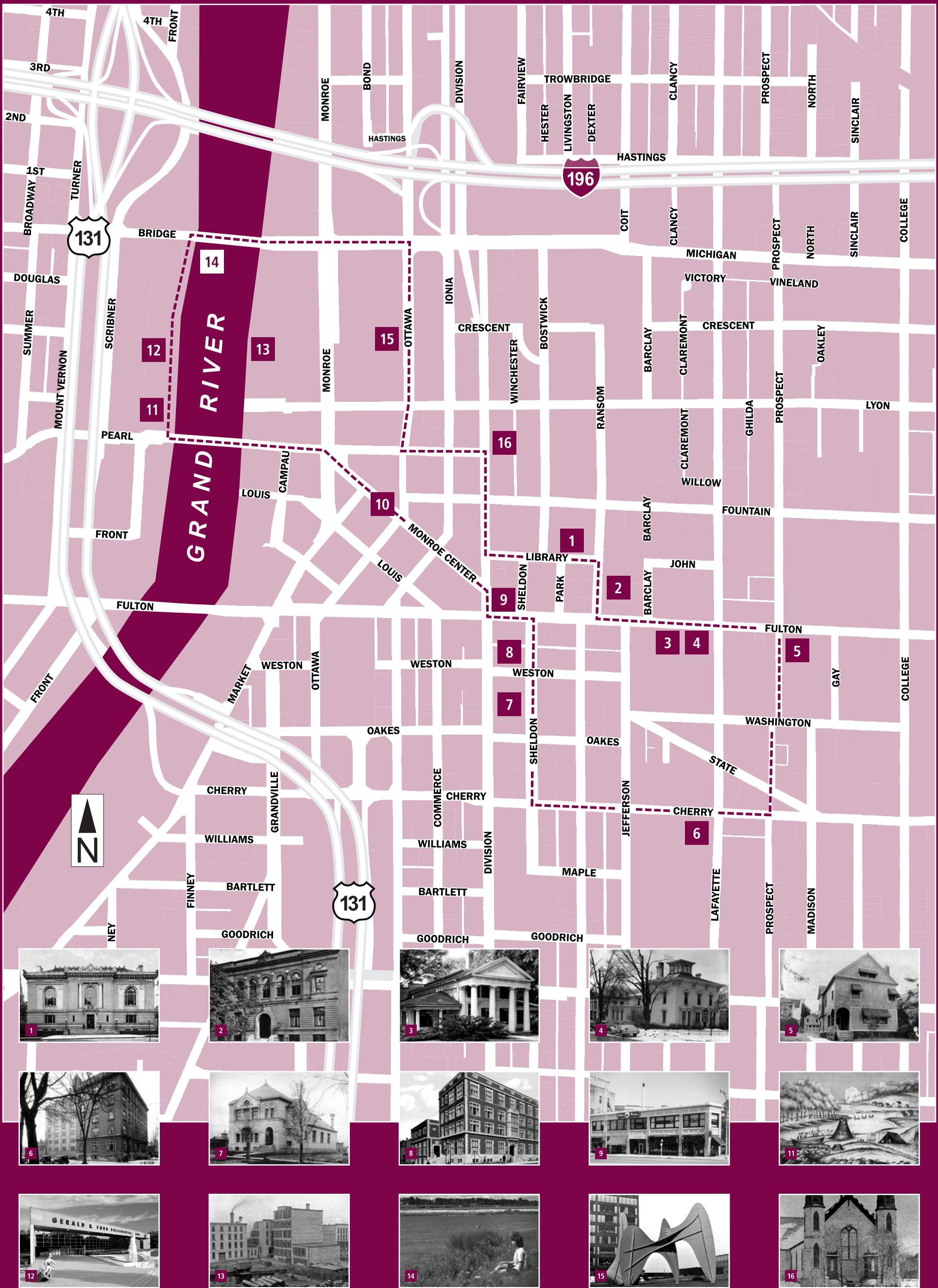
The Grand Rapids YWCA was founded in 1900 and by 1910 it was serving an average of 2,403 young women per week. It used rented facilities until 1921 when, after three years of energetic fundraising, this building was opened. In 1949, the organization elected Helen Jackson Claytor to serve as its president, the first African American woman to serve in that capacity. She would go on to serve two terms as the president of the national board of the YWCA – breaking new ground as the organization's national leader.



Helen Jackson Claytor

9 GRAND RAPIDS CHILDREN'S MUSEUM
11 SHELDON N.E.

Formerly called the Monument Square Building, today it is a monument to the energy of the five local women who met around a kitchen table in 1992 and created a children's museum for Grand Rapids. When this building was donated to the museum in 1993, it presented quite a challenge. Gutted by fire in 1980 and considered an eyesore by its downtown neighbors, many thought it was doomed to demolition. The women led a \$4 million campaign to completely rehabilitate the historic building and provide an endowment for the museum's operation. The museum opened in July of 1997 and every year draws thousands of young visitors to the center of the city.



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