

THE OFFICIAL WALKING MAP & SELF-GUIDED TOUR OF HISTORIC

STONINGTON BOROUGH



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Stunning harbor views.

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We will begin our journey at the center of **Wadawanuck Square**, head south down Water Street to Stonington Point, returning back to the square by way of Main Street. A round trip of just over a mile will be chock full of history, shopping, and opportunities for delicious dining. Keep an eye out for plaques and other signage that offer historic details. You are standing at the **Stonington Free Library** which opened in 1900 and sits on the site of the once bustling Wadawanuck Hotel. The hotel was built by the Stonington Railroad in 1837 to accommodate passengers traveling between New York, Providence, and points north. The New York, Providence, and Boston Railroad began operations here in 1837, the first railroad in Connecticut. Steamships arrived twice daily from New York and passengers could travel north via train.

Throughout your stroll you'll see examples of many styles of architecture that help illustrate the history of this village. Small gambrel style homes date to the 18th century when farming, shipbuilding, and fishing defined a way of life. You'll also see numerous examples of 19th century Greek Revival homes that were home to successful explorers, entrepreneurs, sea captains, and merchants. Sealing, whaling, and the China Trade brought great wealth to Stonington sailors. Stonington Borough was incorporated in 1801 as their interests as a commercial center and deep water port required special attention. Turn right onto High Street to the **Town Dock**, where you'll find Connecticut's last commercial fishing fleet on the site of the old steamship docks and railroad round house.

Back on Water Street, the commercial center of this village, you'll encounter some structures that were raised to accommodate commercial spaces on their ground level. A commemorative plaque marks the location at 107 Water Street of the **James Merrill House**, once home of the late, renowned poet, James Merrill. Across the street you can walk through the brick arches of a former Masonic Hall to **Wayland's Wharf**. Further down Water Street on the opposite side is the **Arcade Building** with its eight column façade built in 1837 for retail merchants. This building and the adjacent **Ocean Bank**, built in 1852, are owned by the Stonington Historical Society. The bank sits on the site of the village's first house, built here in 1753 by Edward Denison. Opposite the bank sitting high on **Cannon Square** are two eighteen pound cannons used to repel British troops during the Battle of Stonington in August of 1814.

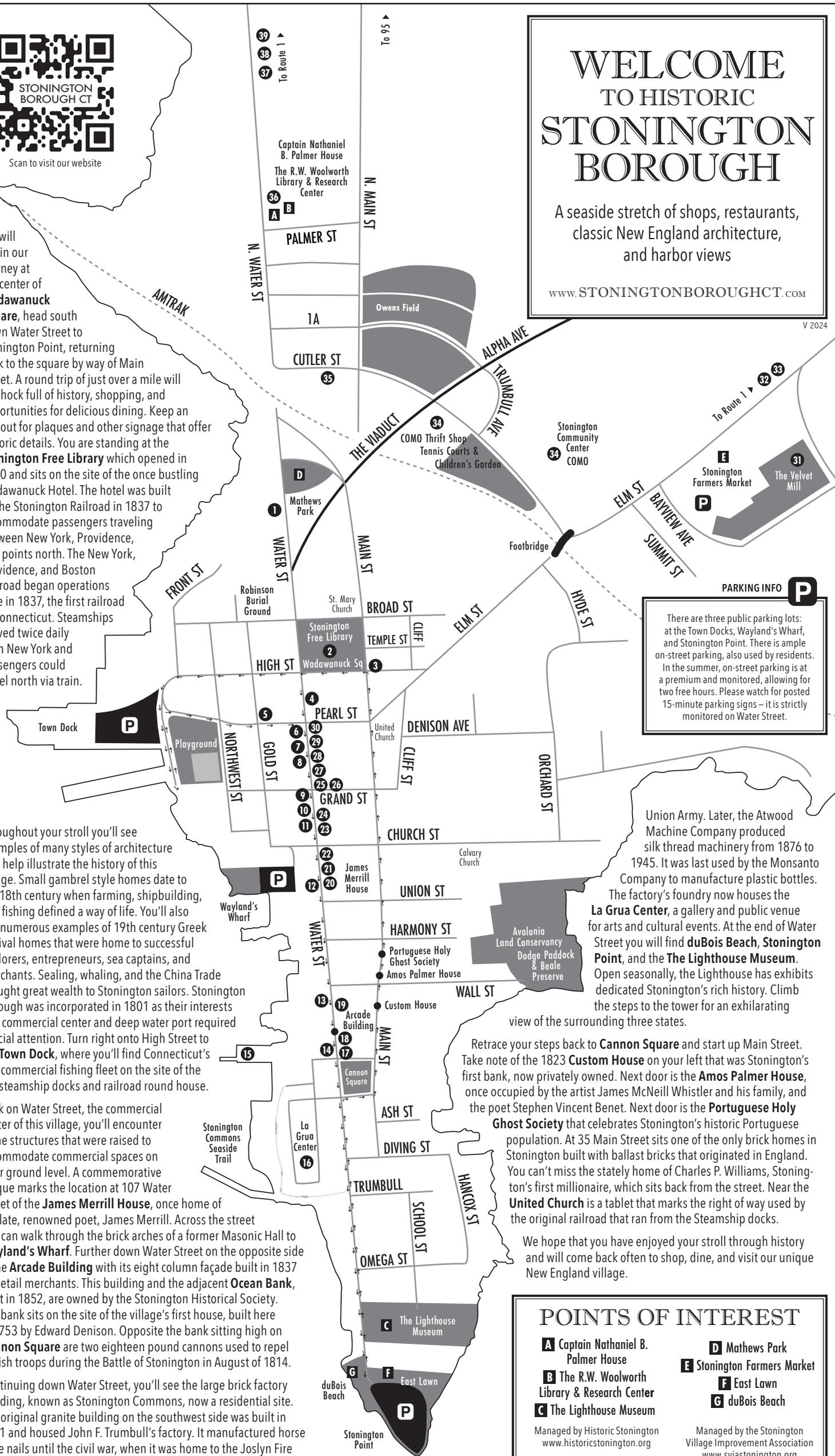
Continuing down Water Street, you'll see the large brick factory building, known as Stonington Commons, now a residential site. The original granite building on the southwest side was built in 1851 and housed John F. Trumbull's factory. It manufactured horse shoe nails until the civil war, when it was home to the Joslyn Fire Arms Company, best known for breech-loading carbines used by the

WELCOME TO HISTORIC STONINGTON BOROUGH

A seaside stretch of shops, restaurants, classic New England architecture, and harbor views

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V 2024



PARKING INFO P

There are three public parking lots: at the Town Docks, Wayland's Wharf, and Stonington Point. There is ample on-street parking, also used by residents. In the summer, on-street parking is at a premium and monitored, allowing for two free hours. Please watch for posted 15-minute parking signs – it is strictly monitored on Water Street.

Union Army. Later, the Atwood Machine Company produced silk thread machinery from 1876 to 1945. It was last used by the Monsanto Company to manufacture plastic bottles. The factory's foundry now houses the **La Grua Center**, a gallery and public venue for arts and cultural events. At the end of Water Street you will find **duBois Beach**, **Stonington Point**, and the **The Lighthouse Museum**. Open seasonally, the Lighthouse has exhibits dedicated to Stonington's rich history. Climb the steps to the tower for an exhilarating view of the surrounding three states.

Retrace your steps back to **Cannon Square** and start up Main Street. Take note of the 1823 **Custom House** on your left that was Stonington's first bank, now privately owned. Next door is the **Amos Palmer House**, once occupied by the artist James McNeill Whistler and his family, and the poet Stephen Vincent Benet. Next door is the **Portuguese Holy Ghost Society** that celebrates Stonington's historic Portuguese population. At 35 Main Street sits one of the only brick homes in Stonington built with ballast bricks that originated in England. You can't miss the stately home of Charles P. Williams, Stonington's first millionaire, which sits back from the street. Near the **United Church** is a tablet that marks the right of way used by the original railroad that ran from the Steamship docks.

We hope that you have enjoyed your stroll through history and will come back often to shop, dine, and visit our unique New England village.

POINTS OF INTEREST

A Captain Nathaniel B. Palmer House	D Mathews Park
B The R.W. Woolworth Library & Research Center	E Stonington Farmers Market
C The Lighthouse Museum	F East Lawn
	G duBois Beach

Managed by Historic Stonington
www.historicstonington.org

Managed by the Stonington Village Improvement Association
www.sviastonington.org