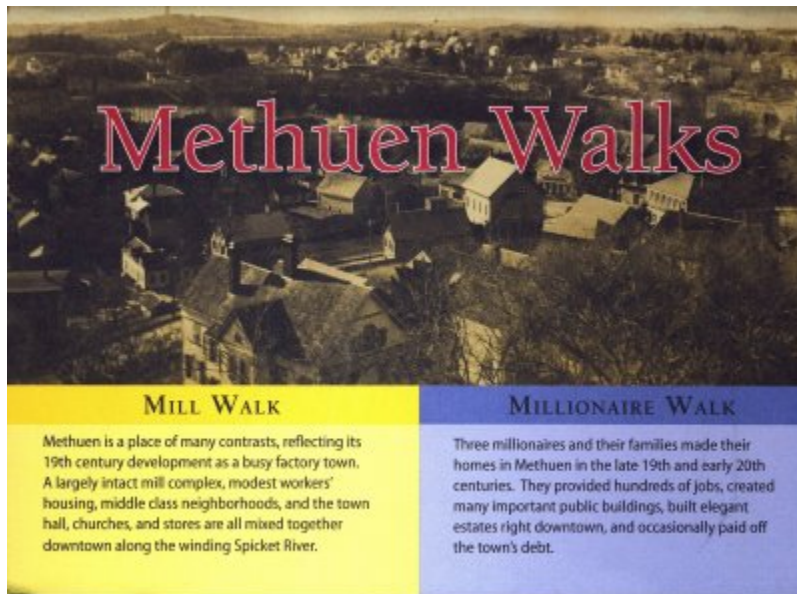


## Walking Tour Brochure Now Available

Methuen residents and visitors can combine a leisurely stroll through downtown Methuen with a dose of fascinating history by picking up the City's new walking tour brochure. "Methuen Walks" includes two tours – a Mill Walk that focuses on Methuen's industrial history, and a Millionaire's Walk that follows the footsteps of the City's three famous millionaires.

The brochure was designed to appeal to a broad range of participants, from avid history and architecture fans to students learning about their city for the first time. Free brochures are available at City Hall in the Customer Service and Economic and Community Development departments and at the Nevins Library.





## MILL WALK

Medwan was a quiet agricultural town for its first 150 years. A few cottage industries served basic local needs. Dramatic change arrived in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, following construction of the Erie Tarpole (Broadway) in 1856 and the town's first cotton mill, at the Spider River Falls, in 1812-14. Within a few decades, Medwan was an important supplier of wool, cotton, and jute products, shoes, and hats. Manufacturing remained an essential part of the town center through the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, supported by a variety of stores, civic buildings, and residential neighborhoods that sprung up nearby.



**1** **Spider River Falls and Mill Buildings, Chocoma Street and the Spider River Falls** With a total vertical drop of about 40 feet, the Spider River Falls powered most of Medwan's 19<sup>th</sup> century mills, and now provides energy for a private hydroelectric company. Among the earliest surviving factory buildings nearby is the Medwan Company's three-story wood-frame Mill No. 5 (300 near **Harpskiss Street**, ca. 1840). Built for cotton spinning, it was originally powered by a waterwheel. Just downstream is the Medwan Company's Jute Mill at 443 **Diagonal Street**, 1870, a 5-story brick structure.

**2** **Chocoma Street Bridge** This stone arch structure (1830) replaced an earlier wood bridge. It was built to handle the increased traffic caused by the new mills, and to better withstand the occasional spring floods. In the 1970s, a 3-story factory was built over the Spider River run to the south edge of the bridge; some architectural remains are still visible.

## MILLIONAIRE WALK

David Nevins, Edward F. Searles, and Charles H. Tenny were native sons who controlled great fortunes in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The philanthropy of these individuals and their families gave Medwan an exceptional architectural legacy, represented by four church buildings, an origin retail mall, two schools, a public library, a home for the aged, three large estates, and landmark granite walls. Talented well-known designers, especially Searles' architect Henry Vaughan, were instrumental in creating the remarkably high-quality of these structures.



David Nevins  
1879-1981

Edward F. Searles  
1841-1920

Charles H. Tenny  
1842-1919

**3** **Nevins Memorial Library, 305 Broadway** Designed by Samuel J.P. Dupper of Boston, the Nevins Memorial Library (1901) is an outstanding example of the Richardsonian Romanesque style of architecture. It was built in memory of David Nevins by his wife Ellen and sons David Jr. and Henry C. Nevins. The richly detailed interior contains a hand-mixed reading room and a grand second-floor hall, where the high school class of 1984 held its commencement ceremony.

