



Village of Richfield Driving Map

The Village of Richfield, originally the home of the Menomonee and Potawatomi people, is located in the south-central Washington County. These areas were ceded by treaties ratified in 1831 by the Menomonee and 1833 by the Potawatomi to the United States. The areas were then surveyed under the auspices of Garret Vliet, who was appointed United States Deputy Surveyor in 1835.

The first landowner of record in the Village of Richfield was Samuel Spivey, a surveyor with Vliet's group, who purchased 160 acres in 1841, although he did not settle there, but bought it for land speculation. By 1846 a formal Township government had been established; and by 1848 most of the Township land had been purchased by German (primarily from Hesse-Darmstadt), Irish and a few scattered English immigrants where conditions in the homeland made it ripe for emigration to America. Most early settlers came with the intention of farming, but they brought with them skills which would prove useful in frontier living.

The settlers found the land in Richfield fertile and well suited to agriculture (early subsistence farming, wheat production and later the milk cow) as well as well-watered due to its small creeks and streams, the two largest being the Bark and Oconomowoc which, as part of the Rock River system, flow south through Illinois to the Mississippi River. The Village also has several lakes within its boundary – Bark, Amy Belle, Little and Big Friess, Lake Five and small Lake Chief Heineker a.k.a. Mud Lake.

Much of the western portion of the Village, along with the neighboring Township of Erin to the west, is comprised of a rugged terrain of beautiful scenic features. Two battling glacial lobes, the Green Bay and Michigan, in movement and melting at their interlobate faces, disrupted the land and left unusual scenic features seen nowhere else on our planet except in the interlobate terrain of the Russian Ural Mountains.

Not only did Richfield have fertile, well-watered, scenic land; but it was serviced by two railroads early in its history. This gave rise to commercial as well as passenger traffic on its way to summer lake activities and Holy Hill. The village of Richfield became a bustling center with two hotels and a full compliment of commercial establishments. Other crossroads communities within the Township borders – Colgate, Plat, Hubertus and Pleasant Hill developed as centers of activity providing services on a smaller scale to the surrounding families. With the advent of the automobile, Richfield's thriving commerce was redirected. Farming and agriculture, however, remained the dominant economic activity until rather recently. With desirable, scenic, well-watered land with proximity to Milwaukee, the Village of Richfield has seen much development associated with urban sprawl. Despite the disappearance of many family farms and the sleepy state of its crossroads communities, one can today still view many historic remnants of the thriving agriculture and commerce of an earlier age set against a stage of unusual scenic beauty. We invite you to take a Driving Tour of the Village.



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The color green denotes an environmental feature.

- (1) As you enter Richfield driving westward on Willow Creek Road, you will cross several recessional moraines of the Wisconsin Glacier's Michigan lobe. Behind you is a dramatic view of Milwaukee some 20 miles to the southeast.
- (2) With the crossing of the sub-continental divide, to the east one leaves the St. Lawrence watershed and enters the Mississippi watershed.
- (3) A view to the southeast at the crest of the hill provides a peek through the trees of two kettle lakes., Bark and Amy Belle, 63 and 33 acres respectively with the latter being the highest body of water in the Village – 973 ft.
- (4) Lake Chief Heineker, a kettle lake a.k.a. Mud Lake, is on the grounds of Metro Milwaukee Y.M.C.A. Camp Minikani. It was the known site of Indian encampments at the time of settlement of Richfield.
- (5) A winding trip through Hunter's Hills subdivision will take you to the juncture with Colgate Road where looking west one sees the Bark River watershed.
- (6) The small unincorporated community of Colgate, established in 1886, straddles the boundaries of Waukesha and Washington Counties. It was the early location of a rendering plant for the Colgate Palmolive Peet Co. whose firm member, John B. Colgate, backed the Wisconsin Central Railroad expansion through Colgate.
- (7) 4122CTH Q – A timber frame construction popular in Wisconsin throughout the 19th century. The home is a two-story with a double gable roof. It has an unusual porch addition.
- (8) Highway 164 & CTH Q – St. Columba Cemetery – This cemetery is the resting place of many Irish settlers. Its earliest grave is 1847. The grave of Francis M. McKenna II, wounded during the Civil War at the Battle of Vicksburg is marked by the Grand Old Army of the Republic five-pointed star.
- (9) A drive along the south shore of Lake Five, a 100-acre kettle lake, provides a scenic view of its natural north and west shorelines.
- (10) Your route winds through a mixed hardwood, deciduous woods along the western shoreline of Lake Five.
- (11) 4875 Monches Road – A cross shaped 2 ½ story clapboard Victorian home with gabled roofed and covered entry porch. Reportedly, the home was purchased from a Sears catalogue.



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- (12) 4600 Monches Road – A cross plan Victorian clapboard home with left and right hand porches supported by turned wooden posting.
- (13) One half mile east of SHY 164 one looks up a broad valley, the glacial remains of an ice wall tunnel which spanned the valley at its narrowest point. During the time of maximum glacial thaw, the volume of melting glacial water was equal to that of today's confluence of the St. Croix and Mississippi Rivers.
- (14) As you round the bend, you view to the south a deep kettle or depression formed by the melting of buried chunks of glacial ice that caused the ground to slump.
- (15) 4003 Elmwood Road (Fahey Homestead Sesquicentennial Plaque) – A 2 story of cut and fieldstone construction with a wood shingle roof, front porch of fenestration interest and a cut stone cornerstone marked 1868.
- (16) 1515 Hillside Road (Juno Homestead Sesquicentennial Plaque) – A 1 ½ story structure of square hand hewn logs, a universal architectural style of the Wisconsin frontier. A lean-to porch extends along the south exposure.
- (17) 1695 Scenic Road – St. Jacobi Church – The congregation dates to 1851. The present church, preceded by a log structure, was built in 1892. It is of the Gothic Revival style of small wood clapboard and topped by a square belfry and octagonal steeple. A series of lightening rods with matched white globes march across its roof.
- (18) 1825 Mayfield Road (Eimermann Homestead Sesquicentennial Plaque) – A 2 ½ story buff brick home of well proportioned design with arching brick window treatment.
- (19) 3117 Highway 167 – Richfield School District #2 – An enrollment of 21 was recorded as early as 1848. While the earliest schoolhouse was likely log, a central core section of the present red brick building was constructed in 1867. It is topped by a more modern version of its earliest cupola.
- (20) 1720 Highway 175 – A once simplified Greek Revival style home of buff brick with entrance portico and paired chimneys. The ornamental brick belt course and corbelling is a distinctive example of the decorative use of brick. Behind the house stands the old gable roofed bank barn.



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- (21) Highway 175, old Fond du Lac Road and Depot Street (City of Laubenheim Sesquicentennial Plaque) – The unincorporated village of Richfield, known until 1856 as The City of Laubenheim, named for Philip Laubenheimer who was the first settler who immigrated from Hesse Darmstadt, Germany in 1842. The Laubenheimer family homestead and livery stand on the west side of the intersection and the Laubenheimer General Store built just after the turn of the century (now Amici's Restaurant) is across the way.

Across from its parking lot behind a white picket fence in a cedar grove, is the Laubenheimer family cemetery where Philip's grave is clearly marked in rose granite. Farther to the east at the end of Depot Street are the railroad tracks which were laid through Richfield in 1855 opening an era of commerce, business and passenger traffic which continued until WW I and the advent of the automobile.

- (22) 3425 Pleasant Hill Road (Held Homestead Sesquicentennial Plaque) – One story remodeled log and fieldstone home, now with siding, is the original site of a small barn also a blend of log and fieldstone, which was moved to Old World Wisconsin as an excellent example of early Wisconsin barns. At its Old World Wisconsin site it is known as the Held barn.
- (23) 3555 Pleasant Hill Road – A buff brick building with an eave line of corbelled brick stands on Pleasant Hill Road just east of the second railroad track. Behind its newer east wing is a smaller home, likely the original log home sided over.
- (24) You are again crossing the sub continental divide, leaving the St. Lawrence watershed and entering the Mississippi. To the southwest you will see a stunning view of the headwaters of the Oconomowoc River and Holy Hill.
- (25) 1988 Scenic Road (Ebling Homestead Sesquicentennial Plaque) – A buff colored brick of simple lines in the Greek Revival style, defined by its return eaves. It is shuttered and has an entrance portico with a large bank barn to the rear.
- (26) 1495 Scenic Road – (Hartleb Homestead Sesquicentennial Plaque) – The north wing of this extensively remodeled home comprises the original structure. It has eaves of corbelled cornice work which is of interest.
- (27) N.E. Corner Scenic & Hubertus Road – The large bank barn whose upper floor would have been used for wheat threshing in the early days is an excellent example of the placement of "old country" barns that were located right in town.



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- (28) 3727 Hubertus Road – St. Hubert’s Kirche (Sesquicentennial Plaque) – Congregation was first organized in 1846. The stone church that replaced an original log is in the 19th century Greek revival style and was completed in 1863. It served the growing unincorporated community of Hubertus whose population reached 100 in 1917. A trip up the drive will provide a view of its beautiful rounded apse at the rear.
- (29) Johnny Manhattan’s Restaurant – Andrew Schickert’s General Store – Hildegard Neuberg recalled, “Andrew Schickert’s General Store was started below our home. Andrew Schickert was my mother’s brother. He delivered groceries with his horse and wagon. He picked his stuff up in Milwaukee. The small building attached to the east was George Meyer’s business establishment – P.O., General Store and Hubertus Telephone Company. George Meyer sold Andrew Schickert the land for his General Store.
- (30) Sloppy Joe’s Restaurant – E. Wolf operated St. Hubert’s Store & saloon and William Stuetngen had a saloon offering wine, liquor & cigars. 1915 saloon and hotel operators in Hubertus included Fred Kiessling, Edward Vick, Harry Jacob and Matthew Stuetngen Jr.
- (31) 3800 Hubertus Road (Weber Homestead Sesquicentennial Plaque) – A 2 ½ story modified cross gable design clapboard Victorian home with faceted bays to the south and east and entrance porch at the east elbow.
- (32) 4195 Hubertus Road (Schmitt Homestead Sesquicentennial Plaque) – A 2 story gable roof clapboard of symmetrical design with entrance portico. A rubble stone outbuilding stands at the southwest. Across the road and slightly to the west stands an excellent example of the Wisconsin dairy barn with its gambrel roof.
- (33) At the stop sign, a dramatic view to the west of Friess Lake, the largest of the Village’s kettle lakes at about 115 acres, and Holy Hill in the distance.
- (34) 1361 E. Friess Lake Road (J. Friess Homestead Sesquicentennial Plaque) – A distinctive example of fieldstone construction which was highly favored in Wisconsin between 1850 and 1880 with an end chimney on a wing addition to the east. Farther down the road, nestled against the shores of Friess Lake, is the Copper Dock (formerly Anderson’s) known for its Sunday brunches.
- (35) 1380 Friess Lake Road – Alpine Retreat Restaurant – Cobblestone walls, painted glass windows, wooden tables and a well-tended fireplace are the distinguishing features of this country tavern built in the 1930s. Food service was begun in 1950. A picture window above the bar brings a “northwoods” scene inside, and along the dining room wall are the quaint original oil paintings of its former owner.



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- (36) 1298 Friess Lake Road – Fox & Hounds Restaurant – The original structure was a one room log cabin built in 1845 and was the start of this renowned restaurant first opened in 1933. Over the years rooms were added, the restaurant’s reputation and popularity grew. In 1964, it was purchased by the Ratzsch family of the famous Karl Ratzsch’s “Old World” German Restaurant in downtown Milwaukee. This restaurant is no longer in the Ratzsch family.
- (37) As you approach the western boarder of the Village of Richfield, you will travel over the Hogsback Road, an esker or ridge of glacial material deposited by a stream flowing in a tunnel or chute under or over the ice.
- (38) It will be worth your while to now travel north on St. Augustine Road turning east on Pleasant Hill Road to the site of Richfield Historical Park, the home of the Messer/Mayer Gristmill and a Pioneer Homestead. The gristmill built in the early 1870s has been restored by the Richfield Historical Society. It is of particular interest because its three floors contain all of the original milling equipment from grinding stones, roller mills, sifters and bolting machines. It will be worth your time to stop for a visit.