

THE OTTAWA WATERWORKS PARK – BUILT 1904

A single-story structure, the Ottawa Waterworks Building is a brick structure, nine bays wide, which rests on a stone foundation. Protected by a roof of ceramic tiles, the building is decorated with stone and wooden elements.

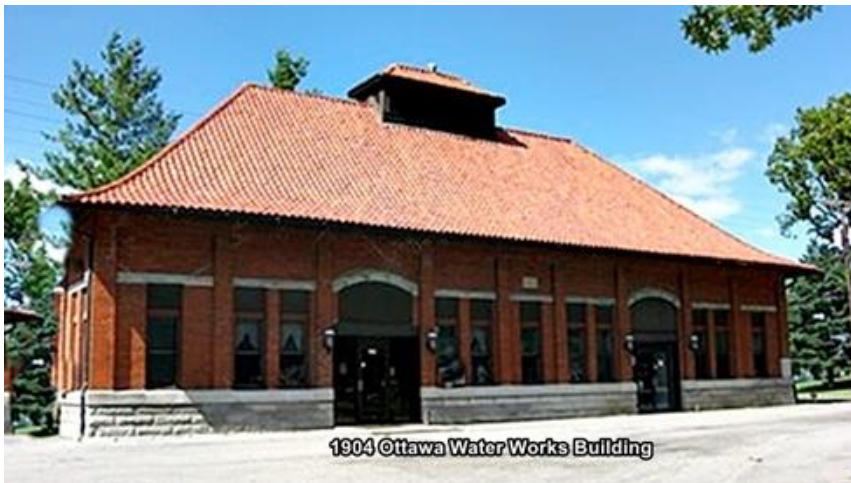
The Ottawa Waterworks Building in Water Works Park, is a historic waterworks in Ottawa, Ohio. Built in 1904 it is Putnam County's oldest water pumping facility; as the first significant water-related public works project in Ottawa, it enabled the creation of a municipal water system in the village. In its earliest years, the waterworks sheltered equipment used to pump water from municipal wells. In the park area, several animals were displayed in cages.

The Ottawa water works was completed in the year 1904. In 1892 the Legislature adopted the municipal code and created the board of public affairs. The first board appointed in Ottawa consisted of the following enterprising citizens: George D. Hamden, Dr. H. Huber, and George D. Kinder, the latter being chosen as the president of the board. Doctor Huber served for one year. Through the efforts of these three men the present water works system was installed. The water works is in the city park, which is on the east side of the town. This park is a very pretty amusement place for a village of this size. Numerous cages of animals and birds have been placed here and it is fitted up for the amusement of the children.

Note: For many years John Hornung served as engineer of the Ottawa Municipal Light Plant on Second St. and later held a similar position at the Ottawa Water Works Plant.

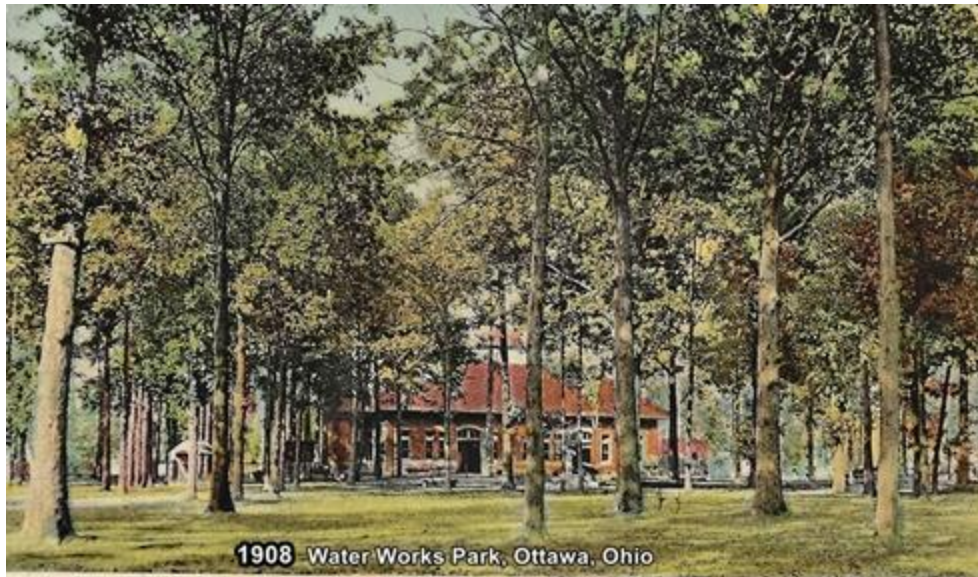
The Waterworks Building served as Ottawa's primary water pumping facility for approximately seventy years, remaining active until a new waterworks was completed in the mid-1970s. Since that time, it has been used as storage for equipment and spare machinery for the water system.

Click photos to view larger



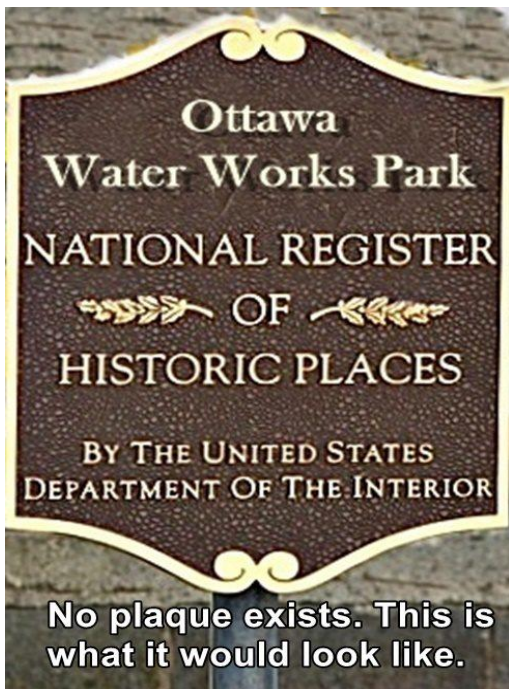
Back of roof tile

Original building before addition. (Click to view larger)



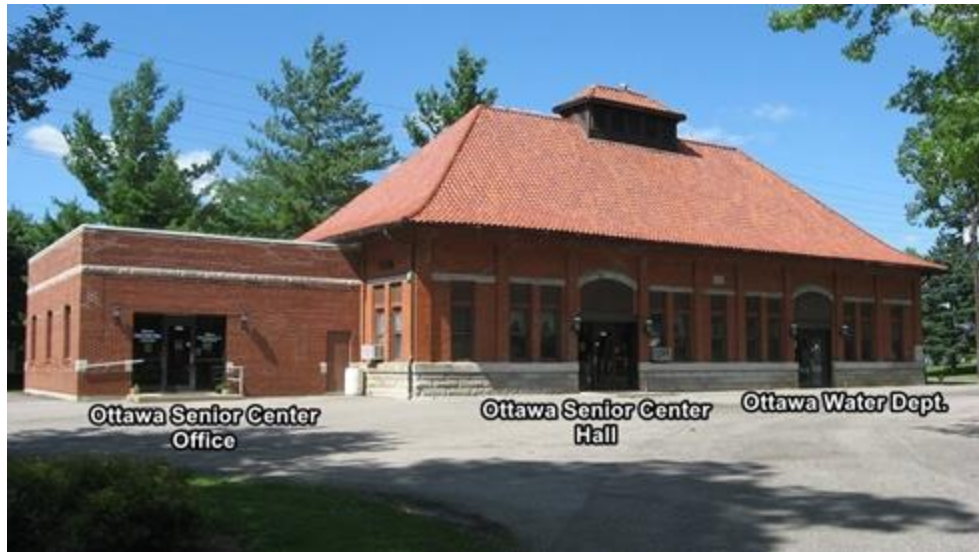
1908 Water Works Park, Ottawa, Ohio

What a great museum the Water Works would have made. When it no longer functioned as the Water Works Plant, a majority vote decided to sell the “old equipment for scrap” over “keeping it for a museum”. It also had the coldest and best tasting drinking fountain inside the building.



In 1976, the Ottawa Waterworks Building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It qualified for inclusion both because of its architecture and because of its place in local history: it was deemed a fine example of a local public works building, and its role as the area's first water pumping station has made it a leading example of the development of early twentieth-century Putnam County.

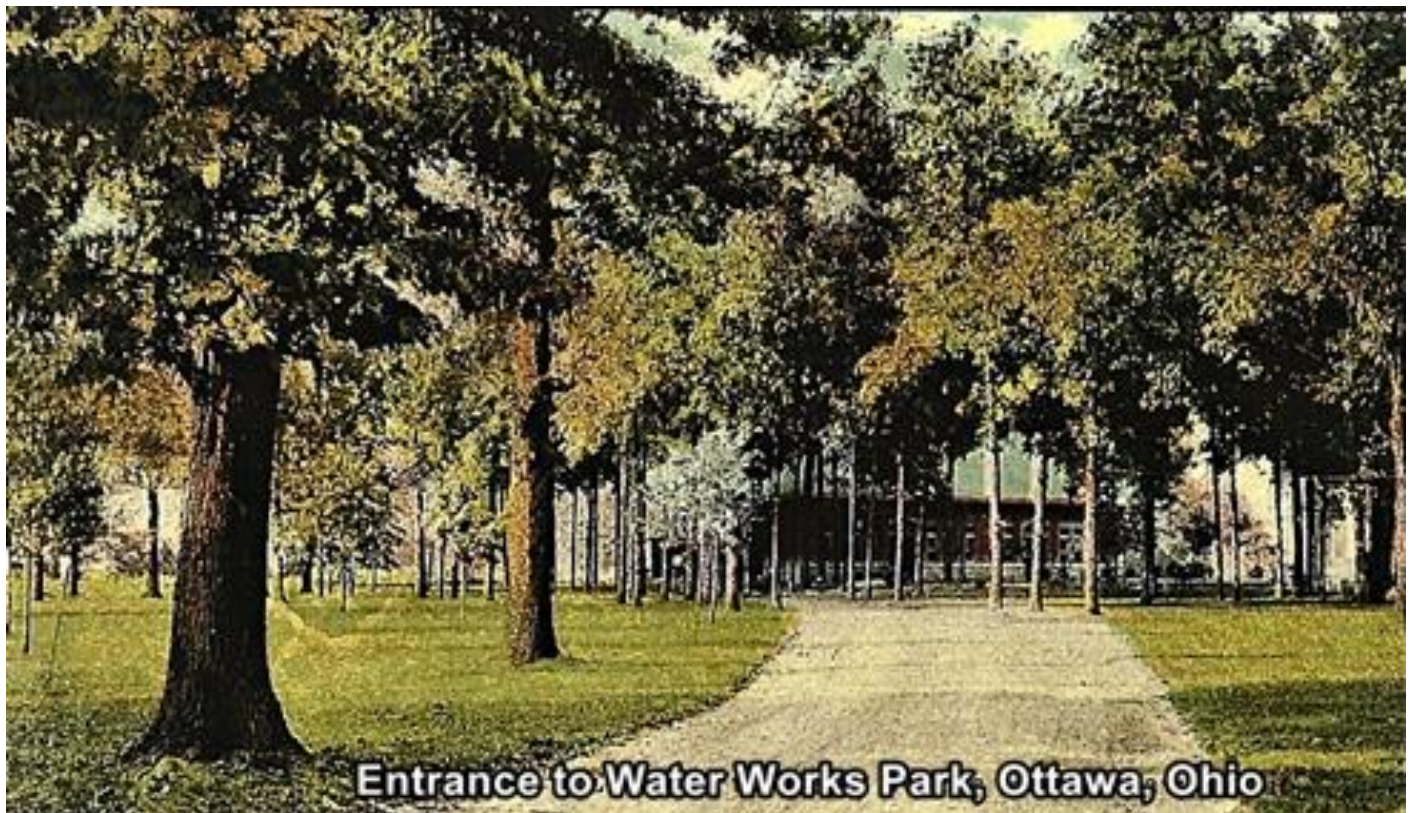
In 1979 the building became the home of Ottawa Senior Citizens Center. The building itself has been maintained very well and today, is home to the Ottawa Senior Center. The center includes an office, meeting room, and a kitchen. It may be rented for group sizes of 40 – 50 people. Great for family get-togethers. The park area is well maintained and in spring and summer is well used by visitors and hall renters.



(Click to view larger)

Waterworks Park Area

Waterworks Park is named after the waterworks building, which was constructed in the early 1900s and is regarded as a fine example of early twentieth-century development. It served as a water pumping facility until the 1970s. No longer in service, the building remains as a centerpiece within the park. During the early history there were several animals caged at the park.

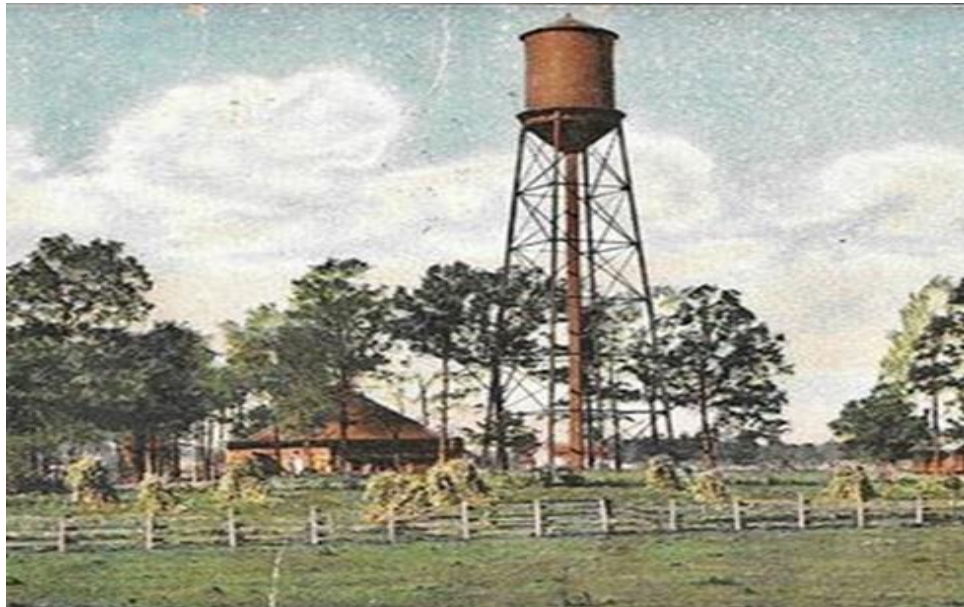




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Water Works Park Zoo - 1909 thru 1920

In 1909, the “happy Zoo Family” consisted of two red fox, two opossums, seven racoons and a groundhog, as well as a pair of yellow owls, a parrot, and a harrier, plus three alligators and a tortoise. “They all dwell together in harmony, thus presenting a proper example to the genus homo,” said the Sentinel.

In 1910, Superintendent Gerding had “a very interesting family of little animals,” the Sentinel said, a few “trusties” that were tame enough to roam freely on the grounds. The collection included Belgian hares, the bantam chickens, Eurasian collared doves, and rock doves, or pigeons, which mingled very nicely.”

At times between 1906 and 1920, the zoological gardens OF Water Works Park contained a barn owl, a great gray owl from Canada or the Pacific Northwest; screech owls; an American bittern, “snake diver”; two American coots, or mud hens; a turkey vulture; a couple of hedgehogs; and Texas toads of unknown origin.

The Water Works Zoo had become so popular that on some days, particularly Sundays, the park became crowded. “Several hundred” people spent their day there, for the park, “assuming its summer beauty, afforded a pleasant place to visit on hot days and evenings,” the Sentinel reported in 1907.

Waterworks Park includes a shelter with an outdoor fireplace, gazebo, playgrounds, shuffleboard courts, benches, log house used by scouting groups, forested common area offering seasonal beauty, and the Ottawa Senior Center. An annual membership is required to participate in the Ottawa Senior Center activities and events.



(Click to view larger)

Sentinel News Articles

Friday October 17, 1902 - It carried. Now Ottawa will have waterworks, good waterworks, up-to-date waterworks. The kind of waterworks we need and the kind we ought to have. Last Monday experienced the best step toward the advancement of Ottawa that has been taken in some time and it's a step that will never be regretted by even those who are now opposed to it. The petition presented to council some time ago asking that the question of bonding the town for the purpose of putting in a water works system was the first move in securing this much needed improvement and was eminently fair in all respects.

It did not ask that a big expense be put on the people without their consent. It asks that they, by means of a ballot, say whether or not the outlay should be made. The decision was made Monday and it was a credit to the town and to the citizens. A good vote was polled, and the issue was carried by an overwhelming vote – 335 to 82. That showed that four out of every five who voted were in favor of water works.

Sentinel News Articles continued

Friday, January 15, 1904

WATERWORKS Plant Will be installed as Soon as Weather Will Permit. All is In Readiness. The town council and the board of trustees of public affairs held a joint meeting at council chamber Monday night for the purpose of making definite arrangements for the early construction of the waterworks system.

Friday, March 4, 1904

WATERWORKS. Contracts Have Not Yet all Been Let But Work Will be Commenced at Once. While the contracts have not yet all been let for the waterworks plant to be installed the coming summer, the principal ones have been closed up and work will commenced on the twentieth of the present month. The lines have all been run and it is expected to have them laid and ready for operation by the fifteenth of June.

The contracts that have awarding so far are as follows:

U.S. Cast Pipe and Foundry Co., Cincinnati---

4inch pipe	\$23.00 per ton
6, 8 and 10 inch	\$22.00 per ton
Specials f.o.b. Ottawa	\$50.00 per ton

Bourbon Copper and Brass Works Co., Cincinnati---

43, 4-inch hydrants	\$23.00 each
15, 6-inch “	\$22.00 “
2, 10-inch valves	\$20.09 “
5, 8-inch “	\$14.00 “
30, 6-inch “	\$10.00 “
3, 4-inch “	\$6.00 “
40, valve boxes	\$2.40 “

Friday, March 4, 1904

Sentinel News Articles continued

Heffner, Garsch & Gibney, Celina---

Laying 10-inch pipe	22c	per foot
“ 8-inch pipe	18c	“ “
“ 6-inch pipe	15c	“ “
“ 4-inch pipe	11-1/2c	“ “

John McGowan Co., Cincinnati---

Two $\frac{3}{4}$ million pumping engines	\$2505.00
Two boiler feed pumps	\$140.00
One 200-horse power heater	\$230.00
Total	\$2875.00

Shaw-Kendall Engineering Co., Cincinnati---

Two 100-horse power boilers	\$21,074.00
Air compressors	\$21,057.00

W. J. Graham, of this place, was awarded the contract for erecting the pumping station, receiving well, etc., for \$8400.00

Friday, August 16, 1904

Water Works Notice

The secretary of the Board of Public Affairs is now ready to receive applications for water. Those desiring the service should apply soon in order to obtain the benefits offered as a special inducement.

The Board will make the necessary connections to property line, the uniform price for making same will be \$5.90, which amount will be remitted to the consumer on his account for water used.

All plumbing will be done at cost, plus 10 per cent until Dec. 1st, 1904, as an inducement to the consumer.

Rates for other purposes and rules governing use of water, will be furnished each applicant in a short time.

By order of the Board.