

The Boyd Brothers

The Boyd Brothers, Harry and William, of Osgoode, now part of south Ottawa, purchased a Ideal Block Machine early in the 20th century. Although the hand-operated mould was only capable of producing one block at a time, by 1913 the Boyds were producing about 800 blocks a day, employing twenty men. In addition to the “rock-faced” blocks, seen on Dr. Blair’s house, the Boyds developed a reputation for producing “artistic” blocks in many sizes, with inset coloured stone or glass, as seen on most of these domestic structures.



Ideal A16 Concrete Block Machine
(Osgoode Township Museum)

This concludes the tour, and it is a short walk back to the Rideau Archives going north along Fourth Line Road towards Prince of Wales.

You will now be able to recognize Boyd Block structures and may wish to drive past many others in North Gower or in other local villages such as Manotick, Kars and Osgoode, or sprinkled throughout the countryside as far away as Kingston or Brockville.

Two nearby that are well worth a visit are the handsome cemetery vault at Elmview Cemetery in Kars, 6804 Rideau Valley Drive South, which was a gift by the Boyd brothers to the community, and Knox Presbyterian Church, 5533 Dickinson Street in Manotick. This handsome Boyd Block structure opened in 1926 when the local Presbyterian congregation decided not to become part of the United Church of Canada.

Thank you for your interest in our Boyd Block buildings. We hope you enjoyed the tour.



Made to Last

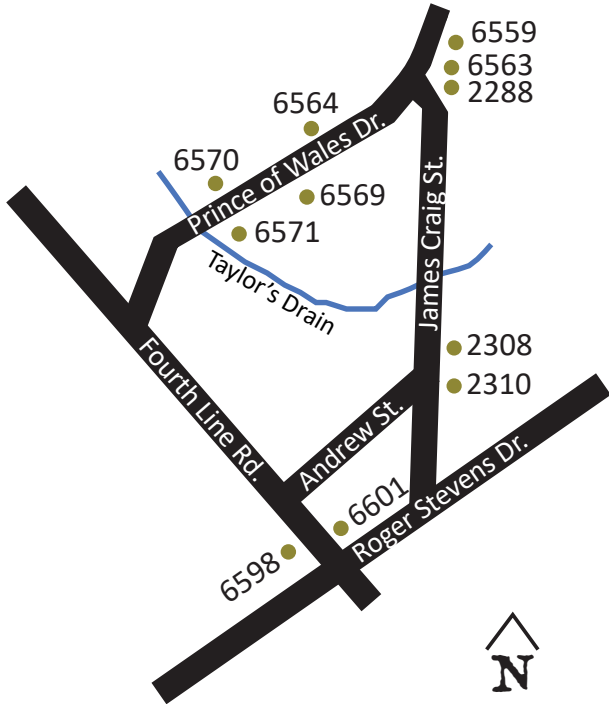
Boyd Block Buildings in the Former
Osgoode and Rideau Townships 2022-2023

Self-Guided Walking Tour

A Short Self-Guided Walking Tour of North Gower’s Boyd Block Buildings

This short self-guided walking tour introduces you to some of North Gower’s Boyd Block buildings. The walk is about 800 metres. It will take you past ten locations and takes as little as a quarter hour. Note that James Craig Street has no sidewalks, so be mindful of any traffic. Please respect private property – stick to the sidewalks and roads.

NORTH GOWER



1

Leaving Rideau Archives, turn right (northwest) and walk to the corner of Prince of Wales Drive. Follow Prince of Wales Drive northeast across the bridge over Taylor's Drain. The first two Boyd Block bungalows are on your right – 6571 and 6569 Prince of Wales. 6571 was once the home of the Field family. Both Eric and Eleanor were charter members of the Rideau Township Historical Society. Across the street at 6570 Prince of Wales is another bungalow with charming proportions.



6571 Prince of Wales Drive



6569 Prince of Wales Drive



6570 Prince of Wales Drive

2

The next house, 6564 Prince of Wales, is the highlight of the tour. Pictured here as it was during Dr. H.G.F. Blair's day, this house was designed and built by the Boyds in 1924 as a dream home for Blair's new bride. It includes the lesser-known hollow Boyd concrete pillars. The side door at the south end was an entrance for patients to his surgery. At the back still stands the stable in which Dr. Blair kept his well-known pair of driving horses he used for house calls.



6564 Prince of Wales Drive



Dr. Blair's House, ca. 1924-1930 (CA028284)

After Dr. Blair's death in 1942, the house was eventually acquired by David and Betty Williamson. He was a painter in oils, she a sculptor. Older residents of North Gower remember her sculptures throughout the property. The house is now designated as an important heritage property.

3

Turn sharp right onto James Craig Street. Looking north here you can see three other Boyd Block homes: 6563 and 6559 Prince of Wales, and 2288 James Craig.



Looking north on Prince of Wales Drive

4

Walk across the bridge over Taylor's Drain, to the stop sign. Here, on the north side of the street, at 2308 and 2310 are two more Boyd Block houses, made with the "artistic" blocks. Note the Boyd Block front porch and steps at 2308 and the Boyd Block garage at 2310.



2308 James Craig Street



2310 James Craig Street

5

At the stop sign, turn right onto Andrew Street and walk south toward Fourth Line Road. Passing P.O. Sadler and Son's workshop, at 2317 is another charming small Boyd Block home.



2317 Andrew Street

6

Continue to Fourth Line Road. Here you may either turn right to return to Rideau Archives or turn left on Fourth Line Road to view two more properties, these being two-storey commercial premises. At 6601 Fourth Line Road, Mr. Mozzarella Pizza occupies half the ground floor, while the remainder is apartments.



6601 Fourth Line Road

7

On this site at 6598 Fourth Line Road from 1904 stood a red brick building which housed the Union Bank, later the Royal Bank. That building was destroyed in a 1948 fire. Cecil McCurdy built the present two-storey Boyd Block structure. He operated a men's clothing store on the ground floor and lived above. It is now residential.



6598 Fourth Line Road