

## Small Historic Towns across America.

as presented by Mr. Stadt's on-line Freedom Project Education U.S. History classes in the Fall and Winter of 2014. You can learn more about our classes by visiting us at: [www.fpeusa.org](http://www.fpeusa.org)



### Brief History of Walnut, Iowa.

Walnut was established in 1871. Originally named "Walnut Creek" because of a lone Walnut tree that stood beside a creek of the same name, this little town quickly became a bustling trade center with the Rock Island Railroad, livery stables, The Walnut House Hotel, and the Walnut Flour Mill which shipped much of its product to Europe.

After fires claimed both sides of the business district the town rebuilt most of the downtown area in brick by the late 1800's. Many of the structures remain and in some cases still carry the same type of merchandise as they did a century ago.



**Enter "Antique City":** Today these buildings are filled with antiques and specialty shops. In addition, you will find a bakery and other businesses--each with its own unique character. The "Walnut Bureau" first published in 1878 as "The Walnut News" is still printed weekly. Rolling Hills Bank & Trust is Walnut's only building on the National Register of Historic Places. Once a hub for entertainment, the Walnut Opera House, built in 1899, still stands on Antique City Drive today.

### Location and Driving Directions from closest major U.S. Airport(s).

Antique City (Walnut, Iowa) is located about midway between Omaha, NE and Des Moines, IA. From either direction take Interstate 80 and at exit 46 (Route M47) turn south about 3 miles. M47 takes you straight into Walnut and to the heart of the shows in 'Antique City.'

### Who was President when this town was founded? And, what was the political environment in America at that time.



At the time Walnut was first organized as a town Ulysses S. Grant was the President of the United States. Our country had recently recovered from Civil War and technically we were still in a period of reconstruction. That era officially ended during Grant's administration when the last Union troops were removed from the southern states that seceded from the Union in 1860 and 62. Grant was a Republican from the state of Ohio.

In 1871 there were only 37 states in the United States of America. Here's the official flag.



### Oldest businesses/largest businesses today.

To the right is a 35mm photo taken by my Father of the bank as it looked in 1956. According to the Walnut website it is still in operation today in the same location, but totally remodeled.

### City government.

Walnut is governed by the Mayor-Council form of government. In this form of government, the Mayor is elected to a two-year term. There are five City Council members who serve staggered four-year terms.



Council Meetings are held the 1st Thursday of every month at 5 p.m. at City Hall. Meetings can be viewed on local cable Channel 12. Agendas and minutes can be viewed under the Your Government tab of the towns' website.

## Historic attractions in the area. Festivals and Events.

Each year **'Antique City'** hosts a number of events. Each is designed to showcase the town and its' rich history and to provide visitors to the town a memorable experience. Details and dates of each can be found on Walnut's website at: [www.walnutiowa.org](http://www.walnutiowa.org)

Some of the annual events include: Antique City Car Show, Christmas Antique Walk, Fireman's Funfest, Junk-Tober Fest and True Junk May Daze.

## Where can we stay if we visit Walnut?



**Clarks Country Inn B&B** The quiet and relaxing two story home was built in 1912. Located one block off main street, it is furnished with authentic antiques, only four blocks from 150 antique dealers in Iowa's Antique City. The Inn was established in June, 1991. Since then, we have had over 9,000 guests from 46 states, 18 countries, and 5 continents. Guests have the use of the Living Room, Dining Room, and Guest Den, with cable TV, DVD, books, magazines, and piano. Outside is a porch swing and secluded deck.

Website: [www.clarkscountryinn.com](http://www.clarkscountryinn.com)

## Why would I want to visit this historic small town.

I'd like to visit here as a trip back to my childhood. My Father was called to Pastor the First Baptist Church in Walnut in 1954. The church met in an old schoolhouse until a couple years later when they purchased land and the men of the church constructed a new building. It still stands today, and remains a testimony for Christ in the community. My Dad & Mom died a couple years ago so I would like to return to Walnut and see if anyone is there that might remember me or my family. We lived a block south of the church on Walnut Street, just down the hill from the lumber yard. It would be fun to visit the town and see how it has changed. I've not been back there since the mid 60's so I am sure there are many changes. Among them all the antique shops that were not there in the 50's. To the right is a photo taken by my Dad of my sister and I playing in the snow.



## First Baptist Church under construction.

It took about a year for my Dad and all the men of the church to finally complete the building of the church. It doesn't look like much in this photo but it still stands today and is used every week. You can actually see a picture of it completed in the youtube video mentioned below.



## Links you may wish to visit.

[www.iowaantiquecity.com](http://www.iowaantiquecity.com)

[www.walnutiowa.org](http://www.walnutiowa.org)

You Tube Video of Walnut in 1956: <http://youtu.be/a8qDY01f7ow>

Upcoming Event – 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Antique Show: [www.walnutantiqueshow.com](http://www.walnutantiqueshow.com)