

History and Overview of Albion, Michigan



Albion, on the eastern edge of Calhoun County is located in the southern portion of Michigan between Detroit and Chicago, exits 121 and 124 on Interstate-94, the major expressway linking these two Midwest Metropolis'. Lansing, the state capital of Michigan, lies only 50 miles north along M-99.

It is the original home of Mother's Day, observed since 1877, thirty-seven years before it became a national celebration and the birthplace of "*The Sweetheart of Sigma Chi*" and "*The Old Rugged Cross*". Originally called Forks of the Kalamazoo by the early settlers, Albion celebrates its beginnings with a Festival of the Forks celebration each September.

Albion is very proud of their rich cultural heritage and ethnic diversity; of their trees, parks and river; of their nationally renowned educational institutions, Albion College and Starr Commonwealth. Albion College is home to the Nancy G. Held Equestrian Center, the only on campus equestrian center in the Midwest, the Albion College Observatory, one of the oldest actively used telescopes in the country, and the Bobbitt Visual Arts Center. Starr Commonwealth was founded in 1913 and campus tours are available of the Gladstone Cottage, Chapel-in-the-Woods, and the Brueckner Museum.

Albion's Historic Walkway was developed by their Bicentennial Commission and takes you around town and across the Kalamazoo River to a number of Albion's historic locations, including their paved main street, first laid in 1903. It was reconstructed with hand-laid, kiln fired clay bricks in 1993. Also on the tour you can see the Holy Ascension Orthodox Church, built in 1916. South of downtown is the Riverside Cemetery listed in the State Register of Historic Sites. The Cemetery reflects Albion's ethnically diverse population and has areas representing their Russian, German, Italian, Lithuanian, and Polish heritage, and African American World War 1 veterans.

For the children in your family, a must-visit is the Kids 'N' Stuff Children's Museum located at 301 S. Superior Street. This unique museum has been designed specifically for children 2-12. It provides a creative and enriching experience through interactive exhibits in the arts, humanities, sciences and technology, and reflects the ethnic, cultural and economic history of the region. With many exhibits for toddlers as well as for older children up to age 12, Kids 'N' Stuff is a wonderful opportunity for children to combine fun with learning and enrichment.

For more information about Albion contact the Greater Albion Chamber of Commerce Visitor Information Center at 517.629.5533.