



History in our Own Backyard

President William McKinley

Do you know what the National McKinley Birthplace Memorial and the McKinley Birthplace Home are and why they are located in Niles, Ohio?

The answer is that both the McKinley Memorial and the McKinley Home honor President William McKinley in the town of his birth. William McKinley was born in Niles on January 29, 1843, the seventh of nine children born to William and Nancy McKinley. The McKinley family lived in Niles until 1852 when the family moved to Poland, Ohio, so that the children could receive a better education.

William attended high school in Poland and enlisted and served in the Union Army from 1861 to 1865. After the Civil War, William moved to Canton, Ohio in 1867 and became a lawyer.

McKinley's political career began when he was elected to Congress in 1876. When his congressional term ended in 1891, he was elected and re-elected as Ohio's governor, serving from 1892 to 1896.

In 1896 McKinley, campaigning often from his front porch, was elected as the twenty-fifth President of the United States. He served as president from March 4, 1897 to September 14, 1901. He died in office as a result of an assassin's bullet. President McKinley is one of eight Ohioans elected to the United States Presidency.

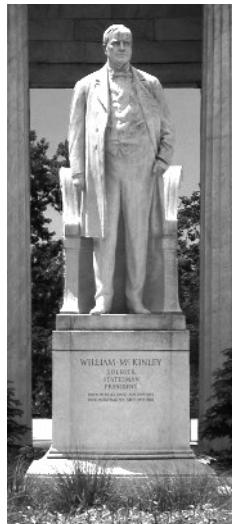


The McKinley Memorial Library

houses a public library for area citizens. Memorabilia dedicated to President McKinley and an auditorium where civic events are held are housed in the north wing.

The McKinley Birthplace Home is not the original home where McKinley was born, but is located on the actual site where it once stood. The present house is a reconstruction of his birthplace, which was destroyed by fire. A historical marker informs all passers-by that this is the site where President William McKinley was born.

Please visit Niles and the memorials to President McKinley. Both have free admission and are open to the public.



McKinley statue

The National McKinley Birthplace Memorial, built by friends to honor him in his hometown, is the site of the one-room schoolhouse that President McKinley attended when he was a boy. The south wing of the Memorial



President McKinley's birth home

Words & Definitions:

1. **Assassin:** One who murders by surprise attack, especially one who carries a plot to kill a prominent person.
2. **Auditorium:** A large room to accommodate an audience in a building such as a school or theater.
3. **Governor:** A person who governs, especially the chief executive of a state in the United States.
4. **Lawyer:** One whose profession is to give legal advice and assistance to clients and represent them in court or in other legal matters.
5. **Museum:** A building, place, or institution devoted to the acquisition, conservation, study, exhibition, and educational interpretation of objects having scientific, historical, or artistic value.
6. **Public Library:** A noncommercial library often supported with public funds, intended for use by the general public.

<http://dictionary.reference.com>

For Discussion:

1. Why do you think that President McKinley's friends raised the funds to build the National McKinley Birthplace Memorial?
2. What other famous or historical buildings can be found in the Mahoning Valley?
3. Why do people visit museums?

Passport to the Past

McKinley Memorial Museum and Library
40 N. Main St., Niles • 330-652-1704
www.mckinley.lib.oh.us
McKinley Birthplace Home
40 S. Main St., Niles • 330-652-1774
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