

#5: Former Benton County Jail (174 West Washington Street)

Benton County's first jail was a small, three walled log structure built in 1838 and used until 1912. The county purchased an abandoned building, which had been erected in 1856 by the Mechanic's Bank of St. Louis, as a branch bank in Warsaw. The bank closed in 1861. Until 2021,, the jail was located in this building at the corner of Washington and Van Buren Streets.

Among people who have walked where you walk today was Howell Lewis, a nephew of George Washington, and one of the men who made the original survey of Benton County. Senator Benjamin Ajar was knifed through the heart near this spot and it was also here, almost a hundred years later in the 1940's, that Benton County Sheriff Meisner was killed by machine-gun fire by an escaping prisoner.