



*Fort
Collins*

HISTORIC

WALKING TOUR

Take a stroll through Fort Collins' past



WELCOME TO HISTORIC DOWNTOWN FORT COLLINS, COLORADO!

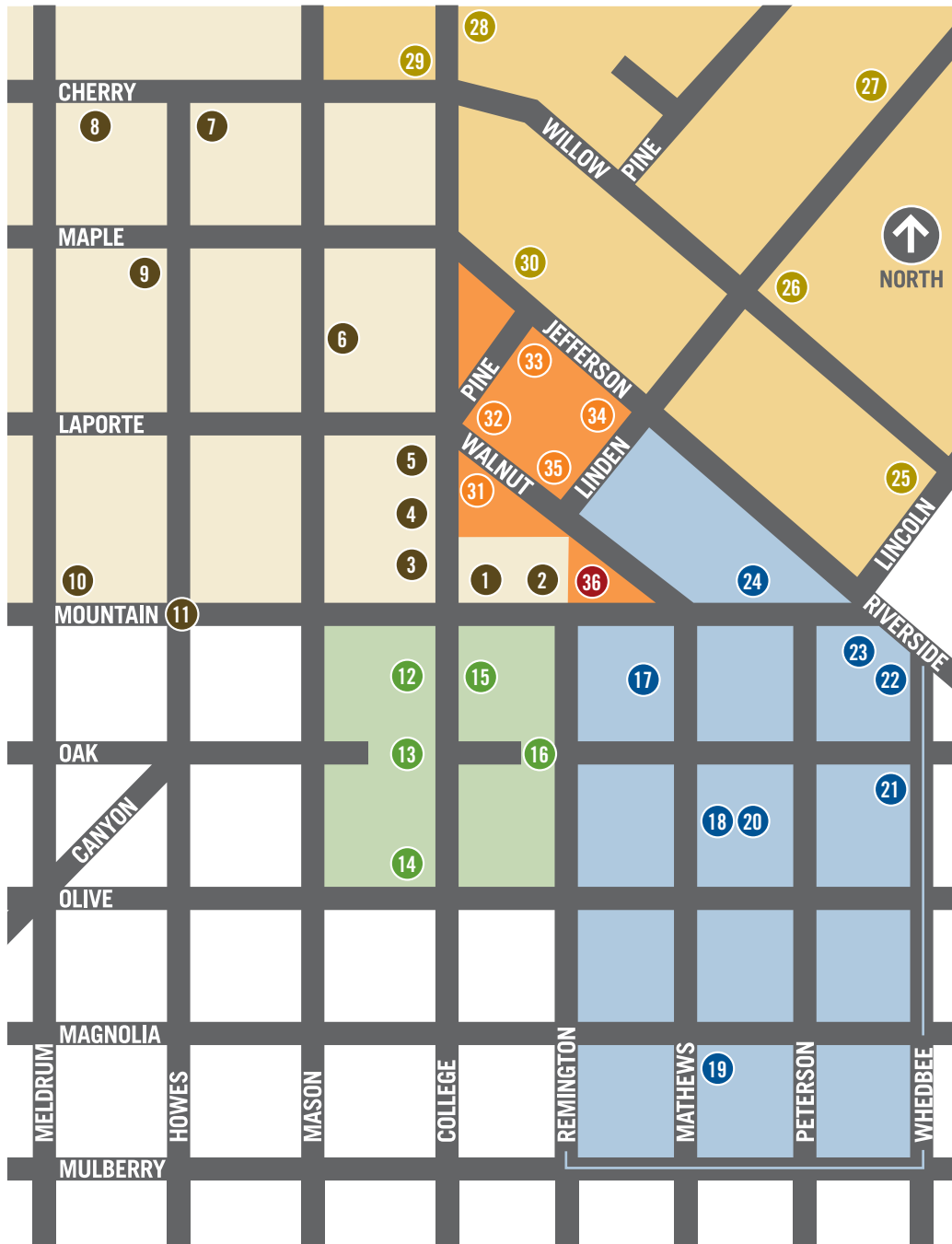
The location of Old Town Square remains the heart of the city as in 1873 when the town was established. Many early grocery stores, restaurants and shops were located in this area. It was a place of enormous activity. You will notice older structures interconnected with more contemporary buildings. This is due to the hard work and planning of a local developer, Gene Mitchell. His dream was accomplished in 1985 and today we celebrate the unique environment that is Old Town Square.

From this location you can venture out to numerous historic sites in our beautiful city.

- On this tour you will visit the most historic locations including the only structure left from the 1860's military post to the childhood home of a legendary film star.
- Discover the amazing story of Fort Collins' connection to Disneyland's Main Street USA.
- Explore the many ghost signs that still hauntingly linger from days past.
- Learn the incredible stories of early residents and how the 'wild and scenic' Cache La Poudre River got its name.
- Travel back in time to the locations of the early railroads and streetcars.
- Learn about the lives of early immigrants and the extraordinary cultural influence they contributed.

We hope you enjoy your tour experience of Old Town Fort Collins and that it will ignite even more excitement into our town's wonderful and historic past.

Historic Fact: Fort Collins was established in 1873.



TOURS



1. **Trimble Court** Old Town Square/College Avenue
2. **Ghost Sign (Coopersmith's)** 5 Old Town Square
3. **Welch Block** 100 W. Mountain & 107 N. College
4. **Opera House Block** 117-131 N. College
5. **Miller Bottling Works** 173 N. College
6. **Colorado and Southern Freight Depot** 136 Laporte
7. **Trolley Barn** 330 N. Howes
8. **Hattie McDaniel House** 317 Cherry
9. **Washington Park** N. Howes & Maple
10. **Avery House** 328 W. Mountain
11. **Birney Car** 21 W. Mountain & N. Howes
12. **Julian's** 137 S. College
13. **Museum of Art/Old Post Office** 201 S. College
14. **Armstrong Hotel** 259 S. College
15. **Nedley Hotel** 130 S. College
16. **Montezuma Fuller Alley** 100 block of E. Oak & E. Mountain
17. **McIntyre House** 137 Mathews
18. **Carnegie Library** 200 Mathews
19. **Fort Collins Hospital** 301 E. Magnolia
20. **Library Park** Oak/Peterson/Olive/Mathews
21. **German Congregational Church** 201 Whedbee
22. **Hoffman House** 426 E. Oak
23. **First Schoolhouse** 115 Riverside
24. **Armory** 314 E. Mountain
25. **Harmony Mill** 131 Lincoln
26. **El Burrito** 404 Linden
27. **Gustav Swanson Natural Area** Linden Street bridge
28. **Old Power Plant/Energy Lab** 430-500 N. College
29. **Fort Collins Museum of Discovery** N. Mason & Cherry
30. **Union Pacific Depot** 200 Jefferson
31. **Candy Kitchen** 255-257 Linden
32. **Linden Hotel** 250 Walnut
33. **Original City Hall/Firehouse** 232 Walnut
34. **LaCourt Hotel** 232 Pine
35. **Northern Hotel** 172 N. College
36. **Mitchell Block** 212 E. Mountain

Historic Fact: The Fort Collins Armory building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (24.)

1 TRIMBLE COURT

BETWEEN OLD TOWN SQUARE AND N. COLLEGE AVENUE

Franklin Avery's 1873 map of Fort Collins included an unnamed, narrow alleyway connecting North College Avenue and Linden Street. At the turn of the 19th century, the alley became Trimble Court, named after business owners Charles and Edgar Trimble, whose business was at the corner of College and the western alley entrance.

Busy entrepreneurs, the Trimble brothers headed a number of establishments in town, including the Trimble Billiard Parlour at 132 N. College, Trimble Barber Shop at 110 Trimble Court, Trimble Court Restaurant at 114 Trimble Court and the Trimble Rooming House upstairs at 138 N. College. Additionally, Charles Trimble and J.A.C. Kissock jointly ran a grocery in 1887 on Linden Street. In short, if one needed a haircut, dinner, groceries, a place to live, or just an opportunity to shoot pool, the Trimble brothers had something to offer!

Today, Trimble Court is home to Trimble Court Artisans, a nonprofit cooperative which began in 1971. The shop concentrates on hand-crafted art works created by more than 50 artists. Its building has been a laundry, a plumbing shop and an artist's studio, among other things. Trimble Court Artisans was one of the first businesses of its kind to open in Old Town. In 2011, it celebrated its 40th anniversary.



© Matthew Gale Photography

2 GHOST SIGNS

5 OLD TOWN SQUARE AND OTHER LOCATIONS DOWNTOWN

Until the 1950s, large wall signs painted on the exterior of commercial buildings or rural structures were a common mechanism for advertising across the United States. These specialized sign painters were known as "wall dogs". With the advent of auto transportation and new forms of advertising, wall signs were either destroyed, covered up, or left to gradually fade, becoming known as ghost signs as a result.

Harold Asmus and Donald Brown both painted wall signs in Fort Collins in the 1950s or later, in the twilight of the wall sign era.

Angell's Delicatessen commissioned Brown in 1958 to paint a sign advertising their business, housed in this building at 220 E. Mountain. He also undertook a large Coca-Cola sign, for which that company paid him \$400. These ghost signs are well-known in the town and in 2011 underwent rehabilitation, a delicate process that involves enhancing the sign for visibility while avoiding damage to brickwork and other historic materials. The restoration preserved the historic faded look of the two signs while forestalling deterioration.

About ten ghost signs still exist downtown, some more visible than others. To spot them you often have to look up! Which ones can you find?



© Matthew Gale Photography

TOUR A
1-2 hours

About ten ghost signs still exist downtown. Which ones can you find?

3

WELCH BLOCK

100 W. MOUNTAIN & 107 N. COLLEGE

Jacob and Anna Welch migrated west from Akron, Ohio and settled in Fort Collins in 1872. Welch purchased the business lot at the northwest corner of College and Mountain Avenues. He put up a large tent to begin his mercantile business. Within a year he had erected a two-story wooden building on the spot. Welch's Dry Goods occupied the first floor, while the Welch family and some of the employees lived upstairs.

In February 1880, a horrible fire destroyed the building. Unfortunately, two of Welch's employees died in the fire. Soon after, Welch partnered with Franklin C. Avery, Jay H. Boughton, and several others to construct a three-story Opera House in the 100 block of North College Avenue.

Finished in December 1881, Welch's Dry Goods store occupied the strategic corner once again, next to the Windsor Hotel, Avery's Larimer County Bank, and the Opera House, which held several other businesses. The Dry Goods store contained six rows of counters and sold groceries, clothing, carpets, boots and shoes. It was truly an early day Big-Box!

For most of the 20th century, Woolworth's occupied the structure, whose façade was modernized in 1919. The building still plays an important part in the downtown Fort Collins story.



© Matthew Gale Photography

4

OPERA HOUSE BLOCK

117-131 N. COLLEGE

Early citizens of Fort Collins, wanting to demonstrate their community's culture and sophistication, desired an Opera House. With the destruction and reconstruction of the Welch Block after a fire in 1880, plans went into effect to finance and build an opera house. The entire block structure was valued at \$30,000 and was touted as the "biggest and best building in Colorado outside of Denver." Although a traditional opera did not take place in this structure, vaudeville shows and similar entertainment were enjoyed by the community. The first floor of the Opera House Block contained one of the earliest financial institutions in Fort Collins, Franklin Avery's Larimer County Bank, as well as millinery run by a Frenchwoman, Madame Rocoulle. The Opera House itself was located on the second and third floors of the structure. It seated a thousand people – nearly the whole town!

In 1917, the Opera House Block underwent a renovation. The second level was resurrected as a dance floor, hosting graduation parties, proms, and dances. This building experienced its last renovation in the early 1990s. The second and third floors were demolished and the interior was repurposed for retail and office space.



© Matthew Gale Photography

TOUR A 1-2 hours

Historic Fact: In 1880, the Opera House was the biggest and best building in Colorado outside of Denver.

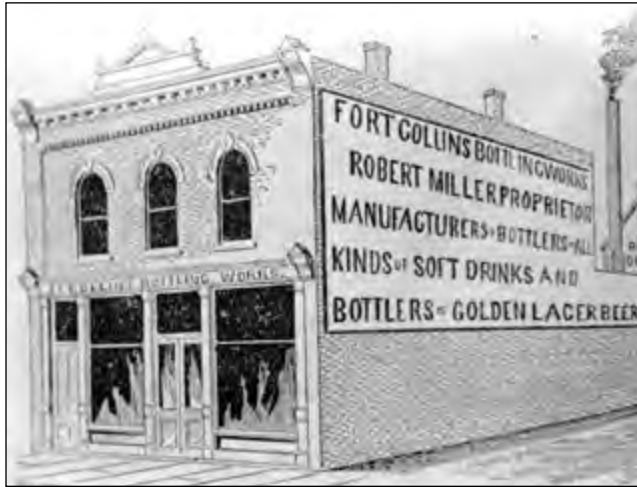
5 MILLER BOTTLING WORKS

173 N. COLLEGE

Look for the 1-88-1 carved into the second story windows' keystones of this building. These numbers mark the construction date of the structure – 1881. In the early days, it housed the bottling works of Robert Miller. The business manufactured and bottled "... all kinds of soft drinks," as well as bottling "Golden Lager Beer" a product of a fledgling brewery west of Denver, operated by brewer Adolph Coors. Prohibition supporters encouraged the city government to ban the sale of liquor, and in 1896, Fort Collins went dry (and remained so until 1969). Allegedly, Robert operated a "bootlegging" business in a back room of his bottling works when the prohibition law became effective.

On May 13, 1905, City Marshall William Richart came to the 173 N. College business to serve a handful of arrest warrants on Robert Miller. A heated argument ensued between Miller and Richart in the dark back room, and the Marshall, fearing for his life, drew his pistol and fatally shot Miller.

The building has had a wide variety of businesses over the intervening years. It was restored in 1980. Art and framing businesses have been the recent occupants.



© Matthew Gale Photography

6 COLORADO AND SOUTHERN FREIGHT DEPOT

136 LAPORTE

When the Colorado & Southern Railroad (C&S) completed its freight depot in 1906 it was greeted with joy. A local newspaper bragged that the depot was the second largest in Colorado designated for freight, behind only Denver, and went on to say that it was "...clearly a recognition on the part of the railroad company of our present and future greatness."

The freight depot continued to serve in that function for eighty years, until 1986, when it was discontinued by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway. The City purchased the depot in 1994 and remodeled it to serve as a Transit Center for both the Transfort City bus service and for national bus companies. A grant from the Colorado Historical Society State Historical Fund assisted in the rehabilitation of the building. It is designated as a local historic landmark.

A short distance away, within a fenced area on Mason Street, is a gravesite for Fort Collins' favorite dog, Annie. Railway workers found an abandoned dog in a Timnath blacksmith shop in 1934. Naming her Annie, they found a home for her at the Fort Collins freight depot. Annie greeted trains for fourteen years, and when she died in 1948 she was buried here.



© Ryan Burke

TOUR A
1-2 hours

Historic Fact: In 1896, Fort Collins went dry and remained so until 1969.

7

TROLLEY BARN

330 N. HOWES

The turn of the 20th century welcomed the electric street car era. Fort Collins granted a franchise to the Denver and Interurban (D & I) Railway Corporation in 1906. The company laid nine miles of streetcar tracks for its Fort Collins operation, along with overhead wire. On December 29, 1907, large 44-passenger Woeber electric streetcars began running on the streets of town. The trolley cars began and ended their runs at the streetcar barn at Cherry and Howes. The commodious barn was built in 1907, and the original sign apparently read, “Denver & Interurban Railway Corp, 1907.”

The City purchased the D & I system in 1919, junked the large Woeber cars, and purchased four small, more efficient 28 passenger Birney Safety cars. The new city system went into operation in May 1919, operating out of the Howes Street barn. There were pits under the tracks in the barn for servicing cars, and a mechanics shop. The last Birney to run on a city street returned to the barn in the evening of June 30, 1951. Since that day, the trolley barn has had a variety of uses, including museum artifact storage.



8

HATTIE MCDANIEL HOUSE

317 CHERRY

Few Fort Collins residents know that famed “Gone With The Wind” actress Hattie McDaniel lived here during her early years. The house her family rented in the early 1900s still stands at 317 Cherry Street. Hattie was born June 10, 1895, in Wichita, Kansas. Henry and Susan McDaniel moved their family to Fort Collins in 1900. Hattie’s earliest school years were spent at the Franklin School, three blocks south of her home. Her father worked as a teamster, but hoped for better opportunities for his family so he moved the family to Denver. Hattie attended East High School where she was bitten by the acting bug, so she left school for the theater.

Hattie is best known for her role as Scarlett O’Hara’s mammy in the 1939 movie, “Gone With The Wind.” She received the “Best Supporting Actress” Academy Award for her portrayal, the first African-American actress or actor to achieve this prestigious Oscar award. She went on to star in other movie and TV roles, and is probably best remembered for her role as “Beulah” on the radio and later television series. Hattie died in California in 1952. Her former Fort Collins home was constructed at the turn of the 20th century in the hipped roof style of several homes in that neighborhood.



© Matthew Gale Photography

TOUR A
1-2 hours

Historic Fact: “Gone With The Wind” actress, Hattie McDaniel, lived in Fort Collins.

9

WASHINGTON PARK

N. HOWES & MAPLE

Washington Park and Lincoln Park (now Library Park) were the first two parks in Fort Collins. An 1887 newspaper article suggested that both parks be fenced and planted with trees, indicating that they may have been little more than shadeless empty lots. Optimistically, the article broached the idea that improvements to Washington Park by the city would induce the railroad company (Colorado Central at the time; later the Colorado & Southern) to create its own park on the block separating its passenger depot from Washington Park. Alas, no such park was ever created and the passenger depot itself was demolished in the mid-20th century.

Washington Park remained regardless of these events (or non-events) and improvements did take place. In 1926 the "Report of the Commissioner of Works and City Engineer" indicated that the caretaker busied himself fertilizing the lawn, trimming the trees, and graveling the pathways. His predecessor apparently was not up to the job, for the report also states "...the man employed the last two years has given [the Park] real satisfactory attention." Praise from the boss!

Today Washington Park provides an oasis for nearby residents, schoolchildren, and employees of downtown businesses and government agencies for a game of Frisbee or a quiet lunch break.



10

AVERY HOUSE

328 W. MOUNTAIN

Franklin Avery surveyed the Fort Collins town site in 1873, creating its wide streets. He was also active in banking and irrigation. Franklin and Sara Avery began building this home in 1879. Members of the family lived here until 1962.

Edgar Avery, the son of Franklin and Sara, recorded his daily activities in 1890, when he was 12 years old. His entries included how he spent his days playing chess, dominoes, checkers, ice skating, marbles, swimming, fishing, and just climbing trees and rolling boulders. Edgar and his friends also formed a baseball team, the Fort Collins Creepers, and played games against teams from nearby communities.

Edgar's list of household chores is nearly as lengthy as his play activities. He tended the furnace, chopped wood, emptied coal ashes, picked and sold fruit and vegetables from the garden, cleaned and oiled the carriage, milked the cow, cared for his pony Chubby, and cleaned the barn.

After Franklin and Sara retired in California, Edgar moved into the family home, where he and his wife Mabel raised six children. After a career engaged in banking, real estate, and insurance, Edgar died in 1961 at the age of 84.

(Edgar's Diary is available for purchase from the Poudre Landmarks Foundation for \$5.00.)



TOUR A
1-2 hours

Historic Fact: Franklin and Sara Avery began building this home (Avery House) in 1879.

11 BIRNEY CAR 21

W. MOUNTAIN & N. HOWES

Between 1900 and 1910, an agricultural boom caused Fort Collins' population to increase by almost 200%. In that first decade of the 20th century, the town purchased land for a large city park, built its first high school, built a sugar beet processing factory, and saw the lamb feeding industry become a key part of the area's farming industry. In 1907 the Denver and Interurban (D&I) Railway Corporation constructed a streetcar system for Fort Collins to accommodate the growing community.

The D & I company closed operations in 1918. The next year, Fort Collins purchased the system, and transitioned to trolley cars. Although popular for many years, after World War II ridership dropped dramatically as Americans deserted public transportation for their private automobiles. The Birney Cars made their last public runs on June 30, 1951. All but Car 21 were sold.

In 1977, the Fort Collins Municipal Railway Society was created to restore Car 21 to running order, and to re-lay the tracks and overhead wire on West Mountain Avenue. Seven years later, the beautifully restored Birney Car 21 began operating again.

It now runs on weekend and holiday afternoons from May through September along the median of historic Mountain Avenue, a lovely remnant of Fort Collins' past.



12 JULIAN'S

137 S. COLLEGE

The white marble, black glass tiles, and rounded windows of this building have changed very little since Julian Siegel opened Julian's Ladies Ready-To-Wear at this location in December 1941. Julian Siegel immigrated from Poland to Florida as a small boy, and relocated to Fort Collins in 1922 where he began attending classes at Colorado A&M College (present-day Colorado State University).

Following the success of two other clothing stores in town, Julian Siegel bought the 137 South College building in 1940 and hired Denver architect William J. Klein to design the elaborate exterior seen today. The interior featured ornate fixtures made of Philippine mahogany stocked with high-quality dresses and coats. After a devastating fire in 1946, Julian rebuilt the store and remained in business until 1976 when he retired after 53 years in the apparel industry.

Siegel was a mainstay in Fort Collins, leading the local war bond effort during WWII, and later serving on the boards for the Chamber of Commerce and numerous service organizations. In 1993, Julian Siegel passed away in Florida at the age of 90; the terrazzo floor tile spelling "Julian's" remains at the entrance to the store, evidence of the long legacy Mr. Siegel has in the Fort Collins community.



© Matthew Gale Photography

TOUR A

1-2 hours

Historic Fact: In 1977, the Fort Collins Municipal Railway Society was created to restore Car 21.

13 MUSEUM OF ART/OLD POST OFFICE

201 S. COLLEGE

The old Fort Collins Post Office and Federal Building, built in 1911, is one of the most impressive buildings in northern Colorado. The site, however, was once the burial ground for soldiers of Camp Collins and civilians of the era, whose remains were relocated prior to construction of the Post Office.

The building, constructed of white limestone, Alabama marble and reinforced concrete is a stylized version of Second Renaissance Revival, an architectural style unique in Fort Collins.

Occupied in 1912, the Federal Building provided an anchor for the new downtown business district outside Old Town. Besides the Post Office Department, the building housed the Civil Service, the Railroad Mail Service, the U.S. Forest Service and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, among other federal offices over the years.

The building was sold in 1975 once the new Federal Building at Howes and Olive Streets was occupied. In the fall of 1985, the Fort Collins City Council designated the property a local landmark protecting the Old Post Office from demolition.

Today, the Museum of Art, formerly the Museum of Contemporary Art, occupies the majority of the building along with artists' studios in the basement.



© Matthew Gale Photography

14 ARMSTRONG HOTEL

259 S. COLLEGE

The only hotel still hosting overnight guests in Old Town Fort Collins, the Armstrong has a history reaching back more than 80 years. The stately three-story brick hotel was opened by Charles and Caroline Mantz on April 7, 1923 and designed to cater to the burgeoning American auto-tourism industry. The hotel, named for early Fort Collins pioneer Andrew Armstrong (Caroline's father), was the southernmost downtown business in Fort Collins at that time.

The hotel experienced a number of changes over the years. During World War II the United States Army housed soldiers there. The hotel passed between owners and changed names for nearly 50 years. After suffering from a fire, declining business, and general deterioration, the hotel closed in 2000.

In 2003, new owners breathed life back into the aging structure with a major renovation and a restoration of the hotel's original name. Even the hotel's current sign harks back to the past; it's a faithful reproduction designed from historic photographs of the building in the 1940s.

Ace Gillett's Lounge in the basement of the Armstrong Hotel perpetuates the name of a well-known Fort Collins entrepreneur and hotelier. Gillett was the proprietor of the Northern Hotel from 1940 through 1967, and for a time, managed the Armstrong.



© Matthew Gale Photography

TOUR B
1-2 hours

Historic Fact: in 1912, the Federal Building provided an anchor for the new downtown business district.

15 NEDLEY HOTEL

130 S. COLLEGE

Early resident and mercantile owner Lewis Secord built this two-story structure in 1909. The first floor housed a mercantile while the upper level had apartments and boarding rooms. At the time Fort Collins was experiencing one of the most prosperous eras in its early history. With the Great Western Sugar Company's sugar beet processing plant north of town and the Union Pacific Railroad Depot 3 1/2 blocks away, the Nedley Hotel housed guests from as far away as Denver and Cheyenne.

In 1913, the Daylight Store, or Meyer Dry Goods Store, opened on the first floor of the Nedley Hotel. The second floor was still used primarily as hotel accommodations. By the 1920's offices replaced the boarding rooms on the upper level.

Although the Nedley Hotel was built during a time of prosperity, it still faced serious competition from other successful mercantile businesses in the area as well as more elegant and larger hotels including the Northern (1905) and Armstrong (1923). However, its central location and resourceful business owners allowed it to survive. The Nedley Hotel is still used as commercial space on the first level, while the upper floors are currently rented out as apartments.



© Matthew Gale Photography

© Matthew Gale Photography

16 MONTEZUMA FULLER ALLEY

100 BLOCK OF E. OAK AND E. MOUNTAIN

Montezuma Fuller was a native of Nova Scotia and a prominent architect in Fort Collins at the turn of the 19th century. During his decades of practice, Montezuma Fuller designed business buildings, churches, and private residences. Many still stand, including his own home at 226 W. Magnolia.

Despite his prominence, Fuller had only an alley named for him rather than a street. In 2006, the Downtown Development Authority began an effort to upgrade alleys to make them more attractive for pedestrians and businesses while still allowing deliveries and trash vehicles. Montezuma Fuller Alley, between Oak Street and Mountain Avenue, was one of those retrofitted. The refurbished alley was dedicated in 2010, complete with artwork, stone benches, hanging baskets, planters, pavers, and improved lighting and drainage. From the north end of the alley and to the left you can see across Mountain to the Avery Block, one of the most noteworthy buildings in Fort Collins. It was designed by Montezuma Fuller in 1897 for Franklin Avery for the latter's First National Bank.

A number of alleys have been improved and provide an alternate route around Downtown. Nothing is more fitting than the preservation of Montezuma Fuller's name in this modern and attractive setting.



© Matthew Gale Photography

TOUR B

1-2 hours

Historic Fact: In 1909, Fort Collins experienced one of the most prosperous eras in its early history.

17

MCINTYRE HOUSE

137 MATHEWS

Captain Josiah McIntyre served in the 16th Pennsylvania Volunteer Cavalry during the Civil War. He was shot in the face during the Battle of Shepardstown, Virginia, and taken prisoner by the Confederates. He and his wife, Lucy, moved to Missouri after the war, where he began a law practice. He and Lucy moved to Fort Collins in early 1878. By 1885 he had lost his sight, but still went on to complete his law studies at the University of Michigan in 1889, becoming the first blind person in the United States to graduate with a law degree.

In 1881, the McIntyres contracted with Colpitts and Boyd to have a two-story brick home built on Mathews Street. The house featured two decorative bay windows, one on the front and the other on the north side. After Josiah died on October 6, 1892, Lucy continued to live in the house until her death, at age 96, on April 14, 1940. The house changed hands several times and became a run-down rental. The house was purchased in 2011 and remodeled into two spacious condominium living spaces, while restoring the façade to its historic appearance.



© Matthew Gale Photography

18

CARNEGIE LIBRARY

200 MATHEWS

On June 16, 1902, the ladies of the Fort Collins Columbian Club wrote a letter to steel magnate Andrew Carnegie, stressing the need for a library building and asking him to donate the money. One month later, the library board received a promised amount of \$10,000 from Carnegie. The building opened on August 26, 1904.

The Carnegie Building was constructed from blocks of native red sandstone, quarried from Stout, Colorado. Though Stout and its quarries now lie beneath the waters of Horsetooth Reservoir, many structures made from Stout sandstone remain standing in Fort Collins and surrounding areas.

A \$60,613 library addition that doubled the size of the building was completed in 1939. An auditorium was a large part of this addition. See if you can find the word “Auditorium” carved in the stone above the building’s south door.

A new public library was built in 1976 at 201 Peterson Street, just east of the Carnegie Building. A museum and local archive then opened in the Carnegie Building. The Museum remained at this location until 2011 when it moved to a new building at Cherry and Mason Streets. After more than a century, the ivy-covered Carnegie Building still serves as a prominent landmark in downtown Fort Collins.



TOUR C
1-2 hours

Historic Fact: The Carnegie Building was constructed from blocks of native red sandstone, quarried from Stout, Colorado.

19 FORT COLLINS HOSPITAL
301 E. MAGNOLIA

It certainly doesn't look like Poudre Valley Hospital but here, at 301 E. Magnolia, is one of its predecessors, the former Fort Collins Hospital. In 1903 a progressive group of doctors created the Fort Collins Hospital Association with the purpose to build a modern self-sustaining hospital for "paying patients" and to furnish a place for the sick and injured. By 1906 they completed the Fort Collins Hospital. The building was one of the most up-to-date hospitals in the region. The hospital could hold up to 40 patients, had modern plumbing, heating and lighting, an operating room and a sterilized bathroom.

The hospital also offered a nurse training course with each local physician presenting his own special subject one night a week. Nevertheless, the hospital closed in 1926 because stockholders found "inadequate equipment and structure." The Larimer County Hospital, built in 1925 at the present site of the Poudre Valley Hospital on Lemay, agreed to accept additional private-pay patients on a space available basis after the Fort Collins Hospital closed.

Once the city's pride in medical services, the building was later occupied by the Pillar of Fire Church and school from 1931 to 1972, and is currently a condominium complex.



© Matthew Gale Photography

20 LIBRARY PARK
OAK/PETERSON/OLIVE/MATHEWS STREETS

Along with Washington Park (another stop on the Tour), Lincoln Park (now called Library Park) was created in 1873 by F.C. Avery as part of the original plat of the town.

The Park is home to four historic buildings. The Antoine Janis Cabin, one of the earliest residences in Larimer County, was relocated to Lincoln Park in 1938. The Auntie Stone Cabin is the only structure from the original 1860s military post. Elizabeth, nicknamed "Auntie" Stone, was a well-respected pioneer and entrepreneur in the early community. The Franz-Smith Homesteading Cabin dates from the 1880s and was located in the southeastern area of modern-day Fort Collins. The 1905 Upper Boxelder Schoolhouse represents rural education in times past and was moved to the park from its original location about 35 miles northwest of Fort Collins.

Other historic artifacts on site include a Union Army plaque; a bronze tablet memorializing the USS Maine, sunk in Havana Harbor in 1898; and a large circular sandstone horse water trough. Finally, glance around to spot the eight Greek pillars. These limestone and concrete columns are said to be from the Evans-Welch mansion, built in 1899, and which used to stand at the northwest corner of College and Mulberry.



© Matthew Gale Photography

21 GERMAN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

201 WHEDBEE

The structure at 201 Whedbee was originally the German Congregational Church. It was built by German-Russian immigrants who came to the United States seeking freedom from an authoritarian government in Russia. These immigrants labored in the beet fields and in the Great Western Sugar Company factory north of the Poudre River. A fund drive raised enough money for the Germans from Russia to build their first church. It was designed in 1903-04 by Montezuma Fuller, a well-known early architect in Fort Collins. The church opened June 18, 1905.

The Gothic Revival building includes a stone foundation from the town of Stout, now under Horsetooth Reservoir. The building is brick with a bell tower originally thirty feet tall; however, a later alteration of the upper section decreased the overall height. Ironically, the tower never housed a bell. A feature on the north side is an entryway supported by two Tuscan columns and steps leading to double doors. An addition on the west was constructed between 1960 and 1962.

A number of older churches in downtown Fort Collins were demolished in the 1960's and 1970's as congregations moved to the suburbs, but this historic church has continued to serve as a place of worship for more than a century.



22 HOFFMAN HOUSE

426 E. OAK

The Hoffman house, located at the corner of Riverside Avenue and Oak Street, was built in 1885 for Richard Burke. It was sold to John M. Hoffman, an early settler of Fort Collins, three years later. Descendants of the Hoffman family lived there for nearly a century.

The wood frame with clapboard home features a complex design of Vernacular Victorian style, including a rusticated stone foundation and Jerkinhead roof (a triangular portion of roof formed by clipping back the gable). The porch, with its Tuscan columns, was added later. Despite some remodeling the house has remained almost unchanged over the years, thanks in part to a covenant placed in a deed when the last member of the Hoffman family to live here sold the residence.



© Matthew Gale Photography

TOUR C
1-2 hours

Historic Fact: The German Congregational Church was designed in 1903-04 by Montezuma Fuller, a well-known local architect.

23

FIRST SCHOOLHOUSE

115 RIVERSIDE

In the summer of 1866, a young widow, Elizabeth Keays, and her 10 year-old son, Wilbur, came to the Fort Collins Military Post to live with her aunt, Elizabeth “Auntie” Stone. In the fall, she began teaching her son and another boy in an upstairs bedroom in the Auntie Stone cabin. Larimer County School District #5 was created that year. This was the beginning of public education in Fort Collins.

Judge A. F. Howes raised \$1,100 to build a small one-room school overlooking the Poudre River near the southeast edge of town on Riverside Drive. Classes began in the fall of 1871, with Alice Watrous serving as the first teacher. By 1878, there were enough children in town that a \$7,500 bond passed for a four-room brick and sandstone structure to be built in the 300 block of Remington Street. Classes were moved from the little school house for the 1879 fall term. The local Catholic congregation bought the Riverside school and used it until 1901, when the new St. Joseph Church and school opened. The old school has since served as a private home.



© Matthew Gale Photography

24

ARMORY

314 E. MOUNTAIN

Early in the 20th century, a 65 member volunteer militia was created as Company F of the Colorado National Guard. Their purpose was to keep domestic peace and to aid in the event of a disaster. In 1906 they launched a campaign to build an armory in town; it was constructed that year. The exterior consisted of white pressed brick with interior maple wood flooring. The front entrance opened into a lobby with officer quarters on either side. A drill room was situated near the back of the building. With the capacity to seat 1,200 people, the new armory was designed to act as a civic and community center in addition to military functions.

By 1922 the members of Company F outgrew this armory so they built a new structure south of town. Paramount Laundry occupied the building from 1930 to 1994. An early relic or “ghost sign” of the popular laundry’s existence is visible on the top west section of the structure. Although vacant for a few years after its closing, the Armory has been used as commercial property and for hosting special events since 1999. The Fort Collins Armory building is one of only 300-400 left in the United States. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



© Matthew Gale Photography

TOUR C
1-2 hours

Historic Fact: Classes at the schoolhouse began in the fall of 1871.

25

HARMONY MILL

131 LINCOLN

Early Fort Collins resident Henry Clay Peterson purchased the lot where the mill stands in 1869. The four-story brick mill building was built in 1886 as a cooperative venture by local farmers to protect the interests of wheat growers in the Poudre Valley. The building features two-foot thick walls with iron doors separating various parts of the mill to prevent the kinds of fires that had devastated neighboring Lindell Mill several times.

Harmony Mill closed in 1901 and the building became a wholesale grocer and later a veterinary supply business. In 1982 the building interior was significantly modernized with new plumbing and electricity, and is now home to professional offices.

Directly across the street, the Lindell Mill was built by early Fort Collins residents Elizabeth Stone and Henry Clay Peterson in 1869.

Fort Collins' first flour mill featured a water wheel measuring over 16 feet in diameter. A 1.5 mile mill race guided water from the Cache la Poudre River through town to the wheel providing power for the mill's grinding stones.

Through the decades, the mill underwent many different owners, equipment innovations, devastating fires, and building renovations. In 1948, Lindell Mill was acquired by Ranch-Way Feeds and became solely an animal feed mill. At over 140 years old, this mill has earned the distinction of being the oldest operating business in Fort Collins.



© Matthew Gale Photography

26

EL BURRITO

404 LINDEN

The restaurant known today as El Burrito has a long history in Fort Collins, reaching back several decades.

In 1920, at the age of four, Solome "Sam" Vigil moved to Fort Collins and worked with his family in the sugar beet fields. In 1935 he and Mary Torres were married. Like other Hispanics at the time, they were required to sit in the balcony of local movie theaters and were faced with "White Trade Only" signs displayed in windows in downtown businesses. Despite this prejudice, Sam and Mary opened their own store, Sam's Place, at 404 Linden Street in the late 1940s, selling tires, gas, appliances, and food to Fort Collins' Hispanic residents.

In 1916, Augustina Ayala moved to Fort Collins with her parents and eighteen siblings to work in the agricultural fields. In 1928, she married Jesse Godinez, Sr. Following his early death of sunstroke while working in the fields, Augustina and her family not only continued field work but also began selling burritos and soda pop to the field workers. Two of Augustina's sons opened El Burrito Restaurant at 406 Linden Street in 1960. Augustina was given the title of head chef.

Sam's Place and El Burrito existed side-by-side for a while; Sam's Place has closed, while El Burrito continues to serve meals at this location.



© Matthew Gale Photography

TOUR D
1-2 hours

Historic Fact: Fort Collins' first flour mill featured a water wheel measuring over 16 feet in diameter.

27 GUSTAV SWANSON NATURAL AREA

LINDEN STREET BRIDGE

The Cache la Poudre River is over 120 miles in length, originating in the Rocky Mountains and flowing across the plains to its confluence with the South Platte River. Legend has it the river received its name before 1835, when a group of fur traders—including some of French origin—hid or “cached” a supply of gunpowder somewhere near the river. Over the years, Arapaho people, fur trappers, soldiers, travelers on the Overland Trail, and farmers all sought a place on the river.

The City of Fort Collins has set aside a number of natural areas along the river. The closest to Old Town is Gustav Swanson Natural Area. Gustav Swanson, a wildlife biologist and professor at Colorado State University, had a special interest in birding and conservation. The Natural Area is 12 acres and includes a wheelchair accessible paved interpretive trail. Among the 45 bird species found in the area are green-winged teals, great blue herons, owls, kestrels, and Bull-ock’s orioles. Fox and deer and other wildlife are sometimes spotted here. Located only blocks from the busy downtown of Fort Collins, the Gustav Swanson Natural Area provides a refreshing change from the urban world.



© Matthew Gale Photography

28 OLD POWER PLANT/ENERGY LAB

430-500 N. COLLEGE

William Miner and other business people launched an effort to build an electric generating plant for the city in 1887. The Fort Collins Light, Heat, & Power Company began producing electricity at its building at the corner of Mountain and Mason, on February 4, 1888. The company was purchased by Northern Colorado Power Company in 1908 and shortly thereafter the local, privately-owned plant was closed, shifting the city’s electric power to a plant in Lafayette.

In 1935, the City created an Electric Utility Department on North College Avenue. The coal fired plant began delivering electricity to Fort Collins homes, businesses and the streetcar system in May 1936. With a couple of additions, the plant served the city well until its closure in 1973, when the City began using outside, co-op power sources. It is now home to Colorado State University’s Engines and Energy Conversion Laboratory.

The picturesque stone grotto in front was installed during the original construction. It circulated cooling water from the plant back to the river. The stone monument in front was built in 1956 and dedicated to the Fort Collins Military Post. A plaque, detailing the Fort’s history, was installed on August 20, 2011, the official birthday of the post.



TOUR D
1-2 hours

Historic Fact: In 1888, The Fort Collins Light, Heat, & Power Company began producing electricity.

29 FORT COLLINS MUSEUM OF DISCOVERY

N. MASON & CHERRY STREETS

Housed for many years in the old Carnegie Library Building in Library Park, the Museum of Discovery moved to its new quarters in 2012. In addition to a much larger facility, the new Museum features the latest in interactive technology and a local history archive.

Pursuing connections among science, history, and culture the permanent collections lead the visitor through themes connected with Fort Collins, including water, energy, music, and local history and prehistory. The Museum also has a traveling exhibit space.

The Local History Archive provides increased space and comfort for researchers, and the education and outreach effort excites children with both its roomy classroom space and its proximity to the Cache la Poudre River.

Equally exciting is the Otterbox Digital Dome, a 360° large-format theater affording many possibilities for viewing or presentations. Visits with ancient creatures, trips to the Serengeti Plain, and even a landing on Mars are among the many offerings to be found at the Digital Dome.

Finally, museum-goers can enjoy a superb view of Fort Collins and the surrounding countryside from a rooftop deck that brings to mind both the past and the present of Northern Colorado.

In short, if there is a “don’t miss” attraction in the Fort Collins area, the Museum of Discovery is it!



© Ryan Burke

30 UNION PACIFIC DEPOT

200 JEFFERSON

When the Union Pacific announced in 1909 that it would build a line through Fort Collins, the town rejoiced to have another rail connection with a major line. Unfortunately, the railway right-of-way ran through one of the oldest parts of the community and involved the demolition or removal of about 75 structures.

The Union Pacific depot was completed and the first train arrived in July 1911, greeted by a large crowd of well-wishers. Described as “magnificent” by a local newspaper, the new station, built of brick, featured sandstone trim from nearby quarries and oak trimming in the interior. The name “Union Pacific” can still be seen engraved above the entrance.

This impressive structure remained in use as a passenger depot until the late 1950’s. After the Union Pacific vacated the premises, the building saw a number of uses, including storage for lumber by a local firm. Its most recent incarnations have been as a restaurant or bar. In the 1980’s it was the Jefferson Grill and then the Jefferson Station. As the Sports Station in the 1990’s, it served a bar clientele, and today the building houses Rodizio Grill. Union Pacific employees of old might be pleased to know that their facility still serves as a gathering place for the public.



© Matthew Gale Photography

TOUR D
1-2 hours

Historic Fact: In 1911, the Union Pacific depot was completed.

31

NORTHERN HOTEL

172 N. COLLEGE

With its unique triangular architecture and art deco design, this structure appears frozen in time, a vestige of its heyday in the 1930s. Once touted as the “Pearl of Northern Colorado,” this grand structure traces its humble beginnings to the early days of western expansion.

In the late 1860’s and early 1870s many moved West searching for freedom and fortune. At that time, there were just three hotels in Fort Collins to accommodate these early travelers. With temporary housing in high demand, David Harris built a Victorian style hotel here in 1873 and named it the Commercial Hotel. In 1904 the hotel was purchased by local investors and underwent a renovation, opening one year later as the Northern Hotel. The 80-room structure was built for \$100,000. That same year an elegant leaded stained-glass dome was installed in the dining room of the hotel. This banquet room seated 50 people and served the best Sunday “table” (dinner) in town with a five-piece orchestra entertaining diners from the mezzanine. Lavish parties and galas made The Northern the place to be for three decades. By the 1940s the number of railroad passengers declined as motels rose to serve automobile travelers. The halcyon days of the “Pearl” came to a close. It currently houses retail space and senior citizen housing.



© Matthew Gale Photography

32

ORIGINAL CITY HALL/FIREHOUSE

232 WALNUT

The cries, “Fire, fire” brought fear to citizens of early Fort Collins, a town with mostly wooden building and no water system. Simply throwing buckets of water on a burning, tinder dry wooden building was a futile effort. A paid “Hook & Ladder” company was organized on May 21, 1880 and the town’s first firehouse opened in July 1882. The town’s water system was completed in 1883 when fire hydrants were installed, fire pressure was created, and an effective way to fight fires was established.

Designed and built by John F. Colpitts, the elegant building featured a decorative fire bell tower. A unique 1,900 pound stationary bell was placed in the tower. City offices were on the second floor. A concrete jail was added to the rear of the building and the window bars are still in place. Head through the alley to see the jail cells in the back.

The City offices moved out of this building in 1957, but it remained the downtown fire station until 1973. Osborne Hardware used the building until 1979 when Ted and Kayrene Will purchased it and began a two-year historic restoration. Commercial businesses occupied the first floor and the front of the second story, while a lovely residence lay hidden on the back of the second floor.



© Matthew Gale Photography

TOUR E
1-2 hours

Historic Fact: In 1910, the Linden Hotel played host to local artistic legend and Wild West showman Frank Miller.

33

LACOURT HOTEL

232-240 PINE

This hotel, originally constructed from red sandstone quarried in nearby Bellvue, Colorado, dates back to 1902. Initially it was named “Brown’s Palace Hotel” – not to be confused with the famous Brown Palace in Denver! The Briggs family purchased the establishment in 1930 and named it the LaCourt Hotel. They owned the hotel for more than 40 years. The family lived on the ground floor while the upper two floors were occupied by about 20 guests and long-term boarders.

In a 1996 newspaper article, Arlene Briggs Ahlbrandt described growing up in the hotel with her parents, two brothers, and twin sister: “There were many poor people after the Depression, and this old hotel was home to older people who were in need of cheap rent. The people who stayed there were from all walks of life and nationalities. My mom was a compassionate person who cared about people who were down and out... most of them were like part of the family... After mom and pop died in the 1970’s, we sold the hotel with tears in our eyes.”

After being vacant for several years, the historical hotel now serves as retail space and apartments.



© Matthew Gale Photography

34

CANDY KITCHEN

255-257 LINDEN

Marie Lafitte, a native of France and one of the most unusual residents in early Fort Collins, arrived from Denver in March 1899. Her life in her new community was one of triumphs and setbacks. Announcements in the Fort Collins Weekly Courier stated that she was opening a cigar and confectionary store at 257 Linden Street and would also provide temperance drinks and lodging. She eventually gave the name Candy Kitchen to the establishment. Unfortunately, a police raid in 1904 found that the Candy Kitchen was a brothel that also featured moonshine liquor.

Lafitte also acquired a number of properties, selling one of them to the Union Pacific railroad in 1911 for several thousand dollars. Attorney fees and setbacks in litigation nevertheless drained her funds and she died in poverty in 1914, leaving an estate of \$1,800 and debts of \$3,100.

The establishment at 255-257 Linden settled into a routine existence over the years, serving as a secondhand furniture store, the Plattner farm implement dealership, an automobile repair garage, an apartment building, and a café. Marie Lafitte herself is buried in an unmarked grave at Grandview Cemetery.



© Matthew Gale Photography

TOUR E
1-2 hours

Historic Fact: A paid “Hook & Ladder” company was organized on May 21, 1880.

35

LINDEN HOTEL

250 WALNUT

Abner Loomis and Charles Andrews built this structure in the fall of 1882 and named it the Loomis and Andrews Building. It first housed the Poudre Valley Bank. The ornate building featured wood and brass furnishings as well as a Hall's time-lock burglar-proof steel vault to keep funds safe and sound. The upper floors accommodated various offices and a meeting space for the Masonic Lodge.

In 1910 the building became the Linden Hotel, and played host to both visitors and long-term residents, including local artistic legend and Wild West showman Frank Miller. One of Miller's paintings is visible inside the retail space on the first floor.

After years of neglect and deterioration, the hotel was condemned in 1984 and faced a bleak future. Fortunately, the building was restored and opened to retail tenants and offices in late 1994. Its permanence may be assured, for it inspired the creation of Main Street in Disneyland. Harper Goff, a native of Fort Collins, was employed at Disneyland while the theme park was getting underway and showed photographs of turn of the century buildings from his hometown to Walt Disney. Disney was intrigued, and, as a result, the Linden Hotel and other buildings were replicated for the delight of tourists at Disneyland.



36

MITCHELL BLOCK

212 E. MOUNTAIN

Sitting just off the east side of the Old Town National Historic District is an architecturally sympathetic modern building – the Mitchell Block. The four-story structure, constructed in 2010, incorporates many architectural elements of older, historic structures in Old Town.

The building is named for Eugene “Gene” Mitchell, a Fort Collins attorney and developer. Mitchell had a vision for the rebirth of the Old Town area in the early 1980s. He partnered with other owners of downtown buildings to develop a car-free plaza along Linden Street. The project broke ground in late 1983, and was completed by May 1985. It has become a very popular focal point for the redevelopment of Old Town, with an eclectic variety of shops, restaurants, and bars.

When local philanthropist Pat Stryker's Bohemian Foundation decided to build a new downtown headquarters, they wanted one that was modern but still fit in with the restored historic structures in the area. The Mitchell Block is constructed of red brick and native sandstone from nearby quarries that were the source of stone for earlier Fort Collins buildings. The foundation named the block after Gene Mitchell in honor of his many community contributions. This new structure has won both design and LEED awards.



© Matthew Gale Photography

TOUR E
1-2 hours

Historic Fact: The Linden Hotel and other buildings were replicated for the delight of tourists at Disneyland.

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