

- WORKING DRAFT 051325 -

**THE TRAIL OF THE GOLDEN PASTY
GRASS VALLEY HISTORIC DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR**

[ADD TERRY'S INTRO – NATIVE PEOPLE, LAND, GOLD, FIRES, AND PASTIES]

- Start your tour at The Golden Pasty, located at [TBD] -

207 MILL STREET - GRASS VALLEY PUBLIC LIBRARY:

Carnegie Library, Classic Revival, 1916, Designated a National Historic Landmark in 1992.
[ADD TERRY'S TEXT]

203 MILL STREET - MARSHALL'S PASTIES:

What's a pasty? It is a handheld meat pie and a part of the British diet since the 13th century. It wasn't until the 17th and 18th centuries that the pasty was adopted by miners in Cornwall England as a means to provide an easy, sustaining, and mobile meal while they worked. When miners from Cornwall came to work the mines in and around Grass Valley, they brought the Cornish pasty with them, and it's been part of this community ever since. Today you can try a true Cornish pasty - still made by hand and served with pride - at Marshall's Pasties.

- Cross Neal Street to continue the tour along the Mill Street Plaza -

163-167 MILL STREET - DEL ORO THEATER, AVENGUARDIA WINES:

In 1854, prominent Grass Valley businessman Thomas Othet opened a grocery, hay, and grain business on this site, which he continued to operate until he retired in 1915. Mr. Othet crossed the plains in 1852, with a party from Chicago making its way to Sacramento. He entered the freight business, hauling supplies to various gold camps in Eldorado and Placer Counties, and eventually landed in Grass Valley. He was so impressed with the growing mining camp that he decided to locate here. Charles Othet went on to become one of the organizers of the First National Bank in Grass Valley (see 131 Mill Street).

The current structure, the Del Oro Theater, was designed by architect O.A. Deichmann in the Art Deco style. Construction started in late 1941, but work ceased during World War II when building supplies became scarce. The theater was completed in 1946, and has served as a movie theater ever since.

161 MILL STREET - VAN'S OPERA HOUSE AND THE AUDITORIUM THEATER:

Pauline and Joseph Van Hoeter built Van's Opera House on this site in the late 1880s. After the death of her husband, Mrs. Van Hoeter sold the building in 1894 to Charles Clinch of Clinch Mercantile Co (see 113-117 Mill Street). In 1896 a fire started here and burned the entire block from Neal to Bank Street. In 1900, a group of fraternal organizations banded together to construct the current three-story building, which operated as the Auditorium Theater. The first floor and gallery held a magnificent 850 seat theater, which hosted traveling

theatrical companies and musicians on its stage, and office space for Grass Valley City Hall. The second floor was devoted to lodge rooms, the third floor was a banquet hall, and the basement housed an armory and kitchen for the National Guard. From 1922 to 1942 it operated as the Strand Movie Theater when silent movies ushered in a new era in entertainment, and then as the F.S. Rasco & Co Store until 1972. It has housed a variety of furniture stores ever since.

153-157 MILL STREET - WEST HOME AND THE FERGON:

153 Mill Street operated as a shoe store from 1910 until 1990. 155 Mill Street was a barbershop in the 1890s, occupied by Tupper's Creamery in the 1940s, and by Merrit's Arts and Crafts in the 1960s. The Old Pacific Dollar Store was located at 157 Mill Street from 1935 to the 1980s. The entire building became part of Hedman's Furniture during their expansion from 161 Mill Street in 1994.

151 MILL STREET - THE UNION BUILDING - MANTRA TEA HOUSE AND BODY BALANCE ACADEMY:

The Union Newspaper was first published as the Daily Union in 1864, the third year of the Civil War. It was named The Union because it stood for the preservation of the Union during the War Between the States. The present building was constructed for The Union newspaper in 1903, which operated here for 76 years until moving to Glenbrook Basin. Fun fact: Of the many historic newspapers started during the California Gold Rush, only the Union of Grass Valley and Nevada City emerged as a successful daily publication and was the seventh daily to celebrate its centennial under its original name.

145 MILL STREET - LOLA AND JACK:

In the early 1900s, Harry Green operated a confectionary shop and sold musical instruments here. It was home to The Golden Poppy Luncheonette from approximately 1931 to 1936 when it was remodeled with knotty pine and renamed The Knotty Poppy. With a soda fountain and jukebox, it was a popular teen hangout. Gift items were added, and in the early 1950s it was renamed Tess' Gifts. From the 1940s until it moved down Mill Street, it operated as Tess' Kitchen Store. The gift store Lola and Jack opened here in 2024.

139-143 MILL STREET - THE BON ALLURE BUILDING - CRYSTAL EMPIRE GEMS AND J. BREUER MENS AND WOMENS CLOTHING:

In the 1880s and early 1890s, this site was occupied by the Railroad Hotel. The original building burned down in the 1896 fire, and the current building was known as the Thomas Building until it was purchased in the 1930s by Arletta Douglas, longtime proprietor of the Bon Allure women's clothing store. 143 Mill Street operated as Breuer's Menswear from 1937 until it moved into the former J.C. Penney building in 1989. Fun fact: Descendants of the original Breuer's opened the current Breuer's in the 2020s.

- Cross Bank Street -

131 MILL STREET - NEVADA COUNTY BANK - CAKE BAKERY AND CAFÉ, THE PORTAL, AND CHAMPANGE JANE:

Built in 1917, this building was designed in the Greek Revival style and modeled after a Greek temple. Although the interior was completely remodeled, the exterior remains intact. The original interiors had a massive bronze counter screen, Belgium etched glass teller

windows, Iconic columns, and a Tavernelle marble banking counter. The bank was considered a fortress against thieves, as it was constructed of concrete mixed with scraps of metal. Bank of America operated here from the 1930s until 1975. The interior was then renovated to house Gold Cities Insurance, and was renovated again in the 2010s to create a variety of retail spaces that you can explore on your tour. Fun fact: When it opened, the Grass Valley Morning Union referred to the building as “The Little Temple of Finance”.

129 MILL STREET - HEART AND HOME:

This building has been home to a variety of real estate, insurance, and financial offices, and now houses a home design store.

125 MILL STREET - NATIVE WREN:

In 1867, the Sportsmen Emporium operated on this site. A few years later, a medical office was here. Over the years, it's been the home of a blacksmith shop, harness maker, music store, real estate office, and army surplus store. Native Wren opened its doors here in the 2020s.

123 MILL STREET - NATIVE WREN:

In 1872, this was the site of the Golden Eagle Hotel. In the 1890s it was a gentlemen's furnishings store, and in the early 1900s, Pacific Gas and Electric located their district office here. In the 1930s, it was home of Grass Valley Flower Shop and Alhambra Waffle Shop, and in the 1940s it housed McCauley's Pastry Shop. In the 1960s, Stucki Jewelers located here, and in the 1970s it became Genie's Candies and Hallmark Store. In the 1980s Tres Jolie was located here, followed by a real estate office.

121 MILL STREET - THE AMICK BUILDING - FOOTHILL MERCANTILE:

This building was constructed in 1942 as a retail store and outlet depot for J.C. Penney. It was the location of Sprouse-Reitz variety store in the late 1940s and 50s before becoming a hardware store. In the 1960s, it was Coast to Coast Hardware and Henderson's Hardware until it was purchased by the Amick family in 1976 and became Foothill Hardware. In 1985, the name was changed to Foothill Mercantile when the merchandise changed and no longer included hardware.

115-117 MILL STREET - TESS' KITCHEN STORE AND VINTAGE ON MILL:

From 1855 to about 1882, this was the site of the Empire Livery Stables, and home to blacksmiths, a harness shop, wagon maker, and saddle maker. The livery was the first brick building completed after the fire of 1855. Around 1883, Charles E. Clinch renovated the building and opened Clinch Mercantile Co. at this site. Later known as Clinch & Co., it was co-owned by William Bourne, owner of the Empire Mine, and well known statewide. Charles E. Clinch went on to become mayor of Grass Valley.

In 1928, the current building was constructed for J.C. Penney Co., which was located here until 1989. Breur's Clothing then moved into the space and continued to operate here until 1999, when the owners retired.

113 MILL STREET - ART WORKS GALLERY:

E. McSorley ran a saloon here in 1872, and the site later became home to A.J. Foster paint and Wallpaper. Charles E. Clinch worked here as a clerk and salesman for ten years before

he opened his own business next door. Safeway operated here in the 1930s, and a Ben Franklin variety store was here in the 1940s and 50s. Fun fact: Art Works Gallery has been here since 2010 and displays the work of over 33 local artists.

111 MILL STREET - LAZY DOG CHOCOLATERIA:

This site has served as a furniture store and undertaking business in the 1890s and early 1900s. In the 1960s, a clothing store was located here.

101-109 MILL STREET - SERGIO'S, THE BOOKSELLER, TRIBAL WEAVER, AND RE/MAX GOLD REALTY:

This corner has been home to many businesses, including a Chinese grocery, dry goods store, clothing stores, restaurants, and photography studios. In December of 1949, a fire broke out and raged for over five hours due to a combination of old wood and gusting winds. The fire burned the existing structure to the ground, and the current building was completed in 1950.

- Turn right onto West Main Street -

GRASS VALLEY MURAL:

Scan the QR code on this vibrant mural, painted by Justin Lovato in 2017, to be linked to the Grass Valley public art map.

105-111 WEST MAIN STREET:

[ADD TEXT]

- Turn right onto South Auburn Street -

100-134 SOUTH AUBURN STREET:

[ADD TEXT]

[STOP AND TRY A MODERN-DAY PASTY AT GRASS VALLEY PASTY COMPANY]

- Cross South Auburn Street -

131 SOUTH AUBURN STREET:

[ADD TEXT]

- Walk back to Main Street and turn right on East Main Street -

125 EAST MAIN STREET:

[ADD MARK'S TEXT FOR 'WELCOME' MINER SIGN]

- Cross Stewart Street -

127-185 EAST MAIN STREET:

[ADD TEXT]

- Cross East Main Street at Washington/East Bennett Street -

102-160 EAST MAIN STREET:

[ADD TEXT]

- Cross South Auburn Street -

102-212 WEST MAIN STREET:

[ADD TEXT]

- Cross North Church Street -

302-314 WEST MAIN STREET:

[ADD TERESA'S TEXT FOR CENTER FOR THE ARTS]

- Cross West Main Street at School Street -

109 SOUTH SCHOOL STREET – THE GRASS VALLEY ELKS LODGE

The Benevolent Order of the Elks charter was signed in 1900, with the first Exalted Ruler being John F. Kidder of the Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad. The first meetings were held in Lords Hall on East Main Street, across from City Hall, until funds could be raised for a new building. This building was completed and dedicated on January 28, 1913, thirteen years after the lodge was instituted. It was designed in the Gothic/English Tudor style by San Francisco Architect William Mooser. Throughout the years the lodge has gone through many renovations to modernize the building. Fun fact: The main hall has a spring-loaded dance floor.

305 WEST MAIN STREET - THE BRETT HARTE RETIREMENT INN:

[ADD TEXT]

- Cross South Church Street -

105 SOUTH CHURCH STREET - 201 WEST MAIN STREET:

[ADD TEXT]

- Turn right onto Mill Street -

102-134 MILL STREET:

[ADD TEXT]

- Stop at Stevens Court -

TRIBUTE TO JOHN CHRISTOPHER STEVENS:

[ADD TEXT]

- Continue down Mill Street -

138-160 MILL STREET:

[ADD TEXT]

- After you complete the tour, reward yourself with a pasty -

FARTHER AFIELD:

If you're interested in exploring more of Grass Valley's rich history, you can visit and tour these other nearby historic sites:

EMPIRE MINE STATE HISTORIC PARK - 10791 EAST EMPIRE STREET:

[ADD TERRY'S TEXT]

GRASS VALLEY MUSUEM AND CULTURAL CENTER - 410 SOUTH CHURCH STREET:

These buildings are a beautiful illustration of a 100-year history spanning from the 1860s to the 1960s. Founded by Father Dalton and run by the Sisters of Mercy, this former convent and orphanage provided education, healthcare, and social services, which changed over time to meet the needs of the community. As the oldest remaining 19th century convent in California, it is also the oldest women's convent still standing west of the Rockies and a state and national historic landmark. Since the 1970s, the buildings have been used a museum, performance and wedding venue, and artist studios. The museum and buildings can be toured, and house displays of furniture, art, clothing, musical instruments, and artifacts from the Gold Rush days and Victorian era. The property's grounds and gardens contain over 100 heritage roses, trees, and plants.

MEMORIAL PARK - 415 CENTRAL AVENUE:

[ADD TEXT]

NORTHSTAR MINING MUSEUM - 933 ALLISON RANCH ROAD:

[ADD MARK'S TEXT]

THE NORTH STAR HOUSE - 12075 AUBURN ROAD:

[ADD MARK'S TEXT]

Grass Valley Historic Downtown Walking Tour

Homework/Next Steps:

1. Tour starting point? (Considerations: Near prominent historic building? Near pasty shop? Location creates straightforward walking route?)
2. Text edits?
3. Content edits - Buildings/addresses to include and/or omit? (Include all buildings/addresses or only those with an important presence and/or history?)
4. Review and sign off on first block of text (139-167 Mill Street) to forward to staff to develop draft online tour for review.
5. Develop and add text for missing buildings/sites (see 4/8/25 sign-up sheet).
6. Mark to continue filling in Working Draft, block-by-block.