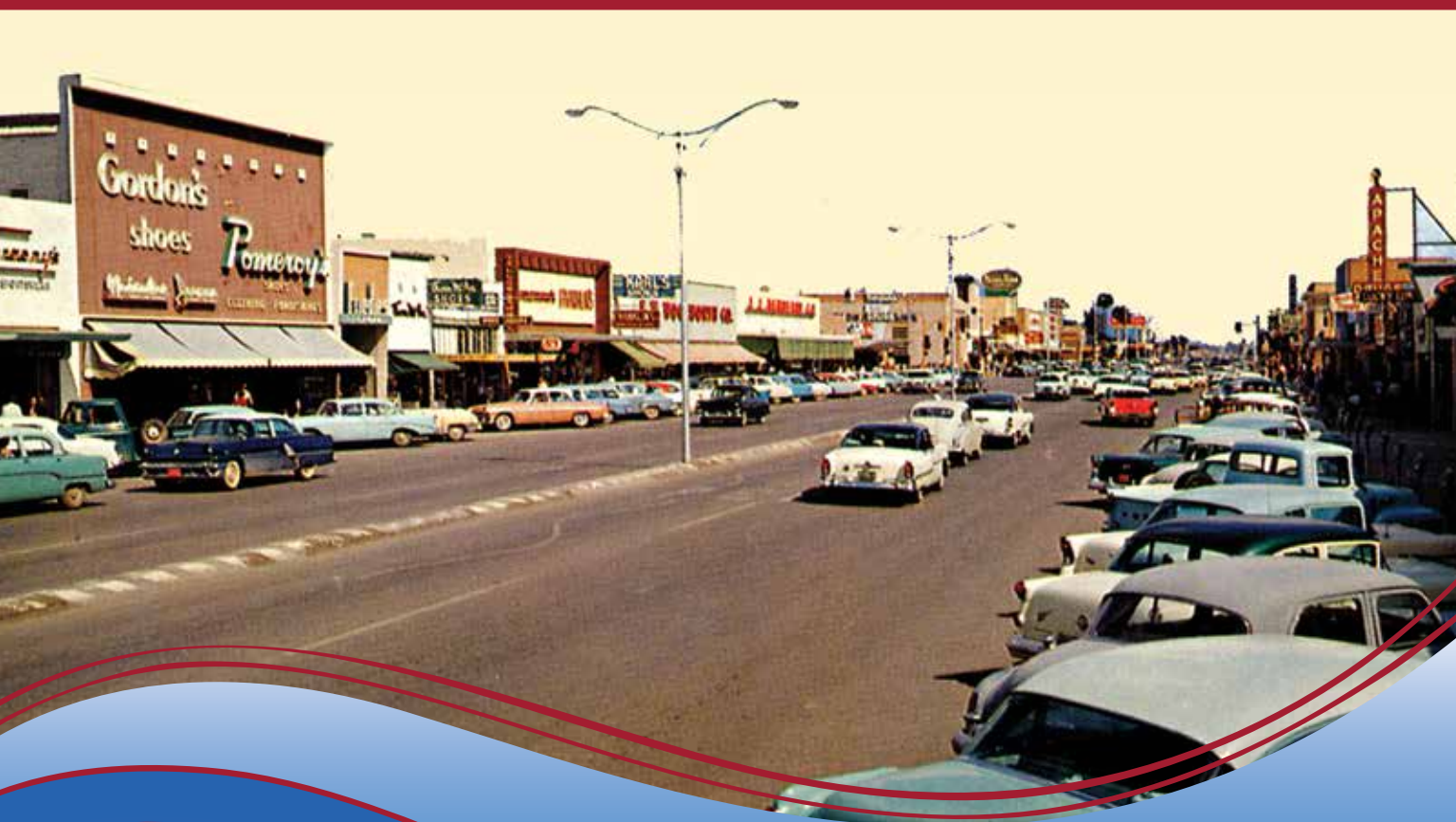


Mesa

Historic Downtown Walking Tour



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Mesa Historic Preservation extends its appreciation to these individuals and businesses for their generous contribution for the printing of this brochure.

Edward B. Mack

Wendy Mack-Allred



A Walk Through Time

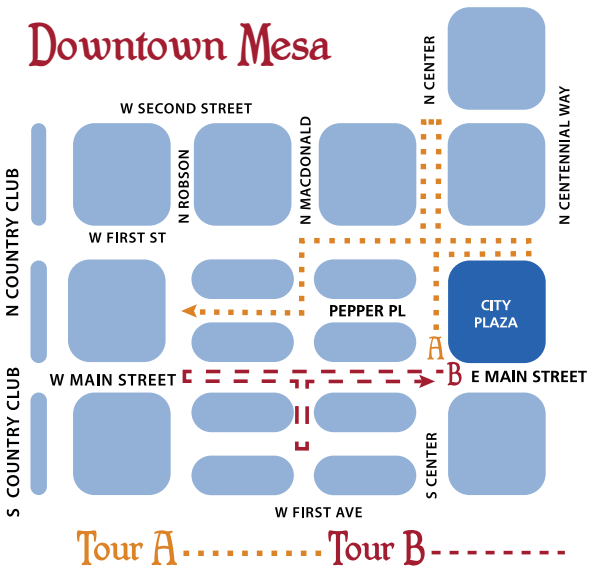


*Town Center Clock
NE Corner of W Main and Macdonald*

Two tours are included in the pamphlet. Each one begins at the City Plaza, 20 E Main, and will take approximately one hour. The routes are shown on the map.

Tour A is to the north of Main Street

Tour B is to the west on Main Street.



Tour A

20 East Main Street - City Plaza Plaques

Begin your walk by reading about the history of the city on the plaques at the Mesa City Plaza Heritage Wall in front of the building.

In 1928 the El Portal Hotel was on this property, but the name was changed in 1945 to Maricopa Inn. During baseball spring training games in Mesa, it was home to several major league baseball teams. In 1975, the multistory First National Bank building replaced it. It is now the Mesa City Plaza.



*Mesa Coliseum and Maricopa Inn, circa 1950
Northeast corner of East Main and Center*

Walk to the north on the east side of Center.

55 North Center Municipal Building

Built in 1961 in a style similar to the building at 59 East First Street, it is still used by several city departments.

In 1947, the city bought and moved a 27,000 square foot World War II hanger from Marana and placed it at this site. It was known as the Civic Center or Municipal Coliseum. The Maricopa County Fairs were held on this block until the building burned down in 1959.

At First Street, walk one block to the east.

59 East First Street – Library Building

Formerly the Mesa Public Library, it was constructed in 1959 in a post World War II Formalism style with an exposed structural system and patterned concrete blocks.

Note the original light fixtures on the porch and the floating terrazzo staircase which can be seen in the foyer. The building is on the Mesa Historic Property Register.



1963, Mesa City Library

Go back to Center Street and turn north.

155 North Center – Irving School

The restored building was built with WPA funds in 1936 and is on the Mesa Historic Property Register and National Register of Historic Places.

NE Corner of 2nd Street and Center – Rendezvous Park

In the 1920s and 1930s, a swimming pool, tennis courts, a skating rink and a baseball field were built at the park. Both the Chicago Cubs (1952-65) and Oakland Athletics (1977-78) had spring training games here. Much of the original park was replaced by the Mesa Convention Center complex in 1978.

Cross the street to the west at Second Street and Center and walk south.

SW Corner of Second Street and Center – Serrine House

Joel Serrine constructed this house for his bride in 1896. The restored home is open to the public during special occasions. It is on the Mesa Historic Property Register and National Registry of Historic Places.

100-120 North Center –

Dobson Corner Flagpole Plaque

In 1918 Wilson Wesley Dobson and family moved into their new large 2 story home on this corner. Part of the former Dobson family ranch is now the Mesa Dobson Ranch sub-division.

Cross the street and walk one block west to Macdonald.

49 West First Street – John Barnett House

The home was built in 1901 at 22 South Sirrine. Before it was moved to this location in 1987, five generations of the family lived in it. Barnett owned the Barnett Building at 48 West Main and was the mayor of Mesa from 1908-1910.

49 West First Street – Ellis Johnson House

The house was built in 1899 by Ellis Hills Johnson who was a brick mason. His family lived in the home until 1910. It was relocated to the present location from 147 East First Street.

NE Corner of First Street and Macdonald – Queen of Peace Catholic Church

The church, originally known as St. Mary's Queen of Peace Church, was built in 1948. The adjacent school was also constructed at that time.

Turn south at Macdonald

53 North Macdonald– Mesa City Hall

(Arizona Museum of Natural History)
The first City Hall, which was a small adobe structure, and a building which replaced it in 1912 were on this property. In 1937, the WPA building shown in the photograph was constructed and included the city offices, police department, and library. The fire department was adjacent to it. You can still see the original entrance in the lobby of the museum.



City Hall, circa 1948

Go to the west side of North Macdonald and look for the address numbers on the buildings.

52 Meldrum Mortuary Building

The Meldrum family has been in business here since 1927. Another mortuary was at this location prior to this.

46 DeSelmes Building

This office building was constructed in 1940. At that time a barbershop and several business offices were here.

48 This courtyard office structure was built in 1946.

34 Medical/Office Building

By 1940, the building was occupied by doctors and other professionals until the 1980s.

The Federal Building is across the street to the south.

26 Federal Building

The north section was built in 1936, and the addition was added in 1960. It is on the Mesa Historic Property Register and the National Register of Historic Places. The Mesa Post Office was here until 1966 when it moved to First Street and Center.

Turn west at the corner of Pepper Place and Macdonald. Continue walking along Pepper to Robson.

118 West Pepper Pl.

This was built in 1943 as a dental office for Dr. Wayne L. Peterson.

130 Pepper Square

In 1948, the Greyhound Bus Depot moved from 10 North Macdonald to this new location in the corner of the L-shaped building. Other businesses included the Greyhound Café, a taxi service, travel agency, and candy store.

NW Corner of Pepper and Robson – Bashas' Market

After building a new store at this location in 1952, Bashas' moved here from West Main. The store closed in 1982.

48 North Robson – Openshaw Home

Built in 1916 by Dr. Eli Openshaw, this craftsman style bungalow was his family's home as well as his medical office for a short time. The design of the chimney has been changed, and the original posts for the front porch were replaced with posts from the former Maricopa Inn.

Tour B

20 East Main Street– City Plaza Plaques

Begin your walk by visiting the City Plaza on the northeast corner of Main and Center to read about the history of Mesa at the Heritage Wall.

Walk to the west on West Main Street on the north side of the street from Center to Robson. Look for the address numbers on the buildings.

10 West Main

By 1939, Showalter's Auto Supply was in this two story building.

12 Strauch Building

In 1952, the Strauch Stationers business was at this location and remained here until 2003. The company was originally established in 1928 and by 1938 was located at 58 West Main. In 1959 the west part of that building was demolished, and the space was replaced by the multistory Valley National Bank building.

30 National Dollar Store Building

A National Dollar Store was here from 1956 to 1965. Note the dollar sign at the entry.

38 J.C. Penney Company

The first business address from 1915 to 1918 was at 146 West Main. The department store then moved to 141-143 West Main until 1952 when it moved to this site. Like many of the company stores at that time, it had a mezzanine which can still be seen inside. In 1968, Penney's left the downtown to Tri-City Mall at West Main and Dobson.

44 West Main

By the late 1930s, Willard's Cafeteria was serving food in this building, and in the 1950s and 1960s, the Mesa Rice Bowl was here.

46 West Main

In the 1940s, the Bacon Grill was in this 1922 building but was replaced by The Coffee Shop in the 1950s and 1960s.

48 Barnett Building

John Barnett, an early Mesa entrepreneur, built Mesa's first drug store here in the 1890s. The second story once served as the Masonic Hall. In the basement are brick barrel vault ceilings. The McKean Laundry and Dry Cleaning Shop occupied this space in the 1940s followed by the Thom McAn Shoe Store in the 1950s and 1960s.

50 Majestic Building

The Majestic Movie Theater opened at this site in 1910. By the 1930s, it had been updated in the art deco style as the Ritz Movie Theater which was here until 1949. LaSueur's Men's Store was in the building from 1950 to the 1980s.

54 Dickson's Jewelers Building

The business was established in 1949. Offices are along the courtyard walkway.



Valley Bank Building, Tower Building, Ritz Theater, Barnett Building – 1943

58 Tower Building

The Mesa headquarters for the Phoenix Gazette and Republic newspapers was at this location from the early 1930s to 1967. The tower was later removed.

NE Corner of W Main and Macdonald – Valley National Bank Building

In 1920, the Salt River Valley Bank was located at 61 West Main. Known later as the Valley Bank and then Valley National Bank, it moved across the street to this corner at 60 West Main in 1932. In 1959, the building pictured above was demolished and replaced by a five story blue building. By the mid 1990s when the Valley National Bank was no longer the occupant, the façade was changed.



Valley National Bank Building 1960

Town Center Clock (NE corner of W. Main and Macdonald)

See picture page 1. This was originally across the street at 61 West Main but was moved to this corner in 1932. The clock mechanism has been updated.

104 Chandler Court

Built by A.J. Chandler in 1907, this was Mesa's first business complex. Originally it was a Revival Mission, U-shaped building with an open courtyard. The first concrete building in Mesa, it has walls that are 12 inches thick. Insulation between the ceiling and roof is three feet of dirt.

In 1907, Ralph F. Palmer, M.D., who was the surgeon for the Roosevelt Dam project, had an office in the building and established Everybody's Drug Store in the east wing. Originally, there was a bank on the corner with the drug store to the west. Everybody's eventually expanded to the corner of Main and Macdonald and remained here until 1991.



Chandler Court, circa 1910

108 Anita Dress Shop Building

Established in 1948, the shop was here until 1968 when it moved to Tri-City Mall. Note "Anita" inscribed in the entry.

114 J.J. Newberry Company Building

The variety store, which included a basement level and lunch counter, was built in 1948, and was here until the 1980s. This building and another to the east replaced what had been the west, rear, and courtyard of the Chandler Court.

120 F.W. Woolworth Company Building

First located at 41 West Main in 1931, the company moved to 128 West Main in 1940. By 1946, Woolworth's was at this address until 1965. It was typical of other company

stores of that time and included a lunch counter. In 1966, it opened as the Worth Mart Discount Store and remained here until 1970.

Known as “Mesa’s Big Department Store,” the Toggery Dry Goods Store was at this address from 1905 until the early 1940s.

124 Karl’s Shoe Store Building

Established in 1940 at 118 West Main, the business had moved to 124 West Main by 1948. Shoes were sold here until 1968.

126 West Main

Zale’s Jewelry Store occupied this space in the 1960s to the mid 1970s.

128 West Main

The F.W. Woolworth Company was here in the early 1940s and was replaced by Marcy’s Shoe Store in the 1960s and 1970s.

130 West Main

Sam Cohen and Brothers had businesses here from the 1920s to the early 1950s.

138 Pomeroy Building

Built in 1891 by the sons of Francis Pomeroy, one of Mesa’s founding fathers, this building housed one of the city’s earliest businesses. Wayne Pomeroy established the Pomeroy Men’s Store in 1951 on the east side of the building, and Gordon’s Shoe Store was on the west section until 1975.

140-144 Bashas’ Grocery Building

Bashas’ was located in this building from 1933 to 1952. The market then moved to the northwest corner of Robson and Pepper Place. From 1953 to the 1970s Daniel’s Jewelry Store was in a section of the building.

146 West Main

The J.C. Penney Co. occupied this 1907 building from 1915-1918. Bunde’s Drug Store was here in the 1950s and 1960s.

150 West Main

Built in 1912, it was first occupied by a pool hall. By the 1940s, the Green Frog Café was in part of the building until the 1970s. Webb’s Jewelry Store was in another section from the 1950s to the 1970s.

154 West Main

Mademoiselle women’s store had customers here from the 1940s to the early 1970s.

156 West Main

Beginning in 1923, the Tibshraeny Grocery Store was established here, and by the 1940s, the Fairway Market occupied the space. It was replaced by Harold’s Shoe Store in the 1950s.

158 West Main

The Baker’s Sanitary Bakery was in this 1920s building in the 1940s followed by Mode O’ Day women’s dress store in the 1950s.

160 West Main

In 1923, “Bowmans’s Cyclery” was in the building. The Frontier Shop featuring western wear occupied it in the 1950s, and in the 1960s Jarrett Travel Service had their business in the building.

166 C.W. Berge Building

The Abell, Wilbur and Company Warehouse was located here prior to 1898 until 1914 when hardware, furniture, wallpaper, and paint were sold at this location. It was occupied by the Paul L. Sale Furniture Store from 1926 to the 1990s.

Cross the street at Robson and walk east on the south side of West Main to Macdonald. The building addresses are listed.

155 Zeb Pearce Company

Dan Hibbert originally established a livery stable here in 1901, but beginning in 1911, buildings in this area were used by Zeb Pearce for his produce business. Mesa Seed and Feed occupied the space in the 1950s to 1970s.

149 West Main

By the 1940s, ladies were shopping here at Hayman's Dress Shop, but it was replaced by Leo's City Radio and TV Store in the 1950s.

137 Stapley Building

Established in 1895, the O.S. Stapley Company prospered during the construction of Roosevelt Dam by shipping building supplies to the dam site. The Stapley Hardware Store was here until 1968.

129 West Main

In 1915, a drug store occupied the space, and by 1923, the Lunch Counter at this address was a busy place as was the Lucky Lunch Café in the 1940s. From the 1950s through the 1970s, Lee Optical was at this address.

127 West Main

Produce was sold at this location in the early 1900s, and by the 1940s Upton's Ice Cream was "the place to go" during the summer.

125 West Main

A meat market in the 1910s to 1920s, the building was used by Goodman's Apache Drug Store from the early 1940s to 1970.

121 West Main

For more than 20 years during the first part of the 20th century, this building housed a grocery store and bakery. Serrano's Department Store was here in the 1950s and 1960s.

119 West Main

From the 1910s through the 1920s a grocery store was at this location. Gamble's Western Auto Shop was here in the 1950s.

117 West Main

The variety store, Sprouse-Reitz Co., was located in this 1930s building from the 1940s to the 1970s.

113 West Main

Hardin's Cleaners and Haberdashery catered to residents in this early 20th century building during the 1940s. Gunnell's Jewelry moved here from 65 West Main in 1958.

111 Wright's Super Market Building

The family owned business was established at this address in 1933 and remained here until 1953. Like many of the buildings in downtown Mesa, it has a full basement.

105 Nile Theater Building

Opened in 1924, this was Mesa's first air-conditioned building. Blocks of ice were put in a container in the back of the building and a large fan behind the ice distributed the cool air to vents under the theater seats. The theater existed until 1951.



*Nile Theater, Wright's Super Market
circa 1935*

In 1884, the Zenos Co-op Manufacturing and Mercantile Company was at this location. By 1905, the LeSueur-Gibbons Mercantile Company group built a new two story building here and had a successful business until the early 1920s when the building was destroyed by fire.

101 Mesa City Bank Building

The two story Mesa City Bank, located here in 1892, was Mesa's first bank. The second floor was later removed but the basement and main floor remain. By 1946, the Mesa Drug Company, which included a soda fountain, was here until the 1980s.

Turn right and walk to the south on Macdonald.

20 Mesa Opera House

The Mesa Opera House was the first theatre built with bricks. In 1901, the Mesa Free Press welcomed the Opera House as "something Mesa has needed for a long time." During this era, "Opera House" referred to a theatre that provided live entertainment.

28 Lamb's Shoe Repair

Previously at another location on this street, the business has been in this 1912 building since the late 1960s.

30 Mesa Typewriter Exchange

The store, established in 1948 north of here, moved to this location in 1960.

Cross Macdonald to the east side of the street at the signal light that is near Lamb's.

43 Alhambra Hotel

After a fire in 1921 destroyed the original 1894 hotel, the present structure was built. It is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Walk north to West Main, turn right, and walk one block east to Center.

SE Corner of W Main and Macdonald Salt River Valley Bank Building

(demolished)



Salt River Valley Bank, circa 1922

In 1920, the bank's doors opened for business, but the Valley Bank moved across the street to 60 West Main in 1932. By the early 1960s, Arizona Bank was established here, and in 1978, they razed the building pictured above and replaced it with the current building. The Arizona Bank installed the kachina stained glass window.

63 Noonan Building Plaque

The Noonan Building stood on this site during the 1880s and served as Mesa's first social hall, as well as a butcher shop and Mesa's first Post Office.



Waldorf Cafe circa 1935

55-57 Waldorf Café (demolished)

The popular 24 hour café with the motto "We Never Sleep" was at this location from 1922 until 1978. Note the cooling tower on the top of the building.

47-41 West Main

By the early 1920s, a plumbing company was in business at this location. The F. W. Woolworth Co. occupied part of it from 1931 to 1940.

39 Drew Building

After having a lumberyard at 19 West Main from 1897 to 1920, the Drew's built the building at this site in 1921. Nolls Furniture Company leased the space from 1950 to the early 1960s.

21-15 West Main

In the 1920s, the Battery Service Station and a paint store were here. During World War II, the U.S. War Price and Rationing Board had an office in a section of the building.

27 Rex Hotel and Crystal Pool (demolished)

Gove E. Phelps built the Rex Hotel in 1917 and opened the first swimming pool in Mesa in 1921 about a half block south of the hotel. This was a very popular place as there were swings; multiple spring boards; a high diving tower; a large slide; and the "Toonerville Trolley," a wire extending from the high dive platform down to the pool so swimmers could slide down it using a leather strap. The pool existed for ten years, and the hotel burned down in 1952.

Downtown Mesa, Arizona



1902

Downtown Mesa was prosperous from the beginning of the town in the late 1800's and especially during the construction of the Roosevelt Dam from 1906 to 1911. Businesses continued to thrive in the 1920's when coast-to-coast highways 60, 70, and 80 plus border-to-border highway 89 merged on Main Street. There was a slight downturn during the depression of the 1930's, but by the next decade and through the 1960's, downtown was a bustling center. After Tri-City Mall was built in 1968 at West Main and Dobson, many stores moved there and others soon closed their doors.

Now downtown Mesa is reemerging as new businesses are being established.

**We hope you enjoyed your walking tour
of Historic Downtown Mesa.**

Research

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