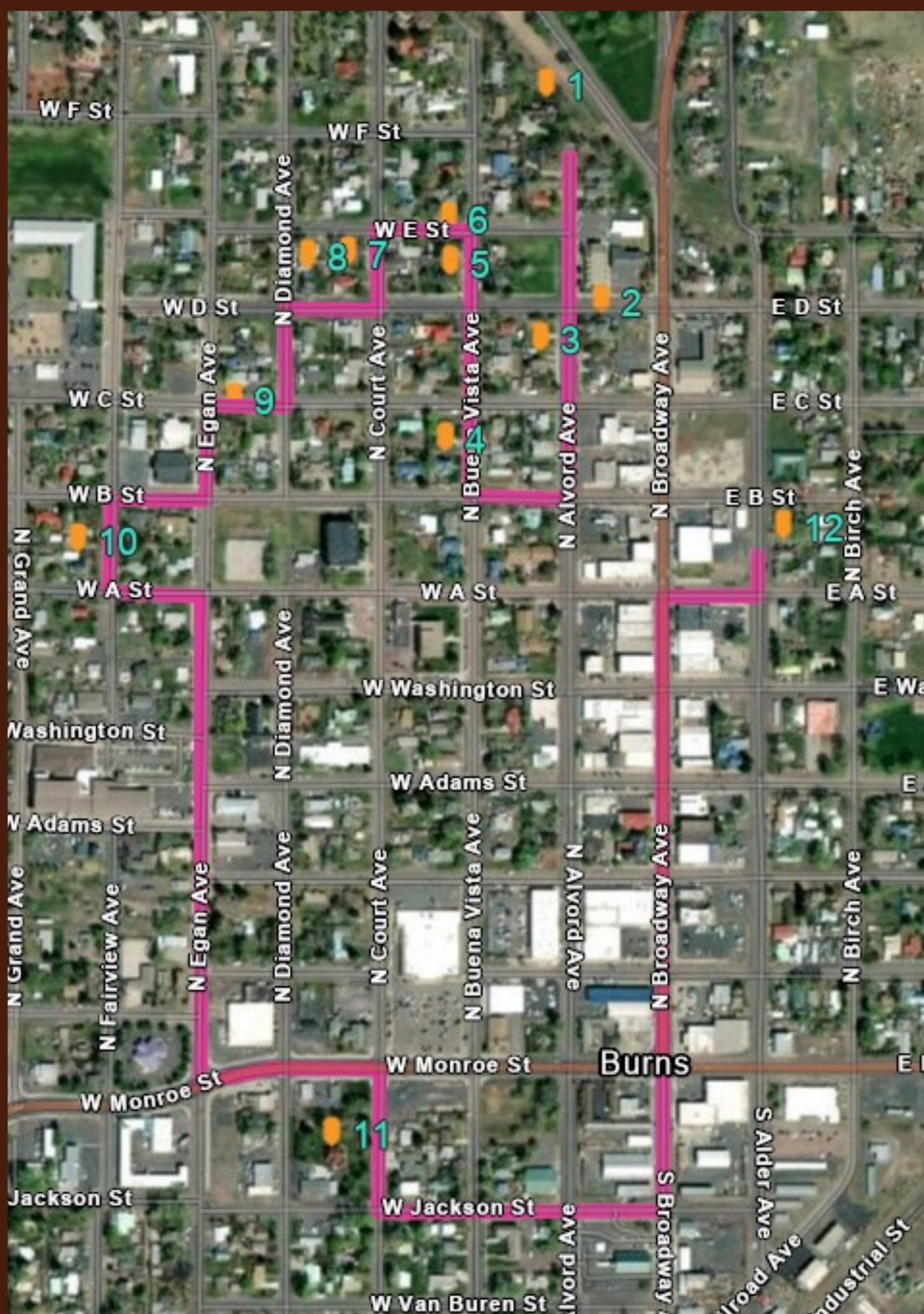


Auto Tour Of Historic Homes In The City of Burns

Burns, Oregon is an old west town with many old houses that were built in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. All of these houses play an important role in the history of the town. This pamphlet gives a tour of 12 houses that have unique styles and history to Burns. By following the line on the map below, you can drive by these homes and see the history in person. Pictures and information about houses (in numerical order) are on the following pages. We ask that you only observe from your vehicle and do not trespass onto the properties.





1. Dr. Hibbard's House-1002 N. Alvord Ave

Dr. L. E. Hibbard was one of the first dentists to arrive in Harney County in 1899. He moved to the county seeking dry climate to help cope with tuberculosis. His practice took to the far ranches and small communities including Alvord Ranch, The P Ranch, Denio, and some parts of northern Nevada. The house that bears his name is built on top of the rocky outcrop that overlooks Triangle Park just as you are entering Burns west bound on Highway 20. It was constructed in 1904 by adding more rooms and a second story on an existing two room dwelling. Later on, a porch was added on the east façade and extends up to the second story.

2. Peter Clemens House-793 N. Alvord Ave

Peter Clemens was born in France in 1850 and immigrated to the U.S. in 1868 at the age of 18. He learned brick masonry while in California and by 1879, he settled down in Harney County where he put his trade to work by constructing a large stone barn on White Horse Ranch which still stands today. In 1882, Clemens and his family established a ranch along Poison Creek just outside of Burns. Peter and his wife Jennie later retired from the ranch business in 1918 and constructed a stone block house on a hill not far from Dr. Hibbard. The stones were quarried from a local source near Miller Spring and were soaked in water first before cut to shape. The house has gone through extensive remodeling recently.



3. The Geary House-736 N. Alvord Ave

This house was built in 1913 for Dr. John Geary and Phoebe Geary. Dr. Geary arrived in Harney County in 1899 and was one of the doctors who traveled throughout the county to far-off ranches and communities operating on patients upon kitchen tables. Phoebe arrived in 1909 and taught at the schools for many years. She was also one of the members of a lady's group that established the Burns Public Library in 1903. The house that was constructed for the Gearys was from blueprints drawn up by a New York architect. It was constructed out of redwood lumber and was one of the first homes in Burns to have indoor plumbing.

4. The Pacific Livestock Company Headquarters- 626 N. Buena Vista Ave

In the winter of 1896 and 1897, 40 freighter horses and mules struggled to pull the large two-story company HQ building of the Pacific Livestock Company (PLS) from the old town of Harney to the newly elected county seat in Burns (over a 10 mile trip). The team pulled the building through thick snow and even had to wait a couple of days at the banks of the Silvies River for the ice to thicken enough to cross with the heavy burden. The PLS was one of the largest cattle companies in the state at the time and was part of the Miller and Lux livestock companies. Once their HQ building was relocated to Burns, the company operated there until Henry Miller's death in 1916. Afterwards, the company moved their HQ to the Island Ranch, but without taking the house. It was purchased by the company's bookkeeper, Ike Holland in 1917.





5. The Foley House-822 N. Buena Vista Ave

One of the most beautiful historic homes of Burns, the Foley House was built in 1898 by Ray Smith, a local contractor. Smith had built several beautiful homes in the early days of Burns and from my count, there are 3 still standing. This home was built for the Foley family. J. C. Foley was from Wisconsin and in 1885, went west to work for John Devine's livestock operations. Once John Devine's company was merged with Miller and Lux Company, Foley went back to Wisconsin where he married his wife, May Ellen. They moved to Harney County in 1898 and moved in to their new home that fall. This house is unique because it was the first home built with a stone foundation in Burns.

6. The Donegan House-860 N. Buena Vista Ave

James Donegan was an early resident of the newly formed Harney County, a well-known accountant, and an owner of a saloon in Burns. He was also married to Margaret Smyth who is known to be the first Caucasian child born in Harney County. The house they lived in was constructed in 1898 and is a great example of late 19th and early 20th century architecture in the American west. It's one of the few houses left in Burns of comparable age and style.



7. Mace House-N. Court Ave

Homer and Mary Mace moved from Jacksonville, Oregon to Harney County in 1883 and established a ranch. When their two children grew older, they moved to Burns to be closer to their school. They constructed their bungalow style home from local lumber out of the Sayer Mill. The family moved in to their new home in 1898. One of the Mace's children was Vella Mace, who became the first music teacher in Harney County. Not only did she have a knack for music, she was also a talented designer of homes and buildings including the Welcome Hotel. After her parents deaths in the 1940s, she inherited the house and she lived there for the rest of her life. She passed away in 1981 at the age of 92.

8. Schwartz House- 388 West D St.

This house was built in 1901 by Isaac Schwartz, a retired Alaskan gold miner turned prosperous mercantile businessman in Burns. Following his death in 1919, Charles McConnell bought the house for him and his family. McConnell was an attorney for the Burns Paiute Tribe during this time. The house that Schwartz built has a somewhat Victorian style and a large screen porch was included in the construction plan. This was a common feature on most early 20th century houses of similar style.





9. Cook House- 455 West C St.

This house was originally built by the Harney County Court Stenographer, W.J. Coleman, in 1901. It is more known for its second owner, Jesse S. Cook, an attorney for the city of Burns for 18 years. He and his wife, Agnes, used the house as an office and home away from home when they were not staying at the 2 ranches they owned. In 1941, the Cooks left Burns for Seattle, Washington and the new owner did extensive remodeling. However, the recent owners of the house restored the house to resemble its original style which includes a small front porch and bay window on the front facade.

10. The Carroll House- 502 N. Fairview Ave

This house was constructed in 1902 by the Egli family, a ranching family with a homestead way out towards Wagontire. They constructed this house for their children to live in while they were attending high school. This was a common practice for some of the big ranching families that were too far from town. The house was later inherited by one of the Egli's daughters, Leila, who was married to Bill Carroll. Bill gained county fame when he accidentally fell into a 60-foot well on a Catlow Valley homestead during the dead of winter. Fortunately, he survived the fall, but both his legs had to be amputated due to frostbite. Instead of falling to obscurity after that event, Bill served as county clerk for 30 years and was an active member of many other community organizations.



11. The Voegtly House- 351 W Monroe S

Charles H Voegtly came to Harney County in 1886 after inheriting 160 acres from his father. He started a ranch on this land which later on became most of downtown Burns. Charles contracted Claude Brown to construct the family home on the ranch in 1907 and this property was known as Voegtly Field. The house reflects some Colonial and Georgian characteristics and has sunburst motifs at the top of the eaves. Ray Smith had a part in the construction of this house and he made the columns and spindles used for the porch. The property now functions as a bed and breakfast.

12. Star Hotel- 537 N. Alder Ave

This two-story, six-bedroom, and three-bathroom house was not just some big home for a big family. It was constructed in 1916 and was first used as a maternity house, but then it was sold to the Urizers, a Basque family, in 1926. The Urizers converted this big house into a hotel to cater to the Basque sheepherders, who were booming in Eastern Oregon during this time. These Basque hotels were important places for the Basque people who immigrated to the West. They could eat, sleep, meet fellow countrymen, have weddings, play card games, and resupply for their next journey. The Basque people have a very unique and vibrant role in the history of Harney County. Another Basque hotel in Burns was the Plaza Hotel, now called the Central Hotel.

