

(continued from other side)

34 Banbrock House – 185 Cherry Ave.

Built in 1911 for a home and studio, the most noted resident was W. E. Banbrock, an early Auburn photographer known for his portrait and landscape work.



35 Barnett Building – 805 Lincoln Way

Originally a two story building built in 1892. Reduced to one story by fire, this has been an important commercial establishment in Downtown for many years.

36 Auburn Drug – 815 Lincoln Way

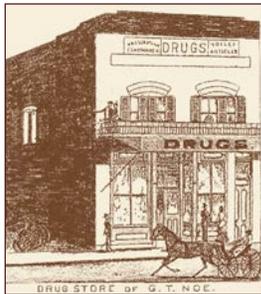
Built in 1927, this building has always housed a drugstore. The vintage soda fountain is still in operation.

37 Old Bank of Auburn – 819 Lincoln Way

This 1898 building was once the home of the Bank of Auburn formed in 1904 by prominent citizens.

38 Noe's Drug Store – 823 Lincoln Way

Built in 1889 for Noe's drugstore, this building has also housed an ice cream shop and the Ann Arbor Bakery, which was owned by the Geitzen family. Henry Geitzen was a long time fire chief, and the Firehouse on Sacramento Street is named after him.

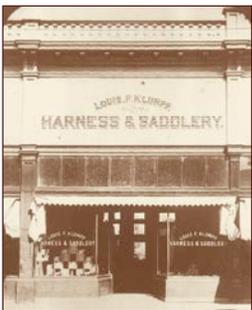


39 Klumpp Building – 835 Lincoln Way

Built in 1919, it was once the home of the Louis Klumpp Saddle and Harness Shop.

40 Liscom Building – 843 Lincoln Way

Built in 1920 this double store front building was the original home to Dr. Durfee, the optician who bought gold during the mini gold rush in depression years and the Auburn Groceteria.



41 Auburn Promenade – 853 Lincoln Way

This has been the site of a succession of hotels: the Putnam, the Nashville, the Hotel Conroy (shown here), and the Hotel Placer. It was rebuilt in 1914 as the Hotel Auburn. The lobby displays historic photos and artifacts.



42 Placer County Bank – 874 Lincoln Way

One of the most impressive buildings in Downtown, this Beaux Arts building was built in 1913. Inside the lobby are relics of an infamous bank robbery and the Weber family murders.

43 Montgomery Wards Store – 884 Lincoln Way

Originally built to house a Montgomery Wards store in 1929. It was remodeled in the 1970's to accommodate several smaller establishments.

44 Post Office – 905 Lincoln Way

This building, another WPA project, was built as a Federal Post Office in 1939.



45 J. C. Penney – 923-933 Lincoln Way

This attractive block was once home to the J. C. Penney store in the 1940's.

46 St. Luke's Episcopal Church – 148 Lewis St.

The congregation of St. Luke's organized in 1887 but this church built in 1890 was their first dedicated home. The unusual design was featured in *The California Architect and Building News* in 1890. The house to the west served as the parsonage for many years after 1910.

A Walking Tour

of

Historic

Downtown Auburn, California

WHERE THE RAILROAD
MET THE GOLD COUNTRY



Michael Loomis



AUBURN'S DOWNTOWN area was shaped by several factors: the establishment of Auburn as the County seat, the crossroads at Central Square, the coming of the railroad in 1865 and the availability of both land and water.

While the easy-picking gold in the nearby area quickly ran out, Auburn remained an important site for not only supplying and provisioning the mining industry but as a good spot for miners to “winter over” waiting for the rains to cease and the mining season to begin again.

The soon cramped and hilly Old Town area, while suitable for stores, saloons and eventually churches and schools, did not lend itself to through traffic. Thus the flat Central Square area just up from Old Town became the crossroads where the major trails and wagon roads converged to head out to the Foresthill Divide, Coloma, Placerville, Colfax, Nevada City and Sacramento.

Auburn was the terminus for many of the heavily laden wagons coming up from the larger supply center of Sacramento City to transfer to pack mules for the arduous trip further into the canyons of the river mining areas.

Nearly a mile from Old Town the first railroad depot in Auburn was built in an almost barren area. Myron Angel, a chronicler of the early days, says it “was impracticable” to build the station in Old Town. That suggests that either the grade was too difficult to accommodate a station stop or that land was too hard to obtain.

The coming of the railroad in May of 1865 didn’t immediately change the configuration of the town. Most merchants and businesses stayed in the Old Town area. The growth around the depot came in the form of shipping houses and hotels to serve the freight and passenger needs of the railroad customers.

The first hotel at the depot was built by Elliot West in 1868, it was a small and fairly ram-shackled place that went through a succession of owners but grew to become the Freeman Hotel encompassing an entire city block. It eventually had indoor plumbing, electric lights, an outdoor dance floor and tennis courts. The Freeman remained the top hotel in the area for many years. It was demolished in the 1970’s.

A huge fire swept through the station area in 1870 and it is telling that the list of losses does not include any mercantile businesses or private houses. All that burned

was centered around the coming and going of passengers and freight. J. J. Smith lost a new hotel, his barn, sheds, stable, hay & feed. Curley and Mahon who ran the combination passenger depot and saloon lost their building. The omnibus (wagon or carriage) shed, Crosby’s blacksmith shop, two lime houses and the West/Wilson Hotel stable and sheds also fell victim to the flames.

George Bishop, the owner of the Traveler’s Rest Hotel on Sacramento Street just above Old Town, initiated an “omnibus” line between the depot and Old Town as early as 1865. Eventually the big hotels in Downtown also ran “busses,” but railway passengers often had to make their way on foot through the treacherous, muddy, sidewalk-less streets. Newspaper articles were filled with dismay that visitors to Auburn, many of whom had business at the County Courthouse on the edge of Old Town were faced with a nearly impassable route through the undeveloped area.

Old Town spread out of the gullies and ravines down East Street and Broad Street (today’s lower Lincoln Way) by 1870, but most of the property along current day High Street and Lincoln Way, the Downtown area, stayed in the hands of large property owners for many years.



Downtown Auburn, looking up Lincoln Way

The beginning of the infill between the Depot and Old Town may have been initiated by Samuel Putnam who bought the Placer County Fruit Drying Company building on upper Lincoln Way and converted it to the Putnam Hotel in 1879-1880. Shortly after, large property owners began to split up their land and several small subdivisions were opened.

Several canals and waterworks already in place to serve the needs of the early miners were put to use

delivering water for domestic use and irrigation for the newly opened area. Merchants in Old Town began to open “branch” stores in what was deemed East Auburn. By 1892 people in the Downtown area were petitioning for their own post office, though one was not established until 1902.

Old Town began a long, steady decline as some businesses relocated and new businesses were established nearer the growing population in Downtown.

The Downtown area experienced a building boom between 1890 and 1910, while Old Town’s decline was accelerated by the constant visit from fire and the demolition of almost one third of its business district and homes for the construction of Highway 40 in the 1930’s.



Stewart Feldman

Today Downtown Auburn offers a vibrant selection of shops, restaurants and more!

Future highway construction (Interstate 80 began in the mid-1950’s and expanded in the last half century) only encroached further and further into Old Town leaving what was left of the Old Town nearly deserted.

Luckily Old Town managed to survive the many lean years until the historic significance of the area was realized by Auburn’s citizens. The two parts of town now make up an integrated Auburn, offering visitors a glimpse of the evolution of a gold camp coming of age.

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A Walking Tour of Historic Downtown Auburn

Though we suggest you begin near Central Square, feel free to design your own route.

START 1 Welcome Center – 1103 High St.

Built in 1937 by the WPA (Works Progress Administration), this Streamline Moderne building housed the Auburn City Hall, the Chamber of Commerce and the Police and Fire Stations. Currently, it is a California Welcome Center operated by the Placer County Visitors Bureau (530) 887-2111.



2 Arthur / Laing House – 1111 High St.

Built about 1890 for W. R. Arthur, the Laing family are most associated with this house. J. A. Laing was affiliated with the Towle Brothers Lumber Co.

3 Mallory House / Robie House – 1125 High St.

Originally built for Ogden Mallory in 1881, this house has been associated with the Robie family for over 60 years. Wendell Robie is the founder of the Endurance Classic Tevis Cup Ride – 100 miles in 24 hours from Squaw Valley to Auburn on horseback.

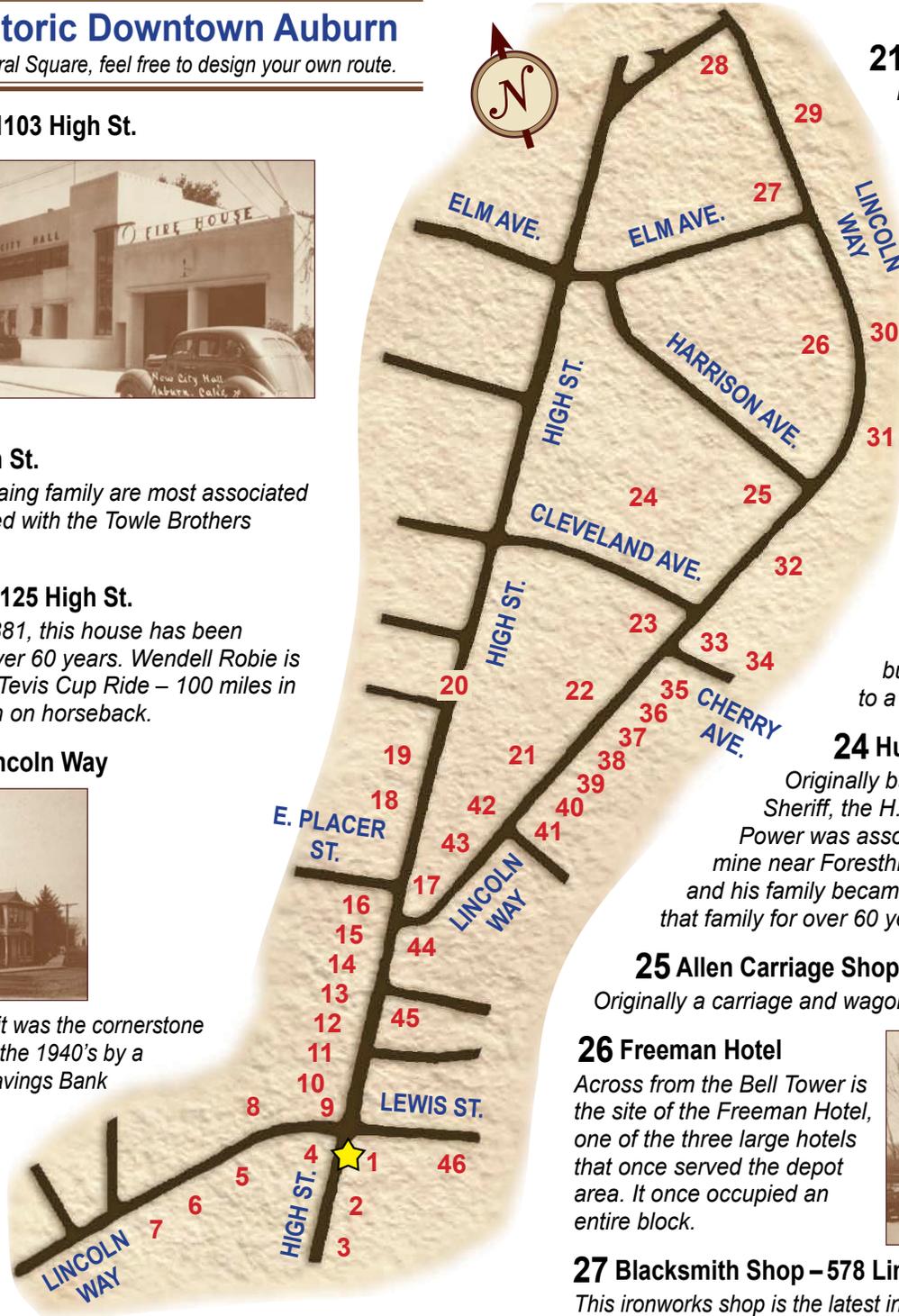
4 Congregational Church – 949 Lincoln Way



The site of a lovely church built in 1881, it was the cornerstone of the Central Square. Sadly replaced in the 1940's by a service station and later by the Placer Savings Bank now the Wells Fargo Bank.

5 McCann House – 973 Lincoln Way

Built in 1903, this house was home to one of Auburn's "favorite sons," Vernon McCann. The McCann Award is given annually recognizing community service to which Mr. McCann was so devoted.



21 Hink Block – 818-846 Lincoln Way

Built in 1906, this block of shops has been a mainstay for commerce in Downtown Auburn. It was built by Mr. John Hink, a retail merchant from Berkeley.

22 Good Templars Hall – 812 Lincoln Way

Built in 1883 for the Good Templars, a temperance order, this building was moved in 1908 from its original location at the intersection of High and Lincoln Way.



(Original location)

23 Weber Building – 800 Lincoln Way

Built in 1885, this is the oldest surviving business building on the block. It was once home to several businesses, including two saloons. Early deeds refer to a water spring located beneath the building.

24 Huntley House – 164 Cleveland Ave.

Originally built in 1887 for Asahel Huntley, a Placer County Sheriff, the H. T. Power family lived here from 1901 to 1917. Power was associated with the prosperous Hidden Treasure gold mine near Foresthill. The prominent surgeon, Dr. J. Gordon Mackay and his family became residents in 1920, and the house would remain in that family for over 60 years.

25 Allen Carriage Shop – 700 Lincoln Way

Originally a carriage and wagon shop and showroom built in 1896 for George Allen.

26 Freeman Hotel

Across from the Bell Tower is the site of the Freeman Hotel, one of the three large hotels that once served the depot area. It once occupied an entire block.



27 Blacksmith Shop – 578 Lincoln Way

This ironworks shop is the latest in a succession of blacksmith shops at or near this site since the late 1860's.

6 State Theater – 985 Lincoln Way

This movie house was built in 1930. In 2008 the marquee was restored to its 1937 appearance. It is now home to the Auburn Placer Performing Arts Center.

7 Hancock House – 991 Lincoln Way

Built in 1900, R. J. Hancock and family were long time residents of this home. Hancock had a hardware store next door. Catering to the mining trade, Hancock was known to finance many a miner down on his luck.

8 William G. Lee Department Store / Masonic Hall – 956 Lincoln Way

The Masonic Eureka Lodge #16 chartered in 1851. The bottom floor was built in 1906 as retail space. In 1914, the Masons added two additional stories and the Gladding-McBean terra cotta facade.



9 Central Square

This crossroads, where two important roads intersect, has existed since the early days of Auburn. After the railroad came to town, it was noted that this intersection was midway between the depot and the Courthouse and hence dubbed "Central Square".

10 Central Block – 938-940 Lincoln Way

A merging of several buildings, this facade has been modernized. The original ornate columns that once greeted customers to the two banks simultaneously housed here have been removed, but the medallions of the Bank of America remain.



11 Kreuzberger Building – 928 Lincoln Way

Built in 1893, this has been home to many businesses including the Placer Steam Laundry, a hardware store, a grocery and Burns Pharmacy.

12 Arthur Building – 922 Lincoln Way

Built in 1892 this building once housed Arthur's Grocery, and the Rochdale Cooperative Store, a general merchandise store.

13 South Yuba Water Company – 916 Lincoln Way

Water canals were first built to supply the miners with water to aid in gold mining and later were used for the city's water supply as well as for agricultural irrigation.

14 Placer Machine & Auto – 908 Lincoln Way

The site of one of Auburn's first auto garages.



15 Koffee Kup – 904 Lincoln Way

For many years a local eatery, inside there are many old photos of Downtown.

16 The Tahoe Club – 900 Lincoln Way

Built in 1913 for a men's club, the upstairs is still in use by current members. It is a highly coveted spot from which to watch the many parades through Downtown.

17 Service Station – 1085 High St.

Looking closely you can see that this inviting building was once a humble service station.

18 P. G. & E. – 1050 High St.

Built in 1929 for the Pacific Gas and Electric Company. P. G. & E. is the successor to the many water and power companies providing service to the community.

19 Auburn Journal – 1030 High St.

Home to the local newspaper, continuing the legacy of newspapers published in Auburn beginning with the **Placer Herald** in 1852.

20 Pedestrian cross walk

Cross High Street, traverse the parking lot, head up the alley adjacent to the Bank building and end up on Lincoln Way.

(continued at top of map)

28 Firehouse #1 – Lincoln Way at El Dorado St.

The volunteer fire department, founded in 1852, was known as "The Rattlers."

This firehouse, built in 1888, was originally next to the Bell Tower on Lincoln Way and moved to this location in 1973. Community volunteers have spent over 8 years on the restoration of this building (see photo on front of this brochure).



29 Railroad Depot & Statue – 601 Lincoln Way

The Transcontinental Railroad arrived at Auburn Station in 1865. The statue of the Chinese worker created by Auburn dentist Kenneth Fox represents the thousands of Asian laborers who poured into the area during the Gold Rush and later worked on the railroad.



30 Bell Tower – 649 Lincoln Way

Originally built in 1889 and rebuilt several times over the years, the Tower Bell was used to muster firefighters using a code of bell rings.

31 Towle Brothers Lumber Co. – 649 Lincoln Way

This was the site of one of the Towle Brothers Lumber Company's retail outlets. The company formed in 1856 and initially provided lumber for mining flumes and mine bracing during the Gold Rush. Later they provided lumber for railroad snow sheds and trestles.

32 Samuel J. Pullen House – 729 Lincoln Way

Built 1881, this house is typical of the homes built in the Downtown area in the 1880's. The Pullen family were long time residents of this home.

33 Signal Gas Station – 799 Lincoln Way

Originally a Signal gas station, this Streamline Moderne style building served traffic on the Lincoln Highway.

(continued on other side)