

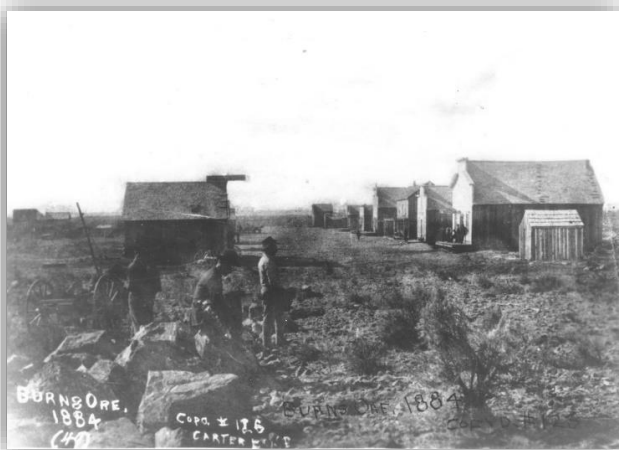
# BURNS, OREGON

## DOWNTOWN HISTORY

---

### *WALKING TOUR GUIDE*

---



*Horace Dillard, sitting atop a large rock, surveys the assemblage of wood frame buildings lining the wagon road through Burns, Oregon in 1884—the same year the post office was established to serve the population of roughly fifty citizens.*

Harney County is located within ancestral territory of the Northern Paiute people. The Wadatika band inhabited a large area, moving widely between habitat types in a seasonal round of subsistence roughly centered around Harney Valley.

The first known photograph of Burns, Oregon reveals the primitive, rocky beginnings of a cow town rising from the Great Basin. Looking beyond the thick dust of a rutted wagon road, the first pioneers saw a valley that was then a sea of grass growing belly-high to a large horse—grass that would sustain innumerable livestock. These earliest settlers experienced blistering summer heat and long frigid winters in sod dugouts and crude wood frame buildings yet were not deterred in their quest to eke out a living. Building by building, the first trappings of modern civilization slowly appeared: a saloon, a livery stable, a blacksmith shop, a hotel. Homes, schools, and businesses soon followed.

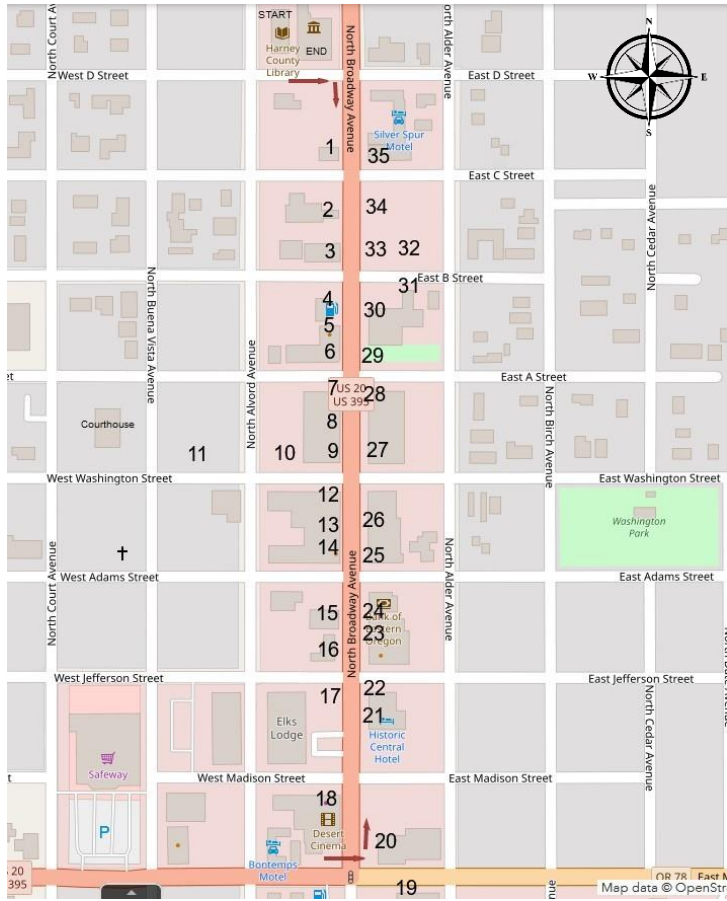
This booklet gives a brief overview of some of the historic buildings in the downtown corridor Burns. The guide begins at the Harney County Library and proceeds south eight blocks along the west side of Broadway Avenue to Monroe Street, then returns north on the east side of Broadway Avenue, ending at the Harney County Historical Museum.

For the sake of standardization, physical addresses used in this guide correspond with addresses in the Harney County GIS database. The official address of various businesses within the buildings have varied across time as partitions were added or removed.

Dates given indicate the construction and/or demolition of individual buildings. Names of buildings refer to the original owner or most closely identified business occupying the building.

**START:** Harney County Library, 80 W. D Street

Proceed SOUTH on the west side of N. Broadway Avenue



*Map- Downtown Burns Historic Buildings*

## HARNEY COUNTY LIBRARY (1968-present)



*The first Burns circulating library was established in 1903 by the Ladies Afternoon Club and operated out of the home of Phebe and Dr. John Geary. Books were purchased from a fund supplemented by membership dues of twenty-five cents per year.*

*In 1927, the library gained its own space in the new building constructed for the Burns City Hall. It remained there until the present building was dedicated in 1969.*

*A portion of an addition to the north side of the building completed in 2006 houses the Harney County Library's historical archives in the Claire McGill Luce Western History Room.*

## 1. SUMMIT HOTEL

714 N. Broadway (1897-1938)

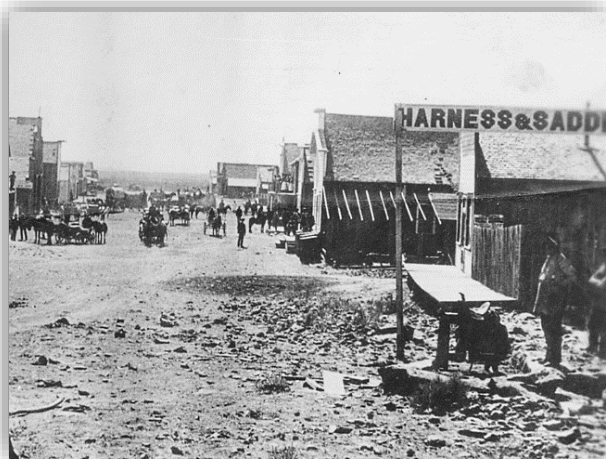


*John Devine, founder of the Whitehorse ranch, died here  
13 SEP 1901.*

Replaced by **WHITTIER HOTEL** (1939- present)



**2. J.C. WELCOME SADDLE & HARNESS SHOP**  
682 N. Broadway Avenue (1889-1915)



*Jacob Charles Welcome, Sr. and his son Henry stand in front of their shop with one of J.C.'s patented saddles sitting atop a sawhorse in this view from 1889.*



*Welcome Saddle*

*The building was destroyed by fire on 14 SEP 1915. The blaze originated in Clevenger's furniture store which was also decimated, along with Dr.*

*Geary's office and three buildings on the opposite side of the street.*

### 3. TONAWAMA BUILDING

610 N. Broadway (1911-1952)



Replaced by **BENNETT MOTEL** (1953- present)



**4. GEER & CUMMINS HARDWARE**  
596 N. Broadway (1900-1964)



Remodeled as the **LIBERTY THEATER** (1917-1940s)





## 5. BROWN BUILDING

530 N. Broadway (1896- present)



*The Brown building is considered the oldest permanent commercial building in Burns.*

*Nathan Brown, Sr., together with his sons Ben and Leon, operated a mercantile business in this location until 1937.*

*The body of Peter French was brought here following his shooting death by Ed Oliver on December 26, 1897.*

*Offices of the Harney County Court occupied space in this building during construction of a new courthouse in 1941.*

## 6. BURNS HOTEL

500 N. Broadway (1882 ca- 1930)



Replaced by **BURNS DEPARTMENT STORE**  
(1950- present)



## 7. FIRST BURNS POST OFFICE

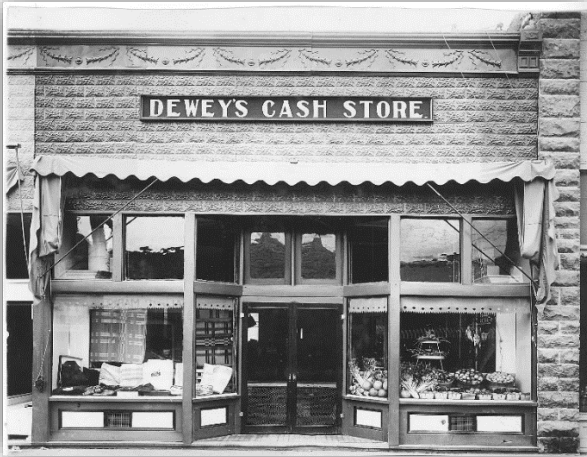
484 N. Broadway (1883-1930)



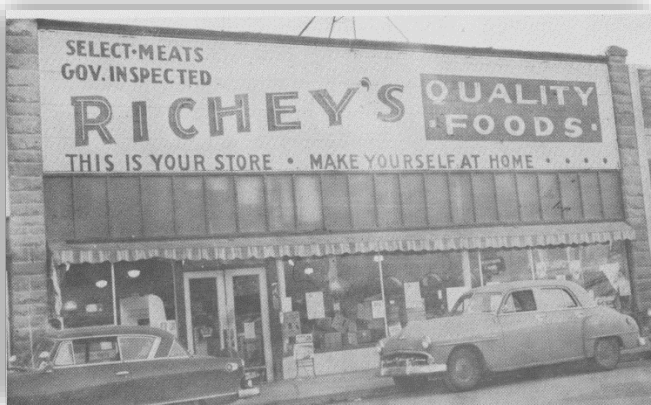
Replaced by **WILBURN BUILDING** (1930-present)



**8a. HAGEY & RICHARDSON BUILDING**  
458 N. Broadway (1909-1957)



Replaced by **RICHEY'S SUPERMARKET**  
(1957- present)



## 8b. REED BUILDING

430, 444 N. Broadway (1909- present)



*Emmett Baxter Reed, his wife Lucinda, and their five children first arrived in the Burns, Oregon area in 1887.*

*Soon after their arrival, E.B. established a general merchandise store. In the ensuing years, other members of the family took up a variety of business trades. The last remaining family business, Reed's Signs and Office Supplies, was sold in 1968.*

## 9. MASONIC BUILDING

406 N. Broadway (1911- present)

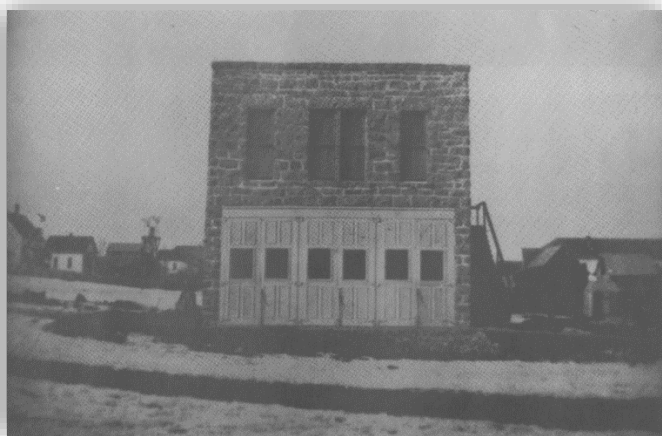


*“Mr. Smith’s plans are for a stone and brick structure two stories high to cover 50 x 100 feet. The lower floor will be occupied by a well-known mercantile establishment. The second floor will contain a number of fine office rooms besides the lodge room proper. The first plans were too elaborate and beyond reach of the finances of the lodge but by dispensing with the banquet room the building can be erected with a lodge room 30 x 50 feet and necessary anterooms. It is to cost \$17,000 complete and if the contract is let at once will be ready for occupancy by January 1.”*

*~May 28, 1910 Burns Times-Herald*

## 10. BURNS CITY HALL BUILDING

90 W. Washington (1902-1927)



Addition constructed (1927- present)



**11. GRANDMA SARAH HASKELL HOUSE**  
150 W. Washington (1890- present)



**12. FIRST NATIONAL BANK BUILDING**  
398 N. Broadway (1902- present)





### 13. ODD FELLOWS BUILDING

340, 348 N. Broadway (1909- present)



*“Harney Lodge No. 77, I.O.O. F. was organized in 1884 and has during the time since been a strong lodge in membership but it had never owned its own hall up to the past year.”*

*“The building is 50 feet  $\times$  100 feet with two large stores on the first floor both of which are occupied. The lodge room is on the second floor and is large enough for all practical use of the lodge, with two ante-rooms and a preparation room. Across the hall way which leads through the building is an ample banquet room and kitchen. The lodge quarters have not yet been fully furnished, the handsome emblem carpets, fine upholstered officers’ chairs, pedestals, draperies, etc., being now in transit. The kitchen is partially furnished as is also the ding room. Besides the lodge quarters on the second floor there are eight well-arranged and comfortable office rooms all of which are rented at a good rental. Lodge room on the second floor. Now the largest building in Burns.”*

*~January 15, 1910 Burns Times-Herald*

## 14. LUNABERG & DALTON STORE

314 N. Broadway (1898-1925)



Replaced by **PENNEY BUILDING** (1927- present)



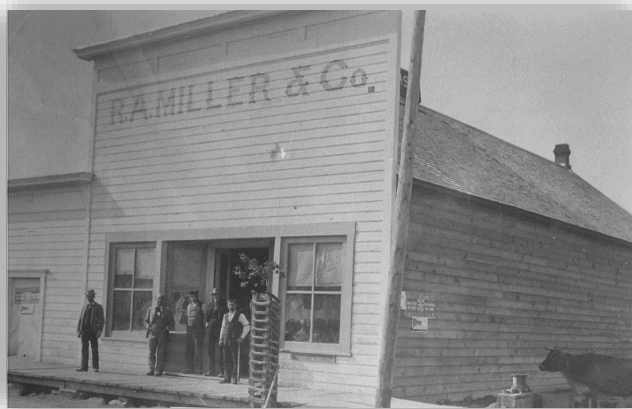
**15. PALACE CAFÉ AND LOUNGE**  
260 N. Broadway (1930- present)



**16. FEDERAL BUILDING / POST OFFICE**  
222 N. Broadway (1940- present)



**17. R.A. MILLER BUILDING**  
188 N. Broadway (1897 - 1927)

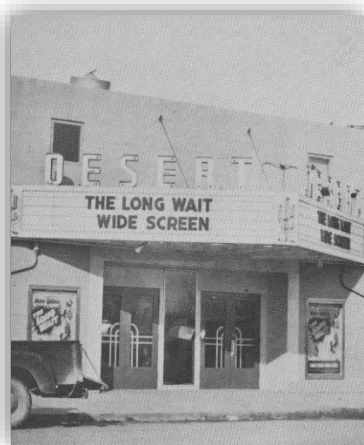


Replaced by **BURNS GARAGE** (1927-present)



## 18. DESERT HISTORIC THEATER

68 N. Broadway (1949- present)



## 19. SERVICE GARAGE

1 S. Broadway (1925- 1940)



Replaced by J.W. Copeland Lumber Yard (1940-)

**20. WELCOME HOTEL**  
21 N. Broadway (1929-1937)



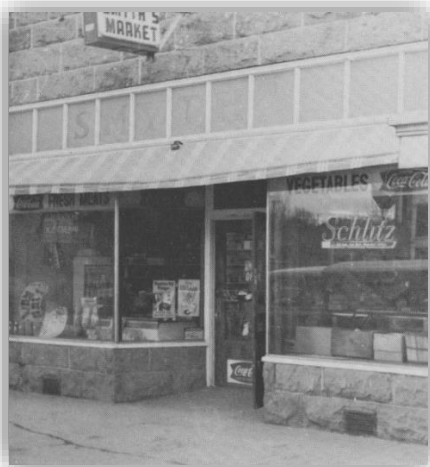
Replaced by **J.L. McCulloch & Sons** (1946- present)

**21. CENTRAL HOTEL**  
159 N. Broadway (1930- present)



## 22. YEE QUONG BUILDING

195 N. Broadway (1937- present)



## 23. IDEAL THEATER

239 N. Broadway (1926- present)



**24. BURNS BAKERY BUILDING**  
279 N. Broadway (1930- present)



**25. C.H. VOEGTLY HARDWARE BUILDING**  
307 N. Broadway (1899- present)





**26. C.M. SALISBURY CORNER**

397 N. Broadway

**CENTRAL SERVICE STATION (1928-1945)**



Replaced by **JORDAN BUILDING (1945- present)**



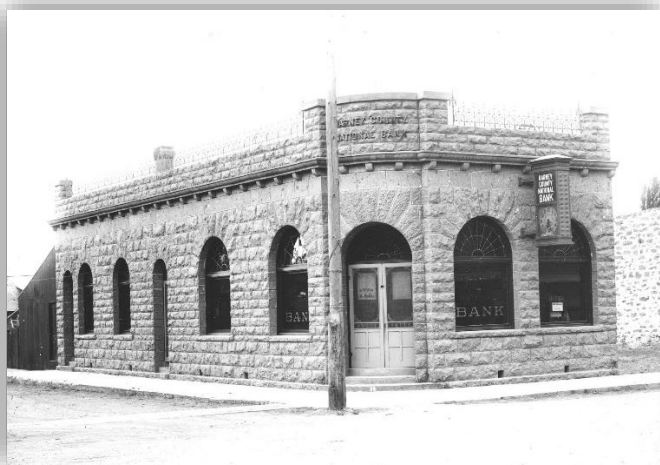
**27. GEORGE FRY BUILDINGS**  
405, 407 N. Broadway (1902-1927)



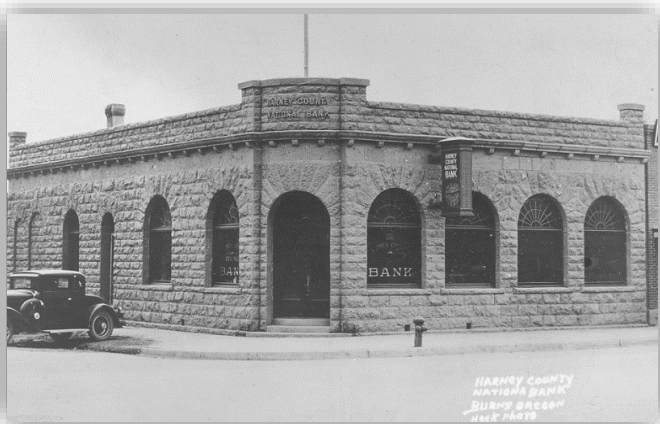
Replaced by **SAFEGWAY BUILDING** (1939- present)



**28. U.S. NATIONAL BANK BUILDING**  
493 N. Broadway (1908-1929)



Enlarged with an addition (1929-1968)



**29. RED FRONT LIVERY STABLE**

501 N Broadway (1887-1914)



Replaced by **LEVENS HOTEL/ARROWHEAD**  
(1914-1973)



### 30. FRENCH HOTEL

531 N. Broadway (1887-1914)



Replaced by **CLEMENS BUILDING** (1929-present)



**31. WHITE FRONT BARN**  
63 E. B Street (1890 ca-1914)



Replaced by **BURNS HARDWARE** (1918- present)



**32. LAMPSHIRE'S GARAGE**

E. B Street (1911-1953)



**33. BENNETT'S MOTOR COMPANY**

600 Block, N. Broadway (1928- )



### 34. LOCHER'S HALL

600 block, N. Broadway (1887 circa. -1913)



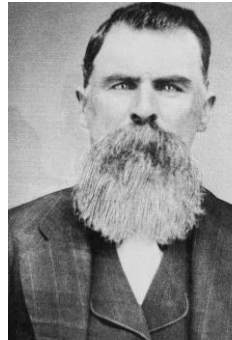
*Locher buildings destroyed by fire on 13 JAN 1913.*

### 35. FIRST DWELLING IN BURNS

789 N. Broadway (1873- )

*“Frank McLeod was the first to settle on the present site of the City of Burns. He built a stone house on the point of the hill just north of the Locher property, in the summer of 1873.”*

*~James Donegan*



*Frank McLeod 1833-1914*



**END:**

**HARNEY COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM**  
18 W D Street (1960-present)



After completion of the tour, take some time to browse the variety of exhibits within the Harney County Historical Museum. You'll find additional photographs and history relating to the settlement of Harney County and the establishment of the cities of Burns and Hines.

Next door, at the Harney County Library, delve into the local history archives in the Claire McGill Luce Western History Room to learn more about our county's pioneer heritage.

Don't forget to take a leisurely stroll downtown to explore the many shops and businesses housed within the historic buildings.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

**CLAIRE MCGILL LUCE WESTERN HISTORY ROOM**  
**Harney County Library**  
80 W. D Street, Burns, Oregon 97720  
Phone: 541.573.6670  
Email: [westernroom@harneycountylibrary.org](mailto:westernroom@harneycountylibrary.org)  
Website: [harneycountylibrary.org](http://harneycountylibrary.org)  
Facebook: [facebook.com/WesternHistoryRoom](https://facebook.com/WesternHistoryRoom)

**HARNEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM**  
18 W. D Street, Burns, Oregon 97720  
Phone: 541.573.5618  
Email: [harneymuseum@centurytel.net](mailto:harneymuseum@centurytel.net)  
Website: [hchistoricalociety.com](http://hchistoricalociety.com)  
Facebook:  
[facebook.com/HarneyCountyHistoricalMuseum](https://facebook.com/HarneyCountyHistoricalMuseum)

**ONLINE DIGITAL ARCHIVES:** features combined collections of the Harney County Museum and the Western History Room at the Harney County Library

[harneycountylibrary.catalogaccess.com](http://harneycountylibrary.catalogaccess.com)

compiled by Karen Nitz  
Claire McGill Luce Western History Room  
Harney County Library  
APRIL 2023