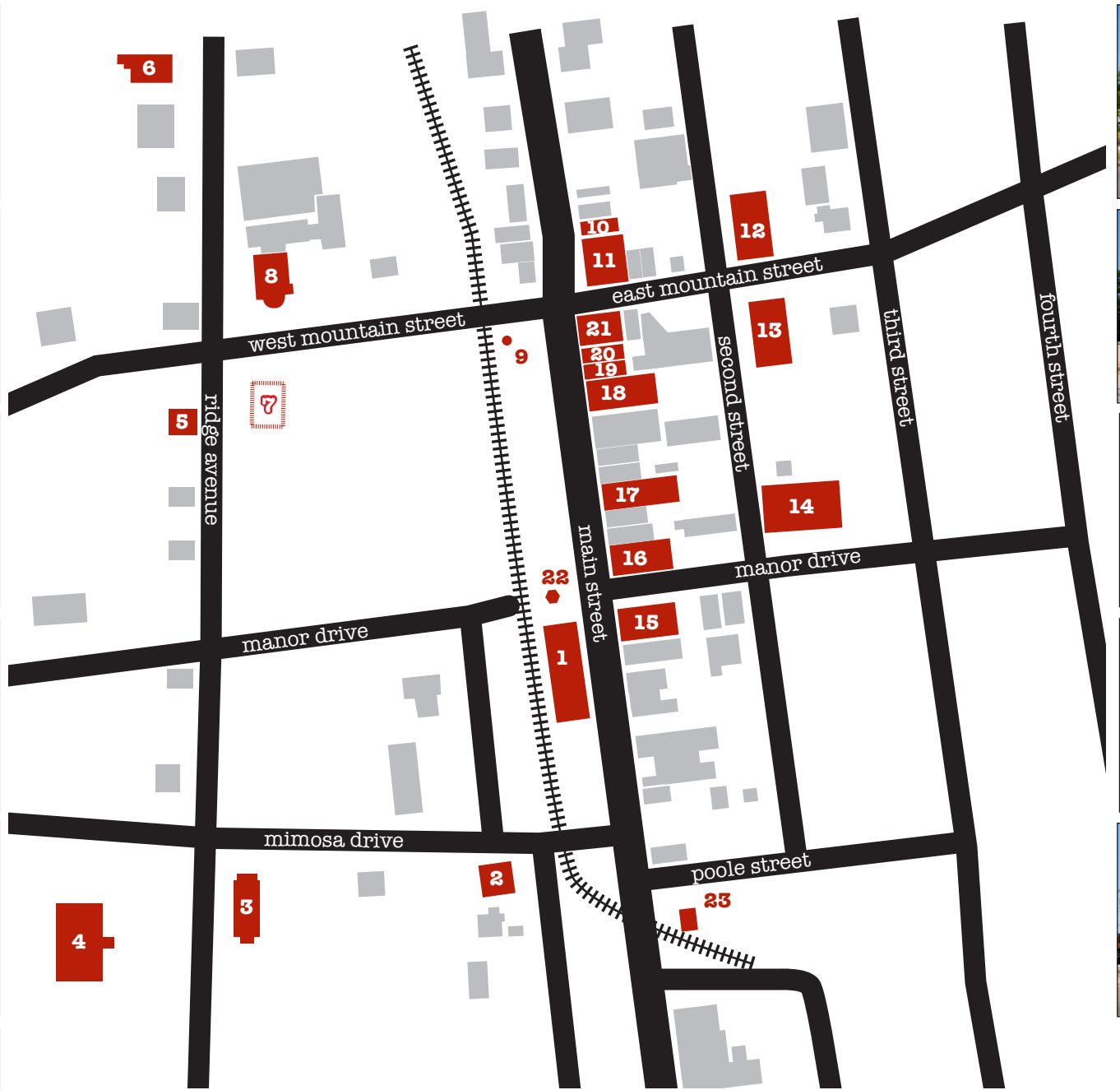


# STONE'S THROW TOUR

In 1839, the Village dusted the granite off its porches, and moved west, shucking its first location, in favor of what the railroad would bring. They hedged their bets and wisely didn't move far. New Gibraltar, known as Stone Mountain after 1847, and the Georgia Railroad were linked and the new right-of-way served as a western boundary for the developing mountain town. Hotels, restaurants, and stores were advantageously placed to grab the attention of all comers as they stepped off the depot platform. Captains of the granite industry, educators, farmers, slaves, freedmen, entrepreneurs, hotelkeepers, merchants, bankers, ministers, all walked Main Street. Its brick and granite buildings greeted early twentieth-century newcomers and immigrants, many of whom sought their fortunes in the area's thriving granite industry. Main Street also served the growing local community, many of who left their farms for town life. This history is captured in the village's architecture. Each building contains a story or an event to be shared about small town life in Georgia. Enjoy the tour!

1. Stone Mountain Depot – 922 Main Street
2. Johnson House – 5329 Mimosa Drive
3. First Baptist Church – 5306 Mimosa Drive
4. Rock Gym – 930 Ridge Avenue
5. Stillwell House – 992 Ridge Avenue
6. Wells Brown House – 1036 Ridge Avenue
7. University School for Boys – Demolished
8. United Methodist Church – 5312 W. Mountain Street
9. "Sherman's Neckties" – Main Street
10. Hurt Museum – 977 Main Street
11. Corner Arcade
12. Granite Building – 5380 E. Mountain Street
13. Old Post Office
14. A.R.T. Station – 5384 Manor Drive
15. Baron's Restorations
16. Stone Mountain Inn
17. Granite Feed Store – 943 Main Street
18. McCurdy Granite Building – 953 Main Street
19. 1905 Bank Building – 957 Main Street
20. Granite Bank – 961 Main Street
21. Two Story Brick Storefront – 963/965 Main Street
22. Freedom Bell – Main Street
23. Visitor's Center – 891 Main Street



**23 Stone Mountain Visitor Center** – the Red Caboose – This beautiful example of a 1914 Seaboard Railroad cupola caboose (No. 5506) was donated to the Village in 1988 by the Stone Mountain Memorial Association. It features two end platforms, a raised box-like central cupola with windows, and a red exterior. Historically, a caboose was attached to each freight train to provide shelter and a workspace for the crew. Mounted red lights were used to indicate the end of a train at night. The cupola was added about 1898 to allow the crew, that sat on elevated seats in the caboose, a visual of the train while in operation. Cabses were used through the 1980s. This example was refurbished for use as the first office of the Stone Mountain Scenic Railroad in 1963 and later used in the park as an office/breakroom for train conductors and actors until it began service as a visitor center. Just like our depot, it was also featured in a famous movie: *Fried Green Tomatoes*.

From depot to caboose...  
A Walking Tour Presented by



**1 Stone Mountain Depot** – Our granite depot stood here when Sherman’s troops moved through the area. While its roof, platforms, and water tank were destroyed by fire, its stone construction allowed its reuse after the war. Its boxy southern end, which features random rubble granite construction, was constructed in 1857 as a warehouse for the Georgia Railroad. In 1914, the warehouse became a freight room when a large granite addition with a red tile roof was built to house passengers and a ticket office. The new construction was joined to the original building by an arched passageway. The new depot was a product of its time; it was designed to have separate facilities for white and black customers as the original drawing shows. When passenger rail service declined in the twentieth century, the depot fell vacant until 1964 when it was adapted for reuse as a City Hall/police station. It served in that capacity through 2012, after which it will become the Village’s future Visitor Center. Catch its starring role in the 2011 movie *Footloose*.

**2 Johnson House** – This early two-story concrete building, constructed in the mid-1830s, predates the railroad’s coming to Stone Mountain. It is considered to be the oldest building in the village belonging to Andrew Johnson, a settler, planter, business entrepreneur, and Stone Mountain’s first mayor. Look on left. A part of the building had to be removed to accommodate the railroad right-of-way; buttresses on the east side of the building attest to that. The building has had a number of identities including first post office, hotel, Civil War hospital, home, and restaurant.

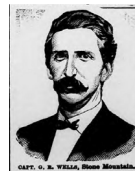
**3 First Baptist Church of Stone Mountain** – This brick church constructed in 1938 is the third on this location that has served the Stone Mountain’s Baptist community. However, the congregation dates to 1839 making it the village’s oldest.

**4 Stone Mountain High School’s Rock Gym** – This 1936 Public Works Administration building is a community landmark, constructed during the New Deal by local stonemasons. Many communities within Georgia’s granite belt have Rock Gyms from this era. The large building has housed graduations, proms, plays, and sporting events during its association with Stone Mountain High School.



**5 Stillwell House** – This simple frame building predates the Civil War. Located on the road to Stone Mountain, tradition has it that it was built as a hotel. It was later acquired by the Stillwell Family, staunch Baptists, who converted it into a home for their family of 11. When Reverend Stillwell, the family patriarch, was out of town, his daughters had a well-attended but not authorized dance in an oval room on the third floor. He destroyed the steps to that story on his return, ending any further chance of dances for his daughters under his roof. The third story of the house would remain inaccessible until 1994 when the building was renovated.

**6 Wells Brown House** – Now headquarters for the Stone Mountain Historic Society, this 1870s building was home to George Riley Wells, his wife Sarah, and their family. Originally finished in a rose color and distinguished for its Greek Revival details, it is constructed of early concrete scored to look like granite. Wells was a Civil War veteran, a successful local merchant, and an active member of the Stone Mountain Baptist Church. His son, Dr. James Riley Wells, was the first to own an automobile in the village.



**7 University School for Boys** – This imposing brick school constructed in 1900 was once Stone Mountain Village’s architectural showpiece and educational center. In 1906, it had an international student body that included a student from Mainland China. The school was later moved and reorganized as Riverside Academy. The vacant school buildings housed the Cheston King Sanitarium and later a nursing home between the 1920s and 1970s. The buildings were lost to fire in 1975. Stone Mountain was known as an educational center from 1830 onward.



**8 Stone Mountain United Methodist Church** – Construction of this beautiful Gothic Revival granite church was completed in 1926. Organized by seven families in 1854, the congregation first worshipped in a 1870s wooden building that was demolished in 1908. The granite church took 18 years to complete during which time the partially completed church, despite windowless walls and dirt floors, was in use. “The preaching during those years must have been spectacular to retain the faith and attendance, especially on icy days in February or blistering days in August. But they kept the faith.” It is the oldest church at its original location in Stone Mountain.

**9 “Sherman’s Neckties”** – This 2012 sculpture is a reminder of the Union troops’ method of destroying railroad lines during the Sherman’s March to the Sea in 1864. The bending of the iron was purposeful to make sure the rails could not be used again. The sculpture was erected in honor of the Civil War Sesquicentennial by the committee for Sherman’s Neckties, chaired by Dr. George Coletti.



**10 Hurt Museum of Natural History** – This older storefront that now houses an art gallery was once a small private museum owned by Joseph Hurt, a world-wide renowned exhibit designer. Mr. Hurt was contracted by the Ringling Brothers Barnum and Baily Circus to mount a large gorilla, Gargantua II, in his home studio. The huge model drying outside caused considerable and continued public excitement leading Mr. Hurt to establish a museum dedicated to natural history in Stone Mountain. He restored the building at 977 Main Street in 1973 and installed dioramas and other exhibits that interpreted the diversity of nature. One account noted that the only thing missing from Hurt’s Okefenokee Swamp diorama was the mosquitos. He would later establish The Gallery of Creation Museum at a different location on Main Street.



**11 Corner Arcade Building** – This distinctive brick storefront is actually three buildings featuring graceful arches and chamfered columns. The first on the corner was built prior to 1917 possibly by George Riley Wells, a local merchant. The corner store was a department store then a grocery store featuring wonderful Colonial bread branded screen doors. It was very much a meeting spot for the townspeople even if you were in your pajamas.

The center building was once the Golden Glow Tea Room notable for its role in serving the famous breakfast hosted by carver Gutzon Borglum on Robert E. Lee’s shoulder carved on the face of Stone Mountain in 1926. It would later become the village’s first movie theater operated by Roy Mitchell. Undaunted by the need for additional projection space, Mr. Mitchell built a projection room over the sidewalk. Brickwork repairs over the door show where the machinery was placed!

The building on the right once served as City Hall. A historic view shows a siren was mounted on the roof to alert residents of an emergency, assemble the volunteer firemen in case of a fire, and to signal the clock striking noon on Wednesdays when the stores would close for the day.

**12 Granite Building on Mountain Street** – This granite building was constructed originally as an in-town car dealership with large display windows. By 1945 it housed a modern supermarket. Opening night, 2,000 came to enjoy the market’s fashionable new décor and experience modern day shopping!



**13 Post Office** – This 1950 modern granite post office, now housing an antique emporium, provided up-to-date services for midcentury Stone Mountain folks. It would later house a restaurant and annual spot for children to see Santa and it is now an antique store.



**14 A.R.T. Station** – Georgia Railway and Electric Company Trolley Barn/Power Station - This building, now the Village’s cultural center, is one of the few surviving trolley barns in the state. The massive



brick building, originally with a turning table, was constructed in 1913 to service the Atlanta to Stone Mountain interurban streetcar line. Like the railroad before it, trolleys brought new business and enabled younger generations a means to find work or attend school in nearby Atlanta. Trackless trolleys or buses would spell the end of the streetcar line that ran from the trolley barn onto Main Street and then curved over through Second Street, heading toward the City Cemetery. Street car service in Stone Mountain ended on March 13, 1948. The transportation landmark was used in a variety of ways until 1991 when it was transformed into a center for the arts with galleries and a theatre.

**15 Baron’s Restorations** – Constructed in 1929, this two-story granite building is notable for its marvelous stonework. Its random rubble construction creates a textural pattern that many liken to a crazy quilt design. The building housed Studdard’s Shoe Store on the lower level and the Stone Mountain Telephone Exchange on the upper floor.



**16 Stone Mountain Inn** – Constructed in 1905 by Street Whitaker on the site of an earlier hotel, the brick inn boasted commercial space with two storefronts on its first floor and 26 rooms for rent on its second floor. A wrap around porch distinguished the building and an upper porch deck accessed by double doors allowed guests a perch to view the village and depot. A door on the south side of the building, that has long since been bricked over, accessed a staircase to the upper floor. A drug store and dining room occupied the first floor space. In the 1930s, the hotel became a commissary for the Stone Mountain Granite Corporation, a mattress factory under the Works Progress Administration, and Haynie’s department store from 1935 through 1978. It became the Stone Mountain General Store in 1981. A ride on Buster, the beloved mechanical horse ‘stabled’ at the general store, was a Stone Mountain must do for all children.

**17 Granite Feed Store** – This granite building dates to circa 1920. When built it was a feed store that extended from Main Street to Second Street. The first floor was open and the second story was used for storage. Double doors on the second story front once opened onto a small balcony.

**18 McCurdy Granite Building** – Irvin Drug Company set up shop on the left side in 1911, creating a new commercial identity that would continue through the century under the style “Mountain Pharmacy.” Prescriptions, medical supplies, sodas and ice cream at the popular soda fountain were provided to the community until the 1970s.



**19 1905 Bank Building** – The Stone Mountain bank provided banking services to the community. Constructed in 1905, the masonry building still contains the historic bank walk in vault. The second story housed meetings for the Stone Mountain Free Order of Masons, organized in 1849.

**20 The Granite Bank** – It was organized in 1911 with the tagline “Granite Bank is as solid as the Rock of Stone Mountain”. It sat next to its competitor the Stone Mountain Bank. The banking operation fueled by cotton and the granite industry housed in the one-story granite building was led by J. Steve McCurdy and J.R. Irvin was cashier. Irvin was also part owner of the Irvin Drug Company.



**21 Two-Story Brick Storefront** – This handsome building is one of the village’s oldest commercial buildings dating to the nineteenth century, surviving a massive fire within the business district in 1918. It housed Campbell and Miller’s General Store for decades and then later Weatherly’s Appliances.

**22 Freedom Bell** – This massive cast bell was acquired by the city in 1999 under Mayor Chuck Burriss, the city’s first African American mayor, in recognition of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s admonition ‘to let freedom ring from Stone Mountain.’ The famous quote refers to the Ku Klux Klan rallies that occurred historically on the mountain summit. The bell is rung each year in observance of Martin Luther King Day.

