

**Johnson County Jim Gatchell Memorial Museum**



**Buffalo Historic Main Street Walking  
Tour**

The Johnson County Jim Gatchell Memorial Museum presents this walking tour for your enjoyment and the opportunity to learn how Buffalo's Main Street has developed since the 1880s.

The tour, featuring officially recognized historic buildings, will begin at the Johnson County Jim Gatchell Memorial Museum and proceed south on the *WEST* side of Main Street. You will be viewing the buildings on the *EAST* side of Main Street.

## MAIN STREET BETWEEN FORT STREET AND CLEAR CREEK-EAST SIDE



### Great Divide Fabrication and Verity Group, CPA, 75 N. Main

This building was at various times a title company, numerous liquor stores, Chevrolet Dealership, and a bank. Near the location of Robert Foote's General Merchandise Store, Charles H. Burritt built this building in the 1880s. Foote's store was destroyed by fire in 1895.



### Chamber of Commerce, 55 N. Main

The current building was erected in 1969. According to old city maps, it was the location of S. T. Farwell Cigar and Tobacco Store. It was established next to Charlie Chapin's Saloon and Club Rooms in 1881.



### **Vacant, 33 N. Main**

Built in 1940 and remodeled in 1965, it once housed the Vaughan Ragsdale Clothing Store and recently The Office. The Buffalo Bulletin was headquartered here for about 20 years with the presses located in the basement. In 1882 it was the original location of the Myers Hotel. It provided “the very best of meals for 35 cents each.”



### **Visionary Communications, 7 N. Main**

The Theatorium, later the Bison Theater, moved to this location in 1917 when R. M. Kennedy, a past Johnson County sheriff, ran it. The current building dates to 1930. The movie theater operated until 1984. Deerfield’s was located here before it closed in 2013.



### **Margo’s Pottery & Fine Crafts, 1 N. Main**

The current building dates to 1909 and was the location of the Thompkins and June Hardware store in the early 1900s. Then Buffalo’s first movie theater, Robert Taylor’s Theatorium, was located here before it moved next door. Later the Buffalo Bar resided here from the 1940s to 1996.

## **MAIN STREET BETWEEN FETTERMAN STREET AND ANGUS STREET- EAST SIDE**



## **Crazy Woman Square**

Crazy Woman Square was the site of two 1900 and 1910 two-story buildings until destroyed by an arsonist in the summer of 1988. The Ben Franklin Store (a variety store), Central Garage, Ford Garage, and the Sanborn Livery and Garage (1903 – 1927), were all located here at one time.



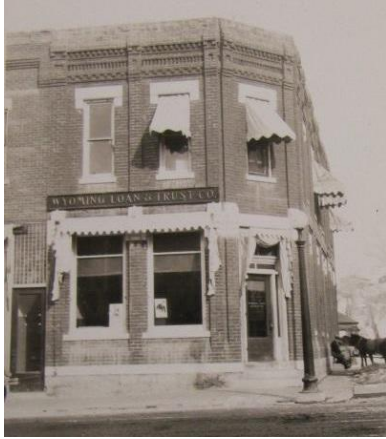
## **Hitching Post Gallery, 51 S. Main**

The home of the Hitching Post Gallery since 1993, it was the location of Walker's Country Magic from 1988 – 1993, Kraft Jewelers from 1980 – 1988, Purcell's Jewelry Store from 1977 – 1980, City Electric in 1970, Bud's Barber Shop in 1944, a grocery store from 1933 – 1944, and a local butcher shop from 1897 – 1933. This building dates to 1930.



## **Silver Sage Jewelry & Gifts, 57 S. Main**

The site of Van Dyke's Men's Clothing Store, this one-story building was constructed in 1935 and later housed several businesses including Bud Meade's Barber Shop, a grocery store, Coast-to-Coast, Gigi's Vintage & Upscale Resale, and the original location of The Breadboard.



## **ANB Bank, 99 S. Main**

This is the location of ANB Bank, previously called the Wyoming Bank and Trust. Before the bank expanded and absorbed the building that housed a café and Purcell's Jewelry (1929 – 1977), it was the site of Knepper's Battery Service and Electric Supply, located here from 1919 – 1923 before the business moved across the street. This current building dates to 1977.



## **First Northern Bank of Wyoming, 141 S. Main**

The First Northern Bank of Wyoming, originally called the Stebbins Conrad Bank and more recently the First National Bank of Wyoming, was established in 1884 at its current location. After operating in a few other locations, it returned to its original site in 1941. Previously this was the location of the Buffalo Creamery, Henry's Variety Store, Wilkerson Saddle Shop, and American Legion. In 1879 this became the second location of the Trabing Brothers' Store, the first store in Johnson County, originally located near Cantonment Reno. The brothers sold the store in 1882 to John Conrad and it became the Conrad Store. Immediately south of the bank was the Masonic Temple, torn down in 2010.

*Cross the street at Angus, in front of GiGi's, turn left and walk up Main Street, north to the Jim Gatchell Memorial Museum. You will now be viewing the WEST side of Main Street.*

## **MAIN STREET BETWEEN ANGUS STREET AND FETTERMAN STREET-WEST SIDE**



## **First Northern Bank of Wyoming Parking Lot**

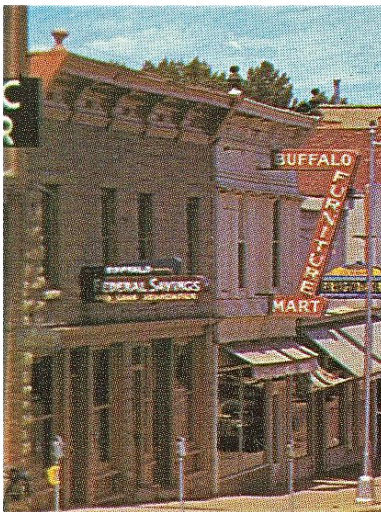
A 1952 one-story building occupied this location where Standard Station and earlier Holt's Drug Store, the first drug store in Buffalo, were located. This was the site of McLeod's Cowboy Saloon and the beginning of Buffalo's Red Light District. The wide alley behind Main Street, (Bob Hancock Drive), provided each saloon with a rear entrance for the convenience of the "ladies of the evening."





## **GiGi's Vintage & Upscale Resale, 98 S. Main**

It was the previous home of Northern Wyoming Insurance, originally Safeco, for 30 years. Earlier it contained Mountain States Power Company, Pacific Power & Light, the Senate Saloon, John Erhart's Fruit and Candy Store, the Darling Grocery Store, a post office in the 1920s, and the Johnson County Bank from 1912 – 1920. Charles Baker built this building in 1910.



## **Up in Smoke and The Purple Door, 94 & 90 S. Main**

This was the first home of Buffalo Federal Savings and Loan and the *KBBS* Radio Station. It was the location of Knebel's doctor office from 1934 – 1957, as well as Burt Grigg's Law Office from 1921 – 1958. Previously it was Charles Burger's jewelry store from 1904 – 1934. Built by F. A. Shaver in 1892 and known as the Shaver Block, it first housed Shaver's jewelry store and Helen Walker's millinery store.



## **The Mini and Cowgirl Coffee Bar, 86 S. Main**

This two-story building with a white metal façade covered in pressed floral designs is an example of how popular it was to buy pre-manufactured building façades to dress up the store front. This was home to Hill and Grigg's Law Office and the Buffalo Furniture Mart. It housed the *Buffalo Echo*, Buffalo's first newspaper in 1883, before it was renamed the *Buffalo Bulletin* in 1906.



## Treasure Chest Antiques and Collectibles, 76 S. Main

Previously housing the Practically Magic Store and Amish Furnishings, this one-story building was Jim Gatchell's Pharmacy from 1904 – 1987. Gatchell's collection of historical artifacts became the basis for the Johnson County Jim Gatchell Memorial Museum.



## Sports Lure Too, Sports Lure, Capital Hotel Vacation Suites, 70 & 66 S. Main

From the picture you can see that the Sports Lure and Sports Lure Too occupy what were originally two buildings known as the Zindel and Oliver

Blocks. The Zindel Block was built in 1894 as a two-story, flat roof building and the Oliver Block was built in 1901. From 1901 – 1987 the New York Store was located on the Oliver Block. The Adams and Young Grocery Store, considered one of the best-stocked stores in Wyoming, was located in the Zindel Block beginning in 1898. The Capitol Hotel and Restaurant were originally located in the Zindel Block and the hotel expanded into the Oliver Block when it was built.



## Johnson County Realty, 42 S. Main

Before Simply Second Hand and Annie's Antiques, this was the location of a floral shop, a bakery, a J.C. Penny Store from 1938 – 1973, Budweiser Bar from 1930 – 1938 with the Telephone Exchange on the second floor, and a post office and stationery store from 1918 – 1926. Built in 1909 as the Brehl Building, this location has been occupied since 1887.



## **Limelight Dance Factory, Wyoming in Color, 38 S. Main**

From 1910 – 2007 Seney's Drug Store was in this building after previously occupying two other sites on Main Street. Originally the Holt Drug Store, it became Seney's after it was purchased in 1910. This building was built in 1922 and remodeled in 1961.



## **Bucking Buffalo Supply Company, 28 S. Main**

The current building, built in 1903 for the Buffalo Hardware Store, later housed the Ellis Hardware Store and the Cloud Peak Mercantile. In 1891 this was the location of the Munkres and Mathers General Merchandise Store.



## **Vacant, 22 S. Main**

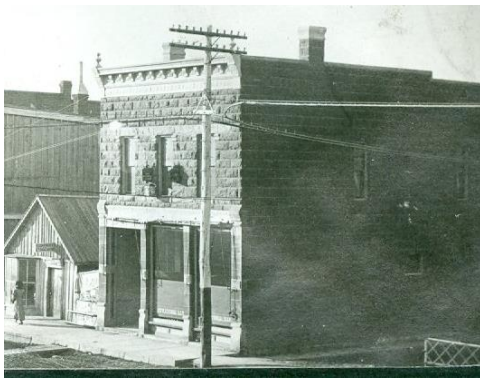
Most recently an antiques store, this location was home to the Red Owl Food Store, Gamble's Store, and Buffalo's first library while the second floor was used as an opera house. In the early 1900s it was the Kube and Kennedy Clothing Store. The building dates to 1887 when it was built for the Hasbrouck Haberdashery business, the first exclusively dry goods store in the northern section of Wyoming Territory.





### **CellOnly-Verizon Retailer, 10 S. Main**

From the 1950s to 1985 it was the Idlewild Hotel. Built in 1919, the only three-story building in downtown Buffalo was the location of Charles King's King Hotel (the sign can still be seen on the sides of the building.) Charles King, the first Chinese man to live in Buffalo, also ran a Chinese restaurant.



### **4th on Main, 4 S. Main**

The 21 Club bar was located here. In 1907 it was the first location of the First Northern Bank of Wyoming. In 1903 this was the location of Julia Jensen's "Fancy Goods and Novelties" Store. This two-story building dates to 1898.

## **MAIN STREET BETWEEN CLEAR CREEK AND HOLLAND- WEST SIDE**



### **The Busy Bee Café**

The first Busy Bee Café, which became recognized nationally, was built in the 1940s before being torn down in the 1990s. The current Busy Bee Café was rebuilt on the same location in 2010.



## **The Occidental Hotel and Small Town Sweets & Treats, 18 – 10 N. Main**

Completely remodeled in the 1990s, the Occidental Hotel has been rebuilt or added onto in 1903, 1908, and 1910, and has been a staple on Main Street since Charles Buell built the first structure from logs in 1879. The only first class hotel in northern Wyoming at the time, famous

visitors included “Buffalo Bill” Cody, Teddy Roosevelt, Owen Wister, Butch Cassidy, and the Sundance Kid.



## **The Occidental Saloon**

The Occidental Saloon is located between the Occidental Hotel and the Virginian Restaurant. The saloon began sometime in the 1900s as a rowdy bar and was later converted into an elegant saloon with a 25-foot bar. True western connoisseurs know that Owen Wister’s “The Virginian” got his man outside the saloon.



## **The Virginian**

Built in the early 1900s the Virginian restaurant was originally a series of stores located within the Occidental Hotel. At one time, the stores included a bank with a vault, Witt’s Jewelry Store, a dairy bar, and Kube’s Clothing Store.



## City Hall, 46 N. Main

The Idlewild Café was located here for many years before it closed in the 1980s. City Hall moved into this 1900 one-story brown stucco building after the City Hall building next door was razed in 1973. The original two-story 1885 City Hall building was located in the current City Hall's parking lot.



## Johnson County Courthouse, 76 N. Main

Built in 1884 the Johnson County Courthouse is the oldest building on Main Street. At one time the courthouse had a cupola (bell tower), a long hitching post, jail, and a bandstand. Remodeling has occurred after WWII, in 1973, 1986, 1994, 2012, and 2020.

*Just a little past the Johnson County Jim Gatchell Memorial Museum, on the west side of Main Street, are the Hersey Apartments.*



## Hersey Apartments, 158 N. Main

Before becoming the Hersey Apartments, it was a roller rink and a center for public events. Dating to 1909, this building was the training facility for Buffalo's militia, known as the Armory, organized after Fort McKinney closed in 1894.

*Images courtesy of the Johnson County Jim Gatchell Memorial Museum, the Local History Department of Johnson County Library, and Jennifer Romanoski.*

*Mapping by City of Buffalo Planning Department.*

*This publication is made possible through the generosity of The Homer A. and Mildred S. Scott Foundation.*