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ANNUAL EVENTS
COUNTY MUSEUM
KENNEDY GOLD MINE TOURS
TAILING WHEELS PARK
& FRIENDLY PEOPLE

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Walking Tour
of
Jackson’s
Historic Core

Downtown Jackson’s Historic District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places

Bottleas, Jackson’s Creek
Jackson – that city which gold, girls, gambling, gastronomic delights and government has kept lively for over 150 years – was born in the gold rush.

Gold seekers passed through the fording place where two forks of a small foothill creek met, headed for the rich Mokelumne River sand bars. Others, dead broke or enriched, returned via the place to Stockton or Sacramento.

Who stayed? Probably no one in ‘48, but a later-day obituary said that one Louis Tellier, a 28-year old Frenchman via St. Louis and the Sandwich Islands, set up his trading tent by the forks in January, 1849.

Had there been a poet on call he might have dubbed the place Springford or Fordsprings. One story notes that the spring became littered with discarded bottles, so Spanish for ‘place of bottles” or Bottleas it became—even though there’s no such word in Spanish. It wasn’t Bottleas for long. Sometime before the fall of ‘49, Bottleas became “Jackson’s Creek.” Maybe it was named after New York native Alden Appolas Moore Jackson or Andrew Jackson.

When the Placers ran out, probably only Jackson’s Creek’s spring and location at the ford kept it alive. When gold quartz was discovered in the county in 1851, the only major quartz mine south of Sutter Creek was the Oneida, a good two miles away. Nonetheless, the camp became that day’s regional shopping center, and miners flocked to the place.

In 1851, at least three events ensured the camp’s permanency: it got a post office, stage coach service and the spoils of the Calaveras County seat. By 1852, politicians in Jackson tried to create a new county. When secession attempts failed in ‘52 and ‘53, Jackson incorporated.

When Amador was organized as a new county in 1854, Jackson eked out a win over Volcano to become the new county’s county seat.

Fixary & Co., a French firm which started in “une certaine tente” in 1851, erected the first brick structure in the summer of 1854. One account that summer said Jackson “has over 100 frames, some two-story.” Later that year the thick-walled, two-story brick building (today’s Masonic Building) was constructed at the corner of Broadway and Water.

It wasn’t until 1855 that fire destroyed a major portion of the town. That blaze was a mere introduction to the town wide conflagration that destroyed most of Jackson on August 23, 1862. If you look behind modern window treatments and various facades in downtown Jackson today, you’ll discover buildings that arose following the 1862 great fire.

While Jackson had quartz mines from the 1850s, none of them – not even the famous Kennedy or Argonaut on its outskirts – were continually profitable until late in the 19th century. The Kennedy didn’t hit real, sustained pay chutes until 1885, and the Argonaut didn’t for another decade or more. But once started, their depths disgorged pay ore almost continuously until World War II shut them down.

At the 19th century’s turn, Jackson had about 3,000 residents, in city and environs, with three churches, three newspapers, four hotels, five boarding houses, two candy factories, cigar and macaroni factories, eight physicians and two dentists.

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In 1922, Jackson became known world-wide when the state’s worst mining tragedy snuffed out 47 lives deep within the Argonaut mine.

In 1942, President Roosevelt’s executive order shut down most of the Mother Lode mines, the Kennedy that year, the Argonaut the next.

Can you imagine semi-trucks and trailers loaded with tree sections bending their way through downtown and out Broadway? They did until 1948 when the division of highways finally by-passed downtown with Highways 49 and 88.

In the 1950s came the closure of Jackson’s nickel-in-the-slot machines, all gaming, and its “girls’ dormitories” which had been synonymous with the sinfully-innocent town since its earliest days.

Though gold, gambling and girls were now gone, gastronomic delights and government remained. Many visited Jackson to dine at fine restaurants downtown and in Jackson Gate.

In 1978, through a federal grant, the city built a basement parking garage and new city hall very near the forks of the creek and spring at which this reprise began.

In the past 22 years, Jackson has expanded as the commercial center of the county, while the Main Street core has struggled in its transition from auto parts and plumbing stores to boutiques and quaint shops catering to the ever-growing tourist trade.

Still, Jackson has remained a small town – with small town friendliness, safe neighborhoods, and good schools – a place that those who live here will tell you is the nicest place in America.

TOUR OF JACKSON’S HISTORIC CORE
Start And End At The Amador County Museum, 225 Court St., Jackson

1 AMADOR COUNTY MUSEUM
(currently undergoing repairs)
Visit the Museum to find out more particulars. Missourians Ambrose and Philippa Brown via Wisconsin built this family home in 1859 and probably planted the towering trees about the same time. Note carefully the artifacts both inside and outside the museum and the poignant headstone and brick cairn for Mrs. Sompayrac who probably died in childbirth long ago.

Cross street and walk to sidewalk historic monument.

2 JEWISH SYNAGOGUE MONUMENT
The bronze plaque gives the particulars about this site of the Mother Lode’s first synagogue. The plaque, alas, errs in that the Synagogue was razed in 1876, not the 1940s. Sometimes facts are hard to find.

Walk northerly on Church Street toward the cemeteries.

3 THE A FANTOZZI MARBLE & HEADSTONE WORKS
Across the street at 405 Church is the Fantozzi Headstone Works. It may not be open to the public yet, but this old firm is a veritable museum of the craft. Young Fantozzi bought the works circa 1921 from its founders, the Particelli brothers, and operated it until his death in 1972. For over a quarter of a century, it remained exactly as Fantozzi left it until Steve and Mary Petrone purchased it a few years ago. They want to retain ownership of the old marble works but preserve as much of it as they can.

Continue northerly on Church to the cemetery.

4 JACKSON PROTESTANT OR COMMUNITY CEMETERY
The first village non-Catholic cemetery was closer to the 1850s heart of town at the
southwesterly corner of California and Summit. Circa 1854 or so, town founders or council moved it further away from town beyond the churches and the grade school.

**From here or higher ground look north for the Jewish Cemetery.**

### 5 Historic Jewish Cemetery
A well maintained historic Jewish cemetery, Giboth Olem, lies on a knoll beyond the Community Cemetery. Access is off Church Street. Jewish history sources say the Jackson town Council deeded to the Jewish congregation a cemetery plot 350' east of the Protestant Cemetery. The Jewish community had its zenith in Jackson in the late 1850s, building a synagogue and a cemetery within its sight. The cemetery is owned and maintained by a bay area Jewish group.

*Walk down Church to the portal over the entrance to the Catholic Cemetery.*

### 6 Jackson Catholic Cemetery
The first Catholic church and cemetery were located on Main between today’s Hein Book Store and the corner of California. That church burned in the 1862 fire. Afterwards, St. Patrick’s built a new church in 1867, but claimed new burial ground beyond the Protestant Cemetery earlier in the 1860s. If newspapers are correct, the celebrated Mademoiselle Marie Suize Pantalon lies buried there in an unmarked grave.

*Walk westerly on Church (once named Oneida) to the corner of Church and North Main.*

### 7 St. Sava’s Serbian Orthodox Church, 724 N. Main
The Mother Church of this denomination is located about a quarter of a mile northerly on North Main (or Jackson Gate Road). If you don’t wish to walk that far, return to it later in your car. According to newspaper items, the Serbians established a cemetery there in 1894 and then built the small, white church with Russian Orthodox cupola. It was the first church in North America of the Serbian Orthodox Church, though it was dedicated on December 16, 1894, under the “Greek-Russian Church of America, diocese of Alaska.” After the 1922 Argonaut mine disaster, 11 of its 47 victims were buried here.

*Walk southerly on North Main down the hill to downtown.*

### 8 The Hamilton Tract Victorian Subdivision
As you walk southerly on North Main note the homes on both sides of the street, particularly the left or easterly side. The Hamilton Tract was among Jackson’s very first subdivisions in the mid-1890s. That was the Victorian era in home architecture here. Hence, you’ll observe as you walk a variety of Queen Anne or other variants on the Victorian theme.

### 9 First Catholic Church Site
At the southeasterly corner of North and North Main, where the parking lot is, was the site of the first Catholic Church, built by 1852. Its cemetery was a bit further down Main.

*Continue on the easterly Main sidewalk, cross California, and continue.*

### 10 Early Town Rock Walls, 160–164 Main
inside note the rock walls probably erected by 1860. They survived the town inferno in 1862. The first Jackson newspaper, the Sentinel, was published near here.

*Continue walking on the easterly side of Main.*

### 11 Fletcher Alley
Café De Coco is bound northerly by a pedestrian walkway, historically known as Fletcher Alley. Jackson Pioneer Hugh Fletcher had his home here in the 1850s.

*You’re at the next site.*
12 CAFÉ DE COCO, 140 Main
This popular café and eatery is in the Sanguinetti building, whose first story was erected in 1869. In a few years its second story went up, and, newspaper accounts tell us, the old oven was added in 1893.

13 GLOBE HOTEL BUILDING, 148 Main
Though no longer a hotel, the first two stories of this brick building date from 1858.

Cross the street. Walk southerly.

14 JACKSON CLEANERS BUILDING
111–115 Main is the Jackson Cleaners building, housed in brick stores from the 1850s. Both survived the awful '62 fire.

Look for the wall plaque.

15 NATIVE DAUGHTERS OF THE GOLDEN WEST BIRTHPLACE, 114 Main
In what was called Pioneer Hall in the basement here was born in 1886 the Native Daughters of the Golden West. Its Ursula Parlor was No. 1. Read the plaque for more details.

Continue southerly on Main.

16 SIDEWALK PLAQUE
At the foot of Court Street (105 Main) note the sidewalk plaque. Proceedings of the Calaveras County Court of Sessions or supervisors were held near here in the then French Hotel. Jackson was county seat of Calaveras County briefly from July 1851 until about May, 1852 before Mokelumne Hill claimed the prize. This is not the famous heart-shaped plaque, despite its shape. Find that one in the museum. The county jail was in the basement here after the 1862 fire.

Continue southerly.

17 BOTTLE SHOP, 145 Main
This one even looks like an old building! It still has what look to be the original iron shutters and brick facade which Moses Brum(e)l had erected. A Bruml cornerstone or merely engraved stone is in the shop’s cellar. Maybe the owner will let you look at it. It dates from 1854.

Continue southerly.
Amador Dispatch publisher, William Penry, bought it for his paper, later adding a second floor to house his press. The Dispatch’s fiery editorials in support of the south, and intemperate remarks upon the death of Abraham Lincoln, goaded federal authorities to close the paper and arrest its editors. Thus, in early May, 1865, federal cavalry cordoned off the building, front and back, and led Penry and LP Hall in chains down to Camp Jackson in Ione. Later, they spent time at Alcatraz. Union-supporting townspeople got revenge, too. They torched the building, forcing Penry on his return to tear the second story down. It’s been 1-story since.

Before the Rogers family moved across the street into this building, succeeding Siebe’s Drug, a drug store occupied this site back into the 1870s.

Continue southerly.

The first telephone in Jackson was probably in this building in the late 1870s when it was the Dispatch office. Publisher Penry and Nickerson of Sutter Creek started the first phone company. This competes with the Masonic Hall as being (at least partly) the earliest brick building, arising in March-April 1854, and home to a French firm, Fixary & Sompayrac. (Monsieur Sompayrac’s young wife lies buried on the Museum grounds.) Some of this building probably dates from 1854, more from after the ‘62 fire, and second floors in the 1890s.

Continue southerly.

This may be the only two-story building in the city with one story brick, the other wood. One of the titan’s of the wine industry, Ernesto Gallo,
was born in this building in 1909. Merchant Richard Lory built the first story in 1878, and added the second a year later. The town’s historic Astor House once stood here in the early 1850s. First Methodist minister Isaac Fish preached sermons here before the first church was finished in 1863. Continue southerly.

23 TRADER STAN, 15–19 Main

In the 1890s publisher Richard Webb purchased air rights over the existing brick Peek and Newman livery. Thus three-fourths of the building dates from 1898. The livery portion? One wall from 1856, the rest from 1860. A bank leased the livery space in the 1970s and architect Gordon Fisk redesigned its facade, echoing the traditional livery entrance. For about sixty years the former Amador Ledger was housed in the part where the community college district office is now.

24 WELLS FARGO BANK, 11 Main

The bank, purchaser of the old Bank of Amador County circa 1965, returned to the exact spot where the historic Wells, Fargo & Express was located in late 1854 and 1855! The firm when it sold to American Express left town in about 1918. This was the site of Sloan and Bowman’s and then their brand new, 2-story fancy Union House in 1854-5. Opposition stages pulled up here in competition with the main postal stages stopping at the Louisiana House.

Walk down Vogan Alley to the footbridge.

25 FOOTBRIDGE ACROSS MIDDLE FORK, JACKSON CREEK

About here was the ford of the middling creek which natives and goldseekers used. The nearby plaque commemorates the historic spring at or near the fording spot. Across the footbridge is a monument to Jackson’s first mayor, Virgilio S Garbarini. Continue across the underground parking area and go upstairs to City Auditorium. On display is the Sesquicentennial Photographic Exhibit of the history of the village, town and city named Jackson. The exhibit was produced by the Amador County Archives from its extensive collection of photos. About 90 of them illustrate the important people, events, and buildings of the city from its founding in January, 1849, to the present. Above the photo exhibit you’ll discover 10 murals produced by the Amador County Arts Council and painted by various local artists or schools also illustrating important events in the city’s history.

Return to Main and stop in front of the National Hotel.

26 NATIONAL HOTEL AND LOUISIANA HOUSE, 2 Water

This is probably the second inhabited site in downtown Jackson, the first being up-trail. Ellis Evans came in 1850 and had his butcher shop here. Then with partners D.C. White and Armstrong Askey, they built a two-story wooden hotel named the Louisiana House. In burned down in the ‘62 fire. By spring of 1863 the same owners erected a new brick hostelry and renamed it the National Hotel, that being more politically prudent during the civil war. Over the years owners extended it and added a story. The late John Wayne was a big loser in an epic poker game here back in the early 1960s.

Walk to the corner.
While the bottom story has been modernized, the top story hasn’t changed since being constructed by Epley and Elderkin in 1863 after the fire. Moreover, in late 1853 and ’54, Amos Barrett and Daniel Maujer had a store here, and Barrett began his ill-fated career as Wells-Fargo agent or sub-agent through Hunter & Co. It was the long-time venue for entertainments, theatricals and even pugilistic exhibitions and fights. It was known as Rocca’s Hall in those years.

Walk one doorway easterly.

Though somewhat disguised with a classical Spanish revival over a brick classical revival building, the Masonic Hall probably arose the same time as Fixary & Sompayrac’s mercantile on Main in spring, 1854. The building survived the fire of 1862, and new owners Amador Lodge No. 56 F&AM rented the space to the county for “a court and two jury rooms.” When the new court house was ready in 1864, the Masons reclaimed the top floor, and purchased the second floor of Rocca’s later.

Take the cross-walk across the street and note the 1856 front of the Fargo Bar & (former) Restaurant as you pass. Head northerly.

This edifice may have a complex. Someone decided once it was the tallest three-story building in captivity though inside it seems like there are five stories or levels. The lodge in 1904 added a story atop the old Union House hotel. You can see the clear outlines of the 2-story hotel, and the 3rd story which arises from half of it. With such a name, wouldn’t Union diehards opt to hold celebrations and torch-light parades which culminated here? Indeed they did. And Volcano’s 6-pound bronze cannon, Old Abe, provided counterpoint to each hurrah! From circa 1870 until 1919, Wells, Fargo & Express was here. The prominent “1855” date stone only means the lodge was founded then.

The restaurant (closed for renovations) is in two buildings, the large dining area in the two-story building erected after the 1862 fire by Ingalls and Kay. The other part of the restaurant sits on part of the site of the pioneer saloon and restaurant probably established in January, 1849, by town founder Louis Tellier. He set up his tent beneath a live oak from which, 1851 to 1855, 10 men were lynched. Note the historical plaque embedded in the sidewalk. The historic live oak, damaged by the 1862 fire, had to be cut down.

Little hard to tell if Tellier set up his first tent bar on this site or next southerly. Nonetheless, this former bar in its name commemorates that first saloon. While Tellier called his bistrots St. Louis House, Empire Saloon or Tellier’s, the Pioneer sobriquet was first used by others later in the 19th century.

Continue up the street.
33 **MOTHER LODE MARKET**, 36 Main
You’ve heard enough about the 1862 (August 23) Jackson fire. Here’s where it started, says the county 1881 history. Hot coals outside the Reichling assay office probably set it off. Before that, this site was the express lot, meaning Hunter & Co, Adams & Co., Pacific Express all had offices here in the 1850s before Francis and Paul Reichling moved in to buy gold and assay it. One story bricks arose here and next southerly. They acquired second floors early in the 20th century.

*Continue up the street to 38 Main.*

34 **TRASSARE JEWELRY STORE**, 38 Main
About 20 years ago the owners restored the facade to make it more like the 1854 building it is! It, with the Masonic Hall, and the Fixary buildings, are the only known stores built in the year the county was formed and Jackson became its first and only county seat. The brickwork for the store and its northerly neighbor (later destroyed) “was laid in 21 days in November” that year. The Amador Dispatch had one of its 19th century offices here.

*Continue to 48 Main.*

35 **STECKLERS BUILDING**, 48 Main
This historic corner leading to the court house was first a “county clerk’s shanty” when Jackson’s Creek became county seat of Calaveras, July 1, 1851. In the mid-1850s building boom, Charles Steckler and partner erected a 2-story brick. It succumbed to the ’62 fire, but was rebuilt. With a back addition, its substantially the same building. Upstairs from 1854 to 1862 was the Jackson Masonic lodge. The Oddfellows also used the hall until they bought their own building down the street.

*Turn up Court Street toward the Court House.*

36 **OLD JAIL SITE**, 16 – 18 Court
The first Calaveras County jail, an escapable log affair, was fabricated here in 1851 when Jackson was county seat of that county. When Mokelumne Hill got the county seat in ’52, its politicians refused to pay for Jackson’s jail. No matter, town pioneer barrister AC Brown bought it, built another frame building after the fire. His youngest son, George, built the present building in 1898. It had a balcony once.

*Walk up to 20 Court.*

37 **NATIVE SONS’ HALL**, 20 Court
Excelsior Parlor No. 31, NSGW, was organized in 1884 but didn’t remove to this site until 1901 and build this building until 1915. Vacant in ’51, Lee & Marshall put their traveling circus here, followed by the Hook & Ladder Company’s Fireman’s Hall, and Ryan’s Saloon after that.

*Go to the corner of Summit and Court.*
38 **CONSTITUTION SALOON, 47 Summit**

Longtime home of the Jackson Woman’s Club, site for several years of the first Amador County Public Library, and, in recent years, purchased by the Native Sons to supplement their hall and kitchen next door. It’s uncertain whether Alma Courtright or W.J. Paugh, an early-day Amador sheriff, built the new, stone saloon across from the court house but it rose in 1860 or ’61. Though damaged in the ’62 fire, it survived, because the county rented it for the district court. Once the new court house was completed, owners Rogers and Raffo extensively repaired the building. The Jackson Woman’s Club was organized in 1910. In 1917, thanks to an $1850 benefice from mining mogul, W.F. Detert of San Francisco, the club bought the old, deteriorated building, and borrowed $3000 to remodel and restore it. It was dedicated on October 28, 1922. It’s now native sons real estate.

*Go southerly a door to 41-45 Summit.*

39 **TOMA AND ASSOCIATES BUILDING, 44–45 Summit**

There were wooden buildings on the site until 1888 when former county clerk, consul to Milan, and attorney D.B. Spagnoli put up a one-story brick on one lot, and by 1898, added the second.

*Crossthe street to the court house.*

40 **FORMER AMADOR COUNTY COURT HOUSE, 38 Summit**

Surely is one of the most extraordinary court houses in the state if not country. The first court house was completed on this site - paid for by Jackson merchants and town trustees - in early 1855. It stood until the ’62 fire and somehow all the records were saved but two-story wooden building wasn’t. A new court house arose by January, 1864. It was designed by S.D. Mandell, the same who designed Ione’s Centenary Methodist Church. But space needs in 1893 compelled supervisors to build a hall of records in 1893. Courthouse and records hall stood side by side with a second-floor walkway. By the 1930s that space between the two buildings was completely filled in to provide more space.

41 **THE LAW OFFICE, 103 Court**

Had James Hubbard’s brick law office not been standing in August, 1862, the records of Amador County up to that time might have been destroyed. Hubbard bought the lot in 1860 and built his flat-roofed, parapet-walled Greek Revival building. County employees with armfuls of records streamed into his office to save the county’s past. Some Jackson attorneys, who had offices in the building, achieved national political prominence. Anthony Caminetti, a district attorney at 25, later became state legislator, congressman, and Commissioner of Immigration in the Woodrow Wilson administration. James Farley, a speaker of the assembly in the mid-1850s, later became California’s U.S. Senator in the 1880s.

In 1939-40, architect George Sellon designed an art deco exterior to envelop the two buildings and make them one. It was dedicated on June 29, 1940. As this court house will be replaced by another in two years or so, this historic building’s future use is yet to be determined. Also note the court house well plaque.

*Crossthe street to 103 Court.*
The plaque dedicated by Native Daughters in 1969 has the wrong date on the plaque. Architecturally, it now sports a gabled roof for the second time in its 140 year history. It was built with a flat, parapeted roof. St. Patrick’s next door acquired the building from the estate of its last occupant, the late Angelo DePaoli, attorney.

**Walk up Court to 115 and then 121 Court.**

**42 THE RECTORY AND ST. PATRICK’S CATHOLIC CHURCH, 115 and 121 Court**
The Italianate rectory - before the recent gable addition - arose in 1887 and acquired more than one addition. The church was built in 1867, replacing church and rectory destroyed in the ‘62 fire at another location. In the interim, the congregation attended mass in the court house. Archbishop Alemany officiated at the church’s dedication on May 18, 1868. A decade later the belfry tower and cross blew off and were replaced in 1894 by a cupola and cross. Father Van Schie added longs front stairs in 1895 and a 20’ section extended the back of the church by 1912. In front of the church is a monument commemorating Angelo Noce, Jackson native and founder of Columbus Day. Note the church’s classic Greek Revival features. It was designed and built by Jackson contractor Daniel Harter.

**Cross Church and head northerly up the street to the United Methodist Church of Jackson.**

**43 215 Court**
Most likely the original part of this house was built by Isaac Peiser in about 1870. But it was the Blair family which obtained in 1900, and expanded it to its present size before 1903. In the 1930s Mrs. Grace Blair DePue had constructed a 2-story brick “Indian Museum building” behind the main house. In 1944, when she died, she willed her 2,831 piece collection of North American Indian baskets and artifacts to the University of California at Berkeley where it remains today. The property was placed on the National Register on October, 26, 1983.

**Return to Church and walk northerly to 120 Church St.**

**44 THE JACKSON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, 120 Church**
Jackson’s first Protestant and second church was built on this site in 1853, but soon was partly or wholly used by the first Jackson school by 1854. When Jackson built a brick school in ’58, the building reverted back to the church. Which used it until 1868 when Daniel Harter designed and built a new church. His plans are still extant. That first church faced southerly, with its side to Church Street. Early in the 20th century, the congregation moved the church to the back of the lot, with high hopes of raising the money to construct a fine brick church on the old site. That dream died, and the church was forced to move the old church back, but this time putting its gabled front facing the street. Major additions and restorations were accomplished in 1913, 1951 and in recent years.

**Continue to 130 Church St.**
THE PARSONAGE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, 130 Church

On the same site as its old parsonage (1861) the Jackson congregation built a new 2-story one in 1893, just in time for a minister with a family too large for the old. Over the years the church extended the building twice. Built in 1893, the architecture reflects the recent arrival in Amador of the Queen Anne, Victorian style of architecture but echoes of the Greek Revival which it replaced.

Cross the street at your back to your starting place.

Thank you for your interest in Jackson’s history.

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