

# Walking Tour of Downtown Greensboro

301 N. ELM STREET

THE PARK BESIDE THE UNITED STATES TRUST CENTER, O. HENRY STATUES

In this small park are three statues commemorating William Sydney Porter, born in Greensboro in 1862, who became a great short story writer, using the pen name O. Henry. There is a statue of O. Henry, one depicting his famous short stories "Gift of the Magi" and "The Ransom of Red Chief," and one showing a dog. These sculptures were made by Maria J. Kirby-Smith in 1985, provided by the Southern Life Insurance Company, and presented by the O. Henry Festival, Inc.

217 AND 223 N. ELM STREET

These buildings' windows are decorated with paintings of Old Greensborough.

CORNER OF ELM STREET AND FRIENDLY AVENUE

Here is a historical marker commemorating the sit-in that occurred in the Woolworth Building at 132 S. Elm Street. Proceed to the description of Woolworth's for a brief account of the sit-in.

114 N. ELM STREET, PIEDMONT BUILDING

The entrance of this 1927 building is beautifully decorated with terra cotta and stone. A new mural by Lou Ann Peters, painted on the walls and ceiling of the entrance to the lobby, shows the 100 block of North Elm Street, looking north, during the 1930s.

CORNER OF MARKET AND ELM STREETS, THE ORIGINAL CENTER OF GREENSBORO

When the city was established in 1808, this intersection was its center. Starting from this point, one block of North Elm and all of South Elm to Lee Street is listed as a National Register Historic District.

101 – 117 N. ELM STREET, JEFFERSON BUILDING

In 1923 people came from miles around to gaze at this new marvel that stood seventeen stories high, the tallest and largest office building in the South. Jefferson Standard Life Insurance Company president Julian Price, impressed by the work of New York architect Charles C. Hartmann, required that Hartmann, if given the job, move to Greensboro. He accepted the offer and became the city's leading architect. The final cost of construction was \$2.5 million, and the building was paid for on its opening day.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the building, clad in terra cotta and granite, is built in a blend of architectural styles. The U-shape design provided ventilation through open windows and door transoms, an important feature in those

pre-air conditioning days. The exterior remains basically unchanged since the 1920's. It forms a column with a base (floors 1 and 2), shaft (floors 3-13), cornice (floors 14-top) and cap. The bust of Thomas Jefferson, placed over the main entrance, reflects the company's name. The company slogan was, "A Jefferson Standard policy is a Declaration of Independence for the family." The date 1922, which appears on the building, indicates the year when building began.

The turn-of-the-century Guilford County courthouse was demolished to make room for the skyscraper.

In its early years, the building was a "city within a city," with a variety of offices in addition to the insurance company. Residents might visit it to do their banking, visit a doctor, dentist, or lawyer, buy floral arrangements, cigars, railway tickets, or clothing, or attend civic club meetings. A restaurant was on the top floor. Later, WBIG radio broadcasts originated there. Today most of the building is used for Jefferson-Pilot offices, and the restaurant is a private club. The interior has been extensively remodeled.

In 1950, a metal observation tower was built on top of the structure to serve as a watch point for forest fires, and on a clear day Pilot Mountain was visible from it. This was manned until the late 1960's.

For many years, residents set their watches and learned the temperature from signs on top of the building. Since the signs included the Jefferson Standard Life Insurance Company name, they were removed when Jefferson-Pilot became the firm's new name. After protests from the public, new signs were installed on top of the new Jefferson-Pilot Building next door.

Hartmann left the north and west sides of the building undecorated, anticipating new buildings beside it, and in 1990 the 20-story Jefferson-Pilot Building was completed next to it.

119 S. ELM STREET, WEST  
WIND CAFÉ

This restaurant is Vietnamese-owned and serves Vietnamese food, representative of the increased diversity of Greensboro during recent years.

121 S. ELM STREET,  
PORTER DRUG STORE

This building stands on an important Greensboro site. Note the sign reading, "In this store O. Henry (William Sidney Porter) 1862-1910 was employed by uncle as drug clerk for five years. Here he was loved by old and young, white and black, rich and poor." This popular drug clerk, born in Greensboro and working here during his teenage years, later became a world-famous short story writer and one of Greensboro's greatest native sons. The plaque dates back to the 1950's, when local high school students collected nickels to replace an earlier one that had disappeared.

The Greensboro Historical Museum contains a reproduction of the drugstore in O. Henry's day, one-third its original size, including a glimpse inside.

Another sign reads, "In this store Lunsford Richardson (1854-1919) during his joint ownership from 1890 to 1898 developed a line of home remedies of which Vicks Vaporub became world-renowned for the relief of the common cold." Richardson and a partner bought the drug store from O. Henry's uncle. His manufacturing operation brought fame to the city for many years.

The current building was built in the late 1920's; the upper floor still has the original Renaissance-Revival style finish, but the ground floor has been greatly changed.

The ornate terra cotta panels of the second story windows are important architectural features. The building was recently renovated for law offices.

125 S. ELM STREET, DIXIE  
BUILDING

This 6-story building, in the Renaissance Revival style, was among Greensboro's largest when it was built in 1904. It also had elevators, making it truly modern! It served as a transition from 19<sup>th</sup>-century Greensboro's three-story buildings to such taller buildings as the Jefferson Building. Notice the colored tiles and terra cotta decorations on the upper part of the building. The granite façade is the result of major renovations in 1981.

The building has been designated as a Guilford County Historic Landmark.

It has had many tenants, including the City National Bank and the Dixie Fire Insurance Co., which joined other companies to form Pilot Life Insurance. A forerunner of the City Club used to meet there. The building illustrates the civil rights history of the city. African-Americans who worked in the Dixie in its early days were barbers, janitors, or elevator operators. In more recent years, an African-American attorney had his office there—until he moved to more spacious quarters.

132 S. ELM STREET, F. W.  
WOOLWORTH BUILDING

This building gained international fame as the site of the February 1, 1960 sit-ins. On this date, four freshmen from nearby North Carolina A & T University, frustrated by the fact that African-Americans were allowed to shop in the Woolworth's store but not to sit at its lunch counter, politely came into the store, sat at the counter, and asked to be served. Other students, including some from predominantly white colleges, joined the four young men (Ezell Blair, Jr, now Jibreel Khazan; Franklin McCain; Joseph McNeil; and David Richmond). In July the lunch counter served African-Americans for the first time. This peaceful protest led to similar protests in other cities and to integration of restaurants throughout the country. The building has been purchased for an International Civil Rights Center and Museum to

commemorate the sit-ins. Markers outside the building contain historical information, and footprints of the four famous freshmen have been placed outside the store.

The building, built for Woolworth's, opened in 1929. Like many other Greensboro buildings, it was designed by Charles C. Hartmann. It combines Art Deco, an elaborate style popular in that period, with classical elements. Notice the granite urns used as decoration.

MEYER'S DEPARTMENT  
STORE, SOUTH ELM  
STREET AND FEBRUARY  
ONE PLACE

Meyer's, which began as a small general store in 1904, opened an impressive 5-story department store in 1924. It was designed by one of Guilford County's finest architects, Harry Barton, who designed the 1918 courthouse on West Market Street, as well as a number of buildings at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. You can still see the original windows, entrance, cornice, sconces and cast concrete walls enlivened with art nouveau foliage. It must have been a festive place to shop and to enjoy lunch in the tea room! As malls sprang up in the city, Meyer's faded. Since 1983, the U.S. Bankruptcy Court has made its headquarters here.

TOURGEE MARKER, S.  
ELM AND E. FEBRUARY  
ONE PLACE, IN FRONT OF  
201 S. ELM STREET

"Albion Winegar Tourgee, a native of Ohio and veteran of the Union Army, moved to Greensboro in 1865 and led a campaign to secure justice for African-Americans. He was an organizer of the Republican Party in N.C., a delegate to the convention that drafted the Constitution of 1868, and a Superior Court judge from 1868 to 1874. As a member of the northern branch of the Methodist Episcopal Church, he helped organize the school which became Bennett College. Disliked by many, his life was often threatened before he left Greensboro in 1876 and N.C. in 1879. As an attorney, Tourgee represented Homer Plessy, who challenged a state law requiring railroads to segregate passengers by race. In 1896 he unsuccessfully argued the Plessy versus Ferguson case before the Supreme Court. A talented and prolific writer, his books included A Fool's Errand, a novel about Greensboro during Reconstruction which was a best-seller. In 1897 Tourgee was appointed consul to France, where he died in 1905."

HENRY FRYE MARKER, S.  
ELM AND W. FEBRUARY  
ONE PLACE, IN FRONT OF  
200 S. ELM STREET

The marker lists some of Frye's major accomplishments:

1963 First African-American Assistant U.S. District Attorney

1968 First African-American member of the General Assembly since 1899

1983 First African-American appointed to the N.C. Supreme Court

It also says that Frye was the organizer and president of Greensboro National Bank, the city's first bank owned by African-Americans. After the marker was placed, Frye, in September 1999, became the first African-American to serve as Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court.

212 S. ELM STREET, S. H.  
KRESS BUILDING

This building entered civil rights history as the scene of a sit-in at the lunch counter of the Kress variety store. The Kress sit-in began on April 21, 1960, over two months after the Woolworth sit-in. Here 45 young people were arrested for sitting at the lunch counter, including Ezell Blair, Jr.(now Jibreel Khazan), Joseph McNeil, and David Richmond, three of the originators of the Woolworth sit-in.

If you knew nothing about Kress, would you guess that this architectural landmark was opened in 1930, when the country was deep in the Depression? Would you think that it was a five and ten cent store? Probably not! However, the S. H. Kress Company believed in selling inexpensive items in elegant buildings. This one is a lively example of Art Deco architecture, an elaborate design popular at the time. Notice the bright orange, yellow, and green decorations, made of terra cotta, and the colored panels at the top. The details include narcissus flowers and the Kress coat of arms. At the top of the façade are rams with tobacco leaves flowing out of their horns, symbols of the economic impact of tobacco on this area. The store was designed by Edward F. Sibbert, who designed a number of Kress stores, and is among his most flamboyant buildings.

It had an unusual form of early air conditioning. A chiller made ice during the night, when power rates were lowest. The ice was used to cool salt brine water, which was pumped to the air handlers during the day.

Currently the building is being renovated to include offices, retail stores, a community gathering place, and a penthouse apartment. The outside is being restored to look as much as possible as it did in the 1930's. The long-lost original blueprints mysteriously appeared, helping to assure historical accuracy, and the high-quality floors, doors, and ornate ceilings, as well as the marble wainscoting on the first-floor walls, have been restored and preserved as much as possible. As a chilling reminder of the Jim Crow era, the restorers discovered two doors, painted to cover the words "colored women" and "colored men."

SCHIFFMAN'S JEWELRY  
225 SOUTH ELM STREET

In 1893, Simon Schiffman, a German immigrant, was about to change trains in Greensboro on his way to check into a jewelry business for sale in Asheville. While waiting for his train to depart, he walked along South Elm Street, saw a jewelry store for sale, and bought it on the spot. His store moved twice before settling into this location in 1927. When moving from the 300 block of Elm Street to this location, he was warned that no decent lady would walk on the side of the street where the saloons were located. Schiffman's first store on this spot, a four-story wooden building, burned in 1935 and was rebuilt the following year as a state-of-the-art facility. Reportedly, it was the first store in North Carolina to have a front door that opened automatically with a "magic beam." This is the city's oldest family-owned business.

230-232 S. ELM STREET,  
FORMER MONTGOMERY  
WARD STORE

The "W" at the top of the building stands for "Ward." The letters "M.W." were engraved in the tiled entranceway and will either remain where they are or be prominently displayed elsewhere in the building.

Greensboro's Montgomery Ward store moved to this location in 1938. This was a good location, close to such other department stores as Efid's, W. T. Grant, Meyer's, Ellis-Stone, and Sears. When Ward left Greensboro after 22 years, Rayless, another department store, moved to the building. Ward returned to Greensboro in 1976, this time to the Carolina Circle Mall.

The building will soon house Triad Stage, a professional theater.

236-238 S. ELM STREET,  
VERNON BUILDING

This building, built about 1885, is one of the oldest on Elm Street. Vanstory sold expensive men's clothing throughout Guilford County and the surrounding counties. The building is in the Italianate style.

Who is Vernon, whose name is embossed at the center of the cornice? The answer seems to be lost to history!

The building has been renovated to house the Liberty Oak Restaurant, as well as apartments and shops.

WASHINGTON STREET

As late as the 1880's, this was the southern boundary of Greensboro!

301 S. ELM STREET,  
GUILFORD BUILDING

Does this building look like a high-tech center to you? Don't let the historic architecture fool you—it's high-wired! Built in 1927, the building housed the Greensboro Bank and Trust Company for years. On the right side of the building you can still see the round night deposit used in those early days.

Charles C. Hartmann, who earlier designed the Jefferson Building, Greensboro's first skyscraper, was the architect of the Guilford, the second tallest Greensboro building of its day. Designed in the Renaissance Revival style of architecture, it is less elaborate than Hartmann's previous design, with thirteen stories instead of seventeen. The lower two sections of the building (the base and cornice) are made of terra cotta, which looks like gray granite and is scored to look like stone blocks. The many windows give the base an airy appearance. The higher part of the building is very plain-looking.

Notice the unusual decorative lamps attached to the front of the building. Now look into the lobby at the walls of San Danielle Italian marble, a type of marble no longer being quarried. Restored to its original beauty, the Tennessee marble floor provides a striking entrance to the building. The building has been renovated for use by telecommunications-related businesses, blending historic architecture with the latest in technology!

310 S. ELM STREET,  
GRISSOM BUILDING, AND  
312 SOUTH ELM STREET,  
MERCHANTS GROCERY  
COMPANY

310 dates from 1899 and 312 from about the same date. The Grissom Building is in the Romanesque Revival style. While the store front has been modernized, the upper floors are in their original condition. Grissom's Drug Store was located here for many years.

The Grissom Building, gutted by fire on July 14, 2000, will be saved. Downtown Greensboro Inc. lent \$50,000 for the project because of the historic importance of the building. Greensboro is learning to preserve its architectural heritage.

325-327 S. ELM STREET,  
ODELL HARDWARE  
BUILDING

325 was built about 1901 as the offices of the Odell Hardware Company, a major business of that period. Notice the Ionic pilasters decorating the upper story.

327 is one of downtown Greensboro's oldest surviving buildings; the first two stories were built about 1885 to house the offices and showroom of Odell Hardware.

Odell Hardware had its humble beginnings in another building—the first sale was for a penny, which, in those days, bought two pencils! Farmers would come to the store in covered wagons, camping in a vacant lot nearby, ready to barter their produce for merchandise at Odell's and at other stores.

An interesting sidelight is that George S. Sergeant, a manufacturer and inventor, bought Greensboro's first telephones for his home and office and soon was so enthralled by the new invention that he bought a telephone for Odell Hardware so that he could easily communicate with that business.

The company no longer exists, and the buildings have been restored to house apartments and businesses.

HAMBURGER SQUARE  
SOUTH ELM AND MCGEE  
STREETS

This intersection near the railroad tracks received its name because there were once hamburger and hot dog eating places in buildings at all four corners. According to many local citizens, these eateries were never segregated. During World War I, soldiers waited in this area for the troop trains. Cars drove freely around a traffic circle with no marked lanes. The circle remained intact until at least 1966. Plans are currently on the drawing boards to reinstate a similar traffic roundabout circling an expanded park.

A marker commemorates events at the end of the Civil War: "The president of the Confederacy held two meetings of his cabinet, April 12-13, 1865, at the home of J. T. Wood, which was a few yds. N." The Confederate leaders, including President

Jefferson Davis, had fled from Richmond, which was occupied by Union troops. Jefferson Davis was offered the opportunity to stay at the Blandwood Mansion but refused, fearing that Union troops might punish the Morehead family for its hospitality to the Confederate president. He chose to sleep in his leaking railroad car.

His soldiers camped nearby, despite “streets swimming in mud.” It was in a boxcar, parked on a siding near the marker, that Davis, his cabinet, and some Southern generals decided to request a cease-fire and a meeting to arrange peace terms. This meeting was held near Durham, N.C., at the home of a Mr. Bennett. Many Civil War buffs are convinced that the fleeing Confederates buried a large amount of gold beneath the railroad tracks leading to Greensboro. In May 1865, some Union soldiers dug up \$80,000 to \$100,000 worth of gold between Greensboro and Hillsborough. Legend has it that thousands more remain hidden.

RAILROAD MARKER,  
ACROSS THE STREET  
FROM 400 S. ELM STREET

"North Carolina Railroad opened interior of N.C. The ground-breaking took place nearby, July 11, 1851. First president, John Motley Morehead."

400 S. ELM STREET,  
NORFOLK SOUTHERN  
OFFICES

This red brick building, the first Southern Railway passenger depot in Greensboro, opened in 1899. Railroads were crucial to Greensboro's growth, as it is not located near a river. Here Teddy Roosevelt spoke to Greensboro residents from the back of a train, and Woodrow Wilson, then governor of New Jersey, stood on the platform by the station to give a speech in 1912.

The depot has been rebuilt as division offices for Norfolk Southern and greatly altered from its original appearance. In 1927 the depot was moved to East Washington Street. That building is also on this tour.

514 S. ELM STREET,  
FORDHAM'S DRUG  
STORE

For over 100 years--from 1898 until 2002--this building was the home of Fordham's Drug Store. The Italianate design, a popular style for American commercial buildings in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, looks basically as it originally did. Note, at the top of the building, the mortar and pestle and the apothecary urns. These notified customers that this was a drug store.

Throughout its long history, the store offered a nostalgic look at the past. The soda fountain, made of Mexican marble, the shelving, and the back bar were all original. The low soda fountain easily accommodated children. Onyx columns were trimmed in gold. The ceiling and ceramic tile floor were also original.

Until its closing, it continued to sell old-fashioned candy, Octagon soap (a popular brand in the store's early days), Lydia Pinkham Herbal Compound, on the market since 1875, and Hoyt's cologne, which was still sold in the type of bottle used since 1868. The soda fountain served soft drinks, such as Coca-Cola and cherry smash, made in the old-fashioned way, by mixing syrup with carbonated water. In the later days of the store, it still had a cash register that was over 40 years old and could only enter amounts up to \$5.00!

In the store's early days, doctors' offices were conveniently located upstairs.

As you can imagine, many interesting things happened during the history of the store. In 1913, a salesman tried to convince Dr. Fordham, Sr. to stock a new drink. He sipped it and declined, declaring that it would never sell. The drink was Coca-Cola!

Later, during Prohibition, the store had two large globes filled with water dyed with food coloring. If the green globe was on display, liquor was available for purchase. If the red one was in view, the ABC man was around, and potential customers could not be served! These globes remained on display at the back of the store throughout its history.

DUDLEY BEAUTY  
COLLEGE, 519 SOUTH  
ELM STREET

Don't let this modest building fool you. It's a tiny hint of a successful many-faceted, multimillion-dollar empire called Dudley Products Incorporated, built by Joe and Eunice Dudley. Joe's rags-to-riches life brought him the prestigious Horatio Alger award, one of 500 granted in 50 years. The Dudley Products headquarters is now in Kernersville, about 15 miles west of Greensboro.

SALVATION ARMY  
BUILDING (NOW  
BROACH THEATRE), 520  
SOUTH ELM STREET

The local Salvation Army headquarters was in this building for 73 years, beginning in 1912. A 1927 renovation gave the building its present Mediterranean style look, with yellow brick, green awning tiles, and French doors leading onto a balcony. The Salvation Army left South Elm in 1985 for a new Citadel off Aycock Street.

For over 15 years the building has been home of the Broach Theatre, downtown Greensboro's first professional theater company.

BANK OF SOUTH  
GREENSBORO, 524  
SOUTH ELM STREET

Bankers of long ago wrestled with getting mistrusting Ma and Pa to lift the mattress and deposit their savings in a bank. This building, with its white limestone façade and Ionic pilasters, illustrates one strategy they used—architecture. By building banks to resemble fortresses—solid, lasting, and safe—the structures told the passersby that their money was secure here.

The building belonged to the independent Bank of South Greensboro, established around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to serve merchants and residents of downtown's southside, which was almost like a separate village south of the railroad tracks.

Around

1903, it became a branch of Southern Life and Trust Company. It was renovated before 1918 to give it the appearance of a Greek temple. Ma and Pa were right; banks were risky. In 1929, the federal government declared this bank too weak to remain open, and customers received 65 cents on each dollar. The city's banking industry eventually arose from the ashes of the Depression, but banking never resumed at 524 South Elm Street. Today the structure serves as an artist's studio and gallery, restored

with an eye for the past.

DEAL PRINTING, 616  
SOUTH ELM STREET

Who would believe that the NASCAR racing empire began here? The second floor of this building housed their first offices between 1948 and 1962. Deal Printing, who acquired the building in 1946, printed the first NASCAR programs.

The building was constructed between 1900 and 1905 in the Italianate style, which was popular at that time. Inside one can still see tin ceilings on the upper levels, a communal bathroom complete with tubs in separate stalls (dating from the building's days as a hotel), and the original hardwood floors. Going up the stairs, one can still see hand-painted signs, intended to improve the hotel's image, saying, "No Drunks and Please Keep Quiet," as well as soot from along-ago fire.

Deal Printing operates with modern electronic equipment but is also the last firm to use an "antique" linotype press.

OLD BLUE BELL  
BUILDING, 620 SOUTH  
ELM STREET

Here is the place that helped to establish the enormous jean empire known as Wrangler. Completed in 1916, it housed Hudson's Blue Bell Overall Company. In the 1920's, expanded to 100,000 square feet, it was called the largest overall factory in the world under one roof. By 1936, it had merged with other companies and overwhelmingly dominated the nation's bib overall, dungaree, and work coat industry. It shifted to military uniforms during World War II, producing two uniforms for every U.S. serviceman. After the war, Blue Bell produced casual wear, including Wrangler western jeans, introduced in 1947.

In 1987 the building was given a new life as a small business and light manufacturing center, and in 2001, the facade was restored to its original 1916 style.

303 E. WASHINGTON  
STREET, SOUTHERN  
RAILWAY PASSENGER  
DEPOT

This Neoclassical building replaced the old depot at 400 S. Elm Street. It was one of the grandest train stations in the state when built in 1927. This larger station was necessary because about 90 trains a day passed through Greensboro! Its Ionic portico can be seen for some distance down Church Street. White passengers entered a large arched vestibule, while African-Americans had to enter a separate entrance to their waiting room in the west wing.

The building has served as a teen center and as a meeting facility since Southern Railway gave it to the city in 1979. In 2001 it will become a transportation center for buses and, hopefully, will serve as a train station again at some later date. Its former appearance will be restored.

310 S. GREENE STREET,  
THE CAROLINA THEATRE

The theater opened in 1927. It cost \$500,000, which was major money back then, and was the largest, finest movie theatre in the Carolinas, with seating for 2200

people. It was the first public building in the state with air conditioning! Built in the Greek Revival style, it has Ionic pilasters and highlights of red, blue, yellow, and green terra cotta. Although we now know that Greek temples were brightly colored, at this time Greek temples were thought to have been white, so the use of color was quite unusual.

A theater-goer could enjoy a film, popcorn, and soda for 20 cents. Laurel and Hardy films were popular fare in those days. An organ provided music. And—in 1928, the Carolina became the first N.C. motion picture theater with a sound system! Until that time, Greensboro residents had, by necessity, contented themselves with silent films.

The theater was not just for movies. People went there for dance contests, war bond rallies, and live entertainment offered by such stars as Amos ‘n’ Andy and Tom Mix. It was the home of the Circle K Club, a children’s radio program.

Until 1964, seating was segregated, with African-Americans sitting in the second balcony. They entered through a separate entrance and climbed steep, narrow stairs. This balcony now holds the theater’s lighting equipment, and the seating capacity is reduced to about 1200.

The building was restored in the late 1970’s through a successful campaign by the United Arts Council. It is on the National Register of Historic Places. Audiences can see the beautiful interior, with its intricate detail, while enjoying film series, plays, concerts, and other programs.

CONE EXPORT AND  
COMMISSION COMPANY  
BUILDING, 330 SOUTH  
GREENE STREET

This, the third location of Cone Export and Commission Company (now Cone Mills), reflects Greensboro’s prosperity in the 1920’s. When it opened in 1925, the Greensboro Daily Record described the building as “the most beautifully appointed office building in the country.” It had the air of an expensive men’s club. Harry Barton, the architect of the Meyer’s Department Store, the 1918 County Courthouse on West Market Street, and a number of buildings at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, designed it.

At present, United States Congressman Howard Coble occupies an office here, and the rest of the building is used by the Guilford County Parole Board. Much of the handsome building remains unchanged since the 1920’s.

130 SUMMIT AVENUE,  
GREENSBORO  
HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Be sure to take time to tour the museum, which illuminates many phases of local history.

The building, in the Romanesque Revival style, was built in 1892 and served as the

First Presbyterian Church until 1903. Later, it served as a civic center, housing the library, art center, museum, and various social service and civic organizations. As the Museum grew, it eventually took over the entire building, and an addition was built. The site includes First Presbyterian Church's historic cemetery and two restored log houses. Civil War wounded were cared for in an earlier church on this site.

The Museum is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

318 N. GREENE STREET,  
CENTRAL FIRE STATION

This building was designed by the well-known architect Charles C. Hartmann, who moved to Greensboro to design the Jefferson Building on Elm Street. It was built in 1926, when the city went from volunteer to professional firefighting, and is in the Italian Renaissance Revival style. Each of the six arches once housed a fire-engine bay. The building is now used as a hotel restaurant. The building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

W. MARKET STREET,  
BETWEEN EUGENE  
AVENUE AND GREENE  
STREET, GUILFORD  
COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Built in 1918, the building is in the Neoclassical Revival style, with Ionic pilasters. It is the 7<sup>th</sup> courthouse built in the county and the fifth built in downtown Greensboro. Since the town was not laid out until 1808, it is evident that new courthouses were built at an amazing rate! It was replaced by the near-by courthouse at the corner of Market Street and Eugene Street but still houses governmental offices.

If you think that spending more than budgeted for a governmental building is a modern phenomenon, you'll be interested to know that the building was budgeted at \$350,000—and cost about \$750,000!

THE BILTMORE HOTEL,  
111 WEST WASHINGTON  
STREET

This building has been a hotel for about 20 years and is furnished with antiques; its lobby is one of the last projects of Otto Zenke, a nationally-known interior designer headquartered in Greensboro.

Designed in the Romanesque style, the building features interesting brick work and was built in 1903 as headquarters for the Cone Export and Commission Company, now named Cone Mills. This New York City company established its Greensboro office in 1893 at the building now housing Thousands O' Prints, easily seen from the Biltmore. Then the office moved to this building and later, in 1924, to larger quarters on Greene Street.

447 W. WASHINGTON  
STREET, BLANDWOOD  
MANSION

This is the former home of John Motley Morehead, North Carolina's governor from 1841 to 1845. He is especially noted for his advocacy of railroads in the state and for

making sure that Greensboro was served by rail. The coming of the railroad was an important factor in Greensboro's growth.

The house began life in the 1790's as a two-story four-room farmhouse. At that time, this was a rural area; Greensboro was not founded until 1808. Another part was built no later than 1822. In 1844, the outstanding architect Alexander Jackson Davis redesigned the house, making it the first Tuscan villa-style dwelling in North Carolina. In Morehead's day, this was one of the finest homes in the South and was famous throughout the state for its hospitality.

General Beauregard and his staff spent several days at Blandwood before the official surrender on April 9, 1865. Morehead's wife served the starving soldiers turnip greens, lettuce, and onions from the garden, along with hot cornbread. Later, when the Union army occupied the town, its generals notified the mayor that they would occupy the largest house in town until their headquarters were ready. In response, former governor Morehead graciously received them as his guests.

From 1927 to 1965, the building was occupied by the Keeley Institute for the treatment of alcoholism and drug addiction. The Greensboro Preservation Society later restored it to the 1840's period. The house is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and is a National Historic Landmark. It now serves as headquarters for the Greensboro Preservation Society and is maintained by the Blandwood Guild. Some of the old boxwoods and oaks are still on the property. Tours of the house are available.

200 BLOCK OF SOUTH  
GREENE STREET  
MILLENNIUM GATE

This impressive gate, directly across S. Greene from the spot where February One Place dead-ends, stands on the city's governmental plaza. The columns and arch, as well as the gate itself, are covered with a total of 105 silicone bronze icons. Each icon shows an invention, event, or person from the last 1,000 years that helped to make life in Greensboro what it is today. These are not always connected to local events or local people. For example, electricity was not invented in Greensboro, but it has a major impact on our lives. A few of the icons are:

- A chair represents the furniture industry which is so important in this area;
- The Lost Colony takes us back to the beginning of European settlement of North Carolina;
- The Battle of Guilford Courthouse reminds us of this major battle fought within the present-day city of Greensboro;
- A drinking gourd is a symbol of the Underground Railroad;

- The Statue of Liberty represents immigration, an important part of today's Greensboro and of our past.

The community was involved in each step of the process. Anyone who wished could contribute ideas, and a committee carefully considered all of them before selecting those represented on the gate. Individuals and organizations contributed money towards the project, which cost about \$150,000. Seventeen artists designed the icons, and sculptor Jim Gallucci's local studio completed the project.

The gate, from base to top, is 19 feet, 4 inches tall on the street side and 20 feet tall on the plaza side. The difference is due to the sloping ground at this spot. The moving part of the gate is 6 feet wide and 13 feet, 10 inches tall. The superstructure is made of galvanized steel. The icons are expected to last 1,000 years!

Information kiosks, lighting, and a permanent base with donor name plates are being added.

No one can guarantee that you'll agree with every topic chosen for an icon or with the artist's interpretation of each one, but every viewer will be challenged to think about Greensboro's past and future—and possibly motivated to learn more!