Tigard Main Street History Tour

Take a stroll down Tigard's Main Street and learn about the history of the area in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Tigard Public Library
Serving the public since 1963

13500 SW Hall Blvd • Tigard, OR 97223
503.684.6537 • www.tigard-or.gov/library

This self-guided tour was researched and compiled by the team at the Tigard Public Library. If you're interested in learning more, the Tigard Public Library Local History Room features a collection of local history materials that document Tigard's development from 1850 to the present. Although the primary focus is the city of Tigard, it also contains some material on nearby communities and Washington County in general.
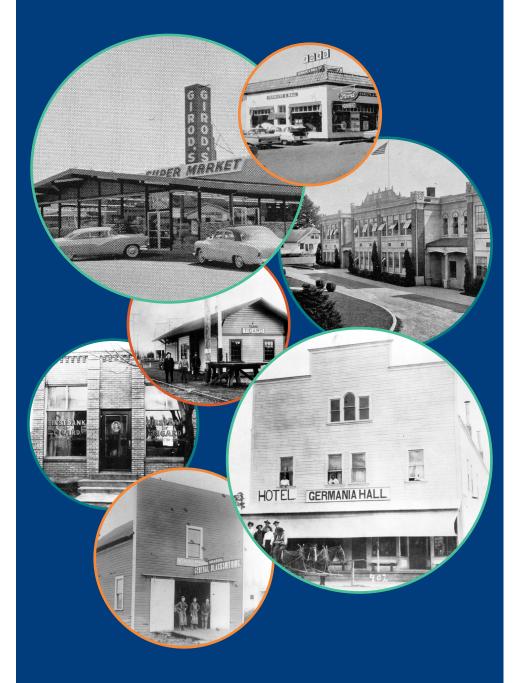
The Local History Room is located on the 2nd floor of the Tigard Public Library.

The collection includes:

- Books, articles and newspaper clippings
- Maps and atlases
- Photographs and scrapbooks
- Tigard High School yearbooks
- Information on historical businesses, entrepreneurs and notable residents

We acknowledge that Tigard's Main Street exists today on the traditional land of the Atfalati Kalapuya. They and their descendants are the original caretakers of this land. We regret the displacement, genocide, and forced assimilation that still impacts many indigenous families today and recognize that injustices visited upon peoples of this region have yet to be properly rectified.

-- Land Acknowledgment Statement, based on the statement at Tigard Outdoor Museum at Rotary Plaza

Butte School / Tigard Union High School / Fowler Junior High School [All Razed] • 12090 SW Main St.

Tigard's first schoolhouse was a log cabin constructed by local pioneers at this location in the 1850s. A larger, 1-room lumber-framed building known as The Butte School replaced the cabin in 1869. Tigard-Union High School, Tigard's first high school, opened here in September 1927. The Tigard-Union High School building was renamed Fowler Junior High School in 1953 when a new high school opened on Durham Road.

1

Tigard Methodist Church [Razed] • 12160 SW Main St.

The Tigard Methodist Church, organized in 1911, constructed their 2nd church building across the street from here in 1923. When the Oregon Highway Commission built the Pacific Highway overpass in 1940, the church was moved across the street to this location. In October 1957, Tigard Methodist Church moved into a new church on Walnut Place in Tigard. This address is also associated with U.S. National Bank (see site 6).

2

United States Post Office - Tigard Branch • 12210 SW Main St.

Tigard's Main Street post office was established in 1908 after the Tigardville Post Office (Charles Tigard, Postmaster) was dissolved. The post office existed in several locations (see site 5 , 18) before the current brick building was constructed in 1975. Built by Tualatin contractor Chester Klock & Sons, the building measures 16,000 square feet and has 2.5 acres of parking, making it one of the largest lots on Main Street.

3

Girod's Super Market • 12230 SW Main St. #120 (Corner of Main St. & Commercial St.)

In 1947, Lou Girod established Girod's Food Store in Tigard's Johnson Building (see site 18). By the mid-1950s he acquired a vacant lot across the street and constructed a larger, 1-story concrete building and parking lot for his market. The store featured a small tower on the roof that read Girod's, with a parallelogram-shaped sign beneath that read Super Market. Girod later expanded the store with a large addition at the entrance to the store. Lou Girod was honored with Tigard's First Citizen award in 1965. Girod's closed for business in the late 1970s.

4

Germania Hall / Burtch Building • 12370 SW Main St. / 12386 SW Main St.

Germania Hall is considered to be the first building constructed on Main Street after the Oregon Electric Railway began service through Tigard in 1908. Built by Adolf Schamoni, Germania Hall was a three-story building with a gabled roof concealed by a false-front facade. The ground floor contained a restaurant, a small grocery, and the family's living quarters were in the back. A dance hall and hotel rooms were located on the upper floors. The Burch Building (built 1921) housed the Tigard Post Office for several years. Josephine (Schamoni) Burtch was appointed Tigard's postmistress in 1919. The Burch Building contained over 80 P.O. boxes as well as a lunch counter where Josephine served meals to customers and passing travelers.

5

First Bank of Tigard / U.S. National Bank-Tigard Branch / Tigard City Hall • 12420 SW Main St.

The First Bank of Tigard was built in 1919 by Tigard resident Harry Bonesteele (see site 9) and was the first building on Main Street constructed of brick. Charles Tigard was the bank's first president. In 1925, the first electric sign in Tigard was installed over the bank's entrance. The building was enlarged on the north and south sides by local contractor Ray Christenson in 1935 and in 1939, 160 safety deposit boxes were installed. The bank was sold to U.S. National Bank In 1944 and became the bank's Tigard branch. In 1960, U.S. National moved to a new building on Main Street at the corner of Scoffins Street (see site 2). When Tigard incorporated as a city in 1961, the First Bank of Tigard building was converted into City Hall. In 1964, the Tigard Public Library began service out of a back room in City Hall.

6

Schubring & Biederman Grocery / Schubring's Grocery • 12430 SW Main St.

In 1922, August Schubring purchased George Boland's grocery store that existed at this location. The original store was a rectangular, two-story wood structure with a covered porch along the front of the building. The Schubring family's living quarters were at the back of the store and upstairs. In 1924 Schubring formed a partnership with his cousin Wilbur Biederman. In the summer of 1931, a fire destroyed the grocery store as well as an adjoining property. The grocery store reopened in January 1932 on the same site in a one and one-half story brick building. The Schubring-Biederman partnership dissolved in 1936 and Schubring continued to operate the grocery store until he retired and sold the business in 1950.
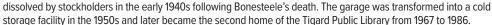
7

Charles Burnham House • 9230 SW Burnham St.

Charles Burnham lived here and farmed 45 acres of adjoining land. After arriving in Tigard in 1883, he built this rectangular, two-story Colonial/Georgian-Revival style house that features a half-hipped roof with a broken pediment. The entrance to the house is a half-width porch supported by two columns; the porch's small roof mimics the broken pediment seen on the second floor. Charles Burnham was a resident of the area for 28 years before his death in 1911. He is buried in Crescent Grove Cemetery in Tigard.

8

Bonesteele Garage / Sealy Mattress / Cold Storage / Tigard Public Library • 12566-12568 SW Main St.

In 1917 Harry Bonesteele became one of the first Ford automobile dealers in Washington County and constructed this two-story concrete garage. In 1923, Bonesteele formed a partnership with local brothers Alfred and Herman Zweiner and incorporated the Sealy Mattress Company of Oregon, using the garage as a manufacturing facility. In 1927 the company provided all the mattresses for the grand opening of the Heathman Hotel in Portland. Sealy Mattress Company of Oregon was dissolved by stockholders in the early 1940s following Bonesteele's death. The garage was transformed into a cold storage facility in the 1950s and later became the second home of the Tigard Public Library from 1967 to 1986.

9

Tigard Lumber Company • 12571 SW Main St.

This building was constructed in 1922 for the Tigard Lumber Company as a hardware store and company offices. Tigard Lumber was formed in 1916 when Emil Johnson purchased a bankrupt lumber operation in Tigard. In the early 1920s he purchased six acres of land fronting Pacific Highway and located his company's lumber yard and building materials facility on the property. The Johnson family home also existed on the lot, across from St. Anthony's Church. When the Oregon Highway Commission built the Pacific Highway overpass in 1940, the property was split in half by the overpass's south ramp. Emil Johnson was honored with Tigard's First Citizen award in 1941.

10

Tigard Planing Mill [Razed] • Vacant lot south of 12525 SW Main St.

In 1938 building contractor Ray Christensen opened the Tigard Planing Mill on this lot, described by a local paper as a "thoroughly modern plant equipped for all kinds of mill work." The two-story mill next to Fanno Creek measured 48'X76' and contained a cement floor inside. As many as 14 employees operated the mill, fabricating cabinets, doors, window sashes, as well as doing general millwork for customers. By 1940 his contracting firm had built over 100 single-family homes throughout the Tualatin Valley. Sometime after World War II, Christensen relocated to central Oregon. The mill was torn down in 2017.

11

Kuehne Farm Equip. & Livery [Razed] • 12501 SW Main St.

In 1909, Harry Kuehne purchased a wood-framed building from Adolf Schamoni and moved it across the street. The building was a wide, two-story wood-frame building with a gabled roof concealed by a false-front facade. Two groups of sliding bay doors were at the front of the building with a painted sign above reading **H.R. Kuehne**. Kuehne operated a livery stable and rented out threshers, balers and labor teams for contract work with local farmers during harvest time. The livery stable rented horses and carriages to salespeople who arrived in Tigard by train and needed transportation to surrounding farms to peddle their goods. Kuehne relocated to Yamhill County sometime after his marriage to Evelyn Hoffarber in 1930.

12

William Ariss Blacksmith / Lee Ariss Service Station [Razed] • 12485 SW Main St.

William Ariss arrived in Tigard in 1911 and opened a blacksmith shop at this location, a 2-story, wood-framed building with a gabled roof concealed by a false-front facade. The ground floor entrance had large bay doors with a sign above that read **Wm. Ariss General Blacksmithing**. By the early 1920s his business expanded to include a garage for motor vehicle repair. A small wood portico was added the front of the building where a fuel pump was installed for travelers needing gas. His son Lee took over running the garage in 1936 and William continued to operate the blacksmith business through the 1960s. Lee retired in 1972. This location has continued to operate as an automotive garage to the present day.

13

Tigard Meat Market [Razed] • 12475 SW Main St.

The Tigard Meat Market was a 2-story, wood-framed building built around 1910 by Knute Raun, who operated the market with his wife Dorothea. The market occupied the ground floor and living quarters were upstairs. A brick facade was added to the building sometime after 1929. The meat market was making deliveries to customers by car in the early 1920s. Knute Raun retired and sold the meat market in 1932 and local butcher Fred Hambach bought the business. The building was torn down in 1981.

14

H.B. Tigard General Store [Razed] • 12405 SW Main St.

Hugh Butler Tigard built his general store on Main Street in 1911, a two-story rectangular structure with a hipped roof and a covered porch along the front of the building. Butler Tigard was operating a general merchandise store in Portland but relocated back to Tigard when the Oregon Electric Railway was built. Oregon Electric officials encouraged entrepreneurs to build general stores close to town train stations in hopes that the population would follow the railway. After 34 years in business on Main Street, the H.B. Tigard General Store closed in December 1945. Butler Tigard remained active in real estate and local fraternal memberships until his death in 1950.

15

Tigard Feed & Garden Store [Razed] • 12345 SW Main St.

The Tigard Feed and Garden Store was built in 1924 by local grocer August Schubring and operated by his partner Wilbur Biederman (see site 7). Biederman was a graduate of Oregon Agricultural College (now Oregon State University) and used his specialized training to custom grind animal feeds for local farmers. In 1936, Biederman returned to Wisconsin and the feed store was sold to a new owner. The original building measured 30' x 60', was one and one-half stories high, and had a gabled roof covered with corrugated tin. A shed roof porch stretched across three quarters of the front facade. The building was moved forward in 1939-40 when the Oregon Highway Commission built the Pacific Highway overpass and in 1941 additions were added to the back and side of the building. By the 1980s the store had fell into disuse, was closed and eventually torn down.

16

Oregon Electric Railway – Tigard Station [Razed] • Rotary Plaza – Outdoor Museum

Passenger service on the Oregon Electric Railway began January 1, 1908, shortly after the last spike was driven near downtown Tigard completing the rail line between Portland and Salem. The railway built a small depot at this location that sold tickets to passengers. About a dozen trains went through Tigard daily, enabling residents, for the first time, to reach downtown Portland quickly and comfortably. Local dairy farmers also used the railway to send large containers of milk to market in Portland. The Oregon Electric Railway transformed Tigard's early growth by attracting entrepreneurs who helped establish a business district near the station, as well as real estate investors who purchased available land around Tigard and began subdividing tracts for future home buyers.

17

Johnson Building • 12255 - 12285 SW Main St.

In 1927, Tigard Lumber Company President Emil Johnson financed construction of a block-long, 1-story office building fronting Pacific Highway. Sever Severson of Tigard was the contractor and builder. The hollow-tile constructed building, 80' long X 70' deep, contained 5 stores and was originally faced with tan-colored brick and columns of cream-colored veneered brick. A diamond motif was painted above each of the display windows of the 5 storefronts. The Johnson Building housed a multitude of Tigard businesses over the years, including Talent's Variety Store, Motes Pharmacy, Girod's Food Store (see site 4) and the Tigard Post Office (see sites 3 and 5).

18

Vermilye Motor Company / Vermilye & Ball Ford Sales Company • 12215 SW Main St.

Hobart Vermilye established the Vermilye Motor Company in Tigard in 1936. in 1940, Vermilye Motors moved into this building built by Emil Johnson of the Tigard Lumber Company. As a Ford dealership throughout its existence, Vermilye Motors was recognized as an "Outstanding Dealership" by the Ford Company for 4 consecutive years between 1947-1950. In 1956 Vermilye took on partner Del Ball and changed the name of the company to Vermilye & Ball Ford Sales Company. Vermilye sold the dealership to Ball in 1963 who renamed the dealership Del Ball Ford. In 1972 Del Ball purchased a lot and moved the dealership on to SW 66th Avenue, just off I-5 in Tigard.

19

Eickmeyer Department Store • 12175 SW Main St.

Mabel Eickmeyer and her husband Lawrence owned and operated the Greenburg Store (at the north end of Tiedeman Avenue) from 1922 to 1939. After Lawrence's death, Mabel opened the Eickmeyer Dress Shop, a small dry-goods store on Main Street, around 1940. Eickmeyer's sold clothing, textiles and sundries. Mabel moved the dress shop the following year into a larger space next to Schubring's Grocery (see site 13). In 1950, Eickmeyer's moved to this larger building constructed that year by Emil Johnson of the Tigard Lumber Company and renamed the business the Eickmeyer Department Store. Mabel Eickmeyer retired in 1964 and sold the business, where it became Fisher's Department Store.

20