

Walking Tour

Driving Tour

Mount Dora Historic Tours

1-Atlantic Coastline Depot - 1915
341 Alexander St
Constructed at a cost of \$8,223, the building served as a passenger depot until 1950 and a freight depot until 1973. In that year, the Mount Dora Area Chamber of Commerce made the depot its permanent home. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

2-Childs House - 1922
352 Alexander St
One of Sears and Roebuck "kit houses," this outstanding example of the Arts and Crafts Bungalow style of architecture was built by Charles Edgerton, owner of the Lakeside Inn, for his niece and her husband.

3-Old Post Office - 1928
430 Alexander St
After two years of persuading the Government a Post Office was needed, it took only three months to build. The one-story hollow tile building had a Lombardy Engove tapered tile roof, a cream-colored stucco facade, a white interior finish and a twelve foot high ceiling with a central skylight.

4-Princess Theater - 1928
120-130 W. 5th Ave
A fire in 1922 destroyed the original theater. On July 4, 1928, a second fire in the projection booth destroyed the facade and buildings on either side. The new 600-seat theater was rebuilt in the Spanish Revival style and equipped for talking movies.

5-Simpson Hotel - 1925
110-116 W. 5th Ave
James Simpson built this hotel at the same time he built the former adjacent bank building. Architect James Gamble Rogers designed the building. Tenants at the time were a realtor, Western Union, a dentist, Eastern Star, Knights of Pythias, a Temple, a photographer and the Chamber of Commerce.

6-First National Bank - 1925
100 W. 5th Ave
Designed by Winter Park Architect James Gamble Rogers, this building cost \$30,000, excluding the cost of land. The lavish interior was appointed with Alabama marble, mahogany, brass and bronze. The building remained the bank until 1965.

7-Donnelly House - 1893
535 Donnelly St
Built by entrepreneur and former Mayor J.P. Donnelly as a wedding gift for his bride Annie McDonald Stone, it remains a superb example of Steamboat Gothic/Queen Anne architecture. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

8-Community Church - 1887
650 Donnelly St
Established in the home of Ross C. Tremain in 1883 this Congregational Church, the 2nd church in Mount Dora, was constructed in 1887 on land donated by J.P. Donnelly. It stands today as the only 19th century church in Mount Dora.

9-Community Building - 1929
520 Baker St
Designed by architect H.M. Griffin of Daytona Beach this Mediterranean Revival style building cost \$35,000. The building was designed so the rear wall could be moved outward without spoiling the proportion of the building. Renovation of the building has begun and is expected to be completed in 2010.

10-Patterson-Hague House - 1916
610 Tremain St
This is a well-constructed and beautifully designed, brick duplex. Built in the Craftsman style this home is an early example of a multiple family dwelling.

11-Education Hall - 1912
308 E. 5th Ave
Originally built as a private school to accommodate the children of winter visitors, it became the City library in 1917. It is an unusual design with two large pavilions topped by hip roofs joined by a smaller recessed center bay.

12-Cross House - 1915
326 Tremain St
The earliest known owners of this house are Nellis and Lily Cross. The Crosses were winter visitors from northeast Pennsylvania. This Frame Vernacular home retains much of its historic integrity. It is located in a well-preserved collection of historic buildings and contributes to the historic district.

18-The Old Jail and Fire Station (Rovellou Museum) - 1923 & 1940
450 Rovellou Lane
Built in 1923 to house the fire station, it began as a much smaller building. It was enlarged to the rear when a new LaFrance fire engine didn't fit. In 1940, four jail cells were added to the front. Owned by the City, the Mount Dora Historical Society has used it for a museum since 1979.

13-Barnard House - 1911
308-310 Tremain St
The Barnard House was owned by George and Bertha Barnard early in its history. Its two-tiered wrap around porch is its unique feature.

14-Maria Marin House - 1885
244 E. Third Ave
This home was built in 1885 by R.C. Tremain and its first owner was Rev. P.B. Fiske, The Rev. Fiske of Vermont was called to be the pastor of the Congregational Church in 1887. The Frame Vernacular home is well preserved.

15-Nutter House - 1910
221 E. Fourth Ave
One of Mount Dora's oldest houses, this well-preserved frame two-story home was occupied in 1913 by the Nutter family for about 20 years and more recently housed a real estate office. It is a typical example of the Frame Vernacular style of architecture.

16-The Highland Garage - 1921
145 E. Fourth Ave
The Highland Garage is significant as an early garage and for its molded concrete block facade. In operation for several years, and owned by G.R. LaBreck in the 1920s, this building is one of two garages located downtown. The other at 441 Donnelly St. was completely remodeled.

17-Dr. Callahan's Office and Home - 1921
142 E. Fourth Ave
This unique building was constructed as Dr. Callahan's home and office as part of his responsibility to the Mount Dora Development Co. formed in 1918. It is significant for its unusual architecture and building materials and has housed a sanitarium for maternity and surgical cases, and a home for unwed mothers.

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19-The Ingram Building - 1923
132-138 E. Fifth Ave
This building contains three storefronts on the first floor, and apartments on the second floor. The stores are unusual in that they have large brick fireplaces. This building is one of the least altered buildings downtown. The building was built by W.W. Ingram, a lawyer and investor from Ohio.

20-The Lewis Drug Store and Post Office - 1908
425-427 Donnelly St
One of the oldest buildings in the downtown, the drugstore located in the two-story building was known for its souvenirs, post cards, books and soda water. This building was a grocery store in the 20s through the 40s. The post office was located in the one-story building for about ten years.

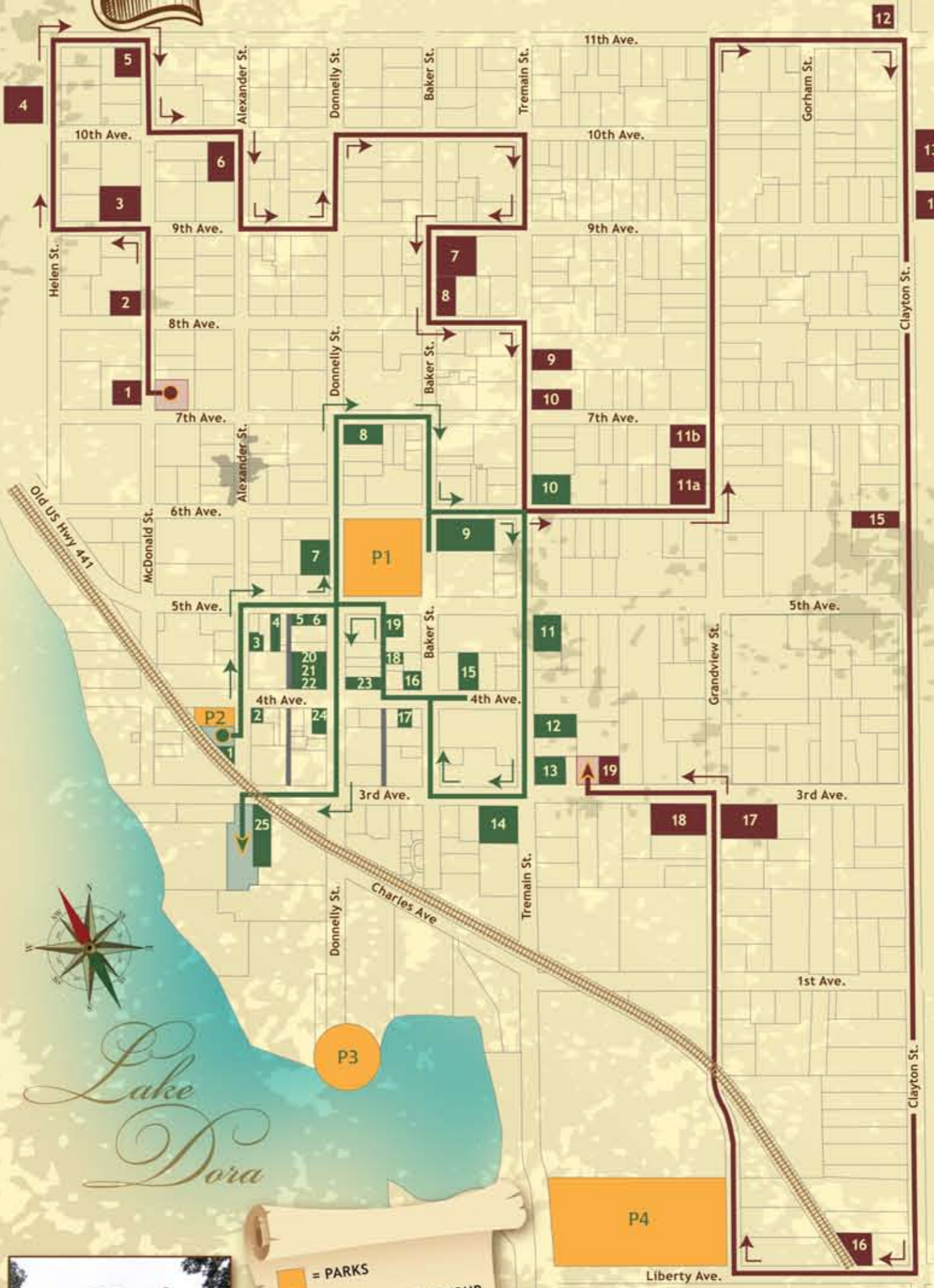
21-The Mount Dora Hotel - 1922
413 Donnelly St
The three-story Mount Dora Hotel is a plain building, but is one of two hotels built in the City during the Florida land boom, and as such, it represents the optimism of Florida investors during that time.

22-Crane Furniture Store - 1929
403 Donnelly St
This masonry building is located on the site of one of Mount Dora's earliest stores. C. Stowe came to Mount Dora in 1884. The store was in operation by 1888, and occupied by various businesses until the 1920s, when Rehbaum and Crane began their furniture store.

23-Rebaum's Hardware - 1915
401 N. Donnelly St
The north half of this building housed Rebaum's Hardware Store from 1915 until the 1980s. The second floor contained apartments where the family lived. In 1918 Mr. Rehbaum started the funeral business in the back of the furniture business.

24-Mount Dora Building - 1938
351 Donnelly St
The masonry building replaced an earlier frame commercial building. The first store in this building was the Drug Variety Store owned by Henry and Proctor Drug. By 1943 it was Vincent's 5-10-25 to \$1.00 Store which operated for at least 20 years. The building is significant for its modern architectural styling.

25-Lakeside Inn - 1883
100 Alexander St
John M. Alexander, Annie and J.P. Donnelly plus John A. McDonald built Mount Dora's first hotel. The first guests arrived via boat. Between 1928-1930 the Olympic-sized swimming pool and two new guest houses were built. In 1930 President and Mrs. Coolidge arrived for a visit and stayed for almost 5 weeks. Other guests have included Thomas Edison, Henry Ford and Dwight D. Eisenhower. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places.



- = PARKS
- = START WALKING TOUR
- ▶ = END WALKING TOUR
- ▶ = START DRIVING TOUR
- ▶ = END DRIVING TOUR

Sponsored by Mount Dora Community Redevelopment Agency

CITY OF MOUNT DORA

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

1910 - 2010
Mount Dora Historic District,
Listed on the National Register of Historic Places
on October 1, 2009

1-McDonald Stone House - 1887
717 McDonald St
Annie McDonald Stone had this house built and then married early Mount Dora promoter J.P. Donnelly.

2-J.H. Crane House - 1906
815 McDonald St
Built by G. Thorne as a sanitarium and sold to the Crane family in 1910. The home has a veranda that runs around three sides and opens into several rooms for shade and ventilation. J.H. Crane served Mount Dora as a councilman, mayor, clerk and treasurer.

3-Wardell-Wilmoth House - 1917
321 W. Ninth Ave
Occupying half a City block this Craftsman Bungalow typifies pattern-book architecture and exhibits virtually no alterations. The pond where alligators once basked is still in place, as are the servants' quarters.

4-Fish-Parker House - 1930
1005 Helen St
This home is Mount Dora's most superb example of a Tudor Period Revival home. It has a matching garage, and has beautifully-kept landscaping.

5-Hoxie-Wilmoth House - 1917
1027 McDonald St
This home exemplifies the economic and social trends of the community in history and is architecturally significant. The home retains much of the integrity of the Bungalow style.

6-Fletcher Crane House - 1914
933 Alexander St
The home has been identified for historical and architectural significance. Mr. Crane and his wife each owned and operated a business in Mount Dora in early 1929. The home is an excellent example of the Frame Vernacular building built in the City prior to the 1920s.

7-Milner House - 1918 (Sunshine Corner)
206 E. Ninth Ave
This house was built for Dr. Duncan Milner, a Presbyterian minister and author. He was renowned for his defense of prohibition and the rights and opportunities of African Americans.

8-Col. Alexander House - 1889
207 E. Eighth Ave
Built by one of Mount Dora's most important developers, Col. John Alexander, founder of the local Methodist Church and a partner in building the Lakeside Inn.

9-Risley House - 1925
742 Tremain St
This unusual house has a large basement. The facade is concrete blocks faced with New York State granite and were all made on the property. C. Risley operated a concrete business on site and is responsible for most of the City sidewalks, tall pyramidal posts for wire fences and blocks for the addition to the Lakeside Inn.

10-Farrar House - 1884
714 North Tremain St
The Farrar family owned a 10-acre citrus grove to the east and south of their house. Built in the Frame Vernacular style, the house was later owned by the Mathews, who renovated the interior in 1937. It is one of the oldest homes in Mount Dora.

14-Bostick/Blanchard House - 1896
908 Clayton St
A large frame two-story home with screened enclosed two-tier veranda. There was originally a windmill on the lot. The Bostick family built this home. The Blanchard family moved in during the 1930s. Ray was a mail carrier and a Worthy Master Mason. Flavilla was the president of the American Legion Auxiliary.

11a-S.M. Thompson House - 1923
647 and 613 North Grandview St
These nearly identical sister houses were built by J. J. West, the first licensed realtor in Mount Dora for his sister and himself.

11b-J.J. West House - 1922
649 E. Eleventh Ave
One of Mount Dora's best architectural homes, this well maintained Bungalow is not typical with a wide front porch supported by grouped columns on molded block bases. Built by M. H. Sanborn the first owners were Edward and Annie Gorham, who wintered here through the 1920s and 30s.

13-Dingee-Banks House - 1911
950 N. Clayton St
Margaret and James Dingee lived in this early Bungalow that was originally a farm house for a citrus grove. In 1924, Alfred and Lillian Banks lived here. Mr. Banks operated the Dixie Highway Garage on Highland Avenue.

17-MacGowen-Fowler House - 1882
539 Liberty St
J.H. Vrooman built this home where he lived with Almeda Gilbert, the daughter of Dr. C.R. Gilbert. Mr. Vrooman was elected a School Board Trustee in 1898.

18-William Watt House - 1906
442 E. Third Ave
Mr. Watt, inventor of corrugated cardboard, packed his oranges here for shipment. This home is now the Grandview Bed and Breakfast.

19-LR Heim House - 1926
347 E. Third Ave
The home of the Sylvan Shores developer was built in the Spanish Revival style. The home is now a bed and breakfast. The Magnolia Inn. Mr. Heim donated the Heim ballpark to the City and owned the Mount Dora Topic (a newspaper) in the late 1920s.

15-Dickson Rental House - 1925
551 North Clayton
Dr. Robert Dickson was the first dentist in Mount Dora and was also involved with real estate and agriculture. The home was a rental. A male goose slept in the garage of this home for years and would sit on the porch and chase the school children and dogs.

16-Vrooman House - 1887
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P1 Annie E. Donnelly Park - 1924
The Women's Club persuaded J.P. Donnelly to sell this land to the City in 1924 in order to provide a central park for the residents' and visitors' enjoyment. He agreed to sell it for \$45,000 with the stipulation that it be named in honor of his late wife, Annie.

P2 Childs Park - 1930's
Mr. R.C. Tremain originally built his orange packinghouse on this location in 1891. In 1895, Mr. Tremain started the hardware store after the freezes of 1894-95 which wiped out the orange groves. Mr. Stanton M. Childs owned a home across from the park and in order to have a view of the lake, the building was torn down and donated to the City. The park was named in his honor.

P3 Evans Park - 1926
In 1940 it was dedicated to the memory of Elizabeth Evans, a Councilwoman, Chairman of the City of Mount Dora Parks Board, and President of the Women's Club.

P4 Gilbert Park - 1922, 1939
In 1922 Mr. Earl Gilbert left this property to the City in his will. The park was developed in 1939



CRAPTSMAN BUNGALOW

During the first three decades of the twentieth century, the Bungalow became the most common style of residential architecture in the United States.

Florida Bungalows appeared in several forms. The more elaborate of them were one-and-one-half stories in height and highly detailed.

Most displayed gently sloping gable-over-gable roofs that face the street. Bungalows employed a variety of exterior materials. Rafter ends were usually exposed and often carved in decorative patterns to combine structure and ornament.



MEDITERRANEAN INFLUENCE

Florida's Spanish heritage and semi-tropical climate favored use of Mediterranean designs. The roots of Mediterranean-influenced architecture in Florida can be traced to the Spanish, Italian Renaissance, and Moorish Revival churches and hotels in St. Augustine developed by Henry Flagler and others during the 1880s.



FRAME VERNACULAR

Frame Vernacular architecture was the common wood-frame construction of self-taught builders, often passed from one generation to the next. Vernacular building traditions resulted from the builder's experience, available resources, and responses to the local environment.



Introduction

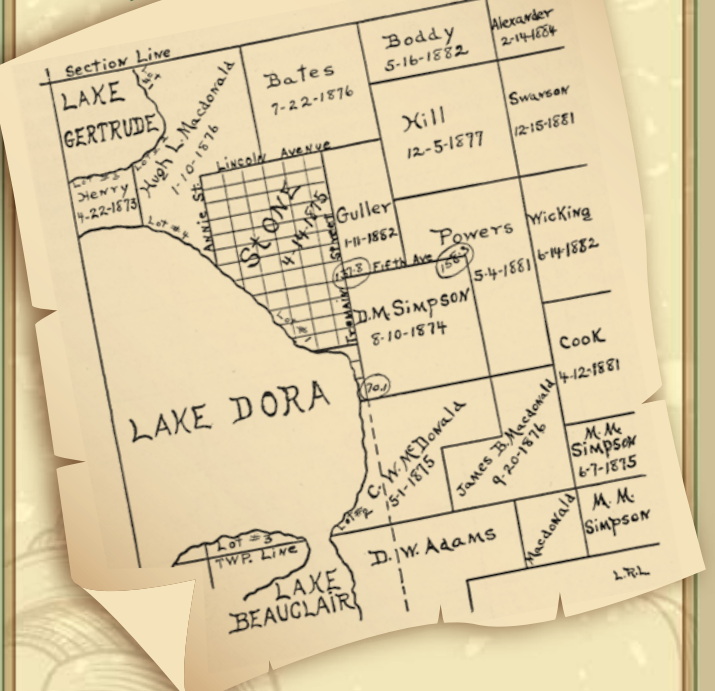
The buildings of Mount Dora provide a tangible record of the history and development of our community. From the modest Vernacular dwellings that were home to the average Mount Doran, to large hotels that catered to winter visitors, to downtown commercial buildings where generations of residents went shopping – each in its own way provides a view of daily life in Mount Dora in earlier times.

The architectural styles of the buildings – from simple to elaborate – reflect the tastes and aspirations of the people of Mount Dora. The materials and craftsmanship in the structures reveal the environment of Central Florida and the skills of builders from years gone by. The historic neighborhoods, where concentrations of older buildings remain, provide important architectural diversity and a sense of place in our growing community. These old buildings and streetscapes are treasures to be enjoyed, cherished and protected, for they add to the beauty and value of our community.

Many of these treasures have already been lost. Long time residents can still recall the grand hotels, when downtown was the only place to shop and when the high-tech street surfacing was pine straw.

This brochure provides a brief outline of the history of Mount Dora. More information about the history of Mount Dora can be found in *Memories of Mount Dora and Lake County: 1845 – 1981* by David Edgerton, *The Story of Mount Dora Florida* by R.J. Longstreet and *Mount Dora: The Rest of the Story, Plus!* by Dr. R. Eugene Burley.

Mount Dora, Florida Someplace Special



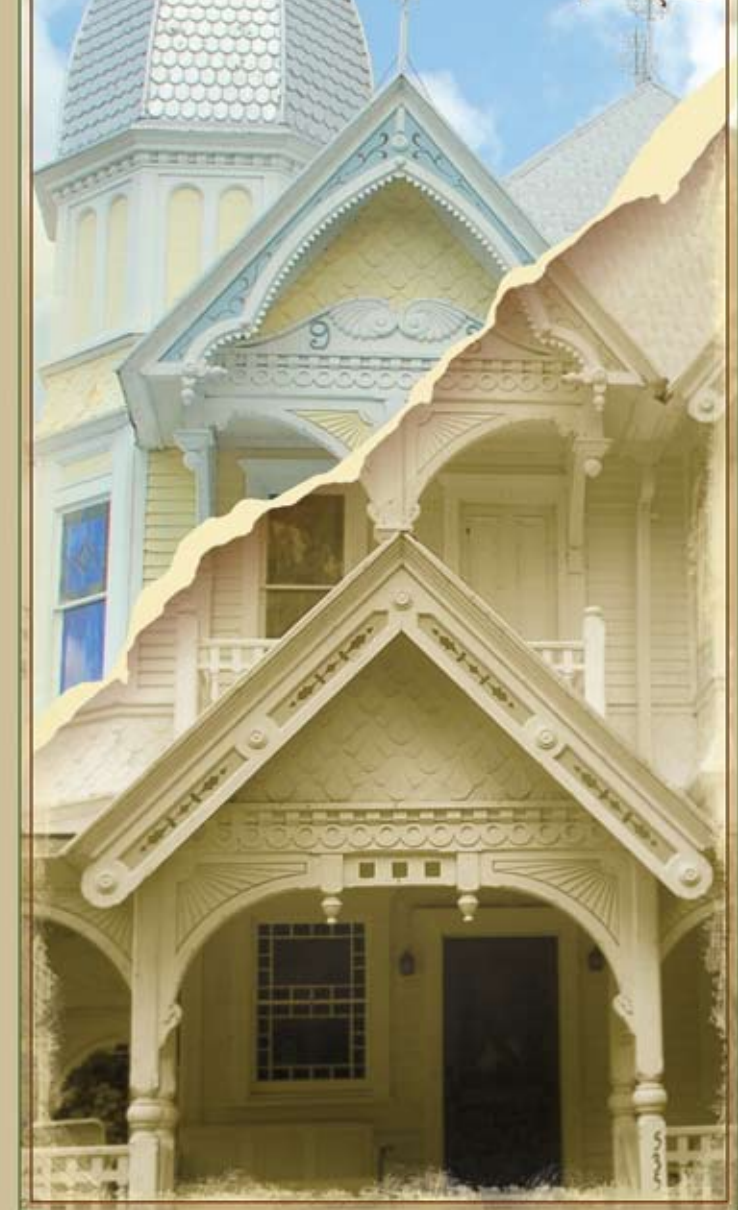
Superimposed upon the Stone homestead of 182 acres is an 1884 plat of the proposed town of Mount Dora.

This illustration was found in both the *Story of Mount Dora, Florida* by R.F. Longstreet and *Memories of Mount Dora* by David Edgerton.

For information on how you can get a map like this made for your community, contact:



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Maps@oryancreative.com
P.O. Box 1334
Mount Dora, FL 32756
352-735-0962



A CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF MOUNT DORA

- 1845 Florida is admitted to the Union
- 1850s William and Dora Ann Drawdy settle two miles south of what is now Lake Dora
- 1874 David Simpson family is first to homestead in what is now Mount Dora
- 1875 Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Stone homestead 160 acres which include what is now downtown Mount Dora
- 1879 Mr. and Mrs. Stone divorce and he returns north
- 1879 John P. Donnelly comes to this area and homesteads 160 acres north of Mrs. Stone's property
- 1880 First Post Office established with Ross C. Tremain as Postmaster. The town is named ROYELLOU after his three children, Roy, Ella and Louis.
- 1881 John P. Donnelly and Ms. Annie Stone are married
- 1883 Name of town is changed to Mount Dora
- 1883 First portion of Lakeside Inn is built, known as Alexander House
- 1886 First newspaper, "Mount Dora Voice," is published
- 1887 First railroad came to Mount Dora
- 1893 Donnelly House is built
- 1908 Ms. Donnelly dies
- 1910 Town is incorporated, J.P. Donnelly is elected first mayor
- 1914 First streets are paved
- 1923 First firehouse (present Royello museum) is built on land owned by Mr. Donnelly
- 1924 Mr. Donnelly sells Donnelly Park property to the City and the park is named for Ms. Donnelly
- 1929 Mr. Donnelly buys Guller House and sells it to the city for use as City Hall
- 1929 Community Building built
- 1930 J.P. Donnelly dies

Historic Overview

Mount Dora was originally surveyed from 1846-1849, it was noted that the Drawdy family was living two miles south of what is now Lake Dora. One version of the history states that Dora Drawdy, wife of William and mother of their several children, hospitably shared the family's meager supplies with the government surveyors. In gratitude, they named the large lake to the north in her honor. In August 1874 the first homesteader, David M. Simpson, moved into what is now Mount Dora. As of 1879, there were five families recorded as living in the area.

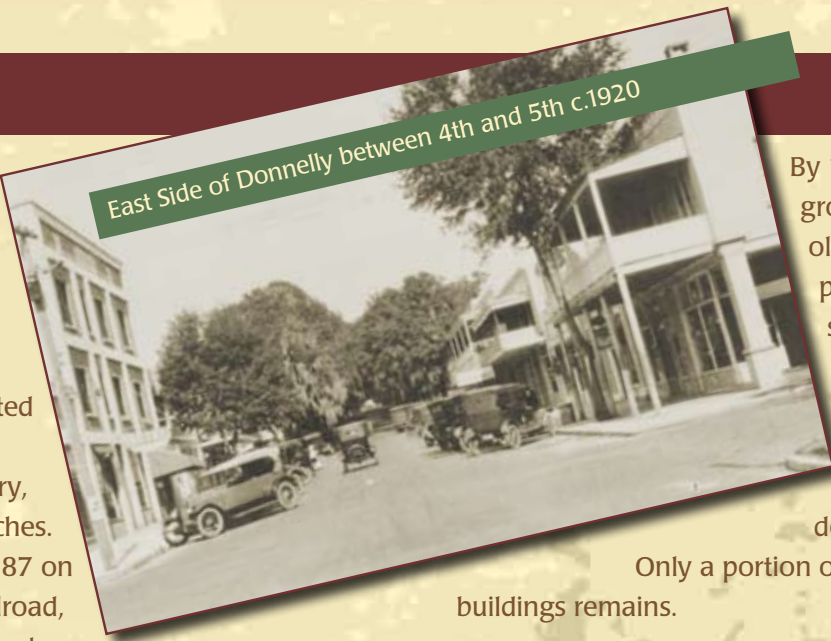
The original name given to the town when the Post Office was established in August 1880 was Royello, an acronym made from the names of early settler and first Postmaster Ross Tremain's three children – Roy, Ella and Louis. Sometime in 1882 or 1883 the name was changed to Mount Dora.

A plat of the town was recorded on September 1, 1884. It is known that J.P. Donnelly and John A. McDonald were heavily involved in this endeavor. They, along with Col. John Alexander, were the first developers in the City.

Prior to 1886, access to the area was limited. Self-reliant residents raised their own livestock, grew vegetables from kitchen gardens and supplemented their diet with the abundant fish and game found in the immediate vicinity. Cloth, tools and many building supplies were brought overland in wagons or made the circuitous water route from Sanford.

However, Mount Dora was by no means "uncivilized." In the spring of 1886, the local newspaper, the *Mount Dora Voice*, noted that the fledgling community boasted two general stores, one drugstore, a carriage factory, three hotels and two churches. The first train arrived in 1887 on the Sanford and Eustis Railroad, and the first direct steamboat connection began in the summer of the same year.

Overall, Mount Dora grew very slowly in these early years. Potentially, the citrus industry could have led to significant growth. However, devastating back-to-back freezes in 1894-95 had an enormous impact as the unusually intemperate weather destroyed both the young groves and the economic dreams of many settlers. The U.S. Census for 1890 records indicates there were 174 people living in the Mount Dora precinct.



East Side of Donnelly between 4th and 5th c.1920

By 1900, the number had grown only to 197. The oldest Sanborn Map was produced in 1906. It shows at that time, what is now the downtown area, there were five commercial buildings, the Post Office, the depot and the town hall.

Only a portion of one of these eight buildings remains.

The City of Mount Dora was incorporated on March 25, 1910. At this time there were 371 people living in the City proper and 42 in the surrounding precinct. The community had no paved streets, no water system, no streetlights and no sidewalks.

From 1919 to 1925, Mount Dora experienced the same building boom as did the rest of the State of Florida. The little community began to transform from an isolated country town into a City.

While the boom still rolled on, the town began to invest in its public infrastructure by installing streetlights, constructing a water system and paving roads.

The building boom in Florida collapsed between 1925 and 1926, which created hard times for all municipalities.

Witherspoon Lodge

1470 North Clayton St

One of the oldest African American Masonic Lodges in Florida, the Witherspoon Lodge was founded in Mount Dora in 1898. It followed the tradition of Price Hall (1735-1807), a noted African American of colonial Boston and opponent of slavery and racial oppression. The Lodge members purchased the Witherspoon building in 1903, and meet there to this day. In the Masonic tradition of mutual aid and community service, they have offered the building for use as a public school during segregation in the 1920s, a church sanctuary, a youth library, and a community center. In 2001, the site was recognized as a Florida landmark and awarded a State of Florida Historic Heritage Marker. In 2009, it was Listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

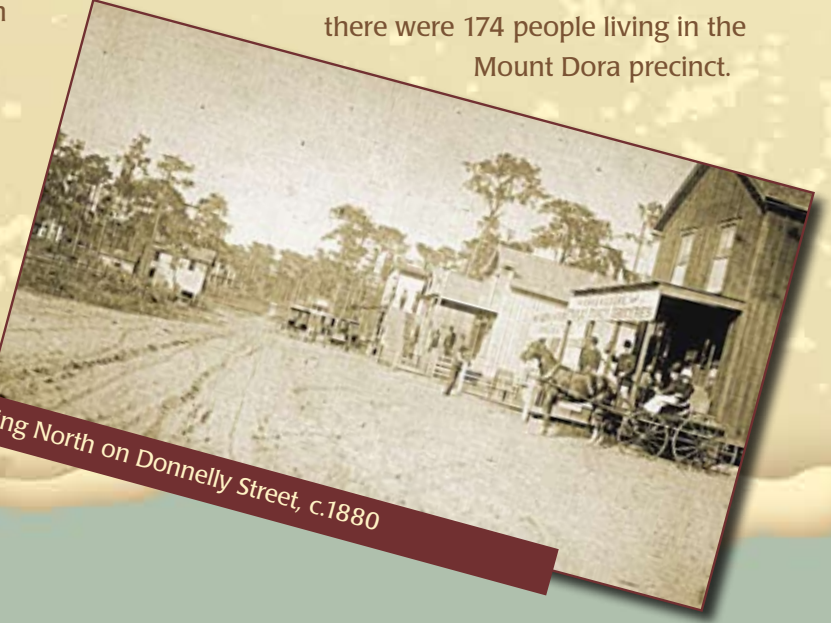


Witherspoon Lodge Present Day

Milner – Rosenwald Academy

1560 North Highland Street

When the original school for Mount Dora's African American children burned in 1922, Mamie Lee Gilbert and Lula Butler spearheaded the drive for a new school. Seed money was obtained from the Rosenwald Foundation, founded in 1913 by philanthropist Julius Rosenwald, to support rural black school construction in the South. Matching funds came from Rev. Duncan Milner, a resident of Mount Dora concerned with racial injustice. Completed in 1926, the school provided an education for children until 1962. Since then the building has been a branch library, youth center, and currently houses the Head Start program. In 2004, the site was recognized as a Florida landmark and awarded a State of Florida Historic Heritage Marker.



Looking North on Donnelly Street, c.1880



Witherspoon Lodge: students who attended classes on first floor



Milner-Rosenwald Academy built in 1926