



North Downtown Heritage Tour

The early history of Salt Lake City is dominated by the story of its Mormon settlers. These settlers came to Utah as a centrally-organized group dedicated to establishing their vision of a perfect society—the Kingdom of God on earth. Accordingly, there was no distinction between religious and secular life in early Salt Lake City. Leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints directed the community's economic life, shaped its social life, and even molded its family life.

The north end of Salt Lake City's downtown is a good place to view buildings and sites that reflect the city's early Mormon heritage. Church leaders, cultural institutions, business enterprises, and church offices tended to cluster near Temple Square, the geographic heart of the Mormon utopia.

Within 20 years of Salt Lake City's founding, the community began to diversify. The completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 made it much easier for immigrants from around the world to reach Utah. Not all the people who settled in Salt Lake City fit the Mormon vision of members of a perfect society. Nor did these new immigrants always share the Mormon community's goals. This tour also highlights some of the buildings and sites that represent Salt Lake City's growth and diversification after its settlement period.

Your walk through north downtown's history will take about one hour. The tour ends on Main Street just one half block south of the starting point at the Joseph Smith Memorial Building. Enjoy the tour!

Hotel Utah, Joseph Smith Memorial Building

1909-1911, Parkinson & Bergstrom, Los Angeles

15 East South Temple

*Interior open to public Monday-Saturday, 9:00am-9:00pm
Roof-top restaurant, Family Search Center*

Constructed on the site of the old Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints tithing office, the Hotel Utah was the “Grande Dame” of hotels in the Intermountain West. The church was the chief stockholder in the venture. For most of the 20th century the Hotel Utah hosted Utah's most distinguished visitors and was a focal point of local social activity. As one historian wrote, “Everything that was anything was held there.”

The exterior of the Hotel Utah is sheathed with decorative glazed bricks and terra-cotta. The building is a lavish example of Second Renaissance Revival style architecture—with a Utah touch. Note the huge brick and plaster beehive cupola atop the hotel. The beehive, of course, is Utah's state symbol.

In 1987, the church decided to close the Hotel Utah and renovate the building to house church offices and meeting spaces. Today the hotel is known as the Joseph Smith Memorial Building.

If you have time, step inside the elaborately decorated lobby.





The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Administration Building

*1914-1917, Joseph Don
Carlos Young and
Don Carlos Young, SLC*

47 East South Temple

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints constructed this building between 1914 and 1917 to serve as its headquarters. Prior to its completion, the office of the church president was located just to the east between Brigham Young's Lion House and Beehive House. (See *building descriptions 3 & 4.*) Today this building continues to house the offices of the church First Presidency and other church leaders.

The Church Administration Building is an excellent example of Neoclassical style architecture. The 24 Ionic pilasters which surround the exterior are made of solid granite and weigh approximately eight tons each. This granite, as well as that which covers the rest of the steel and concrete structure, was taken from the same quarry as the stone used to build the Salt Lake Temple.

The building's architects, Joseph Don Carlos Young and Don Carlos Young, were the son and grandson, respectively, of Brigham Young. Joseph was the church's official architect from the late 1880s until 1935.

3 *The Lion House*

1854-1856, Truman O. Angell, SLC

63 East South Temple

Restaurant open to the public Monday-Saturday, 11:00 am-2:00 pm, and Thursday-Saturday, 5:00-8:30 pm. No tours available.

The Lion House takes its name from the carved lion on top of the portico. The house was constructed with adobe blocks, a common building material during Utah's settlement period.

Brigham Young, second president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, built the Lion House for some of his wives and children. Based on the Old Testament principle of polygamy, early leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints encouraged church members to marry plural wives. This practice was officially ended in 1890.

The basement of the Lion House contained a dining room which could accommodate 70 people. On the main floor were sitting rooms and bedrooms for wives with children. The second floor contained 20 bedrooms for children and childless wives—one under each of the 20 steeply-pitched gables.

Brigham Young died in the Lion House in 1877. Some of his wives and children continued to live in the house until the 1890s. Today the building contains as a reception center and restaurant.

The Beehive House 4

1855-1855, Truman O. Angell, SLC

67 East South Temple

30-minute guided tours available every 15 minutes
Monday-Saturday, 9:30 am-4:30 pm, and Sunday, 10:00 am-1:00 pm.

Completed one year prior to the Lion House, the Beehive House served as Brigham Young's residence, offices, and reception area for official visitors. At this time, Young was both president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and Utah's territorial governor.



The Beehive House was designed by Young's brother-in-law, Truman Angell. Angell was also the architect for the Lion House and the Salt Lake Temple. The Greek Revival, stuccoed adobe Beehive House features a two-story veranda, an observatory, and a cupola topped with a beehive. Young's son added a three-story wing to the north after he purchased the house in 1888.

In the early 1960s, the church restored the Beehive House to resemble its early appearance. Guided tours of the building are available daily.

If you have a moment, cross North Temple Street and read about the history of the Eagle Gate on the markers on the east side of State Street.

Alta Club Building 5

1897-1898, Frederick A. Hale, SLC; east wing, 1910

100 East South Temple

This building has housed the Alta Club for over 100 years. The exclusive club was founded in 1883 by prominent Utah businessmen. The original members were largely involved in the mining industry and all non-Mormons. The Alta Club's official exclusion of Mormons reflects the deep divisions between Mormons and non-Mormons in late 19th-century Utah. After the turn of the century, the club gradually began to admit Mormons and helped promote accommodation between the two communities. The Alta Club now also welcomes women as members.

Well-known Salt Lake City architect Frederick Hale designed the Alta Club in the Italian Renaissance style. This style was popular for men's clubs in the eastern United States at the turn of the century. The Alta Club's Italian Renaissance elements include its horizontal emphasis, arched windows and doors, and recessed arcaded balconies.



Salt Lake City Public Library, Hansen Planetarium

1905, Hines & LaFarge, New York City, and Frederick A. Hale, SLC

15 South State

*Hansen Planetarium open daily.
Call (801) 538-2098 for hours of
exhibits and star shows.*



The local Ladies Literary Society can take credit for the construction of the Salt Lake City Public Library Building. These women promoted Utah's first tax for the support of public libraries in 1898. They then convinced mining millionaire John Q. Packard to donate both the land and the capital for constructing the state's first public library building.

Designed by the prestigious New York architectural firm of Hines and LaFarge, the Salt Lake City Public Library Building is a good example of the Beaux Arts style architecture. This style was popular for large public and commercial buildings at the turn of the century. It combines stately Classical elements, like columns and pediments, with exuberant decorative elements. Notice the library's ornate stone gable which projects above the roofline, large brackets under the eaves, and decorative keystones above the columns of the two-story entrance pavilion.

Social Hall Site

Original building, 1852, Truman O. Angell, SLC; Glass monument, 1992

35 South State

Interior open to the public Monday-Saturday, 5:30 am-10:30 pm.

This glass enclosure marks the site of Social Hall, Utah's first theater. Mormon settlers built the Social Hall in 1852, just five years after their arrival in the Salt Lake Valley. The simple Greek Revival adobe building was evidence of the strong tradition of communal entertainments, like theater and choral singing, in Mormon culture.

Although much grander theaters were soon built in Salt Lake City, the Social Hall continued to serve as a venue for community gatherings like dances and lectures. The building was demolished in 1922, but the story of the Social Hall does not end here.

In 1990, while excavating for an underground walkway beneath State Street, Zions Securities Corporation discovered the Social Hall's original foundation. After an archaeological study of the site, the foundation was removed for the construction of the walkway and then reassembled. The glass structure on top of the foundation mirrors the original size and shape of Social Hall.

To see the Social Hall foundation and an exhibit about the building's history, enter the glass structure and proceed to the basement level.

Mountain States Telephone & Telegraph Building and Salt Lake Theatre Plaque

1947, Ashton & Evans, SLC

98 South State

The Mountain States Telephone & Telegraph Company finished the first two stories of this building in 1939. The additional four stories, which may have been part of the original design, were added in 1947 as the demand for telephones boomed after World War II. The building has been occupied by Mountain States and its telephone descendants since its construction.

The Mountain States Telephone & Telegraph Building is one of the relatively rare examples of Art Deco style architecture in Utah. Shallow pilasters divide the facade into narrow bays and give the building a vertical emphasis. A wide band of low-relief ornament runs around the building just above the first story.



Note the plaque commemorating the Salt Lake Theatre on the southeast corner of this building. Built on this site in 1862, the theater was the largest building constructed by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at the time. The 1,500-seat theater boasted an elegant interior created by European craftsmen who had joined the church.

Amateur acting groups flourished in Salt Lake City and many performed on the Salt Lake Theatre's stage. After the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, nationally known actors and actresses enjoyed performing at the theater because of its high quality and the sophistication of local audiences. The theater was demolished in 1928.

Orpheum Theatre, Promised Valley Playhouse

1905, Carl M. Neuhausen, SLC

132 South State

The Orpheum Theatre represents a later phase of the performing arts in Utah—vaudeville. The theater is crowned by a twelve-foot statue of Venus, the symbol

of the Orpheum vaudeville circuit. National vaudeville acts, ranging from comedy skits to scientific boxing bouts, performed on the theater's elegant stage.

The Orpheum was designed by Carl Neuhausen, a German-born architect who planned several well-known Utah buildings, including The Cathedral of the Madeleine and the Thomas Kearns Mansion. The large carvings of male faces on the columns flanking the main entryway make this Second Renaissance Revival style building easily recognizable.

With the rising popularity of motion pictures, the Orpheum closed its doors as a vaudeville theater in 1918. It was reborn



shortly thereafter as a movie theater and operated under a variety of names. During the late 1920s and 1930s, the building was regarded as the most stylish movie house in town. In 1972, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints purchased the building, renamed it Promised Valley Playhouse, and restored it for stage performances. Currently the building is not being used for theatre productions.

Proceed west on Orpheum Avenue, located on the north side of the theater. Walk beneath the parking terrace to Plum Alley.

10 *Plum Alley* 65 East

Plum Alley was the heart of Salt Lake City's Chinese community. In the early 20th century, Chinese groceries, merchants, laundries, and restaurants congregated along this street. Chinese immigrants first arrived in Utah in the late 1860s as laborers on the transcontinental railroad. Some of these laborers stayed in Utah to work in mining camps. By the early 1900s, most of Utah's Chinese immigrants moved to urban areas where some were able to open small businesses.

Salt Lake City's Chinese community never grew very large, in part because Chinese immigration to the United States was restricted in 1882. Although the city's Chinese residents mostly lived in their own micro-community, they did participate in some local traditions. At least once, they entered a dragon float in the Pioneer Day parade which celebrates the arrival of Mormon settlers in the Salt Lake Valley. A 200-foot long Chinese dragon was a regular feature of Salt Lake City's New Year's Day parade in the 1890s.

Continue west on Orpheum Avenue to Regent Street.

11 *Commercial Street, Regent Street* 40 East

Commercial Street, today called Regent Street, was Salt Lake City's red-light district from the 1870s to the late 1930s. Earlier this century, several dozen buildings along Commercial Street housed brothels and "cribs" for prostitutes. A legitimate business occupied the first floor of each building while "female boarders" lived on the upper floors.

As in other American cities at the time, Salt Lake City's prostitutes operated with the tacit approval of local police. By 1908, each prostitute was required to register with the police and pay a monthly \$10 "fine" which went into the city's general fund.



Utah State Historical Society



Utah State Historical Society

The only remaining building from Commercial Street's red-light days is located at the southern end of the block. The Leader Cigar Factory Building (165 South Regent Street) was constructed by Gustave S. Holmes, a director of the National Bank of the Republic, in 1893. The cigar factory operated from the first floor while a brothel occupied the second floor until at least the late 1910s.

Proceed north on Regent Street to 100 South and turn left.

Utah Commercial and Savings Bank Building 12

1889-1890, Richard K. A. Kletting, SLC

22 East 100 South

The Richardsonian Romanesque design of the Utah Commercial and Savings Bank gives this relatively narrow building a solid, heavy feel. The building's foundation and facade are constructed of large blocks of rusticated, or rough cut, red sandstone. Smooth, carved, and scored stone elements add contrast to the design, but also contribute to the building's appearance of strength. Notice the different treatment of the windows on each floor.



Francis Armstrong commissioned prominent Utah architect Richard Kletting to design the Utah Commercial Savings Bank. Armstrong was the founder of the bank and served as Salt Lake City's mayor from 1888 to 1890. As president of the Utah Power Company, he purchased a street railway system from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and converted it to electric power. Thus in 1889 Salt Lake City became the first city west of Chicago to have electrically operated street cars.

Deseret Building, First Security Bank 13

1919, Lewis Telle Cannon and John Fetzer, SLC

79 South Main Street

A bank has stood on this corner since 1875 when the Deseret National Bank first built on the site. In 1919, the bank replaced its original building with the present Deseret Building. First Security Bank took over Deseret National in 1932 and eventually made this building its headquarters.

Deseret National Bank played an important role in Utah history. First headed by Brigham Young, president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Deseret National was the only Mormon-controlled commercial bank in Utah for many years. As such, it supported the economic needs and social goals of the church.

Like many early skyscrapers, the form of the Deseret Building can be compared to that of a classical column. The building has a three-story "pedestal," a simple eight-story "shaft," and an ornate three-story "capital." Look for the building's original name carved above the west entrance.

14 *Eagle Emporium, Zion's First National Bank Building*

1864, William Paul, SLC

102 South Main

Built in 1864, the Eagle Emporium Building is the oldest existing commercial building in downtown Salt Lake City. William Jennings, Utah's first millionaire, constructed the building to house his mercantile business. It is the city's only remaining commercial structure built prior to the completion of the transcontinental railroad.



The Eagle Emporium Building is also notable as the first home of the Zion's Cooperative Mercantile Institution. (See building description 15.) At Brigham Young's request, Jennings exchanged his emporium's inventory for stock in the new ZCMI and leased this building to the cooperative. In 1876, ZCMI moved to more spacious quarters at its present location to the north on Main Street.

The ornate clock in front of this building is one of the few remaining pieces of 19th century street furniture in Salt Lake City's downtown. The clock was erected on this site in 1873 and was first powered by a water wheel.

15 *ZCMI Facade*

1876 (center section), William H. Folsom and Obed Taylor, SLC; 1880 (south wing); 1901 (north wing), S.T. Whitaker, SLC/Ogden

50 South Main Street

In 1876, this site became the home of the Zion's Cooperative Mercantile Institution (ZCMI). Today all that remains of the original building is its cast iron facade, the largest of its kind in Utah. Perhaps best described as an "architectural sculpture," the historic ZCMI facade now serves as the entrance to a new building constructed in 1976.

ZCMI's origins lie in the Mormon settlers' quest for a perfect society. Self-sufficiency and cooperation were key tenants of their utopian vision. The anticipated completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, however, promised to bring many non-Mormon merchants to Utah who would not abide by these ideals. In response, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints President Brigham Young formed a cooperative merchandising organization dedicated to supporting home manufacturing in 1868.

Church leaders strongly encouraged church members to boycott non-Mormon merchants and shop exclusively at ZCMI. Initially, ZCMI drove many non-Mormon merchants out of business. Neither ZCMI nor church leaders, however, could stem the tide of change that came to Utah once it was connected to the rest of the country by rail lines.