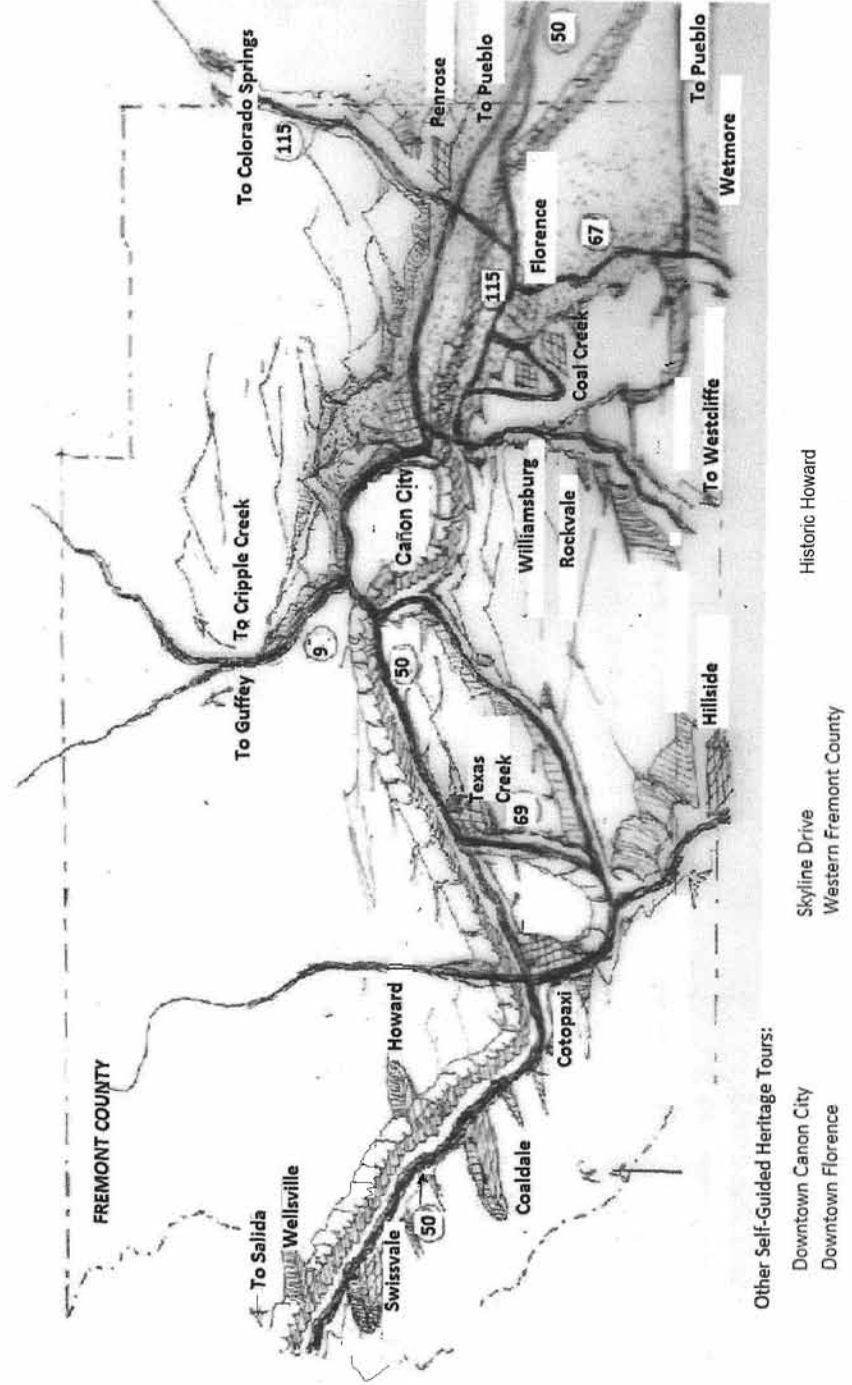


Self-Guided Tour

Historic Howard



FREMONT COUNTY HERITAGE TOURS



About this Booklet – This free Self-Guided Heritage Tour is part of a series by the Fremont County Heritage Commission and Fremont County Tourism Council, with support of a grant from the Colorado Tourism Office to convey the County’s rich history and encourage heritage tourism. The Fremont County Historical Society, a 501 (c) 3 non-profit educational organization, is also a partner in this effort.

Questions, comments and suggestions are welcome and may be conveyed to info@fremontheritage.com or sent to Fremont County Heritage Commission, 615 Macon Ave, Cañon City, Colorado, 81212.

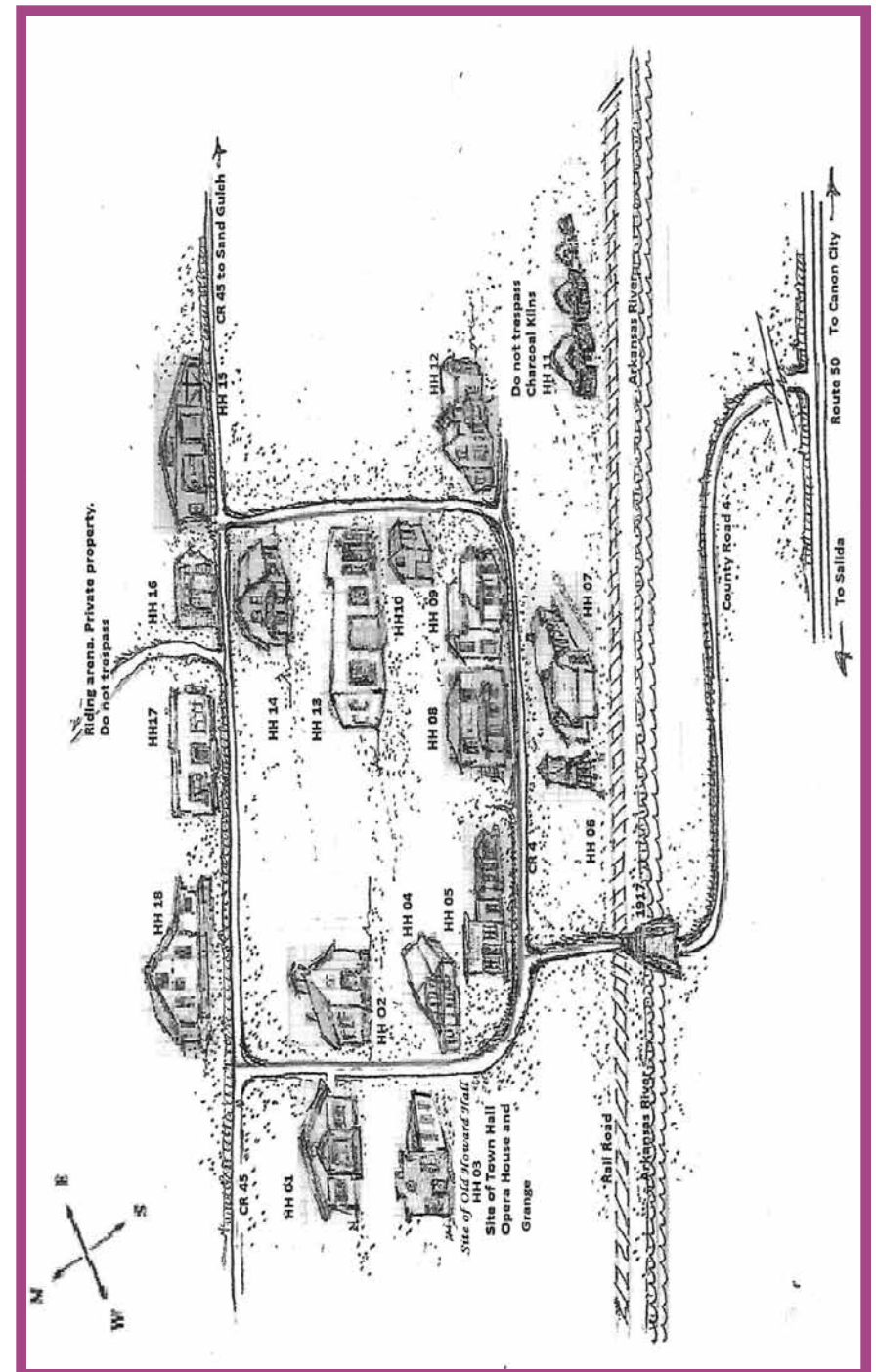
Tours that are part of this series include:

- Skyline Drive in Cañon City
- Western Fremont County on US-50
- Downtown Cañon City, Colorado
- Downtown Florence, Colorado

These and other tours being developed may be downloaded for free at www.fremontheritage.com or found in racks at Chambers of Commerce and Museums throughout Fremont County. Information beyond the scope of this booklet may be found at these locations along with other tours.

Acknowledgments: This all volunteer booklet was originally researched, compiled and written by Linda Beermann and Rita Aten of the Western Fremont Historical Society (WFHS) in 2010 as a Walking Tour of Old Howard. With WFHS permission it has been adapted for this series. Betsy Denney and Jim Nelson edited and coordinated publication. Photos: Royal Gorge Regional Museum & History Center. Illustrations: Mildred Wintz. Layout: Larry Hill. First Published July, 2015

Western Fremont Historical Society (WFHS)
PO Box 181, Howard Colorado 81233



This self-guided tour map is shown with structures or sites in sequence. Begin at Howard Hall and then cross the road to the church and continue on from there. *Please note: most of the buildings and sites on this self-guided tour are private residences or private property. Please stay on the road and respect the owners' privacy.* WFHS is not responsible for accidents or damage to property. Allow one hour for the tour.

The map on the previous page shows 18 sites including:

- HH-01 Present Howard Hall
- HH-02 Howard's first church
- HH-03 Site of town hall, opera house and old Grange Hall
- HH-04 Lou Davis's barn and warehouse
- HH-05 Lou Davis's store
- HH-06 Railroad water tower
- HH-07 Howard railroad depot
- HH-08 Howard hotel and hospital
- HH-09 Old Davis place
- HH-10 Old frame barn
- HH-11 Beehive charcoal kilns
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- HH-13 Blacksmith shop, Jim Howard's Model T Dealership & Garage and store (later Howard Post Office)
- HH-14 Willoughby's house
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- HH-16 Howard's first fire station
- HH-17 Roy Cunningham's general store, grocery store and later the telephone exchange
- HH-18 Parsonage

Many of the surviving structures of the Howard Townsite have been altered or updated over time and are no longer in their original use. Memories persist, however, and whether you are a visitor, resident or pioneer's descendant, we hope our shared memories of this bygone era will help you journey back in time and grasp what life here was like in the late-1800s to the early-1900s. The railroad had come to town and Howard was a thriving supply center for ranchers, farmers, miners and others who called the Pleasant Valley home!

HH-01 Present Howard Hall

The old Howard Town Hall, located just south of here, was torn down and this hall built in 1978. A local newspaper announced: "The new Howard Hall was recently completed and stands ready to serve as a meeting place for community clubs, scouting groups, and wedding receptions." Years later, it continues as a community meeting place.

HH-02 Howard's first church

Beginning in 1889, the Free Methodists met in various homes around Howard. The church you see was built in 1898. W.H. Latham, who held a local preacher's license, was the first minister of the church. Latham was a pioneer resident of the area, coming here in 1881. He was a man of many talents and was an accomplished harpist, could play the accordion and doubled as the church musician.

During its first four years, the church seemed to be quite prosperous. However, during the Great Depression church economics worsened. The pastor at that time announced his in



tention of auctioning off the building, which was not his to begin with. On the morning of the auction, the assembled crowd came prepared. However, rather than shouting out bids, they began throwing rotten eggs at the minister. After that incident, the Free Methodist Church conveyed the property to the Howard Union Sunday School Church Board for a reported \$200. In 1999 the deed was transferred to the Western Fremont Historical Society and the building is now a small WFHS museum/history center.

HH-03 Site of town hall, opera house, Grange Hall

As a center of community life, the town hall housed the local opera, complete with stage and curtains. Picture yourself joining your family inside for a theatrical performance or attending a meeting of the Forestry Club or Woodmen of the World. Together, the town hall and church served as the social center of the budding 1880s townsite.

In 1904, L. L. Freeman sold stock for \$1 a share to fund the construction of the opera house. By comparing pictures of the old Howard town hall/opera house and the Grange, it appears the townspeople merely remodeled the town hall to convert it into the Grange Hall.

Clarence Kelso, among others, was instrumental in founding the Grange in the 1930s. Dances and parties were enjoyed by the townspeople from the 1940s through the 1950s. People



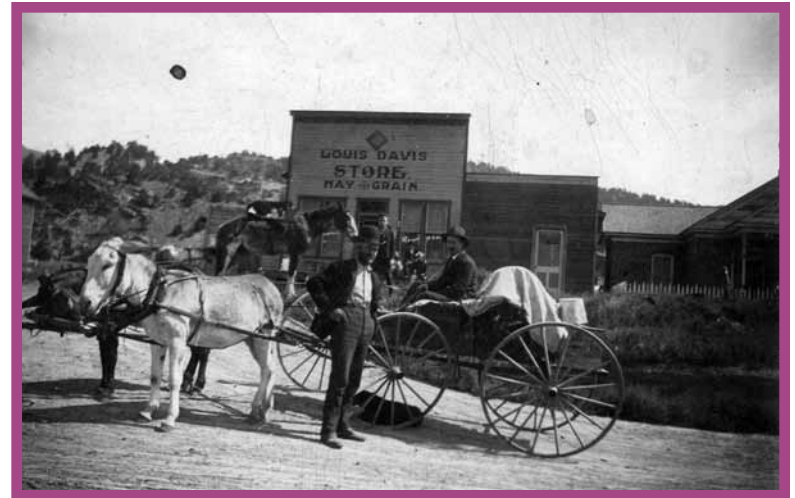
came from neighboring communities such as Cotopaxi and Coaldale to join in the fun. Long-time Howard resident Pearl Auckland talked about the dances. She said they were big affairs – all the women wore long gowns. In 1976, Verl Freek

was Master of the Grange. After the Grange building was razed in 1978, Verl conveyed all the Grange memorabilia to the Western Fremont Historical Society (WFHS).

HH-04 Lou Davis' barn and warehouse

Lou Davis used this building as a storage building in the early 1920s when he owned the store (see Site 5).

HH-05 Lou Davis' store



Lou Davis had a general food store here in the early 1920s. During the 1970s-80s, Mr. Galbraith had an antique store and home here.

HH-06 Railroad water tower

Old photos show the water tower in this location.

HH-07 Howard railroad depot *(Pictured front cover)*

As you walk along, the railroad depot comes up on the right with all the hustle and bustle of freight being moved and passengers awaiting their departure time. Smell the smoke from the engine and hear the steam whistle as the conductor cries, "All Aboard!" The steam and smoke from the locomotive mingle with the haze from the charcoal kilns east of the station.

The railroad enabled people, including tourists, to come here from all over the country. Passenger fares ranged from 2 to 5 cents per mile. Even residents from Cotopaxi came by train to Howard for parties and dancing. By the 1900s, numerous freight trains and about eight passenger trains ran through the area each day. Mail sacks were hung on a pole by the tracks so the passing trains could pick them up twice a day.

HH-08 Howard hotel and hospital

The Denver & Rio Grande (D&RG) Railroad reached Howard in May, 1880. This building was likely part of a hotel then.

From about 1900-1930 David D. Hamilton, MD, operated a hospital here when Calcite (north of Howard on CR-4) was an active mining camp. A scarlet fever epidemic struck this area in 1913. It is believed that a breezeway was built between the hotel and the old Davis place (the white house on the corner) so the two buildings might serve as an infirmary and accommodate those who were ill. The house on the corner that once joined this structure was later moved to its present location.



During the 1930s, Roy Cunningham operated a hotel here.

HH-09 Old Davis place

John Davis and his wife raised their family here. They were the maternal great-grandparents of Georgia Roberts and her siblings, who are descendants of the Howards. According to Georgia, John Davis was the only Northerner amidst a bunch of Southerners. He had a poker table at the train depot and made a good living at it. Georgia tells about visiting her grandparents in the 1940s when she was a young girl. She was

fascinated by their green lawn; Lawns were rare in Howard at that time but more common in Salida.

HH-10 Old frame barn

This barn was once used for animals as there are mangers inside. It was part of the old Davis property on the corner.

HH-11 Beehive charcoal kilns

According to an article in The Valley Voice March 15, 1983: "The kilns were constructed shortly after the D&RG laid its narrow-gauge track up the Arkansas River Canyon in 1880. They were built of rock and brick and originally had barrel staves around them. They were used to burn pinon wood just long enough to convert it to charcoal; the charcoal was then loaded into railroad cars and hauled to Salida, Leadville and Pueblo for use as fuel in the smelters and refineries. The pinon wood was cut north of the river and hauled to the kilns in huge wagons with teams of two or four strong work horses. When use of the charcoal stopped, the operation came to an abrupt halt.

Harold Willoughby's family came to Howard in 1904 and he once recalled that there were three rails laid on the railroad bed then so they could be used by either narrow or standard-gauge trains. The kilns were still being used then and Harold estimated they were used until around 1917.



A few more interesting facts about the kilns are: (1) railroad passenger cars always had charcoal burners to keep passengers warm in the winter; (2) after WWI, there was no longer a need to burn wood to make charcoal for military gas masks; and

(3) in the 1920s to 30s, CF&I and the railroad used the kilns to store ice, which was taken by rail to Calcite for day-to-day operations.

HH-12 Stone house; old Freeman/Cunningham place

In 1904 L. L. Freeman built this grand two-story house. He and his wife, Elsie Freeman, operated the post office here for forty years from 1907 to 1947. L. L. was also the Justice of the Peace. George Hershey also lived in this house and had boarders who worked on the railroad.

In the 1940s, Nancy (Cunningham) Willoughby lived in this house. When she was a teenager, she would look across the road with interest at Harold, who was out in his yard. They were married in 1949.

HH-13 Blacksmith shop, Jim Howard's Model T dealership and garage, the Howard Post Office, and General Store

In 1918 Jim Howard, a descendant of John Howard for whom the town was named, built this long, white building. On the far left, he had a Model T dealership and service business. On the far right, he had a general store and sold shoes.

In 1946, Harold Willoughby acquired the business just before he and Nancy were married. The garage on the south end of the building had a pit for servicing vehicles. Harold also stocked common items like fan belts, oil, and basic parts. He had a counter with a cash register which he rarely used – he preferred to pull out his billfold. He also allowed townspeople to make monthly installments to pay for goods or services. Harold had a reputation for coming to the aid of stranded motorists and would sometimes help them free of charge. The Willoughby family operated the Howard Garage for more than 60 years.

In 1947, the Howard Post Office was moved from the Freeman house, which is across the road, to the little building on

the right where Jim Howard's store had been. It remained here until the 1970s.

When the Willoughbys had their auction a few years ago, they found evidence that there had been a blacksmith shop. In the back of the old garage were a forge and blacksmith hand tools.

HH-14 Willoughby's house

Jim Howard built this house in the 1920s for his Model T dealership. Harold Willoughby acquired the house, property, and business in 1946.

HH-15 Stan Willoughby's auto body shop

In the 1970s when Stan returned from the Viet Nam War, he had Herb Francisco build this shop building. Area residents knew Stan as a die-hard Chevy man.

HH-16 Howard's first fire station

Harold and Nancy Willoughby owned this property for many years. Harold and his son, Stan, maintained the fire truck and bought needed tires and parts. The Willoughbys later donated the property and fire station to the Howard Volunteer Fire Department (HVFD), which owns it today.

HH-17 Roy Cunningham's general store and grocery store and later the telephone exchange building

This building was built in 1923. In the 1930s Roy Cunningham (no relation to Nancy Cunningham Willoughby) had a general store and grocery store here. From the 1940s to 1950s Roland Willoughby ran the telephone exchange. Roland was Harold's brother. Later, George Hershey ran the telephone exchange. Equipment has been donated to WFHS.

HH-18 Parsonage

In about 1920 the Free Methodist Church built this house for their pastors. They likely sold it in the 1930s during the Great Depression. Additional information is available from WFHS.