



*WALKING TOUR  
OF HISTORIC UPTOWN*



# HISTORY

The history of Butte is tied to the rich ore deposits found in this pocket along the Continental Divide in Southwestern Montana. "The Richest Hill on Earth" got its start as a gold and silver mining camp in the 1860's. But as the nation turned to electricity in the 1880's, large mining interests turned to copper — and to Butte.

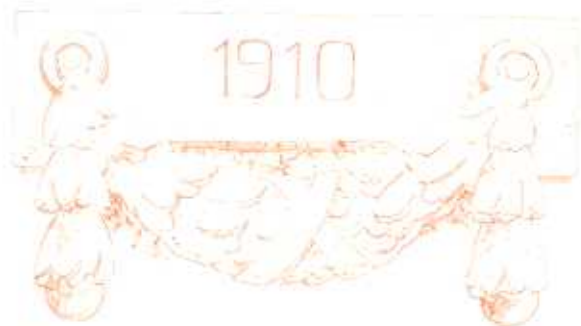
During the course of the next four decades, thousands of miles of mine tunnels — some shafts descending nearly a mile — were cut beneath the tumultuous city. The Copper Kings, armed with the finances of Hearst and others, battled in courtroom and legislature for control of the wealth. The Anaconda Co. was the eventual victor and came to own every mine on the Hill.

The Copper Kings built monuments to their great wealth here, including residences and commercial and industrial structures, many of which stand to this day. The Anaconda Copper Co. has remained, as well, in its historic location.

The richness of Butte can best be expressed, however, in the ethnic diversity of its people. More than sixty ethnic groups and nationalities immigrated to work in the Butte mines and established businesses to serve the miners and their families. The town's outstanding architecture reflects both the rich culture of its inhabitants and the wealth of the Copper Kings.

The older portion of the city was declared a national historic landmark district in 1962.

Copper mining reached its zenith in Butte prior to the 1920's, but remains a powerful presence. Despite economic ups and downs, Butte has moved confidently into its second century.



Granite relief on the Courthouse steps. No. 11.

**TIME:** Approximately two hours, beginning at the Arts Chateau on the NE corner of Broadway and Washington. This tour follows a select route, and many historic buildings are not represented. We encourage you to wander beyond the tour route.

## 1.

**Charles Clark Mansion:** This French Chateau reproduction, reminiscent of the Loire Valley in France, was built by the son of Copper King, William A. Clark. Its handsomely panelled rooms now house the community arts center, which is open to the public free of charge.

*Begin walking to the east, traveling one block to Idaho Street.*

## 2.

**West Side Residences:** East of the Charles Clark Mansion are some of the most striking examples of Butte's fashionable west side. The home at 315 West Broadway belonged to the Ruhle family, where their relative, famed lawyer Clarence Darrow, was a frequent guest. Note the hitching post near the KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS HALL.

## 3. & 4.

**Historic Churches:** Rebuilt after a 1921 fire, ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH is a fine example of English Country Gothic architecture. The magnificent stained glass window on its east wall is well worth viewing. The old Presbyterian Church on the NE corner was built in 1897.

*Please continue left (north) on Idaho Street for one block.*

## 5.

**Connell Home:** This large residence (NW corner), built in 1884, is the oldest larger home remaining in Butte.

## 6.

**Copper King Mansion:** Deliberately ostentatious, this Victorian-Elizabethan home was designed by architect D.H. Brown of Los Angeles. Built in 1888 by Copper King William A. Clark, it has outstanding woodwork and Tiffany windows. Tours daily for a small fee.

*Continue to the right (east) on Granite; the view from the south side of the street is best.*





*Old Silver Bow Club design on the second story of the Miners Union Hall. No. 13*

7.

**The Leonard Hotel:** This massive apartment building, unusual for Montana, was built at the behest of Clark's rival, Marcus Daly, who wished to block the view.

8.

**The Jacobs House:** Henry Jacobs, Butte's first mayor (1879-80), built the town's first brick home (now stucco) in the late 1870's.

9.

**Mantle Home:** Looking north from the corner of Montana and Granite, the building on the left side, now a mortuary, was built by U.S. Senator Lee Mantle in 1892.

10.

**North of the Mantle home** are the CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH (1920) and the MOUNTAIN VIEW METHODIST CHURCH (1899).

*Please continue east on Granite, along the right (south) side of the street.*

11.

**Butte-Silver Bow City-County Courthouse:** Built in 1910-12 at a cost of \$482,000, this classical structure is made of structural steel, concrete and Montana sandstone. Take a few moments to enter through the copper front doors. See the capstan of the Battleship Maine, and the stained glass dome and murals in the Rotunda.

12. & 13.

**Union Halls:** Two union halls face each other on Granite Street near the Courthouse. The CARPENTERS UNION (12), built in 1906, bears the inscription over the doorway: "Labor omnia vincit" — "Work conquers all." The MINERS UNION (13) was built in 1906 as the Silver Bow Club, an ex-

clusive men's social club. The Butte Miners Union, Local No. 1, founded in 1878, has occupied the building since 1940.

*Continue to your left (north) up Alaska Street, but don't forget to look behind to No. 14.*

14.

**The Butte Water Company:** Built in 1906 for the telephone company, this building has one of Butte's most elegant classical facades, evoking the Adams style of 18th-century London. Note the wrought iron palmette balcony.

15.

**Butte-Silver Bow Jail:** This overpowering structure on the SW corner of Quartz and Alaska was built in 1909. Its glowering lions under the cornice house birds' nests in their jaws.

16.

**The Original Mine:** From the jail look up the street to the north. The tall iron framework is the "gallows frame" of the Original Mine. This structure was used to raise and lower men and ore from the deep shaft of the mine. Butte once had nearly a hundred gallows frames; less than twenty remain. In the Spring of 1856, Caleb Irvine, leading a pack train through this valley, camped near this spot and remarked at a mysterious excavation. When a shaft was sunk on this site years later, it was dubbed the "Original."

*Continue to your right (east along the south side of Quartz Street toward Main).*

17.

**Old Butte Fire Hall:** The Butte Fire Department was cramped in its quarters in City Hall during the 1890's. After a fire destroyed the department's livery stable here on Quartz Street, this site was selected for a new station. Modern for its time, it served the city for nearly 80 years. In 1980 the local government and the Butte Historical Society established the **Butte-Silver Bow Public Archives** on the second floor. You are invited to make use of its rich collection of old newspapers, family records, city directories, maps and photographs. (Entrance in rear.)





22.

**The Prudential Tower:** As you approach Broadway and Main, tip your head way back in order to take in all eight stories of this handsome building. Formerly the Hirbour Block, it was the tallest structure in Butte when it was completed in 1901.

*Turn left (east) on Broadway and choose the sunniest side of the street.*

23.

**Old City Hall:** The first building on the south side of the street was actually Butte's second structure to serve the local government. It was built in September 1890 for \$37,000. Over the years it has housed the city jail, the fire department and an emergency hospital.

24.

**East Broadway:** Across the street from City Hall is another group of commercial structures. The ornate

green brick building is the old Southern Hotel. The balconied Thornton Hotel on the corner was the scene of many speeches from famous visitors including Teddy Roosevelt, who spoke here in 1903. It is now used by the Montana Power Co.

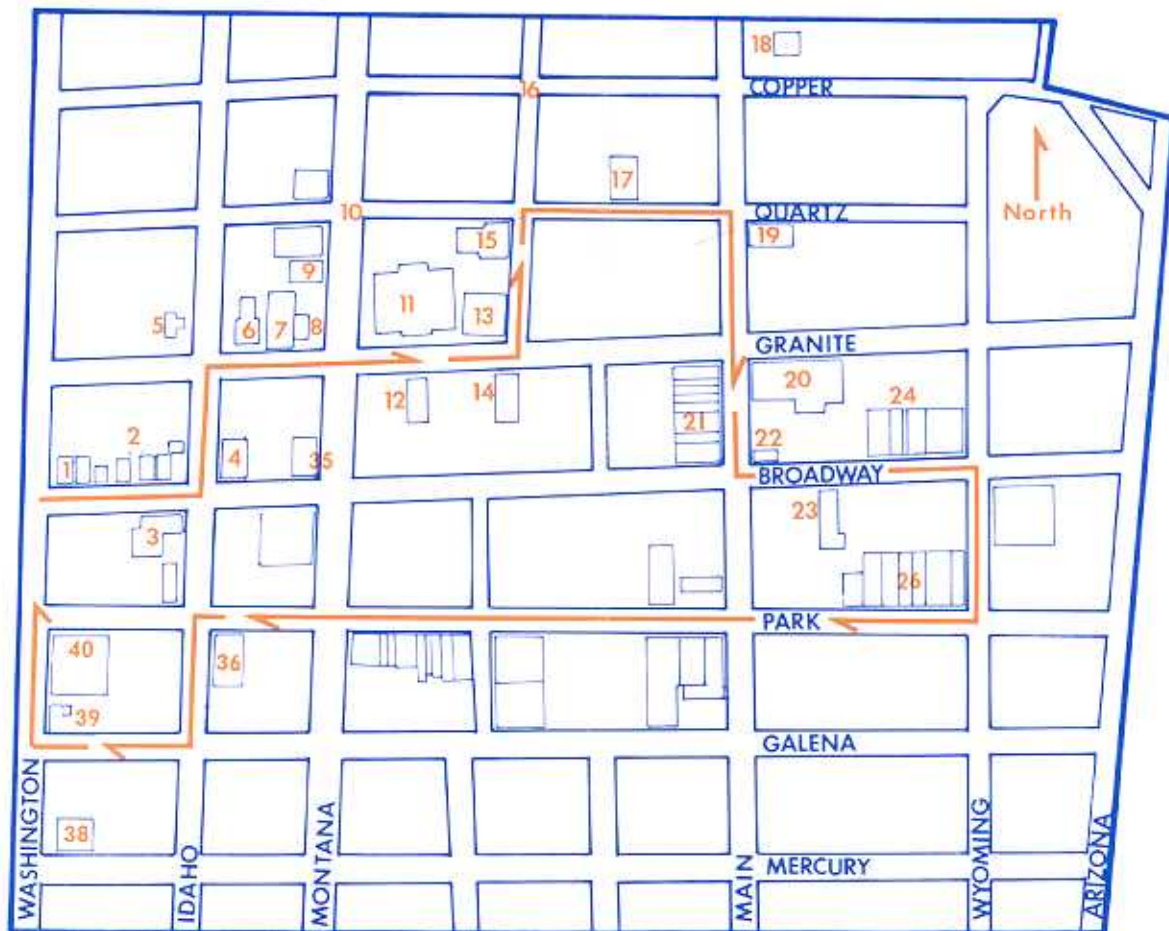
25.

**Finlen Hotel:** Constructed in 1923, this mansard-roofed building replaced the Thornton as one of the leading hotels in the Pacific Northwest.

*At the corner of Wyoming and Park turn right (west) and walk on the left (south) side of Park Street.*

26.

**East Park Plaza:** On both sides of the street are commercial buildings, some dating from the late 1880's. The Owsley Block, which echoes the English Regency Period, is a favorite of many visitors. Note its ornate green bay windows.



27.

**M & M Cafe:** Named after its original owners, Martin and Mosby, the M & M has been a saloon and cafe at this location, just off Park and Main, since 1890. It reportedly never closes.

28.

**Metals Bank Building:** Built in 1906 as the State Savings Bank, it became the second home to the Daily Bank and Trust (see No. 19) and finally the Metals Bank. Designed by Cass Gilbert, it was the first building in Butte to have a structural steel skeleton. Note its noble bronze minerva and fine doorway with granite columns. This early skyscraper is now an office building.

29.

**Curtis Music Hall:** This is Victorian eclecticism at its most whimsical. Built in 1892, it is one of Butte's best surviving "turreted" structures. A glance back at the old signs on its west wall is worth the effort.

*As you continue west on Park Street notice the lions atop the Ben Franklin Variety store (No. 30) and the Butte Heritage Mural (No. 31) painted by members of the community in 1979, Butte's centennial.*

32.

**Miners Bank Building:** Just to the west of the mural, this six story bank once housed Symon's Department Store. It is called the Phoenix building because it rose like the legendary bird from the ashes of a 1905 fire.

33.

**West Park Street:** The entire south side of this block is composed of early day business buildings. The large white building on the corner is the old Renshaw Dance Hall (1882). The Chinese restaurant next door occupies Butte's first City Hall (1884). Other buildings include the Little Joe Block (1889) and the Stephens Block (1890).



*The Butte Historical Society has published a number of books on Butte. Its quarterly journal, The Speculator, is available by writing to the society.*



*Opera glasses are best when viewing this design, one of four above the third story windows of the Masonic Temple, No. 40.*

34.

**The Montana Theater:** North from Park and Montana, the large yellow brick building was built in 1901 by theater impresario, Dick Sutton, as the Broadway Opera House. This European-style theater has a French Baroque interior. Its large stage held a full production of Ben Hur as well as many celebrities including John McCormick and the Barrymores. The Irish patriot, Eamon de Valera, spoke at the Broadway three times. In 1940 it became the Montana Theater. The mansard roof on the adjacent McQuay building to the north hints of Paris.

*Continue west on Park, noting No. 35, The First Baptist Church (1907) across from the Montana Theater.*

36.

**Knights of Columbus Hall:** This Spanish Renaissance style fraternal hall was built in 1917-18. Its neighbor on the next block to the west, THE MASONIC TEMPLE (see No. 40), is an intriguing pot-pourri of Norman and Baroque architecture (1901).

37.

**Thomas Lavelle Home:** Built in 1885-87, this home reflects the exuberance of Italianate Victorian architecture (NW corner, Idaho and Park).

*Turn left (south) down Idaho Street for one block and then turn right (west) on Galena Street.*

38.

**St. Patrick's Church:** On the left side of the street you'll find a group of buildings which make up the parish buildings of St. Patrick's Church, the oldest Catholic Church in Butte. It is called the "mother church" of Butte because it has fostered nine other parishes since 1881.



39.

**B'Nai Israel Synagogue:** The NE corner of Galena and Washington is the location of Montana's oldest functioning synagogue. The architecture reflects the Eastern European heritage of Butte's Jewish community. B'Nai Israel was completed in 1904 to house a Reform congregation and now serves both Reform and Orthodox Jews.

*Turn right (north) on Washington Street for one block.*

40.

**The Fox Theater:** Located on the SE corner of Washington and Park, the Fox is still a functioning movie house. It was built in 1923 as the Temple Theater (named for its adjacent neighbor, the Masonic Temple); it has also been known as The Bow (1955-63). Note the colorful neo-classical frieze atop its columns.

*Continue north on Washington Street for one more block to your point of origin. We hope you enjoyed your tour. A walking tour of the west side mansions is available in the Arts Chateau (Charles Clark Mansion). Please let us know if you have any further questions.*



*The Old Butte Fire Hall, No. 17; now houses the Butte-Silver Bow Public Archives in its second floor.*

*Prepared by the Butte Historical Society and the Urban Revitalization Agency with help from the National Center for Appropriate Technology. Graphics and design by Paul Driscoll.*

**On the Cover:** *The bronze minerva (top) can be found above the arched doorway of the Metals Bank Building, No. 28. Steel engraving (center) appears courtesy of the Sanborn Map Company. Lions keep watch from the third story of the County Jail (bottom), No. 15.*