



Tenino Walking Tour

Tour Tenino's Sandstone Buildings and Sites

Welcome to Tenino and its sandstone legacy of quarries and buildings. Tenino, located in Southern Thurston County and founded in 1872, was known in its early years as a terminus of the Northern Pacific Railroad and later the junction for the Olympia and Tenino Railroad line.

In 1888, a large deposit of sandstone was found near Tenino. By the 1910s quarries were operated by the Tenino Stone Company and the Hercules Sandstone Company. These companies supplied Tenino sandstone for buildings throughout the West from San Francisco to Vancouver, British Columbia and from Aberdeen to Missoula, Mont. The quarries gradually were phased out as concrete replaced stone as a building material and the last quarry closed in the 1930s.

Like so many cities in the West, Tenino's commercial district was destroyed by fires. The 1905 fire destroyed a block on the south side of Sussex Street, and the 1917 fire the other side of the street. In rebuilding and using Tenino's own sandstone, the town was left with a unique legacy of its sandstone quarries.

1. Tenino Depot Museum ~ 1914

This building replaced the town's second station, which was abandoned when Northern Pacific completely rerouted the Tenino-Tacoma section of track. Luther Twichel, a Tacoma architect, designed the building specifying Tenino sandstone, though most small-town depots of the West were of wood-frame construction.

The building features Richardsonian-style stonework. Note the rock-faced arches above the main entry. The exterior walls are made of finished sandstone blocks alternating with courses of rock-faced stone.

The Tenino Depot served passengers until the early 1950s and freight handling until the 1960s when Burlington Northern discontinued service. Threatened with demolition after sitting empty for 10 years, the citizens in 1976 raised funds to move the depot to its present location for use as a museum.



2. Tenino Stone Company Quarry Site ~ 1888

From 1888 to 1926 this site was the only quarry for the Tenino Stone Company and its predecessor, Van Tine and Fenton. After WWII the abandoned stone quarry was acquired by the town. Largely with the contributions of time and money by the Tenino Lion's Club, the site was dedicated as a living war memorial in 1950.

The townspeople turned the quarry site, 95-feet deep and flooded from natural springs, into a city-sponsored swimming pool. The terraced walls on the hillside above the pool are visible reminders of the stone quarrying activity that occurred.



3. Tenino Stone Company Quarry House ~ 1900

The first quarry house for the Tenino Stone Company Quarry Site was located where the Depot Museum is. This second quarry house originally had a stone fireplace, an ornate sandstone fence in front and porch columns. Only the columns and portions of the fence remain.

Beside the quarry house, the Tenino Stone Company had its saw house and cutting shed located adjacent to the quarry site.



4. State Bank of Tenino Building ~ 1906

The State Bank of Tenino Building changed hands in 1915 and became the Citizen's Bank of Tenino. It was because of this bank's failure in the early days of the Depression that the town of Tenino became famous as the home of wooden money.

The building occupies the corner of the "L" shape of the Campbell & Campbell Building sharing similar design details. There is a continuous cornice panel on both street facades with a smooth-faced stone parapet.

The State Bank building features include one large window with a stain-glass transom. Its recessed porch has one round unfluted Corinthian column and side pilasters, all with ornate capitals.



5. Puget Sound National Bank ~ 1983

Though this bank building has had the rock-faced sandstone stone-laid in contrast to the traditional method used for the 1906-21 buildings in the commercial area, the building is complementary. The sandstone used for this building came from the old Hercules No. 1 quarry site, it is now home to KeyBank which was opened specifically for this project.



6. Tenino City Hall ~ 1913

This building was originally the Hercules Company's quarry house at Hercules No. 1 site. It was designed by Hans Scheel's son Walter. The building served as both a home of the directors and clerical force for the company, and is an excellent example of exterior and interior uses of Tenino sandstone.

The main offices on the upper floor originally had wainscoting, walls and panels of stone. The artistically carved panels remain as does the director's room fireplace with its sandstone framed oval mirror. The lower floor was used for the drafting department.

For use as its city hall, the city of Tenino purchased the quarry house from the bank that foreclosed on the Hercules Sandstone Company. In 1921, the building was dismantled with each piece numbered for proper reassembly at its present site. The previous stairs that formerly came up on both sides of the porch were eliminated. A new central stairway to the upper floor was added.



7. Campbell & Campbell ~1906

The Campbell family began business in Tenino in the 1890s. Bel Campbell, appointed postmaster in 1889, operated a confectionery along with her duties. Later, her brother Angus combined his grocery store with her business. By 1901, the company was located in a building on the south end of the present location.

After the 1905 fire, the building of this sandstone structure began. The post office was put into a room facing on Olympia Street and remained in the store until 1913 with Angus succeeding Bel as postmaster in 1907.

After starting with a small building, the business of Campbell & Campbell grew to encompass three buildings and a warehouse. The general store was then the largest in the county and drew trade from a wide area. The Campbells closed their store in 1954.



8. Mentzer & Copping Block ~ 1914

This building is divided into two storefronts, separated by columns of rough-faced coursed stone. When first built, the Monarch Drug Company was on the east side and M.B. Peterson's Tenino Hardware & Furniture on the west side. Later, the hardware store merged with L.A. McLain's grocery business.

The grocery storefront was remodeled in 1935 and the store layout modernized. In 1956, the McLains expanded to the other side of the building to add general merchandise to their business. L.A. McLain retired in 1959, with other family members continuing on until 1973.



9. Miller Block ~ 1906

This building has two major storefronts, separated by columns of smooth-faced stone blocks with rough margins. On the east end of the main structure is another storefront. Though structurally a continuation, it differs in its parapet, which has a gable.

The Miller Block, built by Louis Miller, has had a number of businesses over the years, such as a barbershop, meat market, cleaners and a hardware store. When Jefferson Canon was appointed postmaster in 1913, he moved the post office from the Campbell & Campbell store into the small east-end storefront. Here the post office remained until 1960.



10. Tenino Independent Building ~ 1914

This structure has walls that are of alternating courses of wide, smooth-faced sandstone blocks and narrow, darker, rough-cut sandstone blocks. It is one of the few sandstone buildings in town to have some alteration of its sandstone ornamentation.

Some businesses that have occupied the building have been a saloon during the 1910s and 1920s and a dry good store. The Liberty Theatre was located for many years on the eastern third of the building.



11. Columbia Building ~ 1906

The structure was built by a brewery, probably the Columbia Brewing Company, for a saloon. In 1909, Lee Waddell operated his saloon, Lee's Place. At that time there was a hardware and furniture store in the west-end storefront. During Prohibition the saloon became a pool hall and subsequently has been a tavern.

This building has some interesting sandstone features. The Sussex Street facade has coursed rough-cut sandstone while the Howard Street facade has coursed rubble. Note the entry at the building's angled corner. The arch over the entry is repeated over the two windows on Sussex Street.



12. Russell House ~ 1892

This was originally a small, wooden two-bedroom rectangular-shaped house. In 1911 its then-owner Thomas Russell of the Tenino Stone Company built on an addition to the west side. The porch became "L" shaped and had square columns of rough-faced sandstone added.

Other features of the house are the two sandstone fireplaces, one smooth-faced and the other rough-faced. One of the two original fanlight attic windows with stained glass panes remains.

The house has been maintained with little alteration through the years as a residence. It was later owned by a niece of Thomas Russell, Laura Russell Thomas, for many years.



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13. Russell Building ~ 1910

This structure was built by the Russell family who were owners of the Tenino Stone Company. In the 1910s a men's clothing store was the occupant. Later the telephone company offices were here. For many years up into the 1950s it was the headquarters for the Hercules Powder Company, predecessor of PACCO. In the 1970s through the 1980s, the Southwest Plumbing Company operated here.

The decorative panels are the best features of this building. The central panel is of a small squared flower motif and the outer panels are of large fluted sunburst designs.



14. Masonic Temple ~ 1921

The oldest of the lodges in Tenino is the Mason Lodge No. 86, which was organized March 2, 1892. This structure was built specifically by the Masons for their lodge.

The building exterior has seen no alteration. The stain-glass transoms and the large raised Masonic emblem are the original. Though the building's ornamentation is not as elaborate as that of the State Bank Building, the stone work is still excellent.



15. Wolf Building ~ 1908

One of the first occupants of this building was a saloon operated by the Tumwater-based Olympia Brewing Company. In 1935, the three storefronts had Henry Keithahn's Tenino Feed Store, the Puget Sound Power and Light Company and a barbershop.

The structure is of sandstone and brick construction. Note the course rubble and the side and rear walls. All of the three original storefront bays have undergone alteration.



Walking Tour Key



— Source: Researched and written by Susan Goff.
 Information provided by the Tenino Chamber of Commerce
 and the South Thurston County Historical Society.

Sussex Street — South Side

4. State Bank of Tenino
5. Puget Sound National Bank
6. Tenino City Hall
7. Campbell and Campbell
8. Mentzer and Copping Block
9. Miller Block
10. Tenino Independent Building
11. Columbia Building
12. Russell House

Tenino Park

1. Tenino Depot Museum
2. Tenino Stone Company
Quarry Site
3. Tenino Stone Company
Quarry House

Sussex Street — North Side

13. Russell Building
14. Masonic Temple
15. Wolf Building

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