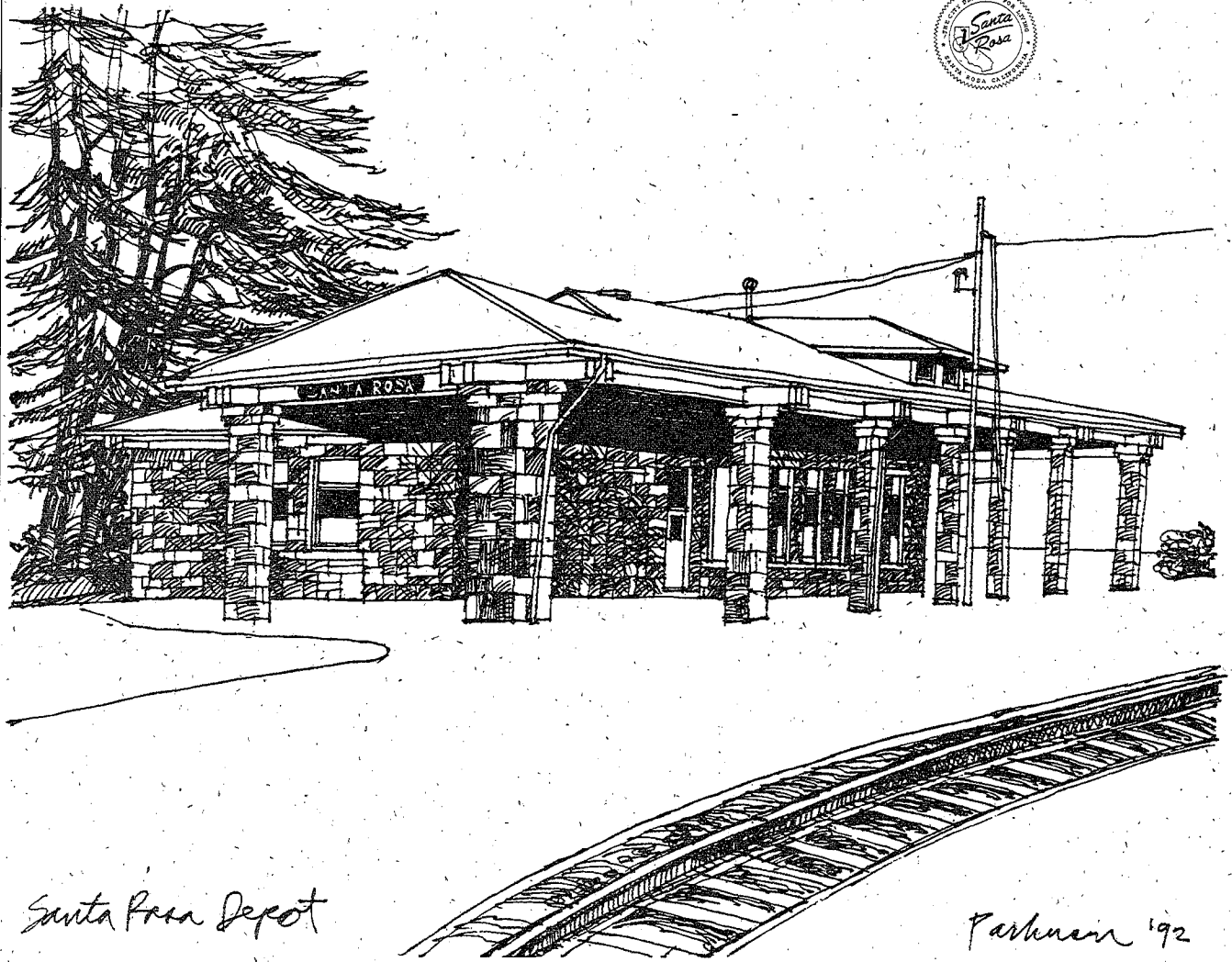


RAILROAD SQUARE WALKING TOUR

*Published by the City of Santa Rosa
Cultural Heritage Board*



Santa Rosa Depot

Parkman '92

RAILROAD SQUARE WALKING TOUR

Railroad Square District was the western anchor of the commercial heart of Santa Rosa for well over 60 years around the turn of the century. The major Northwestern Pacific Railroad bisected Sonoma County, ranging 300 miles from Tiburon Peninsula to Eureka. Santa Rosa became a rail crossroad when, in 1904, the intra-county Petaluma and Santa Rosa Electric Railroad connected the towns of Petaluma, Sebastopol and Forestville and ran its bright yellow cars into Santa Rosa. It cost 15¢ in the 1930's to ride from Sebastopol to Santa Rosa. A popular tourist excursion ran through the Russian River resorts. The Railroad Square District was an exciting and busy industrial, commercial, and tourist center.

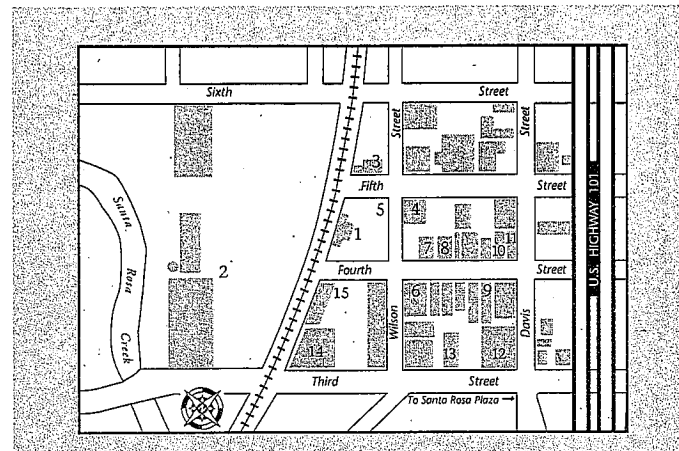
Early in the 20th century, the Depot, the La Rose Hotel, the Western Hotel and the Railway Express Building were constructed by a group of Italian stonemasons, with hardrock from quarries in east Santa Rosa. A number of these sturdy buildings, including the Electroscale Warehouse at 15 Third St., survived the awesome 1906 earthquake which demolished much of downtown Santa Rosa. Most of the other historic buildings in the adjacent Railroad Square were constructed afterward. The simple brick commercial buildings along Fourth St. housed retail stores, hotels and eateries, and the electric cars ran past the courthouse easterly to McDonald Avenue. Eventually, the thriving

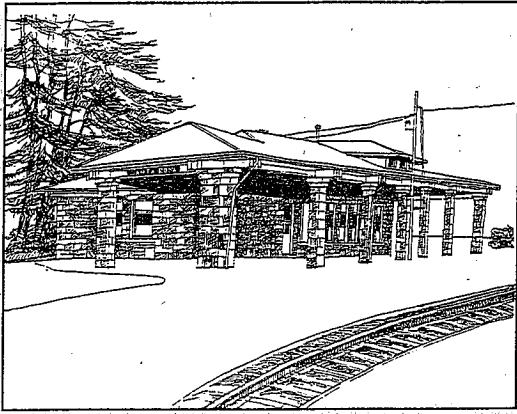
commercial hub was diminished with the coming of the Great Depression and the competition from automobiles and trucks. Today, however, it is back by popular demand.

Enjoy your walk. As you examine these fine old buildings, think back a century and see if you can faintly hear the rumble of horse-drawn carriages and see wagons loaded with country produce. Listen for the shrill whistle and puffing grunt of the big steam engines that defined the railroad era!

Public parking is available adjacent to the Depot Park, and there is street parking throughout the District. You may start the walking tour from any location. Enjoy!

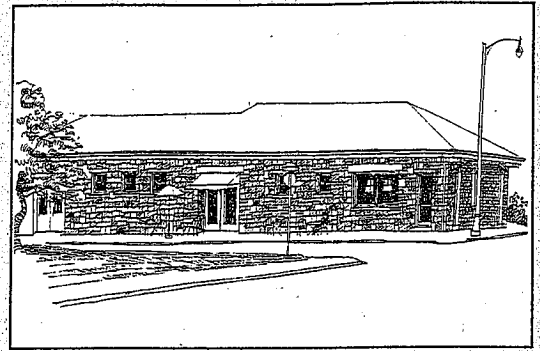
Railroad Square Historical District



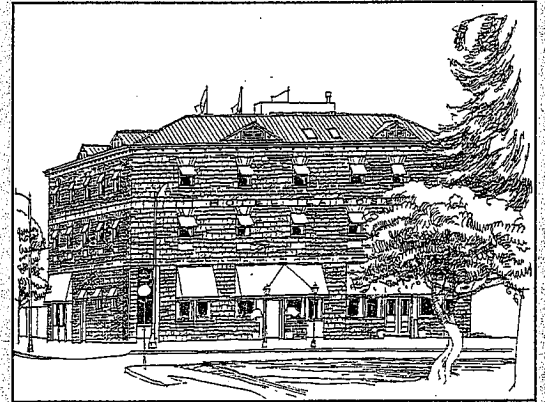


1 The prime structure and landmark is the **NORTHWESTERN PACIFIC RAILROAD DEPOT**. Built in 1904, it was constructed by four Italian stonemasons—Peter Maroni, Natale Forni, Massimo Galeazzi and Angelo Sodini. The one and one half story locally quarried stone building with its heavy wood beams has a stone pillared arcade on three sides, and a hip roof and dormer at track side. The present depot replaced the original wooden structure (c.1870) which burned in 1903. The depot was used as a backdrop in the movie “Shadow of a Doubt” by Alfred Hitchcock.

2 This very large warehouse (c.1915) with its horizontal string courses and exposed pilasters and wood roof monitors is a reminder of the industrial past. Visible to the north is a towering (c.1925) metal frame water tower, with a painted (mostly rust) tank and gaunt appearance.



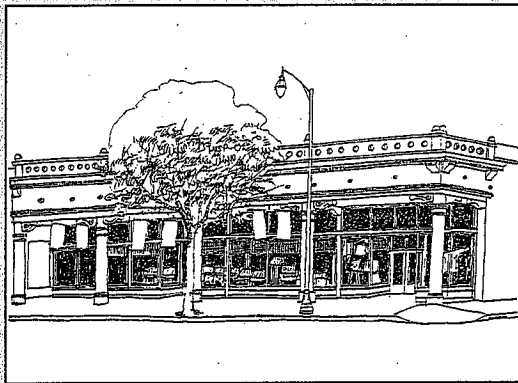
3 Look just to your right and across Fifth Street; walk towards the east to inspect the **RAILWAY EXPRESS AGENCY BUILDING**, (1915) at 11 Fifth St. It is a one story stone building, with hip roof and a sensitive early addition in stone to match the railroad depot exterior.



4 To your right again, at Fifth and Wilson Sts. is the jewel of the district, the **HOTEL LA ROSE**. It was built in 1907 at a cost of \$35,000. The hotel originally had forty rooms and a bar, and was managed by Mr. B.

Bettini. Recently remodeled inside, this three story stone building was constructed by the same Italian stonemasons who built the depot. Its exterior has two triangular dormers on the east and north sides. The windows have flat arched detailing, and the second and third stories are distinguished by a lighter stone coursing. This property was certified for the National Register.

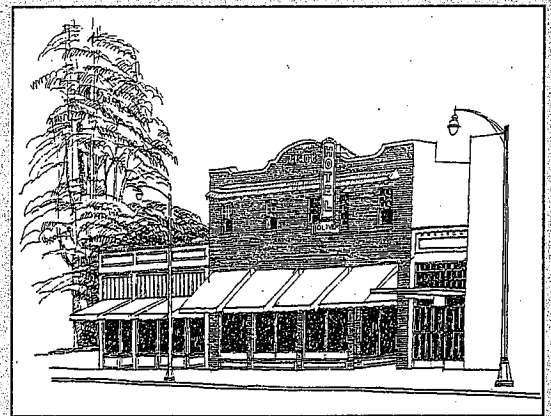
5 As you turn right & south along Wilson St., you are passing the **DEPOT PARK** (c.1904) with its towering cedars and the two bunya-bunya arucaria trees (Monkey trees). It is part of the Railroad Square facade. It was typical to have a small park at a railway station.



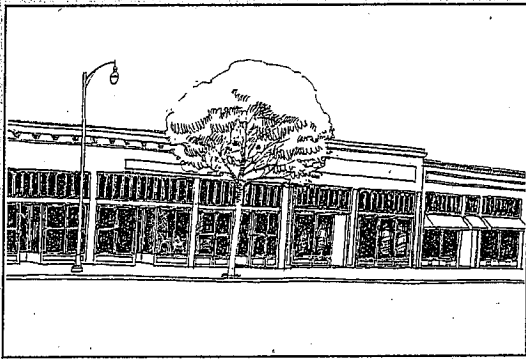
6 Continue south, along Wilson St. to Fourth St. and look across at the **LEE BROTHERS BUILDING** (1906) at 100 Fourth St. with its five steel columns and classic details. Note the decorative cornice above the pierced brick parapet. The arcade was altered c.1930 from an original wood store front. The adjacent building to the left

(108-110 Fourth St.), while built in 1915 with two bays and a commercial false front, was altered with plaster and wood in 1950.

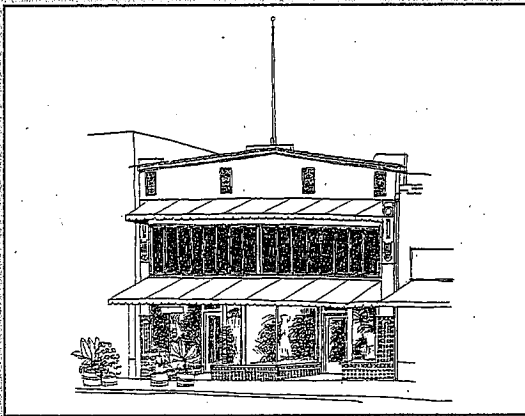
7 As you walk easterly along Fourth Street examine the **TIRONE BUILDING** (c.1913) at 105-109 Fourth Street. This unreinforced brick structure is the only one story brick building which remains unpainted in the District. With its store front, transoms and a recessed parapet (for the building name) it is typical of a commercial building built in the early 1900's. Continue easterly along the north side of Fourth Street.



8 At 111-115 Fourth St. stands the two story **JACOBS BUILDING** (c.1910), a clinker brick structure built by local contractor Frank Sullivan. Still hanging on its angle iron bracing is the sign **OLIVER HOTEL**, a reminder that this Mission Revival structure served as a hotel in the 1920's. It is a National Register quality structure.



9 If you look across Fourth St. on the south side, there is the **130 FOURTH ST. BUILDING** (c.1911), recipient of the City's first merit award for historic preservation; and at 126 Fourth St., is the **WELFARE LEAGUE BUILDING** (c.1925), a one story, two bay, stucco false front with cornice molding and glazed tile in the bays.



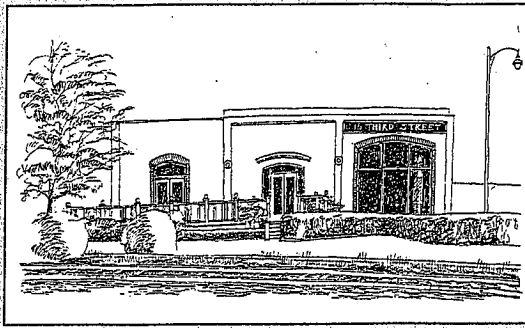
10 Continuing along the north side of Fourth St. at 125 is a Spanish Colonial Revival (c.1925), with stucco siding and a

false front with cast plaster ornamentation. Note the flag pole on the roof and the National Register plaque.

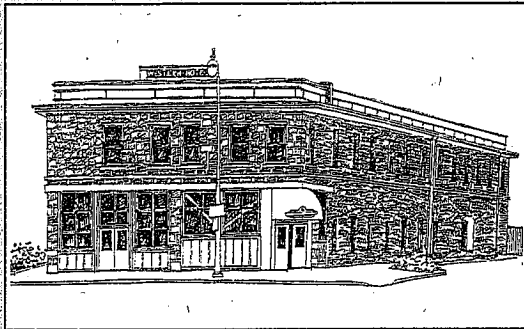
11 Walking to the northwest corner of Davis and Fourth Sts. is another National Register structure having a Mission Revival style with a false front and two bays. Turn right and cross Fourth St. and walk down Davis St. towards Third Street.

12 At the northwest corner of Davis and Third Sts. stood the former **EXCHANGE LINEN BUILDING**, one of the largest buildings in the district. It was originally constructed in 1920 with a stucco finish, and was completely rebuilt from the ground up in 1990. Turn right and walk westerly on Third Street.

13 At 111 Third St. you will find a new commercial building (1985) constructed in the Railroad Square style, with a stepped false front and wood and plaster construction. If you continue on Third, cross Wilson, and notice on your right the long yellow warehouse type structure, it is the location of the **PETALUMA & SANTA ROSA ELECTRIC RAILROAD DEPOT**. The tracks ran north then turned easterly on Fourth Street.



14 The **ELECTROSCALE BUILDING** at 15 Third St., built in 1890, is a large brick warehouse with a 1900's addition to the rear. It's architectural features include exposed pilasters, a horizontal bond course, and a shaped parapet with arched openings. The west side near the tracks is worth seeing. This building survived the great 1906 quake. Turn right and along the tracks towards the depot.



15 The **WESTERN HOTEL** at 10 Fourth St. was built in 1903, and like several others was built of local quarried stone. It was damaged and rebuilt after the 1906 quake. The visible red washers tied the walls together. The false front features a nameplate and cast

iron columns. The facade was restored in 1980. During the railroad era it housed tourist and business visitors and is now used for shops and offices.

This is the termination of the walking tour. Before getting back into your car, take another look around you. Try to imagine what the area looked like to arriving passengers who climbed off the train and got their first glimpse of Santa Rosa. We hope you have enjoyed your walking tour of our Railroad Square District, courtesy of the Santa Rosa Cultural Heritage Board.

Acknowledgements:

This publication was made possible by the City of Santa Rosa, Department of Community Development, and through the efforts of the Cultural Heritage Board and the Historic Railroad Square Association.

The City of Santa Rosa's Cultural Heritage Board is appointed by the City Council to protect Santa Rosa's historic resources. Principal duties of the Board include undertaking historic surveys, designating landmarks and preservation districts, and reviewing proposed alterations to historic buildings.

Railroad Square was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1979 and contains approximately 35 properties. An expanded area was also designated a local preservation district by the Cultural Heritage Board in 1990.

Additional brochures may be obtained from the Santa Rosa Department of Community Development, Room 3, City Hall, P.O. Box 1678, Santa Rosa, CA 95402. Also available at the Department of Community Development is a 14 minute video, "Santa Rosa The Hidden City" which showcases Santa Rosa's historic and architectural resources, including Railroad Square.