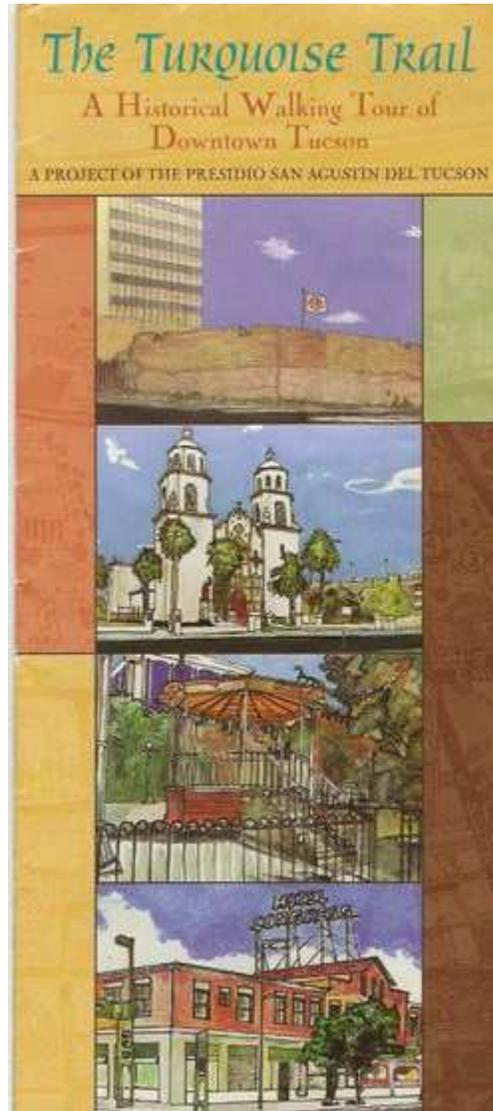


Ormand Family Activity

November 2013: Walking Tour of Downtown Tucson

Anyone who spends much time downtown will probably notice a blue-greenish paint stripe running along sidewalks and across courtyards and squares. When we were here earlier in the week, we figured we would just stop in at the Tucson Visitors' Center in La Placita Village and ask about it. The women working there knew just what we were talking about, and produced this map. We figured that we would come back on my off-Friday and do the walking tour.

Our tour started with lunch at the Little Poca Cosa Cafe. Jerri went there a few years ago while she was on jury duty, and she wanted to go back there with me. I found it pleasantly quirky. The two women who run it are sisters to Chef Davila of the *real* (high-end) Cafe Poca Cosa, and there is some shared cuisine, since LCPC's specialty is *mole*. They don't serve soft drinks, since they pride themselves on making everything they sell, so Jerri had a strawberry lime and I had a horchata. They also don't take credit cards, only cash. Fun little place.



www.littlepocacosa.com

It seems the Turquoise Trail Walking Tour was set up and maintained by the Presidio Trust organization, which is where the tour starts, and ends. The map has numbers for the sites, and the paint stripe has corresponding numbers at the actual sites.

www.tucsonpresidio.org



1. The reconstructed tower of the Presidio San Agustin.

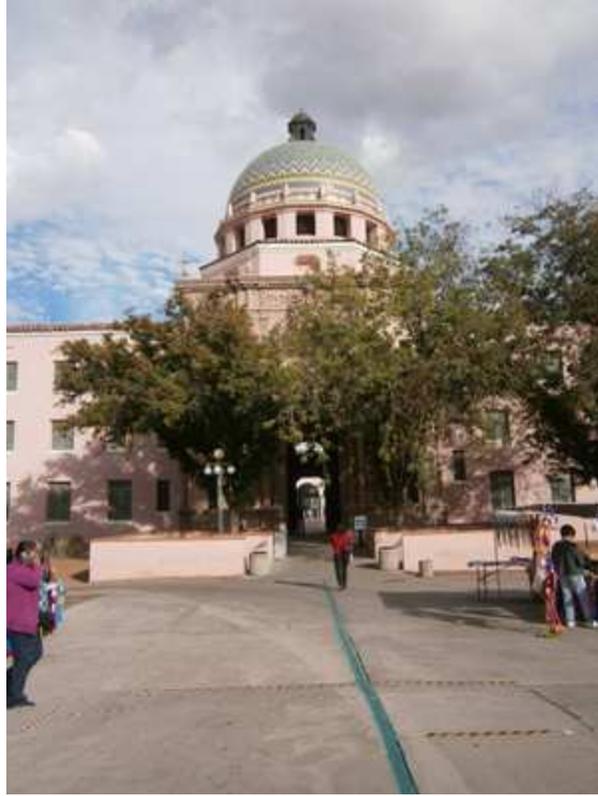
Inside the Records Office at the Pima County Courthouse is a surviving segment of the original Presidio wall.





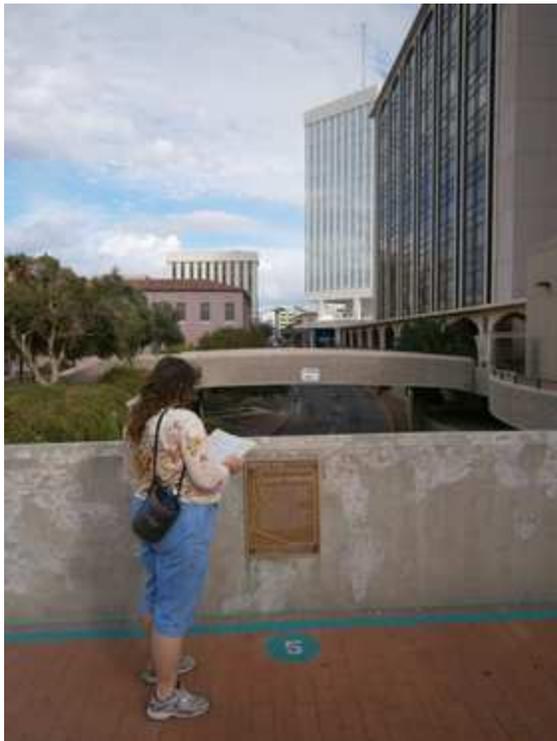
Outside the Recorders Office is a granite stripe in the courtyard walkway to mark where the wall ran.

2. Pima County Courthouse, built in 1929.



3. Monument commemorating the Mormon Battalion, which passed through Tucson enroute to California during the 1846 Mexican War.

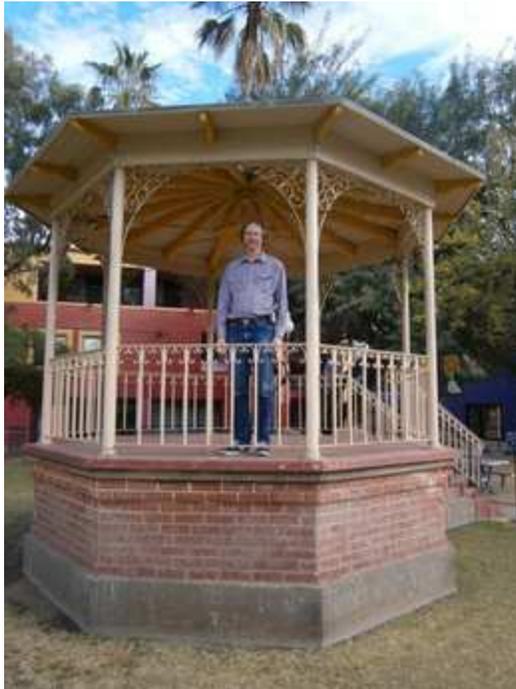
4. Monument to the "soldado de cuerva", or leather-armored Spanish soldiers of the Presidio garrison.



5. Allande Footbridge, named in honor of a Spanish-era gentleman who invested in the Presidio and commanded a force of Dragoons acting against the Apaches.

6. Garces Footbridge, named in honor of Frer Garces, who came to Tucson with Hugh O'Connor at the founding of the Presidio in 1775 (from which Tucson traces its official origin).

I think these footbridges that cross Congress and Broadway between the government area to the cultural area are unique, charming, and very practical.



7. The gazebo in Plaza de Mesilla, in La Placita, just like the structure that was in this place when the stagecoach from Mesilla, New Mexico, ran through here on the Camino Real.

In addition to the numbered sights, there are a few "lettered" sights that are not *on* the Turquoise Trail. **A:** The statue of Pancho Villa (bandit and murderer of Americans) in Viente de Agosto Park, presented to Tucson by the Mexican government, is visible from the little La Placita park around the gazebo.



8. Sosa-Carrillo Fremont House. A survivor from one of Tucson's oldest neighborhoods that was demolished to build the Convention Center. This house was used by John C. Fremont when he was Territorial Governor in 1878.

9. The artsy mural panel was rescued from Jacome's Department Store. I knew this bit of public art was here; I had no idea it actually had some history.



B: Sentinel Peak, where a lookout was posted to watch for Apaches. The "A" was put there by excited U of A students after a football game in 1915. The Indian name for their little town "at the base of the black hill", *Chuk Shon*, is the origin for the name for our city.

Also visible from here (but not in the picture) is **C:** Tumamoc Hill, just northwest of Sentinel Peak. Not visible is **D:** Mission Garden, apparently near the original Convento, now recreated. Corner of Grande and Mission. Bears a future visit.

10. El Tiradito, the Mexican "wishing shrine" in honor of a killed adulterer who could not be buried in the churchyard. This is not the original location of the shrine (about a block away from it, actually), but still quite heavily used as the "wishing shrine". The pocks and crevices in the adobe wall are stuffed with little papers containing prayers and wishes.



11. La Pilata Museum tells the story of the Barrio Viejo and the Carrillo Gardens. Bears its own visit in the future (along with the nearby Fire Department headquarters and firefighters exhibit).

E: Visible from the corner is the depression formerly occupied by Carrillo Gardens, afterwards known as the "Elysian Grove".

Running springs in the day made this a wonderful pleasant place for Tucsonans to gather; kind of like a period Golf 'N Stuff. When the springs died (earthquake? Too much water pumped from the aquifer?), the park fell into disuse and was eventually built over by the western part of the Barrio Viejo.

12. Carrillo School, built in 1930, still in use. Hosts the "La Posada" children's Christmas procession.



13. Teatro Carmen, originally a Spanish-language drama theatre, from 1915. Not clear that it is used for anything now, but certainly kept up.

14. Adobe house built in the 1860s by Jewish tailor Joseph Ferrin, who helped found the first synagogue in Arizona. Now the famous Cushing Street Bar and Restaurant.

Further south and east of here, on Stone, is **F**, that synagogue building, now the Jewish History Museum, which we have been to, and it is quite good.





15. A bit of the Barrio Viejo, showing the typical *canales*, or waterspouts, in the typical Sonoran Rowhouse structure.

16. The Temple of Music and Art, built as a theatre in 1927 as Tucson became more civilized and cultured. We have been here several times for plays, both in the main building and up those stairs to the "Cabaret" theatre, as well as the art gallery above the theatre lobby.



G: On the guide is St Augustine Cathedral, which is definitely one of Tucson's landmark features, and historic, too (construction started in 1896), so it's odd that the Turquoise Trail did not run past it. The guide says one of the bells from the original San Agustin chapel is here. I ought to find out if and when tours are possible.



H: Children's Museum, formerly the Carnegie Library. I actually went in here when it was still the library; I recall narrow, dark aisles with iron railings between tall shelfcases with musty books. The new library is on Stone, and the old Carnegie building is very appropriately used as our Children's Museum.

I: Scottish Rite Cathedral. Still used for freemason events, now open for renting for events, including productions by Waypoint Theatre. Jerri and I got in on the Waypoint "check it out" tour, as well as the first show in the large theatre room.



17. Armory Park used to be Camp Lowell, during the Civil War and the Indian Wars, but the soldiers caused such trouble that the citizens arranged to have it moved out of town. Fort Lowell Park on Craycroft and Glenn is where it was moved to. Monuments to the military involvements of Tucson are present here - from left to right, the Mormon Battalion

marker (placed by the LDS church), the newly-dedicated World War II monument (with its strange blue peephole in the middle), the spartan World War I monument, and the Spanish-American War statue.

18. The Odd Fellows Hall is now occupied by Janos Downtown Kitchen and the Etherton photography gallery. Apparently, the second story had a large dance hall.



19. Hotel Congress - built in 1919 as the railroad hotel, right across from the station. Still a hotel, now a popular cafe and nightspot and gathering place for local culture. Including some sort of homosexual community event when we walked past it.

20. The historic railroad depot. It's still a depot, with a daily Amtrak train taking on passengers, but mostly it's Maynard's Kitchen and Market, and the space between the building and the tracks (with an iron safety fence) is a low-energy nightspot. The building was put up in 1907, but it has been restored to what it looked like in 1942



Some other sites that are nearby but not on the Turquoise Trail:

J: The Pioneer Hotel building, Tucson's first high-rise and an upper-class hotel. When it caught fire in 1970 and twenty residents were killed, including the Steinfelds, it was a Big Deal. Since rebuilt, it is now an office building. Maybe there are apartments in there, too.

K: the Arizona Historical Society downtown museum, on Stone next to the bank buildings. Pretty good little museum.



21. The Fox Theatre. Once, Tucson's only movie theatre. Jerri's mother went to Mickey Mouse Club shows here when she was little. My friend John Hill worked on the Fox Restoration project as an architect. Now it is a fine Art Deco theatre, mostly used for live shows, but occasionally we will go see a classic movie here.

22. The Tucson Museum of Art has a permanent collection of western and Pre-Columbian art, and other traveling exhibits. There's also a pretty nice restaurant in there, the Cafe A La C'Art. There are several historic buildings in the Art Museum complex, including the Casa Cordova, which shows how Spanish life was like in the Presidio days, and also houses the Nacimiento, an amazing nativity scene of miniature figures, which is only open for viewing around Christmas. The "front" of the museum is on Main Street, which on the north side of downtown is where Tucson's finest citizens lived in an upper-class district known back then as "Snob Hollow"; most of those houses are still there, with placards out front identifying the original inhabitants. Many of those houses are still residences.





This side of the Museum is also a courtyard which was formerly the Plaza Militaire, possibly the parade ground of the Presidio.

23. The last stop on the Turquoise Trail is the Telles Block, formerly a square of Sonoran rowhouses around a central courtyard. Now, the buildings are used by the Old Town Artisans; an association of arts and crafts shops.



The courtyard is now used by La Cocina, a pretty nice open-air restaurant.

The blue-green paint stripe continued on back to the Presidio reconstruction, and we walked the entire path. The tour took about two hours, including some back-tracking (you have to know where the La Placita gazebo is, because the turquoise stripe is ambiguous at the

turn-off) and missed connections (we actually walked past the Depot and Hotel Congress in reverse order). But it was a pretty nice overview of the downtown area, especially for newcomers... and long-time Tucsonans who want to get in touch with their roots.