

From The Alfalfa Saloon Basement to the Top of the Larson Building: A Downtown Yakima Walking Tour

North Yakima, Washington was created in the middle of uninhabited sagebrush lands by the fiat of the Northern Pacific Railroad in 1884-85, when the company decided that the existing settlement, then known as Yakima City and now known as Union Gap, was not well-located for the placement of a station. Yakima City did not have adequate land on which new settlers could be induced to come and establish businesses and industries which would furnish the new railroad with passengers and freight into the future.

Our walking tour of what is now Yakima's urban core begins at the Yakima Convention Center and ends on Front Street, where the first businesses were established. Along the way, we will visit the 1888 St. Michael's Church, the 1918 Christian Science Church, the 1911 Egyptian Revival Masonic Temple Lodge Room, the 1920 Capitol Theatre, the 1931 Art Deco Larson Building (where we will have the rare opportunity to climb onto the roof for a fabulous vista), and the 1910 Northern Pacific Depot, where we will enjoy a box lunch in what was originally the men's smoking room.

Your tour leader is John A. Baule, Director Emeritus of the Yakima Valley Museum. Comfortable shoes are highly recommended, and there is a short vertical stair to navigate if you wish to go onto the roof of the Larson Building.