



Historic Healdsburg

A Self-Guided Architectural Tour



Healdsburg Museum

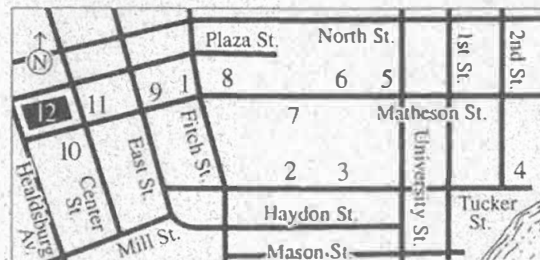
221 Matheson Street
Healdsburg CA 95448
707-431-3325

Wednesday - Sunday, 11am - 4pm
Admission Free

Most archaeologists agree that Healdsburg sits atop 10,000 year old village sites. In the more recent past the area was occupied by Southern Pomo and Wappo speakers. In 1841, 48,800 acres of this land became the Rancho Sotoyome, granted to sea captain Henry Fitch by Mexico. Fitch hired fur trapper Cyrus Alexander to manage the ranch. In 1841 Alexander built an adobe dwelling, and developed a cattle ranch, tannery, and grist mill. Alexander was given his own tract of land (Alexander Valley) from Fitch in 1845. At the end of the Mexican-American War, Fitch's widow sold parts of the Rancho to pay her taxes. Harmon Heald, an Ohio native who came here after a failed gold mining attempt, bought much of the property. He laid out a town that he named "Healdsburg" in 1857. Heald donated land for a central park (the Plaza), as well as for a school, cemetery, and churches. The remaining lots were sold for \$15.00 each. The population within the city limits swelled from 300 people in 1857 to almost 2,000 in 1880.

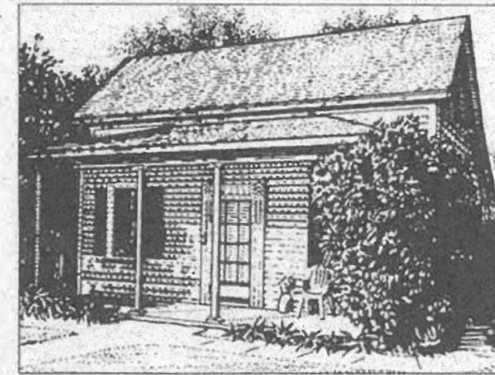
The Healdsburg Museum was founded in 1976. Until 1989 the Museum occupied small temporary quarters. A fund-raising drive raised over half a million dollars to refurbish Healdsburg's Carnegie Library as a permanent home for the Museum. The Museum is owned by the City of Healdsburg and operated by volunteers and staff of the Healdsburg Museum and Historical Society. For more information on local architecture, consult our book "Historic Homes of Healdsburg," join one of our guided walking tours, or make an appointment to do research in our library.

Central Healdsburg showing locations of the twelve buildings



1. Carnegie Library 221 Matheson Street

Built in 1911 during the second revival of classical architecture, this building incorporates the columns, stairs, and pediment typical of Classic temples and other structures. The first library in Healdsburg was established in the late 1870s, but failed. A new library run by the Ladies Temperance League opened in the late 1880s in City Hall. This building served as a City run library from 1911 until the 1980s.



2. James Thompson House 317 Tucker Street

The simplicity of this house and the absence of ornate detail are typical of local farmhouses from the mid-19th century. Little is known about the people who lived in the thousands of unassuming clapboard houses constructed in the west between 1850 and 1875. This one was built by Ohio natives, James and Eliza Thompson, who first settled in Dry Creek Valley in 1849. The Thompsons built this house in town about 1864 for their family of 9 children.



3. George Alexander House 419 Tucker Street

This example of a Queen Anne "cottage" was built with mail-order architectural plans in 1895. The house has a number of elaborate ornamental mill-work details, such as cut shingles on the gables and scroll-sawn brackets on the bay, which were made possible by industrial machinery. This residence was built for George Alexander, tenth child of pioneer settlers on the Rancho Sotoyome, Cyrus and Rufena Alexander.



4. Sarah Cole House 204 Second Street

Italianate Victorian homes built in the 1880s took inspiration from the villas of northern Italy. The overhanging cornice and brackets at the top, smaller pediments over the windows, and elaborate portico are characteristic of these structures. Sarah Cole came here from Texas with several of her 12 children in 1890 and bought the house.



5. **Charles Sherriffs House**
439 Matheson Street

This two story stucco house is an elegant example of a Craftsman style home and was built in 1920 for Charles Sherriffs, a local entrepreneur. The roof is low, pitched, and multi-gabled with deep eaves; the porch is recessed with heavy stucco pillars. The home across the street, built only 6 years earlier, is also a Craftsman style home, but the shiplap rustic siding, exposed rafters, and pegged posts give that home a less formal look.



6. **George Alexander House**
423 Matheson Street

This asymmetrical cottage with its unusual Mediterranean style detailing, quatrefoil windows and tower is a fanciful example of the late Queen Anne period. The slender columns and solid porch rail (balustrade) are more common elements of the subsequent NeoClassical period. This relatively large house was built in 1905 as the second home for the family of banker George Alexander (see #3).



7. **Charles Patchett House**
410 Matheson Street

This large, two story home with its lush landscaping and sprawling front yard, was an unmistakable sign of wealth to the community in 1921. The design captures the flashy style of that boisterous era, but the NeoClassical porch and columns add a stately touch. It was built as a retirement home for Charles Patchett, a San Francisco businessman, and his local-born wife, Rosella Hall Patchett.



8. **Lindley Gilbert House**
309 Matheson Street

This home was built in 1929 for Lindley and Beatrice Gilbert, owners of a Healdsburg lumber yard. Beatrice lived here until the 1980s, making the current residents only the second tenants. The low sweeping roof line and large covered porch connect the structure firmly to the ground, elements typical of the Craftsman period. The arches and stuccoed walls are borrowed from homes of the Mediterranean, another popular style of the 1920s.



9. **St. Paul's Episcopal Church**
209 Matheson Street

This example of the Gothic Revival style is seldom seen except in small town houses of worship. The structure is made of wood, but the crenelated porch roof and side buttresses are imitations of elements on European stone churches. The local Episcopal Mission was established in 1879 and met in the Grange Hall and private homes. In 1888 this Guild Hall was built half a block from this site; the Hall was moved here and refurbished in 1900.



10. **Kruse Building**
112 Matheson Street

This is the only Victorian commercial building in Healdsburg with its original upper story facade still intact. Many similar two story brick buildings once ringed the Plaza, but only this one survived the 1906 earthquake. The bay windows and the false front with cornice and brackets are indications of the Italianate influence in the original 1900 design. Frederick Kruse and his brothers were Wells Fargo agents here for many years.



11. **Gobbi Building**
312 Center Street

One of three remaining cast iron front structures in Healdsburg, this commercial Italianate building's facade has been rebuilt twice (once after the 1906 earthquake and again after a fire in 1982). The iron columns were cast in San Francisco. Built in 1885 by Italian immigrant Barney Gobbi during a local commercial boom, it has housed a succession of retail stores including a grocery, a meat market, and a dry goods store.



12. **Healdsburg Plaza**
300 Healdsburg Avenue

City founder Harmon Heald donated this lot when he laid out the town in 1857. In 1873 the oak and madrone were cleared; the lot was graded; pine, fir, and eucalyptus were planted; and a picket fence was built to keep out livestock. A central bell tower and bandstand were added in 1878, and meticulously manicured trees and shrubs were planted. In 1895 a gazebo replaced the tower and the Plaza was again replanted with roses, citrus, and palms.