

DOWNTOWN

# Foley Foot

by

A HISTORIC WALKING TOUR

# Welcome to Foley!

Stroll the streets of downtown Foley, exploring its rich history and architecture. Hear stories from its residents about days-gone-by, and learn what makes this coastal gateway town so unique.

This self-guided tour is walkable, and you can start and stop along the way wherever you'd like to spend more time soaking in all that downtown Foley has to offer!

Take the Full Tour



## Tour Stops

- 1 Foley's Louisville & Nashville Railroad Depot
- 2 Foley Coffee Shop
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- 11 Foley Fish Company

## Your Safety is Important to Us.

Please obey all traffic laws and be alert while taking this tour.



# Tour Glossary

Before you get started, you may be interested to know some of the terms that appear in this tour.

## **Adaptive Reuse**

The process of reusing an existing building for a purpose other than which it was originally built or designed for.

## **Art Deco**

A movement in the decorative arts and architecture that originated in Paris in the 1920s and was very popular in the U.S. in the 1930s. It is characterized by angular, zigzag, and other geometric shapes within the design.

## **Classical**

Pertaining to the architecture of Greece and Rome, or to the styles inspired by this architecture.

## **Colonial Revival**

This architectural style was popular in the early to mid-twentieth century in the U.S. It mimics aspects of earlier American colonial architecture.

## **Corbeling**

Stepped masonry that projects out from a wall or chimney.

## **Federal Housing Administration**

A U.S. government agency founded by Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1934, the FHA was established to facilitate home financing, improve housing standards, and increase employment in the home-construction industry during the Great Depression.

## **Freemasonry**

Freemasonry (or Masonry) is an organization of people who believe in brotherhood and helping others. Its members are known as "Masons" and typically built lodges for their meetings.

## **Italian Renaissance Revival**

A style of architecture imitating earlier Italian styles that was popular in the U.S. from 1890 to 1930.

## **Mission Revival**

A style of architecture popular in the southwestern U.S. and Florida from about 1890 to 1930; suggestive of earlier Mission architecture, though usually simpler.

## **New Deal**

A series of programs launched by Franklin D. Roosevelt during his presidency to solve the problems caused by the Great Depression, including unemployment and agricultural overproduction.

## **One-part commercial block**

A single story commercial building.

## **Parapet**

A low protective wall or similar barrier at the edge of a roof, balcony, or terrace.

# Tour Glossary

Before you get started, you may be interested to know some of the terms that appear in this tour.

## **Pediment**

The triangular gable end of a roof, especially as seen in classical architecture such as Greek temples.

## **Preservation**

The process of applying physical measures to maintain and sustain the existing materials, integrity, and form of a building, including its structure and architectural elements.

## **Rehabilitation**

Returning a property to a state of utility through repair or alteration which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions or features that are significant to its historical, architectural and cultural values.

## **Restoration**

Recovering the form and details of a property and its setting as it appeared in a particular time period by removing later work and/or replacing missing earlier work.

## **Roosevelt, Franklin D.**

The 32nd U.S. president from 1933-1945. He was president during most of the Great Depression, implemented the New Deal, and led the country through World War II.

## **Streamline Moderne**

A phase of Art Deco that emphasized the horizontal aspects of design; characterized by curved end walls, rounded corners, white or light-colored stucco walls, flush windows, round windows, and glass block.

## **Two-part commercial block**

The most common type of small to moderate-sized commercial buildings, the two-part commercial block refers to a building two to four stories high with two distinct zones, such as a commercial storefront on the first floor at street level with offices or residential units occupying the floors above.

## **USO**

The United Service Organization (USO) was founded in 1941 to provide recreation and entertainment to members serving in the U.S. Armed Forces during World War II. The USO is still active today with more than 30,000 volunteers meeting various needs of service members.

All images courtesy of the  
Foley Public Library and  
Nelson K. Hamilton Americana  
Photograph Collection.



## Foley's Louisville & Nashville Railroad Depot

**125 E. Laurel Ave**

Foley's L&N Railroad Depot was constructed at this site in 1909. It replaced an earlier depot building that burned to the ground the previous year. Though moved to Magnolia Springs in 1971, it was returned to the site and the City of Foley in 1995 and restored.

### You Should Know...

- 1902** John Burton Foley, a Chicago businessman, purchased 40,000 acres at \$50 an acre.
- 1905** The first Foley L&N Railroad depot was constructed.
- 1971** L&N discontinued service to Foley. John Snook bought the building for \$1.00 and moved it to Magnolia Springs, Alabama.
- 1995** Snook deeded the building back to Foley officials who moved the building back to this site.

**What could you buy  
for \$50 today?**

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**What could you buy  
for \$1 today?**

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Tour Stop  
**2**

## Foley Coffee Shop

***213 N. McKenzie St***

Foley Coffee Shop has a rich history and is a favorite of locals. What started as Foley's City Hall building in the late 1930s, the Foley Coffee Shop has continued as a hub of city news since the late 1940s, the owner once quoted joking, "Talk revolves around politics, hunting, fishing, farming, juking, drinking, and who got stopped by the cops."



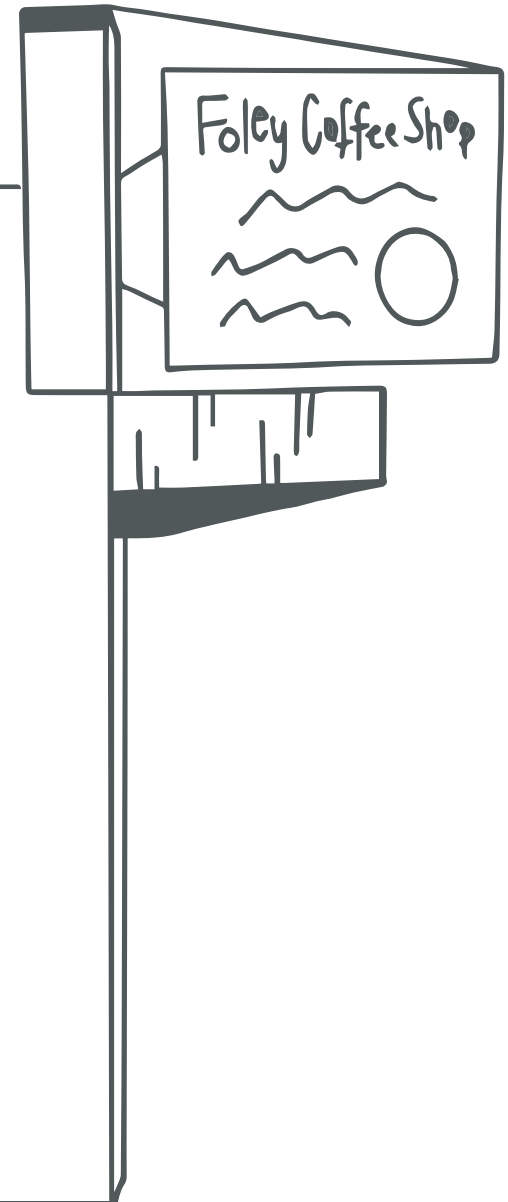
Bonus Stop  
★

## Look Nextdoor

The Claude Peteet Real Estate Office was built c. 1905 and is one of the oldest surviving buildings in Foley. A fire destroyed or damaged many of Foley's earliest commercial buildings in 1921 and resulted in a city ordinance, which stated that no new wood buildings could be constructed in the business district.

## Create Your Own Mural

You may have noticed the mural on the side of Foley Coffee Shop. If you had the chance to design a mural, what would you create? Draw it below.





Tour Stop  
**3**

**Hotel Magnolia**  
**119 N. McKenzie St**

Hotel Magnolia opened its doors in 1908 under the helm of Chicago businessman and city founder John Burton Foley. Attracting tourists and residents alike, the hotel boasted twenty rooms, a dining room, and a beauty shop on the first floor. Though the property saw many innkeepers and owners throughout its history, it stands today as a beacon of Foley’s hospitality and long history as a tourist destination.



*Example of Broken Pediments Above Door*

**You Should Know...**

- Hotel Magnolia is Colonial Revival in architectural style—note the broken pediments atop the door and windows.
- In 1967, John Snook, the founder of Gulf Telephone Company, and his wife, Marjorie Snook, purchased the hotel and made several renovations, including the addition of a custom iron fence that depicts the agricultural history of Baldwin County.
- There is an underground tunnel that connects Hotel Magnolia to the former Gulf Telephone Company building.

**How many agricultural items can you identify in the fence?**

**List them below.**

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**To learn more about these tunnels, check out the full tour.**







Tour Stop  
**4**

## The Masonic Lodge

**200 N. Alston St**

A good example of the Mission Revival style, the Foley Masonic Lodge No. 766 was constructed in 1925 by builder Whaley and Brown and designed by prominent Mobile architect George B. Rogers. Rogers is perhaps best known for the buildings he designed in Mobile, including private residences, churches, public buildings, and the Southeast's first eleven-story skyscraper, the Van Antwerp Building (1907).

### You Should Know...

- The central parapet mimics the shaped parapet on the Alamo in San Antonio and identifies this as Mission Revival



Tour Stop  
**5**

## Foley Bakery

**118 W Laurel Ave**

Another good example of the Mission Revival style, the Foley Bakery building was constructed in 1925. Joseph Tagsherer, or as he was known to locals, "our baker," ran a bakery in Baldwin County from as early as 1914 and was known for his "old world style" brick bakery oven. From its present location, the Foley Bakery provided bread to much of Baldwin County.

### You Should Know...

- It took five days, two people, and one mule to haul enough wood to fuel Tagsherer's brick bakery oven.

**What are some similarities and differences between the Foley Bakery and the Masonic Lodge?**

**Similarities**

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**Differences**

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## Foley Progressive Hall

(American Legion/Lawrence Hardware)

**209 W. Laurel Ave**

The Foley Progressive Club was established in 1912 by some of Foley's earliest founders who constructed this building as a place to host concerts, dances, and cultural events. Though the building changed hands several times over the years, it became a gathering place for the City of Foley in more ways than one. The building was sold to the American Legion, Post 99, in 1937 and used during World War II as the USO club, hosting dances and shows for service men. It was a hardware store from 1956 to 1978.



### You Should Know...

- The United Service Organization (USO) was founded in 1941 under President Franklin D. Roosevelt to provide entertainment to U.S. troops
- Service men were stationed at Fort Morgan and Barin Naval Field nearby
- For two years in the 1950s, the building was a skating rink
- The original beaded pine walls and tongue and groove wood ceilings were restored and can be seen inside today





## Foley Hotel and Stacey's

*113 W. Laurel Ave.*

The Foley Hotel was constructed in 1927 in the Italian Renaissance Revival style. It was designed by noted Birmingham architects Warren, Knight & Davis with Pensacola architect Chandler C. Yonge, who later became the chief architect of the Federal Housing Administration under President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal.

### You Should Know...

- Elements of the Italian Renaissance Revival style include decorative brackets, an arched entry with classical columns, and other classical elements, such as the urns atop brick pilasters
- When it opened on December 9, 1927, there were 46 rooms, a theatre, and six stores in what residents remember as Alabama's first indoor mall
- Stacey's was a drugstore and classic soda fountain and still offers shakes, malts, and floats today

**What attractions would you tell tourists to check out in Foley today?**

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## Holmes Memorial Hospital

(Crosby's Drugstore)

**110-111 W. Laurel Ave.**

The first hospital in the South Baldwin area, Dr. William C. Holmes and his wife, Philomene, a trained nurse, operated the hospital on the second floor of this building from 1936 to 1958. The hospital was named for William's father, Dr. Sibley Holmes, who ran a clinic at this site as early as 1916, served several terms in the state legislature, and died unexpectedly in office as mayor of Foley in 1933. On the first floor, Crosby's Drugs was part of the Walgreens system and was a popular spot in the 1930s and 40s for ice cream and sweet orangeade, both homemade by the Crosby family.

### You Should Know...

- The State Bank of Foley was on this lot from 1909 until it was destroyed by the fire in 1921
- The museum inside houses historic medical instruments and early operating rooms machinery and looks much as it did when the hospital closed in 1958



### Cobb's Light

In the late 1940s, in an effort to quicken police response time, the City of Foley installed a light on top of this building. Citizens in need of police service would call the Gulf Telephone Co. operator who would turn on the light. Chief Benjamin D. Cobb, who was normally patrolling on foot nearby, would see the light and go to a nearby phone where the operator would relay the details of the emergency.

**Can you think of any other people (real or fictitious) who use a signal to communicate?**

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## Orange Crush Bottling Company

**200 S. McKenzie St.**

This building was built for the Orange Crush Bottling Company in 1922. On the heels of the success of Coca-Cola, from the 1880s to the 1920s, soft drink production companies sprang up throughout the Southeast, Atlanta and Birmingham becoming rival hubs in what would come to be known as the “Kola Wars.” With so many colas being produced in central Alabama, bottling companies like this one were in high demand and opened all over the state.

### You Should Know...

- Orange Crush was invented by a chemist named Neil Ward and originally had real orange juice and pulp in it
- By 1924, the drink was so popular that there were 1,200 bottling plants internationally, including this one in Foley

### Sweet Home Alabama

Did you know these sodas also call Alabama “home?” Grapico was created in New Orleans in 1916 but was rebranded and popularized in Alabama. Buffalo Rock Ginger Ale was created by a grocer in Birmingham in 1901 using a tonic formulated by a Selma pharmacist that was used for stomach upset.

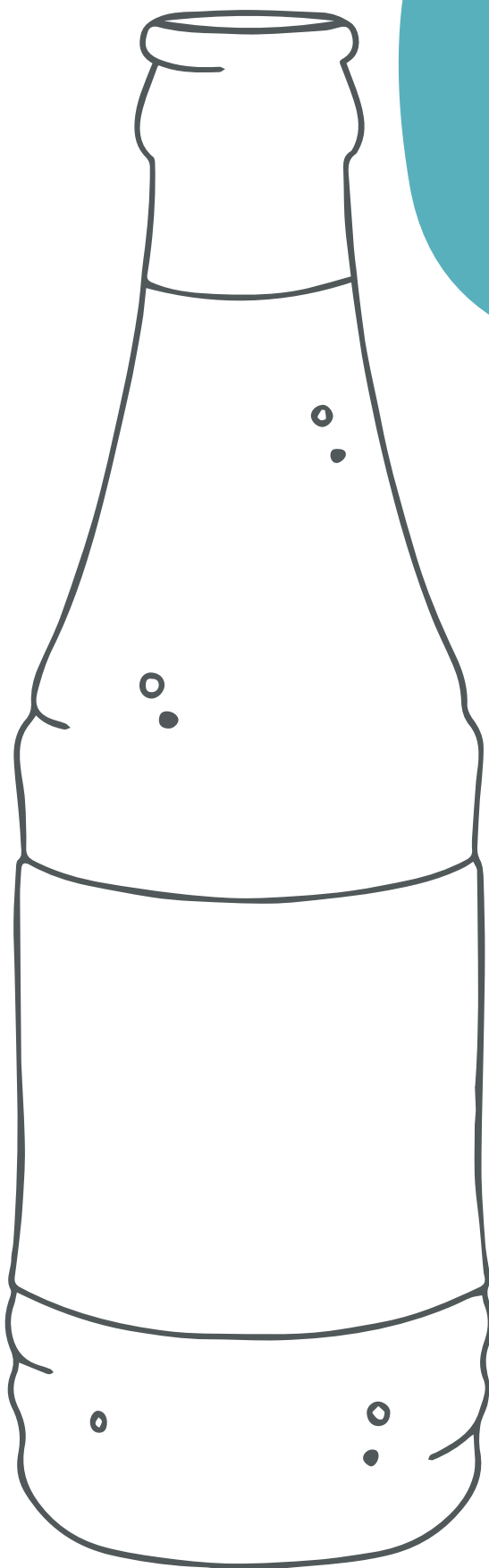
### The “Kola Wars”

In the early days of soda, there was tons of competition! Companies like Celery-Cola and the more popular Coca-Cola were competing for thirsty customers. This time was known as the Kola Wars.



## Soda Flavor

Get creative and use  
all-natural ingredients  
like orange juice and pulp.  
Draw the label below.





## Foley Service Station

**218 S. McKenzie St.**

This mid-twentieth century service station converted to popular coffee shop, the Drowsy Poet, is a great example of what preservationists call adaptive reuse, or historic rehabilitation. While historic restoration seeks to freeze a building in a particular time in history, historic rehabilitation alters the property to meet modern needs while retaining the property's historic character.

### You Should Know...

- Adaptive reuse allows a building to be used for a different purpose and is a "green" approach
- The presence of this and other twentieth century service and filling stations along the highway represent the trends in transportation and growing car culture that greatly affected Foley's downtown and economy.
- Though not the service station pictured, this service station was constructed in 1952 with many of the same architectural elements.

**"The greenest building is...one that is already built."**

*-Carl Elefante*

**If you were to adapt a service station for a new use, how would you use it?**

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**Are there any clues that tell you this building was previously a service station?**

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## Foley Fish Company

**321 S. McKenzie St**

Established in 1921, the Foley Fish Company is one of the oldest and the longest running seafood markets in Baldwin County. They opened at this location on July 19, 1945. Built by the company's owners, John E. Hesse and Charles H. Wakeford, the new "modern plant" featured more than 3,000 square feet of space and a deep-freeze unit capable of quick-freezing 1,000 lbs. of food every two hours or 10,000 lbs. every 24-hours.

### You Should Know...

- The store next door was Brunson Net & Supply Company, a four generation family company.
- More than one hundred people came from New Orleans, Mobile, Montgomery, and Pensacola to tour this modern, new facility on opening day.
- Across the street is a former car dealership and a good example of Streamline Moderne architecture, a phase of Art Deco that emphasized horizontal lines in its design.

### Learn even more about Foley!

You can take an extended tour of Foley, hear stories from locals, and discover the hidden gems that make our community so unique.

Take the Full Tour

