

# EVERYONE HAS A History

*Without History,  
There Would Be No  
Future*

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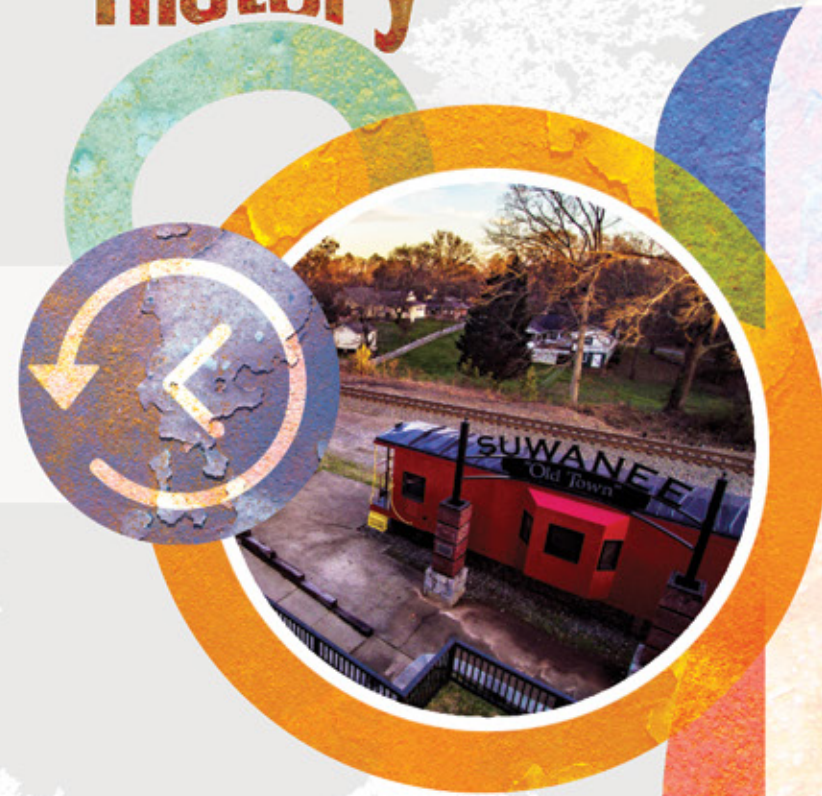
## Historic OLD TOWN SUWANEE SELF-GUIDED TOUR

### Humble Beginnings Historical Significance Lasting Heritage

Currently known for its community vibe, world class Town Center Park development, and high quality of life, the City of Suwanee – like many of its sister cities – originated from humble beginnings. This historic tour will highlight the assets which remain today as architectural and cultural reminders of our community's heritage.

This self-guided tour will navigate you through our small, but relatively intact, historic district affectionately known locally as "Old Town Suwanee." This approximately 56-acre historic district contains both commercial and residential areas dating from 1871 to the early 1960s, which are primarily oriented in a linear fashion along Main Street and running parallel to the Norfolk Southern railroad corridor (formerly the Atlanta & Richmond Air-Line Railway). This development pattern is a glaring context clue as to the importance of the railroad to our commercial and cultural past.

The historic houses represent common late 19th and early 20th century designs and styles, with a few mid-20th century examples. Some have Victorian-era details or pared-down classical details. Our community landmark buildings include the 1910 Suwanee First United Methodist Church, the 1910 commercial building known as Pierce's Corner, and the former hotel at 3949 Russell Street that was built in stages beginning in 1880.



#### ➤ RAILROAD CORRIDOR

The former Atlanta and Richmond Air-Line Railway (now Norfolk Southern) was constructed in 1871. It maintains its historic alignment and relationship to the City of Suwanee, though the depot is gone and trains no longer stop here.



#### ➤ TRAGEDY STRIKES

In 1881, Old Town Suwanee experienced a local tragedy as a fire ravaged the downtown area. All buildings were destroyed, save one. In that same year, Richmond and Danville Railroad completed a narrow gauge railroad line from Suwanee to Lawrenceville.

#### ➤ FOLK VICTORIAN STYLE

Reaching the height of its popularity from 1870-1910, Folk Victorian is one of the most often found styles of historic homes in America; next to the Craftsman Bungalow, this is the style most often associated with being a "historic home." Unlike the high-style Victorian homes such as the Queen Anne and Second Empire, the Folk Victorian trimmings were something the masses could afford and were readily available thanks to the burgeoning railroad system.



**A** SUWANEE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
603 Scales Road

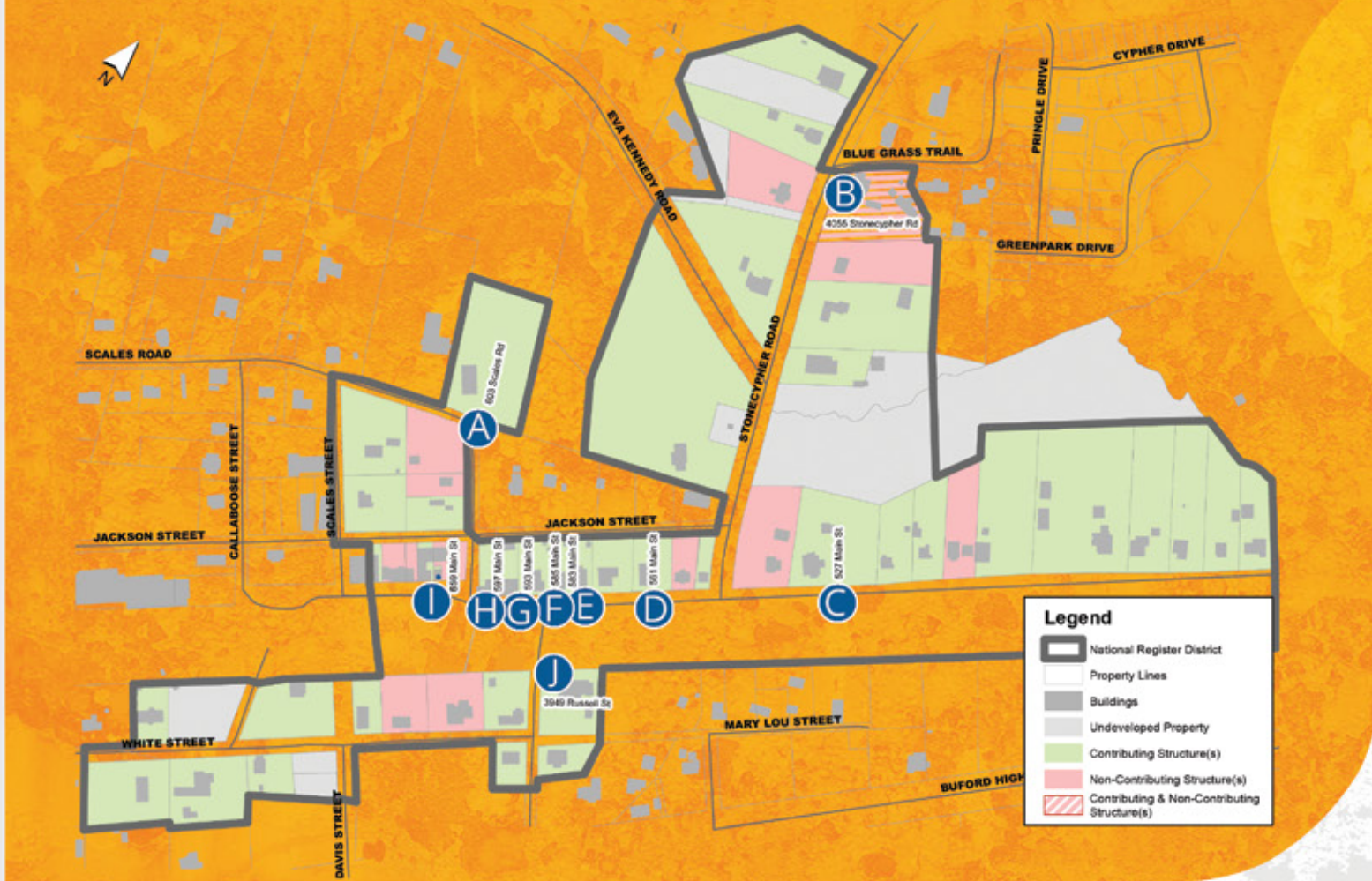
The current Suwanee First United Methodist Church was constructed in 1910 after the original sanctuary – located at the west end of Main Street – was irreparably damaged in a windstorm in 1909. Except for the tower, which was once taller, the building maintains its original architecture and structure. The Methodist Church continues to serve the community and this structure embodies the charm many associate with Old Town Suwanee.

**B** FROM FARMHOUSE TO EVERETT'S MUSIC BARN  
4055 Stonecypner Road

This 1911 farmhouse was built by Ember R. Harris and became a cultural gem. Perched on a large lot with several outbuildings, this gabled-ell cottage features clapboard siding and porches on the front and side elevations. One of the outbuildings has been serving the Southeast as a destination for bluegrass music since 1964: every Saturday evening at 6 p.m., music fans enjoy live music performed by renowned bluegrass performers.

**C** MAIL CARRIER ON MAIN  
527 Main Street

J. Waters Bennett, a rural mail carrier, built this house in 1908. His daughter Viola was also a mail carrier, and another daughter, Eula Farmer, served as the postmistress of Suwanee. The house is a hip-roofed New South cottage that once had Folk Victorian architectural details.



**D** LOCATION FIT FOR A BLACKSMITH  
561 Main Street

The lot of this home was once the location of the Moore and Walters blacksmith shop. In 1903, Abi Wheeler purchased the lot and built the home that stands there today, which has had numerous owners through the years. One such owner was T. Hamp Edwards, mayor of the town of Suwanee in 1922. The house is a hip-roofed Georgian cottage with Folk Victorian architectural details.

**E** GIFT FOR A BELOVED DAUGHTER  
583 Main Street

This gabled wing cottage with Folk Victorian details was constructed in 1872 as a gift from John A. Born to his daughter Seleta and her husband, John A. Ambrose. Among the owners was Dr. John Devore who purchased the building in 1904 and constructed an office next door (585 Main Street) ten years later.

**F** DOCTOR'S OFFICE ON MAIN STREET  
585 Main Street

This shotgun-style house with Folk Victorian architectural details was constructed in 1914 by Dr. John Devore as his office on the lot neighboring his residence at 583 Main Street. This frame building with clapboard siding has four-over-four, double-hung sash windows flanking the entrance.

**G** SUWANEE'S FIRST PHYSICIAN  
593 Main Street

This cottage was constructed in 1875 for Dr. Samuel Jackson, Suwanee's first physician for whom Jackson Street is named. Eula Farmer, the town's postmistress from 1913 to 1945, made this her residence beginning in 1923. Now used for commercial purposes, it retains its historic form, with most exterior materials and workmanship intact.



**H** PIERCE'S CORNER  
597 Main Street

George Little constructed this two-story brick building in 1910. Historic uses include a general store and doctor's office. A.M. Little and Cape Byrd, whose names can be found in the cast iron threshold along with the construction date, operated a store on the first floor. Dr. William Jinks had his office upstairs in the early part of the twentieth century. George Pierce purchased the building sometime after 1938 and gave it the name by which it is known today.

**I** FORMER BANK OF SUWANEE  
659 Main Street

Constructed in 1908, the Bank of Suwanee was built as a branch of the Bank of Buford. The Bank of Buford went bankrupt in 1930, causing the Suwanee branch to shut its doors as well. This lot contains a portion of the lot that contained Holcomb's Store, lost to fire in 1881.

**J** THE RHODES HOTEL  
3949 Russell Street

This two story, gabled-ell house with Folk Victorian details was constructed in 1880 by Daniel M. Born for his daughter Lillie and her husband, Henry W. Rhodes. Located by the railroad tracks, it was built in stages as it evolved from a house to a railroad hotel and boarding house. Now the home to a charming violin shop, this structure maintains excellent integrity.