

June 2016 Road Trip

Downtown in 1981

Earlier this month I attended a high school class reunion (35, but who's counting?). The first night's event was held on the Square in historic downtown Newberry inside Community Hall. As I was coming down the steps (thinking next time I'll take my horse like Col. Dickert), I was suddenly aware of how much the downtown has changed even since my high school years. The buildings are mostly still here, but the names of businesses have changed names more than a few times. So, in honor of the Newberry High School Class of 1981, this month we will take a trip down Memory Lane (although the way is sometimes foggy) and visit Newberry back in 1981. The source for our musings is the advertisements in the 1981 Oracle (with a little help from Hill's Directory Company, Newberry, SC, 1981). I'll bet the yearbook sponsors never thought their ads would still be working thirty-five years later!

For our time travel, we could borrow Mr. Peabody's "Wayback Machine" or, better yet, the DeLorean from "Back to the Future" since we may have to do some driving. Don't forget to bring some coins to feed the parking meters. Leave your cell phones at home, because they only exist on "Star Trek."

Begin your tour on the Square in historic downtown Newberry, at the corner of Boyce and Caldwell Streets. Dominating the corner is South Carolina National Bank. Maybe I'm coming out of there with the checkbook for my new account. (Oops! I actually got that at the branch office on College Street across from Sears.) Don't expect any food at the next building because it is Standard Savings & Loan. On the corner is Sun Printing Co. You can stop by for business cards, letterheads and invitations. They keep saying they're going to do something with that old Opera House, but for now it is the home of City Hall. Turn right on McKibben Street. On the left is the Fire Department with its bright red trucks and gleaming brass pole. Across the street to the right is the Market Basket. Turn left on Harrington Street. Turn left on Victory Street. Newberry is the dairy capital of SC and M. M. Moseley Inc. has all the dairy farm equipment you need. Just down the street is Newberry Machine & Welding. Turn left on Main Street. On the right is Wertz Music. It is the place downtown for music and musical instruments. At the corner of Nance Street, right across from each other, stand Wilson Dance Academy and Newberry Drug Co.

Turn right on McKibben Street. Turn left on Friend Street. Up ahead is Central Methodist Church, its stained glass gleaming in the sunlight. Turn left on Caldwell Street. On the right, W. E. Turner Jeweler has jewelry, fine china and crystal. Home Furniture is right across the street. Turn right on Main Street. On the left hand corner is Bergen's Ladies Shop and right across from it, under the old hotel is Carter's Jewelry and Kristie Macc Cosmetics. On the left is Bergen's Gifts – I can't wait for their after Christmas sale. On the right is Beard & Taylor Office Supplies. Stop by the soda fountain at Main Street Pharmacy for a custom-mixed cherry soda. Across the street is Shealy's Home & Auto. Turn left on College Street. Turn left on Boyce Street. On the right in the old Observer Office is Mama Bert's, the only full restaurant downtown. Up on the corner to the left is Bergen's Men's Shop.

Turn right on Caldwell Street and then right on Harrington Street. Turn left on College Street. College Street has most of your automotive needs with Looney Dodge on the left and, on the right, Hamm's Machine Shop and Sunrise Auto. More banks greet us below with Banker's Trust on the left and Newberry Federal on the right. Check out the 1981 furniture prices at Lindsay Furniture and notice the

cupola on top of the building (left over from the old A&P). Cut across the parking lot to Lindsay Street. The Japanese Gardens have recently been given to the city and the Garden Clubs have been working to restore them. Turn left on Calhoun Street. On the right at the corner of College Street is Whitaker Funeral Home. Turn right on College Street. Ahead on the right is Newberry College, home of the Indians. Just beyond the football field is Rosemont Cemetery, its sidewalks shaded by Redbud trees. Turn left on Fair Avenue.

On the left is the Red & White Grocery store. Stop by and see if Mr. Renwick has what you're looking for. Down the road on the left is Summer's Restaurant and Hair Master Salon. The Kendall Company Oakland Plant is still going strong and turning out cotton cloth. Turn right on First Street. Albert's Superette is located on the left. Turn right on College Street. Stop by the Zesto for a dipped cone. (Hey! You can still do that!) Turn left on Smith Road. On the left is WKDK right where it should be. Turn right on Glenn Street. Driving through the residential district, not much has changed. The houses just look a little newer. Turn right on Harrington Street. Down the street on the left it looks like they're still tearing down the old Junior High School. Turn left on College Street.

Turn left on Main Street. On the right, The Fashion and Belk's along with B. C. Moore's in the next block round out the clothing and accessories stores downtown. On the left is Frank Lominack's Hardware store. Purcell's is at the corner of Wilson Street and looks much the same as it does today. In the next block, ANR Electronics, Altman Appliance & Furniture, Jones Florist and Main Street Exxon occupy the right hand side of the street. On the left side, Lominick's Drug Store, People's Book Store, The Community Players in the old Ritz Theater and Citizens & Southern Bank round out the block. After a few houses, St. Luke's Episcopal Church is on the left. In 1981 it can still claim to be the oldest church building downtown.

Across Calhoun Street, Lipscomb Gulf Station is on the right and, behind the A.R.P. Church, Epting Automotive occupies the old Colonial Store. Notice that Mrs. Reid's house is still facing Main Street. On the right, The Newberry Observer is in its new facility, also known as the old Winn-Dixie. Next door is McSwain's Funeral Home and Buddy's on Main is right across the street. Farther into the residential district on the right is Mayer's Homestead. It's a great place to stop by for fishing and hunting supplies. Turn right on Glenn Street and right on Johnstone Street. Ahead on the left is the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer to balance out our universe. Return to 2016, but stay in historic downtown Newberry.