

Road Trip for May 2016

It's not summer quite yet, but a few days lately have made a pretty good impression of it. Before it gets too hot to think about it, it's time to take a Road Trip. Begin your tour on the Square in historic downtown Newberry.

Head east on Main Street. This street is built in roughly chronological order from the 1850's of the Square to the 1930's of the 1500 block. This was a result of the fires in 1866, 1877, 1879, 1883 and 1907 and a dynamite explosion in 1936. Turn left on Lindsay Street. On the left (in the parking lot) is the site of Thompson Street ARP Church. Founded in 1853, the church burned in 1907 and was rebuilt further up Main Street as Newberry ARP. (As you might guess this section of Lindsay Street was originally called Thompson Street.) On the right just before you get to Scott's Creek is the Wells' Japanese Gardens. Designed by Fulmer Wells in 1930 as a memorial to his grandmother, this garden is a little patch of serenity and calm in the downtown. The lotuses will be blooming soon. Turn left on Calhoun Street. This section was originally called Pelham Street because Dr. Pelham lived in the house where Whitaker's Funeral Home is now. Continue across College on Speers Street. Turn left on Nance Street. On the right, behind the police station, is the Gauntt House, Newberry's oldest residence (circa 1808), and the Newberry County Museum. May is (among other things) Preservation Awareness Month. The Gauntt House is in need of some repairs, so keep an eye on it as work will begin soon. Continue through the downtown and turn right on Boundary Street. Turn left on Dennis Dairy Road.

A few miles down the road on the right is the Quaker cemetery and the site of the old Quaker church. Quakers began moving down the Carolina Road to this area in the 1760's. Warned of a coming conflict the congregation began moving west in 1808. By 1822 there were no practicing Quakers left in Newberry. Turn left on Deadfall Road. Off the road to the left is New Chapel Methodist Church. Founded near the Saluda River, the church moved to this site in 1833. The present building was begun in 1879. On the right on George Loop is the Cannon House which was built in 1867. The house played a part in a story written in the Newberry Herald in August 1867. The editor of the paper was invited to a fishing party on nearby Beaverdam Creek, followed by a fish fry and an evening at Dr. Cannon's new house. In the words of the editor: "it was such a rare old time that the very creek took on a livelier motion, and the 'skeeters sang in unison." At the end of the road, turn right on Hwy 395.

This time of year, things are blooming fast and furious, fueled by recent rain. Many roadsides are graced with rambling roses that once graced the entry to an old house and have now wandered away down the road or fence. The yellow blooms of Prickly Pear Cactus, Yucca (often found near old cemeteries) and Queen Anne's Lace are also visible this time of year. The lush fragrance of Magnolias and Gardenia is in every old yard. Ubiquitous orange Daylilies can be found everywhere. (Their ubiquity does not detract from their beauty.)

Turn left on Stoney Hill Road. After cresting the hill, a vista opens up of "Bush River valley." As it nears Lake Murray, the narrow stream broadens, giving it more the appearance of a river. Turn right on Kunkle Road. While driving through this area, there are a good many old farm houses: homes from the early twentieth century with wraparound porches and bay windows and older one-story homes with end chimneys, wide front porches and long additions. Not all of them are still occupied. Turn left on Harmon's Quarters Road. On the left an old house in a field provides shade for some horses. Turn right

on Stoney Hill Road. On the right is an old gas station. Down the road on the right is the old Stoney Hill School (circa 1925). Beyond it on the left is St. Luke's Lutheran Church. Founded in 1828, the present church was built in 1955.

Turn left on Hwy 391. On the right is Bedenbaugh's Ginnery. Turn right on Rikard School Road and left into the second entrance to Prosperity Cemetery. This will bring you through the old part of the cemetery – back when it was the churchyard for Prosperity ARP Church. Turn right on McNeary Street. Founded as Frog Level in 1852 (a depot on the Columbia & Greenville Railroad), the name of this town was changed to Prosperity in the 1880's. Prosperity is blessed with many beautiful homes from the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Cross the railroad tracks on Broad Street and turn left on Main Street. Turn right on Grace Street. Be sure to notice the old depot. Turn right on Elm Street. Cross the railroad tracks and turn right on Hwy 76.

Turn right on Cy Schumpert Road. On the right is Mid Carolina High School. Turn left on Macedonia Church Road. Turn left on Mt. Pilgrim Church Road. On a bend in the road to the right is Mt. Pilgrim Lutheran Church. Founded in 1880, the present church was built in 1934 and is faced with field stone. The cemetery is to the side. Continue down the road. The steep hill is a reminder of our proximity to Little Mountain. (The mountain can be seen through the trees near the crest of the hill.) Turn right on Pa Metts Road. Turn left on Whippoorwill Road. This is a narrow road trace that follows a branch of Camping Creek and passes by a number of farm sites in the Dutch Fork. After Dowd Road, this road becomes windy and mountainous. On the left is the John Adam Boland House, which was built circa 1830. It still has the dogtrot (or breezeway) between the house and the kitchen. Beyond the house on the left a few stones mark a Boland family cemetery. Turn right on Hwy 76.

Though the area was settled in the 1750's, the town of Little Mountain was established in 1890 as a depot on the Columbia, Newberry & Laurens Railroad. Turn right on Mill Street. Ahead is a beautiful view of Little Mountain Elementary School with the monadnock rising behind it. Turn left on South Boundary Street and left again on Pomaria Street. Ahead on the right is Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, founded in 1891. Turn left on Main Street. Turn right on Mt. Tabor Church Road. Mt Tabor Lutheran Church was founded in 1880. Turn right on Dr. Bowers Road and left on Kibler's Bridge Road. (This will require making another right turn shortly to stay on Kibler's Bridge Road.) After crossing I-26, in a bend in the road to the left is a Kibler Family Cemetery. Turn right on Hwy 773. On the right is St. Paul's Lutheran Church. Established in 1761, it is the oldest Lutheran congregation that has always been in Newberry County (St. John's was in Lexington for a while). Turn left on Jollystreet Road. On the right, at the intersection of Old Jollystreet Road is the Old Jollystreet School. This road offers some beautiful vistas across rolling hills and forests. At the end of the road turn right on Hwy 76. On the right is Newberry Memorial Gardens. On the left-hand side of the cemetery is the Garden of Honor. In the center of this is a 90 mm anti-aircraft gun which was used in World War II and later by the National Guard. Turn right on Hwy 76 and return to historic downtown Newberry.