




Take a walk, and  
**DISCOVER MINDEN!**





WELCOME TO THE UNIQUE TOWN OF MINDEN in the heart of Carson Valley. Explore this former railroad town with its rich agricultural and rural heritage as you leisurely venture through the tree-lined streets, Walking Tour Map and Guide in hand.

Delight in the local scenery and European ambience as you visit one architectural gem after another in the historic downtown and residential areas. Step back in time and let your imagination roam. Visit the C.V.I.C. Hall and picture yourself there circa 1915, enjoying the latest “talkie” on the big screen in the state-of-the-art movie theater. Or imagine luxuriating in your room at the elegant Minden Inn (now the home of Douglas County offices) during its heyday. Visitors from out of town called it the “St. Francis Hotel of Nevada” because it brought to mind the renowned San Francisco hotel.

Need a rest? Stroll through picturesque Minden Park and relax as you take in the local sights or visit with friendly passersby. You can almost hear the mellow strains of a Glenn Miller tune drifting from the old bandstand in the 1940s as young couples swing to the Big Band sounds.

As you explore and discover the treasure that is the Town of Minden, use this guide and map to make your walking tour an enriching and memorable experience. The brochure is filled with helpful information, including a timeline that gives you an overview of Minden’s history since the town’s founding in 1906.

Enjoy the tour, learn what makes Minden unique—and come back soon!



# Your window to historic Minden— *open it and enjoy the view!*

It is a pleasure to be the host voice for *Discover Minden — A Walking Tour Map and Guide*.

Open this guide and discover the incredible town that began with one man's vision and has matured over the 100 years since its creation — nurtured and cultivated by town leaders and citizens who have stayed true to the vision.

Nature provided an ideal setting for the Town of Minden, nestled in Carson Valley with a backdrop of beautiful mountain peaks, sweeping blue skies, and river-fed pasture lands. An abundance of excellent water has allowed agriculture to flourish in this high desert valley ever since the pioneers and settlers first planted crops and grazed cattle on the tall grasses.

It was the agricultural plenitude and promise of economic success that led to the creation of the Town of Minden and the extension of the V&T (Virginia and Truckee) Railway's Carson City branch line to Carson Valley. The railroad, in turn, spurred the town's growth into an important hub of agriculture.

Since its founding, Minden has evolved into a vibrant, multi-faceted town whose ranching and agricultural roots and historical heritage now blend with manufacturing, retail, tourism, and other elements that allow it to flourish and prosper. These elements include a dynamic business community, attractive residential developments, excellent recreational assets, great educational opportunities, and abundant cultural amenities.

As you walk the unique Town of Minden you'll discover its historical heritage reflected in the buildings and homes featured in this tour.

Wynne M. Maule

## A Man's Vision: The Unique Beginning of a Unique Town

In 1905 H. F. (Henry Fred) Dangberg, Jr., began to cultivate his vision for a new town—a planned community in the heart of the valley, just north of the established town of Gardnerville. Known as Fred, he was the eldest son of German-born Carson Valley rancher H.F. (Heinrich Friedrich) Dangberg, Sr.



H. F. Dangberg, Jr.

Fred and his three brothers, John, George, and Clarence, had created the H. F. Dangberg Land and Livestock Company with their father before his death in 1904. John ran the company's Buckeye and Sheep Camp ranches while Fred and George operated the Dangberg and Klauber ranches. Clarence eventually sold his interest back to the company and established the C. O. D. (Clarence Oliver Dangberg) Garage, one of Minden's earliest businesses. But that came later. First the town had to be planned, designed, and established. Fred was the driving force behind that endeavor.

A key first step in creating the new town was to persuade the V&T Railway to extend its railroad line from Carson City to Carson Valley. Not coincidentally, the H. F. Dangberg Land and Livestock Company owned the land that the proposed new line would span—as well as much of the surrounding land. The company granted the V&T the right-of-way through its property on the condition that the line would terminate at the site that was to become the Town of Minden. The railway agreed, and construction of the extension began in September 1905. The first train arrived in Minden on June 12, 1906.

Meanwhile, Fred was busy laying the groundwork for the new town. He shepherded the process of planning and designing a village community with neatly ordered streets and a town square, a concept that had its roots in the Dangberg family's German heritage. The business and commercial sectors of the town would be separate from the residential areas, but the townspeople and workers would have easy

access to them. The town square would be a focal point of the community, a park where residents and visitors alike could gather to enjoy nature, play, visit with neighbors, or be part of special community events and celebrations. Trees would be planted all along the neighborhood streets.

The plan for the new town was presented to the Douglas County Commissioners in 1905 and approved in July 1906 by unanimous vote. The framework for the Town of Minden was established; let the building begin! And so it did, starting with Minden's first home site and continuing to the present. With the building, though, have come careful planning and a commitment to preserving the historic character and quality of life that make Minden what it is today.

In this guide you will find many of the significant and interesting buildings and sites in the 100-year history of the Town of Minden. They capture the essence of the town's heritage and character.

#### About Wynne Maule

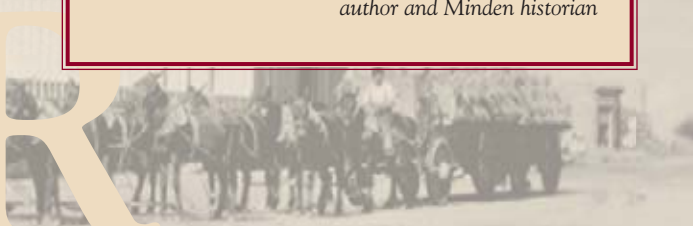
My parents had our home built near the Minden Park in 1915 and I arrived on the scene in 1925. I attended local schools and graduated from Douglas County High School in 1943. After graduation I immediately joined the military.

Upon completing my military service in the Asian-Pacific theater of World War II, I returned home to pursue a college education and a career that took me to many places in the United States. After I retired in 1980, my wife and I settled in my family home in Minden. We continue to enjoy living here.

Growing up in Minden was a rich experience, and as you explore the town you'll see what makes it such a special place.

Enjoy your walking tour!

—Wynne M. Maule,  
*author and Minden historian*



# Town of Minden, 1906–2006

1906



1916



## 1906

- In June the first train arrives at the new V&T Railway station. The new branch line terminates in what will officially become the Town of Minden the following month.
- In July the Dangberg Company presents a design plan for the new town of Minden to the Douglas County Commissioners. The plan is approved and the Town of Minden is established.
- The first home in Minden is built near the V&T Railway Depot for the V&T's Minden agent.

## 1907

- In October the Minden Flour Milling Company begins operations at its new facility.
- Truckee River General Electric Company brings light and power to Minden and Gardnerville.
- One of Minden's first businesses, the Meyers Mercantile Company, opens its store in May.
- The first post office in Minden begins postal operations in the Meyers Mercantile building.

## 1908

- The V&T Railway begins carrying mail, supplanting the stagecoach as the means of delivering mail to and from Carson Valley.

- Minden Butter Manufacturing Company is established. By 1915 the creamery had developed a world market for its products.
- Ed LeClaire opens the Minden Wood and Lumber Company at County Road and First Street. The site was later occupied by the Copeland Lumber Yard for many years.
- The Minden water system is constructed by C. E. Merrick.

## 1909

- The first Heidelberg bar opens for business in May 1909 under the ownership of Fritz Dangberg, a cousin of the town's founders.
- A livery stable consisting of a huge barn, adjacent corrals, and a shed is built by the Dangberg Company. The advent of motor vehicles made such establishments obsolete just a few years later.
- In October 1909 the Farmer's Bank of Carson Valley opens its doors in the newly constructed building at the northwest corner of Fourth and Esmeralda streets. The Bank Parlor and Pub now occupies the building.

- C. E. Cole constructs a blacksmith shop at the building at Second Street and US Highway 395. Douglas Fabrication, Inc. currently occupies the building.





## 1926

- Construction of Minden's first school, referred to by old-timers as their "little green schoolhouse," is completed and classes start in the fall with an enrollment of 19 students.



## 1910

- Fritz Dangberg builds a new Heidelberg saloon, an all-brick building located at Third and Esmeralda streets. The building eventually became home to the Minden Grocery Store, followed by the Pony Express Restaurant and then Francisco's Mexican Restaurant, its current occupant.
- Chris Christoffersen opens the Minden Dry Goods store on the site later occupied by the Pioneer Motor Parts store.
- The first Carson Valley Day celebration is held June 11 under the leadership of William Dangberg.

## 1911

- Two large cement columns are erected at Sixth Street and County Road to mark the western entrance to Minden. The columns still stand.

## 1912

- The Carson Valley Improvement Club is formed in May. In November, the newly constructed C.V.I.C. Hall, built by the club's members, is opened to the public.



## 1936

- The C. O. D. Garage is opened for business by C. O. (Clarence Oliver) Dangberg. Fred Hellwinkel eventually became sole owner of the firm; sons Dan and Don Hellwinkel operated the garage for many years. Don passed away in early 2006.

## 1914

- The original Minden Park Bandstand is constructed circa 1914. It was used until 1984, when construction of the new bandstand, designed by architect Peter Wilday, was completed.

## 1915

- A state-of-the-art moving picture machine is installed at the C.V.I.C. Hall.
- A Nevada Senate bill that authorizes the county seat to be moved from Genoa to Minden passes in the Legislature and is signed into law.

## 1916

- The Douglas County Commissioners hold their first meeting in the new courthouse on Eighth Street. Noted architect Frederic J. DeLongchamps designed the building.
- The Minden Wool Warehouse is constructed. The building still stands at the corner of Buckeye Road and US Highway 395. Bently Nevada Corporation acquired the facility in the 1970s.



# 1946

# 19

## 1917

- The Minden Inn is completed and the new inn has its grand opening on June 11. The Inn was once dubbed the “Little St. Francis Hotel of Nevada.”



- The Crystal Confectionery, a candy and notions store and later an ice cream parlor under a similar name, opens for business in October. The Lone Tree Frame Company and Gallery has been in business at this location since 1985.

## 1918

- Construction is completed on the warehouse building that eventually becomes known as Graunke’s Warehouse. In 1982 the building was converted to a restaurant and is now Fiona’s Bar & Grill.
- Farmer’s Bank of Carson Valley moves into the new building across the street. In later years, scenes from two Hollywood movies were filmed in the historic building—including “Charlie Varrick,” starring the late Walter Matthau.

- The Minden Grammar School building is constructed on Mono Avenue to replace the little green schoolhouse. It is now the site of the Douglas County School District administrative offices.

## 1920

- *The Record-Courier* reports in its March 5, 1920 issue that “(silent film star) Mary Pickford started something when she selected Douglas County as the place to secure her divorce...and it seems that Minden will become a rival with Reno as a divorce center for notables.”
- Predecessor of the Minden Town Board, the Minden Commercial Club is formed to advance the social, financial, business, and civic interests of the community.

## 1921

- As a result of the efforts of the Minden Fortnightly Club, a new street lighting system is installed.

## 1923

- A wind described by some as a twister demolishes the Carson Valley Hay and Produce Company and damages other nearby buildings.
- The Minden Fire House is constructed at the site where the Douglas County Engine Company building now stands.

**1926**

- Spearheaded by W. H. Bridges, cashier of the Farmer's Bank of Carson Valley, a Rotary Club is organized in Minden.
- The Rood-Heitman Company creates the Minden Mercantile Company and, in November, opens the store for business at its new building on Esmeralda Avenue. Tumblewind Antiques now occupies the building.

**1927**

- The fire department is reorganized into a countywide department.

**1932**

- The Pioneer Motor Company creates excitement in town when it displays a new V-8, 65-horsepower automobile from Ford Motor Company that can do a whopping 75 miles an hour!

**1933**

- Under the leadership of Dr. F. J. Morley, the Douglas County Library gets its start after a meeting is called by the doctor to generate support for a library.
- On March 14, the Farmer's Bank of Carson Valley is one of the first banks in the country to reopen after President Roosevelt declares a bank moratorium to prevent a run on the nation's banks.

**1934**

- In September, infamous gangsters "Baby Face" Nelson and John Paul Chase meet up near Minden before heading to Chicago shortly after the leader of their gang, the notorious John Dillinger, is shot to death.

**1935**

- All of the streets in Minden except Tenth Street are paved. It is a significant improvement project for the small town.

**1936**

- The continued operation of the V&T Railway is in question. The company publishes an article in local newspapers warning that unless conditions improve quickly, the V&T will be forced out of business.

**1938**

- Douglas County purchases a new American LaFrance 500-gallon pumping engine and hose car with a cab. The now-antique fire engine has become a featured entry in the Carson Valley Days parade.
- The V&T Railway is placed into receivership by a federal judge. Around the same time the railway petitions for permission to abandon its railroad lines. The request is granted 12 years later.





## 1976

### 1950

- Approval to cease operations is granted to the V&T Railway. On May 31, a locally assembled squad fires a volley from their shotguns to signal the final run of the V&T from the Minden railroad station.

### 1954

- The first church building is established in Minden with the relocation of the Coventry Cross Episcopal Church building to 1631 Esmeralda Place from Smith Valley.

### 1957

- The first subdivision in Minden is built by Mack Land and Cattle Company. The 20-unit development extends along County Road from Fourth Street to Ninth Street. It was the first of the farm lands surrounding Minden to be devoted to housing.

### 1961

- Don Bently moves to Nevada and sets up shop at the airport to manufacture electronic equipment that checks for abnormal performance in rotating machinery such as turbines.

### 1968

- The Douglas County Library gets its own building, located on a parcel of land deeded to Douglas County by Grace Dangberg.



## 1986

### 1969

- Don Bently announces that Bently Nevada Corporation has purchased the old Minden Butter Manufacturing Company building ("the creamery") for the company's future expansion.

### 1974

- In December a new post office building, located between Ninth and Tenth streets at US Highway 395, opens its doors. The Minden Post Office still operates at that site.

### 1981

- The East Fork Fire Protection District is formed. The new district encompasses eight volunteer departments in the valley.

### 1982

- The Douglas County Library moves to a brand new, much larger building off County Road on Library Circle in August.
- In July the new Judicial and Law Enforcement Center on Buckeye Road is introduced to the public.

### 1984

- The Carson Valley Inn opens its doors in August. It has expanded its operations significantly over the years.



1996

2006

### 1985

- Minden comes of age with the installation of its first traffic light, at Sixth Street and US Highway 395.

### 1989

- The new Carson Valley Swim Center at County Road and State Route 88 has its grand opening.

### 1994

- A project to plant a rose garden in Westwood Park sets in motion a series of events that culminates in the downtown beautification project. Another end result is the start of the “Concerts in the Park” on summer evenings in Minden Park.

### 1996

- The Douglas County Commission approves the comprehensive Douglas County Master Plan, which provides a framework for orderly development of the county and its communities including the Town of Minden.

### 1999

- The Town of Minden administrative offices get their own facility after years of renting space, when an extension is built from the north side of the C.V.I.C. building. The C.V.I.C. kitchen and other facilities were updated as well.

### 2000

- A citizens advisory committee holds workshops to establish a master plan for the Town of Minden. A framework is constructed that will underpin the full-fledged master plan to be titled the *Minden Plan for Prosperity*.

### 2002

- The *Minden Plan for Prosperity* is completed and adopted.
- Extensive renovations to the C.V.I.C. Hall are completed in January 2002.



### 2006

- The Town of Minden celebrates its 100th birthday. The town was founded in July 1906.

## For more information

Here are some resources that you can use to get more information about our community, past and present.

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### BOOKS

Dangberg, Grace. *Carson Valley: Historical Sketches of Nevada's First Settlement*. Carson Valley Historical Society, 1972.

Maule, Wynne M. *Minden, Nevada—The Story of a Unique Town, 1906-1992*. Published by author in 1993.

Miluck, Nancy. *Genoa-Carson Valley Book: Where Nevada Began*. Published by author in 1991.

Nation, Nyle N. *Pine Nut Chronicle: The History and Adventures of Mining in Douglas County, Nevada* (2d Ed., Revised). Pine Nut Press, 2000.

Smith, Raymond M. *Untold Tales of Carson, Eagle and Smith Valleys, Nevada*. Volumes I-IV, 1993-2002. Published by author.

### ORGANIZATIONS/ MUSEUMS/LIBRARIES

**Carson Valley Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Authority**  
1477 US Highway 395  
Gardnerville, Nevada 89410  
775.782.8144  
[www.visitcarsonvalley.org](http://www.visitcarsonvalley.org)

**Carson Valley Museum and Cultural Center**  
1477 US Highway 395  
Gardnerville, Nevada 89410  
775.782-2555  
[www.HistoricNevada.org](http://www.HistoricNevada.org)

**Douglas County Historical Society**  
1477 US Highway 395  
Gardnerville, Nevada 89410  
775.782-2555  
[www.HistoricNevada.org](http://www.HistoricNevada.org)

**Douglas County Library (Main Library, Minden)**  
Library Circle, off County Road  
Minden, Nevada 89423  
775.782.9841  
[www.douglas.lib.nv.us](http://www.douglas.lib.nv.us)

**Genoa Courthouse Museum**  
2304 Main Street  
Genoa, Nevada 89411  
775.782.4325  
[www.HistoricNevada.org](http://www.HistoricNevada.org)

**Nevada Historical Society**  
1650 N. Virginia Street  
Reno, Nevada 89503  
775.688.1190  
<http://dmla.clan.lib.nv.us/docs/museums/reno/his-soc.htm>

**Nevada State Library and Archives**  
100 N. Stewart Street  
Carson City, Nevada 89701  
775.684-3360  
<http://dmla.clan.lib.nv.us/docs/nsla/>

**Nevada State Museum**  
600 N. Carson Street  
Carson City, Nevada 89701  
775.687.4810  
<http://dmla.clan.lib.nv.us/docs/MUSEUMS/cc/carson.htm>

**Nevada State Railroad Museum**  
2180 S. Carson Street  
Carson City, Nevada 89701  
775.687.6953  
<http://dmla.clan.lib.nv.us/docs/MUSEUMS/rr/ccrr.htm>

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**Administrative Offices**  
1604 Esmeralda Avenue, Suite 101  
Minden, NV 89423  
Telephone: 775.782.5976  
Fax: 775.782.5287  
Email: [mindenom@townofminden.com](mailto:mindenom@townofminden.com)  
Website: [www.townofminden.com](http://www.townofminden.com)  
Office Hours:  
Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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Douglas County Commissioners, 1908,  
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