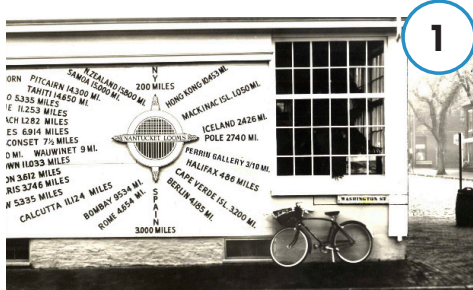
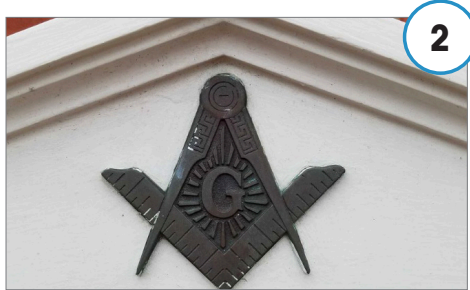


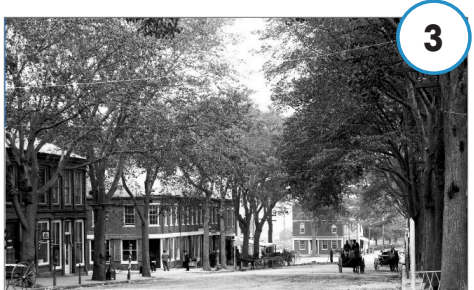
DOWNTOWN CORE DISTRICT WALKING TOUR



The Compass Rose



Masonic Lodge



Middle of Main



Top of Main Street



Pacific Bank



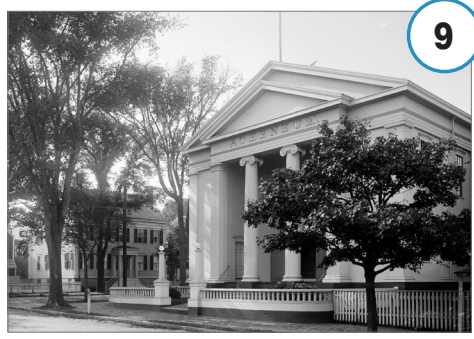
Petticoat Row



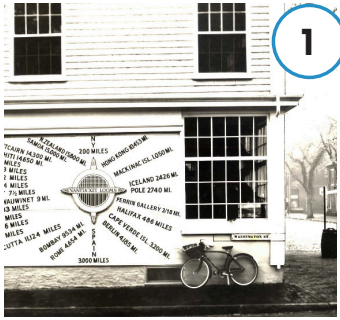
Jared Coffin House



Town Building



Atheneum



1

The Compass Rose

In 1936, H. Marshall Gardiner had a giant mural painted here, on the side of his then camera shop. Based on a compass rose used by mariners, Gardiner's version included Nantucket landmarks, locations from whaling history, and places of personal significance. Other spots on the Compass Rose appear in high-seas history. Valparaiso (Chile) features in the rescue of sailors from the doomed Nantucket whaleship Essex, while the mutineers from the HMS Bounty settled on Tahiti and Pitcairn. Nantucket Looms began in this building (now located up Main Street) as one of a handful of specialty manufacturers. Before whaling became Nantucket's financial engine, spinning/weaving were at the heart of the economy. Early settlers herded as many as 10,000 sheep here. Nantucket's Main Street, just in front of you, is known for its cobblestones. Islanders laid the first cobblestones in 1821, probably to address drainage issues. No one knows where the cobblestones came from, though many speculate whaleship captains used them to improve a ship's stability.



2

Masonic Lodge

In 1799, President John Adams declared that U.S. towns must submit a list of their streets. The effort was tied to taxation. Assessor Isaiah Coffin listed 100 streets, many with names he invented. Though Nantucketers initially refused to use these new street names, many eventually stuck. Union Street is one of those streets. As you walk, look for others, including Liberty, Federal, Jefferson and Washington. Look up to the second floor of the building to your left: No windows! Inside rests the once-secretive Mason's Union Lodge, established in 1771 and then moved to this location in the late 19th century. Island Quakers strongly disapproved of Masons. While early Masons fiercely guarded their secret ways, modern Freemasons actively seek members. This Lodge hosts open houses, inviting the public into the beautiful upstairs meeting hall with its star-studded, sky-blue ceiling.



3

Middle of Main

On July 13, 1846, a stovepipe in a hat shop caught fire. As two crews of firefighters (one across the street) fought over who would stop the fire, the flames spread to a hayloft and overtook downtown. No one died, though one-third of downtown – over 400 buildings, covering 35 acres – was destroyed. Islanders appealed to the country. "We are in deep trouble. ... We need help – liberal and immediate." Towns around America responded, sending in \$100,000. Within months, new buildings began to rise. On the 4th of July, Nantucket pays homage to the Great Fire right here - with a massive water fight! Firefighters manning an old hand pumper on a modern fire truck battle another crew using a 1927 fire truck, with onlookers joining in. Now look up Federal Street to see several amazing American elms, which were the unofficial sidewalk favorite because early settlers found their tough, fibrous wood useless. Unfortunately, the Great Fire destroyed many of these trees, and in 1931 Nantucket lost more elms to Dutch elm disease. Many of the trees killed by the disease in the 1930s were replaced with Christine Buisman elms, a disease-resistant strain.



4

Top of Main Street

To the left you will see Murray's Toggery Shop, which is home to the famous Nantucket Reds, red pants that fade pink over time. Philip Murray introduced the pants in the 1960s. In the '80s, they were included in The Official Preppy Handbook and Murray trademarked the name. Nantucket Reds are Breton red. In the 19th century fishermen in Brittany, France prevented mildew by treating their cotton canvas sails with tree-bark tannins. The original color? Breton red, which faded pink. Now look down Main Street to the roof of the first two buildings on the left. See the little porch-like structure? That's a widow's walk – called a roof walk on Island. Legend has it a wife would look out to sea, hoping to find her husband's ship coming back to port. Though the romantic story has proved popular, the widow's walk may have been built to allow easy access to the top of the chimney in case of chimney fire!



5

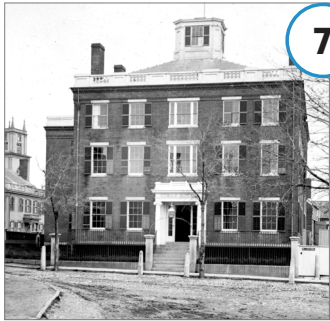
Pacific Bank

During its whaling heyday, Nantucket owed much of its wealth to the whale-laden Pacific Ocean. This bank was named in testament. While the Pacific Bank's original offices sat in a former home at the bank's founding in 1804, the current brick edifice was built in 1818, with slate roof and fireproof vault. William Mitchell and his family lived here. Mr. Mitchell worked as: banker, cooper, soap boiler, candle maker, farmer, schoolmaster, insurance broker, chronometer rater, astronomer, justice of the peace, and writer of wills. Mitchell and his daughter, astronomer Maria Mitchell, built shed-like observatories on the roof, from which Maria discovered a comet. This discovery earned her a medal from the King of Denmark and recognition as America's first woman astronomer. The plaque on the left side of the bank welcomes you to Thomas Turner Square. Nantucket-born Turner sailed on the ship Bonhomme Richard during the Revolution, which was helmed by naval officer John Paul Jones. who uttered the famous sentence, "I have not yet begun to fight." The white Nantucket United Methodist Church next to the bank was built in 1823 and altered in 1840 to include Greek revival details. It is the only wooden structure to survive the Great Fire and the oldest wooden structure downtown today. During 21st century restorations, a preservation architect discovered the original church building dated back to 1760. It was built off island, disassembled, carefully marked, and reassembled here in 1823.

**6**

Petticoat Row

Sherburne Hall, originally called Centre Street Block, took only five months to rebuild after the Great Fire. Restoring the building in 1987 took twice as long. The stepped granite structure in front of you at the southwest corner of Centre and Hussey streets is a "carriage block," or "mounting block." A remnant from horse-and-buggy days, it aided travelers getting in and out of carriages. This portion of Centre Street is known as Petticoat Row. During the island's whaling heyday, women ran many shops downtown and made a name for themselves by overseeing the daily function of the Island, from their own businesses to the economy of the entire Island. "Cent schools" popped up around the Island to tend to children while their mothers worked. Children arrived at school with a penny in their lunch pail to pay for the day's care.

**7**

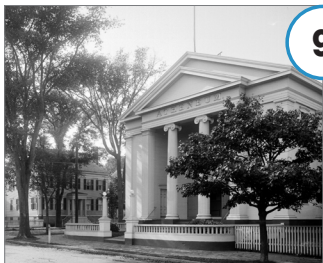
Jared Coffin House

Across the street is the Jared Coffin house. Coffin owned Nantucket's first 19th century brick house at 19 Pleasant Street, and Nantucket's last 19th century brick house - this one - erected in 1845. Today, there are twelve brick houses on Nantucket. The brick Jared Coffin House withstood the Great Fire, but the wooden church next to it burned to the ground. Look down the continuation of Centre Street and find the steeple of the First Congregational Church. The building grew in fits and starts, beginning with the Old North Vestry (1725) and ending with the bell tower (1968). If you're willing to climb 94 steps to the top of the church's bell tower, you'll be rewarded with stunning views. Nantucket abounds with examples of 18th and 19th century seaside architecture (spare and muted) but few examples of the extravagant Victorian era. The buildings at 19 and 21 Broad Street offer a peek into that era. Why so few Victorian style homes? In the 1930s and '40s, preservationists encouraged homeowners to strip away their Victorian period elements, considered ugly, to make their homes resemble their simpler neighbors.

**8**

Town Building

Look to the left across Broad street at the brick building, which houses the Whaling Museum. It was originally named for Peter Folger, one of the first European settlers of Nantucket. He served as interpreter between the island's Wampanoag and European settlers. Peter and his wife Mary had nine children, but only one was born on Nantucket: daughter Abiah. She married British-born Bostonian soap maker Josiah Franklin and gave birth to founding-father Benjamin Franklin in 1706. Peter Folger's direct descendent J.A. Folger, born here in 1835, founded Folger's Coffee. After the Great Fire destroyed the family business, J.A. and two brothers set off to find fortune in the gold mines of the West. In California, J.A. took a job with the Pioneer Steam Coffee and Spice Mills. He rose to sole proprietor and then renamed the company J.A. Folger & Co. Gold Rush madness hit Nantucket, taking a toll on the whaling industry. More than 500 Nantucket men deserted the island to seek their fortunes, and more than 40 whale ships were refitted to bring travelers to the West Coast. Four factors contributed to the demise of the Nantucket whaling industry: The Gold Rush, the Great Fire, shifting sands making harbor entry difficult for whale ships, and the Civil War, which took 400 men from the island. Did you know you are in the town of Nantucket, in the county of Nantucket, on the island of Nantucket? You are standing in front of the Town & County Building, Nantucket's version of city hall, which was built in 1966. This spot used to house a mansion owned by several Islanders of note, including 19th century islander Frederick C. Sanford, who saved visiting President Grant when his carriage horses bolted by steering into a tree.

**9**

Atheneum

Island book-lovers, including a ship owner who installed lending libraries on his ships, founded this building, the Atheneum in 1834. The original building was a Universalist Society church, burned in the Great Fire. The building you see was today was built in only six months, adopting the same Greek Revival style as the original Atheneum. Named after Athena, the Greek goddess of wisdom, athenaeums are membership libraries, though Nantucket's became a free, public library in 1900. Shortly thereafter, Islanders gathered in the second-floor hall to witness the first telephone call between the mainland and the Island. The Atheneum also hosted many famous speakers and writers. Four years after escaping slavery, Frederick Douglass spoke here during an anti-slavery convention in 1841. Abolitionist Stephen Foster's 1842 fiery speech led to the "Brotherhood of Thieves" riot, with an angry mob throwing stones and eggs. Abolitionist/suffragette Lucretia Coffin Mott left her birthplace of Nantucket at age 11, but returned in 1854 to lecture. And Maria Mitchell, the world-renowned astronomer, served as the Atheneum's first librarian before she became the first-ever Professor of Astronomy at Vassar College. Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote of the Island when he visited in 1847, "The air of Nantucket comes into your face and eyes as if it was glad to see you. The moon comes here as if it was at home, but there is no shade." Emerson's fellow author, Henry David Thoreau also spoke here, delivering a speech entitled, "What Shall It Profit?" condemning American materialism. To celebrate the Atheneum's 175th anniversary, 50 time capsules were buried in a vault in the public garden, to be opened at the Atheneum's 200th anniversary in 2034.