Exploring history along the Chuck Huckelberry Loop

A trip along the Loop and nearby neighborhoods and communities offers a fascinating look at dozens of historical points of interest here in Pima County. From the iconic Pima County Courthouse near the Santa Cruz River to the site of ancestral homes of Native Americans at the confluence of the Rillito River and Pantano Wash, users will find cultural and historic points of interest on whatever path they choose.

This guide will help you explore that history. And visit pima.gov/LoopHistory for more detailed explanations of the historic districts and areas found on this map.

Historic sites
1. Rillito Rancho Historic District
2. St. Philip’s in the Hills Episcopal Church
3. Binghampton Rural Historic Landscape
4. San Pedro Chapel
5. Prehistoric Residential - Hard Site
6. Dishes/Flume - Historic Use of Pantano/Wash and the Rillito River
7. Fort Lowell Historic District
8. Indian Ridge Neighborhood Historic District
9. Emond Station
10. Pima Air & Space Museum
11. San Xavier del Bac
12. Waters In Life, River is Home: A River that Presides
13. Paseo de Las Iguanas - Human Use of the Santa Cruz River
14. Julian Wash Archeological Park
15. Santa Cruz Catholic Church
16. Armory Park Historic District
17. Historic Barren
18. Birthplace of Tucson/Mission Garden
19. Sentinel Peak - Cúi Sra
20. Tucson Museum of Art & History
21. Memba Park Historic District
22. El Paso and Southern Pacific Railroad Depot
23. Seo Camilla Fennert House
24. La Placita de la Mesilla
25. Old Adobe Patio/Ci Brown House
26. Mirand College
27. Julian-Drew Building
28. Rialto Theater & Building
29. Hotel Congress
30. Southern Pacific Passenger Depot
31. Arizona Hotel
32. J.C. Penney-Chicago Store
33. Dr. William Austin Cannon House
34. Rebel Trail
35. U.S. Post Office and Courthouse
36. Valley National Bank Building
37. Fox Theater & Commercial Building
38. Arizona Daily Star Building
39. Pima County Courthouse
40. El Presidio Museum
41. Lev H. Manning House
42. University of Arizona Campus Historic District
43. Catalina American Baptist Church
44. Professor George E. P. Smith House
45. Dr. William Austin Cannon House
46. Paul Lawrence Debar School
47. Pasion Cultural Plaza
48. USAF Tucson Paint Materials Center
49. Prehistoric Residential - Life on the Floodplain
50. Early Agricultural Period - Ancestral Farmers near Tres Ríos and Las Capas
51. Las Marimonts Conservation Park
52. Steam Pump Ranch
53. Honey Bee Village Conservation Park
54. Romero-Horst/Catalina State Park

Downtown-area sites
Nearly two dozen historic sites can be found in and around the downtown Tucson area.

A trail through time
For more information on these sites and additional historic districts, visit: pima.gov/LoopHistory

Click on the Maps tab at pima.gov/theLoop for:
- Loop Art Map
- Downtown Murals Map
- Loop Interactive Map
- Tucson Metro Bike Map
- Loop Pathway System Map
- Loop Art Map
- Downtown Murals Map
- Loop Interactive Map

Tumamoc Hill • Santa Cruz River
Tumamoc Hill or Chumasham Do'og, a Tarahumara (Dutch) place name meaning Hill of the Humed Lizard, has attracted humans for over 2,000 years. Since the early 1900s, this area has been recognized for its value related to science, art and invention. In 1903, the Desert Laboratory of the Carnegie Institution opened on Tumamoc Hill, focusing research on land plants.

Pima County Courthouse • Santa Cruz River
Built in 1929 by prominent local architect Roy Place, the iconic Pima County Courthouse is perhaps the most outstanding Spanish Colonial Revival Building in Arizona and features a brilliantly colored tile mosaic on the roof of the central dome. The 1929 Courthouse replaced the 1881 County Courthouse building, and operated until 2015 when Justice Court and other services were moved into the Pima County Public Service Center. By 2020, it will be home to the Southern Arizona Heritage and Visitor Center and the Gem and Mineral Museum.

Los Morteros • Santa Cruz River
Named for its bedrock mortars, where mesquite was once milled by the ancestors of present-day Native American Tribes, Los Morteros was settled near reliable water over 1,000 years ago. Villagers were artisans and farmers who built a communal plaza, irrigation system and an oval ball court, interacting with neighboring villages and trading as far south as the California Gulf. Acquisition was done with Open Space Bonds. Los Morteros again became an important place in historic times. Juan Bautista de Anza’s 1775 Spanish expedition had 240 travelers and 1,000 animals camp here. A century later came the 1838 “Plant of Mountain” stagecoach station and a Patricia Vaya village.

Steam Pump Ranch • Cañada del Oro
Steam Pump Ranch houses the remains of an 1870s blacksmith shop and adobe building once protecting a ground groundwater pump driven by steam power. Its water used to water cattle for railroad shipping and raise chickens for eggs that would supply the Pioneer Hotel in Tucson. This place played a key role in the burgeoning ranching and food production businesses of the region and the development of Oro Valley.

Romero Ruin/Catalina State Park • Cañada del Oro
One of several large Hohokam villages in the Tucson Basin, the Romero Ruin is the largest archaeological site in Catalina State Park. Decorated pottery found at the site suggests the Hohokam lived at this settlement continuously for 1,000 years.

Four centuries after the Hohokam left this site, Francisco and Victoriana Romero made this site their home. They built several structures on top of the hohokam settlement, within the wall that had enclosed the last phase of the ancient village.

The walls of this mid-1800s settlement are still standing today.

Binghampton Rural Historic Landscape- Brandi Fenton Memorial Park • Rillito River
The Binghampton Rural Historic Landscape is significant in Tucson history as the first Mormon agrarian settlement. Founded in 1898 on the floodplain north and south of the Rillito River. Over two decades, Mormon settlers transformed the land into a patchwork of irrigated crops, orchards, dairies, and pasture fields and built a one-room schoolhouse that still stands today.

From the 1920s to the 1950s, the area served as owner-occupied ranches and farms. Residents pastured prized horses and cattle and built residential complexes in Southwestern Revival architectural styles with exotic and native landscaping. Today, horse culture remains important in the rural landscape. Building rehabilitation was done with Historic Preservation Bonds.

Pima Air and Space Museum • Julian Wash
In 1966, while celebrating the 25th anniversary of the U.S. Air Force, members of what is now the 109th Aircraft Maintenance and Regeneration Group lamented the loss of America’s aviation heritage. As they watched historic World War II and 1950s-era aircraft taken from storage and fed into smelters.

Bases officials began setting aside aircraft stored in military yards that was representative of the nation’s aviation history. In 1976, the museum opened its gates to the public and today, military and commercial planes stored at the museum communicate the history of American aviation, a history specific to the growth of Tucson.

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Fort Lowell Area • Pantano Wash
Located at the confluence of Pantano Wash and Tanque Verde Creek, where the Rillito River forms, is Fort Lowell Park. Where the pithouse villages of ancestral Native Americans stood, the United States Army built a supply base between 1873 and 1891 during the “Apache Campaigns” to protect settlers, freighters, and ranchers.

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Partial acquisition was done with Open Space Bonds.