



The
**Historic Preservation
Alliance of Arkansas**

*announces the
2006 List of*

**Arkansas's Most
Endangered
Historic Places**

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The Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas began Arkansas's Most Endangered Places program in 1999 to raise awareness of the importance of Arkansas's historic properties and the dangers they face through neglect, development, and loss of integrity. The list is updated each year and serves to generate discussion and support for saving the state's endangered historic places. Previous places listed include the Bluff Shelter Archaeological Sites in Northwest Arkansas, the Goddard Hotel in Hot Springs, the Nutt-Trussell Building and Fielder House in Fordyce, the Stephen H. Chism House in Booneville, and the twentieth century African-American Rosenwald Schools throughout the state.

Properties are nominated by individuals, communities, and organizations interested in preserving these places for future Arkansans. Criteria for inclusion in the list includes a property's listing or eligibility for listing in the Arkansas or National Register of Historic Places; the degree of a property's local, state or national significance; and the imminence and degree of the threat to the property.

The Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas was founded in 1981 and is the only state-wide nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving Arkansas's architectural and cultural heritage. The mission of the Alliance is to educate, advocate, and assist historic preservation in Arkansas.

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Arkansas's Most Endangered Historic Places

2006 List

Johnny Cash Boyhood Home
Dyess

Centennial Baptist Church
Helena

Argenta Drug Company Building
North Little Rock

Clardy-Lee House
Center Point, Howard Co.

Ray Winder Field
Little Rock

Haven United Methodist Church
Hot Springs

Gypsy Camp for Girls
Siloam Springs

St. Bartholomew's Community Hall
Little Rock

Dyess Colony Administration Building
Dyess

W.G. Hall-Anthony Building
Little Rock

Johnny Cash Boyhood Home

Dyess

The Cash family moved to this site as one of 600 families chosen to relocate as part of the Dyess Colony project initiated under the Works Progress Administration. Johnny Cash's formative years were spent here—picking cotton in the fields with his family, singing hymns with his mother, surviving the 1937 flood, and mourning the death of his older brother. Cash began playing guitar and writing songs early in his life and in high school performed on a local radio station. Many of the themes in Cash's music can be traced back to his life in Dyess, including the song "Five Feet High and Rising" inspired by the 1937 flood. After Cash left to join the Air Force, he returned to Dyess only once-- in 1969 while filming a documentary.



*We couldn't see much good in the flood waters when they
were causing us to have to leave home,
But when the water went down,
We found that it had washed a load of rich black bottom dirt across our land.
The following year we had the best cotton crop we'd ever had.*

-lyrics from *Five Feet High and Rising*, Johnny Cash



The Johnny Cash Boyhood Home has been occupied by the owner for the past thirty years. Though alterations to the exterior and interior have been extensive, the level of integrity is sufficient for its association with such a notable figure. While the house continues to be occupied, there is little risk of damage from the elements. However, regular maintenance and insensitive alterations have resulted in the loss of some of the historic fabric. The property owner has offered the property for sale, but at prohibitive cost. Like the Dyess Colony Administration Building, great opportunity exists for restoring the house to its historical context and capitalizing on its heritage tourism draw to contribute to the economic development of northeast Arkansas.

Centennial Baptist Church

Helena

Centennial Baptist Church in Helena was the “home base” of one of the most influential persons in the history of African-American religion in the country. Reverend Dr. Elias Camp Morris was the president of the National Baptist Convention, the largest African-American organization in the United States at the end of the 19th century, from 1895 to 1922. Designed in 1905 by Henry James Price, Centennial Baptist Church is the only known example in Arkansas of an African-American church designed by an African-American architect. Centennial Baptist Church was designated as a National Historic Landmark in 2003, the highest recognition of historic structures at the federal level.



Although work has been done to stabilize Centennial Baptist Church, the structure continues to be threatened by structural instability and exposure to vandalism. Work began to stabilize the structural trusses in 1998, but ended in 2003 due to budget shortfalls. The deterioration of these trusses has created cracks in the foundation and exposed the interiors, including the historic pews and 1908 pipe organ, to damage from the elements. Centennial Baptist Church is one of the most significant historic churches in Arkansas and its loss would be immeasurable.

Argenta Drug Company Building

North Little Rock

The Argenta Drug Company Building in downtown North Little Rock is a visible and historic anchor to Argenta's historic downtown. Constructed in 1887, the building is one of the oldest buildings in the Argenta Historic District and has always contained a pharmacy.



The future of Argenta Drug looked bright only a year ago when plans were unveiled to restore it into a mixed development anchor of downtown North Little Rock. However, the plans fell through and coupled with the advanced state of deterioration due to water damage, the uncertainty of its future puts it in danger. The Argenta Drug Company continues to operate in the north half of the first floor, but the rest of the structure has been deemed unsafe for use by the City of North Little Rock. To lose such a vital part of the Argenta Historic District would be a tremendous loss to the architectural history of North Little Rock.

Clardy-Lee House

Center Point, Howard County

The Clardy-Lee House is a large two-story frame mansion located in the Center Point community in Howard County. Constructed in 1873, the Clardy-Lee House was most likely built by Moses Hill, an educated Methodist minister, a business man and skilled carpenter who emigrated from South Carolina in 1854. Mr. Hill brought with him ideas and images of the Palladian-Georgian forms of Charleston and Beaufort, South Carolina which he drew upon in designing the Clardy-Lee House. The two-story Palladian porticos found on the east and north facades, the curvilinear columns, the tri-partite windows, and the hipped roof are all characteristics suggesting a geographically distant relation to Charleston architectural styles. The Clardy-Lee House was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1977.



“The Clardy-Lee House is one of the most distinguished pieces of architecture in Arkansas. It’s on the brink of oblivion. Do we have the creative energy to save it?”
-Cyrus Sutherland, Fayetteville



The most serious threat to the Clardy-Lee house is neglect due to over four decades of vacancy. Exposure to the elements and vandalism have caused this house to deteriorate rapidly during that period. The Clardy-Lee House is a significant reminder of the development of southwest Arkansas in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Ray Winder Field

Little Rock

Originally named “Traveler Field” upon its construction in 1932, Ray Winder Field in Little Rock is a potent reminder of the glory days of minor league baseball in Arkansas and the country. As the fifth oldest minor league ballpark in the United States, Ray Winder Field has experienced all that minor league baseball has offered in the twentieth century. The field was renamed “Ray Winder Field” in 1966 to recognize the efforts of a man who dedicated 52 years to the promotion of professional baseball for the Little Rock and Arkansas Travelers. Although Ray Winder Field has a capacity of 6,083; on June 1, 1991, more



than 12,000 turned out to witness the return of famed Dodgers pitcher Fernando Valenzuela to professional baseball. Although Ray Winder Field has been completely renovated over the last twenty years, the original park remains intact with the exception of the right field bleachers.

2006 will mark the final season of Travelers baseball at Ray Winder as the team will move to a new field in North Little Rock in 2007. As with numerous other “purpose-built” structures, particularly sporting arenas, the future of Ray Winder Field is uncertain without

the presence of a team to use it. The City of Little Rock through its Mid-town Task Force has assembled a group of citizens to look at potential uses of the park, but the future of Ray Winder Field is still unclear. As such a vivid reminder of the history of minor league baseball in Arkansas and the country and as an important anchor of midtown Little Rock, Ray Winder Field’s importance to history and the community are significant.



Haven United Methodist Church

Hot Springs



Haven United Methodist Church in Hot Springs is one of the oldest African-American churches in the city. The congregation was founded in 1877 by Reverend C. W. Whitehead and the church at the corner of Walnut Street and Whittington Avenue was constructed in 1914. The Haven Methodist Church Choir sang for, then Secretary of Commerce, Herbert Hoover in 1927.

In 2005, the congregation relocated to a new church building and the 1914 structure now remains vacant. The roof, which had sustained significant water damage, was poorly repaired in 2003 and less than a year later the leaks had returned. Exposed to water damage, the interiors have sustained mold damage and part of the roof has collapsed around the 100 year old pipe organ. Plans to remove the historic stained glass windows to sell at auction have also been discussed-- potentially resulting in a huge loss to the historic fabric of the structure and another avenue of exposure to the elements. Haven United Methodist Church is a significant monumental piece of Hot Springs' architectural legacy and should be preserved for future generations.



Gypsy Camp for Girls

Siloam Springs

Gypsy Camp in the Siloam Springs vicinity was started as an artist colony in 1921. By 1924, it had become a camp for girls aged 8-17. The founder, Weezie McAllister, was an artist who taught at the University of Tulsa and local schools in the Siloam Springs area. The camp continued as a summer camp until 1978. The camp buildings, constructed between 1921 and 1928, reflect a rustic style associated with camps and park buildings from the era. The property was listed as a National Register Historic District in 1988, pursued by local citizens in the face of condemnation and demolition by the city. The



60+ acre property also includes several large protective bluffs and caves which hold archaeological significance as a Native American pre-historical site.

The Gypsy Camp is endangered due to the large size of the property and the prohibitive cost to maintain it. Additionally, this corner of Arkansas has seen exponential growth in development over the past several decades. The increasing unchecked development and suburban sprawl create enormous

pressure on the Gypsy Camp and many other similar largely undeveloped sites located in or adjacent to residential areas. Gypsy Camp is a significant site in its own right, but it also tells the tale of many other sites like it facing the threat of overdevelopment and suburban sprawl across Arkansas.



St. Bartholomew's Community Hall

Little Rock



The Community Hall of St. Bartholomew's Catholic Church located in Little Rock is a significant example of an early twentieth century religious building. The Craftsman-styled building was constructed in the 1920s along with a now-demolished convent. St. Bartholomew's Church holds great significance to the community for its stable presence over the course of the twentieth century. Upon moving to its current location in 1911, a new church was constructed followed by the convent and community hall structures in 1925 and a school building in 1949. The property is located in the Central High Historic District and is a contributing structure.

Currently the community hall is being used for storage, but plans have been made to demolish the structure. Barring alternative solutions to save the structure, the demolition will likely proceed and result in an immense loss to the architectural and cultural history of the community.



Dyess Colony Administration Building

Dyess

The Dyess Colony Administration Building in Dyess is one of only a few remaining structures from this town's significant history. This prominent two-story Greek Revival style is located in the heart of the Dyess Colony Center, designated a National Register District in 1976. The New Deal-era Dyess Colony project was one of the earliest Federal Emergency Relief Administration and Works Progress Administration undertakings in Arkansas. The colony was designed as "an experiment in permanent reestablishment of the independent farmer" and was soon replicated across the country as part of Roosevelt's New Deal programs. The building is currently unoccupied and used for storage by the property owner.



The Dyess Colony Administration Building is currently in fair condition despite its age and years of use, although this appears to be due to the original solid construction and not to regular maintenance. Its long-term future is uncertain given the dwindling population and financial resources of the town over the past few decades. The Town of Dyess is very interested in obtaining the property and converting it for use as local museum. The plight of Dyess and the Administration Building is found many times over in small towns with decreasing populations and limited resources to save some of our state's most monumental architecture. The potential of this site and others like it for heritage tourism is enormous and programs, such as the Arkansas Delta Rural Heritage Development Initiative, are seeking solutions for saving such treasures as a component of a broader regional economic development plan.

W.G. Hall-Anthony Building

Little Rock

The W. G. Hall-Anthony Building in Little Rock represents the early twentieth century commercial development of the area along High Street and holds a significant place in the African-American history of this community. Constructed in 1915, the building remained under the ownership of W. G. Hall until 1968 when it was sold to Lee Anthony. Most of the tenants under Hall's ownership were African-American entrepreneurs, including the drugstore of J.R. Harrod in the corner store location. The Hall-Anthony Building also holds a significant



place in the musical history of Arkansas as the location of Soul Brothers Record Shop. Lee Anthony and Bill Hamilton started the first and most successful African-American owned record store in Arkansas and established one of the most active recording studios in the South. Notable artist who recorded in the studio included Art Porter, Hazel Hynson and the Arkansas Baptist College Choir, The Loving Sisters, Joe Tex, and many others.

Mere days after the Hall-Anthony Building was deemed eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, a car crashed into the side of the building causing extensive damage. After the accident, the building

was deemed ineligible for listing in its current state. The National Register listing would have allowed the rehabilitation of the building to be eligible for Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits, but now its future is uncertain. The building requires extensive repairs to the east façade and the roof. Given its significance to the history of this community and its potential as an anchor for community revitalization, the loss of the W.G. Hall-Anthony building would be tremendous.



