

# Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas

*Announces the 2010 list of Arkansas's Most Endangered  
Historic Places*

## Nine in Need





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The Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas is the only statewide nonprofit organization focused on preserving Arkansas's architectural and cultural resources. Founded in 1981, the Alliance's mission is to educate, advocate and assist preservation efforts across the state.

Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas

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## About Arkansas's Most Endangered Places List

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Each year during Arkansas Heritage Month and National Preservation Month, the Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas announces its list of *Arkansas's Most Endangered Historic Places*. The program draws statewide attention to historically significant structures or landscapes associated with the great stories and personalities of Arkansas history. It also serves to raise awareness of the importance of Arkansas's historic properties and the dangers they face through neglect, encroaching development, and loss of integrity. The Alliance focuses on the circumstances that threaten these places in an effort to save them for the enjoyment and education of future generations.

Arkansas's Most Endangered Historic Places list is designed to raise awareness of the importance of Arkansas's historic places, generate support for saving endangered properties, provide a tool for evaluating and prioritizing preservation needs in Arkansas, make endangered properties eligible for technical and or financial assistance, and support the goals of Arkansas Heritage Month and National Preservation Month. The list ideally includes properties from all sections of the state as well as a wide range of property types that represent different aspects of Arkansas's heritage and a variety of preservation issues.

Properties are nominated by individuals, communities, and organizations interested in preserving these places for future Arkansans. They are selected based on the degree of a property's local, state, or national significance, and the imminence and degree of the threat to the property.

The theme of Arkansas Heritage Month this year is **“Roads Less Traveled: The Enduring Heritage of Rural Arkansas.”** Properties on this list represent unique aspects of Arkansas's rural heritage. They are some of the oldest remaining structures in the state and are worthy of preservation for the benefit of future generations.

The theme of National Preservation Month is **“Old *is* the New Green.”** Preservation is inherently green and plays a significant role in fostering development that is environmentally and economically sustainable. The preservation and reuse of properties on this year's list of *Nine in Need* could considerably aide revitalization efforts in Arkansas's prominent cities.

Learn more about National Preservation Month at [www.PreservationNation.org/PreservationMonth](http://www.PreservationNation.org/PreservationMonth)

## Beebe Colored Schoolhouse

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The Beebe Colored Schoolhouse was built in 1944 and served students until 1956 when they were sent to a nearby school in Searcy. The building is vacant and has been neglected for several years. However, it still stands as a good example of one-room schoolhouses built before the United States Supreme Court landmark decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* to overturn “separate but equal” educational facilities.

The Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas hopes that including the Beebe Colored Schoolhouse on the 2010 list of *Nine in Need* will encourage additional support at the local level. The building may be eligible for rehabilitation tax credits, and the planned transfer of ownership to the White County Historical Society will make the schoolhouse eligible for historic preservation restoration grants.





## Fort Smith: Mallalieu Methodist Episcopal Church

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The Mallalieu Methodist Episcopal Church was established in the late 1800s as an African-American congregation of the local Methodist Church. The existing building was built in 1921 and served the congregation until the late 1980s when it relocated. The building has been vacant, neglected and damaged by the elements since then. The stained glass windows were sold to an out of state collector, making it ineligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

By listing the Mallalieu Methodist Church on the 2010 list of *Nine in Need*, the Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas hopes to raise awareness about this significant local landmark and build support of the local efforts to redevelop the property. The Howard Foundation is a 501 (c)3 organization that was started to raise funds for the building's rehabilitation. The foundation's long term goal is to develop the Mallalieu building to provide a place where the underserved youth on the north side of Fort Smith can benefit from physical activities, personal mentoring, encouragement, and opportunities to communicate with educated people around the world.

## Levesque: Deadrick House

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Constructed circa 1850, the Captain Isaac N. Deadrick House in the Levesque community in Cross County is a two story vernacular interpretation of the Greek Revival Style. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in September 1993 with local significance for Captain Deadrick's involvement in the Civil War and post-war reconstruction government in Wittsburg. It is also regarded as the oldest extant building in Cross County and the last symbol of the antebellum period in that area.

The Deadrick House has been vacant and neglected for some time, but the Cross County Historical Society is preparing a master plan involving the structure and the Deadrick-Hare Cemetery behind it. It is located on Crowley's Ridge Parkway National Scenic Byway and holds much potential as a restored and rehabilitated visitor destination for the more than 450,000 annual travelers along the National Scenic Byway.



## Lisbon: Mount Moriah Masonic Lodge #18

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The Mount Moriah Masonic Lodge #18 is a rare and unusually intact example of a mid 19<sup>th</sup> century rural social meeting place and Masonic Lodge that served the community of Lisbon and the surrounding area. While the building is in fair condition, it has some structural deficiencies that need to be addressed for the long-term stability of the building. Mount Moriah Lodge #18 is an excellent example of 1850s era building techniques and materials, and may very well be the oldest building in the state still used for its original purpose by its original owner.



The Mount Moriah Masonic Lodge #18 in Lisbon is included on the 2010 list of most endangered places for its rarity and ability to offer an authentic and unencumbered view into the lives of the early Union County citizens.



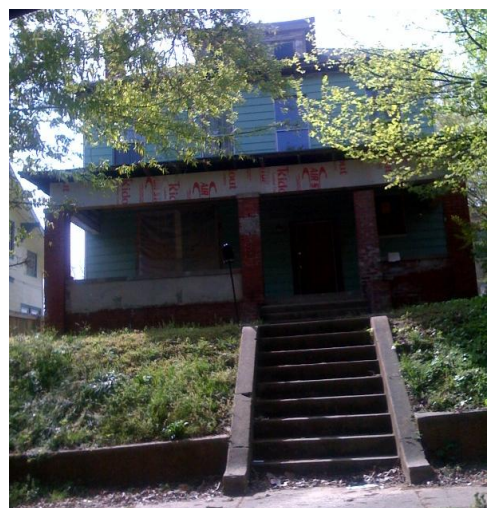


## Little Rock: American Foursquares in the Wright Avenue Neighborhood and Central High School Historic District

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The Wright Avenue Neighborhood and the Central High School Historic District contain a wide variety of examples of architectural styles. Chief among these is the American Foursquare, a subtype of the Prairie style that was popular from the mid 1890s through the late 1930s, which incorporated handcrafted woodwork and a floor plan typically consisting of four rooms per floor.

Many of the American Foursquares in this area of Little Rock were established circa 1913 as part of a tract development supervised by the Holman Real Estate Company.<sup>1</sup> In 1999, the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program published a volume in which the 2300 block of South Summit Street was commended for its “exemplary versions” of the American Foursquare.<sup>1</sup> This comes as no surprise as 11 of the 30 contributing Foursquares in the district are located on this block of South Summit St, and this particular street is the only street in Little Rock, and perhaps Arkansas, that is comprised exclusively of Foursquares. Like many historic homes in central Arkansas, these homes have fallen victim to neglect and the ravages of time and absentee ownership. At the current time 64% of the Foursquares on the 2300 block of South Summit Street sit vacant or abandoned. The great irony is that these homes sit endangered on the very block where they are most “exemplary”.



## Little Rock: American Foursquares in the Wright Avenue Neighborhood and Central High School Historic District

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The loss of these significant houses would be detrimental to the community revitalization efforts in these neighborhoods. New tools such as the Little Rock Land Bank Commission may help secure the future of abandoned houses like these, but time is running out. Greater understanding of the importance of historic buildings is needed to allow these tools to function for the benefit of our state's historic resources.





## Little Rock: Shotgun Houses

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Shotgun houses were among the most popular house types built in the Southern United States from the end of the Civil War to the 1920s. They were one room wide, usually no more than twelve feet, and three or more rooms deep with no hallways. Praised for their ventilation qualities and utilization of space, they were often built in rows and comprised entire city blocks. They were popular among the middle and lower class until automobile ownership was common. Shotgun houses were once prevalent in Little Rock's older neighborhoods, but now only a few remain scattered around town. Even less common are rows of more than three houses. There are perhaps only two streets in Little Rock where rows of shotgun houses remain.

Shotgun houses represent significant aspects of American history and are the southern equivalent of brownstone houses in the northeast. By listing these on Arkansas's *Nine in Need*, the Alliance hopes to raise awareness about the importance of this almost-forgotten building style and to encourage Arkansas's citizens and leaders to take pride in the preservation of this important house type.



## Marion: Old Marion High School

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The Marion High School building was built in 1912 and served as the first compulsory education school in Crittenden County. The building first housed all grades and it later served as a high school and middle school until the early 1990s. Since then it has been used for storage and office space and is now in danger of being demolished. The Marion School District is considering replacing the building with a new media center and office complex. Inappropriate window replacements have caused some water damage but the two story brick building is structurally sound. The Alliance hopes the Marion School District will give adequate consideration and pursue rehabilitation rather than demolition of this building as part of their expansion plan.

The Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas encourages all public institutions to develop policies that support the preservation of their historic resources. With appropriate maintenance, historic buildings like these will serve Arkansans well into the future and remain unique symbols of our communities and culture.



## Osceola: First Baptist Church Building

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The Classical-Revival style First Baptist Church in Osceola became an immediate landmark when it was built in 1915. It was designed by Branson Uzzell and is unique in Mississippi County, featuring tabby brick and a dome similar to those in Jewish synagogues. In 1917, President Woodrow Wilson's daughter spoke to the women of Osceola here in an effort to enlist their help in the war effort.

The building served the congregation until the 1980s when it was sold to a different congregation and later auctioned. It remains vacant and has been damaged by the elements and vandals. Several community members in Osceola are interested in saving the property but there has not yet been an organized effort. This culturally and architecturally significant property could serve citizens and visitors to Osceola well into the future. The First Baptist Church building's size and associated buildings make it ideal for a number of reuses, but it needs to be rehabilitated soon.



## Rohwer and Jerome: Japanese-American Relocation Camps

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The Japanese-American relocation camps at Rohwer and Jerome represent an important aspect of United States history that has not been widely interpreted in Arkansas. The Rohwer camp operated from September 1942 to November 1945 and held nearly 8,500 people at its peak population. The Jerome Relocation Center operated from October 1942 to June 1944 and held over 7,900 people at one time.



Rohwer is a National Historic Landmark but only a few monuments remain. There is a small cemetery and a monument to Japanese-American soldiers who died fighting for the United States in World War II. Assessments by the National Park Service and WER Architects determined the site and its monuments to be endangered. It has been neglected and vandalized over the years. Additionally, the ownership of the cemetery is unclear so interested parties have been unable to acquire the site for preservation and interpretation.



## Rohwer and Jerome: Japanese-American Relocation Camps

Less remains at the Jerome site. There are a few water tanks, concrete foundations, and the iconic smokestack. Most of the buildings were removed by the mid 1950s and it has been a farm since then. A monument was added in recent years and is maintained by the property owner.

A limited amount of funding from the National Park Service's Japanese American Confinement Sites Grant Program is available for acquisition and interpretation of these properties. However, without cooperation among interested parties and a clear legal owner of the Rohwer property, moving forward is difficult and the sites and their stories are in danger of being lost.





## Most Endangered Historic Places Success Stories

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In some cases, listing has spurred restoration and reuse of once threatened and abandoned historic properties such as the Old Hotze House in Little Rock and Magnolia Manor outside of Arkadelphia. Both were purchased and restored following listing and are now private residences. Also, a success story, West Side Junior High in Little Rock was adapted into loft apartments and part of the building also serves as a clinic for Arkansas Children's Hospital.

Sometimes preservation takes time as in the case of the Dunbar Neighborhood in Little Rock listed in 2007, which is now being surveyed for listing as a National Register Historic District. Sometimes progress is incremental: the Riceland Hotel in Stuttgart received a boost last November when, after decades of darkness, the iconic neon sign was restored and relit to celebrate the upcoming 75<sup>th</sup> Wings Over the Prairie Festival. The Alliance hopes that this step will kick off full rehabilitation of the building.

Listing on the MEP list led to grant funding to help promote preservation of two of 2009's Six to Save. The National Trust for Historic Preservation granted funds to execute an assessment of the Dr. E.P. McGhee Infirmary in Lake Village as the first step toward restoration of the historic hospital. The NTHP also awarded a grant for structural assessment of the Faulkner County Courthouse in Conway to determine the building's feasibility for restoration.

Other properties formerly listed on the Most Endangered Historic Places list include the Mitchell-East Building in Tyronza, which now houses the Southern Tenant Farmers Museum; the Rosenwald School in Selma which received a grant from Lowe's and the National Trust for Historic Preservation for restoration as a community center; and the Stephen H. Chism House in Logan County which is currently being restored by the owner.



Old Hotze House, Little Rock



Southern Tenant Farmers  
Museum, Tyronza



Selma Rosenwald School



## Organization Contacts

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