

2016



ARKANSAS'S MOST
ENDANGERED
PLACES



**... & ONES
WORTH
WATCHING**



SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks to 2015 Most Endangered Places Selection Committee Members: Tom Wing, Chairman, Fort Smith; John Henris, Monticello; Tommy Jameson, Little Rock Mason Toms, Little Rock and Dr. David Ware, Little Rock.

Thank you to additional members of the Board of Directors Clayton Blackstock, Courtney Crouch, Jamie Brandon, Jodi Barnes, John Greer and Sarah Hansen for participating in the announcement.

ABOUT THE MOST ENDANGERED PLACES PROGRAM

Arkansas's Most Endangered Places program was begun in 1999 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 list is updated each year and serves to generate discussion and support for saving the state's endangered historic places. Previous places listed include Johnny Cash Boyhood Home and the Dyess Colony Administration Building in Dyess, Arkansas Mound Sites Statewide, Rohwer and Jerome Japanese-American Relocation Camps in Desha County, the William Woodruff House in Little Rock, Magnolia Manor in Arkadelphia, the Thompson Building in Hot Springs, Centennial Baptist Church in Helena, the Donaghey Buildings in Little Rock, the Saenger Theatre in Pine Bluff, the twentieth century Rosewood Schools throughout the state, St. Joseph Home in North Little Rock, Forest Fire Lookouts statewide, the Hantz and Durst Houses in Fayetteville, the Historic Dunbar Neighborhood in Little Rock, Carleson Terrace in Fayetteville, the Woodmen on the Union Building in Hot Springs.

Properties are nominated by individuals, communities, and organizations interested in preserving these places for future Arkansans. Criteria for inclusion in the list include 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.



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Digital photos are available
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Seven to Save: Preserve Arkansas Announces 2016 list of Arkansas's Endangered Places

LITTLE ROCK—Preserve Arkansas's 2016 list of Seven to Save: Arkansas's Endangered Places is comprised of a Mid-Century Airport Terminal building; a former National Guard Armory and youth center named after a prominent African American community leader; a rural, vernacular church; a school building started with Rosenwald School funding a late 19th Century residence; a railway station; and the home of one of the Little Rock Nine. Two properties were also two named as "Ones Worth Watching."

The announcement took place on May 12 in the State Capitol Rotunda. Arkansas's Most Endangered Places Program was started in 1999 to raise awareness of the importance of Arkansas's historic properties and the dangers they face. The list is updated each year to generate discussion and support for saving these places that matter to Arkansas.

The Arkansas's Most Endangered Historic Places list highlights historically and architecturally significant properties throughout the state that are facing threats such as deterioration, neglect, insufficient funds, insensitive public policy, and inappropriate development. Preserve Arkansas solicited nominations from residents and organizations across Arkansas.

Properties named to the 2016 list of Seven to Save are as follows

2016 SEVEN TO SAVE

Goodwin Field Terminal, 1948

418 Airport Drive, El Dorado, Union County

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National Guard Armory (Sonny Alston Youth Center), 1930

309 N. College, Clarksville, Johnson County

–

Union Chapel Community Center, 1929-1938

281 Union Chapel Rd, Springfield, Conway County

–

Sweet Home Chapel, 1907

Mount Ida Vicinity, Montgomery County

–

Slack/Comstock/Marshall House, mid 1890s

North of AR 220, Uniontown, Crawford County

–

Warren & Ouachita Railway Station, 1909

325 W. Cedar St, Warren, Bradley County

–

Ray House, 1917

2111 Cross St, Little Rock, Pulaski County

ONES WORTH WATCHING

KATV Building, 1929

401 Main Street, Little Rock, Pulaski County

–

Mosaic State Temple Building, 1921

906 Broadway, Little Rock, Pulaski County

ONE TO REMEMBER

Cox/Burrow House, 1871

Bridge and Burrow Streets, Morrilton, Conway County

Goodwin Field Terminal, 1948
418 Airport Drive, El Dorado, Union County



In the 1940s, the southern Arkansas city of El Dorado was a place with bright prospects: wartime growth fueled by chemical and munitions factories as well as the area's petroleum business meant that it was a destination, served by air transportation. Goodwin Field, located outside of El Dorado, served regional commercial carriers, as well as business and private aviation. Its terminal, built in 1948, was aggressively up to date, built in the hybrid Art Deco/Art Moderne style that characterized many such structures of the time including those at Little Rock's Adams Field and Memorial Field of Hot Springs. Of those midcentury Arkansas air terminals, Goodwin field's is the best preserved. Enlarged and modified, it yet retains the clean Art Moderne lines and details given it by its designers, architect John B. Abbott and the Little Rock firm of Brueggeman, Swaim and Allen. But, like many buildings of its time, it needs repairs and updates. Ironically, in light of its 2006 expansion, it is now considered too large for the traffic it handles; sentiment exists to simply demolish it and start over. As of this writing the El Dorado Airport Commission has approved demolition of Goodwin Field. The final decision rests with the City Council, who will have to allocate funding for a new building.

National Guard Armory (Sonny Alston Youth Center)
309 N. College, Clarksville, Johnson County



The Clarksville Armory, more recently known as the Sonny Alston Youth Center, is on one hand a workaday building built with stylish design touches suggestive of its era of origin and, on the other, a public space whose original martial mission has given way to civilian pursuits. Its present-day name memorializes a prominent member of the local African American community—a city employee who was a booster of community youth sports programs. Like many of its kind, the former Clarksville Armory has suffered from aging and maintenance issues. Cost estimates for rehabbing it to serve as a city maintenance building have run higher than some city council members are comfortable with. Reluctance to pursue grants for rehab is based on concerns over responsibility for long-term maintenance if the grants are awarded. Public outcry about the council’s vote to not pursue funding through the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program encouraged the Mayor to appoint a committee to look more closely at funding sources. Since then, the City has agreed to put a tarp on the roof to stop immediate water infiltration. Though this is a step in the right direction, the Armory building and its supporters still face an uphill battle to win its preservation.

Union Chapel Community Center

281 Union Chapel Rd, Springfield, Conway County



In the decades preceding the American Civil War, the Springfield district of Conway County became a magnet for in-migration due to its agricultural potential and its proximity to river transport. Its economic centrality doubtless helped it become, for a time, the county seat. After the conflict, significant numbers of African Americans migrated to the county and established several small communities. Union Chapel was one of these, located on the outskirts of Springfield. Union Chapel lasted; one indication of this was the construction, in the late 1920s, of a stone-clad three-teacher school with an adjacent shop or trades education building; supported by the Rosenwald foundation. When the Rosenwald School burned in the mid-1930s, a new one was erected by workers of the WPA on the same footprint during 1937-1938. The school was built of local rock, the workers supervised by a reputable local mason. It served the children of Union Chapel until 1970, when they were transferred to a more modern facility. The former school, now styled the Union Chapel Community Center, was deeded to the community in 1970. For many years, it hosted the stuff of community life: annual picnics, basketball games, fish fries and a host of other functions. In recent years, however, the buildings have fallen into disuse and disrepair. The WPA-built school and pump house walls, plus those of the original Rosenwald-funded shop, remain in fair condition but ceilings and floors have perilously sagged. The community does not have the resources to repair it on its own. A place that was, over its decades, so many things to so many people is now something else: at risk.

Sweet Home Chapel, Mount Ida, 1907
Mount Ida, Montgomery County



For much of the second half of the 19th century, the inhabitants of Sweet Home held church services in improvised venues, including the local school house. In 1907, however, community members banded together to build a dedicated church structure on land donated by local farmer W.J. Hovell. The new church was dedicated on May 17, 1908; the day's sermon was drawn from Luke 7:5: "For he so loves his people, that he built them a synagogue." For seven decades the Sweet Home church saw baptisms, weddings, funerals and other functions, the kind that built a solid core of community. A congregation history noted that "our [congregation] is made up of different denominations, we call our Sunday school the "Non-Denominational Sunday School" but use the Presbyterian literature. "The church was decommissioned in January 1977; it and the land on which it stood reverted to private ownership. The present owners did not realize that the old church was included on the land they bought in 2001. The old Sweet Home church is in fairly good condition, given its age, but roof and foundation deterioration threaten this onetime rock of the community. The present owners wish to preserve it, perhaps to once again host church services and other community activities, but require resources and assistance to ensure its future.

Slack/Comstock/Marshall House, Uniontown
North of AR 220, Uniontown, Crawford County



Sometimes, an ordinary house is or becomes extraordinary. This may well be one. This house, located not far from the Oklahoma-Arkansas border in Crawford County, was erected in phases beginning in the mid-1890s. It was built in the “Plain Traditional” style but is distinguished by decorative shingle-work in the gables, a distinctive vernacular touch. The house was originally built by farmer Van Slack as a rectangular single-story double pen structure, facing south. It was later expanded by adding rooms, a common practice then and now. In this instance, however, the builders went beyond the norm: sometime after 1900, new owner Hardy Comstock added the three-room, one-and-one-half story addition with a cross gable roof. Comstock also added a wrap-around porch, which served to integrate the large addition with the rest of the design. After the Marshall family acquired the property in 1918, they added a porch to the rear of the house and in succeeding decades made other minor changes to the house. These did not obscure its historic lines and features. Today, the Slack/Comstock/Marshall house stands vacant, still in the hands of Marshall descendants who love the house and want to keep it, but are at a loss for ideas as to the “how.” The structure is extraordinary less for its architectural graces than for its survivor status; it is a pin that binds together three families’ histories with that of the district. The graceful line of the porch is countered by the dangerous tilt of its stone piers, reminders of its risky condition.

Warren & Ouachita Railway Station, Warren, 1909
325 W. Cedar St, Warren, Bradley County



From the mid-nineteenth century through the early decades of the Twentieth, one of the surest signs of a town with prospects was the presence of a railroad station at its heart: a symbol that one's town or city was connected to markets and destinations, to "bigger things." The Warren railway station is a prime example of this. The Warren and Ouachita Valley (W&OV) Railway was a shortline or "tap" railroad, organized in 1899 by a pair of lumber companies; it laid its tracks over what had been the line surveyed for the first railroad charter in Arkansas. The route connected Warren to the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad. It carried logs and lumber, plus passengers and agricultural products. The first Warren station was built in 1909; two years later, it was heavily damaged by fire, then rebuilt on the same spot. Passenger service disappeared in post-World War II days but the depot remained railway property until it was deeded to the city of Warren by a successor road to the W&OV in 2014. By this time it had been inactive for many years; vandalism and the elements had taken their toll. Today, the old Warren depot is in limbo. Ideas for its use are stalled by its rapidly deteriorating condition. The great enemy is moisture and associated wood rot, of rafters, joists and sills: the roof of the warehouse portion is very porous, that of the two-story section a little less so. Most windows have been broken out, though temporary glazing has been fitted. The local Chamber of Commerce would like to restore the building, making it available as a community center, but funds are tight. For this landmark, salvation is in a race against rot, and time.

Ray House, 1917

2111 Cross Street, Little Rock, Pulaski County



The Ray house, located on Cross Street, in the Dunbar Historic District, was the home of Harvey C. and Mary Ray, The first two African American professional employees of the Arkansas Agricultural Extension Service. They moved into the house in 1917, the year it was built in a district that would be home to many other African American middle class and professional families. Harvey Ray worked with farmers to manage and grow their operations; Mary Ray was a Home Demonstration Agent, teaching women and girls across the state. After Mary Ray's death in 1934, Harvey Ray remarried, this time to another home demonstration teacher, Julia Miller. They raised three children in this solid residence; one of them, Gloria, would win fame in 1957 and after as one of the Little Rock Nine. This house, the largest on its block and rich in associations, stands many years vacant (the previous owner died in 2013) and besieged by demolition: two adjacent houses have already been torn down. And others are vacant or appear to be. Preserving this house might provide a visual as well as spiritual linchpin for stabilizing the neighborhood.

ONE WORTH WATCHING

Worthen Bank Building (KATV Building), 1928
401 Main Street, Little Rock, Pulaski County

In 1928, Little Rock's long-established Worthen Bank moved



into its imposing new home at the corner of Main and Fourth Streets. To design the new building, Worthen directors turned to one of Arkansas's most respected and best-known architects: George Richard Mann, known for his work on the Arkansas Capitol and Pine Bluff's Hotel Pines. Since 1969 it has been the home of television station KATV; it has been modified internally but its limestone exterior retains almost all of its historic elements. In 2015 the Worthen/KATV building was listed as a "property to watch" and its future remains unclear: KATV has announced plans to move and the building will soon be offered for sale. The Worthen/KATV building affords a golden opportunity to work for the building's survival, incorporating it into the evolving plans for the Little Rock Tech Park development. Success in this will ensure that the Park will be developed in a way that acknowledges its surroundings and the significant built heritage of downtown Little Rock.

ONE WORTH WATCHING

Mosaic State Temple, 1921

906 Broadway, Little Rock, Pulaski County



In the last decades of the 19th century, the Mosaic Templars of America, an African American fraternal order, was established in Little Rock Arkansas by a visionary group of businessmen. In 1911-1913, the MTA built its imposing headquarters at the corner of 9th and Broadway; soon after, in 1918, the Templars constructed an adjacent infirmary and nurses' college and, in 1921, a separate headquarters for the state-level Temple of the by now nationwide organization. Of these three buildings, two have been destroyed by fire and recreated; only the Mosaic State Temple remains, its original fabric and exterior decoration mostly intact although much modified on its interior. It has served many tenants since the MTA's dwindling in the 1930s; it is currently for sale—an auction date has been set for May 19th. Its purchase by the State of Arkansas would add both program space and badly needed parking to the Mosaic Templars Cultural Center complex; acquisition by the state

ONE TO REMEMBER

Cox/Burrow House

Bridge St, Morrilton, Conway County



This venerable survivor, located on Morrilton's Bridge Street, is an ell-shaped Greek Revival house built by Colonel Handsel Wesley Burrow, a farmer and an early resident of Lewisburg, a river town and the thriving seat of Conway County. In 1871, the widowed Burrow, remarried and built this graceful house on a five-acre parcel on the north edge of Lewisburg. Burrow died in 1887; he had raised five children in the house, three of whom grew to adulthood. He had also seen the decline of Lewisburg, supplanted as a county seat by Morrilton due to the advent of the railroad. In 1974, the house was listed on the National Register; at the time it was owned by the Cox family and used as a school house. Until recently, the property stood vacant and in poor condition with the pedimented porch intact, but barely supported. In 1974, the nominator described it as "one of the last remaining links between Morrilton and the parent community of old Lewisburg" Sadly, the house was demolished by its owner on April 25, illustrating the fragility of Arkansas's historic resources and making it "One to Remember."

UPDATE ON PREVIOUSLY LISTED PROPERTY

**Old Springfield Road/Cadron Creek Bridge, 1874
Cadron, Conway/Faulker Counties**



The Springfield Bridge was built in 1874 by the King Bridge Manufactory and Iron Works of Iola, Kansas. It was shipped disassembled, then erected on footings built by a local mason. The bridge was an essential link in an historic route connecting Des Arc on the White River with Springfield, the onetime seat of Conway County. The Springfield bridge is a good example of the now-rare bowstring truss design, as well as the oldest surviving highway bridge in the state. The road was relocated and the bridge bypassed in 1991. Since then, the bridge has been allowed to deteriorate; the stonework is failing and vandals set fire to the bridge timbers in 2013.

Update:

The City of Conway and Faulkner County were recently awarded a \$300,000 grant for the relocation and preservation of the bridge. The grant funding comes from the Department of Transportation, through the Metroplan Regional Planning organization. Applicants successfully used the bridge's designation as one of 2015's Endangered Eight as support for the project during the application process.



ABOUT US

Preserve Arkansas works to build stronger communities by reconnecting Arkansans to our heritage and empowering people to save and rehabilitate historic places.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Tuesdays in May – Hops and Hope

Open 4:00 – 9:00 pm

\$1 of each beer goes to Preserve Arkansas

Stone's Throw Brewing
4012 E 9th Street, Little Rock

July 22 – Preservation Libations Master Mix-off

Albert Pike Masonic Center
712 Scott Street, Little Rock