

1999 Most Endangered Historic Places

Treece House – Lost

The Treece House in Fayetteville was built circa 1876 by A.M. Byrnes who helped erect the University of Arkansas' Old Main Building. Left over lumber from the campus project was used to build this house and the one to the right of it for his two daughters.

All of the detailing was original, and although it probably needed some work, there was enough there and photos available to have restored it completely. The inside was much the same except that it was turned into two apartments. Mr. Treece lived on the left side. The Treece House was also important to Fayetteville, the state of Arkansas, and the United States for its connection to the Bonnie and Clyde robbery next door at the Brown's Grocery Store.

Woodman of Union Building (National Baptist Hotel) – Saved

The Woodman of Union Building in Hot Springs was erected in 1923 along the length of Malvern Avenue, between Gulpha and Garden Streets. On January 21, 1924, African American men from every region of Arkansas participated in the dedication of the Woodman of Union Building. Created by J.L. Webb, Supreme Custodian of the Woodman of Union, the unique building housed various activities of the fraternity. A 100 bed hospital and nurse training school, a 75-room bath hotel, the Woodman of Union Bank, a 2,500 seat auditorium, and electronically operated printing plant, and executive offices were all located within the building. In 1950, the building was purchased by the National Baptist Association, U.S.A. and became known as the National Baptist Hotel and Bath House. The NBA expanded the bath house and upgraded the bath facilities according to the regulations of the United States Department of Interior. The bath house was finished with an abundance of nickel-plated brass and marble. In 1971, the NBA purchased the land directly behind the hotel to use for a parking lot. As segregation ended and integration of public facilities became prevalent, usage of the National Baptist Hotel waned in the late seventies and finally, in 1981, the hotel closed and has remained closed to this date.

Old River Bridge – Saved

The Old River Bridge in Saline County is one of the oldest remaining bridges in the state. It was constructed in 1889 at the cost of \$5,000 and represents a great deal of the history of Saline County. In 1827, Ezra M. Owen established a small settlement west of the Saline River and named it Collegeville. Early in 1931, a post office was established at the "crossing of the Saline" with William Lockhart, the first recorded settler in Saline County, as postmaster. The settlement was officially named "Saline". The Old Missouri Trail became important as the connection between Collegeville and Little Rock and as a main road through the county. It was made a military road in 1824 and there were constant requests for Congress to appropriate funds to improve it. In the early 1830s, all that had been done to change the road from a barely passable trail was cutting of timber. The argument was made to Congress that it was the main artery of travel from St. Louis and Memphis southwest into Texas and Mexico, and therefore a national concern. In 1831, the Arkansas Legislature passed a law giving William Lockhart an exclusive right to construct and operate a toll bridge over the Saline River where the Military Road crossed it. In 1830, Charles Caldwell started a settlement five miles up the river. Benton, as it came to be known, began to grow and was named the county seat at the formation of Saline County in 1835. This expanded the importance of the Military Road but slowly led to the decline of the settlement in Lockhart's Saline.

Old Hotze House – Saved

Peter Hotze, an Austrian immigrant, built a home for himself in 1869 on what was little more than a country road complete with tree stumps. Known today as the “old” or “little” Hotze House to distinguish it from its more elaborate successor behind it, the house at 17th and Main in Little Rock was endangered for lack of a plan to put the building back into use for today’s needs. Moving to Little Rock in 1857, Peter Hotze entered the general merchandise business. During the Civil War, he served with the famous Confederate Capitol Guards until 1864 when he was wounded, captured, and sent to an Ohio prison camp for the remainder of the war. In 1862, Peter’s brother Conrad arrived in Little Rock and, following Peter’s instructions, dug up \$5,000 in gold to pay his brother’s Northern debts. In 1863, Conrad bought Block 166 on which the Hotze houses stand today. Returning to Little Rock after the war, Peter entered business with John Gould Fletcher. Soon they narrowed their general business interests to cotton, pursuing the lucrative New York market. Hotze’s early payment of Northern debts meant he was able to obtain unlimited credit in the North. In 1868, Peter married Johanna Krause, moving to New York City to supervise his cotton trade. He lived in New York for 27 years, but returned to Little Rock in 1900, where he died in 1909.

The symmetrical floor plan of the little Hotze House is similar to the Jeffersonian Classic style of Trapnall Hall, but the exterior is early Victorian with Italian Renaissance influence. At one time, the house was being used as a scout hut, but it has since had period of disuse and misuse, surely leading to its endangered status.

West Side Junior High School – Saved

West Side Junior High School at 1300 Marshall Street in Little Rock is an example of a fine structure left largely to the forces of nature and vandalism. The building was designed by Theo Sanders in 1917 and built in 2 phases. It is a three-story classical building that fills the entire block between 13th and 14th Streets and Marshall and Wolfe Streets. The entrance bay facing Marshall Street is defined by an entablature, pilasters and a pair of Tuscan columns flanking a set of double doors with transom.

Not only is this building important for its history and architecture, this school building and many like it across Arkansas contributes to the stability of its neighborhood when it is functioning in its intended role of public space and architecture. When left to decay, the structure cannot function in these ways and is a serious detraction from the neighborhood.

Union Depot – Saved

The Union Depot in Brinkley was built in 1912 and is a symbol of Brinkley’s origins as a railroad town and a symbol of the continuing importance of transportation in this agriculture-based community. Since 2003, the Delta Historical Society has restored and occupied this building, using it to display Brinkley’s important historical memorabilia.

Louis Jordan Boyhood Home – Lost

The height of Louis Jordan’s career was in the 1940s, when his music was a favorite of G.I.s. Jordan had 55 top ten hits, and number one hits on three different Billboard charts. Many consider Jordan the “Father of R&B” and the “Godfather of Rock&Roll”. He was held in the highest esteem by Ray Charles, Dizzy Gillespie, James Brown, Muddy Waters, B.B. King, and others who followed. As of today, the house is structurally unsound and options are being looked at, the most likely is that the house will be moved to the site of the Marion Anderson High School.

Stephen H. Chism House – Restoration Underway

This two story log house was built by Dr. Stephen Chism in 1845. Dr. Chism married Jeanetta Logan, daughter of James Logan, for whom Logan County was named. Mrs. Chism and 2 children died before the Civil War and are buried nearby the home. The Chism family occupied the house until the time of the Civil War when Dr. Chism moved to Roseville. Ben Chism, son of Dr. Chism, served as Secretary of State for the state of Arkansas in the post-Civil War period. Throughout the years, the house was occupied by various families; however, the house has not been occupied for perhaps 50 years. The house is perhaps the oldest structure in Logan County and is a wonderful example of pioneer architecture. The structure of the house remains much the same as when originally built. The floor is stone. Throughout the years, minor alterations have been made. The house was originally a dogtrot style. At some point, the dogtrot was enclosed by wooden planking.

Fielder House – Saved

The Fielder House in Fordyce is the only remaining dwelling from the pre-railroad period or from before the founding of Fordyce, the county seat. Mr. Elon Hawkins Fielder built the house around 1875 and lived in it until 1888. Mr. Fielder moved that it is the only documented structure built in the decade of 1870. Reflecting traditional evolutionary patterns in Arkansas, the house, initially constructed as a long one-pen structure eventually became a dogtrot. The Pollard family constructed the structure into today's central hall house in about 1910. After this date, the house became associated with the successful early 20th century popular novelist, Harold Bell Wright. In the winter of 1915-1916, Wright visited his father who was then living in the house with his father's sister, Mrs. Pollard. Local interviews revealed that Wright wrote all or part of his widely acclaimed novel Trail of the Lonesome Pine during this stay. The novel, later adapted for the screen, became the first outdoor Technicolor feature film. The entire site was at one time a farm. Trees are those that are planted by some of the original inhabitants. Two rose bushes and a pear tree, brought with the Fielders and planted when they built the log cabin, continue to bloom. Two oak trees which they planted are alive and well. The current owners of the building are direct descendants of the original settlers. They have restored the house and are currently living in it.

Russey-Murray House – Still In Danger

The Russey-Murray House in Nashville was built circa 1861-1862 and is known as the first brick house built west of the Mississippi and south of St. Louis, Missouri. It is in its original location and at one time had a wood kitchen and summer kitchen adjoining the house though they have long since been torn down. It had a very wide hall that was enclosed and made into two rooms years ago.