

2004 List of Most Endangered Places

Arkansas's Bluff Shelter Archeological Sites – Still In Danger

Numbering more than 1,000 and located throughout the Ozarks in Northwest Arkansas, the bluff shelters were used over thousands of years for habitation, storage, ritual, and burial. As a result, the shelters contain artifacts and discarded debris representing a very wide range of prehistoric and historic Native peoples, as well as white American settlers. In nominating the bluff shelters to the *Most Endangered* list, Dr. Ann Early, Arkansas State Archeologist, said this about them:

When they are left undisturbed for careful study, bluff shelters harbor a record of human and environmental history that can rarely be matched in quality anywhere in the world. This record can be used to explore questions and issues of local and regional history, but it can also contribute to investigations that are national and international in scale and interest.

In other words, the bluff shelters are resources that are of importance not only to Arkansas but also to the nation and the world. The major threats to the survival of the bluff shelters are looting and vandalism. Trading in antiquities is a highly lucrative endeavor. In fact, at the global level, the illegal trade in antiquities is third only to drugs and armaments in scale and value. Some of Arkansas's bluff shelters already have been extensively defaced by digging groups searching for marketable relics. Presently, no program exists at the federal or state agency level in Arkansas to find and inventory the bluff shelter sites or to develop a plan to protect these fragile resources. Such a program is needed to prevent the loss of Arkansas's Bluff Shelter Archeological Sites. The Alliance hopes that the *Most Endangered* listing will draw attention to this critical need.

Horn-Carpenter-Pinkston House – Saved

Thought to be the oldest remaining residence in Cave City, the Horn-Carpenter-Pinkston House has been owned by only two families: the Horns, who built the original log section of the house in 1886, and the Carpenter-Pinkston family, who purchased the house in the early 20th century. Three generations of the Carpenter-Pinkston family have called it home. The four Pinkston grandchildren who own it are unable to do the work and want to sell the house— but only to someone who will love it as their family has. “This old house is a landmark for the people of Sharp County”, says the nomination to the *Most Endangered* list that was prepared by Pinkston family members. “It would please us greatly if it could remain a monument to this town and to our family, friends, and neighbors.”

The home was sold to a family who have made restorative changes and are living there now.

Burdette School Complex Historic District – Still In Danger

When the Burdette School Complex Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2001, it contained five historic buildings. Now, two of those buildings are gone, leaving a 1922 Prairie-style classroom building; a 1939 WPA-built English Revival-style classroom building; and a 1940s Quonset-style gymnasium, all situated on a 20-acre site. After the Burdette School closed in 2001, it was purchased by the City of Burdette, ostensibly to save it. However, preservation efforts have been stymied by the city's unwillingness to enter into a conservation easement, which is a condition for the receipt of preservation grant monies from the state. Consequently, \$30,000 that would have been available to stabilize the historic school

buildings has gone unused (\$20,000 grant from the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program plus a \$10,000 match raised privately by the nonprofit Friends of the Burdette School).

In addition, efforts to find suitable tenants for the buildings so far have been unsuccessful, in part because of the building's condition. The *Most Endangered* listing is intended to encourage the City of Burdette to work with local residents who want to see the remaining buildings in the Burdette School Complex Historic District returned to productive use.

Goddard Hotel – Lost

Since the early 20th century, the Goddard Hotel had anchored the southern end of Hot Springs' downtown commercial district. The hotel was situated in a prominent location, just where Ouachita Avenue splits off of Central Avenue, the main thoroughfare through the city. In that location, the hotel was an imposing presence; its three stories enclosed 54,000 square feet of space. A red-brick building, the hotel was architecturally distinguished by a neoclassical pediment that faces Central Avenue. Despite its prominent location and imposing scale, the Goddard Hotel eventually fell into disrepair and had been vacant for more than two decades. Rehabilitation plans announced in the late 1990s did not materialize, and the building's condition had steadily deteriorated. One wing now had been opened to the elements following the collapse of a section of roof.

The hotel was demolished in 2006.

Fraternal Cemetery – Still In Danger

Located at 21st and Barber Streets in Little Rock, on land that was purchased by the City in 1863, Fraternal Cemetery was created in the late 1880s at the request of several black fraternal organizations, including the Knights of Tabor and the Mosaic Templars— hence, the name “Fraternal Cemetery.”

Much as Mount Holly Cemetery became the final resting place of distinguished white residents of Little Rock, Fraternal Cemetery saw the burials of distinguished members of the black community that had grown and prospered in Little Rock following the Civil War. Visiting Fraternal Cemetery today is to encounter a veritable “Who’s Who” of that community. The Ishes, renowned educators; John Bush and Chester Keatts, co-founders of the Mosaic Templars of America; Dr. J. M. Robinson; attorney Mifflin W. Gibbs— these are just a few of the prominent African-Americans who are laid to rest in Fraternal Cemetery. In addition to its important historical associations, Fraternal Cemetery is significant for its funereal statuary— again, much like Mount Holly.

Unlike Mount Holly, however, Fraternal Cemetery has received little public attention. As the city sold off portions of the original 14-acre site, the cemetery became “wedged in” between Booker Elementary School, Mann Middle School, and a strip shopping center. A storage lot for school buses borders the cemetery's northern edge. Unfortunately, these surroundings make Fraternal Cemetery an easy target for vandals.

Finding ways to raise awareness of the cemetery's significance, along with methods to prevent vandalism and restore damaged headstones, are the goals of the *Most Endangered* listing.