Historic Preservation
Alliance of Arkansas

announces the
2007 List of

Arkansas’s Most
Endangered
Historic Places
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, 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 the Bluff Shelter Archaeological Sites in Northwest Arkansas, the Goddard Hotel in Hot Springs, the Johnny Cash Boyhood Home in Dyess, Centennial Baptist Church in Helena, 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 statewide 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
2007 List

Woodruff House
Little Rock

Mountaineer Apartments
Hot Springs

Salem Community School
Fayetteville

Pitman’s Ferry
Randolph County

Berger-Graham House
Jonesboro

Dunbar Historic Neighborhood
Little Rock

Carlson Terrace
Fayetteville

Campbell Cemetery
Randolph County

Forest Fire Lookouts
Statewide
The Woodruff House, located at 1017 East Eighth Street in Little Rock, was built in 1853 by William Woodruff, one of Arkansas’s most influential early citizens. The New York native arrived in the Arkansas Territory in 1819 with a modest collection of printing supplies and soon began publishing the *Arkansas Gazette* from Arkansas Post. When Little Rock became the capital, Woodruff moved his operation to Little Rock and published his first *Arkansas Gazette* from Little Rock in December of 1821. Woodruff’s interests extended beyond the press, he founded the first library in Arkansas in 1826, was the first Vice President of the Arkansas Historical Society, and served the city of Little Rock as treasurer and councilman, and as state treasurer.

Woodruff constructed his home in 1853 on a twenty-five acre lot overlooking the Arkansas River. Originally designed in the Greek Revival style, the house was altered through the years to adopt Classical and Colonial Revival styles as they came into vogue. Perhaps the biggest change came between 1890 and 1900 when the front of the house was changed to the rear to comply with new city zoning codes. The Woodruffs had moved out of the house by the 1920s and it became a boarding house and then later apartments.

In recent years, the Woodruff House had steadily declined while being used as apartments. Extensive alterations to the interior were made to accommodate this use. Several years ago, the house suffered a fire which rendered a barely habitable structure uninhabitable. The Woodruff House has been vacant ever since. With the redevelopment of the area near the Presidential Library comes increasing development pressure. The house has been on the market for several years, but has come under increased pressure for commercial development. Marshall Peters, the listing agent for the house, is actively showing the house in hopes of securing its future. “Ideally, we would like to see the Woodruff House restored and returned to use as a single or multi-family residence or a bed and breakfast operation”, Peters said.

The Woodruff House is undoubtedly one of Little Rock’s most significant early homes and holds significance for Arkansas’s early development and history and the formation of the *Arkansas Gazette*, the forerunner of the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*. 
The Mountainaire Apartments were built around 1947 along Park Avenue in Hot Springs. Originally constructed as a hotel, it catered to the booming tourism draw of Hot Springs and its place along the road to Dallas from the east. These two nearly identical towers are the finest example of Art Moderne architecture in Hot Springs and perhaps the region. The steel casement windows at the corners and vertical massing make this style one of the more unique early twentieth century styles. The Mountainaire builder, A.I. Albinson relocated to Hot Springs from Minnesota to take advantage of the booming tourist industry in the area. Mr. Albinson operated the Mountainaire as a hotel for 20 years before converting them into apartments and later a nursing home.

The Mountainaire buildings have been vacant since the mid-1990s. Most of the interior was stripped out for an impending restoration project which never materialized. While the structures have remained vacant, the roof has slowly deteriorated to the point of water infiltration damaging the interior.

The Mountainaire is an unique structure that reflects the early twentieth century history of Hot Springs and the development of an automobile tourism culture. To lose such a building to the elements would surely be a loss for Hot Springs and Arkansas.
The Salem Community School was constructed in 1916 in the community of Salem just outside Fayetteville on land deeded to the community by Joye Lichlyter. The school housed elementary classes until 1949 when it was consolidated into the Fayetteville Public School System. The original deed stated that if the property was no longer used for a school, then ownership would go to the community. Residents of Salem have been working to raise money to save the school for a number of years.

Due to its vacancy and confusing ownership issues, the Salem Community School has not been maintained over the years. The school needs a new roof to prevent water intrusion, currently being held in check by a donated plastic sheet. Save the Salem Community Building is a nonprofit organization formed to help raise funds to save the school and apply for grants to restore the one-room school. Christine Bell of Save the Salem Community Building says “There are not many of the old school buildings remaining and the Salem School is one of the few left in Washington County. We envision using it as a historical reminder of the early school days.. a museum and a place that elementary classes can visit.”
Pitman’s Ferry, also known as the Baymiller Farm, is a 731 acre site in Randolph County along the west bank of the Current River. Pitman’s Ferry holds a very high significance in early Arkansas history and during the Civil War. Pitman’s Ferry is the site of the first river ferry in Arkansas, along the Southwest trail from Missouri into the Arkansas Territory. In 1803, William Hix opened the ferry which became known as the Gateway into Arkansas, an important landmark for early pioneers striking into Arkansas. It was also a site along the Benge Route of the Cherokee Trail of Tears into Arkansas. During the Civil War, the site was the headquarters of the Army of Upper Arkansas and the site of four Civil War skirmishes in 1862. It was also the launching point of Major General Sterling Price’s 1864 raid into Missouri.

Today, Pitman’s Ferry holds significance as an archaeological site. Numerous trenches, rifle pits, and cannon emplacements remain from the Civil War period. Five Rivers Preservation, Inc. was formed in 2005 for the Pocahontas Sesquicentennial Celebration and has focused on Pitman’s Ferry as one of the preeminent historic sites in Randolph County worthy of preserving. The site is currently leased out for row crop farming purposes, a use that could potentially disturb important archaeological sites from the Trail of Tears and Civil War eras. Additionally, the Ferry site and Indian Ford, the site of the Trail of Tears crossing, are under threat from riverbank development along this recreational river.

It is the hope of Five Rivers Preservation, Inc. that this site will be recognized by the state and the property owners as a significant piece of Arkansas’s history. Eventually, it would be preferable that the site be protected by a state or federal battlefield status.
The Berger-Graham House in Jonesboro was built in 1904 and is an excellent example of Richardsonian Romanesque architecture, a style rarely used in residential homes or in Arkansas. The house was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1985. Marcus Berger built the house for his son and future daughter-in-law, Joseph Berger and Essie Blass. Marcus Berger was a prominent Jewish merchant in northeast Arkansas and built many of the commercial buildings in Jonesboro’s downtown in the 1880s. W.H. Graham purchased the house in 1909 and lived there until his death in 1939. Since then, it has been used as a boarding house, a clinic, and a fraternity house. In 1983 it was purchased by Larry Hampton with plans to restore it to a residential home.

Despite efforts to restore the house, Mr. Hampton has been unexpectedly confronted with the condemnation of the property. The house was grouped with three other houses in worse shape and placed on the agenda of the city council. Mr. Hampton requested the properties be reviewed individually, but the council decided to condemn all as one group. In March, Mr. Hampton was given six months to complete the restoration, less time than would be needed to complete restoration or even bring the house up to code.

The Berger-Graham House is a unique residential home for northeast Arkansas and should be preserved.
Dunbar Historic Neighborhood is situated between two of Little Rock’s more prominent historic districts, the Governor’s Mansion and Central High districts. The district is primarily composed of single family residential homes, with several commercial properties, churches and community buildings. The neighborhood has been the home to many of Little Rock’s significant black community leaders since the Civil War and was home to six of the “Little Rock Nine”.

Many of the original houses in Dunbar were razed in 1952 and 1954 under the Housing Act of 1949. Today, many of these sites remain as vacant weed lots. In 1997, eight properties in the neighborhood were listed on the National Register and in 2003 the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program determined that a section of the neighborhood was eligible for listing on the National Register. The lack of redevelopment in the area has contributed to some historic homes being lost due to deferred maintenance and neglect.

Dunbar Neighborhood is a significant part of Little Rock’s 19th and early 20th century development. It also represents other historic neighborhoods around the state where disinvestment and mid-20th Century redevelopment programs has led to a loss of historic homes.
Carlson Terrace on the University of Arkansas campus in Fayetteville is one of only three buildings designed by Edward Durell Stone on the campus. Stone was an internationally known architect and a leader of the Modern movement in architecture. Carlson Terrace was built in three phases beginning in 1957. The 300 unit Carlson Terrace complex embodies the aesthetic and economic values of the decade that Euro-modernism swept onto the American scene. Grouped in sets of long, low blocks organized around generously planned courtyards, Carlson Terrace was designed to provide optimal dwelling function in minimal space. For Arkansas GI bill students, Carlson Terrace offered fashionable and functional dwellings where, according to residents, a true sense of community blossomed.

Unfortunately, in the last thirty years, Carlson Terrace has slowly deteriorated into an undesirable housing location. In June 2005, The University Board of Trustees unanimously voted to remove five of Carlson Terrace’s buildings and sanctioned the demolition of the entire complex. The University of Arkansas has only two examples of world class modern architecture both designed by Stone, and Carlson Terrace is one of them. The Board of Trustees has approved demolition of all remaining 15 units of Carlson Terrace, scheduled for the end of May 2007. Despite the demolition plans, Carlson Terrace remains a significant structure architecturally and culturally. The buildings could be adapted to another use beyond student housing and remain a vital part of the campus community.
Campbell Cemetery, located in Randolph County, is part of an area historically known as “The Point”. The Point was the site of the first court for the original Lawrence County held in 1815. Campbell Cemetery dates to the early 1800s and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The cemetery is unique due to its raised limestone graves. It is also named for James Campbell, the first county judge and sheriff of Lawrence County. The limestone blocks that were used for the above ground graves were mined locally at a mine operated by slave labor until the Civil War.

Campbell Cemetery is located in a pasture but has no protection from wandering cattle. Additionally, the graves and markers have experienced damage through the years and are in serious need of restoration work. Adequate fencing and restoration work would help to preserve this significant site for future generations of Randolph County residents.
In the 1920s and 1930s, the Civilian Conservation Corps built numerous fire lookout towers all over the state to guard against the ravages of rampant wildfires. Of the more than 120 documented fire lookouts in Arkansas, only about 40 remain standing. Since visual spotting of fires from ground level went out of use with the advent of modern fire detection techniques, many of these towers have not been maintained at all in the last fifty years. Most only remain standing because they provide an efficient means of locating modern telecommunication equipment. The majority of these towers are steel structures with metal lookout cabs, particularly susceptible to rust and deterioration. Two exceptions are the Bee Mountain and Tall Peak Lookouts in the Ouachita National Forest. These two have short stone bases with wooden cabs built in a style more often found in western states. Because of their distinctive form and construction, these two are particularly significant. The remote locations of many of these towers make them especially susceptible to vandalism.

The Arkansas Forest Fire Lookout Association was formed to document and preserve these important structures that are significant for their association with forest management history and Depression-era work programs in Arkansas. These lookout towers are located in state and national forests and on private property, which makes saving them collectively especially difficult. By working with various state and federal forest agencies and educating owners of these historic towers about their significance, the Association hopes to preserve these important pieces of Arkansas history.
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