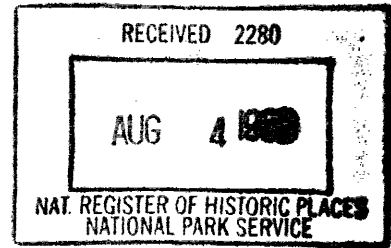


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Cover



**National Register of Historic Places
Multiple Property Documentation Form**

This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Type all entries.

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Arkansas Highway History and Architecture, 1910-1965

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Arkansas Highway and Transportation Era Architecture, 1910-1965

C. Geographical Data

State of Arkansas

See continuation sheet

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.

Cathryn H. Slater

July 20, 1999

Signature of certifying official

Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

State or Federal agency and bureau

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Edson W. Beall
for

9/3/99

Signature of the Keeper of the National Register

Date

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ARKANSAS HIGHWAY HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURE, 1910-1965

Travelers through Arkansas will find no markers designating the once famous Dollarway Road. In its early days, “sporting motorists drove long distances over primitive dirt and gravel roads or shipped their autos on flatcars to Pine Bluff for the thrill of spending a day or two traveling back and forth over 24 miles of bump, rut, and pothole-free “super-road” at speeds up to 45 miles per hour.” Farmers along the new road complained that the roaring automobiles were harmful to their livestock.¹ The taxes however, may have been what they most disliked about their new road.²

In Arkansas as in other parts of the nation growing numbers of autos brought many challenges. The first problem was constructing an efficient road surface for auto use. Time would tell which materials and techniques built the best roads. Once the infrastructure was in place, roadside entrepreneurs vied for the attention of passing motorists, demonstrating their ingenuity by utilizing innovative designs. Soon the automobile, and the structures associated with it, became ingrained in the American landscape and way of life. Auto travel had become a defining element in American culture.

I. National Car-Culture History**A. The Victorian Era Locomotive vs. The Democratizing Automobile**

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When automobiles appeared in the United States between 1910 and 1920, Americans were abandoning the ideas defining Victorian-era leisure activities in favor of more daring, physically challenging activities. Favoring outdoor settings and Thoreau-inspired activities, they chose autocamping or “gypsying” instead of the resort destinations fashionable during the Victorian era. Gypsying was an expression of the emerging leisure ethic characterized by an unhurried, unstructured lifestyle. Touring literature nurtured the belief that, “Man was naturally migratory, yet modern life made him stay in one place.”³ The auto fostered family togetherness, instead of the gender-based separateness that characterized Victorian spas. While still a rebellion against Victorian conventionality, the traditional, paternalistic values of gypsying appealed to the middle class that feared moral decay and family disintegration.⁴

Car travel allowed tourists to experience the American landscape on a personal level, unlike the train where scenery passed the window like a movie on a screen. The

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car traveler developed an intimacy with the American countryside. During the See America First movement of the early twentieth century travel writers emphasized the uniqueness of the American countryside. Especially after 1914, when Americans were cut off from Europe, auto travelers sought picturesque historic sites. This led to renovations of existing historic sites and inspired architects of the late 1920s to design gas stations to look like Tudor cottages or colonial Spanish missions.⁵

Burgeoning nationalism and nostalgia for colonial American sites coincided with Theodore Roosevelt's call for Americans to revive the strenuous life of earlier times.⁶ Forsaking the luxury and relative comfort of the train car, autocampers braved mud, bridge washouts, and breakdowns. For these tourists the experience of traveling was as important as reaching their destination. Camping at roadside parks or in rural fields, families shared in the work of preparing meals and auto maintenance. This allowed families an opportunity unknown in the segregated entertainment and exercise regimes of Victorian spas.

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Gypsying also allowed people to meet others from diverse locations and backgrounds. Travel accounts illustrate the belief that the road was the real democratic America. All classes traveled the same muddy roads, and all were expected to lend a hand to overcome diverse road conditions. Travelers meeting on the roads, “acted as like-minded engineers who could help each other.”⁷ Autocampers downplayed class distinctions by wearing common comfortable clothes. Talk of wealthy privileges, such as servants, was shunned. Nicknames were adopted in the camps and anonymity became the rule.

In the years following World War I Americans stressed democratic principles, and the automobile seemed to embody these ideals.⁸ The auto offered an individual mode of travel free from rigid dress codes and itineraries, unlike its precursor, the railroad locomotive. Class distinctions seemed to fall away as auto travelers braved less than adequate roads, bonding together to overcome obstacles and camping in common areas

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along the roadside. Unlike trains, cars were the property of the traveler. Whether or not tourists reached their destinations depended upon their ability to coax their automobile over unpredictable road conditions. As a result, many owners developed a personal attachment to their automobile. Simply stated, Americans loved their cars. They were eager to exploit opportunities that allowed them to spend time in their autos.

II. Arkansas Highway History

Because early automobile enthusiasts encountered numerous road hazards, improving existing roads became a priority throughout the United States. In Arkansas the first roads were largely converted from Native American trails. Prior to statehood in 1836, the federal government funded and constructed these roads using military manpower.⁹ Soon after statehood the federal government built and maintained post roads under the jurisdiction of the United States Postal Service and Agriculture Department. They provided for communication and commerce where steamboats could not reach. These roads provided relatively rapid mail and passenger service by stagecoach before

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the 1850s when railroads became the predominant means of overland travel. The horse and buggy remained the mode of transportation for most individuals, however.¹⁰

During the 1870s a new form of transportation gained popularity in urban areas. The bicycle provided relatively maintenance free, cost efficient, individual transportation. Poor road conditions quickly became an issue for bicyclists who struggled over ruts, potholes, and became mired in mud. In fact, bicyclists were the first to form good roads committees to address the issue of funding and constructing adequate roads for their own use as well as for use by horse-drawn buggies. In the 1890s a Little Rock cyclist group, and the Arkansas Gazette newspaper that championed their cause, persuaded Governor James P. Clarke to host a Good Roads Convention in Little Rock. In 1896 the Good Roads League of the State of Arkansas was founded. The next obstacles to overcome were finding additional popular support, and more importantly, adequate funding to construct better roads. Until this point the only state legislation concerning highway maintenance required healthy men between 21 and 45 years of age to contribute five days

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per year of road work or the monetary equivalent. One year after Arkansas's Good Roads League was founded an act was adopted that authorized counties to appoint an overseer for these work groups with a team of animals and the basic tools to maintain roads. Good road advocates criticized this act because it did so little to improve the general road conditions in Arkansas. The act of 1899 was only a slight improvement mandating that county overseers mark intersections and direct the work of prison crews.¹¹

Meanwhile, the good roads movement was making progress on the national front. In 1900 the National Good Roads Association was formed. Auto enthusiasts had joined the movement and, by 1910 auto owners would control this association. Along with the American Auto Association, formed in 1902, the Good Roads Association formed the driving force of the movement for better roads on a national scale.¹²

After the second Good Roads Convention in Little Rock, Arkansans agreed on the value of good roads, but the question of who would meet the financial burden remained unanswered. The issue was first addressed by the Arkansas Legislature in 1907 when an

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act allowed the formation of local road improvement districts.¹³ The practice of using local districts with poor centralized supervision and planning would only worsen Arkansas's situation, however. In 1911, Arkansas legislation imposed a registration fee on autos in the state. And, the need for good roads was increasing with Arkansas's registered autos tripling in the two years between 1914 and 1916.¹⁴

A. The Dollarway Road and Local Road Improvement Districts

Rural Arkansas's rough terrain had always proven challenging to travelers. The coming of the car to this rural state only helped to illustrate the poor quality of Arkansas's roads. The first roads built to accommodate auto traffic were themselves experiments in road construction.

To help meet the needs of multiplying auto travelers throughout the state, road improvement districts were formed and charged with the daunting task of creating good roads. The Jefferson County Road Improvement District No. 4 constructed the Dollarway Road in 1913-1914. In its early years, the approximately 23-mile long stretch

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of concrete had the distinction of being the longest continuous length of concrete pavement in the nation.¹⁵

The Dollarway Road was so named because construction costs approximated one dollar per square yard or per lineal foot of its nine-foot wide pavement.¹⁶ It was the first use in Arkansas of reinforced concrete for road and bridge construction. A very thin bituminous seal coat was applied to the concrete surface, marking its first use in the South.¹⁷

The original design for the Dollarway Road called for nine feet of five-inch concrete consisting of a 1-2 1/2-5 mixture. The edges of the concrete were constructed on a forty-five degree slope, giving a top width of 8 1/2 feet and bottom width of 9 1/2 feet. Eighteen inches of gravel and three feet of graded dirt were added on each side constructing a total roadbed eighteen feet wide. The gravel shoulder enabled drivers to pass when they met another on the narrow roadway.¹⁸ Two one-half-yard capacity stationary concrete mixers were the only pieces of machinery used on the job. Extending

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northwest from Pine Bluff to the Pulaski County Line, “the Dollar Way” connected with the Pulaski County section of the old Pine Bluff and Little Rock wagon road.¹⁹

Isaac Prather Shelby, the engineer who designed and constructed the Dollarway Road, was distressed by the poor horizontal alignment of the finished road in many places. He urged the District Commissioners to permit him to correct the worst situations, such as right angle turns, even at his own expense. He was prohibited because state legislation specified that new pavement be laid only “on the road as now laid out.”²⁰

Although modern U.S. Highways 65 and State Highway 365 cover most of the original Dollarway Road, sections are still visible today. A roadside park featuring a short section of the original road was located south of Redfield, Arkansas on Highway 365 (NR listing, 5/17/74.) Although the park closed some years ago, visitors can still see the path of the road winding through the remaining trees. Jefferson County residents living near the park-site use another section of the remaining road to access their property. Further South on Highway 365 is the best remaining section of the Dollarway

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Road still in public use (NR listing pending.) A 1.6 mile-long stretch of the original roadbed can be seen peaking through the potholes of a dirt-covered local route. Now named Reynolds Road, this section also features two original reinforced concrete bridges.

When Arkansas Governor Charles Hillman Brough was elected in 1917, the good roads movement found a local champion. Governor Brough believed that adequate roads would lead to agricultural and commercial advancements in the state. He supported appropriations of state funds to create a comprehensive highway system. However, progress during his terms was hindered by the use of local road improvement districts.²¹

The road improvement districts had little centralized supervision and no unified plan to create roads. A patchwork of good and bad sections of road throughout the state, resulted.²² Fraud and burdensome local property taxes were also consequences of this inefficient system. In 1921, the scandal resulting from local road improvement districts' corruption attracted national attention. The issue was debated in the United States

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Congress, who issued a mandate that federal funds be withheld from states without a centralized means of supervising and planning road construction.²³

When Governor Thomas Chipman McRae was inaugurated in 1921 he called for a reorganization of the state highway department. He objected to the corrupt practice of using road improvement districts and levying taxes against local property owners. He argued that those using the state road system should pay for construction and maintenance.²⁴ McRae invited federal officials to assess the state road situation and submit a report to the Arkansas General Assembly. Despite all his efforts, Governor McRae was powerless to do away with the root of the Arkansas road problem –the local improvement districts. The state legislature refused to centralize administration of road improvements, even when facing the loss of federal money after 1921. McRae was able to persuade the legislature to levy gasoline taxes to be shared between state and county road funds, replacing local property taxes for road maintenance. Meanwhile, by 1923 the over 300 road improvement districts had amassed a \$62 million debt and were threatened with bankruptcy. Federal officials responded to the state legislature’s inaction by

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withdrawing financial support. Governor McRae convened a special session of the General Assembly in September 1923 and demanded that legislation be passed to correct the problem. The result was the Harrelson Road Law, which increased gas taxes and granted supervisory status to the state highway department. Finally McRae had succeeded in reforming road construction policy as well as placing the burden of taxation on road users.²⁵

Now Arkansas was prepared to participate in the construction of a unified network of highways. In 1925 the American Association of State Highway Officials and the United States Bureau of Public Roads formulated a plan for a national highway system with route numbers to identify interstate highways as they pass through numerous states.²⁶

The devastating flood of April 1927 damaged or destroyed most of Arkansas's roads and bridges. Governor John E. Martineau responded to the road crisis by proposing that the state should assume the remaining debt of the road improvement districts and

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issue highway bonds for maintenance and construction. He supported user-related taxes, such as auto registration fees and gasoline and oil levies, rather than taxing property owners.²⁷ These suggestions were ratified by the Arkansas General Assembly in 1927 and were known collectively as the Martineau Road Plan. The State Road Patrol was organized in 1929 to enforce speed limits and other highway laws necessitated by growing numbers of motorists.²⁸

B. Depression Era to Interstate Boom

During the Depression revenue from gasoline taxes and auto registration fees declined sharply. The great lingering debt inherited from the road districts coupled with declining revenue from highway users' taxes placed the Highway Department in financial jeopardy.²⁹ In 1933 the Arkansas legislature passed an act reducing licensing fees in an attempt to promote auto travel. Ironically, this may have encouraged the Depression-era flight of "Arkies" from the state to California to work as agricultural laborers. Later

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legislative acts during the Depression era shifted the focus to maintenance of existing highways, rather than new construction.³⁰

The greatest road construction movement in America resulted from the Second World War. In 1941 President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared a state of emergency in response to the escalating European conflict. Congress passed the Defense Highway Act, which called for the construction of a network of highways important to the national defense. Construction materials and manpower were for use only on these highways and access roads. Responding to the President's call to conserve gasoline and rubber, the Arkansas legislature reduced speed limits throughout the state.³¹

When Sidney Sanders McMath entered the Governor's office in 1949 the Arkansas highway system was arguably at its worst. During the Depression the state was forced to default on highway bonds so there was little money for road maintenance. The wartime prohibition on construction and maintenance on non-defense highways worsened this situation. McMath proposed that general-obligation bonds be issued for the purpose of construction and maintenance of state highways and bridges. State voters later

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approved the issue. The bonds resulted in unprecedented construction and modernization, including the state's first paved road surfaces. Despite his administration's achievements, McMath's Highway Department was accused of inefficient and wasteful practices. A highway audit commission found that contractors and vendors of road equipment had made political contributions to the governor.³² These findings coupled with the inefficient and unpopular practice of allowing incoming governors to appoint patrons to Highway Department positions, eventually resulted in the passing of the Mack-Blackwell Act of 1952. This act reformed the State Highway Commission and established a self-governing State Highway Department.³³

In 1956 the Federal Aid Act established the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways. This act charged the federal government with the responsibility of funding ninety percent of the cost of Interstate construction, the remaining ten percent being charged to the states. Alfred E. Johnson, chief engineer of the Arkansas Highway Department, is considered one of the major architects of the nation's Interstate Highway

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System. Concrete was the chosen material to construct “the world’s most ambitious network of roads.”³⁴ In Arkansas construction actually began on the first sections of Interstate in 1952. The five original Interstate highways running across Arkansas are Interstate 30, running from the Texas state line north of Texarkana to Little Rock; Interstate 40, running from the Oklahoma state line north of Fort Smith through Little Rock to the Tennessee state line at Memphis; Interstate 55, running from another point on the Tennessee state line at Memphis north via West Memphis to the Missouri state line northeast of Blytheville; Interstate 540, a connection to Fort Smith; and Interstate 430, a loop to the west of Little Rock that included a new fourth bridge across the Arkansas River.³⁵

Through the mid-1960s construction on Arkansas Interstate Highway system was progressing according to schedule. In 1962 Arkansas was leading the nation in Interstate construction according to the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads. The Arkansas Legislature was mindful of secondary roads as well, passing an act in 1961 mandating the Highway

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Department to spend one-hundred-thousand dollars in each county on unpaved Federal Aid roads during that calendar year.³⁶

III. Types of Roadside Architecture

Since the end of the 1920s, automobiles and highways are embedded in the American landscape and define American culture. According to Karl Raitz, author of the National Road, “the way people live, and the way they arrange their lives, is hugely determined by the way they travel.”³⁷ The growing infrastructure allowed Americans to expand across the landscape bringing about the disintegration of the compact cities that characterized the railroad-dominated Victorian age.³⁸ “Galactic cities” emerged, characterized by residential and commercial or industrial sections separated by sprawling undeveloped space.³⁹ Vast highway infrastructure, and the resulting commercial development along its length, truly transformed the American landscape.

In order to attract the attention of quickly passing auto travelers, American entrepreneurs first utilized signs and then conspicuous architectural designs. Downtown

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businesses blanketed traditional commercial buildings with advertisements in an attempt to capture traveling trade. By the beginning of the twentieth century, balancing the need to sell with the need to put forth an attractive and appropriate commercial structure was problematic. Main Street became “the site of a full-scale visual tug-of-war between traditional building styles and bold commercial signs.”⁴⁰

Highway expansion and urban sprawl opened a new frontier for commercial development outside the city limits. Inventive business owners soon learned the advantages of locating outside the traditional, center-city commercial district. Free from zoning regulations, merchants were limited only by their imaginations when designing and constructing their roadside businesses. They used flashing lights, bold shapes, heights, and colors to attract the eyes of motorists.

Local entrepreneurs were quick to cater to the new market produced by highway traffic once the infrastructure was in place. Development along Arkansas’s highways mirrored that of other parts of the nation with the appearance of gas stations, tourist

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courts, auto dealerships, drive-ins and other roadside attractions. Spanning decades, the architecture along Arkansas's highways represents varied construction trends and cultural interests. Some of the buildings were designed in popular national styles to draw travelers to their attractive facades, while others utilized vernacular building traditions. Some of both types of historic roadside construction have survived in Arkansas to the present.

Hoping to tap into popular sentiment, designers used imagery embedded in the public's subconscious. Images of domesticity were popular after World War I. In response to the excesses of the flappers and other full-scale rebellions against Victorianism, post-war Americans hoped for a return to normalcy.⁴¹ Roadside vendors easily converted small homes into shops and fueling stations. Often the traditional touches were exaggerated (oversized roofs, nonfunctional dormers, shutters, and chimneys) to draw attention to the structure.⁴² Bizarre images were used to surprise and intrigue drivers. Colossal cement animals and food images advertised the products

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available to passing motorists who, in turn, spread word of the roadside attraction across the continent. Regional and historic associations were also incorporated into roadside designs. Regional stereotypes tempted travelers to stop for souvenirs and pictures.

Reflecting the technological excitement of the late 1920s and early 1930s, the Moderne architectural style was popular for gas stations and roadside diners. Moderne architecture used machines as inspiration and produced a kinetic feeling within the structure.⁴³ During the 1950s the smooth shapes of Streamline Moderne and Art Deco were replaced by the energetic designs of Exaggerated Modern architecture. Owners of coffee shops, gas stations, and motels along the commercial strip hired architects to design flamboyant structures with sloping rooflines and angular signs. Designs inspired by the natural environment were popular during the early 1960s as Americans awareness of environmental issues increased. Roadside design during this era intended to blend into the landscape, rather than attract attention. Quieter styles featuring mansard roofs replaced the bold angular shapes of the earlier decade. These ornamental mansards

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softened the appearance of roadside structures and effectively hid the unattractive collection of vents and machinery housed on the roofs of most restaurants.⁴⁴

A. Autocamps to Motels

Perhaps the most recognized roadside enterprise, the “motor inn” or “motel” evolved from roadside autocamps frequented by motor gypsies. Many cities responded to the popularity of autocamping by creating public campgrounds. By the early 1920s most campers preferred these municipal autocamps to camping along the roadside.⁴⁵ Local boosters supported autocamping in their municipal parks as a means to attract tourists and foster contacts with the outside world.⁴⁶ Attitudes began to change, however, as auto travelers became more proletarian. Civic leaders pushed for pay camps to replace the free camps thought to attract vagrants and undesirables.⁴⁷ Autocampers were accepted, even welcomed, when they were wealthy families only pretending to be gypsies. Those who traveled year-round, however, and truly resembled poor, nomadic vagabonds were shunned. By the mid-1920s most camps required an admittance fee and

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registration, thus destroying the anonymity that characterized the early era of autocamping. Local boosters' enthusiasm for any sort of camp wavered as costs increased to supply campers with standard water and sewage and tourist spending decreased. With municipal free autocamps closing to eliminate their presumed attraction to riffraff and competing camps charging fees to cover expenses, the market was opened to private entrepreneurs. Private camps often operated out of town where land was affordable.⁴⁸

Depression-era tourist camps and other auto-related industries fared well in comparison to other recreational activities.⁴⁹ Profits remained small, however, until after the war. Still, many contemporaries believed "the tourist camp [to be] a depression built business."⁵⁰ Tourist camps illustrated that a small business could still survive. Tourist courts were viewed as democratic, like the larger auto industry to which they belonged.

Some entrepreneurs built cabins as a compromise between auto or tent camping and hotels. During the Depression years farmers opened cabins for auto tourists on their

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road-adjoining land when crop prices failed.⁵¹ Often several small cabins were organized around a larger building housing an office and sometimes a restaurant. These motor courts offered several advantages to auto travelers. Fewer preparations and equipment was needed when staying in motor court cabins that provided bedding and plumbing. Motor courts offered an informal setting, allowing weary travelers easy access to their autos and eliminating the dreaded scrutiny of the hotel lobby. The small, one room cabins fostered family togetherness without the burden of preparing an encampment at every day's end.

At first cabins were sparsely furnished, offering travelers little but shelter. Profitable courts expanded by adding more cabins with the success of each touring season. Soon owners offered more amenities for a modest fee increase, capitalizing on the auto traveler's desire to carry as little camping equipment as possible.⁵² Auto tourists were smart shoppers willing to go the distance for elaborate furnishings at a reasonable rate. Competition among neighboring courts led to more improvements. By the early

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1930s some motor courts offered private showers to attract more of the hotel clientele. Manufacturers eagerly capitalized on the motel market by advertising that their products were available at certain courts. Brand name recognition fostered a feeling of familiarity to travelers out of their own region and allowed manufacturers to showcase their products.⁵³

Entrepreneurs in regions hosting tourists year-round could afford to invest more in their establishments. Providing indoor plumbing, kitchenettes, and other amenities allowed these motels, as they were soon known, to attract affluent travelers who otherwise would have patronized hotels. In the long run, however, motels became victims of “their own modernizing rationale.”⁵⁴ Tourists expected more for less. During the Depression Era this trend increased as miserly travelers began to haggle over nightly fees. Roadside motel owners who refused to upgrade establishments yearly lost the repeat business they sorely needed. Standards rose so quickly that in 1933 most offered shared

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baths, but by 1939 individual baths were available to meet tourists' demands for privacy.⁵⁵

Design had always been an important advertising tool for motel owners. Since the first motor courts sprang up, entrepreneurs capitalized on regional stereotypes to attract tourists. Tourist cabins were modeled after log cabins, Spanish missions, and even Indian tee pees. In other regions homey cottages and miniature bungalows dominated motor court design. Typically, individual units were placed around a central courtyard or larger office building. Nearly all units were freestanding originally and owners were encouraged to manipulate the landscaping and unit layout to create variety among the individual units. After World War II, motel design was standardized and space saving designs dominated. Eliminating the freestanding cottages, motels were now built with units attached to each other in a continuous structure.⁵⁶

An excellent example of vernacular design and local craftsmanship is the Crystal River Tourist Camp in Cave City, Arkansas (NR listing, 06/06/91.) Built in 1934, this complex of six, single-story stone cabins and a central office building was constructed

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around a cave entrance. The camp catered to motor tourists who came to explore the legendary cave. The buildings are all constructed of concrete faced with native stone. The stones are varied in size, color, and shape. The buildings are further decorated with found objects such as arrowheads. Some are ornamented with stones laid in patterns such as crosses or circles, and others feature undulating rooflines ornamented with long, rising stones, emulating the profile of a dinosaur. The variegated walls and boldly textured walkways contribute to the organic quality of the complex's overall design.⁵⁷

H. C. Carpenter, a Postal Service employee, developed the Crystal River Tourist Camp with the assistance of Prince Matlock, the local builder credited for designing the camp's unique stonework. Both the cave setting and the wealth and variety of natural stone available in the area may have inspired Matlock. He celebrated this abundance by incorporating as many different stones and artifacts into his designs as possible, in a number of configurations, some with clear iconographic significance.⁵⁸

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Carpenter constructed the camp to service visitors to the large cave for which the surrounding community of Cave City was named. The cave was originally discovered by the Osage Indians years before the arrival of white settlers and had become a popular attraction by the 1900s. The advent of the automobile presented an opportunity for Carpenter to develop the complex for greater profits. The tourist camp operated until c. 1955 when fascination for it waned and the expanding interstate highway system drew travelers away from the site.⁵⁹

The close of the war brought a boom to the auto-related industries. According to the definitive text by Warren James Belasco, Americans on the Road, “post war affluence, coupled with a housing shortage, brought record numbers of people into [motor] courts.” Motels grew, offering more accommodations, as the highways expanded. Soon, the characteristic small-scale courts and motels were replaced by larger “motel-hotels.” Increasingly franchised corporations, such as Howard Johnson, owned these establishments that offered the conveniences of motels (such as free parking, informal

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dining, and lobby-free registration) with the luxury of hotels. Using architecture as advertising, these franchises were easily recognizable to passing motorists. Motel franchises, like the independently owned establishments before them, used anti-modernist design themes. Reminiscent of New England churches, old tearooms, and Elizabethan pubs, these designs were nationally mass-produced.⁶⁰

B. Gas Stations

According to Karl Raitz' National Road, corporate franchising was pioneered in the gasoline service industry. Although many independent service station owners contracted with petroleum companies who supplied gasoline, large corporations dominated the industry. "From curbside pumps located at hardware stores or livery stables, gas stations evolved into corporate symbols, complete with signature architecture and signs."⁶¹

Since automobiles run on gasoline, an infrastructure of fueling stations cropped up along the American roadside. The story of American gas station design is a tug-of-war

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between functionality and aesthetics. Designers attempted to balance public desire for a pleasing cityscape with the need for numerous service and filling stations. At first, gasoline was available for purchase from existing businesses. Realizing this was less than ideal, oil companies began designing drive-through gas stations. Concerned citizens soon protested against the characteristic filling station with a tiny building and a disheveled collection of pumps.⁶² In the 1920s oil companies responded to the demands of advocates of the City Beautiful by building substantial stone or brick stations with Greek, Beaux Arts, or Neoclassical details.⁶³ At the same time, prefabricated buildings, available through catalogs, were popular among station owners. These stations were available in many sizes and varied designs and could be bolted together in a matter of days. Gas stations near residential areas purposely resembled cottages so they would blend into the neighborhood.⁶⁴ Domestic station design fostered a feeling of familiarity and friendliness in the minds of passing auto travelers. For this reason the small house or cottage-style station dominated this era.⁶⁵

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The 1930s brought several changes to American gas stations. More cars on the road meant increased demand for repair services, tires, and auto-related accessories. The first neighborhood service stations were house-type stations with add-on bays to shelter autos being repaired. During the Depression, station owners were forced to diversify their services as gas revenues plummeted. Selling tires, batteries, and accessories was now as important as pumping gas into cars. New, larger station buildings were required to showcase merchandise and provide service. Consistent with post-Depression marketing trends, gas stations updated their look by introducing white, enameled structures designed in the International or Streamlined Moderne style. These box-like structures prevailed until the early 1960s when competition from independents prompted companies to rethink station design. Flat roofs were replaced with soaring, angular roofs forming canopies. In a short time, however, the new flamboyant design was rejected in favor of the traditional box-type buildings.⁶⁶

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The Gulf Oil Company Service Station in Paragould, Arkansas was built in 1926 on the corner of Main and South Third Streets (NR listing, 08/16/94.) The station consists of a small rectangular brick building and an adjoining canopy supported by square brick columns. The simple design combines several architectural details, including modest Craftsman windows, patterned brickwork, and classic details along the roofline. The traditional station box is divided into four small rooms: an office, two bathrooms, and a room for parts and tools. This station has remained virtually unchanged since it was operational, 1926 though 1969, thanks to the efforts of its last owner.⁶⁷

C. Drive-in Theatres

Drive-in theatres are a distinctively American auto-born enterprise. Patented in 1933, drive-ins thrived throughout the country in the 1940s and 1950s. Yet, by the end of the 1960s it was clear that the golden years of the drive-in were past. Why did drive-ins enjoy such fleeting success? Post-war America embodied the elements needed to foster

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this industry. The post-war economy brought the population new-found wealth. Most Americans owned cars and, more importantly, loved to be in their cars. There was also a surplus of cheap, vacant, highway accessible land on which to construct drive-ins. However, owners' inability to acquire first-run movies coupled with the limitations of drive-in technology resulted in declining attendance. Ultimately, television and shrinking American cars brought an end to the drive-in era.

According to Kerry Segrave's work Drive-In Theatres: A History from their Inception in 1933, Arkansas's first drive-in theatre opened in 1940 at Rose City. "On opening night an estimated twelve hundred cars jammed the highway trying to squeeze into the four hundred-car lot."⁶⁸ Advertisements promised a loudspeaker for every car. Drivers were led through the lot and instructed how to park on the inclined ramps. Ushers, who also cleaned windshields, brought refreshments to cars. The price of admission was thirty cents and the management promised prices would stay low, "to include many persons not now able to attend the movies in conventional theatres."⁶⁹

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Affordability and convenience were the keys to the drive-ins' early success. By charging a fee per carload and admitting children free, drive-ins offered a family entertainment opportunity previously unavailable. Parents were encouraged to bring their children, fostering family togetherness and saving the babysitter's fee. Plus, drive-ins were casual. In a time when appropriate dress was required for public outings, drive-ins allowed mothers to wear housedresses; fathers, tee shirts; and children, pajamas.⁷⁰

Throughout the drive-in's history owners battled the Hollywood monopoly to acquire first-rate movies, a battle they never won. Soon owners began to sell the drive-in rather than the movie. Some installed stages in front of the screen for live entertainment before sunset. Many offered playground equipment to entertain the youngsters. All constructed concession stands that brought in a large part of their profit. An evening at the drive-in offered wholesome family entertainment that overshadowed the low-rate movie and poor-quality sound.⁷¹

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Drive-ins were usually located outside of cities where owners could afford five or six acres of land with highway frontage. They had at least one thirty-by-sixty-foot screen supported by various construction methods at about twelve feet above the ground. A series of arching terraced rows fanned out in front of the screen. There were several apparatuses developed to deliver sound to the audience. Early drive-ins simply blasted the audio over speakers mounted on the screen tower.⁷² Later, individual speakers were available to mount inside cars. Although there were many experiments to improve sound and picture quality at drive-ins, the technical aspects of outdoor viewing were never completely mastered.

By the late 1960s television lured families back into their homes. With attendance rates already dropping, the adaptation of Daylight Savings Time in 1967 crippled drive-in theaters. Prevented from acquiring new movies, some owners offered

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X-rated films. Drive-ins, newly adopted by teenagers, had lost their family appeal. Most closed by the 1980s.⁷³

D. Auto Showrooms

Auto showrooms served as the meeting point between Americans and their beloved cars. The first auto dealerships were modified from horse transportation businesses. Booming business led dealers to construct stores for selling autos exclusively. During the early 1900s new dealers built their businesses along the commercial strip. These structures were designed to complement the existing Main Street facades. The interiors of these show places emphasized luxury and often included hotel-like lobbies complete with huge chandeliers.⁷⁴ In addition to providing a showcase for new models and auto accessories, these dealerships included a rear garage for servicing autos. Structures with multiple stories were outfitted with freight elevators for transporting inventory. Competition among auto manufacturers necessitated that they become involved in selling and servicing their products. No longer content to leave design in the hands of individual dealers, manufacturers mandated how dealerships would

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look.⁷⁵ The manufacturers modeled dealerships after grand office buildings and banks. Bas-relief and entrance porticos often graced the facades of these impressive structures. These dealerships were designed to be as structurally strong and dependable as they looked from the street. They were reinforced to carry the load of tons of inventory, including moving automobiles being driven through the specially designed interior. Fire prevention was a priority in these environments where electricity and gasoline cohabited. For these reasons reinforced concrete was the preferred constructions material.⁷⁶

The Depression influenced auto dealership design just as it had other auto-related enterprises. Depression-era showrooms were smaller and less ostentatious with more space devoted to selling previously owned vehicles.⁷⁷

After World War II many auto dealerships were redesigned in the Streamlined Moderne style to reflect the assembly lines where autos were manufactured. Dealers were now encouraged to locate on larger lots outside of cities where they could display more cars.⁷⁸

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Mass production of autos in the 1950s opened the market to independent salesmen. Many of these dealers simply lined cars up on vacant lots. By the 1960s dealers mass marketed new cars in much the same fashion as used cars had previously been sold. Rather than showcasing new models alone, they utilized huge lots to display inventory and concentrated on selling cars in quantity. Long rows of cars were now the focal point rather than the showroom floor. Dealership design reflected this trend by emphasizing strictly functional structures housing service areas and a small showroom. These structures were almost always removed to the rear of the lot, behind rows of cars for sale.⁷⁹

The Griffin Car Dealership located at 117 East Locust in El Dorado, Arkansas was built in 1928 by William, Tom, and Carl Griffin to house their Chevrolet car dealership (NR survey, 08/27/84.) The brothers had operated a livery business in the city since 1915, but when oil was discovered in the El Dorado region they believed

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automobile sales would be highly lucrative. The building is designed in the Spanish Revival style with glazed terra cotta and brick details. The front of the structure features an open, drive-in area covered by the second story. Large white porcelain tiled piers support the second story featuring decorative tiled arches along its length. The business complex covers three acres with an adjoining car lot spanning 80,000 square feet.⁸⁰

E. The Climber

In addition to national dealerships, Arkansas briefly hosted its own unique automobile manufacturer. The Climber Motor Corporation was established in 1919 by incorporators William Drake, Clarence Roth, David Hopson and later Henry Buhler. Its factory was constructed on a 20-acre tract of land located at 1800 East Seventeenth Street in Little Rock, Arkansas. George Schoeneck of Detroit was hired as the company's chief engineer and charged with purchasing or designing the necessary materials and equipment to begin production. As its name suggests, the Climber was specially designed to conquer mountainous Ozark terrain. To prove its prowess, a Climber was

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driven up the steep steps of the State Capital Building in Little Rock. From 1919 through 1923 the Climber Motor Corporation produced approximately 275 cars, two of which still survive. One of the last surviving examples of this vehicle is housed at the Museum of Automobiles on Petit Jean Mountain in Morrilton, Arkansas.⁸¹

F. Amusement Parks

Americans have a long history of enjoying amusement parks, such as Nineteenth Century Coney Island in New York. After the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis, a showcase for amusement technology, America experienced a building boom in this industry that continued through the 1920s. During the 1920s ride makers refined the mechanical devices that formed the backbone of the amusement industry. In the 1930s Americans visited these parks to escape the trials of the Depression. World War II emptied parks, but the crowds returned in the 1950s, and the baby boomers followed.⁸²

Small roadside parks followed the spread of theme and amusement parks throughout the country. Roadside amusement parks usually offered concessions and a

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few rides. Some were based on themes, such as regional history or a movie plot. Others were little more than traveling carnivals nailed in place. These parks could be constructed anywhere along the highway where tourists could see the rides (and often fantastic fiberglass sculptures) and pull from the road.

War Memorial Amusement Park operated in a 15-acre lot near the Little Rock Zoo, Ray Winder Field, and War Memorial Stadium for nearly sixty years. Featuring brightly colored rides, fantastic fiberglass animals, and a frightening mechanical dummy, the park entertained children every summer. The park included many vintage rides and attractions, such as "Laughing Sally" who had been scaring children since 1940. Due to declining attendance since the late 1970s, (partially caused by the popularity of new water theme parks) the owner decided to auction off the rides and attractions and close the park in 1998. Only the remarkable Hershell-Spillman carousel will be restored and reinstalled at the Little Rock Zoo. This wood and cast-iron Over-the-Jumps carousel

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dates from c. 1920 and is representative of the golden age of the carousel from 1875 to 1935.⁸³

G. Miniature Golf

The first miniature golf courses were intended as practice putting areas for full-scale golfers. Golf enjoyed new popularity after World War I when individuals hoping to improve their class status adopted it. After a suitable surface was discovered that replicated the movement of golf balls on natural greens, the popularity of putting courses increased. The first miniature golf courses were prefabricated and distributed under the name Tom Thumb Golf. These courses incorporated hazards and obstacles with a fantasy theme that appealed to adults as well as children. Also, miniature golf courses proved to be an unexpected boom during the Depression. These courses created a demand for construction materials, an industry hurt by the national economic crisis.⁸⁴ They also provide a fantasy world into which American families could escape.

Not everyone loved miniature golf courses, however. By 1930 urban residents began to protest the noise and crowd congestion generated by these roadside attractions.

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Zoning regulations were enforced against these businesses. And as the Depression worsened Americans began to seek out alternative forms of escapism, such as the movies.⁸⁵

Miniature golf courses returned after World War II in a slightly different form. Now rather than locating in urban areas, courses were most often found along commercial strips and tourist areas. They were part of larger operations now and helped attract tourists to motels, shopping centers, and other enterprises. Courses built in this era were often handcrafted out of everyday materials and exhibited the ingenuity of their builders, rather than prefabricated like those before and after them. After the mid-1950s most courses were prefabricated and often included huge fiberglass renditions of animals or fantasy characters. Although the character of miniature golf courses has changed little through the years, they have never regained the popularity they enjoyed during the period preceding the Depression.⁸⁶

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Another genre of roadside attractions is scenic natural sites. Natural bridges, scenic over views and the like were some of the first attractions exploited along America's roadsides. A simple booth or stand to collect admission fees along with enough space to allow tourists to pull off the road was all that was needed to capitalize on a scenic site.

H. Dining Out

Americans' affinity for dining away from home preceded the automobile era. Drug store soda fountains and ice cream shops prospered during the horse transportation era. The car, however, offered a new dining opportunity.

Families traveling cross-country in their cars provided the business for the most successful roadside restaurant franchise of the 1930s and 1940s, Howard Johnson's. Howard Johnson cleverly combined the respectable family dining often found in the roadside tearooms of the 1920s with the convenience of a soda shop. By mandating

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structure design and regulating menu items and food preparation, these franchises offered familiarity to auto-tourists as they traveled along unfamiliar roads.⁸⁷

Hamburger and hot dog stands gained new respectability in the mid-1920s with the spread of the White Castle chain. Serving consistently decent food quickly and inexpensively from a sanitary environment, White Castle eliminated the fear of the unknown that had previously characterized hamburger joints and greasy spoons.⁸⁸

This era also saw the development of the drive-in restaurant. Most early drive-ins consisted of a round or rectangular building with eye-catching advertisements on its roof. Customers encircled the building with their cars. Drive-in restaurants boomed after the World War II rationing of gasoline, tires, building materials, and foodstuffs ended. Most post-war drive-ins sported distinctive pavilions to shelter attendants and vehicles. The Exaggerated Moderne design reigned in the 1950s to the mid-1960s. Characterized by projecting roofs and bright, flashing signs, Exaggerated Moderne drive-ins were designed in “the rock n’ roll style.”⁸⁹

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Diners developed simultaneously with the drive-in. The city cousin to the rural chuckwagon, dining cars maneuvered through the streets in search of customers. As their popularity grew they became permanently affixed in one location. By the 1920s, diners were a booming business.⁹⁰ Offering a varied and inexpensive fare, they survived the Great Depression and expanded their customer base. “By the early 1930s the diner had become one of the most democratic of all eating places,” with individuals of various professions and classes frequenting them.⁹¹ In the late 1940s diners traded their wheels for streamlined designs and larger windows. A decade later, when their popularity wavered, designers abandoned the boxcar motif in favor of the Exaggerated Moderne style, which only remotely resembled original diners.

Following the self-service trend in other retail industries characterizing the 1940s and 1950s, McDonald’s mass-produced cheap, uniform food extremely quickly. By encouraging customers to drive-through they increased the number of people that could

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be served in an hour. McDonald's became the prototype for numerous fast-food chains to follow.⁹²

The Jameson-Richards Café stands next to the Jameson Gas Station on Highway 367 in Bald Knob, Arkansas, both were constructed c. 1931 (NR listing 09/05/91.) Like the gas station, the café is clad in brick with English Revival features. This small, single-story building has stucco and half-timbering on the front gable. The café has six-paned casement windows with multi-paned transoms above each and a French door surrounded by casement sidelights. The remainder of the T-shaped structure is faced with brick. The café's association with the gas station illustrates the importance of the automobile to both establishments.⁹³

Located at 1330 E. Main Street (AR Hwy. #64) in Russellville, the Old South Restaurant was constructed in 1947 by William E. Stell, owner of the National Glass and Manufacturing Company of Fort Smith, for Russellville businessman Woody Mays (NR listing pending.) The streamlined Art Moderne design was integral in the modular diner package developed by Stell in the mid-1940s. The Old South Restaurant is square in plan,

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one story in height, and clad in porcelain coated aluminum panels. A band of neon highlights three sides of the building. Linear bands of fixed windows fenestrate the building and a protruding airlock houses the front entrance. The interior contains virtually all of its original fixtures including its stainless steel counter and stools, glass and mahogany cabinets, padded booths, and ladies lounge area. A large neon spectacular sign stands adjacent to the Old South.

Although it isn't known how many Old South Restaurant packages were sold, only one other was ever constructed in Arkansas. In 1947 Mr. Woody Mays, owner of Woody's Classic Inn and Coffee Shop in Russellville, ordered an Old south Restaurant package. In true turnkey fashion Mr. Stell had the diner set up and operational — including the menu — in six days. The Russellville Old South Restaurant opened its doors on April 4, 1947, and has been in continual operation since that time.

When it was constructed, the Old South Restaurant was located on the outskirts of Russellville on an undeveloped stretch of Arkansas Highway #64, at that time the main

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travel route from Tennessee to Oklahoma. By virtue of its location and the fact that it was open twenty four hours a day, seven days a week, the Old south quickly became a popular dining spot for travelers including such famous entertainers as Ernest Tubb, B. B. King, and the King himself, Elvis Presley. Even after the construction of Interstate 40 in the 1960s which by-passed the Old South Restaurant, it remained a popular spot.

Today, the Old South Restaurant looks virtually the same on the exterior and interior as it did when constructed in 1947. Its streamlined design, rounded windows, metal skin, neon lights, aluminum fixtures, and padded booths typify its Art Moderne design. Even the menu offers many of the same items that were originally served, including the famous cream soups and salad dressing developed by R. C. Strub for the prototype Old South in Fort Smith. It is still open twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week serving the needs of travelers and locals.⁹⁴

Arkansas's automobile history from 1910 to 1965 mirrored that of the nation as

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a whole. Americans eagerly embraced this new transportation technology that embodied their cultural ideals of individuality, democracy, and family unity. Ultimately, choosing the auto over the railroad for traveling had a lasting effect on the American landscape. Creating an infrastructure of good roads became a priority at the state and federal level. The Dollarway Road remains as testament to both the ingenuity and fallibility of those who endeavored to create better Arkansas roads. Everywhere the highways extended, auto-born enterprises such as gas stations, tourist courts, auto dealerships, drive-ins, and other attractions dominated the roadside landscape. As in other regions of the nation, Arkansas still has many surviving examples of these roadside architectural types throughout the state.

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⁷ *Ibid.*, 36.

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⁴⁷ Ibid., 106.

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Submitted by Christie McLaren of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, May 26, 1999.

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OUTLINE OF PROPERTY TYPES

1. Autocamps, Tourist Courts, Motels
2. Gas Stations
3. Drive-In Theatres
4. Auto Showrooms, Repair Shops, Manufacturers
5. Amusement Parks, Miniature Golf Courses
6. Restaurants, Diners, Drive-Ins, Cafes

AUTOCAMPS, TOURIST COURTS, MOTELS

Description:

Autocamps typically were roadside campgrounds offering few, if any, amenities other than a place to pitch a tent and cook out. Some were municipally owned and free to the public; while others were privately owned and charged fees. Municipally owned camps were usually associated with local parks within the city limits of a community. Privately owned and operated camps were typically sited out of town where land was affordable. Both offered the minimum in amenities—water and sewage—if at all. Although the fascination with auto camping waned, it never truly died. Places like KOA Kamp Grounds and RV Parks help to keep it alive.

Tourist courts evolved from the autocamps as auto travelers became more demanding. Typical tourist courts were composed of several small one-room freestanding cabins grouped around a larger central building housing an office and sometimes a restaurant. The first tourist courts were sparsely furnished offering little more than shelter; however, as auto tourists became more discerning, improvements increased. The design of tourist courts was eclectic, capitalizing on regional stereotypes, historic themes, and unique architectural styles.

Arkansas has several surviving tourist courts—five of which have already been individually listed: Crystal River Tourist Camp (NR listed 6/5/91), Woodland Courts (NR listed 11/27/92), George Klein Tourist Court Historic District (NR listed 6/8/93), Bates Tourist Court (NR listed 10/4/93), and The Tall Pines Motor Inn Historic District (NR listed 1/15/99). These five courts exhibit varying design elements and materials including Craftsman detailing, rustic log construction, stucco finishes, stone veneers, and in the case of the Crystal River Tourist Camp, cast concrete with stone veneers and found objects.

Motels were the next evolutionary step. Indoor plumbing, private baths, kitchenettes and other amenities soon became the norm rather than the exception. The design of the motel differed also. After World War II, motel design was standardized and space saving designs dominated. Eliminating the freestanding cottages, motels were built with the units attached to each other in a continuous structure.

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Significance:

The surviving auto camps, tourist courts, and motels in the state are significant because of their association with the development of Arkansas' highway culture, the increase in auto travel in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, and national trends in automobile culture. The five tourist courts that are currently listed on the National Register in Arkansas are listed under Criterion C with local significance. Any future properties should be listed under Criterion A for their association with the development of Arkansas highway culture, as well as under Criterion C for their design.

Registration Requirements:

Arkansas' surviving auto camps, tourist courts, and motels are significant because of their unique architectural styles, construction materials and workmanship; they are also significant because of their representation of local, state, and national trends in automobile culture during the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. In general, to meet registration requirements, these auto camps, tourist courts, and motels should have been built in the period between 1910-1965; they should retain sufficient physical features to identify them as having been built during this period; they should be good examples of the feature or style of structure they represent; they should be intact, unaltered, and retain their integrity of setting.

GAS STATIONS

Description:

Because automobiles ran on gasoline it was necessary to have locations that supplied fuel and oil to the motorist. At first, fueling stops were found at existing hardware stores or livery stations. As the automobile industry boomed and more individuals began purchasing and driving autos, the curbside fueling stop disappeared to be replaced by structures devoted solely to the needs and operation of the automobile. In the early decades of the twentieth century, gas stations were designed in a wide variety of architectural styles to blend in to the neighborhoods where they were located. In the post-depression decades the trend in gas station design became more unified—the stations were larger to meet the increasing demands and needs of the automobile owner—and reflected the growing preference for the International or Moderne style. During this time period, also, the large petroleum companies began developing standardized designs, which would reflect their corporate image.

Arkansas has several gas stations listed on the National Register that reflect the different design that were popular early on. The Gulf Oil Company Service Station in Paragould is pure Craftsman in design, the Magnolia Gas Station in Little Rock characterizes the Spanish Revival style, the Jamison Gas Station #2 in Bald Knob exhibits the English Revival style, and the Ferguson Gas Station in Marshall is a vernacular interpretation of the English Revival style.

Significance:

The surviving historic gas stations in the state are significant because of their association with the development of Arkansas highway culture, the increase in auto travel, and national trends in automobile culture. The gas stations that are currently listed on the National Register are listed under Criterion C. Future properties should be listed under Criterion A for their association with the development of Arkansas highway culture, as well as under Criterion C for their design.

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Registration Requirements:

Arkansas' surviving historic gas stations are significant because of their unique architectural styles, construction materials, and workmanship; they are also significant because of their representation of local, state, and national trends in automobile culture. In general, to meet registration requirements, these gas stations should have been built in the period between 1910-1965; they should retain sufficient physical features to identify them as having been built during this period; they should be good examples of the style of structure they represent; they should be intact, unaltered, and retain their integrity of setting.

DRIVE-IN THEATRES

Description:

Drive-in theatres were usually located on the outskirts of cities along highway frontage. Their location away from city centers was necessary because of the need for affordable and multiple acreage. Drive-ins usually consisted of five or six acres and at least one thirty-by-sixty foot screen positioned about twelve feet above the ground. A series of terraced (or sometimes flat) rows fanned out in front of the screen. Posts at each vehicle spot held individual speakers that could be mounted inside the car. Some drive-in theatres had stages installed in front of the screen for live entertainment, others provided playground equipment to entertain the children. Almost all offered concession stands. The hay day of the drive-in was in the 1940s and 1950s. By the 1960s television, the adoption of Daylight Savings Time, and the inability of drive-in owners to obtain first-run movies sounded the death knell of the drive-in. Although they struggled along by showing X-rated films, by the 1980s most drive-ins had closed.

Significance:

The surviving drive-in theatres in Arkansas are significant because of their association with the development of Arkansas highway culture, the increase in auto travel and usage, and national trends in automobile culture. The remaining drive-in theatres in Arkansas should be listed under Criterion A for their association with the development of Arkansas highway culture, as well as under Criterion C for their design.

Registration Requirements:

Arkansas' surviving drive-in theatres are significant because of their architectural styles, construction materials, and workmanship; they are also significant because of their representation of local, state, and national trends in automobile culture. In general, to meet registration requirements, these drive-in theatres should have been built between 1910-1965; they should retain sufficient physical features to identify them as having been built during this period; they should be good examples of the style of structure they represent; they should be intact, unaltered, and retain their integrity of setting.

AUTO SHOWROOMS, REPAIR SHOPS, MANUFACTURES

Description:

As America's love affair with the automobile deepened, showrooms displaying the latest models began springing up all over. The first dealerships were usually modified horse transportation businesses. As

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business boomed; however, structures devoted exclusively to the sale of automobiles became the norm. The first showrooms were located in the commercial districts of towns and cities and were designed to complement existing street facades. Most showrooms were single story, but occasionally multi-story dealerships were built. Architectural styles varied in showroom design, but typically emphasized luxury on the interior.

As competition among auto manufacturers increased it became necessary to add additional amenities such as garages for servicing the vehicles. Manufacturers, at this time, also began dictating the design of the showroom, modeling dealerships after grand office building and banks. During the Depression Era auto showrooms/dealerships became smaller and less grand in design, focusing more on previously owned vehicles.

Following World War II as the economy entered an upswing, auto showrooms/dealerships once again grew. Design became more functional and streamlined and showrooms/dealerships were located outside of the downtowns on larger lots where they could display more cars. By the 1960s dealers began mass marketing new cars, utilizing huge lots to display their inventory. Auto showroom design reflected this trend by emphasizing strictly functional structures housing service areas and a small showroom. Auto repair shops exhibited the same style trends and size changes as the showrooms/dealerships during this time period. The National Register listed C. B. Case Motor Co. Building in Mountain View, Arkansas is an early auto repair building constructed in 1928. Located on Main Street in the downtown, the building is a large two-story commercial style building constructed of local limestone.

In addition to national dealerships, Arkansas briefly hosted its own unique automobile manufacturer. The Climber Motor Corporation was established in 1919 in Little Rock to design and produce vehicles specifically for the mountainous Ozark terrain. The company was only in business for four years producing 275 vehicles, two of which still exist.

Significance:

The surviving auto showrooms, repair shops, and manufacturing buildings in Arkansas are significant because of their association with the development of Arkansas highway culture, the increase in auto travel and usage, and national trends in automobile culture. The remaining auto showrooms and repair shops in Arkansas should be listed under Criterion A for their association with the development of Arkansas highway culture, as well as Criterion C for their design. The only automobile manufacturing building should also be listed under the same criteria.

Registration Requirements:

Arkansas' surviving auto showrooms, repair shops, and only automobile manufacturing building are significant because of their architectural styles, construction materials, and workmanship; they are also significant because of their representation of local, state, and national trends in automobile culture. In general, to meet registration requirements, these showrooms, repair shops, and manufacturing building should have been built between 1910-1965; they should retain sufficient physical features to identify them as having been built during this period; they should be good examples of the style of structure they represent; they should be intact, unaltered, and retain their integrity of setting.

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AMUSEMENT PARKS AND MINIATURE GOLF COURSES

Description:

Amusement parks have always been a favorite type of entertainment for Americans. Following the 1904 World's Fair, which showcased amusement technology, the industry experienced a building boom. Improvements during the 1920s in mechanical ride technology boosted the development of amusement parks nationwide. Small roadside parks followed the spread of amusement parks, being developed along the highways to attract passing motorists. Typical roadside amusement parks offered concessions and mechanical rides. Some offered carnival-type attractions and many were designed and based on themes.

Miniature golf courses were first developed as practice putting areas for golfers following World War I. The first miniature golf courses were prefabricated, incorporated hazards and obstacles—typically following a fantasy theme—and were located in urban areas. Following World War II, miniature golf courses were moved from urban settings (based mainly on the complaints of their urban neighbors, but also to attract auto travelers) to more commercial roadside areas and were usually associated with other businesses such as motels, drive-in restaurants, and shopping centers.

Significance:

The surviving roadside amusement parks and miniature golf courses are significant because of their association with the development of Arkansas highway culture, the increase in auto travel and usage, and national trends in automobile culture. The remaining roadside amusement parks and miniature golf courses in Arkansas should be listed under Criterion A for their association with the development of Arkansas highway culture, as well as Criterion C for their design.

Registration Requirements:

Arkansas' surviving roadside amusement parks and miniature golf courses are significant because of their architectural styles, construction materials, and workmanship; they are also significant because of their representation of local, state, and national trends in automobile culture. In general, to meet registration requirements, these roadside amusement parks and miniature golf courses should have been constructed between 1910-1965; they should retain sufficient physical features to identify them as having been built during this period; they should be good examples of the style of structure they represent; they should be intact, unaltered, and retain their integrity of setting.

RESTAURANTS, DINERS, DRIVE-INS, CAFES

Description:

Dining out has always been a favorite past time for Americans. With the growth of auto travel, chain restaurants, diners, drive-ins, and cafes experienced a growth trend that continues even today. Early restaurant chains like Howard Johnson's and White Castle combined the convenience of good food, quick service, and sanitary conditions in a respectable family-dining atmosphere. By mandating design style of their restaurants, these franchises offered a sense of the familiar to auto travelers.

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Drive-ins and diners developed simultaneously in the 1920s. Following the gas rationing of World War II, both experienced wide spread growth. Drive-ins tended to be round or rectangular in shape, sometimes having awnings under which customers could park. Almost all had eye-catching advertisements on the roof and made extensive use of neon lighting. Diners began life as mobile eating places that moved through the streets in search of customers. Typically long and narrow like a boxcar, diners appealed to individuals of all classes and professions. By the 1940s diners had traded in their mobility, became fixed in place, and streamlined in style. In the late 1940s diners underwent further changes, trading in their linear shapes for the more boxy style of Art Moderne.

Small roadside cafes have always been favorite eating establishments for auto travelers. Usually associated with an adjacent gas station, tourist attraction, or motel, these cafes were extremely eclectic in design and materials. The National Register listed Jameson-Richards Café in Bald Knob, Arkansas is typical. Constructed c. 1931, the café is associated with the adjacent Jameson Gas Station. Like the gas station, the café is English Revival in style with brick cladding.

Significance:

The surviving roadside restaurants, diners, drive-ins, and cafes are significant because of their association with the development of Arkansas highway culture, the increase in auto travel and usage, and national trends in automobile culture. The remaining roadside restaurants, diners, drive-ins and cafes in Arkansas should be listed under Criterion A for their association with the development of Arkansas highway culture, as well as Criterion C for their design.

Registration Requirements:

Arkansas' surviving roadside restaurants, diners, drive-ins, and cafes are significant because of their architectural styles, construction materials, and workmanship; they are also significant because of their representation of local, state, and national trends in automobile culture. In general, to meet registration requirements, these restaurants, diners, drive-ins, and cafes should have been constructed between 1910-1965; they should retain sufficient physical features to identify them as having been built during this period; they should be good examples of the style of structure they represent; they should be intact, unaltered, and retain their integrity of setting.

G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.

See continuation sheet

H. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional documentation:

- State historic preservation office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency

- Local government
 University
 Other

Specify repository: _____

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In 1998, the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program (AHPP) initiated the research and writing of a context exploring Arkansas highway history and architecture between 1910-1965. It was felt that properties associated with the development of Arkansas' highways were in danger of insensitive rehabilitation, deterioration or demolition as a result of neglect and highway improvements. At the initial planning meeting in which the parameters of the project were discussed, it was agreed that a number of goals would be pursued with the ultimate objective of calling attention to the importance of these properties. It was hoped that by emphasizing the importance of these properties to the understanding of the history of highway development in Arkansas, the AHPP could encourage their continued preservation, protection, use and adaptive re-use.

The highway history and architecture project involved significant interaction and cooperation between the AHPP program areas. The Special Projects Historian researched and wrote the historic context study on the subject, the Survey Historians agreed to attempt to locate properties associated with the project and schedule survey trips in order to identify, photograph and document those properties that remain extant. The project will begin with countywide surveys of Pike and Fulton counties, and will continue on an on-going basis. All AHPP staff members who travel throughout the state have volunteered assistance in locating and documenting properties associated with the context. As properties are identified, nominations will be developed and processed as amendments to the context. Public input and involvement will be sought through press releases.

Several properties that are already individually listed on the National Register will fit into the context and are referenced in the document. One property, The Old South Restaurant, is being submitted with the context for listing.

The properties that are already listed and those that will be nominated in the future are significant physical reminders of an important period in Arkansas history. By recognizing the importance of these resources to the understanding and appreciation of Arkansas history, the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program hopes to encourage the preservation, protection, continued use and adaptive re-use of these properties.

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