

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Oklahoma's Most Endangered Historic Places Announced

Preservation Oklahoma, Inc. (POK) announced the 2015 list of Oklahoma's Most Endangered Historic Places at the Hart Building in Oklahoma City on Tuesday, April 7.

Since 1993, Preservation Oklahoma has recognized historic sites across the state at risk of demolition or deterioration, raising awareness of the need to protect Oklahoma's historic resources. While inclusion on the list does not guarantee protection or funding, it can be a key component in mobilizing support for the preservation of historic sites.

"The Endangered Historic Places List is an effort to raise awareness about historic sites and preservation issues, but has also been a powerful mechanism for saving significant buildings," says Executive Director David Pettyjohn. "We hope that sites on this year's list will benefit from the attention garnered, and that Oklahomans will benefit from learning about the diverse pieces of our state's history represented."

This list was selected by a group of preservation professionals from nominations submitted by the public. An exhibit of the 2015 List will travel to numerous locations across the state in an effort to continue the discussion about the need to preserve these historic buildings.

The 2015 List of Oklahoma's Most Endangered Historic Places are:

New Deal Structures, Statewide (Focus on Dunbar School, Atoka): 2015 marks the 80th anniversary of the Works Progress Administration legislation and today, many of the structures constructed during this time have fallen into disrepair. One such building is the Dunbar School in Atoka. Constructed in 1942, the building served as the African-American school for Atoka until 1958 when desegregation took place.

Religious Buildings, Statewide (Focus on Epworth University Methodist Church, Oklahoma City): All across Oklahoma, religious buildings hold a special place within a community. Unfortunately, many of Oklahoma's early religious buildings suffer from decay and disrepair. Constructed in 1903, the Epworth University Methodist Church is facing an uncertain future. The brick Classic Revival Church was originally constructed as Epworth University, the precursor to Oklahoma City University.

Riverside Studio, Tulsa: Designed by Bruce Goff and built in 1928, the building features both Art Deco and International Style design concepts. Many elements of the design were also influenced by music including the exterior fountain, windows, and tile work.

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Depression-Era Bathhouses (Focus on El Reno Bathhouse): During the Great Depression, the federal government provided funding for numerous projects meant to improve the quality of life for Americans. One such project was the construction of municipal swimming pools and bathhouses. These provided needed recreational activities for local communities. The El Reno Bath House is one such facility. Constructed in 1935, it is the last remaining intact resource of the El Reno Municipal Pool Complex.

Rock Art, Statewide: This art was done through pictographs (paintings) and petroglyphs (carvings) along cave walls and sandstone bluffs and provides valuable insight into the culture of Oklahoma's early ancestors.

Oklahoma State Capitol, Oklahoma City: Designed by Solomon Andrew Layton, the Oklahoma State Capitol was completed in 1917 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976. In 2014, Governor Mary Fallin signed legislation that provided \$120 million in funding to address many needed repairs. While this is welcomed news, more funding will be needed to properly restore this important Oklahoma building.

Quanah Parker Star House, Cache: Built around 1890, the Star House was built for renowned Comanche warrior, leader, and statesmen Quanah Parker. Relocated to its current location in Cache, the home is visited by people from all over the world.

Route 66, Hydro to Bridgeport and William H. Murray Bridge: In western Oklahoma, the section of Route 66 from Bridgeport to Hydro is considered distinctive since it marks a change in geography by providing the first glimpse of the western plains. The section also contains the William H. Murray Bridge, also known as the Pony Bridge (due to the truss system it uses). Completed in 1934, the bridge is one of the most distinctive bridges of the road in Oklahoma due to its massive length.

The event was generously sponsored by the Kirkpatrick Foundation; Cherokee Nation Businesses; Preservation & Design Studio; Michael & Jennifer Gallagher; BancFirst; Fitzsimmons Architecture; Midtown Renaissance, LLC; Bill Gumerson & Associates; and Hart Partners, LLC.

About Preservation Oklahoma, Inc.:

Preservation Oklahoma, Incorporated, is the state's only private, nonprofit membership organization that is dedicated to promoting, supporting, and coordinating historic preservation activities throughout the state. Preservation Oklahoma's mission is to promote preservation statewide. Founded in 1992, Preservation Oklahoma is a Statewide Partner with the National Trust for Historic Preservation and works on joint projects with the Oklahoma Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

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