

2015 Historic Preservation Board Calendar

Orlando Landmarks



US Post Office and Courthouse, 46 E. Robinson Street
Photo by Bob Egleston

An Orlando Landmark since 1989. In Orlando's early years, the post office moved from building to building as new postmasters were appointed, often located in small stores, hotels or pharmacies. The Florida Land Boom in the late 1920s created demand for a permanent Post Office; however the Depression years stalled the effort. Opening on April 15, 1941, this building has continuously served as a Post Office and other federal agencies with courtrooms on the upper floors and offices for judges, US Marshalls and the IRS. The three-story Italianate Revival, designed by architect Louis A. Simon, is significant in its use of marble and unusual styling. Two horizontal bands of travertine marble wrap around the building and each casement window is surrounded by pitted marble. A lookout tower projects above with a pyramidal roof. The main entrance is covered by a projecting entry portico supported by tapered round columns with a small balcony located above.

January 2015



**Former OUC Building/Dr. Phillips Center, 1101 N. Orange Avenue
Photo By Linda Bauman**

An Orlando Landmark since 1987. John Cheney organized the Orlando Light and Water Company in 1897 and built a small plant at the present location using Lake Ivanhoe as a reservoir. In 1922, The City of Orlando bought the company to establish the Orlando Utilities Commission serving Orlando to Longwood. The following year, OUC built this Italian Palazzo Revival style plant overlooking N. Orange Avenue. The two-story rectangular building is divided into three bays with a hip roof covered in red ceramic tile. Round arched and flat topped windows are the dominant features on the façades. In 1992, after OUC moved to another building, it was converted to an arts center. The Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts included spaces for ballet and opera. During the holiday season, large illuminated channel letters overlook Orange Avenue to wish motorists “Happy Holidays” or “Happy New Year”. The 12 foot high sign was an Orlando tradition during the 1950s through the 1990s. Restoration efforts by the Ivanhoe Village Main Street, City of Orlando, OUC, and Ivanhoe Foundation returned the holiday sign to service in 2013.

February 2015



**Plaza Theatre Sign, 425 N. Bumby Avenue
Photo By Ronok Doolen Nichols**

An Orlando Landmark since 1997. The Plaza Theatre Sign is the only unchanged theater sign from the 1960s and is the only known sign of its type in the City. The roof-top sign sits on a stepped platform and consists of four curved painted metal supports that hold a drum-like, faceted-surface cylinder with the channel letters “Plaza Theatre”. The sign was built in San Diego and shipped to Orlando where the Harper Neon Company installed the sign. The Plaza Theatre opened in 1963, with the John Wayne movie, “McLintock”. Wayne, along with other movie stars of the day including Cary Grant, Audrey Hepburn, Maureen O’Hara, Paul Newman, Gregory Peck, Rock Hudson and Jack Lemon sent telegrams of congratulations and good wishes to the theater that were posted in the lobby. The Plaza Theatre introduced Orlando moviegoers to twin screens, rocking-chair seats, angle seating, and wider screens. Architect Robert E. Collins also designed the underwater theater at Weeki Wachee and buildings in Peru and New York City. The movie theater closed in 1992 and the building was rehabilitated. Known today as Plaza Live Orlando, the building showcases the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra and many other concerts, comedians, and cultural events.

March 2015



**Kress Building, 15-17 W. Church Street
Photo By Samantha Thurston**

An Orlando Landmark since 1978. The Kress Building is one of the very few true Art Deco structures Orlando. Edward F. Sibbert of New York and the official architect for the S.H. Kress Company, designed the Orlando Kress and more than fifty other Kress stores between 1929 and 1944. Established in 1896, the chain of S. H. Kress & Co. 5-10-25 Cent Stores were a familiar sight on "Main Streets" in hundreds of cities throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Though the chain closed in 1981, several former Kress stores are recognized as architectural landmarks and many are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Several have been adapted to new uses including the 1913 Canal Street Kress, now the New Orleans Ritz-Carlton, the historic 1936 Kress building in downtown Fort Worth, Texas now leases residential and office space, and on Hilo, Hawaii, a former Kress store has been renovated into Kress Cinema, a downtown movie theater. As one of Orlando's finest period structures, this 1936 Art Deco features masonry over steel reinforced poured concrete with the primary façades veneered with granite. The building is L-shaped with frontage on both S. Orange and W. Church Street. The Art Deco pilasters are capped with a polychromatic terra cotta capital. The display windows are single sheet plate glass set in a 1950s ceramic tile surround while the upper windows are the original steel 4/4 double hung units.

April 2015



**Marks Street School, 99 Marks Street
Photo By Bill Wohlfart**

An Orlando Landmark since 1991. Built in 1925, The Marks Street School is Orlando's oldest remaining Mediterranean Revival school building and features include arcades, courtyards, large arched windows, heavy paneled wood doors, and applied ornamentation. Local architect Howard Reynolds, who served as the architect for Orange County and the School Board, designed this and many other school and public buildings including the Callahan School, the First National Bank, Howard Middle School, and the St. James School. This one-story building was designed so that every classroom had an outside entrance, an innovative safety feature and a means of aiding air-circulation in pre-air-conditioning days. Pictured is the entrance tower to the auditorium with twisted terra cotta pilasters with composite capitals, a round topped arched doorway, and a three arch arcade with twisted columns on the curved parapet. This landmark is an example of adaptive reuse, serving the local community throughout its history as an elementary school, special education center, a book depository, and currently, the Marks Street Senior Center.

May 2015



**Porter Paints Sign, 700 E. Colonial Drive
Photo By Kevin S. Drinan**

An Orlando Landmark since 1995. The Porter Paint Company was founded in 1922 in Louisville, Kentucky as a mail-order paint business, primarily for barns. As the company grew, retail and wholesale stores opened, including this shop on Colonial Dr., the first Porter Paints in the Orlando area. In 1954, Citrus Fruit Products (now Dr. Phillips, Inc.), owned the property and hired L. Alex Hatton, a local architect, to design the International Style building for their new tenants, Porter Paints. The black, white, and orange striped sign are part of the building's outer walls and made of porcelain enamel-faced metal panels, the only example of this material used for a pre-1966 non-illuminated sign in the City. In 1995, Porter Paints became the first company to take advantage of the historic sign ordinance that protects historic signs that do not conform to current codes. The Porter Paints sign's structure, material, color, and graphics are important elements to the overall composition of the small store.

June 2015



**Atlantic Coast Line Station, 1400 Sligh Boulevard
Photo By Junko Hennessy**

An Orlando Landmark since 1978. Constructed in 1926, the Atlantic Coast Line Station served as the main gateway to Orlando during the Land Boom of the 1920s that brought an influx of investors and visitors to Florida exploring real estate opportunities in the area. Over 6,000 people attended the January 11, 1927 dedication and opening ceremony. Many of the original architectural features of this Mission Revival structure remain including the heraldic shield and “1926” cartouche, parapet wall, stone trim elements, exterior wood windows, built-in interior benches, light fixtures, tile roofing, and the decorative domes. Architect M.A. Griffith studied various types of Spanish style architecture and mission churches in the Pacific West to influence his design. The Historic American Buildings Survey, the Nation's first federal preservation program begun in 1933, surveyed the station; six of these drawing sheets are documented at the Library of Congress. Since opening, the station has continuously been used as a passenger station, serving the Atlantic Coast Line, Seaboard Coast Line, Amtrak, and in 2014, SunRail passengers.

July 2015



**Fairchild Chapel Sign, 301 N. Ivanhoe Boulevard
Photo By Ronok Doolen Nichols**

An Orlando Landmark since 1996. Constructed in 1940, the Art Deco building was a modern and up-to-date funeral home offering ambulance service, a crematorium, and an on-site chapel. Fairchild Funeral Home, one of the oldest continually operating funeral businesses in Orlando, faced tough competition from Carey Hand Funeral Home, established in 1907. Fairchild capitalized on their modern facilities with heavy advertising and erecting a large roof top sign in the 1950s. Though slightly changed from the original design and orientation, the sign consists of a large metal frame, 5 foot tall channel letters with plastic faces and neon tubing inside.

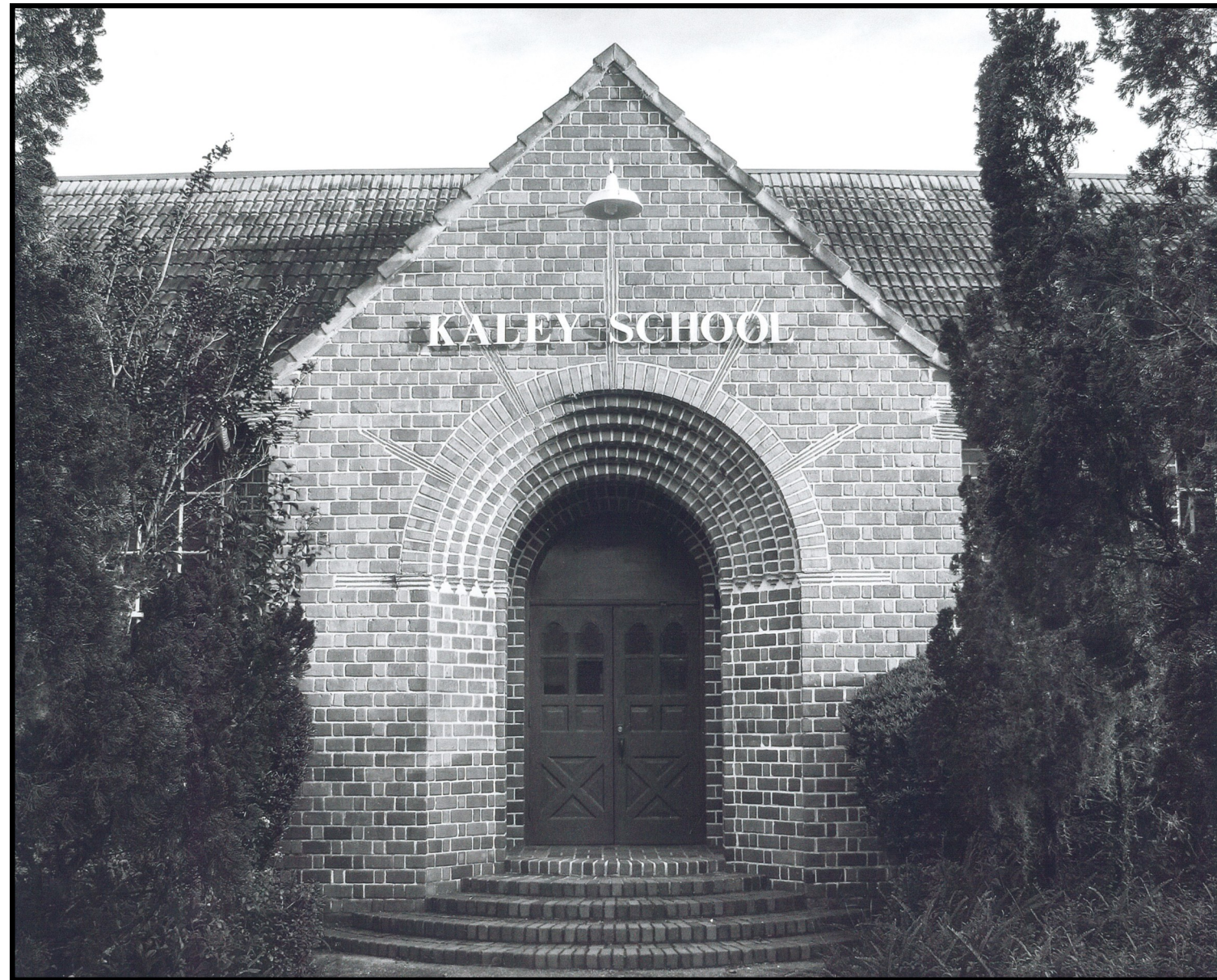
August 2015



H.H. Dickson Azalea Park and the Washington Street Bridge
Photo By Vivian Ward

An Orlando Landmark since 1991. In 1926, the Concrete Steel Bridge Company replaced the simple wooden bridge across Fern Creek with a large reinforced concrete bridge. The Washington Street Bridge is a closed spandrel bridge with three spandrels, each 18 feet wide and 8 feet high. The center spandrel arches over Fern Creek and the other two act as covered walkways. The brick driving deck has a Beau Arts-influence balustrade and sidewalks on each side. It is unique in that it is the only bridge of its kind in the City of Orlando and perhaps Florida. In 1933, the Civitan Club requested Mayor S.Y. Way to approve converting the surrounding overgrown, city-owned space to a park. In 1935, they broke ground and with the aid of Botanist Mulford B. Foster laid out plantings to preserve native plants and planted trees and shrubs bearing berries to encourage a bird sanctuary. Local groups including The Orlando Garden Club, First Methodist Church, employees of Dickson Ives Department Store, and the Sentinel Star newspaper adopted plots within the park to beautify. They dedicated H.H. Dickson Azalea Park on February 21, 1937, honoring Henry Hill Dickson, a pioneer Orlando businessman and advocate of the City's beautification. The park, which includes a series of terraces, bridges, walls, stairs, and paths, is Orlando's only cultural landscape designated a historic Landmark. This scenic public park and bridge is often the site of picnics, hikes, weddings, and engagement pictures.

September 2015



**Kaley Street Elementary School, 1600 E. Kaley Street
Photo By Jeanann Wohlfart**

An Orlando Landmark since 1995. This 1936 Tudor Revival is significant as the only example of this style utilized as a non-residential building in the City. With a lack of building resources during the Great Depression, crews built Kaley Elementary from eight pound bricks removed from nearby streets when Kaley Street was resurfaced. Designer Maurice Kressly designed several of Orlando's important commercial and institutional buildings of the 1920s-40s. Pictured is the central entrance bay with cascading rows of recessed brick arches detailed with thin slivers of tile radiating from the arch under a small gable roof with flared eaves. Curved brick steps lead to the original double wood doors. Originally built with six classrooms, an auditorium, cafeteria, and a playground, today the school consists of a group of one story brick buildings dating from the 1930s to the 1990s constructed in a rectangular pattern with two courtyards. Although altered though the years, Kaley Street School maintains its architectural integrity through sensitive design and retention of its original features.

October 2015



Jack Kerouac House, 1418 Clouser Avenue
Photo By Scott Nichols

An Orlando Landmark since 2003. Jack Kerouac, a great American author of the 20th Century, lived in this house when his most successful book, *On the Road* was published. Kerouac became famous overnight on September 5, 1957, when The New York Times gave a rave review. Here, he wrote the book's follow-up *The Dharma Bums* in twelve days using a rented typewriter and a roll of teletype paper taped together as a continuous scroll. Because the home had no air conditioning, Kerouac mostly wrote at night or underneath the large oak in the backyard. Having arrived penniless and renting the home with his mother, he left for New York in 1958 as a famous American writer. Today, the property is managed by the Jack Kerouac Writer in Residence Project of Orlando, a nonprofit group that opens the home to a writer or poet to live and write, rent free. In 1998, the group renovated the c. 1920 Frame Vernacular house to look like it did when Kerouac lived there. In 2013, The Jack Kerouac House became the newest site in Orlando to be placed on National Register of Historic Places.

November 2015



**Ebenezer Methodist Church, 596 W. Church Street
Photo By David Billingsley**

An Orlando Landmark since 2004. The Ebenezer Methodist Church, founded in the early 1890s, purchased the property at the corner of Terry Avenue and Church Street in 1892 to build a wooden church. The wooden building became the first African American Methodist Church and one of the City's first buildings to be built by an African American. When the congregation outgrew the small wooden church, they demolished it to construct this larger brick church built in phases from 1922. The high style Gothic Revival structure includes arched windows, shaped parapets, and a corner tower. The corner tower has a round arched door opening and pointed Gothic arched windows on the second level, as pictured. The Ebenezer Methodist Church building remains a preserved example of a church constructed during Florida's Land Boom and is the second oldest African American Church building in the city following the Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church structure built in 1921.

December 2015



**Peleg Peckham /Dr. Phillips Home, 135 N. Lucerne Circle
Photo By Douglas Metzger**

An Orlando Landmark since 1978. Built in 1893, Col. Peleg Peckham constructed the house as a wedding gift for his daughter. In 1912, citrus magnate Dr. Phillips and wife, Della, purchased it and hired architect L. Percival Hutton to remodel the mansion adding the Greek Revival portico, a cellar, additional bedrooms, and converting gas-lights to electricity. This is the only example of a 19th c. Shingle style mansion in Orlando. It features horizontal bands of shingles in various shapes including the diamond-patterned shingles on the roof of the turret. Now a bed and breakfast, it is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places. One of Orlando's first millionaire families, the Phillips' were prominent supporters of the arts, hosting many cultural events at the house. Their support continues through Dr. Phillips, Inc. which provides grants to educational and cultural organizations.

2015 Historic Preservation Calendar

Letter from the Mayor

The 2015 Historic Preservation Board calendar celebrates Orlando's rich history through our many treasured landmarks and national register properties. This year, rather than exploring one of our historic neighborhoods, we're featuring historic resources throughout our entire City, including churches, gardens, historic signs, commercial buildings, homes, schools and theaters. Each spectacular landmark represents a special chapter in our City's history and culture.

Many of these historic sites date all the way back to the early years of our City, such as the Old Orlando Railroad Depot, which many of us know today as Church Street Station and is the exact location where SunRail operates today. The calendar also features the beautiful Washington Street Bridge and the Kress Building.

In addition, the homes of some of our most treasured historical figures like Judge Cheney, Jack Kerouac, Dr. Phillips, Harry P. Leu and Dr. W. Wells provide an exciting glimpse into our history. Our local historic schools, such as Orlando High (now Howard Middle), Princeton Elementary and Kaley Elementary, exemplify Orlando's great respect for heritage.

I would like to thank the members of the Historic Preservation Board for their continued commitment to preserving our City's historic landmarks and districts. I would also like to thank the McCoy Federal Credit Union for sponsoring the Historic Preservation Board calendar for the past 5 years.

I hope you enjoy this year's calendar and appreciate with me all that makes Orlando, the City Beautiful.

Sincerely,

Buddy Dyer
Mayor