

**Walks through History**  
**Stuttgart Commercial Historic District**  
**Begin at the Old Stuttgart Post Office (now City Hall) at 302 S. Maple**  
**October 13, 2012**  
**By: Rachel Silva**



**Intro**

Hi, my name is Rachel Silva, and I work for the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program. Welcome to the Walks through History tour of the Stuttgart Commercial Historic District! Before we get started, I'd like to thank the Grand Prairie Historical Society for co-sponsoring the tour, and I'd like to recognize a few people in particular for their help with the tour—

Claudia Ahrens with the GPHS and the *Stuttgart Daily Leader*;  
Pat Peacock, former director of the Museum of the AR Grand Prairie;  
Glenn Mosenthin, editor of the *Grand Prairie Historical Bulletin*; and  
Gena Seidenschwarz, archivist at the Museum of the AR Grand Prairie and  
GPHS member;  
And last but not least, Mayor Marianne Maynard, for allowing us to use City  
Hall today.

The Stuttgart Commercial Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2007 for its association with the development of Stuttgart and for its collection of late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century architectural styles. The district is bounded by 1<sup>st</sup> Street, College, 6<sup>th</sup>, and Maple. There are 4 buildings individually listed on the National Register in downtown Stuttgart—the Arkansas County Courthouse, Northern District (NR-listed 1992), Riceland Hotel (NR-listed 1986), Standard Ice Company Building (NR-listed 1979), and the Stuttgart Post Office (NR-listed 2004).

### **Brief History of Stuttgart**

Stuttgart is located in a geographical subregion of the Mississippi Delta called the Grand Prairie. The Grand Prairie encompasses modern-day Arkansas, Lonoke, Monroe, and Prairie counties. Historically, the Grand Prairie consisted of about 320,000 acres of tallgrass prairie. The Grand Prairie is characterized by a unique soil type with sandy topsoil and dense clay subsoil, giving it a slow permeability (difficult for water to penetrate). And the Grand Prairie had what initially seemed to be an endless supply of groundwater from the Mississippi River Valley Alluvial Aquifer. The land therefore seemed ideal for crops that required flooding, such as rice. Early settlers raised hay, oats, fruits, and cattle before the advent of rice farming.

Reverend George Adam Buerkle is considered the founding father of Stuttgart. Buerkle was born in Plattenhardt, Germany, and came to the U.S. with his family in 1852. By 1877 Buerkle was a Lutheran minister in Woodville, Ohio, and began searching for a good spot to start a German colony. In 1878 Rev. Buerkle purchased 7,749 acres of the old Gum Pond Plantation and brought the first group of families (65 people), including 17 Lutheran ministers, to the Grand Prairie. A second group of settlers, including Rev. Buerkle's wife and children, arrived in October 1879. Buerkle kept half of the plantation for his family and sold the other half to the colonists (for the same price he had paid, \$3/acre). In 1880 Rev. Buerkle established a post office in his home and called it Stuttgart after his old home in Germany (Stuttgart is about 10 miles north of Plattenhardt).

In 1883 the Texas & St. Louis Railway (became the St. Louis, Arkansas & Texas in 1886, which was then reorganized as the St. Louis Southwestern or “Cotton Belt” Railway in 1891) was completed from Pine Bluff to Clarendon, but the railroad did not come through Buerkle’s settlement where the original post office was located, so the train didn’t stop. Luckily, Buerkle also owned the land adjacent to the railroad tracks, so he built a small shack along the tracks and put a sign reading “Stuttgart” on it. This became the second post office and the present-day site of Stuttgart. This post office was located north of the railroad tracks and west of Main Street and was about 2 miles southeast of the old Buerkle homesite (post office no longer extant).

Stuttgart was platted in 1884 but did not experience much growth until 1887, when Col. Thomas H. Leslie and his brother, Henry, relocated from Leslie Center (present-day Gillett) to Stuttgart and established the Grand Prairie Real Estate Exchange. The Leslie brothers sent land agents to the Midwest, where they offered people free travel by train to Stuttgart to see the Grand Prairie. The Leslie brothers also built a large wood-frame hotel on the site of the Riceland Hotel at the southwest corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> & Main (destroyed by 1889 fire). Thomas Leslie was the president of Stuttgart’s first bank, the Arkansas County Banking Company. In 1889 the Leslie brothers, along with Francis M. Gillett of New York City (who provided the total cost of \$250,000, a locomotive, and two passenger cars), founded the Stuttgart & Arkansas River Railroad. This railroad went southeast from Stuttgart to DeWitt to Leslie Center, which was renamed Gillett (in honor of the NYC investor). [By 1893 the railroad was in debt, and in 1901 it was sold to the Cotton Belt. It became the Gillett Branch of the Cotton Belt Railroad.]

Stuttgart’s first schoolhouse was constructed in 1882 at the southwest corner of 4<sup>th</sup> & Main. A larger wood-frame school was built in 1889 at the northwest corner of 4<sup>th</sup> & Leslie (an addition was built ca. 1905). A brick school was built on Lowe Street in 1912, and the old wood-frame school at 4<sup>th</sup> & Leslie served as the courthouse beginning in 1913, when Stuttgart was designated the county seat for the northern district of Arkansas County (current courthouse was built in 1928).

Stuttgart's first electric light company was incorporated in 1897, as was the first telephone company. In 1904 W. H. Fuller of Lonoke County and his brother-in-law, John Morris, of Carlisle, were the first to successfully grow rice on the Grand Prairie. In 1907 the Stuttgart Rice Mill Company constructed Mill A, the first rice mill in the area. The Rice Growers' Association of Arkansas was formed in 1909 to protect and inform farmers, and the first annual Rice Carnival was held in Stuttgart the same year to extol the virtues of Arkansas rice. The first sewer lines were laid in 1910, and the construction of sidewalks and the addition of house numbers began in 1912. As I mentioned earlier, Arkansas County was divided into two judicial districts in 1913, and Stuttgart became the county seat for the northern district, with DeWitt being the county seat for the southern district. In 1916 Main Street was paved from the Cotton Belt Railroad tracks south to 6<sup>th</sup> Street at the cost of \$4,500. This was accomplished under the direction of Clyde Pettit, L. H. Mophew, and H. E. Rhodes. Mr. Rhodes provided the concrete at cost as part of his civic duty.

In 1921 the Arkansas Rice Growers Cooperative Association was formed to provide security for producers' future earnings. This co-op exists today as Riceland Foods, Inc. Producers Rice Mill, Inc., was started by local farmers in 1943. Together, Riceland and Producers handle 40% of the nation's rice crop, making Stuttgart the Rice Capital of the World.

Stuttgart is located in the Mississippi Flyway near the Arkansas and White rivers, and the area's rice fields only made it more attractive to migratory birds. Every fall, ducks and other waterfowl make a pit-stop (sometimes a permanent pit-stop ☺) on their way south to feed on the remnants of rice left in the fields. This made Stuttgart a popular destination for duck hunters and tourists, eventually leading to its title as the Duck Hunting Capital of the World. In 1936 the first World's Championship Duck Calling Contest was held as part of the Rice Carnival. The idea was conceived by Dr. H. V. Glenn, Verne Tindall, and Thad S. McCollum. The Duck Calling Contest is now held during the annual Wings Over the Prairie Festival, which takes place in Stuttgart the weekend after Thanksgiving each year.

In 1942, the Stuttgart Army Air Field was built north of Stuttgart as a twin engine advanced flying school during World War II. This also drew people to the area and boosted the town's economy.

[The first French settlement west of the Mississippi River was established in 1686 at Arkansas Post (Santa Fe is the oldest European settlement west of the Mississippi; founded in 1610). France sold its vast landholdings to the United States in the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, and in 1812 present-day Arkansas became part of the Missouri Territory. Arkansas County was created in 1813 by the Missouri Territorial Legislature and comprised about two-thirds of what is now the state of Arkansas as well as part of eastern Oklahoma. More than half of Arkansas's counties were formed from this original county. In 1819 when Arkansas Territory was created, Arkansas Post became its capital. Then in 1821, Arkansas's Territorial capital was moved to a more central location in Little Rock. When Arkansas became a state in 1836, Arkansas Post became the county seat of Arkansas County. By 1845 Arkansas Post had a population of less than 100 people. Arkansas County had very few roads, and it was difficult for residents to travel to the far southeast corner of the county in order to conduct their county business. So in 1853, a commission chose a site near the geographical center of the county and platted the county seat of DeWitt.]

### **Stuttgart Post Office (NR-listed 2004)**

The Stuttgart Post Office was built in 1931 and was dedicated in 1932. The building was designed in the Colonial Revival style of architecture with Neoclassical details by the General Services Administration's supervising architect, James A. Wetmore. When originally constructed, the building's façade was symmetrical with an accentuated front entry and multi-pane windows. The design features a triangular pediment supported by four Corinthian columns and a projecting cornice with dentil molding and pine cone (or pineapple) ornaments at the corners (said to be a symbol of hospitality). The original building cost \$60,000. In 1968 a 3,000-square foot addition was built on the north side of the building at a cost of \$144,957. The GSA was careful to match it to the original building, but it

makes the front façade asymmetrical. The parking lot to the south of the building was also added at this time. The handicapped ramp was added in 1995. In 2002 a new post office was built on Michigan Avenue, and the City of Stuttgart purchased this building to serve as city hall. City Hall was dedicated in 2007.

**Lot at the SE corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> & Maple**—site of a ca. 1940 building that housed the USO during World War II, catering to pilots at the Stuttgart Army Air Field. Was later the location of Rich’s Grocery, run by H. R. and Jimmy Rich.

115-117 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> (by the vacant lot)—built ca. 1910 and housed a meat market in the western storefront and the post office in the eastern storefront with lodging upstairs (became the Metropolitan Hotel for a short time around 1913, when the old Metropolitan Hotel on Main Street became the Hotel Price). The post office remained here until the new post office was completed in 1932.

118 W. 3<sup>rd</sup>—built ca. 1920 as an auto garage with a 40 car capacity. By the 1950s, it was Moll Motor Company (Oldsmobile). May have been Early-Jackson Chevrolet in the 1920s?

### **Walk south along Maple**

Tindall House at NW corner 4<sup>th</sup> & Maple—built ca. 1935 (sometime between the 1924 and 1950 Sanborn maps). Stuttgart Lumberman Joseph I. Porter’s ca. 1880 2-story house was on this site and was later moved west down 4<sup>th</sup> Street to 4<sup>th</sup> & Porter, where it became part of the Chet Pond home. This buff brick home was built by Carthell Robbins, who was involved with the J. I. Porter Lumber Company. The home was later purchased by Verne Tindall, one of the three men who organized the first World Championship Duck Calling Contest in 1936. It is mostly Craftsman in style, but its front entrance is more Collegiate Gothic in style with its parapet and pilasters.

Morphew House at SW corner 4<sup>th</sup> & Maple—built ca. 1885 by one of Stuttgart’s first doctors, Dr. Veasey. After Dr. Veasey’s death, Dr. Leander Howard Morphew

bought the house and enlarged it. By 1913, the house had a two-story wrap-around porch with paired columns and three columns at the corner. Dr. Morpew was a druggist and physician and operated a drug store at 309 S. Main (current location of Choi Beauty & Hair). Dr. Morpew's daughter, Lucile Morpew Rodgers, later lived in the house. Local residents remember a cursing (and whistling) parrot on the porch of this house in the 1940s. You can still see a brick chimney in the side yard that was either from a detached kitchen or servant's quarters (there was a 1-story log outbuilding in that location, and the 1913 Sanborn map marked it "Servants").

118 W. 4<sup>th</sup> (NE corner 4<sup>th</sup> & Maple)—Majestic Dress Shop. The N. T. Kesterson House, which dates from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, makes up the core of this building with a more modern commercial-style addition wrapped around it. Pat Peacock worked here in the 1950s and later owned the dress shop.

### **Walk south on Maple to 6<sup>th</sup>, and go east on 6<sup>th</sup>**

111 W. 6<sup>th</sup> (Daily Leader)—About 1895, a Christian Church was built at the southwest corner of 6<sup>th</sup> & Main. Then about 1915, the First Christian Church erected a new building on this site. First Christian Church remained here until 1928, when the church built a new building at 10<sup>th</sup> & Main, and then in 1946, the Hanson Building was constructed here (see parapet). This was Ragsdale Motor Co. (Ford dealership), run by C. B. Ragsdale. It was later Knoll (Nall)-Ratcliff Motor Co. Has been the Daily Leader since 1959.

### **Main Street**

SW corner 6<sup>th</sup> & Main—I've already told you there was a Christian Church on this corner beginning in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The corner was vacant until ca. 1940, when Finch's Esso Service Center was built here (Esso is for "S. O." or Standard Oil).

SE corner 6<sup>th</sup> & Main—Charles Williamson incorporated Stuttgart's first electric light and water company on this corner in 1897. By 1917, the name was changed to Arkansas Public Service Co. Powerhouse & Waterworks. The 1924 Sanborn map shows these buildings slated for removal, and an office and ice house for Arkansas Power & Light Company was built on this site shortly thereafter. AP & L remained there until 1967. The 2-story American Legion Hall was built directly to the east of AP & L. The library was later housed in the old American Legion Hall.

NE corner 6<sup>th</sup> & Main—By 1917 there was a marble works here in a small tin building. By the 1930s or so, there was a large, brick service station on this corner. It was the Goodyear Service Station, first run by W. E. Albright and later by Howard Horst. Horst Goodyear remained there until the early 1960s.

NW corner 6<sup>th</sup> & Main—By 1924, Hayes Lion Oil Service Station was located here and remained until at least 1960.

Main Street is very wide because at the time the town was platted, it was necessary for teams of oxen and horses to turn around in the street. There were short columns with a cast-concrete ball on top placed in the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> & Main and 3<sup>rd</sup> & Main intersections to allow for people to turn around, and also to delineate the different sides of the street after the advent of the automobile. The first buildings on Main Street were of wood-frame construction, but after a fire in 1889 almost wiped out the entire business district, a city ordinance was passed requiring all new buildings to be brick.

### **East side of Main going north from 6<sup>th</sup> Street**

#### **500 & 400 blocks**

**Standard Ice Company (NR-listed 1979)**—The Standard Ice Company Building was constructed in 1926 in the Spanish Revival style with a glazed brick façade and a tile roof. At the time of its construction, ice houses manufactured blocks of ice for residential and commercial use. The building remained in operation for over 50

years. In 1933 the Standard Ice Co. sold to the Standard Ice Co. of Arkansas. In 1978 the Standard Ice Co. of Arkansas merged with the Southern Ice Co., and the building was abandoned. After in-home refrigerators cut into their business, the lost revenue was made up by freezing and packing strawberries in the building as well as processing and freezing ducks killed by local hunters.

Going north from the ice plant—

There were two buildings on the site of the stage and chamber of commerce. The southernmost building was the office of Dr. Rex Hancock (1950s), and the northernmost building was Louis Hofner Paint & Paper in 1920, and by the 1950s, it was the office of Doctors Champion, Cook, and McCracken.

To the north of the chamber building, there was a 2-story brick building with a full, 2-story screened porch. It was built ca. 1910 as the Stuttgart Sanitarium and later became a hotel. 1913—Tranquilla Hotel; 1917—Hotel Tranquilla on Sanborn and City Hotel in directory; 1924—Hotel; 1936—Rhodes Rooming House; 1946—Home Hotel. It remained on this site until the early 1990s, when it was severely damaged by high winds.

423-425 Main—built in 1950. Housed the Riceland Electric Co-op and Stuttgart Water Works.

The Pierron (Pear-on) House was north of 423 Main. Mrs. Pierron converted part of her house into a millinery. During WWII, soldiers rented rooms in this house. In the 1940s and 50s, this was the Bungalow Beauty Shop (and I believe it was the oldest wood-frame building left on Main Street before it was demolished in the early 2000s).

415 Main—Magnolia Apartments, built in 1946?

413 Main—Natural Gas Building. Built ca. 1930 for Arkansas Louisiana Gas Company. Features basket bond brickwork, a shaped parapet, and transom windows. The ceramic tile in the doorway reads “Morrison.”

411 Main—B. L. Williams Building, built 1920. Home to the Rice Belt Land Company in the 1920s, and by the 1930s, it was McDonald Insurance. In 1955, it was Keller Furniture Co. The building has apartments upstairs, which were rented out from about 1940 to 1980.

409 Main—Built ca. 1910. J. Duncan Furniture? Example of a slipcover. By 1955, this was First Federal Savings.

407 Main—Built ca. 1915. Drummond Printing opened here in the 1940s.

403-405 Main—Built ca. 1910. Housed several businesses over the years. 405 (right) was home to Downing Photography in 1913 and was later Floyd Denman Jewelers (by 1944). By 1955, it was Max Denman Optometry. 403 (left) was the Stuttgart Business College (1918), Denman Bros. Jewelry (1920), Wilcox Grocery (1920), Bowden Furniture (1925), Duncan Furniture (1937), Sears Roebuck & Co. (1953), and Words Jewelers (1955). In 1970, 403 was Billy's Record Store. There were three apartments upstairs, and in the 1920s, the Glenn Hospital was also upstairs. "Denman" in the mosaic tile entry to building.

401 Main—Only 3-story building on Main Street. Built ca. 1910. Initially housed a "gent's furnishings" or men's clothing and accessory store called Menees (Minez) Bros. Clothing. Also home to several banks, including the People's National Bank, First Stuttgart Bank & Trust, and First National Bank. The Elite Café occupied a storefront on the north side of the building facing 4<sup>th</sup> Street. From the 1930s until about 1970, this was People's National Bank. The upper floors housed professional offices (including Dr. Petter, dentist), and a lodge hall was on the third floor (in 1917 it was designated for the Elks). The building is known as the Johnson Building on old photos, but beginning on the 1917 Sanborn map, it is labeled the Exchange Building (Exchange Bank).

### **300 Block**

321-323 Main—H. E. Rhodes Building, built in 1889. Has a new façade and has been extensively altered--was originally much more elaborate, with 8 second story windows across the front façade, brick corbelling at the cornice, and cast-iron building components on the storefront. You can still see the window sills along the building's southern elevation. The building initially housed Rhodes Hardware. In the 1890s, one half of the building was occupied by Strong & Oberly Grocery and the other half by Rhodes Hardware, and Dr. Sillin's office was upstairs. Ca. 1918, the building was occupied by the J. P. Selig Land Company and the F. E. Erstine Hardware Store. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the building was extended to east. In 1913, the telephone office was on the second floor, and a lodge hall occupied the second floor in the back portion of the building. In the 1950s, this was Belcher's Hardware and Kline's Children's Wear. In 1968-69 Sterling 5 & 10 moved to the Rhodes Building from its location in the Riceland Hotel. Cummings Electric was also in the Rhodes Building at that time. The façade was altered after a fire in the 1970s.

A fire in the 1970s destroyed two buildings to the north of the Rhodes Building. A one-story building constructed in 1950 was at 317-319 Main and housed Wellworth Department Store and later Belk-Jones Department Store. Another small one-story building dating from about 1910 at 315 Main housed Keller Furniture (1928), Helm Furniture (1940), and Moll Auto Supply & Radio Co. (1947-at least 1970s).

313 Main—built ca. 1910. Housed the Pastime Pool Hall beginning in 1920—the pool hall closed in 1972. It was later Shoemith Shoe Repair. In the 1950s, Bill's Barber Shop was in the rear of the building.

311 Main—currently Ragan's Gifts. Built in 1912 as a dry goods store (says "1912" in mosaic tile entry). It was the Arkansas Mercantile Company by 1914. From at least 1936 to the 1970s, this was Ben Franklin 5 & 10.

305-307-309 Main were built in 1903 as one building with three storefronts and all have newer facades.

309 Main—Choi Hair. Was Morphew Drug, run by Dr. L. H. Morphew (says “LHM 1903” in mosaic tile entry). Later became Morphew Rexall Drug, and in the late 1950s, it was purchased by Joe Horst and became Horst Rexall Drug. About 1969, Norris Ragan bought the property, and it became Ragan Rexall Drug. In the last 15-20 years, Ragan Rexall Drug moved one building to the south and became Ragan’s Gifts.

307 Main—Embellish. Bank of Stuttgart, People’s Drugs, Inn Café (1919). By 1944, this was Russell’s Department Store.

305 Main—Celebrate. Crowe Building (see parapet). Beginning in 1914, this was Crowe Drug Company, run by J. Roger Crowe. In the 1940s, Crowe Drug had a soda fountain and offered curbside service. Crowe Drug was here well into the 1970s. During the 1960s, the Stuttgart High School pep rallies were held in front of Crowe Drug.

301-303 Main—Built ca. 1890 with a decorative pressed metal façade. The northernmost storefront (301) housed several banks, including the Bank of Commerce (1904), Farmer’s and Merchant’s Bank (1918), Arkansas County Bank (1922), and First National Bank (1927). By about 1915, Harper-Croom Dry Goods and the Conn & Underwood Hardware Store were in the southern storefront (303). Conn Hardware occupied the entire building in the early 1940s (still had the metal façade). By the late 1940s, the pressed metal façade had been removed, and the building was stuccoed. At that time, it housed West Bros. Department Store.

## **200 Block**

221-223 Main—Built ca. 1917. The 221 side (left) housed McCollum Hardware, run by M. T. “Mack” McCollum. You can still barely make out the ghost sign reading McCollum Hardware above the transom windows. When duck hunters started coming to Stuttgart en masse in the 1930s and 40s, McCollum’s Hardware

began stocking items to outfit them. Business was so good that Mack McCollum decided to open a store dedicated to the sale of sporting goods. He acquired the storefront at 223 and cut a doorway through the interior wall. He opened Mack's Sport Shop in the 223 side in 1944. In 1970 the business left downtown for a larger location on Hwy. 79. It expanded again in 2000 and moved to its current location on Hwy. 63, where the business has continued to grow. The business became known as Mack's Prairie Wings and is now America's premier waterfowl outfitter. Was Knoll (Nall)-Ratcliff Hardware at 221 after McCollum Hardware? Before Mack's Sport Shop moved into the 223 storefront, it housed Hammans-Selig Gent's Furnishings (1920) and possibly a bank (1924 Sanborn)?

217-219 Main—built ca. 1915. 219 (right) housed the Fair General Store (1918) with the Grand Prairie News (printing) upstairs about 1920. The Wellworth Dime Store (started out as a dime store before it became a department store) and the F. E. Erstine Stove Store were here in the late 1920s. Naub Street Liquor was here in the 1940s, followed by Graves Hardware and later, Graves Home Supply (by the mid-1950s). In the 1960s and 70s, it was Belcher Hardware.

217 (left) was Selig's Real Estate in the 1920s and later the People's Grocery. By 1965, this half of the building was combined with the one-story building at 215 Main to house the United Dollar Store. Various professional offices were upstairs in this building, including the credit bureau office (1950s) and attorney Lillian Young's office.

215 Main—Dollar Zone. Built ca. 1910. Housed R. F. Stipsky Grocery and Meat Market by 1917. Was later Bill's Café (by 1936), A. G. Duncan Furniture (1955), LaMode Ladies Dress Shop (1958), and part of the United Dollar Store by 1965.

213 Main—Too Cute. Built ca. 1910. Was Moran Farm Insurance by 1914, followed by the Pollard Café in 1915. People could also drop their laundry off at the Pollard Café. It became the City Café in 1917. The City Café was open 24 hours a day. Every farmer ate here—everyone went here. Mrs. Mildred Hedtrich was owner-manager. The City Café was here until about 1970.

211 Main—metal slipcover. Built ca. 1910. Built to be an auto garage. By 1920, this was the Reo Auto Dealership (R. E. O. are the initials of Ransom E. Olds of Oldsmobile; this was an early form of Oldsmobile). It was later the New York Store, which was a high-class clothing store, followed by Rephan's (Re-phan's) Department Store. By 1948, it was Bowden Furniture (and remained so until at least 1955). In the 1960s and 70s, this was Western Auto.

209 Main—Magic Forest. Built ca. 1920. Has a shaped brick parapet with a recessed rectangular panel. Was Jones Bakery, and then Franke's Bakery.

207 Main—Grand Prairie Leader Building. Built ca. 1920. Housed the Stuttgart Daily Leader newspaper office. May have housed First National Bank at some point? Labeled bank on 1924 Sanborn. From the late 1960s until the early 1990s, this building housed Anderson Office Supply.

205 Main—J. George 1937. Kroger was here in the 1940s, followed by McKinley Jewelers in the 1960s and 70s.

201-203 Main—Freemyer's. This building was constructed about 1935 on the site of an old hotel. By 1903, the 2-story Pickwick Hotel was on this site. It was later called the Harper Hotel and became the Planter's Hotel by 1917. The building was made with concrete block, and the board-and-batten veneer is a later addition. Safeway Grocery was here until the late 1950s.

## **100 Block**

Second Street was originally called Union Street. Sanborn maps began indicating "2nd St." in parentheses next to Union beginning in 1913. The name was permanently changed by the 1920s.

NE corner 2nd & Main—Site of the Arkansaw Grain Company's hay, grain, and grocery warehouse. This building dated from ca. 1915. It was replaced in the 1940s by the McCallister Motor Company (Ford). McCallister Ford had open bays

at the front and south side, so you could drive into the service area to reach the gas pumps. The motor company office was located in the next building to the north (today at 119 Main).

119 Main—built ca. 1920. Was J. S. Burch Barber in the late 1920s. Later part of McCallister Motors.

117 Main—Ace Hardware. Built ca. 1920. Blackmon Bros.? In the 1960s and early 70s, this building housed Cummings Electric.

115 Main—arches. Allis Chalmers implements by 1946 and Stephens Implements by 1955.

113 Main—yellow storefront. Arkansas Farm Machinery (1935) and later Western Auto-Jett Cato (before it moved to the 200 block in the 1960s?).

109-111 Main—last two red brick storefronts or the southern half of the white building? Weiman Implements.

101 Main—white building. The northernmost half was Duckett Pontiac, which became Burnett Pontiac in the 60s.

Lot at NE corner 1st & Main—J. I. Porter Lumber Company (up through the 1960s). Porter Lumber Co. was also on the south side of First Street in the early 20th century before these buildings were constructed.

Old Cotton Belt Railroad Tracks—The Mission-style Cotton Belt Passenger Depot was built in Stuttgart in 1910 just south of the tracks between College and Grand streets. Railroad passenger service stopped in 1959, and the depot was demolished ca. 1986. There was also a Rock Island Depot in Stuttgart on the north side of First Street between College and Grand (just south of the Cotton Belt Depot). It was identical to the Rock Island Depot at Hazen (demolished in the 1940s).

## West side of Main St. going south from tracks

### 100 Block

100-104 Main—Gossip Shop. Site of the White Way Esso Station and Lucheonette. Also had a bus station and a bait shop connected with the service station. The White Way Station was built in 1937 and had several additions over the years. Sometime in the 1940s, the white one-story building you see today was built to the south side of the White Way station. It housed the Elmer Grant Liquor Store. I'm not sure if there is any of the historic fabric from the White Way inside the current Gossip Shop building.

110 Main—2-story. Built ca. 1915. Features some vernacular Italianate elements like the hood molding over the second story windows, windows set in segmental arch openings, and brick corbelling and dentils at the cornice. Has housed many things, including Avery Machine Shop (1919), Rice Belt Feed (1929), Chet Pond Liquor (1938), City Grocery (1946), Boone Hays Plumber (1946), and Bogard Produce (1955). In the late 1940s and 1950s, the Elbow Room was upstairs in this building. It was a club where you could play pool.

112 Main—Buckeye. Built ca. 1930. Has shaped parapet and circular panel (may have had a clock here?). Was home to Buckeye Machine Shop and later Waggoner Magneto (a magneto is part of a starter for large agricultural equipment). In the 1960s and 70s, it was ABS Music.

Buildings at 116-118-120 destroyed by fire (what year?). Housed McVay-Harris Grocery, Belcher Produce, and Turner-Hall (?).

122 Main—ornamental concrete block with rock face design (from the rock face panel used to stamp the blocks). Built ca. 1920. Was Fairbanks Morse Irrigation equipment and pumps (1922) and later became Crow-Burlingame (auto parts).

Look down 2nd Street to 116-120 W. 2nd—location of Layne-Arkansas, which started in 1907 digging wells and building irrigation systems on the Grand Prairie. The company perfected the Layne gravel wall well to prevent wells from caving in due to the Grand Prairie's sandy topsoil. Had their machine shop, demonstration room, office, and parts warehouse here. They occupied an earlier building on this site, but the current brick building dates to about 1925.

## **200 Block**

202-204 Main—built ca. 1910. Buerkle Drug in the northern storefront, and Stump Grocery in the southern storefront (1927). There were hotel rooms for rent on the second floor. Southern storefront became Oklahoma Tire & Supply in 1953 (OTASCO was also located on the west side of Main in the 100 block and on the east side of the street as well).

206 Main—L. A. Nails. Built ca. 1910. A & M Café, barber shop, and Tomastic Sandwich Shop (1955).

The empty space was full of wood-frame buildings that burned, including Selig Sandwich Shop (beginning 1920) and Red Shoe Barn & Grocery.

210-212 Main—Mayn Mart. Built in 1911 as the Reinsch (Wrench) Mercantile. B. Reinsch & Co. sold dry goods, millinery, clothing, boots & shoes, carpets, groceries, and window shades. In the late 1940s, Conn Hardware moved from its location at the SE corner of 3rd & Main into this building, where it remained until the 1960s or 70s. Note the cast iron pilasters and decorative detailing on this building—paired brackets under the cornice and an accentuated north entrance with a pediment topped by a cartouche.

216 Main—2-story Coker-Hampton. Built ca. 1890. Has decorative pressed metal façade. H. H. Spiller Grocery and later Rosenthal's Dress & Beauty Shop (late 1920s until the 1960s).

218 Main—1-story Coker-Hampton. Built ca. 1890. Has tile-capped parapet. Housed Webb Drug and McFadden Jewelry by 1920. In 1928 Tom Coker and Bill Hampton opened the Coker-Hampton Drug Store here. Had a soda fountain with curbside service (1950s). Later expanded into the Rosenthal's building to the north (1970s).

220 Main—northernmost section of Wilkerson's Jewelers. Was originally a 1-story building constructed ca. 1890. Was Gettle Harness Shop (1910), an automotive store (1920), Aldridge Grocery (1944), and Denman Jewellers (1955). During the recent remodel of Wilkerson's, the old Denman Jewellers Building was absorbed into Wilkerson's and altered to match the Wilkerson's façade.

222-224 Main—This is the oldest brick building on Main Street with a construction date of 1889. Col. Thompson constructed a wood-frame building on this site, but it was destroyed in the 1889 fire. He was quick to rebuild. Col. Thompson and his wife, along with Miss Julia Shannon, lived in the south side of the building's second floor. The original building was brick with elaborate hood molding above the second story windows and a projecting metal cornice with the names "Thompson" and "Mahle & Harper" (Mail) at the top. The building housed the Exchange Bank (1914), German American Bank (1926), and the Farmer's & Merchants Bank (1946) in its southern storefront (left). Notice the lower façade of this portion—it has cast-stone detailing with quoins and a triangular pediment at the entrance. This was added when Farmer's & Merchants Bank moved into the building. The northern storefront (right) housed Harper Grocery (1920) and later Sims-Alexander Jewellers (1947). Housed Shields-Horst Insurance beginning in 1959. Wilkerson's has been here since 1970.

### **300 Block**

SW corner 3rd & Main—In 1887 the two-story, brick Metropolitan Hotel was constructed on this site. It had rooms for rent on the upper floor and a bank, barber, dining room, and grocery on the first floor. By 1913, the name changed to the Hotel Price. When it was the Hotel Price, a full, two-story porch with Ionic

columns was added to the building. The northern half of the Hotel Price was demolished in 1921 to make way for the Riceland Hotel, leaving behind only the southern half of the building (about where the cream colored building is to the south of the Riceland Hotel).

**Riceland Hotel (NR-listed 1986)**—The Riceland Hotel was built in 1921 and 1922 by the Stuttgart Hotel Company, which consisted of about 40 stockholders from all over the Grand Prairie. The Little Rock architectural firm of George R. Mann and Eugene John Stern designed the hotel with subtle Neoclassical-style details like two projecting cornices, limestone pilasters, dentil molding, and a decorative cartouche above a north entrance. While construction was underway, the investors had financial difficulties due to a drop in the price of rice. In 1922, the hotel's new owner, the Exchange Bank, resumed construction. The Riceland Hotel formally opened on February 15, 1923. The Riceland operated the top three floors as well as the storefronts that opened up onto 3rd Street, while the Exchange Bank had the two-story portion of the building fronting on Main Street. In 1929 the Southern Hotel Company acquired the hotel lease, which it retained until 1957. In its heyday, the Riceland Hotel was the place to see and be seen. The hotel's roof garden offered dancing every Friday night and was advertised as being "Cool and above the mosquitoes." According to locals, a piano was once thrown off the roof of the Riceland during a wild party. In the early 1960s, the Sterling Store was in the first floor of the Riceland Hotel. The Riceland Hotel closed in 1970.

306 Main—part of old Hotel Price? With new façade? Or entirely rebuilt? Housed Baker Mercantile (1925), American Mutual Insurance Co. (1920s), Kirchoff Motors (1928), Wilcox Grocery (1920s), Britt Grocery (1930s?), and Krummen Motor Rental (1928). In the 1950s and 60s, the Famous Department Store was here.

308 Main—built ca. 1930. The Blind Archie hot dog stand was on this site before the current building was constructed. This building housed Watkins Café (1936) and later the Esquire Grill (by 1944).

Building façade at 312 Main—old Strand Theater. Built ca. 1930. Showed some questionable movies (X-rated). Mode-o-day Ladies Dress Shop was later located in the square opening on the façade, and a book store was in the arched opening. You can still see the light bulb sockets on the theater façade.

314 Main—Built ca. 1930 (not 1909 like façade says). Nice basket bond brickwork. Smith-Lindsay Hardware (1950s until at least 1970).

316-318? Main—Built ca. 1930. Brown building with awning. Menees (Menay's) Department Store (1930), Oberly's Menswear (1942), and Chet Pond's Men's Store (1947).

320-326? Main—Pettit Building. Built ca. 1910. Mr. Pettit's law offices were upstairs, as were the offices for Kroger, along with a bowling alley and wrestling arena. Downstairs, there were four storefronts or more. Going north to south: People's Market (1929), Young's Department Store (1955). The Exchange Bank occupied the next storefront before 1920. Then Williams Bargain Store and Williams Ready-to-Wear (ca. 1915 & 1920). Southernmost storefront was Hord-Ahlfeldt Grocery (1915) and Sam's Department Store (1942).

Look west on 4th to point out the site of the Majestic Theater (behind the Trust Dept. Building at 400 Main). It was built ca. 1920 as the Garden Theater and later became the Majestic. It was the main movie theater in Stuttgart. Demolition work on the building began in the 1970s, and the entire building was taken down in the 1980s. Parts of the old Majestic Theater were salvaged for other buildings around Stuttgart.

## **400 & 500 Blocks**

Stuttgart's first school was on the SW corner of 4<sup>th</sup> & Main (built 1882).

Prior to the construction of the modern bank buildings, there were many small, wood-frame buildings on this block of Main, many of which were cafes and

sandwich shops, including the Fern Café, Stella Griffin Café, Mack's Café, the Tip Top Café, and Roy's Sandwich Shop. There was also a barber shop and the Barricklow (Bear Claw) Harness Shop.

400-422 Main—Trust Department & Bancorp South. First portion built in 1955 by First Federal Bank. The Bancorp building was constructed in the late 1960s for First National Bank.

The two-story H. E. Rhodes concrete building was located at 418-420 Main (where the Bancorp parking lot is now), and there were two 1-story buildings to its north. The one-story buildings housed Mahfouz (Mafous; Arabic) Music and Knoll (Nall) Laundry in the mid-20th century. The Rhodes concrete building housed Helm Furniture in the early 20th century and later Kettering photography studio, Anderson's Gifts and Office Supplies (run by Frank Leslie Anderson), Rhodes Furniture, Leland's Shoe Shop, and the Midget Grocery.

424 Main--Gaunt & Company—Dr. H. V. Glenn's office sat on this site. This was Glenn Mosenthin's grandfather. He was an osteopath. Served as mayor of Stuttgart. Dr. Glenn's office was razed in early 1965, and the current building was constructed in 1965-66 for Dr. Fred Eldridge, an optometrist.

Bronze Envy (green awning)—built after 1950. By 1953, was the Hub Co. Auto Electric, run by Johnny Bueker (Beaker).

Christy's Studebaker Dealership—built ca. 1920 but has newer veneer. Was later Christy Smith Electric.

Fire Station—a one-story fire station was built here (the same building) ca. 1915. A second story was added to the building in 1929. The building was again enlarged and joined to the new city hall in 1958.

City Hall—built 1955?

**Go one block to the east and walk up College Street**

College Street was so named because of Stuttgart College, which was founded in 1889 (building constructed ca. 1890). The Stuttgart College building was located at the foot of College Street at 15<sup>th</sup>. Later became the Stuttgart Training School. By 1917 the old college building was used for rice & grain storage. It was demolished (or burned) sometime before 1950.

St. John's Lutheran Church—NE corner College & 5<sup>th</sup>. Wonderful example of Gothic Revival style in Stuttgart. Church built in 1948 to replace an earlier building on this site.

312 College—courthouse annex/sheriff's office. Built to serve as the Elks Lodge. Later Turpin Funeral Home, run by Clay Turpin.

305 College—Dittrich (Deatrack) Law office. Was Morgans Funeral Home, run by Leland "Mutt" Morgans.

**Arkansas County Courthouse, Northern District (NR-listed 1992)**—SW corner College & 3<sup>rd</sup>. Built in 1928. Designed in the Neoclassical style by the Stuttgart architectural firm of Barrett & Ogletree.