

**Walks through History
Walnut Ridge CHD
Begin at Mo-Pac Depot
August 13, 2011
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 Walnut Ridge Commercial Historic District! I'd like to thank Cathy Harthorn, Jerry Gibbens, Phillip Clark, and Lloyd Clark for their help with the tour.

The Walnut Ridge Commercial Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in June 2010 for its association with the development of Walnut Ridge and for its collection of late 19th and early 20th century architectural styles. National Register designation is honorary only—it does not prohibit owners from altering their buildings. However, owners of NR-listed properties may be eligible for rehabilitation tax credits or grants.

There are a total of 58 resources in the historic district. 30 are contributing (51.7%) and 26 (including 3 vacant lots) are non-contributing (44.8%). Two buildings (3.5%) are individually listed on the National Register—the Missouri Pacific Depot (listed 6/11/92) and the old Post Office (listed 5/20/94).

Brief History of Walnut Ridge

Lawrence County was created in 1815 as part of the Missouri Territory and originally encompassed most of present-day northern Arkansas. Named after James Lawrence, an American naval hero during the War of 1812, Lawrence County predates the creation of Arkansas Territory (1819). Lawrence County is called the “Mother of Counties” because 31 counties were ultimately carved out of the original landmass. Early settlement was concentrated along the Black River and the Military Road (or Southwest Trail), as those were the two main transportation routes. Lawrence County has had several county seats, each one reflective of a change in population centers. Davidsonville, the first county seat, was also the site of Arkansas’s first courthouse and post office. When the Military Road was rerouted around some swampy land in the 1820s, bypassing Davidsonville, the population moved and consequently a new county seat was established at Jackson. Other county seats included Smithville, Clover Bend, Powhatan, and finally, Walnut Ridge. Present-day Lawrence County contains two geographically distinct regions divided by the Black River—the western half of the county is situated in the foothills of the Ozark Mountains, while the eastern half is located in the lowlands of the Mississippi River Delta.

Historically, the western part of the county was more populous than the eastern section due to the location of the Black River, which allowed steamboats to access the area. Even as late as 1870, the eastern half of Lawrence County was practically unsettled (this is the delta portion of the county and would have experienced drainage problems in the early years). The first permanent white settlers came to the Walnut Ridge area around 1860. They lived in a community that is now referred to as Old Walnut Ridge. In 1867 Civil War veteran Col. Willis Miles Ponder came from Missouri to Old Walnut Ridge, where he operated a sawmill and farmed. Ponder’s landholdings included the present-day town site of Walnut Ridge, and in 1873 when the St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern Railroad announced plans to construct a line through the county, he offered a right-of-way through his land and cleared a site for a depot. Col. Ponder founded the town of Walnut Ridge in 1875 and became its first mayor. The population gravitated toward the newly completed railroad line, thus bolstering the growth of Walnut Ridge.

Col. Ponder first called the town Pawpaw because of the number of pawpaw trees in the area, but before he applied for a post office at the new town site, he discovered that there was already a town in Arkansas called Pawpaw. So he named the town Walnut Ridge because of the large number of walnut trees in the area.

Back to the county seat issue...in 1869 Powhatan became the Lawrence County seat. Then by 1870 the county was divided into two districts—one at Powhatan and another at Old Walnut Ridge. A single judge convened on certain days in one town and certain days in the other. Then in 1887 legislation was passed creating two judicial districts—a western district in Powhatan and an eastern district in Walnut Ridge. However, Walnut Ridge outgrew its counterpart in the 20th century and by 1960 voters removed political authority from Powhatan, and Walnut Ridge became the sole county seat.

Walnut Ridge has always been closely tied to its neighboring town of Hoxie. In the early 1880s when Walnut Ridge businessmen could not agree with railroad officials on a route for the Kansas City, Fort Scott & Memphis Railroad, the railroad officials moved a mile and a half to the south. They secured land for their railroad and named the new town Hoxie in honor of railroad executive Jack Hoxie.

[The St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern RR became Missouri Pacific in 1917 and later Union Pacific. The KC, Fort Scott & Memphis RR became the St. Louis-San Francisco RR or Frisco in 1901 and later Burlington Northern-Santa Fe (BNSF).]

As early as the 1890s mule-drawn streetcars went back and forth between Walnut Ridge and Hoxie. In 1903 the Iron Mountain RR constructed a roundhouse and shops at Hoxie, which employed men from Walnut Ridge, who rode the cars to and from work. By 1908 the Walnut Ridge & Hoxie Light, Power & Transit Company was located at the NW corner of SW Front & Oak streets. This was a coal-burning power plant and also had a car barn for the mule-drawn streetcars. The company later became the Walnut Ridge Light, Power & Transit Co. and later the Arkansas-Missouri Power Co. Ark-Mo had an ice plant and a power plant on that location by 1929. You can still see the old smokestack (behind the self-storage units). By about 1920 the mule-drawn streetcars were replaced by electric streetcars, which ran along the same tracks up and down Front and Main streets. In the 1950s a bus ran between Walnut Ridge and Hoxie and cost a dime.

Timber and agriculture formed the backbone of the Lawrence County economy in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Hardwood timber was cut, land was cleared and drained, and row crops were planted. King Cotton dominated the agricultural output of Walnut Ridge. There were numerous cotton gins around town, the Phoenix Cotton Oil Company occupied 6 blocks from SW 4th Street over to SW 6th Street and from W. Elm down to W. Free (from at least 1904 to 1940). The Planters Gin Company cotton gin is still located at the NW corner of SW 4th & W.

Vine (by the city waterworks). By 1919, the Hoxie & Walnut Ridge Compress Co. was at the NW corner of SW Front St. and Georgia St. (near current site of Hays Food Market). In the 1920s it became the much larger Federal Compress & Warehouse Co., which was there until at least the 1940s. Some of the buildings still exist.

Everything revolved around cotton. The small school districts around Walnut Ridge had split school terms so kids could help out on the farm. Kids got out of school in mid-to-late August for about 6 weeks so they could help pick cotton and then went back to school. Now there is not ANY cotton grown in Lawrence County—farmers grow rice, soybeans, milo, corn, wheat, and a small amount of peanuts. Residents in the western part of the county, or “hill folk,” grow cattle, hogs, and chickens.

In 1942 a team from Maxwell Field in Montgomery, Alabama, scouted the area near Walnut Ridge for the location of an Army Airfield. About 1,800 acres were taken from the Mount Zion community in order to build the airfield. Landowners were paid an average of \$110 an acre. Construction began on June 20, 1942, and the field was activated on August 15, 1942. The airfield served as a pilot training facility and ultimately housed 3,000 military personnel and 2,000 civilian service personnel. The Army Air Force ceased operations at the airfield in 1944, and it became the Walnut Ridge Marine Air Facility. Marines trained here before going to the Pacific Theater during the final months of WWII. After the war's end, the airfield became a salvage depot for surplus aircraft. Planes were brought here from all over the world. Some were sold for military and civilian use, and others were melted for their aluminum. In 1947 the former army airfield became a city-owned airport and the campus for Southern Baptist College, now Williams Baptist College (after Dr. H. E. Williams).

The Walnut Ridge Army Airfield had a dramatic impact on Walnut Ridge and the surrounding county. Construction crews and contractors flooded the town while the airfield was being built, causing a housing shortage—room rental rates jumped from \$15-\$35 per month to \$100-\$150 per month. The airfield contractors bought construction supplies locally, stimulating the economy. While the cadets were stationed here, they bought local goods and married local women. After World War II, former cadets built homes here and remained in the area. Walnut Ridge continues to benefit from the location of the municipal airport and college.

Missouri Pacific Depot

The St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern RR came through Walnut Ridge in 1873. By the late 1890s, a 2-story Railroad Hotel with a ticket office and waiting room was constructed near the current depot site. Mrs. H. Peters was the proprietor in 1897. But by 1904 part of the building was vacant and another part was used as a dwelling. The 1908 Sanborn map indicates that the building is gone, and 4 old box cars on the east side of the tracks were being used as a temporary passenger depot. The Iron Mountain Railroad constructed the current Mediterranean-style depot in 1909. It had two waiting rooms (white & colored) divided by an office in the middle. The baggage room was on the NE end of the building. The depot was restored to its original appearance and now serves as the W.R. Chamber of Commerce office and an Amtrak station.

NE Corner of SW Front & Elm

By 1910 there was an Airdome Theatre on this corner. Like a drive-in movie but you walked in through a gated partition and watched the show in the open air. The theatre was gone by 1919. Sometime in the 1920s a filling station was built on this corner, and then by 1940 an auto garage was attached to the filling station. The current concrete block building was part of that 1940s construction.

East side of RR tracks, 100 block of SE Front St.

From Right to Left (from Elm to Main):

Historically, there were agricultural implements, a carpenter, plumber, tin shop, and auto repair on this corner. There was nothing here by 1940, so the current building was constructed post-1940.

Frank's Glass Service—Between 1908 and 1914, a 2-story theatre was built here. The building burned by 1929 (probably shortly before 1929) and remained a ruin until at least 1940. The current building was either rebuilt from the ruin or built as a completely new structure after 1940.

Shepherd Care—Built between 1897 and 1904. Housed a barber and bank, a law office and bank by 1914, auto repair by 1929, and retail by 1940. The building had two separate storefronts divided by a central staircase to the second floor.

Dickey Tree Service—May have been constructed as early as 1897-1904?? Façade drastically altered with wood siding. The historic building on this site housed 2

separate businesses at all times, including a restaurant, general store, billiards, hardware store, movie theatre, bakery, and auto repair.

W.R. Police Dept.—Built between 1929 and 1940 to serve as the city hall, fire department, and jail.

Gable-roof building on corner—There was a filling station here by 1940. It had 3 gas pumps out front. Is this the same building??

113 E. Main—Built between 1919 and 1929. Was auto repair & sales showroom. Also had an area for battery charging and a filling station (see filling station canopy). Was historically home to Snapp Motor Company. Now Cavanaugh Dodge Chrysler Jeep.

East side of RR tracks, 100 block of NE Front St.

From Right to Left (Main to Walnut):

By 1897 this block consisted of 5 2-story buildings on its southern end and 1 1-story building with 4 storefronts on the northern end. By 1929 the 1-story building was gone and it is still a vacant lot to the NE of the old Masonic Lodge. The 1-story building formerly housed candy and ice cream factories, a furniture store, cobbler, and meat market.

On empty lot—site of a 2-story building dating to at least 1897. Housed hardware, general store, wholesale grocery, and retail. Gone by 1940.

1-story tan building with metal roof—Formerly a 2-story building here. The 2-story building housed a printing shop. By 1940 it was replaced by a 1-story building.

1-story white building—Built post-1940 on site of former 2-story building. Housed Zalaker's Cleaners & tailor shop.

Baker Electrical—Built before 1897. Housed Lawrence County Bank and offices. The Lawrence Co. Bank was established in W.R. in 1890 with Captain J. M. Phelps as bank president. Later a grocery, restaurant, pressing shop, and retail. Has cast-iron storefront elements stamped "Pullis Bros., St. Louis, Mo." This building used to have an elaborate pressed metal cornice that is now gone.

Old Masonic Lodge building—Built 1893. The cast-iron threshold reads “Herman Arndt, 1893.” This was home to a general store, grocery, furniture store, and undertaker with a lodge hall on the second floor (longtime home of Masonic Lodge). This building also had an elaborate pressed metal cornice that is no longer extant.

See historic photo of this block—from ca. 1900. Shows building on vacant lot was T. J. Sharum’s Hardware, then T. J. Sharum’s General Merchandise, and then the Famous Cash Store. Last two storefronts unreadable.

West side of RR tracks, 100 block of NW Front St.

From Left to Right (Main to Walnut):

All-Star Music—Current building constructed ca. 1925 to replace a previous 1890s 2-story building with much more intricate detail on its façade. The original building had more windows, brick pilasters, a peaked parapet in front, decorative grilles, and a stepped side parapet. This earlier building housed R. C. Eskridge Groceries & Notions ca. 1900. Was this also a former location of Burrow Hardware??

Next three buildings—Some of these buildings may date to the turn of the 20th century, but I can’t be sure because of unsympathetic alterations to facades. There were a variety of businesses in this block historically, including drug stores, saloons, dry goods, etc. By 1940 the Metro Theatre was in this block (I’m not sure if it was in the 1-story white building or the vacant lot where buildings once were). The Metro Theatre was owned by the Metro Goldwyn Mayer movie studio and was a nation-wide chain of theatres. The white 1-story building was a cash & carry store (modern use was the Front St. Theater).

100 block of W. Main, north side

From Right to Left (Front St. to NW 2nd):

Vacant lot behind All-Star Music—There were a couple storefronts built here ca. 1920 facing Main Street. They housed a millinery, dry goods, gentlemen’s furnishings, restaurants, and retail. Buildings demolished ca. 2003.

At alley—commercial buildings were first constructed on this portion of the block about 1900, expanding the business district along Main Street away from the RR

tracks. The commercial district continued to expand along Main because of the 1900 courthouse at Main & SW 3rd streets.

1-story green building with 3 storefronts—Built ca. 1905 and housed dry goods, clothing, boots & shoes, and furniture. Then it was a department store. In the mid-20th century, this was Van Atkins Dept. Store, which was a mid-grade store in W.R. at that time. Notice the old Van Atkins sign.

Gracie's Creative Cuts—2 storefronts combined into 1. Built ca. 1905. Housed dry goods, grocery, general store, bakery, meat market, and printing shop. NC because of new brick and mansard awning.

Lawrence Agency—Built ca. 1905. Was a grocery for many years. Later housed Moore's Feed Store. Some of you may remember Buster Secoy, who used to hang out at Moore's Feed Store. He was a savant and would remember everyone's birthday. Also NC.

200 block of W. Main, north side

From Right to Left (NW 2nd to NW 3rd):

In the late 19th and early 20th century, there was a private residence on the back side of this block facing Walnut Street. The outbuildings from the house were located on this side of the block. Commercial buildings weren't constructed here until ca. 1910, when a 2-story bank building was built on the NE corner of Main & NW 2nd streets.

First National Bank—Current building was constructed in 1975 and replaced 3 historic buildings on this corner, dating from about 1910 to 1918. The three historic buildings housed a bank, drug store, and the post office. The post office was located in the northernmost building until the old post office was built in 1935 (now office of Times-Dispatch newspaper). In more recent memory, Malloy's Hardware was located in a building here and sold everything from tack supplies to hardware to clothes to fertilizer. Marvell's Dress Shop (very upscale) was also located in a storefront here. First National Bank occupied the historic corner bank building and then built new in 1975. At some point, First National was also located in the 2-story building at the SW corner of SW 2nd & Elm.

2-story building w/ blue and green awnings—Built by 1919. Housed a general store, barber, and cobbler. This was the last building on the block on the 1919

Sanborn map—nothing built to the left of it yet. The right-hand storefront (S) was formerly Rainwater Jewelry, and the left-hand storefront (Downing's) was Robert's Shoe Store.

Phillip Clark's office—Built ca. 1925. Had retail on the first floor and photography studio on the second floor. In more recent memory, Dr. Chambers's office was upstairs.

Pet Palace—Built ca. 1935. Was Sloan's Department Store (equivalent to Dillard's).

Sexton Pharmacy—Built ca. 1940. Sexton Drugs started in 1886 on NW Front Street. It is the oldest existing business in W.R.

Law library—Built ca. 1940. Western Auto.

Sharum Theatre—Built 1924 by Swan C. Dowell. It was a movie theatre until a fire in the 1930s partially destroyed the building. Then it was the T. J. White Store (sold furniture) until 1940 when Jimmy Jeff Sharum restored the theatre. The Sharum Theatre showed movies into the 1970s. There was an incident in the mid-1950s when a gentleman came into the Sharum Theatre during a movie and shot his wife's boyfriend. The exterior was altered with a stucco veneer sometime after 1984, so it is NC.

300 block of W. Main, north side

Building behind city hall—Built ca. 1945. Was Baltz Oldsmobile Dealership and then Otasco (OK Tire & Supply Co.).

City Hall—In the late 1800s, this corner was home to the I. Less Cotton Gin. Then by 1908 there was a row of small dwellings along this block of Main—may have been like a tourist court. By 1919 there was an auto garage/repair shop here (remained until at least 1940).

Beyond city hall on this block—In the 1920s, Walnut Ridge Lumber Company was located in the middle of this block (across from the courthouse).

Lawrence County Courthouse

We already talked about Walnut Ridge becoming the county seat for the eastern district of Lawrence County (officially became a separate judicial district in 1887). Soon after this happened, a two-story, frame courthouse was built in W.R. on East Main Street between NE 3rd & NE 4th streets. It had the clerk's office and 2 jury rooms on the first floor and the courtroom on the second floor (no longer extant). Then in 1900, a new brick courthouse was built on the site of the current courthouse at W. Main & SW 3rd streets. It was a beautiful 2-story Romanesque-style building with a corner clock tower. The 1900 courthouse was replaced in 1965 with the current building.

By 1914, there was a 2-story jail building on the SE side of the courthouse square. There was a small county jail on that site until the mid-1960s when the current courthouse was built.

Walnut Ridge Waterworks (in distance)

The Walnut Ridge Water Works was established about 1915 at the NE corner of SW 4th & Vine streets. The current water tower probably dates from that time (although I think the waterworks building itself is newer, maybe from 1940s). Prior to the construction of a waterworks, residents got their water from private wells and several large public cisterns.

Iberia Bank

About 1925 the Lawrence Hotel was built where Iberia Bank is now. It was a 2-story building and took up this ¼ of the block. Retail establishments were downstairs and hotel rooms upstairs. In the 1930s and '40s, you could get a good meal at the Lawrence Hotel. They also had a shoe shiner and a barber.

Old W.R. Post Office

The old post office was built in 1935 and designed in the Colonial Revival style with a symmetrical façade, dentiled cornice, multi-pane windows, and a broken pediment above the front entrance. The building was designed by the Treasury Department's architect, Louis A. Simon. It also has panels reading "United States Post Office" and "Walnut Ridge, Arkansas." It served as the post office until 1977 when it was sold to the Times-Dispatch newspaper. The interior and exterior of the building have been very well preserved.

Cross Main Street to see other side better

200 block of W. Main, south side

From Right to Left (post office to SW 2nd St.):

This block consisted of boarding houses and dwellings until about 1915 when the first commercial buildings were constructed here.

Lawrence County Abstract—Built ca. 1930. In mid-20th century, this was Kroger.

Ponder & Jarboe—Built ca. 1915 (or maybe 1970s infill/new façade) as an auto garage with a 40-car capacity. By 1929 it was the Meyer Department Store (until at least 1940). Later it was Burrow's Hardware (and maybe Otasco at some point??). R. D. Burrow owned Burrow Hardware Store and was opposed to the installation of parking meters on Main Street (1960s). So he took a saw and cut the meters off in front of his store. This made national news! Also ran a promotion (gimmick to get people in the store) where people would buy a yellow hoe with a number on it. They took down the number at the counter and there was a drawing for a prize. Paul Doty, Sr., won the drawing.

Dark red brick building—Built ca. 1925. Was an office for Arkansas Power & Light.

Adam Staples State Farm—Built ca. 1925 and looked like building to the right. It was remodeled with Carrera glass tiles and glass block when it became Citizen's Bank.

1-story red brick—There were originally two 2-story buildings here by 1919. The one on this site was identical to the one still standing at its left. Early on, this building housed an auto garage and vulcanizing business. The current building was here by about 1940.

2-story building (Sunlight Nails & Spa)—Built ca. 1915 (with twin to right—no longer extant). This side housed a pool hall and barber on the first level and a photography studio on the second floor.

Dark red brick on corner—Built ca. 1935 and housed a restaurant. In the mid-20th century, this was The Grill Restaurant, which had good hamburgers and jukeboxes on the tables. Notice the old neon sign.

Cross Main Street at the crosswalk and go 1 block down SW 2nd Street.

The 5 dark red brick storefronts along SW 2nd Street were built ca. 1935 and housed a variety of businesses. Besides The Grill in the front, it had the White Way Barber Shop where the current barber pole is. This whole building is under renovation.

Beatles Sculpture—The Beatles made a surprise visit to W.R. in 1964 when they landed at the municipal airport late on a Friday night on their way to a weekend vacation across the Missouri border. Their arrival was kept pretty quiet, but by the time they departed on Sunday, news had leaked out around town. A huge crowd assembled to see the group's departure. As a tribute to this event, a life-sized sculpture of the Beatles's Abbey Road album cover will be installed in one of the former storefronts along SW 2nd Street. There will be an unveiling event for the sculpture on Sept. 18 with live music and even a Beatles tribute band.

Adriana's Mexican Restaurant—Built ca. 1935. Housed Gamble's Department Store (or Dry Goods Store?). At some point, this was the Piggly Wiggly Grocery store.

Methodist Church—Methodist Episcopal Church was built in 1921 at a cost of \$60,000. The education building next door was completed in 1955 at a cost of \$75,000. Both of these buildings are included in the commercial historic district boundary.

¼ block of 2-story buildings—The Baptist Church was located on this corner (SE corner of SW 2nd & Elm) from at least the 1890s until about 1910. Then this block of 2-story buildings was constructed about 1910. By 1919 this was the Lane Hotel with hotel rooms on the second floor and retail on the first floor. Sometime in the 1920s it became the Hotel Thomas, and then by 1940, there was no hotel and the storefronts housed retail establishments.

3-story building facing Elm Street—Built ca. 1915 as a hotel office and lobby for the Lane Hotel. In the 1920s it became the lobby for the Hotel Thomas. At that time, there was a 1-story building next to this one that housed the hotel restaurant (where AR Workforce Center is now--no longer extant). By 1940, there was no hotel and this was a warehouse.

2-story bank building at SW corner of SW 2nd & Elm—Built about 1920 as a bank. Housed Planters Bank until about 1930. A former location of First National Bank??

1-story building next to former bank building—Built ca. 1945 on site of former private residence.

Back to Main Street

100 block of W. Main, south side

From Right to Left (SW 2nd to Front St.):

In the late 1800s, there was a livery stable and a private residence on this block of Main. By 1908 commercial buildings were built along the entire block. In 1908 this half of the block was the 2-story Rhea Hotel, with various retail on the first floor and rooms on the second floor. John A. Rhea opened a hotel in Walnut Ridge in 1877. He also owned the livery stable on this block prior to the construction of the brick hotel building. Mr. Rhea also operated the trolley between Walnut Ridge and Hoxie. See old postcard of the Rhea Hotel with trolley car in the foreground. He was killed in 1893 when he and his horse were hit by a train near the current location of Stewart Park. You can still see his tombstone in the field across from Stewart Park. It is said his horse is buried there with him.

The Rhea Hotel was here until about 1915, and then the one-story commercial buildings were constructed in its place. They were all built by 1919 at the latest. The 2-story stucco building (now Kristy's) is all that remains of the former Rhea Hotel.

Allied Tang Soo Do Karate (2 1-story red brick storefronts)—Storefront on right was a dry goods and grocery in 1919, and the storefront on the left was a barber. Later, both storefronts housed Wilcoxon's Federated Store (sold clothing and linens).

2 dark red brick storefronts—In 1919 these two storefronts housed a hardware, furniture, and undertaking business. Then later it was a Sterling Store (dime store).

Gray metal slipcover building—In 1919 this was a dry goods and clothing store. Later it was the Ben Franklin Store (dime store).

2-story stucco building (Kristy's)—Built ca. 1905. Was part of the Rhea Hotel but had a drug store on the first floor and rooms on the second. The drug store began as Cooper Pharmacy (Rexall Drug), established by Mose Cooper (whose sister, Lizzie Cooper Rhea, was John Rhea's wife). The store was later run by Mose Cooper's son, Rennard Cooper. It was later home to Warner Drugs, run by L.R. Warner. During the time that Warner Drug was here, they made dentures upstairs in the building. Later it became Goings Pharmacy, run by Luther Goings.

Alley

Lawrence County Prosecuting Attorney/Celebrations (Dark red brick w/ 3 storefronts)—This building was here by 1919. It was built on the site of a 2-story building that dated to the late 1800s and housed an opera house on the second floor and retail on the first floor. In 1919, the current building housed a jewelry store, gentlemen's furnishings, and millinery.

R & R Sales and Service—Former site of a 2-story building that faced the railroad tracks (built ca. 1895 or earlier). It housed The People's Store, run by S. N. Pitzele & Co. (who also had a cotton gin at the corner of NE Front & Hill streets in 1914). There were also 1-story buildings going south along Front Street facing the RR tracks (no longer extant). The 2-story building on this corner was gone by the 1940 Sanborn map. The current building was built about 1945.

Extras:

Ms. Bug's Rooming House was located on the current site of First Baptist Church.