

PRESERVATION OKLAHOMA NEWS

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How the Redevelopment and Adaptive Reuse of the historic Skirvin Hotel in downtown Oklahoma City, Oklahoma is being aided by the use of Federal and State Historic Preservation Tax Credits

Note: All rehabilitation work for the Skirvin Hotel has been designed in consultation with the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office and the U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. It should also be noted that any individual or business entity benefiting from the federal investment tax credits must have an ownership interest in the property.

Background

The Skirvin Hotel, a landmark historic hotel located in downtown Oklahoma City first opened its doors in 1911 with two, 10-story towers containing 224 rooms. In 1930, a third wing was added raising the structure to 14 stories and increasing capacity to 525 rooms. Despite its rich history, after several years of neglect, the Skirvin was closed in 1988. The hotel has been traded among numerous private investors who were unable to redevelop the hotel. In order to save this historic structure from the threat of the wrecking ball, the City of Oklahoma

City purchased the hotel in July of 2002 for approximately \$2.76 million dollars. The City's vision, consistent with the Metropolitan Area Projects (commonly referred to as MAPS) initiative, was to ultimately partner with the private sector on redevelopment of the Skirvin. The Skirvin is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and is considered by preservationists to be one of the most important historic structures in the State.

A New Beginning

In 2003, Skirvin Partners, LLC ("Skirvin Partners"), a collaborative partnership between Milwaukee-based Marcus Corporation and Dallas-based Partners in Development was designated by the Oklahoma City Urban Renewal Authority to redevelop the Skirvin after going through a complete RFP process. Skirvin Partners has agreed to redevelop the Skirvin in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. By doing so, Skirvin Partners will be able to raise much needed capital to fund redevelopment through the sale of federal and state historic preservation tax credits. On a combined basis, the sale of the federal and state historic tax credits will fund approximately \$8.895 million dollars of redevelopment costs. Furthermore, a new federal tax credit program entitled New Markets

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Tax Credits will be utilized to raise approximately \$5.826 million of additional capital for redevelopment of the Skirvin. A table illustrating the estimated funding sources for redevelopment of the Skirvin is set forth below:

Source	Amount
Owner Equity	\$ 2,500,000
First Mortgage Debt	14,900,000
Federal Historic Tax Credit Proceeds	4,315,000
State Historic Tax Credit Proceeds	4,580,000
New Market Tax Credit Proceeds	5,826,000
Public Assistance	18,000,000
Total Estimated Project Cost	\$ 50,121,000

As illustrated in the foregoing table, it is unlikely that redevelopment of the Skirvin would occur without the capital provided by federal and state historic tax credits. At \$8.895 million, the capital raised through the sale of these tax credits will account for over 17% of the total redevelopment cost.

A Good Ending

Redevelopment of the Skirvin will provide much needed premium hotel room and banquet space to serve the downtown Oklahoma City market. Once redeveloped, the Skirvin will be flagged as the "Skirvin Hilton Hotel at One Park Avenue" and will have 225 guestrooms with 20 large King suites, a grand lobby, a fully restored exterior, a fine dining, three meal restaurant, a corner bar, over 18,000 square feet of ballrooms and banquet space and many other features consistent with a premium, full-service hotel. Furthermore, a redeveloped Skirvin will generate new sales tax revenue, hotel-motel tax revenue and ad valorem tax revenue in addition to employing approximately 170 full-time employees.



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Newkirk Volunteers for Keep Oklahoma Beautiful

By Karen Dye, Newkirk Main Street Manager

Keep Oklahoma Beautiful, Public Service Co. of Oklahoma, H.I.S. Paint and Newkirk Main Street volunteers chose August 13th as Fresh Paint Day in Newkirk. This pilot project makes use of donated paint, a little creativity, a lot of elbow grease and willing volunteers who transformed one of Newkirk's historic iron-fronted buildings into a work of art.

Starting with Greenleaf Park in Mannford and moving through Ardmore, Altus, Lawton, Durant and Newkirk, the transformations took place in a variety of venues, including an old church, storefronts, homes in disadvantaged neighborhoods, neglected outdoor park equipment and Newkirk's own iron-front historic building.

The first project took place on July 23 in Mannford and the other events were to be completed by August 20th. The project was designed

to encourage volunteers to seek out and renovate community projects with the creative use of resources. Building on success with a painting project, volunteer groups may wish to take on a landscaping or recycling or other type of community improvement challenge. Keep Oklahoma Beautiful will help provide the ideas, guidelines and templates for such endeavors.

By viewing before and after photos of these Fresh Paint Days, project corporate sponsors will select the one effort that makes the greatest impact – and that community will receive special recognition during the Keep Oklahoma Beautiful annual conference on November 3. If the program demonstrates replicable success, Fresh Paint Day may become an annual affair that takes place all across Oklahoma – helping to make and *Keep Oklahoma Beautiful*.

Naturally, the week-end Main Street design committee chose to begin their project, rain became a part of the forecast for Newkirk. However, in spite of wind and clouds a dedicated group of volunteers met on West Seventh Street Friday, August 12th and began scraping John and Linda Williamson's historic iron-front building. The next morning at 6:30 a.m. the full crew turned out to paint.

Ken Dye with TNT Construction and Pioneer Rental made it possible to have a lift available – without which this project would have been impossible. Everyone pulled together to make this a successful project. Eastman National Bank provided Main Street Bakery doughnuts to a hungry crowd. Janet Williams brought oatmeal cookies and water. Volunteers who have helped to transform this building include Tom and Susan Smith, Mary and Steve Austin, Robert and Caryl Morgan, Janet Williams, Wayne White, Delores Prelesnick, Sue Roy, Walter Shafer, Carl Barnes, Roy Chaney, Dorothy Gilbreath, Nathan Mayer, Jeanette Bame, Luke Mizell, Ken and Karen Dye. The historic colors for the building were recommended by Oklahoma Main Street architect Ron Frantz.

The project has been such a success that the group may keep moving west on Seventh Street. It is amazing what a change a group of dedicated volunteers can accomplish in a very short period of time.

SHPO to Recognize Preservation Projects and Activities

Know someone who rehabilitated an important historic building in your community? Worked with a dedicated group of volunteers to save a historic property? Enjoyed a walking tour in a historic district? These and many more projects and activities contribute to the preservation of Oklahoma's heritage. Help the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) recognize these important accomplishments.

The SHPO is now accepting nominations for the 2006 Shirk Memorial Award for Historic Preservation and the SHPO's Citation of Merit. The deadline for nominations is 5:00 p.m., Friday, December 2nd, and candidates will be notified in February 2006 about the results of the selection process. The awards will be presented at the banquet during Oklahoma's 18th Annual Statewide Preservation Conference in Wilburton/Robbers Cave State Park (May 31-June 2, 2006).

The Shirk Memorial Award for Historic Preservation is presented for historic preservation programs or activities that have had statewide impact. The SHPO's Citation of Merit is awarded for noteworthy accomplishments in historic preservation at the state or local level. The SHPO will accept nominations in either electronic or hard copy format. To request nomination forms and instructions, contact Shea Otley at 405 / 521-6249 or sjotley@ok-history.mus.ok.us.

Or, obtain the information from the SHPO's website at www.ok-history.mus.ok.us/shpo/shpom.htm. If you have questions about the awards criteria, contact Melvena Heisch at 405 / 522-4484 or mheisch@ok-history.mus.ok.us.

SHPO ADDS SURVEY INFORMATION TO WEBSITE

The Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) continues development of its website to increase public access to information about Oklahoma's historic resources and their preservation. The SHPO is pleased to announce that all of the architectural/historic survey reports generated through its comprehensive survey program are now on its website.

Visit and select "Survey/Planning" and then "Architectural Surveys." You will find each architectural/historic survey report generated over the past twenty years in PDF format. These reports include historic context information, lists of properties recorded, assessments of National Register eligibility, and bibliographical information. As future survey projects are completed, the reports will be added to the website.

Detailed information about the SHPO's other programs is also available on this website. Watch Preservation Oklahoma News for details about future updates and additions.



An Inside Look at the Aldridge Hotel, Shawnee

By Catherine Montgomery AIA,
SHPO Historic Preservation Architect



The rehabilitation of the Aldridge Hotel in Shawnee (1929, individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places June 2000) is nearly complete. At a recent site visit, I snapped these current photos and located pre-rehabilitation images from the project file as a pre-view of an exemplary rehabilitation project. The Aldridge Hotel is being reviewed by the SHPO both as a Section 106 (federal undertaking) and as a historic tax incentives project.

These pictures provide just a small taste of what developer ERC Properties, Inc., of Fort Smith, AR has accomplished. Veteran investors utilizing housing tax credits, this project represents ERC's first experience with the historic tax credit program. It is also the first opportunity that the architect, The Hill Firm also of Fort Smith, AR has had to work on a project that is required to meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Staff with The Hill Firm and ERC Properties Inc. have been working closely with the SHPO to maximize the retention of historic fabric and

develop a facility that will provide comfortable and modern residences for independent seniors. The team's attention to detail is illustrated by the accompanying images. The Second floor common area was a modification that cut the height of the original two-story lobby in half. The use of the tax credits and following the Secretary's Standards did not require that the two-story lobby be recovered. The design and construction team elected to leave the floor in place and restore as much of the original openness as possible. So complete was their commitment that they have replicated the original railing that used to surround the second floor mezzanine. Compare the new look with the historic image and the way the area looked before they got started.

The ballroom at the top floor had received the bulk of the water damage from a compromised roofing system. The restoration of this space is breathtaking. Stay tuned for more inspiring images of the completed project!



Artist's Home and Warden's House are listed in National Register of Historic Places

The State Historic Preservation Office is pleased to announce that two Oklahoma properties were recently added to the National Register of Historic Places. The two properties, Break O'Day Farm, the home and studio of artist Augusta C. Metcalfe, and the Warden's House at the McAlester State Penitentiary, were added to the list on June 16 and 17, respectively. These two properties, located at opposite ends of the state, reflect differing aspects of Oklahoma's rich history. The National Register is the federal government's official list of properties significant in our history.

The home of Augusta Corson Metcalfe, Break O'Day Farm, is located south of Durham in Roger Mills County. Metcalfe, an untrained artist who has garnered renown as a chronicler of pioneer life in the prairies of western Oklahoma, began sketching, drawing, and painting at an early age. Metcalfe's family homesteaded in Roger Mills County in 1893. Augusta soon began sketching and painting, focusing her attention on animals and landscapes nearby. She entertained ideas about supplementing her family's farm income through her art and as she entered adulthood, she sold or traded paintings and did illustrations for *Sportsmen's Review* and *Sturm's Weekly Magazine*. Attracting the attention of art supporters like Nan Sheets in Oklahoma City, she was encouraged to exhibit her works publicly and even appeared on WKY television's Saturday Farm Fair in 1947. Although her body of work spanned her lifetime, she achieved most of her fame in her waning years, earning her the additional appellation "Oklahoma's Grandma Moses" and the "Sagebrush Artist." Metcalfe died in 1971. Her farmstead is now home to the Augusta Metcalfe Museum, dedicated to preserving and displaying her works of art.

The Warden's House at the State Penitentiary in McAlester, was constructed around 1911, along with the original walls and cell blocks of the Penitentiary. The Renaissance Revival style house was built using prisoner labor. The Renaissance Revival design was drawn up

by former State Architect P. H. Weathers, called for poured concrete walls, the same as the prison. The Warden's House was more than just the residence of the Warden. It served as the social center for this



politically important state institution during the first decades of statehood. Numerous important meetings have been held in the house, especially in the early patronage days of state institutions. The clean lines of the house, with smooth, white-painted concrete walls, its red tile roof, and the arcaded porch present a dignified air to the institution that it serves. The house is sited directly across from the main gate of the prison and serves as a refined counterpoint to the looming, imposing prison walls.

The State Historic Preservation Office continues to strive to gain recognition for those places significant in Oklahoma's history. These two disparate properties add to the compendium of the state's documented history.

For more information on these or other National Register properties, contact Jim Gabbert at 405/522-4478 or jgabbert@ok-history.mus.ok.us.



Okmulgee Black Hospital

PSF Funds Awarded in Oklahoma

The National Trust for Historic Preservation and its Southwest Office have recently awarded Preservation Services Funds to: Okmulgee County Multi-Cultural Heritage Association for \$2268 to conduct a Preservation Master Plan for the Okmulgee Black Hospital, and to the Loretta Y. Jackson African American Society for \$2000 to support the One Room School House Restoration project.



One Room School House

ACHP to Consolidate Resources by Closing Colorado Field Office

Effective October 28, 2005, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation will close its Lakewood, Colorado, field office and reallocate resources to its headquarters in Washington, DC. This realignment will allow the ACHP to complete its reorganization of the Office of Federal Agency Programs, expand and consolidate staff to better meet its mission goals articulated in the National Historic Preservation Act, and more fully support the Administration's Preserve America Initiative.

Created in 1973, the Lakewood field office served as a base for management of western State Section 106 cases. However, regulatory and statutory changes since then have significantly altered case management practices. The Section 106 review process has evolved to focus ACHP participation on high-profile cases where such involvement facilitates realization of outcomes acceptable to involved stakeholders.

Involvement in these cases can also lead the ACHP to pursue broad changes to Federal agency programs or policies. The ACHP staff and Federal agency liaisons in the Washington, DC, office will now perform these tasks.

The ACHP's expanded and consolidated Office of Federal Agency Programs, responsible for administering the Section 106 review process, will continue to work with Federal agencies to address their requirement to take historic properties into account when planning and executing projects. In addition, it will intensify its focus on addressing systemic Federal policy and program issues that impact historic preservation.

Staff of this realigned office will also be better positioned to participate more fully in other ACHP program responsibilities, including implementation of Executive Order 13287.

Over the next two months the ACHP will work with its customers to ensure a smooth delivery of services. A subsequent news release will provide details about this consolidation of resources and assignments of Federal agency review responsibilities.

REGISTER NOW FOR THE SHPO'S DECEMBER WORKSHOPS

The Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is pleased to announce the schedule for its annual fall workshop series. Each workshop is devoted to one of the SHPO's federal preservation programs and is designed for preservation professionals, government agency representatives, and concerned citizens. The sessions will be held Wednesday, December 7th through Friday, December 9th in the Classroom, Oklahoma History Center, 2401 N. Laird (Oklahoma Historical Society's new location just northeast of the State Capitol), Oklahoma City. The workshops are free, but the SHPO requests that you register by 5:00 p.m., Wednesday, November 30th. Space is limited and will be reserved on a first-come basis.

The workshop schedule is as follows:

December 7

(9:30 a.m.–12:00 noon)

State and Local Governments as Preservation Partners in Oklahoma: The CLG Program

The half-day workshop concerns the SHPO's Certified Local Governments Program (CLG). Local governments that enforce historic preservation zoning ordinances may qualify for CLG status. The workshop explains the eligibility criteria, certification process, and program benefits, including a share of the SHPO's annual federal funding from the U. S. Department of the Interior. Additionally, the SHPO will provide a special presentation about the new Preserve America Communities program, a White House initiative launched in 2004.

December 7

(1:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m.)

Guidelines and Tax Incentives for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings

Owners of buildings listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places may qualify for the 20% federal investment tax credit for certified rehabilitation. The topics that will be addressed include how to determine if a building is a certified historic structure, what guidelines must be followed in the rehabilitation work, and how to successfully complete the application process for certification of the rehabilitation. Effective January 1, 2006 Oklahoma taxpayers who qualify for the federal credit will be eligible for an equal State rehabilitation tax credit without additional paperwork. The SHPO will update workshop participants about this extremely important increase in the incentives for redevelopment of Oklahoma's historic buildings now used for income producing purposes.



Water once again cascaded from the 80-year-old fountain in Memorial Park thanks to the City of Oklahoma City, and the Parks and Recreation Department.

December 8

(9:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m.)

The Section 106 Review Process: A Workshop for Agency Officials and Cultural Resource Management Consultants

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act provides that Federal agencies must consider the effect of their undertakings on archeological and historic properties listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Topics addressed in this day-long workshop include the basic requirements of Section 106, the regulations that went into effect August 5th which govern the process, how to determine National Register eligibility, what constitutes adverse effects, mitigating adverse effects, and streamlining Section 106 review.

December 9

(9:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.)

Working with the National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the foundation of the SHPO's programs, and a basic understanding of the register is essential for those involved in historic preservation at all levels of government and in the private sector. The workshop provides detailed information about the National Register criteria, what listing means, the rights of property owners in the nomination process, tips for preparing successful nominations, and much more.

Registered architects who attend these workshops can qualify for American Institute of Architects Continuing Education System (AIA/CES) learning units. Contact Catherine Montgomery, Historic Preservation Architect with the SHPO, at 405/522-4479 or catherinem@ok-history.mus.ok.us.

If you may have questions about workshop content, contact Melvena Heisch at 405/522-4484 or mheisch@ok-history.mus.ok.us.

To register for any or all of the workshops contact Shea Otley at 405/521-6249 or sjotley@ok-history.mus.ok.us.

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