

**The Society
for Commercial Archeology
presents the**



**"BIG D"
ROADSIDE
ARCHITECTURE
TOUR**

**of
Dallas, Texas
October 5, 1991**

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Co-sponsors:

Texas Historical Commission
Society of Architectural Historians, Texas Chapter
Friends of Fair Park
Old Oak Cliff Conservation League
City of Dallas Landmark Commission

Key to Tour Guide:

- * Lunch Stop
- * * Photography Stop
- * * * Photography and Tour Stop

1. **LUCAS B&B RESTAURANT SIGN**

Oaklawn and Bowser
Northeast corner

Art Moderne neon sign.

North on Preston Road to # 2.

2. **HIGHLAND PARK VILLAGE SHOPPING CENTER * * ***

Mockingbird at Preston Road
Southwest corner

The Highland Park Village was built in 1931 and is one of the earliest shopping centers in the U.S. with a unified architectural style and interior parking. Designed by Dallas architects Marion Fooshee and James Cheek, the center is the main shopping area of Highland Park. This development and Highland Park itself were financed by Hugh Prather, Sr., and Edgar Flippen. After much research, travel to Spain, Mexico, and California, and a visit to the Kansas City Country Club Plaza development, the architects selected the Mediterranean style as the predominant theme. Notice the tile roofs, arched doors and windows, overhanging balconies, ironwork, and brick walkways. Two service stations were part of the original shopping center design, but are not extant.

West on Mockingbird to Love Field.

3. **LOVE FIELD AIRPORT AND ENTRY SIGN**

Mockingbird, West of Lemmon Avenue
North side

Love Field opened in 1927 and remained the primary airport for Dallas until 1973, when it was replaced by Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport. Love Field briefly declined but rebounded in part because it served as the hub of Southwest Airlines. The terminal dates from 1957, but was extensively remodeled in the late 1980s. The interior of the main terminal includes a terrazzo floor boasting an inlaid map of the world with flight patterns. The entry sign is original and shows the 1950s influence in colors and design.

Reverse direction on Mockingbird to Inwood Road, left on Inwood to Lovers Lane.

4. **INWOOD THEATER**
5458 W. Lovers Lane at Inwood Road
Southeast corner

This c. 1940 theater is the focal point of Inwood Shopping Center primarily because of its four-story projecting tower.

East on Lovers Lane, across North Central Expressway, then to Greenville Avenue.

5. **CENTENNIAL LIQUOR SIGN**
North Central Expressway at Lovers Lane
Northeast corner

The 25-foot neon "Big Tex" sign is a replica of the famous State Fair of Texas mascot, which is three to four times larger. The original 1950s sign was destroyed in a storm in 1985. This sign is a replica of that one and is designated a landmark sign by the city of Dallas.

South on Greenville Avenue to Milton Street.

6. **MEADOWS BUILDING * ***
6688 North Central Expressway at Milton
Southeast corner

This International Style building is significant in that it was the first office building of any size to be constructed outside of the central business district, and the first one of any size to locate along the then new Central Expressway in the mid-1950s. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the Meadows Building was a landmark that indicated to southbound travellers that they had finally arrived in Dallas. Nothing north of here ever approached the size or height of the Meadows Building until the late 1960s. To drive Central Expressway from Plano to this part of Dallas today, with that thought in mind, is truly a numbing experience. The building will be open on Saturday, and its lobby, doors, and portico design are well worth a look for a true trip back to the 1950s.

South on Greenville to Fondren, right on Fondren to # 7.

7. **JARRELL COMPANY SIGN**
Fondren at North Central Expressway
Southeast corner

Large "Sputnik-like" sign outlined in red neon.

Return to Greenville, south to Mockingbird to # 8.

8. **DR. PEPPER BUILDING * ***
East Mockingbird at Greenville Avenue
Northwest corner

From 1948 through 1986, this building was the international headquarters of the Dr. Pepper Company. The building is an Art Moderne masterpiece with glass blocks, sharp angular wings, and a streamlined pylon with neon outlines and a clock face with the numbers 2, 4, and 10 in red neon. The original building was designed by Dallas architect Arthur E. Thomas and constructed in 1948. In 1974, additions were made to the east and west wings under the direction of Dallas architect Ralph Kellman. The sensitive addition received a Dallas Chapter/AIA Design Award that year. The building is now vacant, for sale, and endangered due to the large amount of valuable vacant land (27 acres) around it.

West on Mockingbird to # 9.

9. **MRS. BAIRD'S BAKERY**
Mockingbird at North Central Expressway
Southwest corner

Large, blue neon letters spell out "Mrs. Baird's Bread" along the east facade of this huge operation, which is a Dallas/Fort Worth institution.

10. **STATE LIQUOR SIGN**
3016 Mockingbird
South side

This is a small but excellent porcelain/neon sign; it is visible from Mockingbird and Central Expressway.

Turn onto North Central Expressway, then south on North Central Expressway to Fitzhugh.

11. **KEN'S MUFFLERS**
Fitzhugh at North Central Expressway
Northeast corner

Giant 25 to 30-foot human figure holding a giant muffler, with c. 1960 neon sign.

East on Fitzhugh, left on Ross, then left on Greenville Avenue.

12. **ARCADIA THEATER**
2011 North Greenville Avenue
West side

Note the neon letters, the colorful pylon, and the neon-lined marquee. Across the street, the c. 1925 shopping area features a mosaic tile facade, a Neoclassical stepped parapet, decorative urns, a slate roof, and keyhole dormers. This was the first suburban Sears retail store in Dallas.

Other small shopping centers align Greenville Avenue; we will pass a few of these, such as those at McCommas and Greenville and in the 2700-2800 blocks of Greenville.

13. **GRANADA THEATER**
3524 Greenville Avenue

Note the use of glass blocks in the theater facade.

North on Greenville to Richmond, east on Richmond to Abrams Road, south on Abrams to #14.

14. **GLO CLEANERS**
2117 North Abrams
West side

Note the stacked circles of the small neon sign above the doorway.

South on Abrams to # 15.

15. **EL CHICO RESTAURANT**
2029 North Abrams Road
West side

Opened on Oct. 12, 1946, this is the second restaurant of the Cuellar family's regional chain of Mexican eating establishments. This one was opened here at the request of Lakewood area homeowners who wanted a location closer to their new homes (the original El Chico opened on the west side of Dallas in 1940, at Oaklawn and Lemmon). Note the excellent neon signs. Across the street are two large porcelain/neon signs for Fishburn's Laundry and Cleaners — another regional chain of stores.

South on Gaston Avenue to # 16.

16. **LAKEWOOD THEATER * ***
Gaston at LaVista
Southwest corner

This is the finest Deco-era theater in North Texas; it was built in 1938 to serve the rapidly expanding Lakewood and Munger Place neighborhoods of East Dallas. Note the 100-foot tower, lined with neon tubing, and the Art Moderne, stucco, streamlined facade.

South on Gaston and one block west to Swiss Avenue.

17. **SWISS AVENUE HISTORIC DISTRICT * ***
Drive south through the entire district.

This is somewhat outside the purview of SCA, but must be included in any architectural tour of Dallas. It is significant as an early automobile-oriented suburb, since it was developed in the late teens and 1920s. In 1973, this became the first historic district in Dallas.

Turn right on Fitzhugh to Ross Avenue, left on Ross Avenue to # 18.

18. **WILSON MOTORS**
4540 Ross Avenue
South side

Ross Avenue for years has been known as the place in Dallas to buy a used car.

The 4000 through 6000 blocks are still lined with dozens of used car lots. This one, at 4540, is the quintessential 1950s lot with strings of bare light bulbs, typical upward-canted eaves on the office located at the rear of the lot, and a free-standing neon sign with geometric cut-out shapes.

Continue southwest on Ross to # 19. Note the neon sign on the east side of the 4100 block for El Gallito.

19. **ROSS AVENUE IGNITION SERVICE SIGN**

3505 Ross Avenue
North side

Porcelain/neon sign in excellent shape, c.1945-50.

Continue on Ross to Allen Street, left on Allen, right on Bryan, left on Cantegral to # 20.

20. **WEAVER'S SPRING AND BRAKE SERVICE**

Cantegral at Bryan
Southwest corner

Porcelain/neon sign in the shape of a leaf spring and a shock absorber, c.1950s.

Southeast on Cantegral to Live Oak.

21. **JOHN M. CLARK AUTO SALES * ***

2625 Live Oak at Cantegral
Northwest corner

This operation is a virtual palace of 1950s architecture and signage. The brick building has a tall neon pylon advertising the unlikely mixture of Cadillac, Buick, Oldsmobile, Volkswagen, Chevrolet, and Rambler. The free-standing sign on the corner is a real treasure. Clark was apparently an unauthorized dealer of new or slightly used cars in the 1950s and 1960s. Now the operation is a shadow of its former self, and deals in a few older cars, while the neighborhood continues to deteriorate. Note the excellent porcelain/neon sign advertising Haskins Photography just east of here on Live Oak, south side. Continue on Cantegral to Swiss, go west one block to Good-Latimer Expressway, turn south on Good-Latimer and go through the tunnel/underpass.

22. **GOOD-LATIMER EXPRESSWAY**

At Gaston Avenue underpass

The underpass/tunnel was constructed in 1930 to relieve traffic congestion at the intersection of two major crosstown routes: Gaston Avenue, which carried wealthy commuters to the then new Lakewood subdivision in East Dallas; and the Good-Latimer Expressway, which carried US 75 traffic south towards Houston, before the advent of IH-45 and Central Expressway. The underpass also serves the Texas and Pacific Railroad tracks.

Turn left on Main Street, and drive east through the edge of Deep Ellum district.

23. **INTERSTATE FORWARDING COMPANY WAREHOUSE**

3200 Main Street

The six-story brick commercial style warehouse was built in April 1913 as a bonded warehouse serving the U.S. Customs Service. This speculative project was announced two days after President William Taft reorganized the Customs Service on March 4, 1913, and named Dallas a port of entry within the Galveston district. It is one of the earliest warehouses constructed in the Fair Park area and was recently nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

Turn left on Second Street, go to Elm Street, then left on Elm.

24. **CONTINENTAL GIN COMPANY COMPLEX**

3301-3333 Elm Street

The complex consists of buildings ranging from vernacular masonry structures with ornamental corbeled cornices built in 1888 to glass-front, industrial structures built in 1914. Continental Gin Company manufactured ginning machinery under the direction of Robert S. and Stephen I. Munger. The Mungers prospered in this venture and real estate activities and became two of Dallas' most successful businessmen and philanthropists. The complex was listed in the National Register in 1983.

Continue on Elm Street through the heart of Deep Ellum, take a left on Crowder Street to Canton Street. Right on Canton to Henry Street.

24A. **MODEL T FORD ASSEMBLY PLANT**

Canton Street at Henry Street
Southwest corner

This former Ford Motor Company assembly plant seems incredibly small, but it was the Southwest Regional Assembly Plant for Model T Fords from 1913 until 1925, when it was replaced by a much larger facility in East Dallas. The building was designed by architect John Graham of Seattle, Washington.

Return on Canton Street to Crowder Street to Elm, and take a left on Elm Street.

25. **DEEP ELLUM**

A few blocks east of downtown is the recently revived Deep Ellum district, running along East Elm Street from roughly the 2900 block to the 1900 block. This is an area of early 20th-century warehouse showrooms and saloons that has recently been repopulated by artists and craftspeople. Note the old neon sign of the defunct Boyd Hotel in the 2900 block of East Elm, southside.

Take a right on Good-Latimer Expressway, then right on Swiss Avenue to 2900 block of Swiss.

26. **WILSON BLOCK HISTORIC DISTRICT ****

2900 Block of Swiss Avenue

Although not a commercial site and outside the purview of SCA, the Wilson Block is of interest to architectural historians and anyone involved with non-profit organizations. In the early 1980s, the Meadows Foundation funded the restoration of these Victorian houses for the use of local non-profit service organizations. The Dallas Historic Preservation League is located here.

East on Swiss Avenue— note the Swiss Circle shopping center (c.1920s) and ghost Coca-Cola sign. Continue on Swiss to Peak, left on Peak to Ross, left on Ross, then left on Haskell to Jack Walton's Hot Barbeque.

27. **JACK WALTON'S HOT BARBEQUE ***

1605 Haskell at San Jacinto
Northwest corner

As indicated by the canopies for parked cars, Jack Walton's was once a true drive-in restaurant with carhops. The current owners purchased the business some 20 years ago, but date the business back to around 1920. Jack Walton owned several of these restaurants, including one in Fort Worth. His picture hangs inside the main dining room.

Note the numerous porcelain/neon signs, and, inside, the wooden counters and metal stools. This is a true old-time Texas barbeque joint that has not been "yuppiefied" yet. You may order Louisiana shrimp, barbeque pork, beef, chicken, etc., for \$4.50 to \$6.50. Please cooperate and pay attention to the waitresses, as they will be hard-pressed to handle a busload.

Head south on Haskell to Gaston Avenue, right on Gaston until it merges with other streets, turn left on Pearl to Elm, then right into downtown.

28. **MAJESTIC THEATER ****

Elm Street, between Harwood and St. Paul
North side

Designed by renowned theater architect John Eberson, the Majestic was constructed in 1921 in the Baroque style. In the 1980s, it was saved from destruction, restored, and listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

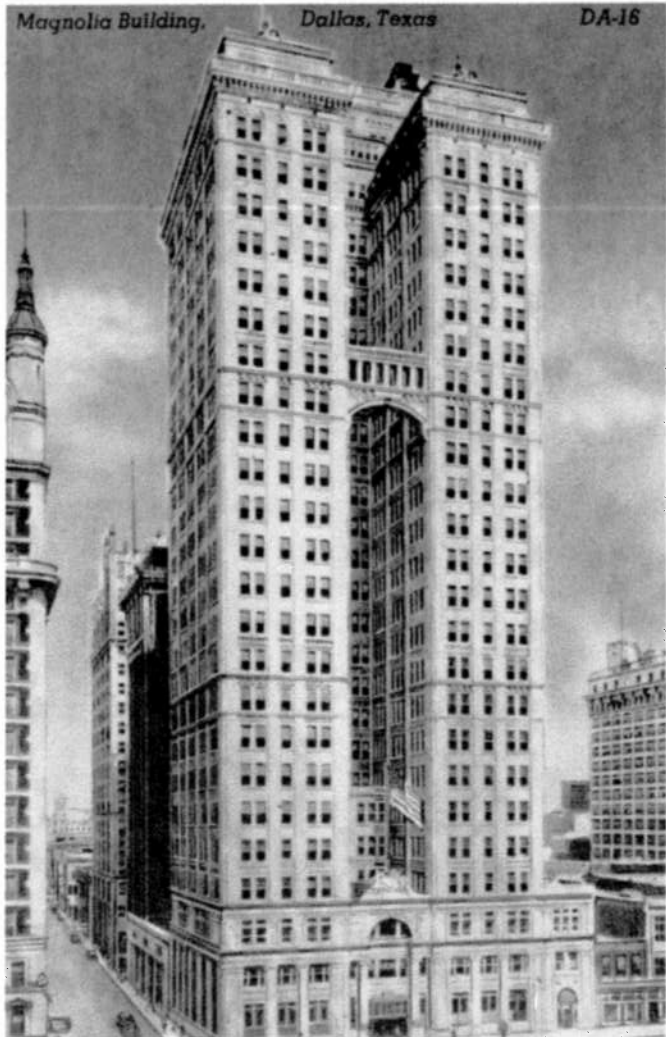
East on Elm to Akard, left on Akard, left on Commerce. Park here for photo stop. **

Continue on Commerce to Ervay.

29. **MAGNOLIA BUILDING**

Commerce at Akard, northeast corner
(best view from Jackson at Akard)

This is the best place to view the neon Pegasus landmark sign atop the 1921-22 Magnolia Building, which was the tallest structure in Dallas until the Mercantile Bank



building was constructed in 1942. Mobil Oil Company was the successor to the Magnolia Oil Company, which began in Corsicana, Texas, after the Spindletop discovery in 1901, and moved to Dallas shortly thereafter. Designed by Sir Alfred C. Bossom (New York and London) in association with Lang and Witchell (Dallas), the 29-story building was the 16th tallest in the U.S. when completed.

On March 18, 1934, the huge Pegasus neon sign was completed and mounted on its 50-foot tower atop the Magnolia Building. The Magnolia Oil Company was an affiliate of Socony-Vacuum Oil Company, which later became Mobil. Socony-Vacuum was created in 1931 upon the merger of Standard Oil of New York and Vacuum Oil Company. In 1934, the Texlite Company of Dallas was commissioned to build the porcelain/enamel likeness of Pegasus, not because of the

upcoming Texas Centennial, but to celebrate the coming of an oil convention in September 1934. The sign was built in less than six weeks, using 1/4 mile of neon tubing, 2,500 pounds of steel, 800 square feet of sheet metal; altogether, it weighed 7,000 pounds, and was rotated by a 3hp-motor. The "electric roof sign" was valued at an astronomical (for 1934) \$7,888 on the building permit application. The sign is actually two 30 X 40 foot flying horses, mounted 14 feet apart.

In 1973, the city of Dallas bestowed official landmark status on the sign, which is much loved and recognized by citizens as a symbol of the city's skyline. Until the 1970s, when taller buildings began to obscure it, the sign was used as a beacon by airplane pilots, who reported that it was visible from as far as Hillsboro, 60 miles to the south.

Adjacent to the Magnolia Building is the 1912 Beaux Arts Adolphus Hotel. If you walk back one block east, the Art Deco entrance to the Dallas Power and Light Building (1932) may be viewed.

30. **MERCANTILE NATIONAL BANK**
Commerce at Ervay, northeast corner

Constructed in 1942, this was Dallas' tallest building at that time. The spire and neon clock are still Dallas landmarks, though the faith in what they represent has been shaken in recent years. The building is now abandoned and endangered.

Continue on Commerce until it meets Young Street.

31. **MAGNOLIA SERVICE STATION AND AUTO SHOWROOM**

This terra cotta and brick building is sited on a triangular tract, allowing easy access from two sides. It is one of many fairly standardized architectural designs used by the Magnolia Oil Company in the 1920s. Advertising for supplies was incorporated into the panels, now covered. The building was a project of the well-known Texas firm of Lang and Witchell. The adjacent building was used as a showroom for new cars.

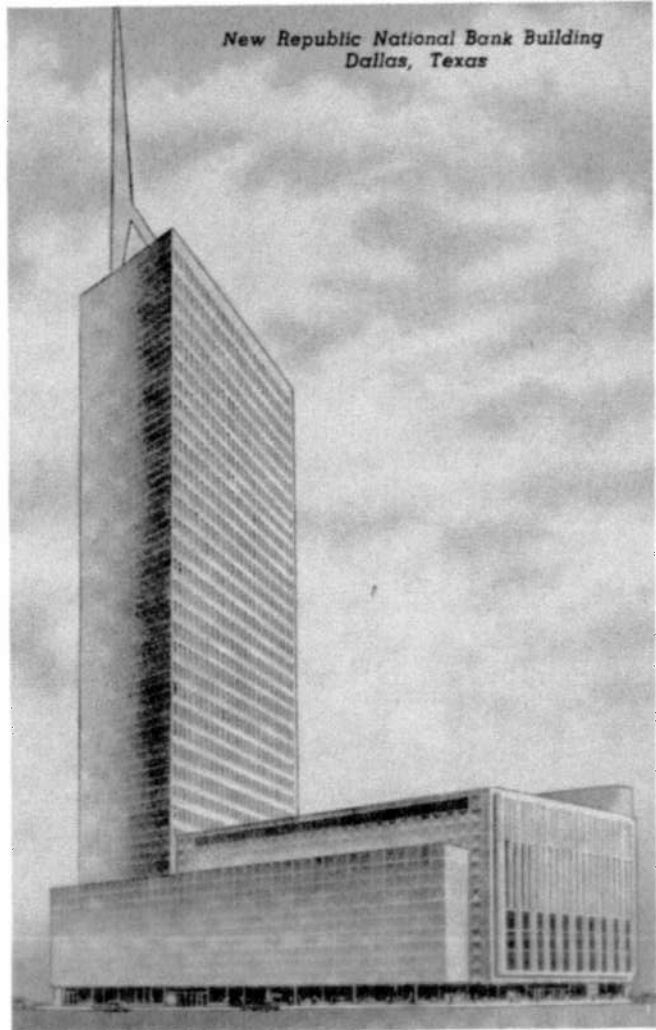
Turn right on Young, continue to Ervay and take a right to #32 and #33.

32. **H.L. GREEN'S (WILSON BUILDING)**
Southwest corner of Elm and Ervay

Constructed in 1902, the eight-story Beaux Arts Wilson Building was the tallest building in Dallas at that time. It is of interest to SCA members today due to its c.1950s, two-foot neon letters that spell out the name "H.L. Green's." The store is reminiscent of an old Woolworth's. Immediately to the south, at Main and Ervay, is the 1914 Nieman-Marcus building, with four to five periods of alterations dating through the 1970s.

33. **REPUBLIC NATIONAL BANK BUILDING ****
(Now NCNB)

As we approach, look northward on Ervay Street for the unusual gray metallic facade of the 1954 Republic National Bank tower. The building was designed by Harrison and Abramvitz Architects of New York in partnership with Alcoa Aluminum. This was the second use (the first being the Alcoa Building in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1950) of an aluminum wall covering a steel frame. Although begun in 1952, the building sat for two years



unsheathed because of an aluminum shortage during the Korean War. The crimp in the aluminum panels was modified and combined in a special design for the simulated rocket on top of the building's western edge. This symbolized the 1950s optimism, faith in technology, and future aerospace development visualized by the wealthy bankers who controlled Dallas' civic affairs through the 1950s and 1960s. A brilliant beacon cast light around Dallas from the top of this "rocket."

Continue to Akard (on an angle), then left on Akard to Elm, right on Elm to Houston, left on Houston, then left on Commerce, then right on Lamar.

DETOUR IF ROAD IMPROVEMENTS NOT COMPLETED:
Take left on Young, right on Griffin, right on Canton, then left on Lamar.

34. **GOOD LUCK SERVICE STATION ****

Lamar at Cadiz
Southeast corner

This abandoned building features an Art Moderne tower, c. 1939. This local chain of gas stations is still in business in other, less spectacular buildings in Dallas. Until December 1982, there was a Good Luck station similar to this one on the northeast side of downtown on Ross Avenue. A full-color plate of this station, before its colorful trim was removed, is in Dan Vierya's book, *Fill 'Er Up*. This was one of the finest examples of Art Moderne gas station designs in the United States.

Continue south on Lamar to #35.

35. **SEARS, ROEBUCK, & COMPANY BUILDING**

1409 South Lamar

This tremendous complex is the regional office headquarters, warehouse, and retail store for Sears, Roebuck, & Company, and is the work of Lang and Witchell architects of Dallas. The largest building varies from nine to 12 stories, and is a distinctive red brick color with white beltcourses dividing each floor. The north facade is topped by a huge, 35-foot-high landmark sign of red neon built in 1962 by J.F. Zimmerman and Sons, Inc. A similar sign on the adjacent Roe Street warehouse dates from 1953. Both signs are designated landmarks by the city of Dallas.

Left on Corinth, left on Akard to Griffin.

36. **NEWLAND HOTEL SIGN**

1325 South Akard at Griffin Street West

Small, early 20th-century two-story brick hotel with c. 1940 porcelain/neon sign (east side).

Continue on Akard to Wood Street, left on Wood to Houston Street, left on Houston.

37. **UNION TERMINAL**
400 South Houston
South side

Designed by Chicago architect Jarvis Hunt, Union Terminal was completed in October 1916. The handsome Beaux Arts building became the central depot for the nine railroads serving Dallas in the early 20th century and replaced five separate depots in use before its construction. The concept of a "union" terminal was a recommendation of George Kessler in his 1910 plan for the city of Dallas.

Continue south on Houston for the full effect of crossing the historic Houston Street Viaduct into Oak Cliff.

37A. **HOUSTON STREET VIADUCT**

Built in 1910-11, the Viaduct was the first of five concrete and steel viaducts built to connect north and south sections of Dallas. It is one of the longest viaducts with reinforced concrete arches ever built (6,562 feet), and was constructed entirely with Dallas County funds at a cost of \$2.10 per square foot. The bridge includes an unusual feature designed to facilitate ocean-going vessels, in anticipation of the Trinity River being navigable from the Gulf of Mexico.

Houston merges with Zang, south on Zang to Grande Tourist Lodge.

38. **GRANDE TOURIST LODGE**

Constructed in 1931 for Marcus and Alicia Plowman at a cost of \$300,000, the Grande Tourist Lodge was one of the most spectacular and well-known tourist courts in the Southwest. Rooms rented for \$7 a night, a significant price for the day. Fooshee and Cheek, Dallas architects (also the architects of Highland Park Village), designed these courts. They remain in pristine condition and are now for sale with the adjoining restaurant.

The courts were strategically placed on a diagonal lot to attract north-bound travelers to stop in Oak Cliff before crossing the Trinity River bridge into Dallas.

Oak Cliff was once a separate city; a recent initiative has emerged to restore that status.

Continue south on Zang to #39.

39. **POLAR BEAR ICE CREAM BUILDING**
(Now Casita Lupe Cafe)
1207 North Zang

This whimsical "iceberg-shaped" building was once the home of the popular Polar Bear Ice Cream. Many of these stores were found in Texas cities, but few, if any, remain. These were popular in the early 20th century, and this one probably dates from the 1920s.

South on Zang to Beckley intersection.

40. **MOBIL SERVICE STATION ****
1030 North Zang at Beckley
Southeast corner

This Art Deco Mobil service station is strategically situated at the intersection of two major thoroughfares, which were both U.S. highways in the 1930s. The large land area and parking area attest to the former importance of this station, which is now a locksmith's shop. The owner is obviously sensitive to the building's historic significance, as the original porcelain signage and the building's color scheme have been retained.

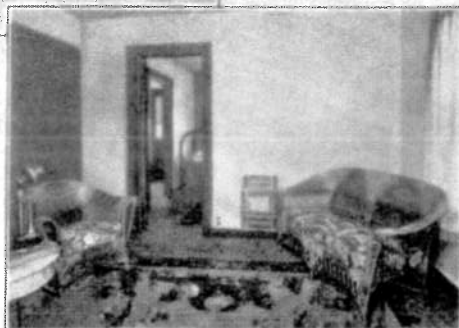
South on Beckley to 9th Street, left on 9th to Marsalis.

GRANDE TOURIST LODGE — DALLAS, TEXAS



Located in the heart
of Dallas.
A delightful
Bungalow Hotel
of 60 Apartments.

Beautifully furnished;
telephones and baths
in all apartments.
Hotel Service.



41. **MODERN OLDS DEALERSHIP**
9th Street at Marsalis

Until recent years, this was the oldest Oldsmobile dealership in Dallas. The c.1940s multi-story building is still in use as a dealership, although dealers are abandoning this area for more spacious, outlying locations.

Continue on 9th to Lancaster, right on Lancaster towards 10th Street.

42. **TAYLOR PONTIAC-RAMBLER BUILDING**

Just one block to the east is the former c.1950 Taylor Pontiac-Rambler building, now a used car dealership. The building (and Taylor's advertisements) sported two separate showrooms under one roof, which was quite unusual 30 to 40 years ago.

Turn right on Jefferson Boulevard, continue to 100 block of East Jefferson.

43. **ART DECO STOREFRONTS**
100 block of Jefferson

This is the central business district of Oak Cliff. The busy stores retain much of their 1940s flavor today. The bas-relief carvings in the storefronts in this block are of particular interest.

Continue on Jefferson to #44.

44. **TEXAS THEATER**
229 West Jefferson
North side

This theater and neon star are being restored by a local non-profit group. The building is most famous as the place where Lee Harvey Oswald was arrested after the assassination of President Kennedy.

Continue on Jefferson to #45.

45. **OAK CLIFF MUSIC COMPANY SIGN**
612 West Jefferson
South side

Excellent c.1945-50 porcelain/neon sign with neon musical notes.

Turn right on Tyler Street, north to Davis Street, left on Davis.

46. **RITE-WAY PLUMBING COMPANY SIGN**

Tyler at 7th Street

Southwest corner

Rite-way Plumbing Company has an immaculate, large porcelain/neon sign on the north face of its building. Look for the slogan, "Just a plumb good plumber."

Continue on Davis to # 47.

47. **HODGE'S SUPERMARKET**

909 West Davis

North side

Large c.1940s neon sign on an increasingly scarce independent supermarket.

Continue on Davis to Clinton.

48. **SHOPPING CENTER**

1400 block of Davis

Southeast corner

This unusual c.1950s shopping center/office building features Moderne style corner pylon and mosaic tile facing.

Continue on Davis to Edgefield.

49. **"THE VILLAGE"**

1310-1314 Davis Street (US 80)

Southeast corner

This unusual two and one-half story Jacobean Revival style shopping center and office building dates from 1922, with additions made in 1928. The Village is part of the Winnetka Heights Historic District, which was listed in the National Register in 1983.

Continue on Davis to # 50.

50. **THE TACO WAGON**
3400 block of Davis at Lillian
Southeast corner

This is an early drive-in restaurant, c.1945-55, in the shape of a Conestoga wagon.

51. **"CASH USED CARS" * ***
3500 block of Davis at Fort Worth Avenue
South side

The signage and graphics on this c.1950 canopied car lot are true SCA classics—"Instant credit!" and "The Walking Man's Friend!"

52. **SHANGRA-LA MOTEL**
South side

The Shangra-La Motel is one of a handful of motels along this road. Note the clipped gable roofs and mixture of wood frame and brick cottages.

53. **TEXAS MOTEL**
3800 block of Davis
South side

This c. 1940s motel is textured with brick siding and features an unusual corner turret.

54. **CARCO AUTO SEAT COVERS SIGN**
4040 West Davis
South side

This huge, two-story neon sign, c.1958, is one of the last remnants of the original signs for the Brake-o, Ray-co, and Car-co regional auto service franchises. Brake-O repaired brakes and shock absorbers, Ray-co replaced seat covers, and Car-co was a clone of Ray-co. Each of these stores was known for its huge sign.

55. **PALACE MOTEL**

These are tourist courts consisting of stone cottages.

Turn around and head east to Fort Worth Avenue cut-off on the left.

56. **STEVENS THEATER**
2005 Fort Worth Avenue (old US 80)
North side

The Stevens theater is a Moderne style theater with glass blocks.

57. **WOOD CREST MOTEL**
1632 Fort Worth Avenue
South side

Only the rambunctious two- to three-story neon sign remains from the 1940s era motel, which was razed in 1989. The sign appears to date from the late 1950s or early 1960s.

58. **AVALON MOTEL**
1015 Fort Worth Avenue
North side

This large c.1950 motel, with its Mission style facade, hugs the hillside as the road begins a series of curves.

59. **ALAMO PLAZA COURTS ****
712 Fort Worth Avenue
South side

This is one of the few remaining tourist courts associated with the Alamo Plaza Courts chain that began in Waco, Texas, in 1929. The principal facade evolved from a very close replica of the Alamo in San Antonio to this elongated version of the same motif. This chain spread throughout Texas and the Southeast. The Dallas Alamo Plaza is probably a post-World War II court. Note the similarity between the large star-topped neon sign out front, and the original Holiday Inn sign.



60. **MISSION MOTEL ****
500 block of Fort Worth Avenue
South side

This large tourist court was built for John L. Little in the early 1930s. Little was a pioneer in the auto court business and held several offices in the Texas Court Owners Association. He died in 1938, leaving this court and the Trinity Courts to be managed by his wife. Several books on tourist courts have used the Farm Security Administration's Mission Courts photograph (c.1940), which is on file in the Library of Congress. The design is obviously inspired by the missions of Texas and is probably the finest and most intact tourist court of this type in the state. Of special note are the twin towers and individual garages with each unit.

Continue east across the Trinity River Bridge or Commerce Street Viaduct.



61. **TRINITY RIVER BRIDGE/COMMERCE STREET VIADUCT**
Old US 80

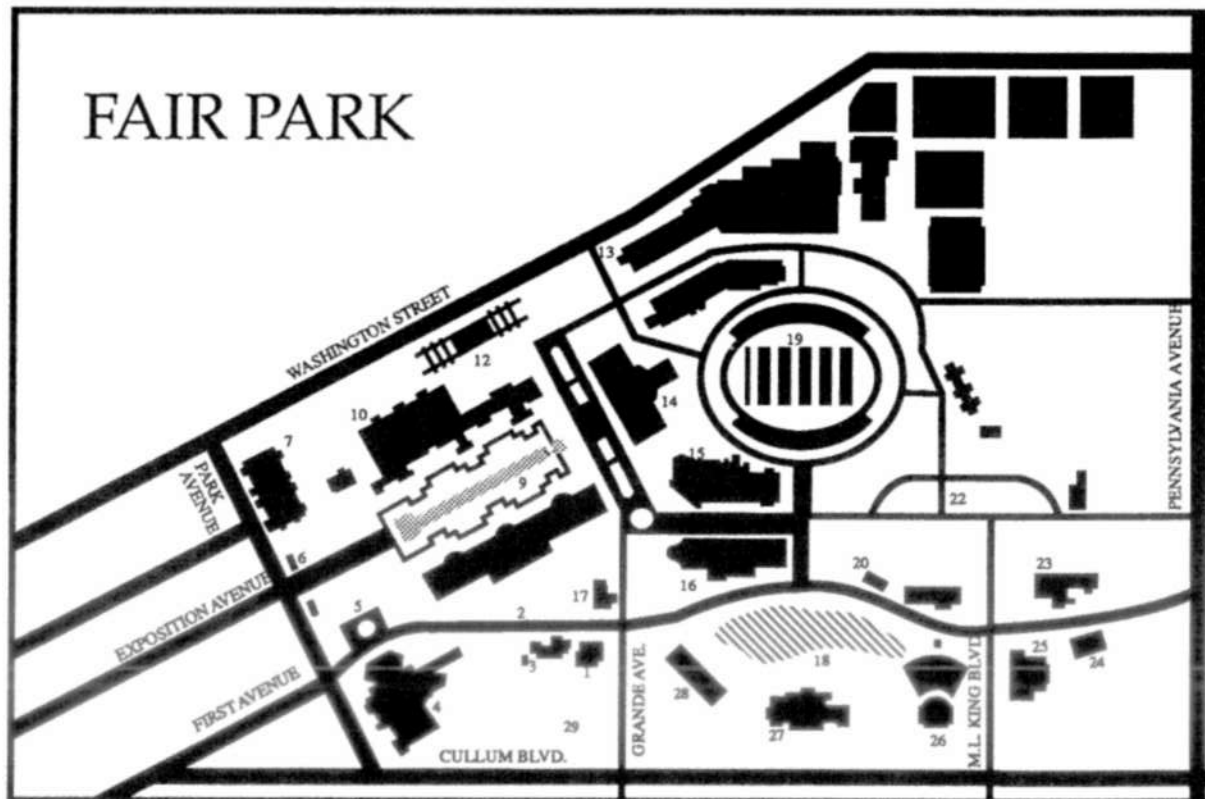
This balustraded concrete bridge over the Trinity River floodplain was once the main route out of downtown Dallas to Fort Worth and other points West. Note the beautiful street light globes on each side. The bridge offers an excellent view of the Dallas skyline.

Follow Commerce to Houston, right on Houston, then left on Young to Griffin, then right on Griffin to IH-30 to Fair Park exit. Continue to main gate of Fair Park.

62. **FAIR PARK *****

The annual State Fair of Texas will be in full swing during our tour. There is an admission charge, but the sights are worth it.

Fair Park is the site of the 1936 Texas Centennial Exposition, and most of the buildings date from that year. Therefore, it is one of the world's most concentrated collections of 1930s design, art, and architecture. It is also unusual in that the buildings still survive, and were not torn down after the Exposition. Today, Fair Park's six museums and numerous places of assembly result in almost continuous events throughout the year, making this Dallas' most heavily used cultural resource.



FAIR PARK BUILDINGS

1. (Map # 14) *Texas Hall of State*. At the end of the 1,000-foot-long reflecting pool and Esplanade sits the most formal and grandiose of Fair Park's Art Deco buildings. Like most of the other buildings here, the Hall of State was constructed for the 1936 Texas Centennial Exposition as a shrine to Texas history and its heroes. It also has housed the Dallas Historical Society since 1936. This building is one of the finest examples of Art Deco architecture in the United States. Every detail relates to Texas history and culture, Art Deco design precepts, or both. Be sure to see the murals in the Great Hall, and take note of the huge Deco light fixtures on the plaza in front of the building.

2. (Map # 15) *Tower Building*. To the right of the Hall of State is the aptly named Tower Building with its shaft topped by a gold eagle and its base featuring a sculpted Art Deco mural of Texas history and industry. If the building is open, take a look at the conference room, complete down to its 1936 furnishings.

3. (Map # 19) *Cotton Bowl Stadium*. Looming behind the Hall of State and the Tower Building, is the massive, 75,000-seat Cotton Bowl. This is the site of the annual Cotton Bowl Classic football game on New Year's Day and the hotly contested Texas-O.U. game. The latter is an annual fall ritual, in which the University of Texas and Oklahoma University football teams, fans, and alumni virtually close down the town for an entire weekend of hoopla.



4. (Map # 10) *Centennial Building*. As you stand in front of the Hall of State facing the Esplanade, the Centennial Building is on the right. It was built for the 1936 exhibition, as its name suggests. Originally, it was the Transportation Building. The frescoes at each entrance and on the eastern side of the building depict different modes of transportation.

5. (Map # 11) *Automobile Building*. Across the Esplanade from the Centennial Building is the Automobile Building, which houses the new automobile displays at the State Fair each October. Although it retains the Art Deco style, this building is later than the others, having been constructed in 1948 to replace an earlier building that burned to the ground in 1947.

6. (Map # 4) *Fair Park Music Hall*. Located next to the main gate, this is one of two buildings in Fair Park that predate the 1936 Centennial. The Music Hall was constructed in 1925 in a Spanish Eclectic style, and was originally known as the Dallas Municipal Auditorium. The City of San Antonio has a very similar municipal auditorium, which was built at about the same time. The Music Hall has a seating capacity of 3,420, and hosts the Dallas Summer Musicals, as well as the Dallas Symphony Orchestra (until the new Symphony Hall opens in the Arts District north of downtown).

7. (Map # 7) *Plant Engineering Building*. The other building predating the Centennial is the Plant Engineering Building (formerly the Hall of Administration), which is located across the Esplanade from the Music Hall. It was constructed in 1910 as a coliseum. Although not open to the public today, the statue and fountain outside the west facade were designed in 1936 to commemorate "The Spirit of the Centennial."

8. (Map # 6) *Parry Avenue Entrance*. The main entrance, beyond the foot of the Esplanade, is quite impressive and worthy of a photo, if it is not too crowded with fairgoers. This was the main entrance of the 1936 Centennial Exposition. It features an 85-foot-high pylon by Dallas architect George Dahl, a gold "Lone Star" on top, and sculpted friezes depicting early Texas history.

9. (Map # 1) *Magnolia Lounge Information Center*. Located at the intersection of Grand and First avenues, this small building should be at the top of everyone's list. "Friends of Fair Park" maintains its office and a very helpful information lounge here. Constructed in 1936, this was the first International Style building in Texas. Designed by architect William Lescaze, it was commissioned by the Magnolia Petroleum Company (predecessor of Mobil Oil Company and original occupant of downtown's Magnolia Building). It also houses the Margo Jones Theater, a theater-in-the-round that was opened by actress/

producer Margo Jones in 1947. Jones, a pioneer of the regional theater movement, was a highly talented Texas native, who died at a relatively young age a few years after her theater debuted.

10. (Map #28) *Dallas Museum of Natural History*. Across Grand Avenue from the Magnolia Lounge is the first of several museums in Fair Park. These are open throughout the year. This one is the Dallas Museum of Natural History, with dioramas of Texas plant and animal life. Note the Art Deco metal grillwork and fixtures on the building's exterior.

11. (Map #27) *Science Place I*. Continuing along the landscaped lagoon, this 1936 building is the former Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, which recently moved to a new facility north of the central business district. The city's science and technology museum is now housed here. The facade facing the lagoon features crafted metal panels that depict Texas flora, while the opposite side symbolizes the arts.

12. (Map #26) *Band Shell and Amphitheater*. Next to the science museum is this 5,000-seat outdoor theater, which also dates from 1936, as hinted by its Art Moderne streamlining. The Dallas Shakespeare Festival is held here each year.

13. (Map #21) *Dallas Aquarium*. Also dating from 1936, this is one of the largest inland aquariums in the country. The bas-relief sea horses on the building's exterior were done by Dallas artist Allie V. Tennant.

14. (Map #25) *Dallas Civic Garden Center*. Diagonally across the street from the aquarium is the Garden Center, which was built in 1936 as the Hall of Horticulture. It subsequently housed the World War II Rationing Board in the 1940s, and then became the Women's Building for the State Fair. In 1958, it was heavily remodeled to house the Garden Center.

15. (Map #24) *1936 Model Home*. Nestled beyond the Garden Center is the only survivor on site of what were four model homes that were built for the Centennial to show contemporary decorating trends. This one is a simple, one-story precursor to the ranch house.

16. (Map #23) *Science Place II*. Across from the 1936 model home is the former Hall of Domestic Arts, which was constructed for the 1936 exhibition. The building now houses a planetarium, called Science Place II, and the studios of radio station WRR-FM,

which is owned by the city of Dallas. In the 1960s and 1970s, WRR was the only municipally owned commercial radio station in the country. Dallas natives will remember that WRR was originally at 1310 on the AM dial, and listeners from the 1960s will fondly recall the "WRR Library of Laughs" program at 45 minutes past each hour, "brought to you by Clarence Tally Volkswagen at 710 North Pearl." Clarence and his Pearl Street location have long ago disappeared, and the AM portion of the radio station was sold in the 1970s.

17. (Map #22) *The Midway*. Located behind Science Place II is the famous State Fair Midway. At this time of year, the Midway will be a true sub-cultural experience, with stimuli for the eyes, ears, nose, and palate to be discovered around every corner. Like an overgrown carnival, it is populated with hawkers, amusement rides, shooting galleries, bright lights, noise, overpriced State Fair hot dogs, and awestruck teenagers and pre-teens from remote small towns and farms all over the state. Be sure to see "Big Tex" at the head of the Midway next to the Tower Building. Listen for his "Howdy folks!" greeting at the top of the hour. At the opposite end of the Midway, pause for a moment's remembrance of the huge wooden roller coaster that was located here until the late 1980s, when it was sadly demolished due to concerns about its structural stability.

(The discussion of Fair Park buildings is largely drawn from the brochure provided by the Friends of Fair Park, entitled "A Guide to Fair Park: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow.")

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