

Walks through History
Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District
Begin at Hotel Seville at 302 N. Main
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Based on a previous script by Rachel Silva



Intro

Hello, my name is Callie Williams, and I work for the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program. We are a division of the Department of Arkansas Heritage and conduct these walking tours throughout the year in communities around the state to increase awareness and encourage preservation of unique historic resources.

Welcome to the Walks through History tour of downtown Harrison! Harrison has 10 properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and today we'll see 5 of them (Hotel Seville, Harrison High School, Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District, Boone County Jail, and the Boone County Courthouse). Not on the tour: Twelve Oaks, Haggard Ford Swinging Bridge, Grubb Springs School, Evans-Kirby House, and the Duncan House.

I would like to thank Toinette Madison with the Boone County Heritage Museum (our local co-sponsor). This is a walking tour that was originally developed in 2013 by Rachel Silva with help from many local historians and it has been updated over the last month. **Today we are going to cover about 14 blocks and walk a little over a mile during the next hour and a half. We will end a block to the south along the courthouse square.**

Brief History of Harrison & Boone County

In 1855 Albert G. Stiffler settled near the present-day southeastern corner of Central and Spring streets in Harrison at what would become known as Stiffler Spring. Stiffler Spring was a popular camping and gathering place for pioneer residents and provided them with fresh water. In 1867 Stiffler sold his land and log house to former Union captain Henry W. Fick, who established a store near the spring. Fick applied for a post office and intended to call the new town “Crooked Creek.” Up until 1869, most of Boone County had been part of Carroll County with the county seat at Carrollton. But during Reconstruction, with carpetbaggers and Union sympathizers in positions of power throughout Arkansas, Captain Fick and other Republicans had considerable influence in state politics. They wanted a new county (and they wanted the new county seat to be located on their land), and in 1869 the Arkansas Legislature approved Act 70, which created Boone County. The origin of the name Boone County has been debated, with one possibility it is named after Daniel Boone, but it is also believed that the county was so named because it was a “boon” to local residents. The seat of justice was located at Captain Fick’s store.

In 1870 former Union Colonel (later Brigadier General) Marcus LaRue Harrison, then working as an engineer, surveyed a proposed route for the Pacific & Great Eastern Railway through Boone County. While he was here, Harrison was asked to survey and plat the new town’s streets, and the town was subsequently named in his honor. In 1871 a courthouse was constructed on the court square in Harrison (completed 1872). However, in 1875, the neighboring town of Bellefonte challenged Harrison for the county seat. You see, Reconstruction was over, the ex-Confederates in Bellefonte were allowed to vote again, and they wanted the county seat. The situation was very tense with the threat of violence a real possibility, but an election was held and Harrison won. The town of Harrison incorporated in 1876. Early residents engaged in subsistence farming, grew livestock, and worked in the milling, mining, and timber industries.

The St. Louis & North Arkansas Railroad (later the Missouri & North Arkansas) was completed through Harrison in 1901, connecting the town to Eureka Springs and Missouri. By 1912 the M & NA decided to put its shops and roundhouse in Harrison, which provided additional jobs and established Harrison as a regional shipping center.

1) Hotel Seville (NR-listed 5/19/1994)

The Hotel Seville opened for business on October 5, 1929, and served as the center of Harrison’s social life for the next 3 decades. The Continental Hotel Company of Springfield, MO, commissioned architect Eugene Johnson to design the Spanish Revival-

style hotel at a cost of \$135,000. The building is an excellent example of the Spanish Revival style with its smooth brick façade ornamented with tile and terra cotta, rounded arch openings, and wrought-iron grillework. An addition to the west of the original hotel was constructed in 1963. Unfortunately, competition from modern hotels caused its closing as a hotel by the mid-to-late 1960s. In 1970 it was purchased by the Defenders of the Christian Faith of Wichita, KS, who used the building to house and feed the elderly. In 1978 it was sold again and became The Townhouse, which was used for a similar purpose, housing for the elderly. In April 2008 it was purchased by PFI Hospitality with Jack Moyer and Don Alberson as principles. The hotel was restored to its original beauty and is now a fully-functioning hotel and restaurant. Elaborate stenciling in lobby.

2) NE corner of Main & Ridge (across from Hotel Seville) - Around the turn of the 20th century, a 2-story house here was adapted to be a hotel. It was operated by Mrs. W. M. Connerley. It burned in 1921—thought to be arson as a result of the railroad strike—a rumor circulated that the hotel was not friendly to railroad workers/strikers. First Baptist Church was built on this site in the 1920s and was razed in 1979 to make way for the construction of this building, which opened in 1980 as Security Bank. Building is now Northark (North Arkansas Community College).

3) Small frame house just to the west of the Seville Hotel was the location of the first library in Harrison from at least 1903 until 1940 (the wood framed house has been substantially altered since the early 1900s). Woman's Book Club organized for the purpose of creating a library and just after the turn of the century, they raised money for a building and books. In 1986 the Boone County Library moved into another former Security Bank location at the NE corner of W. Stephenson and Spring (building completed for Security Bank in 1963).

We will walk past the following buildings:

4) 224 N. Main (Kandy Gregg Webb, Attorney at Law) John Hickman Service Station - Was a Phillips station. Had 2 glass gas pumps out front, and the lower portion of the façade had a river rock veneer. It was one of the first filling stations in Harrison and operated there from about 1915 until 1974.

5) 212-214 N. Main (Phillips Media Group) with a Jason Jones mural along the north wall — There was a third building north of these two until relatively recently. In these storefronts, there was a barber shop from 1949 to 1964. Barbers were Troy Drewry, Hurley Brown, Curtis Williams, and Roy Tucker. There was also a bus station in one of these storefronts. And probably most memorable was Ashley Music Store, run by Hugh Ashley, who was also mayor of Harrison for a time.

Walk South to the Courthouse Square, stand at the northeast corner of the Courthouse Square.

Two important events in the recent past need to be mentioned - the 1961 Flood and the “Battle for the Buffalo.”

1961 Flood—In the evening hours of May 6 and early morning of May 7, 1961, eleven inches of rain fell in twelve hours, transforming Crooked Creek into a raging river. About 3:30 a.m. on May 7, a 12 to 14-foot wall of water came over the levee a block southeast of the square and rolled through downtown. Four lives were lost, and 80 percent of the business district was destroyed with hundreds of buildings severely damaged. The flood caused more than \$5.4 million in property damage. The Corps of Engineers dubbed this a “100-year flood,” and it was the worst disaster in Harrison’s history. News of the Harrison flood commanded national and international attention—it made the front page of the *Los Angeles Times* and other major newspapers. The four people who were killed had homes along Crooked Creek and did not evacuate fast enough, but there were many harrowing tales of local merchants who narrowly escaped the floodwaters downtown. You see, the fire department got some advance warning from upstream and evacuated residents along Crooked Creek, BUT they also told merchants to prepare for the flood—so they rushed downtown to their stores in an attempt to put things up off the floor and so forth. Well, the flood hit while most of them were still downtown, trapping some of them in upper floors and on top of buildings for hours.

Battle for the Buffalo—The Flood Control Act of 1938 provided for civil engineering and flood control projects like dams, levees, etc. to put people to work and prevent flooding disasters like the Mississippi River Flood of 1927. The Corps of Engineers included the Buffalo River in its planning for a system of dams on the White River (which the Buffalo flows into). The Corps selected two dam sites on the Buffalo—one on the lower portion of the river near its mouth and one at its middle just upstream from Gilbert. The possibility of a dam caught the attention of conservationists in the state, who formed the Ozark Society to oppose dam construction and advocate for the preservation of the river in its natural, free-flowing state. The pro-dam faction formed the Buffalo River Improvement Association. While the pro-dam faction worked with the Corps of Engineers and 3rd District Congressman James Trimble, the Ozark Society appealed to the Dept. of the Interior, namely the National Park Service.

In December 1965 Governor Orval Faubus wrote the Corps of Engineers that he could not support the idea of a dam on the Buffalo River, leading the Corps to withdraw its proposal for a dam. In 1966 John Paul Hammerschmidt of Harrison defeated Trimble for the 3rd Congressional District seat and indicated that he would support the concept of

creating a park along the river. Congressman Hammerschmidt and Senators J. William Fulbright and John L. McClellan introduced the first Buffalo National River park legislation in 1967. The final park legislation was introduced in 1971. In February 1972 Congress voted to establish the Buffalo as the nation's first "national river." Congressman Hammerschmidt went on to enjoy 13 straight victories and contributed 26 years of service to the people of Arkansas. [The "National River" designation protects rivers from industrial uses, impoundments, and other obstructions that may change the natural character of the river or disrupt the natural habitat for the flora and fauna that live in or near the river.] Today the Buffalo National River attracts more than one million visitors each year. Harrison is the gateway to the Buffalo River National Park and the location of the park headquarters (NW corner of Prospect & Walnut).

The Harrison Courthouse Square Historic District (NR-listed 5/6/1999) includes the Seville, the west side of the 200 block of Main, buildings around the square, and a few blocks along side streets off the square.

6) Old Federal Building & U.S. Post Office—Built in 1903 and 1904. Was completed in 1905 at a cost of \$78,000. The Post Office was on the first floor from 1906 until 1965, when a new p. o. was built. The second floor was devoted to the U.S. District Court, and the third floor housed federal offices. The building was designed in the Neoclassical style of architecture with a first floor of rusticated brick, limestone keystones and pediments (both triangular and segmental arch), and a projecting cornice with dentils. The building is currently owned by Boone County and houses county and state offices.

7) Boone County Courthouse (NR-listed 7/21/1976)

During the late 1800s, the blocks surrounding the courthouse were mostly small frame buildings with some older log buildings interspersed. By the 1880s, the area was starting to coalesce into a commercial trading center. The 1870s courthouse burned on July 4, 1908—locals speculated that the fire was caused by a new device used to project pictures onto a screen on the side of the courthouse or that it was purposely set on fire by someone wanting to destroy records of a trial in process, but it was really ignited accidentally by fireworks that were shot from the roof of the courthouse. The current courthouse was built in 1909 to replace it. It was designed in the Classical Revival style by well-known Little Rock architect Charles L. Thompson and features a triangular pediment with dentils, pilasters with limestone capitals, and a segmental arch pediment above the north and south entrances. The courthouse was designed to be accessible from all four sides and is surrounded by a large lawn, giving the area a park-like setting.

Bandstand—the original bandstand was constructed in the early 20th century on this site and was later razed. The current bandstand was built as part of the Bicentennial celebration in Harrison in 1976 and closely resembles the original structure.

View north side of courthouse square — from east to west

8) Missing 2-story building on east side of this block—was demolished in early 1960s as part of Urban Renewal project and widening of US 62-65 B. It housed the Boone County Abstract Office and later Bennett's Drug Store.

9) 103 W. Rush (Frenzy)—Built ca. 1900 but has new brick veneer. By the 1910s, this building housed Farmer's Bank. It was later home to several restaurants, including Mrs. Dunn's Café (1935), Wagner's Café, Koffee Cup, and Bowtini's.

10) 105 W. Rush (Frenzy 1-story)—Housed the North Side Square Grocery and was later divided into 2 separate storefronts. In 1935 it was Blatz Discount Beer and the City Bakery.

11) 107 W. Rush (Parker Place)—Long-time home of the American Railway Express office.

12) 109-111 W. Rush (*Harrison Daily Times*)—The *Harrison Times* was first published in 1876 in a two-story wood-frame building on this site by the Newman family. About 1900 the wood-frame building was replaced with a rusticated stone building with large arched window and door openings—you can still see the stone and arched openings on the side elevation in the alley. A rear addition was built in 1930, and the front façade had been changed several times over the years, beginning in the 1940s. In the mid-20th century, the westernmost building had carriage glass panels on the façade, and the eastern building had vertical metal panels. Then the buildings were re-bricked sometime before 1986. In 1954 the *Harrison Daily Times* merged with the *Boone County Headlight* (a weekly). Until recently, the paper was a family business, beginning with the Newmans, then the Dunlaps, and later the Christensons. Now operated by Community Publishers, Inc.

13) 113-115 W. Rush (Lyric Theater) — This building was a 1-story wood-frame house on this site until about 1923. The Lyric Theater was built in 1929. Noted builder J. W. Bass constructed the building at a cost of \$35,000. Bass was also responsible for the 1929 Hotel Seville, the Montgomery Ward store on the west side of the square (Fraley's Furniture), and his own home Twelve Oaks Estate.

The “new” Lyric showed the first talking movie in Harrison on November 7-8, 1929. The show was *Broadway* and it packed the house. The initial admission price was \$0.10 for adults and \$0.05 for children. Lyric owners David E. Fitton and his wife, Lulu Garvin Fitton, (Dave Fitton’s grandparents) opened an Air Dome theater in Harrison in the 1910s. It was located north of the current Lyric building. Then in 1919 they purchased a theater on the west side of the square from H. H. Jackson (112 N. Willow—Dental Creations). This was the first Lyric Theater. When the “new” Lyric opened in 1929, the “old” Lyric became the Plaza Theater and was later converted to sound movies. The Plaza stayed open until 1955. D. E. Fitton died in 1950, leaving Lulu in charge. She also ran the Ozark Drive-in. The interior of the Lyric Theater was updated in 1953 (still has the 1953 carpet in the lobby). Lulu died in 1970, and the Lyric Theater closed in 1977. It is currently operated by the Ozark Arts Council and hosts live performances, plays, concerts, movies, and special events.

Point out detailed finials and tile work along the top of the façade. The interior includes six, 12-foot high murals by J.W. Zelm, which were hidden under burlap that had been installed along the walls. Although damaged by water in the past, they were restored during the restoration of the Lyric Theater. Zelm was born in Latvia in 1883 and by his death in 1971 he had painted murals all across the south. He painted the murals in the theater sometime after July of 1929. Although the murals were sometimes referred to as Hobo art, painted by an itinerate artist, the murals were actually the work of Zelm, a then well-known and sought after artist. Also, there are still 2 original seats and some 1950s seats upstairs in the balcony, downstairs the seating is new.

14) On the west side (left) of the first floor in the Lyric (now the Ozarks Arts Council Offices) — was the location of a restaurant called Klepper’s. It was very small with a counter and one row of booths. You could get a good bowl of chili there before seeing a movie at the Lyric.

15) 117 W. Rush (currently empty)—Built ca. 1905. Was the Bank of Harrison in early 20th century. Was an appliance store in the 1950s-1960s. Sold Frigidaire appliances.

16) 119 W. Rush (Town House Café)—Built ca. 1905. Has been a restaurant for many years, but not the Town House. Anyone have more info?

17) 121-125 W. Rush (2-story with barber shop)—Built ca. 1905. A portion of this building has been a barber shop for many years, and it was also home to Shirley’s Dress Shop (run by Opal Boyd).

18) 127 W. Rush (Ugo's Eatery)—Built 1946 (plaque at top of building) to replace earlier structure here. Was Bardwell Hat Shop in early 20th century. In recent memory, it was State Farm Insurance and then a privately owned Marine Corps museum.

**There were other businesses on the North side of square—just not sure which building they were in—Cooper Shoes (predecessor of Family Shoe Store and Harness Shoes), Commercial Bank (predecessor of First National Bank), etc.

Walk to the Northwest corner of the square facing Dollar General

Bandstand—the original bandstand was constructed in the early 20th century on this site and was later razed. The current bandstand was built as part of the Bicentennial celebration in Harrison in 1976 and closely resembles the original structure.

19) 205 W. Rush (Dollar General) — In 1940 there was a frame hotel on this corner. Bennett Building constructed ca. 1945. Kroger was located here in the 1940s-50s.

20) 207-215 W. Rush (All Star Awards)—Built ca. 1945. In 1950s-60s it was a Singer Sewing Machine Shop.

21) 206-212 W. Rush — In 1950s-60s was the NuWay Dry Cleaners.

West side of Courthouse Square — going north to south

22) 132 N. Willow (SW corner Rush & Willow, Patricia Virnig, Attorney) — Built ca. 1930. This building initially had 2 tiny storefronts—the northern one (right) was W. T. Harrison Jewelry, started in 1948 by W. T. Harrison, Sr., and the southern one (left) was the Green Castle Café. Harrison Jewelry later took up the whole building. In the 1980s the business was operated by W. T. Harrison's son, Tom Harrison.

23) 130 N. Willow (Tiny Tots Resale)—Built ca. 1930. Housed Martini's (store operated by local Jewish family) in mid-20th century.

24) 124-128 N. Willow (Milburn Building, 1930 – date seen on façade, now Hard Target Shooting Academy) —This building housed a variety of businesses, including Western Auto, Orendorff's Supply Co., W. W. Rose Grocery, McKinney Shoes, a beauty shop, Carl's Electric & Plumbing, Sherwin Williams Paint, and others.

25) 120 N. Willow (Fraley's Furniture & Appliance)—Built in 1929 by J. W. Bass for Montgomery Ward. **Very intricate façade with tile, terra cotta, and raised Mission-style parapets with finials.** The upper façade bears Montgomery Ward's corporate

symbol, the Goddess of Liberty. Ward's opened in the fall of 1929 and carried men's, women's, and children's clothing, furniture, bedding, appliances, automotive & tires, yard supplies, radios, and a portion of the basement was "Toyland." Ward's was here for 50 years. The building's interior was later divided into smaller booths for a variety of shops and a restaurant. In 1996 Bill and Sherry Fraley opened their furniture store here.

26) 116 N. Willow (Cavender's)—Built ca. 1920. In the 1950s "Spike" and Katherine Cavender operated the Well-Worth Dime Store here. It was severely damaged by the '61 Flood but reopened in this location. The Cavenders later opened The Party House in this location. They sold the store, and it became Shelby's Party House. The Cavenders retained ownership of this building, and Shelby's moved into its current location on Main Street north of the old federal building/post office (that building was constructed in 1970 for Harrison House, which sold men's and women's clothing). Spike Cavender made "greek seasoning" for his friends and family. In 1968 Spike and his son, Steve, decided to market and sell their Greek seasoning blend. S-C Seasoning Company continues to manufacture Cavender's Greek Seasoning in Harrison. This building is still owned by the Cavender family.

27) 114 N. Willow (The Pour House coffee shop)—Built ca. 1910. Housed Tims Victory Market until 1960, when Family Shoe Store moved here. Has wonderful cast-iron columns with Corinthian capitals now painted red.

28) 112 N. Willow (Dental Creations)—Built ca. 1908 as a 2-story building. In 1913 H. H. Jackson opened the first indoor theater in Harrison here, the Lyric. In 1919 the Fittons purchased the Lyric and operated it until 1929 when the "new" Lyric was built on the north side of the square. This theater was then converted to talking films and called the Plaza. The 2-story building was damaged by fire in the late 1940s and shortened to one story. The Plaza Theater operated until 1955.

29) 108-110 N. Willow (Elle & Co. Boutique & Harness Boots and Shoes) — Built ca. 1915. The two storefronts have housed a variety of businesses. In 1939 the southern storefront (left) was the Capitol Café, run by the Fuller family who lived upstairs. The northern storefront (right) was Kroger. The right storefront was later Oklahoma Tire and Supply Co. (OTASCO). Other occupants of the building were Bee Discount, Rowland's Department Store, Fashion Lane, and Unlimited Outlet. Harness Boots & Shoes opened in 1989, but generations of the Harness family have worked in the shoe business. In 1949 Perry Harness started working for Albert Cooper at Cooper Shoe Store. Perry Shoe Center and Family Shoe Store both evolved out of Cooper Shoe Store. **Note the shell detail in a roundel along the top of the façade.**

30) 104 N. Willow (Best Choice Insurance) — In 1939 was Moore’s Barber Shop, later Wasson’s Barber Shop. Note the slanted entryway (asymmetrical).

31) 100-102 N. Willow (Kade & Cate boutique, Nationwide Insurance, US Post Office) — Building currently has metal slipcover on it, but the original façade was brick with a projecting cornice. Building probably dates to the turn of the 20th century. Hudson Grocery started out in the corner storefront in 1920 as Green & Hudson. Hudson’s was here until 1963. Shipman’s Jewelry occupied the northern space from 1970 through 2016, now the northern space is Kade & Cate boutique.

Walk to the Southwest corner of the Courthouse Square

32) 200 W. Stephenson (Harrison Convention Center & Visitors Bureau)—Built ca. 1910. Had elaborate façade originally—current panels and brick are from mid-20th century (Maybe 1950s). This was originally Boone County Hardware Company. Harrison Federal Savings & Loan was organized in 1934 by 25 local businessmen. The offices were located on the north side of the square from 1938 until 1960, when it relocated to this building at the SW corner. Beginning in the early 1970s, Harrison Federal Savings & Loan opened branch offices throughout northwest Arkansas, so in 1974, they changed the name to First Federal Savings & Loan to reflect the regional character of the organization. First Federal had a separate loan office in the building at the SE corner of Willow & Stephenson for awhile, and that building is now the Coffman Center (named after F. L. Coffman, Sr., and/or F. L. Coffman, Jr.—both were longtime bank presidents). The convention center moved into this space in the last 5 years.

33) 204-208 W. Stephenson (Back Street Trader & gray metal slipcover) — This was once one brick building with 3 storefronts. The entire thing was Harrison Hardware & Plumbing Co., and then became Saveway Hardware, and after the 1961 flood, it was Coast-to-Coast Hardware.

34) 212 W. Stephenson (previously Lena Frances Flower Shop, now closed and used as additional space for Back Street Trader) — Panel on façade says “C. O. Allison.” Built ca. 1905. Before Lena Frances, this building housed Saffer Drug. The Lena Frances Flower Shop was established in 1939 by Lena Frank Barron and Frances “Frankie” Cotton. It has had different owners since its establishment, but still used the Lena Frances name.

We will discuss the rest of the square after we walk back from the old High School building.

We will walk by the following buildings shortly:

35) 205 W. Stephenson (Legal Aid of Arkansas). Built in c. 1900, this building is composed of rusticated stone blocks with a dentil detail along the top of the façade. By 1904, this was the home of a grocery, faced in stone. The space would eventually be used as a commercial space through the early 20th century.

36) Fowler Building — to the east of Boone County Library. Was Dr. Ross Fowler's office (general practitioner).

Walk east along West Stephenson Avenue to Spring Street and cross street to empty lot.

37) NE corner Stephenson & Spring—Boone County Library. Built in 1963 for Security Bank and has been the library since 1986.

38) NW corner Stephenson & Spring — Cox building. This was the 555 Firestone station (“Five Fifty-five”), now completely covered in siding.

Walk east along West Stephenson Street to Pine Street, walk to in front of the Old First Christian Church

39) SW corner Stephenson and Pine (now Pine Street Mini Storage) — site of old Methodist Church. In 1979 the Allied Telephone Co. office on Pine exploded due to a leak in their gas main. The blast blew out the stained glass windows in the church and caused extensive damage to buildings in the surrounding blocks. The Methodist Church was later demolished.

40) Old First Christian Church — one of few remaining historic downtown church buildings. The original congregation dated from 1876. This building dates from the early 1890s, with a hand-dug basement. The exterior was stuccoed in 1930. The congregation moved out of building in 1957 to a new building to the south along south Maple Street.

41) Rock building on W. Stephenson (E of Thompson's)—From 1941 to 1964 this was the Pepsi-Cola Bottling Plant (which moved to a larger facility in 1965 and later built an even larger plant in the industrial park in 1975).

Walk east to the corner of West Stephenson and South Cherry Street, then south along Cherry Street to in front of the old High School.

42) Central Elementary School — This corner was the site of the Harrison public school by 1897, and the site of the Harrison Grammar School by the 1910s. The current building was started in 1940 by the WPA (it has since been expanded significantly). In the 1960s,

both the old high school and Central Elementary were the Junior High. Then Central was later used as a middle school.

43) Harrison High School (NR-listed 1/24/2007)

The Old Harrison High School is located at the NW corner of Central and Cherry. Harrison High School was built in 1912 and designed by Ft. Smith architect Harry C. Schwebke. It cost \$15,464 to construct the building, which was officially completed on August 17, 1912. The facade originally had large, curving bay windows on both stories, but in 1954 the façade was remodeled into more of a Prairie-style appearance and the bay windows were removed. The building served as a high school until 1952, when it became the junior high. It was the junior high until 1987. Soon after the students moved out, the building was leased to the Boone County Heritage Museum, which is operated by the Boone County Historical and Railroad Society.

Walk west along West Central Avenue to the corner of South Spring Street

44) City Hall was built in 1954 for a cost of \$150,000. When the new building was opened on April 25, 1954, about 3,000 people visited that day. The new building had an attached fire station. The city hall is apparently located where Captain Henry W. Fink's home and hotel had stood in the late 1860s.

45) First Presbyterian Church (across from city hall) was built in 1913 and originally had stained glass windows and a cupola on the roof. Educational wings were added in 1949 and 1976. The congregation left the downtown building within the last 15 years, and it currently houses REAL Ministries.

46) Stiffler Spring—site of the original settlement and named after early landowner Albert Stiffler. Was the community's primary source of water for many years. The spring originates in the area of the intersection of Spring Street and Central Avenue. Point out Crooked Creek Recreation Area and Lake Harrison (across the levee) — In 1984 the Corps of Engineers approved the clearing of the creek bed and construction of a weir to create Lake Harrison and help with flood control.

Walk west along Central Avenue to the corner of South Willow Street.

47) Boone County Jail (NR-listed 12/12/1976)

Built in 1914 and designed in the Mission style by Little Rock architect Charles L. Thompson. It served as a jail with living quarters for the jailor until 1976. There was an earlier jail located on the same site, and it was here that the last legal hanging in Harrison took place in 1913 (one of the last in AR; official last hanging in AR was in 1914 in Paris, AR). Odus Davidson was convicted and hanged for the murder and dismemberment of 18-year-old Ella Barham. Davidson was suspected because he was seen in the vicinity chopping wood with an ax the day of the girl's disappearance. Her dismembered body was found in an old mine shaft, partially covered with rocks. Davidson was jailed in Berryville to ensure his safety. A jury quickly convicted him, and he was hanged on a set of gallows in the area in front of the old jail. A new book about this event has recently been published: *Remembering Ella* by Nita Gould.

Walk north along South Willow Street to the Courthouse Square

South side of square—going west to east

48) 128 W. Stephenson (Coffman Center)—Built ca. 1900. Originally had a decorative pressed metal façade with a peaked parapet and housed the People's National Bank. In February 1921 outlaw Henry Starr attempted to rob the People's Bank. He was shot by banker W. J. Myers, who obtained a rifle and fired on Starr as he was looting the safe. Starr died a few days later. Security Bank was organized in 1931 and occupied the former People's Bank building. By 1937 the bank had been remodeled with brick pilasters on the lower level and 3 windows with stone lintels and sills on the second floor. It had a projecting cornice with dentils. In 1937, it housed Security Bank on the first floor and Harrison Realty on the second floor. In 1952 Security Bank started a Hopalong Cassidy Savings Club for kids to encourage savings. Had parties at Christmas and in June for the members, and had a mechanical horse, "Topper," in the bank lobby for kids to ride. Before 1961 Security Bank remodeled the façade again—this time with granite panels and roman brick. In 1963 Security Bank moved from this location to the NE corner of Stephenson & Spring (current Boone Co. Library building) and then again to the current Northark building. In recent memory, the First Federal Loan office was located here.

49) In the early 20th century, there were 5 separate 1-story buildings going east between the bank and the alley. Each one of them had a decorative pressed metal façade.

In the late 1910s or early 1920s, the following businesses were in these 5 buildings (from west to east)—New Model Grocery, City Drug Store, Relief Commissary, and Capps Bros. Grocery by the alley. By 1937, 126 W. Stephenson was the Farmers Exchange Cash Grocery, and 124 W. Stephenson was Sims City Drug Store. In recent memory, the current building at 124-126 W. Stephenson housed Sims Drug (both

storefronts). In the early 20th century, Dr. David Evans opened a drug store on the south side of the square. Because he had no children, Dr. Evans brought his nephew, Walter L. Sims, into the business with him (store became Evans & Sims). Later Sims acquired his uncle's interest and it became Sims City Drug. In the mid-1930s, Walter's son, Robert Sims, also joined the business. Sims was located in the eastern storefront (left) prior to the '61 flood. After the flood devastated the buildings, they were demolished and the current building constructed in their place. Sims Drug then occupied the entire building (both storefronts).

In the 1960s, a different line-up of businesses occupied these buildings. Sims was here, and then it was Heur-Wilson Shoe Store (sold kids shoes; run by Otis & Marie Wilson) and the Style Spot (sold adult shoes). Next was M & F Office Supply and Franklin Janes Studio (later Coiffures Et Cetera).

Alley

50) 112 W. Stephenson (Higher Places Massage)—J. W. Phelps Building, 1950. Nice basket bond brick work on upper façade. Former building on this site housed Wilson Bruton Meat Market, and later the Wilson Meat Store.

51) 110 W. Stephenson (Second Hand Rose)—Coffman Building, 1957 (date on façade). Former building on this site was the longtime home of the Coffman Kirby Drug Store.

52) 104-108 W. Stephenson (Advanced Realty & Auction Group)—Built ca. 1910 to house Magness-Reece Hardware. Has wonderful detailing on upper façade—rough-cut stone and triangular pediments above the windows.

53) 102 W. Stephenson (Deb's Frames & Things)—Built ca. 1910. Housed the Palace Drug Store and later the Crescent Drug Store. Crest Variety Store moved here in the mid-to-late 1950s and in 1970 expanded into one storefront of the 2-story building to the west. Crest carried gifts, housewares, cosmetics, and had a toyland.

Walk to Southeast corner of the Courthouse Square

54) Block is missing a 2-story building at the corner (100 W. Stephenson) – this building was demolished to widen Main Street in the early 1960s. In its early years, the building was Spot Cash Grocery and later became a jewelry store. Crest Variety Store was started there in 1952 by R. L. and Gladys Sims and then moved next door. After Crest moved out, this was McKinney Men's Store. The building had a large sign on top of the roof advertising the Siesta Motel (part of the Best Western chain) a half-mile from downtown.

55-56) Point out two buildings at SE corner of square on E. Stephenson—108-110 E. Stephenson (Wagley 1947 & Wood Building)—The Wood Building (2-story) had a double-decker porch on the front façade—you can still see where it was attached to the brick. Both the Wood and Wagley buildings housed Clark & Eoff Furniture Company. Today the Wagley 1947 building is home to Down Home Creations.

East Side of square – from south to north

57) 101-103 N. Main (Lefler's & other storefront, currently empty)—Built in 1912 as two separate buildings with a firewall. Known as the Walter's Building. Founded in 1867 in Woolum by J. H. Walters, the store later moved to St. Joe, and in 1897, it moved to Harrison (was located on south side of square). Mr. Walters's sons, Alexander and William, joined him in the business. J. H. Walters died in 1909, and in 1913 men named Lawson and Durnil opened Jackson Clothing Company in the northern storefront of this building. Later Lawson, Durnil, and T. L. Jackson bought out the Walters family and incorporated the business as Walters Dry Goods Co., Inc. Jackson Clothing Co. retained its own name for several years before merging with Walters (sometime after 1939--then Walters had the whole building). At that point, they cut doorways through the interior wall to allow people to pass between buildings (offered clothing, shoes, jewelry, cosmetics). In 1958 the store was purchased by Verl Hudspeth, Ben N. Henley, Robert Reynolds, and Ben C. Henley. They changed the name to Walters, Inc. Bob Reynolds was also mayor of Harrison and is the man depicted on top of the Walters Building in the 1961 flood mural inside the First National Bank of Berryville.

58) Building at 105 N. Main (burned, now empty lot) — dated from ca. 1900. Housed Ben Franklin store before it moved down the block to the Capps-Paul Building. In recent memory, this was a pool hall.

59) 107 N. Main (buff brick building) — was built ca. 1900 and matched the building at 105 N. Main. They were both rusticated stone buildings, but at some point, a buff brick veneer was applied over the stone. You can still see the stone firewall from the side elevation. In 1939 this was the Cope-Ellis Company. In more recent memory, this was Crooms Dept. Store and later Fosters Dept. Store (by early 1970s).

60) 109-111 N. Main (Capps-Paul 1914, now empty)—In 1939 this was the Capps Economy Store (on the north or left) and the Sterling Store (on the south or right). In the mid-20th century, it was the Ben Franklin Store.

Walk to the center of the east side of the Courthouse Square

61) 113-115 N. Main (ocular openings in façade, Boone Lodge #314, Harrison Flowers and Gifts)—built ca. 1910. Very nice detailing on upper façade with decorative stone-faced ocular vents and dentiled cornice. Historically it was occupied by dry goods and boots and shoes stores. In recent memory, this building housed Guys & Dolls (a girls and boys clothing store) and Treece Jewelry.

62) 117-119 N. Main (large 2-story red brick next to ocular)—built ca. 1910. Historically housed a grocery and barber shop. Now home to Backyard Framers.

63) 121 N. Main (Daisy Shop [now closed] and The Upper Crust)—The Daisy Shop was started in 1946 by Daisy Cecil and her three daughters—Lula Marie Rodman Vowell, Mary Sue Moore, and Sammie Lee Fuller. The Daisy Shop has been at this location since 1966. It was sold to Phyllis and Eddie Young in 1971 and recently closed.

64) 123-127 N. Main (Sam Alexander Pharmacy & Health Mart)—Kirby 1913 Building. Built in 1913 to house the general offices of the Missouri & North Arkansas Railroad on the second floor. Jim Dye's Drug and a confectionary were on the first floor in early years. By the mid-20th century, the first floor occupants were Coffman Drug (on north or left) and Dean's Store for Men (on south or right).

The M & NA (nicknamed “May Never Arrive”) was in financial trouble quite often throughout its history. In December 1920 the management of the M & NA announced a cut in wages to be effective February 1, 1921. This, combined with resentment over general manager C. A. Phelan's lush salary, led many railroad workers to walk out in February. Striking railroad workers who were members of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) headquartered themselves in Harrison, the population of which was initially sympathetic toward the strikers. However, that sympathy soon evaporated, especially as the economic hardships of the strike took hold and as striking workers engaged in violence and sabotage, such as burning railroad bridges. On March 7, 1921, prominent citizens formed the Harrison Protective League to fight back against the strikers. After a series of bridge burnings in early 1923, a group of 1,000 armed men patrolled the streets of Harrison in search of strikers. They arrived at the home of striker Ed C. Gregor, who fired a shot to disperse them. He injured no one, but the angry mob returned fire and actually shot one of their own and blamed it on Gregor. He was jailed, and later that night a group of men in black masks kidnapped Gregor from the jail and hanged him from a railroad bridge just outside of Harrison. Other strikers were dragged from their houses and whipped. A committee appointed by the Arkansas legislature found no one at fault. Railroad line was closed by 1962.

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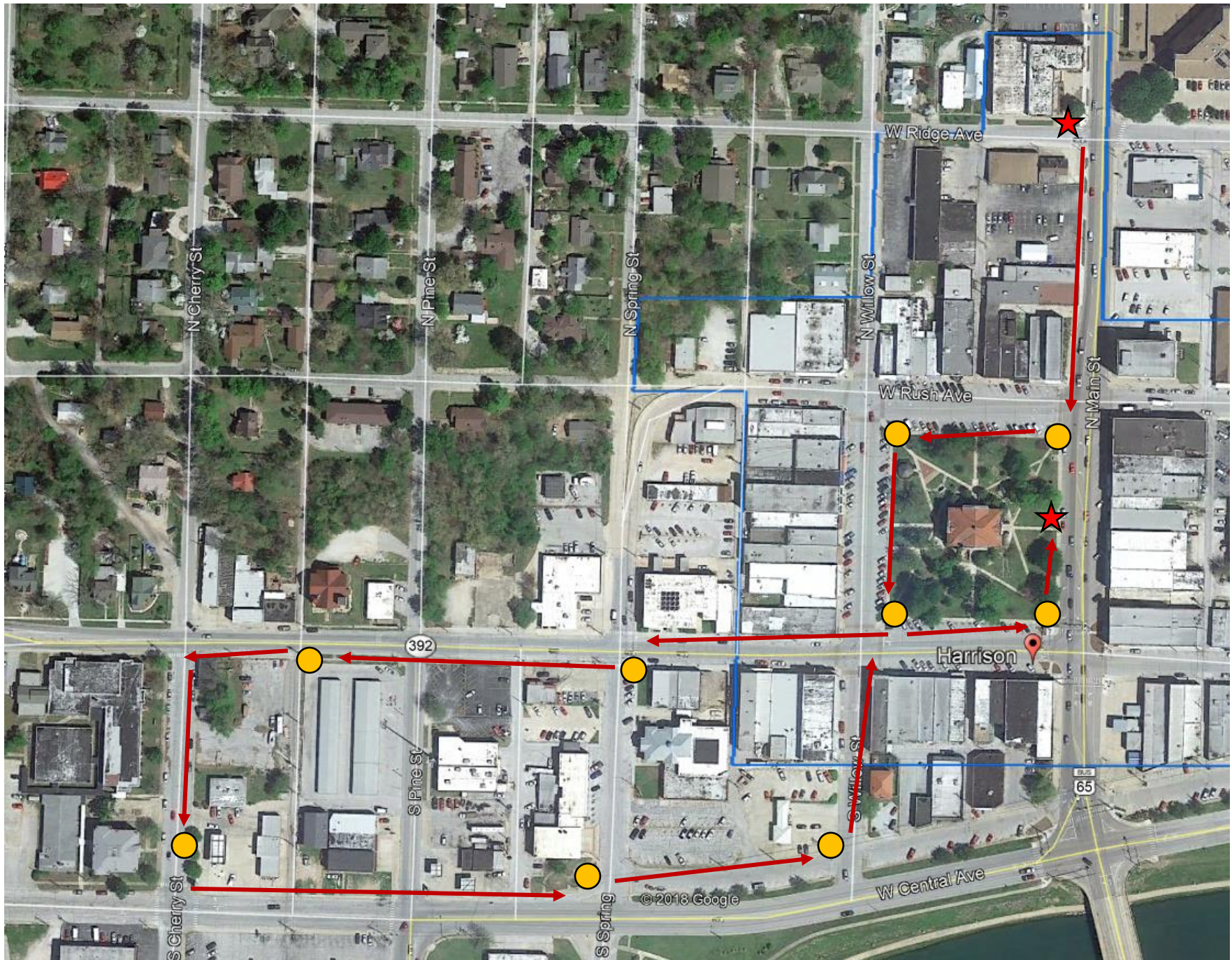
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