

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Rail Haven Motel  
other names/site number Rail Haven Motor Court

## 2. Location

street & number 203 S. Glenstone Avenue N/A  not for publication  
city or town Springfield N/A  vicinity  
state Missouri code MO county Greene code 077 zip code 65802

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Mark A. Miles*

*MARCH 22, 2010*

Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles, Deputy SHPO

Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Rail Haven Motel  
Name of Property

Greene County, Missouri  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
11	1	buildings
0	0	sites
1	3	structures
0	0	objects
12	4	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Route 66 in Missouri

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: motel  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: motel  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY  
AMERICAN MOVEMENTS  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
foundation CONCRETE  
\_\_\_\_\_

walls CONCRETE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
STONE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof ASPHALT  
\_\_\_\_\_  
other WOOD  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations** N/A

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** moved from its original location.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE  
 COMMERCE  
 TRANSPORTATION

**Period of Significance**

1938-1960

**Significant Dates**

1938  
 1950  
 1958

**Significant Person**

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):** N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency National Park Service
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Rail Haven Motel  
Name of Property

Greene County, Missouri  
County and State

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## 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property** 4.2 acres

### UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 15 476722 4118075  
Zone Easting Northing  
2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing  
4 \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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## 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title Philip Thomason/Kristen Luetkemeier  
organization Thomason and Associates date September 20, 2009  
street & number 1907 21<sup>st</sup> Ave. S. telephone 615-385-4960  
city or town Nashville state TN zip code 37212

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### Additional Documentation

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submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 Or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO) or FPO for any additional items

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### Property Owner

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(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Central Park LLC c/o Best Western Rail Haven  
street & number 203 S. Glenstone Avenue Telephone 417-866-1963  
city or town Springfield state MO zip code 65802

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**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1 Rail Haven Motel  
Springfield, Greene County, Missouri  
Route 66 in Missouri

## DESCRIPTION

The Rail Haven Motel is an L-shaped motel complex built in 1938 and enlarged in 1957 at the southwest corner of Glenstone Avenue and St. Louis Street in Springfield, Missouri. Springfield is the county seat of Greene County and in 2000 had a population of 151,180 residents. Springfield is located in the southwest region of Missouri and was the crossroads of several major federal and state highways in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. One of these highways, US Route 66, extended through Springfield along Glenstone Avenue and then turned west and followed St. Louis Street. Because of this historic association with the highway, both Glenstone Avenue and St. Louis Street remain as major transportation arteries in the city. The Rail Haven Motel encompasses just over four acres and the general vicinity is characterized by automobile oriented businesses and commercial buildings. Within the MPDF "Route 66 in Missouri" the Rail Haven Motel meets the property type description of "Lodging: Motor Courts and Motels."

Located directly adjacent to the historic roadbed of Route 66, the Rail Haven Motel occupies a prominent corner on Glenstone Avenue which serves as Springfield's main commercial thoroughfare. To the north and south of the motel as well as to the east across the street, are numerous automobile-oriented businesses such as restaurants, retail stores, and gas stations. West of the motel is a residential neighborhood developed in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. At the northeast corner of the Rail Haven Motel property is a stone veneer office building. To the south and west of the office are five rows of linear motel units; three of the rows are arranged in a north/south direction while the remaining two rows are arranged east/west (Figure 1). All of the buildings are one-story in height with gable roofs, exteriors of concrete and stone veneer, porches supported by square, wood posts and rectangular cupolas at the roofline. Directly south of the office is a pool house and swimming pool.

The Rail Haven Motel was originally composed of eight stone and concrete cottages built with Bungalow/Craftsman influences. These buildings were designed with gable roofs, front porches with wood columns and exteriors of random course stone and concrete. The stone exteriors of the cottages were designed in a vernacular building form known as "giraffe stone" or "Ozark rock". In this property type, slabs of stone are laid unsystematically with concrete mortar. The stone slabs vary in size and were usually laid upon a concrete foundation and as a veneer over wood frame or concrete walls.<sup>1</sup> At the Rail Haven Motel, the stone was laid over frame walls to form a continuous veneer.

The buildings were arranged in an L-shape with two rows of three buildings oriented east-west and the other two oriented north-south. The six cottages oriented east-west were built as

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<sup>1</sup> Ruth Keenoy and Terri Foley. "Route 66 in Missouri." Multiple Property Documentation Form on file with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, 2008, F-53.

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Springfield, Greene County, Missouri  
Route 66 in Missouri

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duplexes. The two cottages built in the north-south orientation were also built with two units each and separated by open garage bays. The success of the business led to the construction of eleven additional stone and concrete cottages in 1939. Nine of these contained single units while the other two were built with two units each separated by central garage bays. These buildings were also designed with Ozark rock exterior walls.

This configuration of the Rail Haven Motel continued until 1950 when a new building containing sixteen rooms was built just to the west of the cottages. This building was constructed with a large porch supported by wood posts and faced west towards a parking lot. The Rail Haven Motel was further expanded in 1957 with the construction of a thirty-unit building constructed in an L-plan. This modern building replaced the eight single cottages built in 1939. Another building containing three units was also added in 1958 along with the swimming pool. During this year the original stone cottages were remodeled and joined together to create additional units and many of the interiors were remodeled as well. The buildings of the 1950s were designed with random course smooth ashlar and horizontal stack stone veneers. The 1930s cottages had their Ozark rock walls on the elevations facing the street remodeled with random course ashlar finishes to create a unified appearance with the 1950s buildings. During the 1950s, openings were cut into the walls to install air conditioning units. In 1961, the property was sold to Ward Chrisman who constructed a one-story restaurant on part of the playground area facing Glenstone Avenue. Known as the Sycamore Restaurant, this building was completed in 1962 and stood until it was removed in 1994. This area was then converted back to a landscaped front yard west of the swimming pool.

The property was purchased by the present owner in 1994 and the interiors of the units were updated with new carpeting and wall and ceiling finishes. Some of the original bathroom fixtures and tile were retained while other rooms had their bathrooms remodeled. The original wood windows in the pre-1950 motel units were replaced sometime in the 1960s with new aluminum sash units. The aluminum windows had deteriorated and were energy inefficient when the present owner purchased and updated the motel in the mid-1990s. The aluminum windows were then replaced with vinyl sash windows. Original windows in Buildings 4, 6 and 10 were retained. Older wall HVAC units were also replaced at this time.

The rehabilitation of the property in 1994 was designed to retain the overall plan and design of the motel while updating the units. The interiors of the motel units had been remodeled numerous times in the 20<sup>th</sup> century with various carpets and drywall ceilings and walls. None of the interior finishes were original with the exception of some bathroom tile and fixtures. In most cases these original features were retained. The major exterior change was the replacement of non-historic aluminum windows with vinyl windows.

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Springfield, Greene County, Missouri  
Route 66 in Missouri

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The original sign was removed in 1995 and replaced with standardized Best Western Motel chain signs. The property now consists of eleven contributing buildings, one non-contributing building, a contributing structure (swimming pool) and three non-contributing structures (two signs and one fence).

**INDIVIDUAL DESCRIPTIONS****Building 1 – Nine Unit Motel Building**

This building originally consisted of two 1938 double cabins that had central automobile garages. The building was remodeled in the 1950s into its present form. This building contains nine units and has a gable roof of asphalt shingles and a concrete foundation. The east façade has a stucco surface, and the north, south, and west facades have original stone veneer exteriors. The two original duplexes were originally separate, but were connected with a stucco wall on the west façade. The main (E) façade has an incised, shed roof porch with square, wood posts and a concrete floor. Entrances have solid wood doors and the window bays have ca. 1995 six-over-six, vinyl sash windows set within horizontal wood panels. Below the windows are wall HVAC units added ca. 1995. Between each room is a Craftsman-style light fixture added ca. 1994. In the gable fields on the north and south facades is weatherboard siding and louvered vents. On the west façade several of the window openings have been enclosed with wood panels but retain original concrete sills. Other windows on this façade have four-over-four, vinyl sash windows and added air conditioning units and concrete sills. The interiors have added carpet and wall and ceiling finishes. Bathrooms retain original tile and replacement tile to match the original. (C)

**Building 2 - Laundry**

This is an original 1938 cabin and has a gable roof of asphalt shingles, a concrete foundation, and an exterior of stone veneer on the north and west facades. This building contains the laundry. The building's garage bay was enclosed in the late 1950s with a stone veneer wing on the south façade. The building's east façade has two entrances with ca. 1957 double doors in the north bay with six-light and three-panel glass and wood design. This building also has an incised, shed roof porch with square, wood posts and concrete floors. At the roofline on the north façade is a brick flue. Windows are ca. 1994, four-over-over and six-over-six, vinyl sash with horizontal wood siding. The south bay of the building has ca. 1970 wood double doors. On the west façade the window bays have been enclosed with wood panels. The gables have weatherboard siding and rectangular, louvered vents. Windows have original concrete sills. (C)

**Building 3 – Nine Unit Motel Building**

This building consists of two 1938 units connected with a frame wing. The building has nine motel units. The building has similar details on the main (E) façade as building #1. The north, south, and west facades are of original stone veneer. Window openings have been enclosed with wood panels and stucco, but retain original concrete sills. The wood connecting bay has

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Springfield, Greene County, Missouri  
Route 66 in Missouri

weatherboard siding. In the gable fields is weatherboard siding and rectangular, louvered vents. The interiors have added carpet and wall and ceiling finishes. Bathrooms retain original tile and replacement tile to match the original. (C)

### **Building 4 – 16 Unit Motel Building**

This building was built in 1950 and contains sixteen units. It has a gable roof of asphalt shingles and a concrete foundation. On the north façade is an exterior of coursed stone slab veneer. The east façade has a stucco surface, and the south façade has an exterior of random course stone veneer. The main (W) façade has a full-width, shed roof porch with original, square, stuccoed columns and a concrete floor. Entrances have original vertical board doors. Windows are original, two-over-two, horizontal steel sash. The window surrounds have weatherboard panels, beneath the windows are ca. 1994 HVAC units. Between each unit, on the wall are ca. 1994 Craftsman lights. The porch ceiling is ca. 1994 plywood with narrow vents. At the roofline on the main façade are four original gable roof dormers with rectangular, louvered vents. The central bay of the roofline has an original, square cupola with rectangular, louvered vents, metal roof with a finial, and faux weathervane. On the south façade of the porch is a ca. 1994 concrete handicapped ramp. In the gables on the north and south facades is weatherboard siding and rectangular, louvered vents. On the east façade the building has an original stucco exterior and original two-light, steel windows with concrete sills. The interiors have added carpet and wall and ceiling finishes. Bathrooms retain original tile and replacement tile to match the original. The bathrooms also retain original bathtubs – sinks were replaced in 1994. (C)

### **Building 5 – Original Laundry**

This is a one-story stone veneer building constructed as the original laundry in 1950. The building has a gable roof of asphalt shingles and a concrete foundation. On the north façade is an exterior of coursed stone slab veneer. The west facade has a stucco exterior. The north and south facades have exteriors of original random course stone veneer. On the south façade is an original stone veneer chimney. The main (E) façade has an entrance with original double doors of single-light glass and wood design. The east façade has a gable roof porch with weatherboard siding and an enclosed utility bay. On the north façade is a gable roof dormer with weatherboard siding and a louvered vent. On the north façade is an original two-over-two, horizontal sash, steel window with a concrete sill. (C)

### **Building 6 - Office**

Property 6 is a one-story, stone-veneer office building constructed in 1953. The building has a gable roof of asphalt shingles, a concrete, foundation, and an exterior of coursed stone slab veneer. On the south façade is a drive-through bay with a gable roof and square, wood posts. At the roof is a cupola with louvered vents and metal finial. The main entrance on the south façade was an original single-light glass and aluminum door. On the east façade are five original, fixed light windows with concrete sills. On the south façade the original section has two original



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window bays with fixed single-light windows and concrete sills. This façade also has an enclosed porch area with fixed light windows and weatherboard siding. On the west façade was a porch area which was enclosed in 1994 to create a breakfast area. This façade also has an entrance with an original solid wood door and an original two-over-one, horizontal sash, steel window and concrete sill. On the north façade are two original single-light glass and wood windows with a concrete sill and an original style-light, steel window and concrete sill. In the gable fields are weatherboard siding and rectangular, louvered vents. The porch on the east and south façade has original square, wood posts. At the southeast corner is an original stone veneer chimney. (C)

### **Buildings 7, 8 and 9 – Multiple Unit Motel Buildings**

These are original 1938 cabin units that were remodeled ca. 1957. All have gable roofs of asphalt shingles, exteriors of stone veneer, and concrete foundations. The facades facing the courtyards have shed roof porches with square, wood posts. Entrances have ca. 1957 solid wood doors, and windows are six-over-six, vinyl sash. The remaining facades have enclosed window openings with stucco and original concrete sills. In the gables is weatherboard siding and rectangular, louvered vents. Property 8 was originally two units, and these were connected with a frame addition between them. At the roofline is a cupola with an asphalt shingle roof and metal finial. Property 9 was originally three units, similar to others, with a cupola at the roofline with asphalt shingles, louvered vents, and the finial is missing. Wood sections with weatherboard siding connect the three wings. The interiors have added carpet and wall and ceiling finishes. Bathrooms retain original tile and replacement tile to match the original. (C)

### **Building 10 – Thirty Unit Motel Building**

Property 10 is an L-shaped motel building containing thirty units and built in 1957 with a concrete foundation and a gable roof of asphalt shingles. The exterior of the building is of stucco. The building has an incised, shed roof porch with square, wood posts and a concrete floor. Entrances have original solid wood doors. Windows are original, tri-part sliding track aluminum design with brick sills. Beneath the windows is horizontal wood siding and inset HVAC units. Between each unit is a ca. 1994 Craftsman light fixture. The north-south wing has two concrete firewalls while the east-west wing has one. At the roofline of the north-south wing are three cupolas with louvered vents, metal roofs, and finials. The north façade has an exterior of stone slab veneer and an exterior wall, stone chimney. The west façade has a stucco veneer and original one-over-one, steel sash windows. The east-west building has two cupolas at the roofline. The east façade has a stone slab veneer of coursed stone and an exterior wall chimney. On front of the L wing are ca. 1994 wood railings and landscaping. This wing also has original one-over-one, steel windows and a stucco exterior. The interiors have added carpet and wall and ceiling finishes. Bathrooms retain original floor tile and have replacement fixtures. (C)

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## Structure 11 - Swimming Pool and Pool House

The swimming pool was completed in 1958 and has an original stone veneer and concrete foundation. It is now surrounded by ca. 1994 wood fencing. The pool house is original and has a flat roof with curved corners, metal support posts, and a stone veneer and concrete block wall on the west, north, and east facades. (C)

## Building 12 – Three Unit Motel Building

Building 11 was built ca. 1957 and has three units with stucco exterior, sliding track, aluminum windows, original solid wood doors, and two-light windows on the east façade. The interiors have added carpet and wall and ceiling finishes. Bathrooms retain original tile and replacement tile to match the original. (C)

## Building 13 – Storage Building

This is a one-story frame storage building constructed in 1995. (NC)

## Structures 14, 15 - Signs

At these locations are two metal signs added in 1995. (NC)

## Structure 16 - Split Rail Fence

Along sections of the east and north property line is a wood split rail fence rebuilt in 1995 (NC).

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Springfield, Greene County, Missouri  
Route 66 in Missouri

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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - SUMMARY

The Rail Haven Motel is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places for its local significance under Criteria A and C for its significance in Architecture, Commerce and Transportation. Under criterion C for Architecture, the Rail Haven Motel meets the property type description of “Lodging: Motor Courts and Motels” in the MPDF “Route 66 in Missouri” and is representative of motels constructed along the highway in the state in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The original motel units of the 1930s were designed with an exterior surface of Ozark rock and the plan and character of the motel has not been extensively altered since its period of significance.

The motel is also eligible under criterion A for its significance in Commerce and Transportation within the MPDF historic context of “Automobile Tourism and Roadside Commerce, Route 66 in Missouri, 1926 – 1981.” Under Commerce the motel reflects the type of small business owner motels which were built in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to cater to the Route 66 traveler. The Rail Haven Motel was one of the best known motels in southwest Missouri and enjoyed a fine reputation for lodging during the heyday of Route 66. Under Transportation, the motel was built directly adjacent to the “city route” of Route 66 in Springfield and it has a strong association with the history of the highway which was the primary roadway between Chicago and California during the early and mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The period of significance extends from the construction of the original units in 1938 to 1960 when the city route of Route 66 moved from Glenstone to St. Louis Ave.

The motel reflects the rise of the tourist industry and the rapid increase in automobile use in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, particularly along Route 66. The Rail Haven Motel is representative of the type of motel which flourished along Route 66 until the construction of the interstate in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The motel complex retains much of its design and materials from its period of significance and its site and setting conveys a strong sense of time and place of the Route 66 experience. Route 66 was one of the nation’s premier east-west highways well into the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century and the resources along this road reflect the automobile culture of the period. The property continues to be operated as a motel and is one of the best preserved along Route 66 in Springfield. The Rail Haven Motel meets the registration requirements for motels set forth in the MPDF, “Route 66 in Missouri.”

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The construction of the Rail Haven Motel evolved in response to the large amount of automobile traffic that traversed Route 66 by the 1930s. Between St. Louis and Springfield, Missouri, Route 66 followed the path of the Old Wire Road, a well established early roadbed which had developed originally as the Osage or Kickapoo Trail and later served as a stage line. In 1922, the Old Wire Road in Missouri was designated State Highway 14, and four years later it was

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redesignated as part of U.S. Highway (Route) 66. The debate over the numbering of the highway was decided in Springfield where road boosters Cyrus Avery and B.H. Piepmeier met and decided on the number "66." The two men sent a telegram to Bureau of Public Roads Chief Thomas H. MacDonald on April 30, 1926 notifying him of their decision. Because the decision was made in Springfield, the city became known as the "birthplace of Route 66."<sup>2</sup>

Missouri was quick to begin improvements to Route 66 throughout the state. Initially, the entire route in the state was graded and covered with either macadam or gravel, to ensure that no sections were left unimproved. After this was completed, the state began paving the roadbed. A 1927-1928 manual of the Missouri State Highway Department reported that "U.S. Route 66, St. Louis-Joplin road, will be an all-weather road at the end of 1927; however, the Department will not be able to complete the surfacing with concrete until about 1932." The Department, however, underestimated its ability, as they completed paving the entire route through Missouri on January 5, 1931. This made Missouri the third state to have Route 66 fully paved within its borders. In celebration, work crews at the scene (in Phelps County) tossed coins into the wet cement.<sup>3</sup>

By the 1930s, the most common type of lodging facility in Springfield and along US 66 was the tourist court. These complexes of individual cottages or rows of connected individual units came into vogue in the late 1920s as the latest development in tourist accommodations. This development was a natural progression from camping along the roadside. Initially, towns offered free motor camps to automobile tourists in an effort to draw tourists, and tourist dollars, into their communities. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce estimated that over 1,000 such municipal facilities existed across the country in 1922. As automobiles became more affordable and the number of travelers increased, a growing trend emerged of charging a small fee to keep out potential troublemakers and undesirable guests. When entrepreneurial individuals realized travelers were willing to pay for a camping spot, privately-owned campgrounds began to sprout along the roadways. Some were quite elaborate with facilities such as laundries, service stations, and groceries, but most were basic camping areas with little more than a place to pitch a tent. Competition was high and by the late 1920s camp operators found that travelers were willing to pay more money for more permanent and private accommodations. In 1933, the American Automobile Association estimated that thirty thousand "tourist cottage and camp establishments" lined the nation's highways, and by the mid-1930s, the transition from tent sites to cabins had been made.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Snider, et al. "Route 66 in Missouri, Survey and National Register Project,"  
<http://www.cr.nps.gov/rt66/HistSig/MissouriContext.htm>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Chester H. Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile, American Roadside Architecture* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1985), 170-177.

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Motor camps soon became motor or tourist courts, with neatly arranged lines of identical small cabins or cottages positioned off the road. Initially these facilities were very rudimentary with few, if any, furnishings. A larger building, generally housing the office and/or the owners' living quarters, would be situated near the roadway in front of the cabins. Operators of these facilities, or courtiers as they were called, often relied on a theme or gimmick and many crafted their facilities as tepees, windmills, or log cabins.<sup>5</sup> In their history of the motel in America, authors Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers note the common pattern of these early motels:

Cottages were usually arrayed as individual units with open spaces between the units. . . . The typical cottage court contained an office building that usually included private apartment space for the motel manager and his family. Another building might contain a coffee shop. As in the case of the cabin camps, public space was primarily outdoors. . . . Architecturally, cottages were made to look like little suburban houses in order to enhance their appeal for the middle-class tourist and the traveling businessman. Cottages were furnished like suburban houses, with rugs, dressing tables and bureaus, radios, and the like.<sup>6</sup>

Privately owned tourist courts flourished during the 1930s. Requiring little investment and no specialized knowledge, these enterprises were good candidates for small, first-time business owners. Most beginning entrepreneurs did not need to purchase land, but used property they already owned. The lodgings were simple in design and easily constructed at a low cost. Various builder magazines offered construction plans, and prefabricated kits were available. Most tourist courts could be managed by family members with few employees. The largest investment was sweat equity, typically supplied by a husband and wife team.<sup>7</sup> It was an easy family business for many to start, and one that offered great potential to those who were willing to work hard at it. A *Popular Mechanics* article encouraged individuals to try it: "If you live near a well-traveled highway, or can lease space near one, a few low-cost tourists' cabins. . . will afford you a substantial income during the summer months."<sup>8</sup> In 1935, this same magazine offered plans for how to build "Tourist Cabins That Get the Business."<sup>9</sup>

Tourist courts proved to be a good business for many individuals along well-traveled routes such as US 66. Most of those who started these businesses "were not upwardly mobile or newly wealthy; they were property owners who were converting or diversifying their investments in

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 175-177.

<sup>6</sup> John A. Jakle, Keith A. Sculle, and Jefferson Rogers, *The Motel In America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 41.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 63-69.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>9</sup> Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 172.

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response to temporary market constraints.”<sup>10</sup> Throughout the 1930s mom-and-pop enterprises sprouted up along the nation’s roadways. One of these was the Rail Haven Motel, built in 1938 by brothers Lawrence and Elwyn Lippman. In the early 1930s the Lippmans ran a printing company in Springfield but saw the potential business opportunities of property owned by their grandfather.<sup>11</sup> This property consisted of an apple orchard at the southwest corner of St. Louis Street and Glenstone Avenue.

The roadway designated as Route 66 entered Springfield from the northeast and split into the “city route” and the “bypass” route after 1936. The city route ran south along Glenstone Avenue while the bypass route turned west following Kearny Street. The city route extended south along Glenstone Avenue before turning west following the alignment of St. Louis Street. Both routes were heavily traveled by the 1930s and after considering the opportunities associated with this prominent corner location directly on the city route of Route 66, the Lippman’s acquired the land in 1937. Elwyn Lippman purchased several adjacent lots from 1938 to 1941 which altogether consisted of over four acres.<sup>12</sup> The Lippmans originally constructed eight stone and concrete cottages in 1938 and completed an additional eleven cottages in 1939.

The design of their motor court followed patterns widely used at the time for lodging along Route 66. The Lippman’s constructed both individual and connected cottages in rows aligned both east/west and north/south. The individual cottages had attached garages while the connected units shared a central garage. The buildings were designed with gable roofs and with exteriors of Ozark rock. Ozark rock was widely used in southwest Missouri as an exterior material and consisted of random course stone embedded in concrete and used as a veneer over frame and concrete. This type of building construction was widely used along Route 66 in Missouri and reflected local traditions and materials in the region.

Originally known as the Rail Haven Motel Court, the Lippmans chose to surround the motel with a snake rail wooden fence as a distinctive identity and brand. The first known Rail Haven color postcard in late 1938 highlighted “Look for the Rail Fence!” and recommended the cottages for “motorists who demand the best.”<sup>13</sup> During the 1940s the cottages contained a total of 28 rooms and the motel was considered “excellent” by the American Automobile Association (AAA).<sup>14</sup> In addition to the AAA, the motel was also prominently recommended by Duncan Hines in his books on restaurants and accommodations in the 1940s and 1950s.

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<sup>10</sup> Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 64.

<sup>11</sup> Rita Spears-Stewart, *Route 66 Rail Haven: An Offspring of the “Mother Road,”* (Springfield, Missouri: Barnabas Publishing Services, 1998), 6.

<sup>12</sup> Greene County Deed Book 672, Page 475, August 16, 1938; Deed Book 661, Page 406, July 14, 1939; Deed Book 708, Page 518, January 7, 1941.

<sup>13</sup> Spears-Stewart, 8.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 9.

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The Lippmans expanded the Rail Haven Motel in 1950 when they completed a sixteen unit motel building off St. Louis Street west of the stone cottages. In addition to this motel building they also constructed a stone veneer laundry which also served as a lunch room for the motel's maids. The prosperity of the motel also led the Lippmans to construct a new office building at the northeast corner of the property replacing an earlier frame building at this location. The new office and lobby for the motel was completed in 1953 at a cost of \$25,654.<sup>15</sup> In addition to this building the Lippmans also continually updated the playground and added landscaping to enhance the motel in the early 1950s.

The Rail Haven Motel was featured in the June, 1954 edition of *The Ozarks Mountaineer* magazine as part of an article titled, "Ozarks' Motels Now Rank Among the Nation's Best." Springfield was described as having 65 motels and the Rail Haven was mentioned as deserving special recognition as "...the first in the entire region to enter the field of providing fine accommodations, then found only in good hotels."<sup>16</sup> The Rail Haven was described as having 46 units making it the largest motel in the region. Each unit was "replete with every refinement, including air conditioning. The grounds are parklike and beautifully kept, and the central office building provides a commodious lobby akin to that of a hotel."<sup>17</sup> When asked about the operating the motel, Lawrence Lippman stated that it was a full time job and a gamble since it was dependent on having a national highway next to it whose route was always subject to move. Lippman also said that the Ozark motel business required continued reinvestment to be successful.

"Some people have the impression that a lot of money is being made in the Ozark region out of the motor court business, but the intelligent operator who expects to continue to operate successfully re-invests a sizeable amount into his venture each year. We ourselves are spending over forty-five thousand dollars in upgrading and new construction, and other successful operators also are making regularly sizeable investments in improvements. We feel, however, that the industry is in healthy condition, - that motor courts are here to stay,- because in this automobile age they are filling a definite need; and because they constrictively are meeting the wants of the public with constantly improved facilities."<sup>18</sup>

The operation of the motel occupied many members of the Lippman family. Lawrence and his wife Katherine were the primary operators of the motel along with Elwyn. Elwyn also used his

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<sup>15</sup> Springfield Building Permit Number A-3509, November 5, 1953. Permit on file at the Springfield Building Inspector's Office.

<sup>16</sup> *The Ozark Mountaineer*, June, 1954, 11.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

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printing shop to create numerous postcards, signs and other advertisements for the motel. Lawrence's children, Elinor, Daniel and Edgar were responsible to work at the motel after school, help show guests to their rooms and run errands. Edgar later became manager of the motel following his graduation from college.<sup>19</sup> All of these efforts resulted in an increase in business at the motel and in August of 1957, the Lippmans were given a building permit to "erect a thirty unit motel" at a cost of \$90,000.<sup>20</sup> This new motel replaced eight of the original cottages which were demolished as part of this expansion. Built in an L-plan, this new building was designed with a gable roof, a large porch supported by wood posts and decorative cupolas at the roofline. In order to unify the appearance of the motel, the remaining stone cottages were also remodeled with new porches and several of the automobile garages were removed and new motel units added in their place. The original Ozark rock veneers on elevations facing the street were remodeled with new random course stone to create a more unified appearance to match the new units. In addition to this remodeling, a swimming pool and pool house was completed in February of 1958 at a cost of \$5,000.<sup>21</sup> The alignment of the "city route" of Route 66 was relocated to the Chestnut Expressway from Glenstone Avenue and St. Louis Street in 1960 but business continued to remain steady at the motel.

Lawrence and Elwyn Lippman continued to own and operate the Rail Haven Motel until August of 1961 when they sold the property to C. Ward Chrisman.<sup>22</sup> After selling the business, Elwyn Lippman moved into the Ozark Methodist Manor in Springfield in 1969 and resided there until his death in 1972 at age 77. In his obituary, the *Springfield Leader-Press* stated that "He and his brother pioneered the Highway 66 Motel List, which was later merged with the Best Western Motel Association."<sup>23</sup> Lawrence Lippman moved to nearby Marionville following his retirement and died at his home in 1983 at age 84.<sup>24</sup>

Following his purchase of the Rail Haven Motel in 1961, Chrisman not only operated the motel but also removed part of the playground facing Glenstone Avenue and built a one-story restaurant in 1962. Known as the Sycamore Restaurant, this establishment was a popular eatery in Springfield for several decades. The Chrisman family retained ownership of the Rail Haven under the name of Facilities Management Inc. until they sold the property in 1994 to Central Park LLC, a company owned by Gordon Elliott.<sup>25</sup> Elliott then embarked on a renovation of the

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 13.

<sup>20</sup> Springfield Building Permit Number 4297, August 6, 1957. Permit on file at the Springfield Building Inspector's Office.

<sup>21</sup> Springfield Building Permit Number 6141, February 18, 1958. Permit on file at the Springfield Building Inspector's Office.

<sup>22</sup> Greene County Deed Book 1242, Page 285, August 4, 1961.

<sup>23</sup> *Springfield Leader-Press*, 18 December 1972, 5.

<sup>24</sup> *Springfield Leader-Press*, 4 September 1983, 12.

<sup>25</sup> Greene County Deed Book 2310, Page 1184, March 3, 1994.



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motel including new furnishings, carpeting and bathroom finishes. The Sycamore Restaurant was removed and replaced with landscaping and additional parking spaces. Elliott celebrated the renovation of the motel on June 12, 1997 and renamed the property the Best Western Route 66 Rail Haven Motel.

The Rail Haven Motel is a notable example of the type of up-scale motels built along Route 66 in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The motel retains much of its integrity and meets the registration requirements for the property type "Lodging: Motor Courts and Motels" in the Multiple Property Documentation Form, "Route 66 in Missouri."

To meet registration requirements under criteria A and C, a motel along Route 66 in Missouri must possess the following:

- A clear feeling and association with Route 66 during the years of significance, 1926 and 1981.
- Retain sufficient characteristics of historic elements and integrity including location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, association, and setting.
- The design and layout of the motel courts or motel units must be apparent.
- Authentication that a property is associated with historic Route 66 and not a former or later alignment.
- Physical features that classify it as a motel as well as original materials, and architectural elements (Alterations to the form and materials may exist as long as the significant architectural elements of the style are retained).
- A clear feeling of the association with the transportation and commerce traffic along Route 66 in Missouri in the years of significance, 1926-1981.

The Rail Haven Motel meets these registration requirements as follows:

- The Rail Haven Motel has been in operation on Route 66 since its construction in 1938.
- The overall form and plan of the motel complex has not been extensively altered since 1958. The buildings in the complex retain original stone exteriors, porches and cupolas at the roofline. Three of the buildings have their original windows. The primary alteration to the buildings since 1958 has been interior upgrades and the addition of vinyl windows to nine of the buildings in 1995-1995. The interior upgrades did not alter the original floor plan of the motel units and many of the bathroom features such as fixtures and tile walls were retained. While the vinyl windows are a non-historic addition, they do not sufficiently detract from the overall design and character of the complex to render it ineligible for the National Register.

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- The Rail Haven Motel was built directly facing the original city route of US 66 in Springfield which was one of two alignments of the highway through the city from 1936 to 1960.
  - The property continues to be operated as a motel and contains a motel office, various attached and detached motel units, and several support buildings.
  - Due to its location on one of the historic alignments of Route 66, the Rail Haven Motel speaks to the era of the rapid rise in automobile use and tourist travel.

The Rail Haven Motel is one of the most intact motels remaining in Missouri along Route 66. With the exception of only a brief period in the 1990s, the motel has been in continuous operation along Route 66 in Springfield. The motel retains a strong degree of its original setting and design, and conveys a clear sense of time and place from its period of significance.

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## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary for the Rail Haven Motel is all of parcel 881219127028 in the city of Springfield, Missouri, which consists of 4.2 acres. This parcel is bounded on the north by E. St. Louis Street, on the east by Glenstone Avenue, and on the south and west by adjacent property lines. This boundary is shown on the accompanying Greene County Tax Assessor's Map which is drawn at a scale of 1" = 75'.

## VERBAL BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary for the Rail Haven Motel includes all properties historically associated with the motel complex. This parcel of 4.2 acres contains all of the motel units that were built and placed in operation in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as the Rail Haven Motel.

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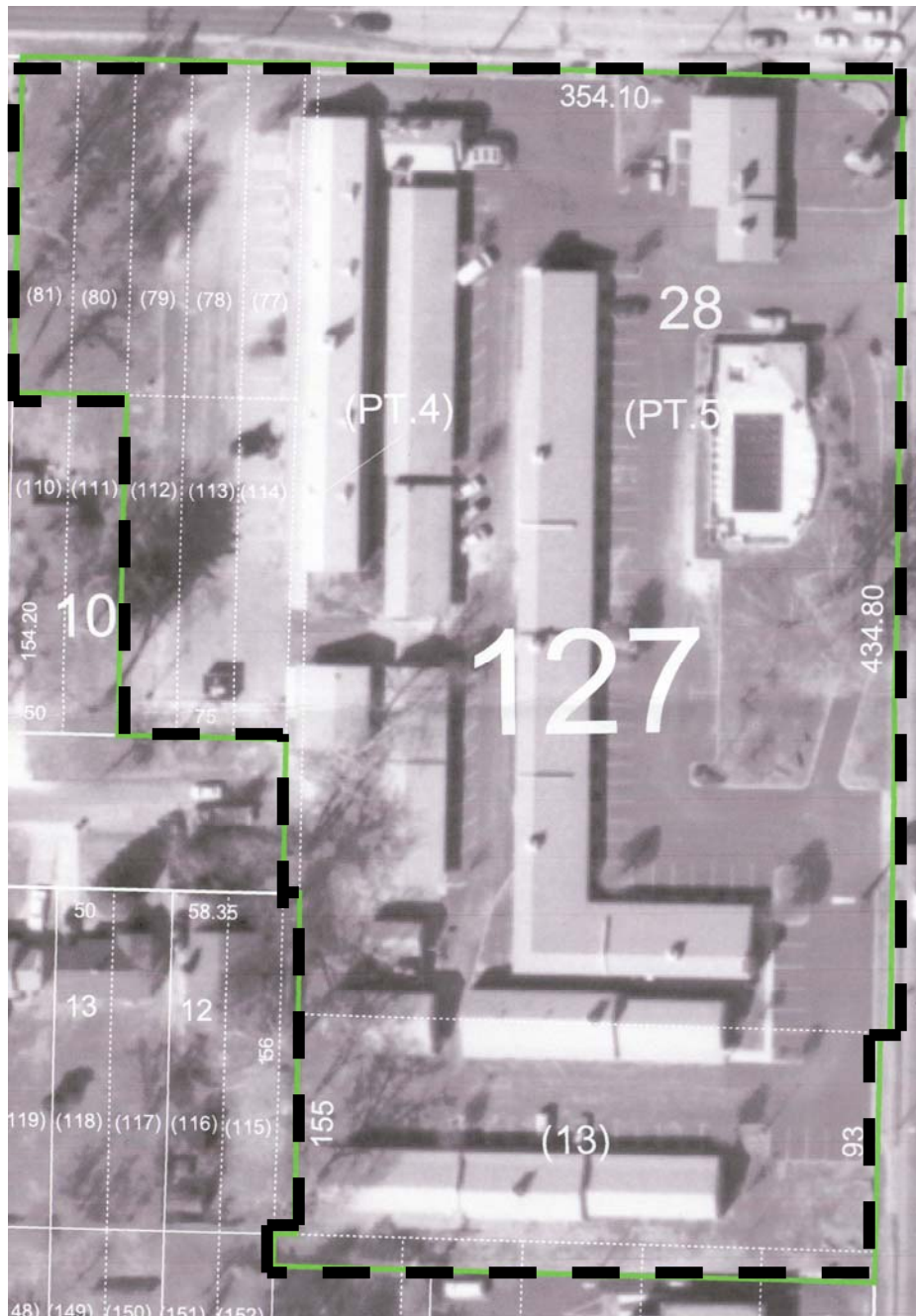


Figure 1: Boundary of the Rail Haven Motel. Scale is 1" = 75'. (Greene County Tax Assessor's Office)

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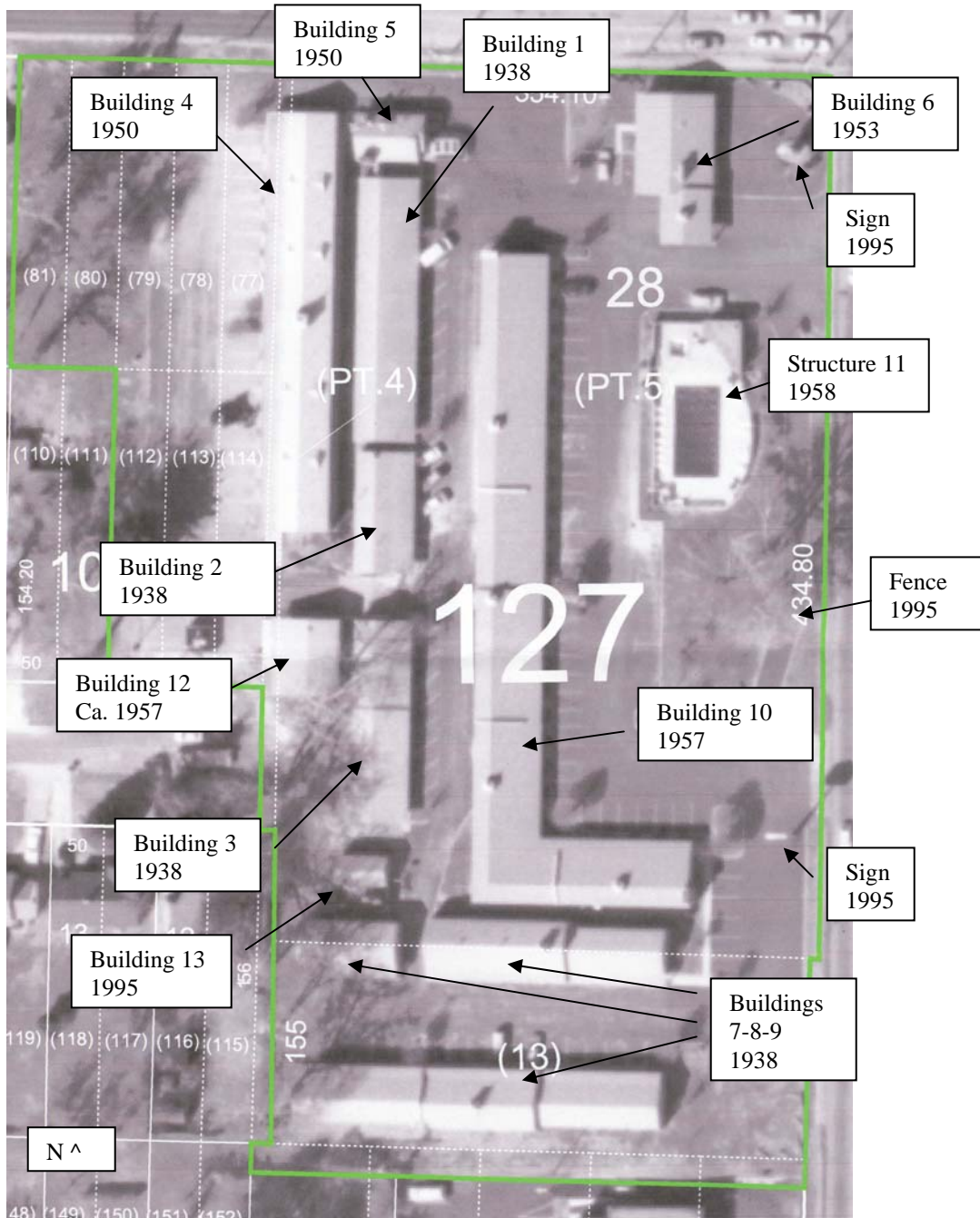


Figure 2: Site Plan of the Rail Haven Motel. Scale is 1" = 75'. (Greene County Tax Assessor's Office)

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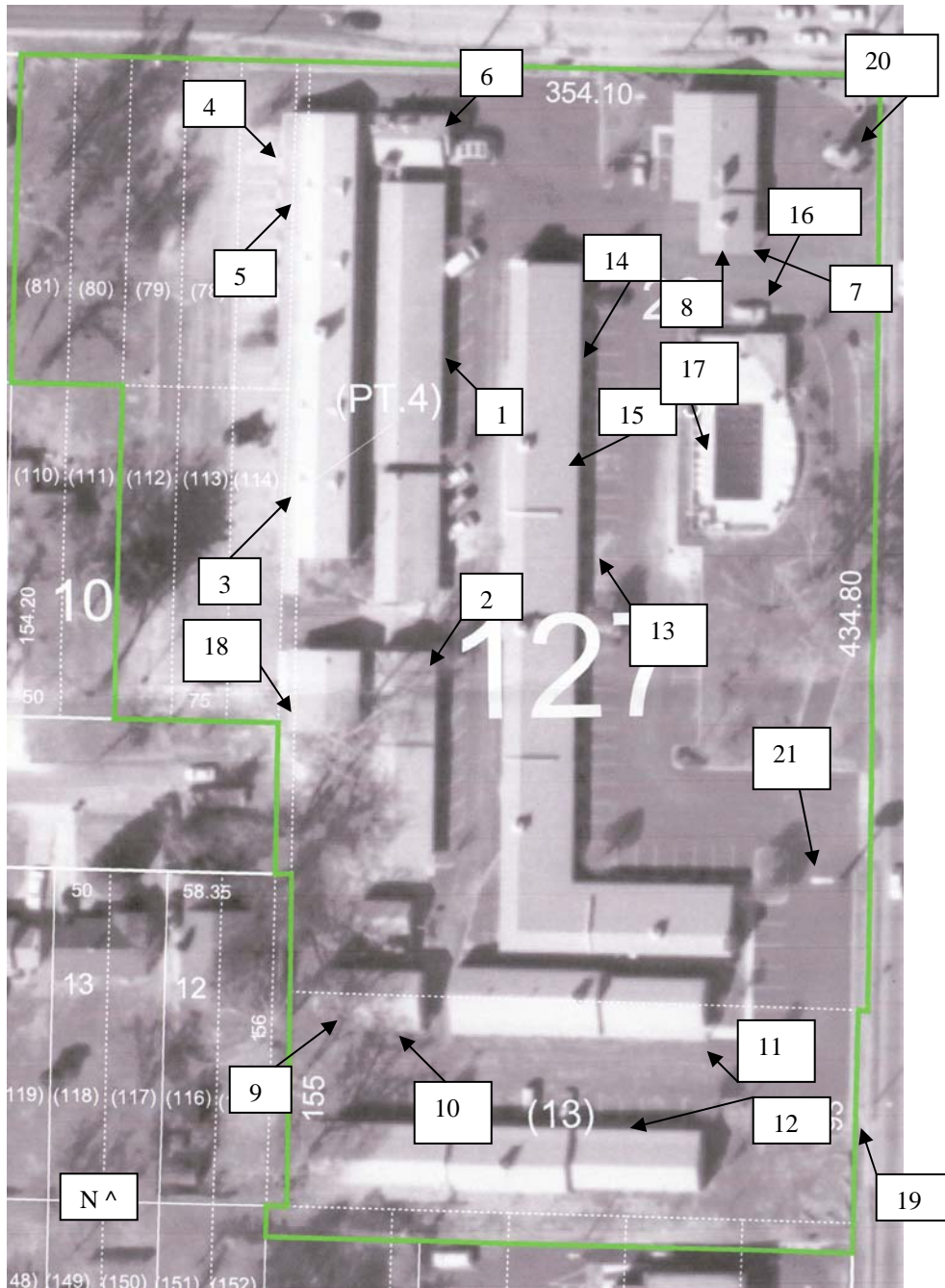


Figure 3: Photo Key of the Rail Haven Motel. Scale is 1" = 75'. (Greene County Tax Assessor's Office)

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## PHOTOGRAPHS

Rail Haven Motel  
Springfield, Greene County, Missouri  
Photographer: Thomason and Associates  
May 2009  
Location of Negatives: On file with author.

- Photo 1 of 26: Building 1, view to the northwest.
- Photo 2 of 26: Building 3, view to the southwest.
- Photo 3 of 26: Building 4, view to the northeast.
- Photo 4 of 26: Building 4, view to the southeast.
- Photo 5 of 26: Building 4, detail of door and window.
- Photo 6 of 26: Building 5, view to the southwest.
- Photo 7 of 26: Building 6, view to the northwest.
- Photo 8 of 26: Building 6, entrance.
- Photo 9 of 26: Building 7, view to the northeast.
- Photo 10 of 26: Building 7, view to the northwest.
- Photo 11 of 26: Building 8, view to the northwest.
- Photo 12 of 26: Building 9, view to the southwest.
- Photo 13 of 26: Building 10, view to the northwest.
- Photo 14 of 26: Building 10, view to the southwest.
- Photo 15 of 26: Building 10, detail of door and window.
- Photo 16 of 26: Building 11, view to south.
- Photo 17 of 26: Building 11, view to the southeast.
- Photo 18 of 26: Building 12, view to the southeast.
- Photo 19 of 26: Split rail fence along east property line.
- Photo 20 of 26: Sign added in 1995, view to the southwest.
- Photo 21 of 26: Sign added in 1995, view to the southeast.
- Photo 22 of 26: View of lobby interior.
- Photo 23 of 26: Interior of Room 424.
- Photo 24 of 26: Interior of Room 314.
- Photo 25 of 26: Bathroom of Room 103.
- Photo 26 of 26: Interior of Room 209.



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- Figure 1: Boundary of Rail Haven Motel.
- Figure 2: Site Plan of the Rail Haven Motel.
- Figure 3: Photo Key of the Rail Haven Motel.
- Figure 4: Rail Haven Motor Court in 1939 showing the original stone veneer cottages and rail fence.
- Figure 5 Rail Haven Motor Court in 1939 showing stone cottages, rail fence and original sign.
- Figure 6: Rail Haven Motor Court, ca. 1940.
- Figure 7: Lawrence Lippman relaxing in one of the motel units in 1943.
- Figure 8: Interior of one of the motel rooms, ca. 1945.
- Figure 9: North section of the Rail Haven Motel on the 1950 Sanborn Insurance Map.
- Figure 10: New 16-unit wing added in 1950 at the northwest corner of the motel property.
- Figure 11: Rail Haven Motel, ca. 1955 showing the new office building completed in 1953.
- Figure 12: Rail Haven Motel ca. 1960 showing the motel wing added in 1957 and the pool added in 1958.
- Figure 13: The Rail Haven Motel on the 1957 Sanborn Insurance Map showing the added sixteen-unit building at the northwest
- Figure 14: Rail Haven Motel ca. 1965 showing the motel and the now demolished Sycamore Restaurant.

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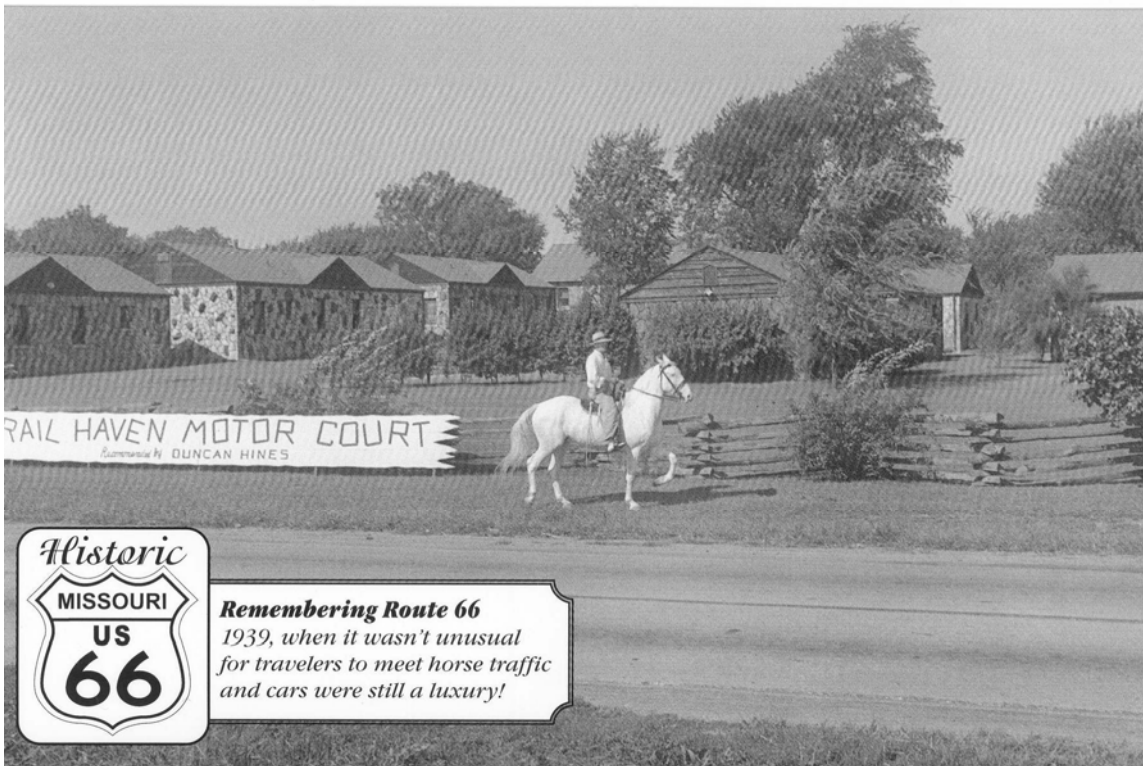


Figure 4: Rail Haven Motor Court in 1939 showing the original stone veneer cottages and rail fence. (Postcard courtesy of Rail Haven Motel).

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Figure 5: Rail Haven Motor Court in 1939 showing stone cottages, rail fence and original sign. (Postcard courtesy of Rail Haven Motel).



Figure 6: Rail Haven Motor Court, ca. 1940, (Courtesy of Rail Haven Motel).

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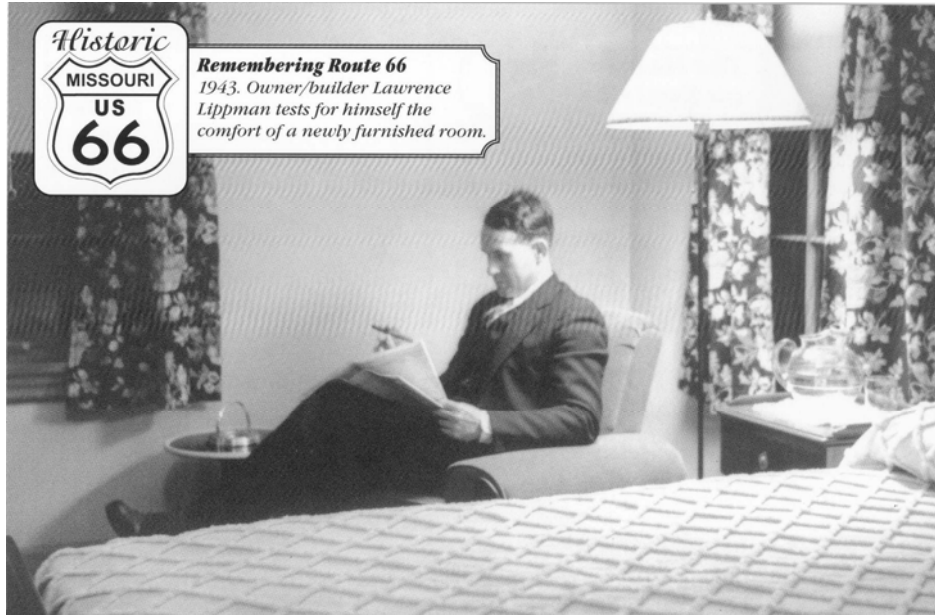


Figure 7: Lawrence Lippman relaxing in one of the motel units in 1943. (Postcard courtesy of Rail Haven Motel).



Figure 8: Interior of one of the motel rooms, ca. 1945. (Postcard courtesy of Rail Haven Motel).

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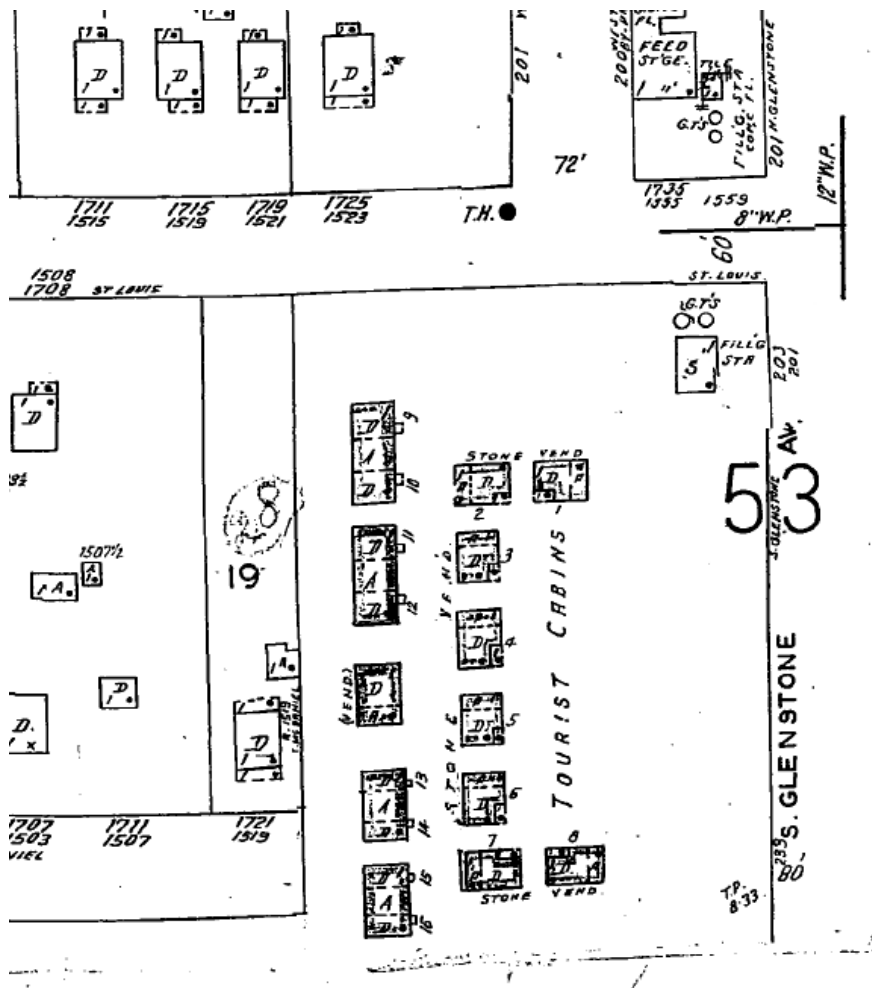


Figure 9: North section of the Rail Haven Motel on the 1950 Sanborn Insurance Map. The two rows of units on the south edge of the complex were cut off from the map. The complex was mapped just before the construction of the new unit in 1950.

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Figure 10: New 16-unit wing added in 1950 at the northwest corner of the motel property. (Postcard courtesy of Rail Haven Motel).



Figure 11: Rail Haven Motel, ca. 1955 showing the new office building completed in 1953. (Courtesy of Rail Haven Motel).

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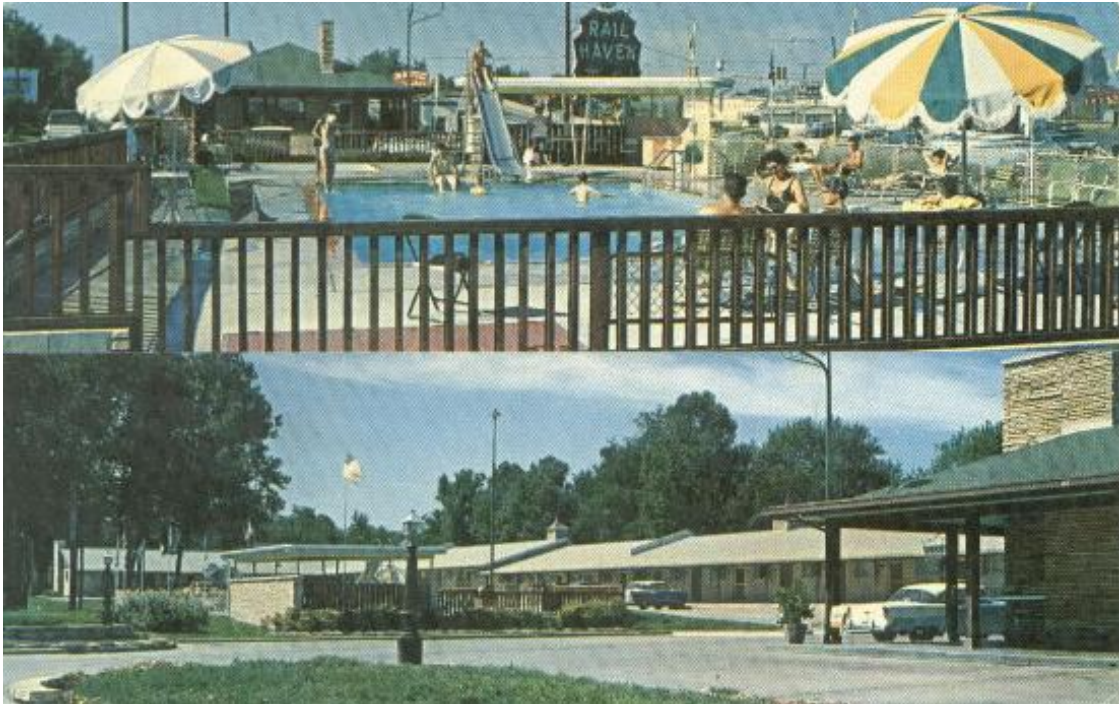


Figure 12: Rail Haven Motel ca. 1960 showing the motel wing added in 1957 and the pool added in 1958. (Courtesy of Rail Haven Motel).

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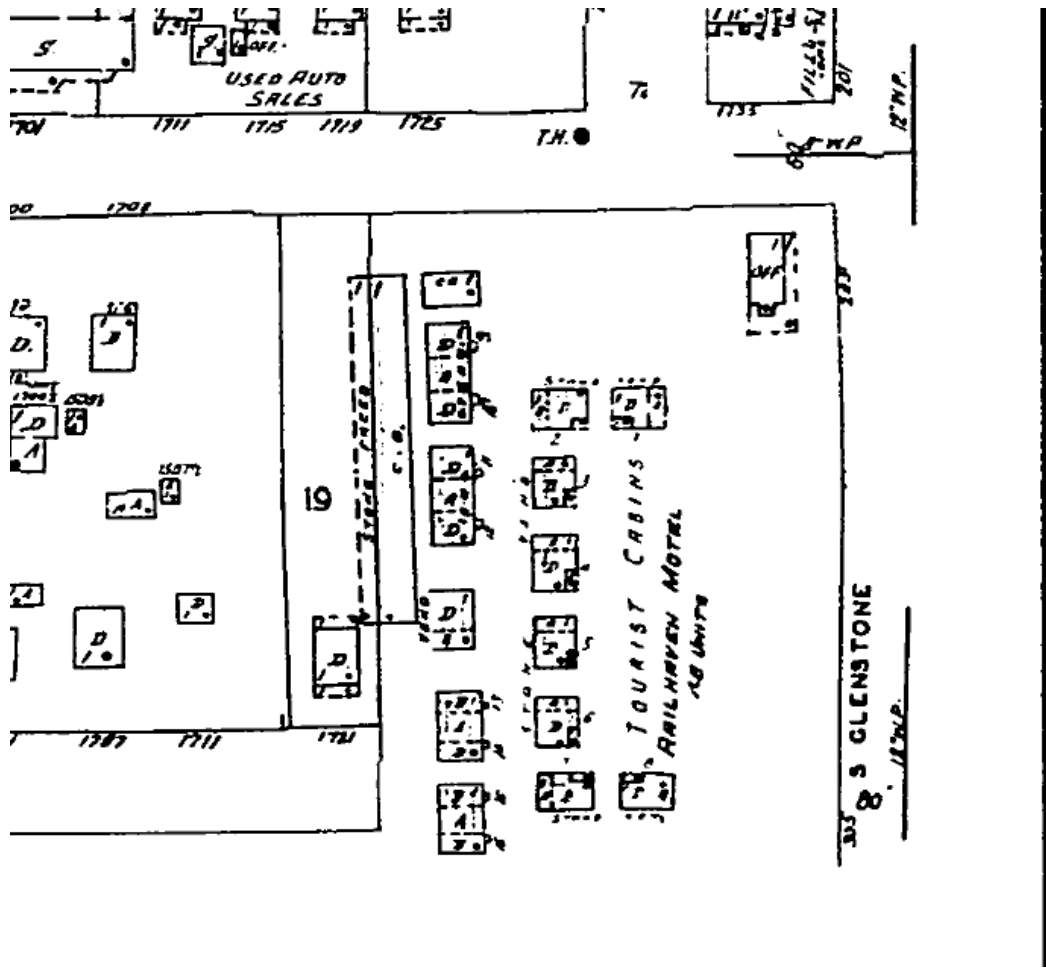


Figure 13: The Rail Haven Motel on the 1957 Sanborn Insurance Map showing the added sixteen unit building at the northwest. Again the two rows of cabins on the south end of the property are cut off on this map.



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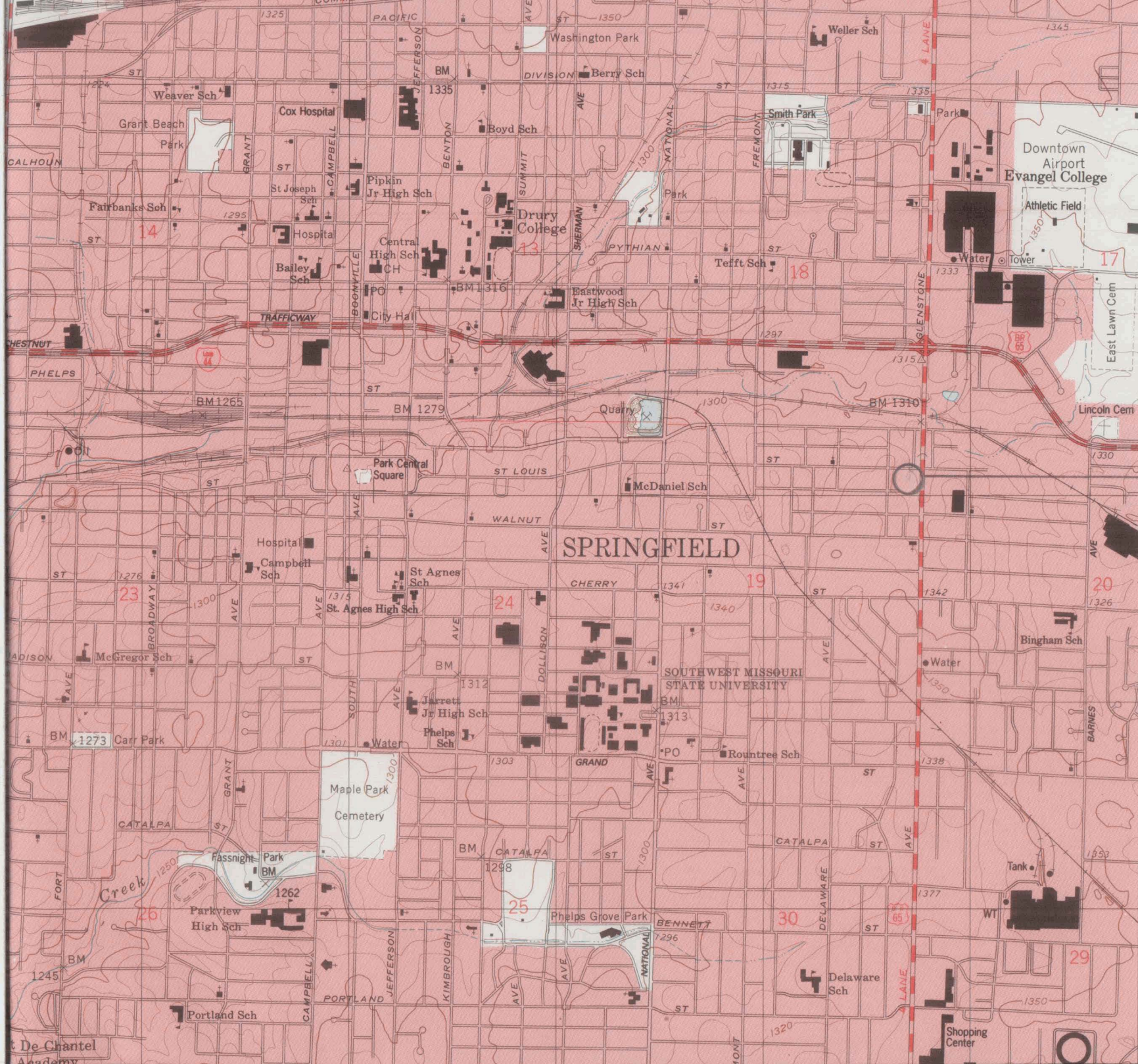
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Figure 14: Rail Haven Motel ca. 1965 showing the motel and the now demolished Sycamore Restaurant. (Courtesy of Rail Haven Motel).



12°20'  
 12°19'  
 12°30"  
 12°17'  
 12°16'

Rail Haven  
 Motel  
 203 S.  
 Coleustone  
 Ave.  
 Z=15  
 E:476722  
 N:4118075









315









OPEN 24 HOURS



LEFT TO RIGHT

2000

BR

HISTORIC  
RENOVATION









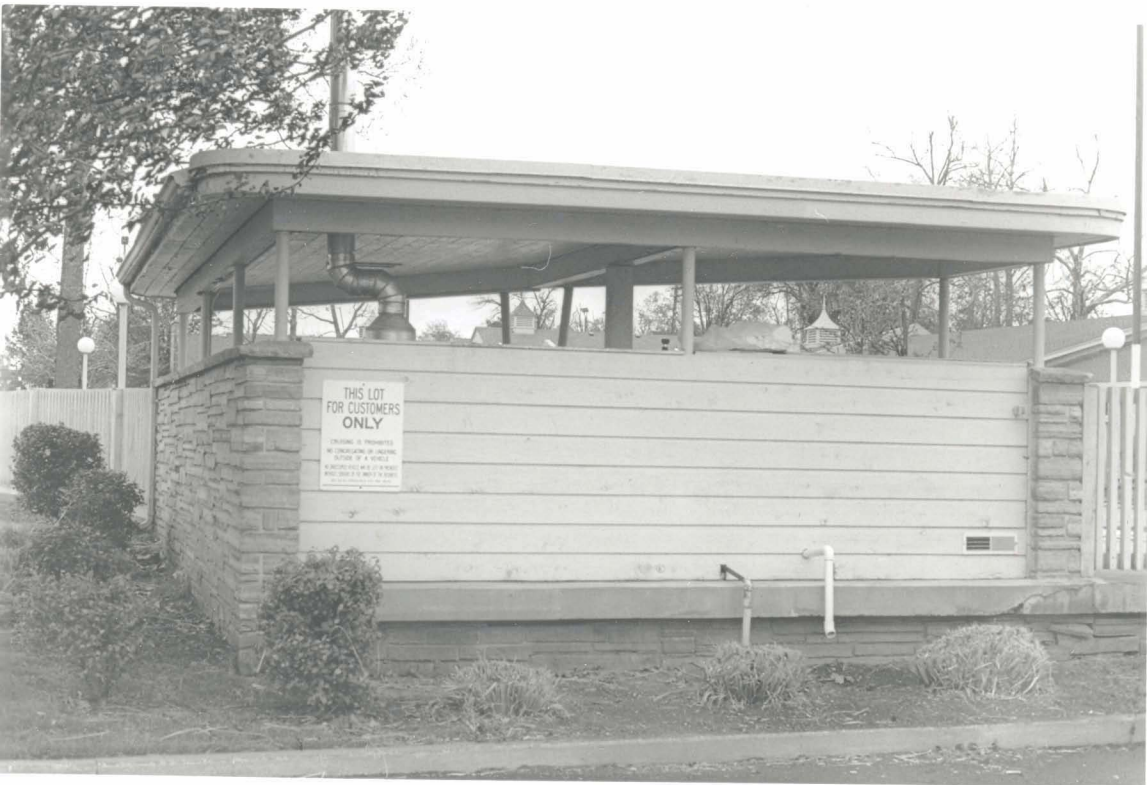






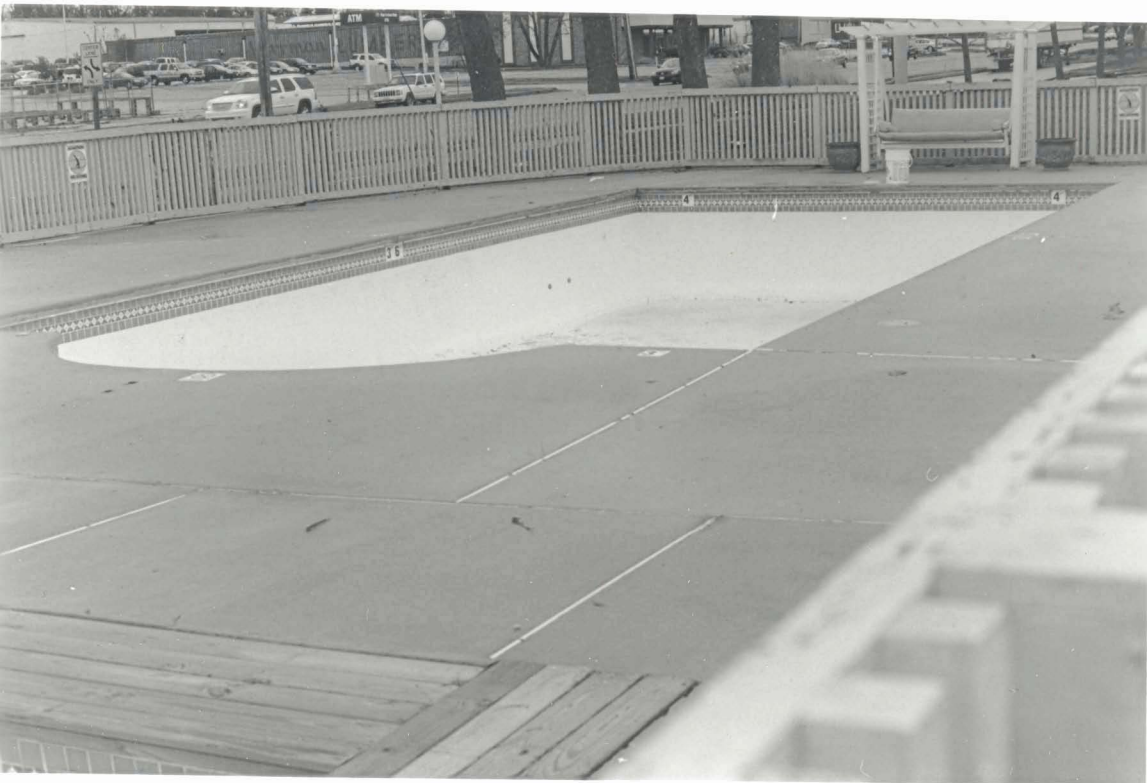






THIS LOT  
FOR CUSTOMERS  
ONLY

RENOVATION IS PROHIBITED  
NO CONSTRUCTION OR LANDFILL  
DUMPING ON A LOT  
NO MOTOR VEHICLES OR TRAILERS  
NO OTHER VEHICLES OR TRAILERS  
NO OTHER VEHICLES OR TRAILERS  
NO OTHER VEHICLES OR TRAILERS







Best  
Western



RAIL HAVEN

100%  
SATISFACTION  
GUARANTEED

AWARDED

HISTORIC  
RENOVATION

HAT AL  
M Bean Co



CRUDY PALM

2318

W. 10th St.





YOUR ROOM  
FREE

RAIL AVEN

CAUTION  
WET FLOOR



CUIDADO  
PISO  
MOJADO



