



Florida Trust for Historic Preservation  
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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Florida Trust for Historic Preservation Announces this year's 11 to Save, Most Endangered Historic Places in Florida**

*The annual list provides a voice for communities around the state, and drives the organization's education and advocacy initiatives for the year*

**DeLand, Fla., July 27, 2022** – Today, the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation announced the 2022 Florida's 11 to Save, a list of the most threatened historic places in the state, at the 2022 Preservation on Main Street conference hosted in collaboration with Florida Main Street.

Each year, the Florida Trust announces its 11 to Save nominated by the public and a true reflection of the historic places that matter to them. The program is designed to increase the public's awareness of the urgent need to save Florida's historic resources, highlight the breadth of Florida's unique history, inspire unique collaborations and empower local preservationists and community groups in their work to preserve Florida's rich history.

The 2022 11 to Save represents endangered historic resources in Alachua, Duval, Escambia, Gadsden, Lee, Leon, Monroe, Palm Beach, Polk and Putnam counties, covering hundreds of years of history and a variety of cultural resources.

"This year's 11 to Save showcases Florida's unique and diverse history and empowers us to work towards sharing and saving that history" said Florida Trust Board President Jenny Wolfe. "These are the historic places that matter to people throughout the state, and I am excited to be a part of sharing the stories these places represent – and working to ensure they remain around for years to come."

Inclusion on the Florida's 11 to Save is a starting point for the Florida Trust's advocacy and education efforts and is intended to be part of a collaborative effort to identify custom solutions for each property. Listings are not in any order of importance.



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**Colvin House**  
**Lake Wales (Polk County)**  
**Built 1920**

Completed in 1920, the Colvin House is one of the first residences built by African American pioneers in Lake Wales.

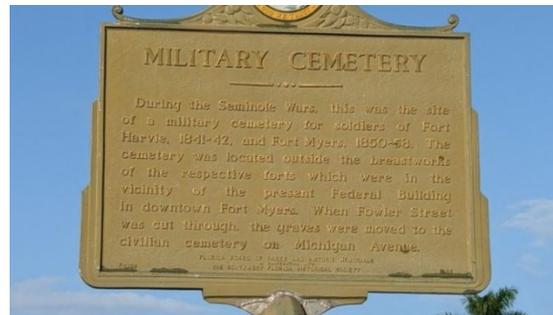
Built for Donnie and Anna Colvin, Gullah Geechee settlers from North Carolina, the Colvin House is also one of the oldest surviving structures in the Northwest community. Settled in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century by naval stores and citrus industry laborers, the Northwest section of Lake Wales was the only neighborhood in the city where African Americans could own property prior to desegregation. Once anchored by a vibrant business district, the Northwest community has lost much of its original building stock over time to incremental demolition and redevelopment.



Now in deterioration, the nominator seeks to raise awareness to protect and restore this bungalow structure, which is representative of the Northwest community's original built environment and historically significant story.

**Fowler Burial Historic Cemetery**  
**Fort Myers (Lee County)**  
**c. 1830**

The Fowler Burial Historic Cemetery houses burials dating back to the Seminole Wars. Connected to the Fort after which the city was named, limited records of its origins and boundaries remain. The cemetery is recorded in the Florida Master Site File, which notes there is evidence of human remains on the site.



Now, this area is a construction site, and archaeologists, historic preservationists and community members are worried that human remains and artifacts may have been, or will become, endangered. The developer was not required to submit an archaeological survey prior to beginning work.

The Florida's Department of State Division of Historical Resources has sent a letter to Fort Myers indicating they must ensure the preservation of cultural, historic and archaeological resources and handle any human remains appropriately. The nominators hope that, by listing the site on Florida's 11 to Save, they will bring awareness to this vanishing but historically significant burial site.

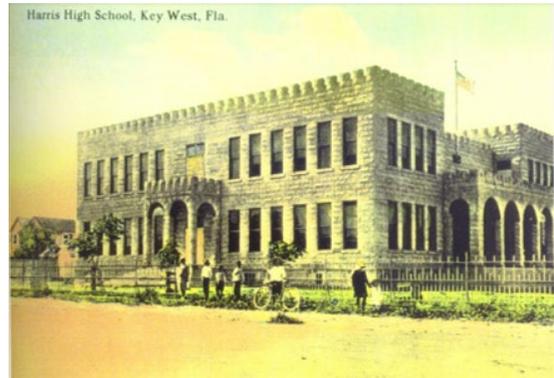


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**Harris School**  
**Key West (Monroe County)**  
***Dedicated 1909***

The Harris School was named in honor of Jephtha Vining Harris, an assistant surgeon for the Confederate Army and Navy during the Civil War. After the war, the Harris family moved to Key West, where he resumed his medical practice and became a customs collector and school superintendent.

Dedicated on July 4, 1909, the Harris School was the first public school in Key West and served as an elementary school until 1982. The two-story building with rusticated concrete block exterior walls is a contributing resource to the Key West Historic District, which was originally designated to the National Register of Historic Places on March 11, 1971.



In 2006, the Monroe County School Board sold the building. Unfortunately, the site has been deteriorating ever since and cited multiple times for code violations while being used as a commercial parking lot since 2009. Now the last large historic school building in Key West that has not been rehabilitated, the property is currently listed for sale. The nominator hopes to raise awareness of the historic structure and assure it is preserved as a future part of the community.

**Jupiter Elementary Auditorium**  
**Jupiter (Palm Beach County)**  
***Built in 1927***

Designed by architect William Manly King, the Jupiter Elementary School is an excellent model of the Mediterranean Revival Style. The first permanent school in the town of Jupiter, it was built in 1927 to accommodate the town's students, with the exception of African American children, who had to attend school in Limestone Creek.



Completed at the cost of \$150,000, the Jupiter School was a state-of-the-art facility with a science lab and an auditorium with a stage for the arts. At the time, it was one of a few schools in Florida accredited by the Southern Association, allowing its graduates to attend college. The school was the town's primary education facility until 1964, when Jupiter High School opened.

Unfortunately, the building, and especially its auditorium, is in a state of disrepair. There are fears the structure will deteriorate rapidly without restorative work. The nominator aims to



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mobilize the community through advocacy and overcome any roadblocks that prevent the auditorium's restoration and community use.

**Lake Hall School**  
**Tallahassee (Leon County)**  
***Built 1870***

The Lake Hall School is a small wood-frame building erected in 1870 by once enslaved tenant farmers who acquired portions of the old Hall Plantation from former planter Mariano Papy after the Civil War.



Schooling time was tied to the growing seasons, and largely dependent on whether a family needed or could spare child labor in the farm or field. Purchased by Leon County Schools in 1919, the one-room school, with several benches on each side, a stage up front and heated by a wood stove, eventually closed in the 1950s.

Threatened by encroaching development, descendants of the Lake Hall community desire to restore and open the schoolhouse to the public as a historical exhibit. Recently, the Leon County Board of Commissioners voted to support these preservation efforts by acquiring the property. The nominator wishes to continue to raise awareness to restoration efforts underway to preserve this important part of the Lake Hall community.

**LaVilla Neighborhood**  
**Jacksonville (Duval County)**  
***Incorporated in 1866***

LaVilla is one of Jacksonville's oldest Gullah Geechee communities and one of Florida's first urbanized Black communities.



Incorporated in 1866 and settled by former enslaved and United States Colored Troops soldiers, LaVilla emerged as a major epicenter for ragtime, jazz, blues and civil rights, earning the moniker Harlem of the South.

Negatively impacted by urban renewal and gentrification, vulnerable property owners are at risk of losing their properties, further endangering the community's historic sense of place. The community is now working to designate what remains as a National Register Historic District. Furthermore, the neighborhood has organized



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to secure equitable redevelopment opportunities and to ensure infill development is complementary and respectful of the community, its heritage and history. Inclusion to the 11 to Save program will help these efforts by bringing more public awareness to the history of this urban neighborhood.

**Noah's Ark**  
**Palatka (Putnam County)**  
***Constructed 1930***

Constructed in 1930 by the Tilghman family, Noah's Ark served as a steamboat on the St. John's River until the 1950s. Equipped with staterooms, a formal dining room and a salon for relaxation, it ferried notable people of the era during fishing expeditions, including Jimmy Stewart, Babe Ruth, Gary Cooper and Senator Sam Ervin Jr., chair of the Watergate Investigation Committee.



During late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Palatka, the Gem City of St. John's, was a primary tourist destination in Florida. It featured several steamboat lines by 1885 and rivaled Jacksonville as a major commercial port. Noah's Ark, a tangible link to Palatka's maritime and tourist history, remains drydocked since 2006. One of few surviving steamboats, it continues to deteriorate.

Nominators hope to raise awareness and seek to list the vessel on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Old Mount Carmel Baptist Church**  
**Gainesville (Alachua County)**  
***Built 1944***

Located in Gainesville's historic Pleasant Street Neighborhood, Old Mount Carmel Baptist Church is listed in the National Register for its importance in the vernacular tradition of African American churches, as well as its association with the Civil Rights Movement.



During the midcentury, the church served as a religious and social hub for the African American community and a strategic center where local, state and national organizations planned legal and other nonviolent actions for the Civil Rights Movement in Alachua County and North Central Florida. The building was the command post for the local National Association for the Advancement of Colored People chapter, hosting



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discussions about the desegregation of the county school system and supporting local students involved in the 1971 Black Thursday sit-in to improve racial equity at the University of Florida.

Currently, the building is in disrepair, having suffered roof damage and water infiltration. In addition, new residential construction and gentrification threaten the building's historic setting and continued use as a community gathering space. The nominator hopes that preserving the building will help educate the community about the building's Civil Rights heritage and bolster equity activism in the historic Pleasant Street Neighborhood and across the city.

**Pepper Hill African American District  
Quincy (Gadsden County)  
*Established 1828***

A Florida Main Street Community, named for John Quincy Adams, Quincy was established in 1828. Following the Civil War, Quincy grew from a frontier village into one of the Panhandle's most important commercial, political and cultural centers.



By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the southside of Quincy began to flourish as an African American community with many residents working in various tobacco packing houses scattered throughout the neighborhood. A comprehensive survey of the neighborhood, characterized by one-story wood frame buildings, was completed in 1996. Since that time, with no preservation mechanisms in place, it is estimated that nearly one-third of the neighborhood's contributing resources from that survey effort have been lost to incremental demolition.

The nominators hope to raise public awareness of this district's contributions to Quincy's culture and heritage in an effort to build momentum to preserve and protect surviving contributing resources.

**Pink House  
Pomona Park (Putnam County)  
*Built 1886***



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Named after the Roman Goddess of fruit trees, the Town of Pomona Park was incorporated in 1889 and was known for its citrus, grape vineyards, farm produce and long leaf yellow pine. It was incorporated more than 25 years after a group of settlers arrived in the area after the Civil War. One of those early settlers was Holmes Erwin, a vineyardist and Civil War veteran from Tennessee.



This Gothic Revival, gingerbread structure, also known as the Pink House, was believed to be built for Erwin in 1886. Here, Erwin resided with wife Mary and servants James and Mary Bradly. It was later owned by Adolph Linke, a truck gardener raising fruits and vegetables for market, who immigrated to the country in 1901 from Austria. Currently vacant, this structure features unique interior woodwork, four fireplaces and a root cellar.

Today, the house is in a state of rapid deterioration. Nominators would like to raise awareness and ultimately preserve the historic building linked to the founding era of Pomona Park and the surrounding area of Putnam County.

### **Smith's Bakery Pensacola (Escambia County) Built 1918**

Founded by Gordon Smith in 1899 in Mobile, Alabama, Smith's Bakery grew from a four-baker operation into a company employing 600 staff producing baked goods throughout the entire Gulf region. In 1928, the operation opened a bakery in Pensacola's Belmont-DeVilliers neighborhood. A historic center of Black commerce and culture, Belmont-DeVilliers is one of two locations in Florida that are designated as stops on the Mississippi Blues Trail.



With buildings dating back to 1918 situated in the heart of the neighborhood, this large industrial complex served as the community's economic epicenter for 65 years, once employing over 100 workers to produce Sunbeam English muffins and rolls. A major part of the city's African American history, Smith's Bakery closed in 1990 because it was considered dated and obsolete for modern day bakery needs.

Over the next three decades, the bakery complex's aging buildings have continued to deteriorate. A local nonprofit is now seeking funds to restore the complex to serve as a history and cultural center for the surrounding community. Nominators believe inclusion of the site on the 11 to Save



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is important to the community because of the increased awareness it will provide for the property's restoration efforts.

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### **About the Florida Trust**

The Florida Trust for Historic Preservation is the state's nonprofit dedicated to protecting Florida's extraordinary heritage and history. Founded in 1978, the Florida Trust has collaborated to save irreplaceable Florida treasures like the Historic Florida Capitol and is a statewide partner of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Learn more at [www.FloridaTrust.org](http://www.FloridaTrust.org) and follow us on Twitter @FloridaTrustHP.