



# South Main Stories: Self-Guided Walking History and Architecture Tour

As you walk down South Main, you're a part of its legendary history. The buildings, most of them constructed in the early 1900s, are museum-quality architectural gems. And the stories that have transpired inside their walls over the past century show the quirky, innovative, individualistic spirit of the neighborhood.

## QUICK HISTORY OF SOUTH MAIN

Until 1850, what is now South Main was actually a separate city from Memphis - the city of South Memphis - and the boundary was Union Avenue. South Memphis was the residential suburb of Memphis and remained that way until the early 1900's when the railroad stations were built.

Because of Memphis' geographical location in the country, it was a perfect city to become a center for railroad traffic. Two large railroad stations opened along Calhoun Street (now GE Patterson) Central Station (c 1912) and Union Station (c 1914). 50 passenger trains would pull into these two South Main stations each day.

As a result, South Main began to transform from a residential neighborhood into a business center to support the booming railroad traffic. The vast majority of the buildings you still see along South Main were built by business owners between 1910 and 1925 as a result of this boom. By 1929, 8 restaurants and 11 hotels sprung up between Central Station and The Orpheum.

Manufacturing and distribution warehouses were drawn to South Main to be near railroads. Piggly Wiggly, Meyer Brothers Drug Company, Puck Brand Foods, United Warehouse, Memphis Brewing Company and others employed tens of thousands employees. South Main also became the distribution center for all of the major movie studios - MGM, Paramount, Warner Brothers, 20th Century Fox and more. Most of these businesses were clustered in one-story buildings along Second Street which was known as "Film Row".

By the 1950s, the railroad industry was beginning to crumble, and with supporting businesses. Fewer stops to Memphis meant fewer customers for South Main businesses. Union Station closed its doors on March 31, 1964 and the building was torn down in 1969, replaced by a surface parking lot for the post office.

At the same time, manufacturing began migrating east to industrial parks leaving many large warehouses vacant and falling into disrepair.

The assassination of Dr. King at the Lorraine Hotel in 1968 and the ensuing riots were the final blow for South Main. The Arcade Restaurant, which had been opened since 1919 24-hours a day, had to closed its doors for the first time in 70 years during the riots. It took a while because they couldn't find the key!

Ironically, South Main was saved because it was abandoned and neglected. The historic, architecturally significant buildings were kept intact because no developers were interested in the area. So the buildings in South Main look much like they did when they were built in the 1910-1925.

Artists and creatives were drawn to South Main's historic charm, low property prices, and the ability to find large live/work studios. South Main's renaissance truly began in 1982 when Robert McGowan and Annie Mahaffey bought 418 S Main as their home and art studio, and other artists followed. Robert in particular became a staunch advocate for South Main, lobbying the city for much-needed infrastructure and code enforcement to save and preserve the history buildings.

The movie and film community recognized South Main's gritty time capsule of architecture and began using it as a backdrop for many films. *Mystery Train*, an indie movie by Jim Jarmusch, was filmed in South Main in 1989 paving the way for other movies to follow: *The Firm*, *Walk The Line*, *Great Balls of Fire*, *Elizabethtown*, *Hustle & Flow*, and others.

More awareness of the neighborhood came with the openings of major anchors like the National Civil Rights Museum (1991), the Trolley Line (1993) and the re-opening of Central Station (1999) along with new apartments. Phil and Terry Woodard began renovating many South Main buildings making way for art gallery spaces, locally-owned boutiques and loft apartments.

Today there are more than 2,500 people living in South Main drawn to the neighborhood's charm, walkability and proximity to all of Downtown's amenities (more than half are over the age of 45). South Main has 34 retailers and 25 restaurants - all (except one!) that are locally owned and operated. South Main has kept true to its origins by being a neighborhood built on the backs of local entrepreneurs and is the home of Emerge Memphis, Memphis' start-up incubator for businesses.

Creatives and artists are still drawn to South Main. The Memphis College of Art moved its Graduate School to South Main in 2010 and RiverArts Festival - the largest arts festival in the region - has its home in South Main. ArtSpace - a live/work incubator for artists - will soon begin work on its new space. WEVL, Memphis Music Foundation, Blues Foundation, DittyTV, Electraphonic and other organizations that support the arts are clustered in South Main.

Attractions and events like the National Civil Rights Museum, The Orpheum, RiverArts Festival, Memphis Farmers Market, Trolley Nights, Jack Robinson Gallery, Memphis Railroad and Trolley Museum draw hundreds of thousands of people to South Main each year. And the great news? More than \$100 million in new investment is planned or underway in South Main!

**To view the walking tour on your smartphone or Ipad,  
go to [GoSouthMain.com/Tour](http://GoSouthMain.com/Tour)**

## **START HERE!**

### **THE ORPHEUM THEATRE 203 SOUTH MAIN**

The Grand Opera House was built here in 1890 and was billed as the classiest theatre outside of New York City. The Grand became part of the Orpheum Circuit of vaudeville shows in 1907, thus the theatre became known as The Orpheum.

In 1923 a fire burned the theatre to the ground, and the structure you see today was erected in 1928 at a cost of \$1.6 million. This theatre was twice as large and far more opulent than its predecessor with lavish tasseled brocade draperies, enormous crystal chandeliers, gilded moldings, and the Mighty Wurlitzer pipe organ.

As vaudeville's popularity waned, the Orpheum was purchased by the Malco movie theater chain in 1940 and presented first run movies until 1976 when Malco decided to sell the building. There was even talk of demolishing the old theater to build an office complex. However, in 1977 the Memphis Development Foundation purchased the Orpheum and began bringing Broadway productions and concerts back to the Theatre.

Fifty-four years had taken a toll on the "South's Finest Theatre." The Orpheum was closed on Christmas in 1982 to begin a \$5 million renovation to restore its 1928 opulence. A grand reopening celebration was held in



January of 1984, and it signaled the rebirth of entertainment in downtown Memphis.

Throughout the next 20 years, the Orpheum brought in large-scale Broadway shows, like Phantom of the Opera, Cats, and Les Miserables, while continuing to offer performances from great entertainers like Jerry Seinfeld, Dorothy Hamill, Tony Bennet, the Goo Goo Dolls, and many more. The Orpheum brings in 10-12 Broadway performances a year and more than 350,000 guests.

Legend has it that two ghosts reside in The Orpheum. One is sweet little Mary and she's 9 years old, she wears a white dress and has pigtails. Some say the real Mary ran out of the theatre and was killed by a trolley car. Mary likes to sit in seat C-5 and often causes a raucus by slamming doors and flickering lights. The second ghost is that of a masked figure that resides in the air ducts above the house. The nameless ghost is known to stretch its brown arm out of the molding that covers the opening in the air duct, and wave at audience members during performances.

What's next for The Orpheum? Just south of the theatre in the parking lot, work will soon begin on a \$11 million Orpheum Performing Arts and Leadership Centre that will offer education and community outreach programs to more than 60,000 children and their families each year.

Source: *Orpheum-Memphis.com*



## 241 SOUTH MAIN MLGW PARKING GARAGE

On May 31, 1940, Joe Foppiano's Grill was the scene of one of the city's most famous crimes. A local gambler and shady businessman named Bob Berryman cornered a nightclub bouncer named John Phillips inside the restaurant and killed him with a sawed-off shotgun.

When the cops hauled him off to jail, Berryman told the police, "There has been a grudge for some time." Berryman claimed his motive was self-defense. The sensational court room drama that ensued lasted for weeks, with many witnesses claiming that John Phillips had beaten them senseless without provocation. Nonetheless, Berryman was found guilty.

A couple of years later, Foppiano's closed and a furniture store opened in its place.

The entire block that contained this building and others was torn down in the 1960s and today it's an annex building for Memphis, Light Gas and Water.

SOURCE: *Ask Vance Blog, Memphis Magazine*



## 272 SOUTH MAIN STREET THE CHISCA HOTEL

The Hotel Chisca was the largest hotel in Memphis at the time it opened in 1913, a year after Union Station was completed. The hotel was seen as less of a luxury hotel than an accommodation for the middle class but did uniquely boast of its Chisca Treatment Rooms with Turkish baths and Battle Creek Methods to cure rheumatism.

On January 1, 1913, the Commercial Appeal stated, "The new Chisca Hotel at the corner of Linden and Main Street ... will be one of the finest in the South and with the site will cost when completed one million dollars."



A historic event occurred in The Chisca that quite literally changed the world forever. From 1949-1956, WHBQ radio's Dewey Phillips broadcast his popular show "Red, Hot and Blue". On July 7, 1954, Dewey played Elvis Presley for the first time on radio with Elvis's first recording of "That's All Right, Mama." Indeed the world has never been the same.

Through the 50s and 60s, The Chisca served as an important meeting place for civic organizations and later served as the headquarters for the Church of God in Christ. The hotel was completely abandoned in the 1980s and fell into major disrepair.

Today, a development team is in the process of a \$20+ million historic renovation of the building to convert the hotel into 149-apartments with ground floor retail and restaurant space. Talks of a Dewey Phillips memorial booth are in the works.



## 263 - 269 SOUTH MAIN THE ADLER HOTEL

A two-story Hoadley's Ice Cream was first built on this corner in 1904. In 1908 a third floor was added to the building when it became The Adler Hotel. The south wing was built in 1912. In 1913, the Commercial Appeal ran an ad for the Adler Hotel that claimed "We cater to couples and gentlemen / Strictly moral and modern ... Call bells in every room / Rates \$1.00 per day, \$1.50 with private bath."

The strictly moral hotel (which wasn't the case with many hotels in South Main) remained open until 1974 and was then renovated and reopened in 1994 as the 22-unit Adler Apartments. The units have their original window and door molding, along with original tiling in most bathrooms. Some of the windows also have original blown glass. Note the decorative arches on the north exterior of the north wing.



The ground floor at this key gateway intersection is available for lease.

## 275 SOUTH MAIN COGIC BUILDING

This small slice of a building was the Electric Waffle Shop Restaurant in the 1930s - 1950s and the Station 5 Deli Restaurant in the 1970s.



## **290 SOUTH FRONT**

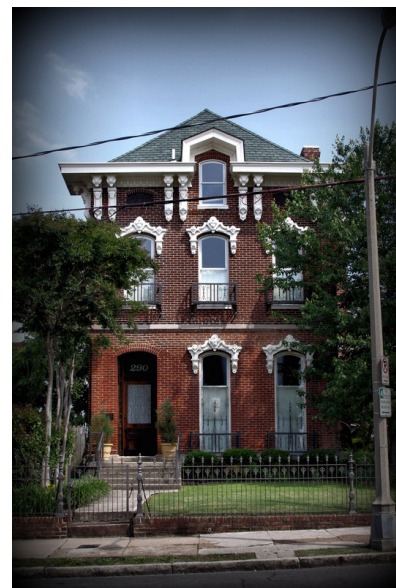
### **THE JOHN ALEXANDER AUSTIN HOUSE**

South Main was actually a suburb of Memphis in the mid-1800s through the turn of the century. This special structure is South Main's only remaining single-family Victorian-era residence built in the late 1800's and prior to the neighborhood's transition from a residential into a commercial transit hub.

The John Alexander Austin house was built as a private residence in 1873. At the time it was built, the house was located on riverfront property, and Front Street was actually called Shelby Street. John Alexander Austin was a confederate soldier who apprenticed in New York men's stores and later opened clothing stores in Memphis.

By 1907 the house became a boarding house. It is interesting to note that that this house has always been occupied, even during South Main's distressed times in the 70s and 80s.

But when Hank and Barbara Cowles, who now reside in the home, bought it in 1989, the house had nonetheless had seen better days. Mushrooms were growing out of the walls. The Cowles' poured their heart and soul into renovating the home. Several years later in 1993 they moved into the home and today it serves as a wonderful monument to days gone by.



## **69 PONTOTOC**

### **THE PONTOTOC HOTEL**

This handsomely dignified, unembellished building was constructed in 1906 of rusticated concrete block. The Pontotoc Hotel flourished as a fine European-style establishment, complete with Turkish baths. Originally servicing railroad and riverboat travelers, by 1920 this hotel had become one of the area's better-known bordellos.

In 1929, George Touliatas, Sr., founder of the Front Street Theatre, purchased the Pontotoc. Vaudeville-era actors and actresses from this theatre and others, including The Orpheum, took rest here.



## **299 SOUTH MAIN**

### **PEARL'S OYSTER HOUSE**

The 24-room Longinotti Hotel was built here in 1895 by a Genoa, Italy immigrant brothers August and James Longinotti. The the Longinotti's also tried their hand at making and distributing "fine whiskey" from the hotel. The hotel became the Manhattan Hotel in 1948 with the Manhattan Cafe on the ground floor, until the hotel closed in 1954.

This is now the site of Pearl's Oyster House.  
*Source: Historic-Memphis.com*

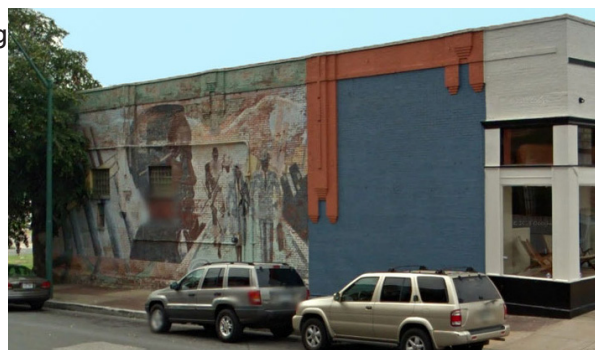


## **300-306 SOUTH MAIN**

### **PEARL'S OYSTER HOUSE**

This row of buildings date back to 1920. 300 South Main was, during its early years, the Main Fruit Company. Their ads boasted "We are Dealers in all kinds of Fruit, Cigars, Tobacco. Try our Home-made Italian Spaghetti, Chili Mack and Chili Con Carne!"

Notice the mural on the Pontotoc side of the building. This mural called "Taking Care of Business," was created by a group of students under the supervision of celebrated local artist George Hunt. It was one in a series of murals created around the city during 1983, and one of only two murals remaining from this project.





### **303 SOUTH MAIN THE RUMBA ROOM**

Thirsty? Just Whistle! 303 South Main was one of the many facilities that was producing Whistle Brand Soft Drinks during the 1920s. After a dispute, a partner in Whistle started his own soda company which became a more familiar brand today, 7Up.

Today you can work up a thirst at The Rumba Room, one of the best dance floors in the city!



### **311 SOUTH MAIN**

In the 1950s, this building was the site of Hemphill Diesel School.

### **322 SOUTH MAIN MERCHANTS HOTEL**

The Merchants Hotel once occupied this corner of South Main and Talbot and was listed in the 1860 Memphis City Directory as one of the city's 18 hotels at the time. At some point the building was torn down and this corner was vacant for several years.

The new infill condos that you see today were built in the mid-2000s.



### **325-327 SOUTH MAIN GREEN BEETLE AND FRANKS MARKET**

Constructed around 1906, this Beaux Arts style building is distinguished by its ornate cast stone window arches and decorative pressed metal cornice and trim.

Plate lunches cost 15-cents when the Green Beetle opened in 1933. It was also a known popular speakeasy during the final days of Prohibition. Legend has it that Machine Gun Kelly, a Memphian, came into the Green Beetle one night and shot up the joint, leaving bullet holes in the paneling behind the bar.

"Big" Frank Liberto and his wife Mary bought and operated the Green Beetle in 1939, making it the oldest operating tavern in Memphis. Frank also had Frank's Liquors next door and operated both until the 1970s.



Today Frank and Mary's grandson Josh Huckaby operates the Green Beetle, which slogan is "Have a beer here, your grandfather did." You'll find signature dishes on the menu that are a nod to Josh's grandparents - Mary's Lasagna and Frank's Big Burger.

### **335 SOUTH MAIN CHAPMAN FURNITURE**

Southern Comfort Liquor, though most associated with New Orleans, was distilled by Martin Wilkes Heron at this location from 1891 to 1911. It was originally called "Cuffs and Buttons" with the slogan "Two per customer. No gentleman would ask for more."

Chapman Furniture has been owned and operated by the Chapman family since the mid-1980s.



### **345 SOUTH MAIN THE AMBASSADOR HOTEL**

The 140-room hotel was built in 1915, and like other hotels in South Main, was considered modest and affordable. Note the dollar and half rate boldly posted on the side of the hotel. The hotel actually consisted of three buildings, one of which burned down. One of the buildings which faces Vance is now a condo complex called Ambassador Commons. The building fronting Main Street remains a great development opportunity.



### **VACANT LOT AT MAIN AND TALBOT TRI-STATE HOTEL**

The Tri-State Hotel stood on this vacant lot from 1940 - 1958. The ad on the side of the building offered rooms for 50-75-cents daily or \$3 per week. Guests had the luxury of hot AND cold water.



### **361-365 SOUTH MAIN SOB AND LEADERSHIP MEMPHIS**

This building, which was built circa 1930, has a unique glazed brick facade with extraordinary terra-cotta ornamentation.

This three-bay building is now home to SOB I South of Beale, which has been featured frequently on FoodNetwork shows (try the Brussels sprouts!). Leadership Memphis, an organization that helps our city's leaders become more aware of our community assets and needs, moved into this space a few years ago.



### **371 SOUTH MAIN**

Built in 1890, this is probably the oldest commercial structure still standing in South Main. The building likely marked the turning point of the district from a fashionable residential area into a commercial district. Its tall windows with raised brick hoodmolds and cast iron attic vents are typical of late-19th century commercial architecture. At one point it served as a Gattas Jewelry Store.



### **372 SOUTH MAIN ROBERT JOHNSON'S FINE FURNITURE**

This building is one of the older buildings left in the District. Built in 1905, the site has been occupied by one of South Main's pioneers, Robert Johnson, since the early 1980's. Johnson is a fine woodwork craftsmen who designs and hand crafts furniture for clients across the country.

Note Mr. Johnson's art display on the outside of the building. It's always a treat to see his new displays!



### **378-384 SOUTH MAIN**

These matched buildings were under construction in 1905. They subsequently housed several businesses, including in 1913, the Paris Dress Store. The beautifully conceived tripartite arched windows with prominent keystones inspired the logo for the South Main Street Historic District. Also note the unusual circular attic vents with keystones. The building was renovated in 1986 into eight apartments.



## 400 SOUTH MAIN

Built in 1910, this building served as a Fred P. Gattas department store until it closed in October 1975. In 1996, Linda and Bill Felts purchased old F. P. Gattas warehouse for \$250,000 that had been for years boarded up. Linda's design firm and a large antique shop was there for 8 years until they sold their building to investors from New York and New Jersey who planned to do condominiums. The buyers actually ended up losing the building and the entire property was sold for a private residence. The 20,000-sf property is now back on the market for almost \$5 million.



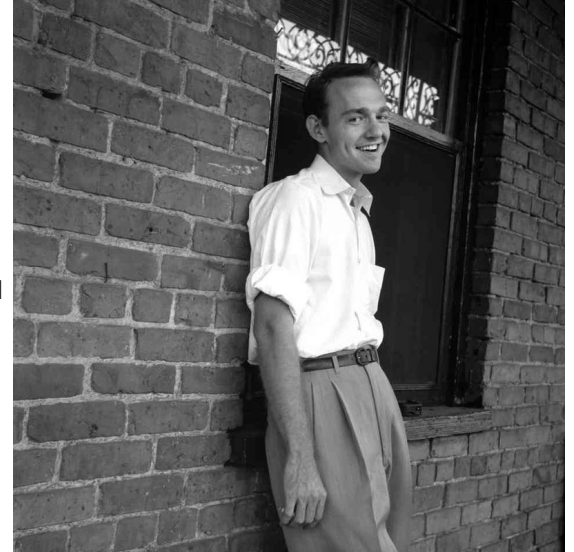
## 44 HULING

### JACK ROBINSON GALLERY

In the 1970s, Jack Robinson came to work as a stained glass designer at Rainbow Studios, which is still in operation today at 44 Huling. Jack was intensely private about his life, as worked there for 20 years until his death in 1997.

After he passed, the owner of Rainbow Studios, Dan Oppenheimer, went to his apartment to settle his affairs. What he found shocked him ... hundreds of thousands of high end photographs of major celebrities and rock stars, fashion and pop icons, and more.

Unbeknownst to anyone in Memphis, Jack had been one of America's most prominent photographers, working for Vogue, Life Magazine and the New York Times during the 50s and 60s. He lived a glamorous life in New York and Paris, which also included drugs and alcohol - all of which he left behind when he moved to Memphis. His incredible collection of photography is now on display at this gallery.



## 409 SOUTH MAIN

### "PUCK" AND LUCKY MURAL

Built in 1912 and designed by Jones and Furbringer, this genuine loft warehouse originally housed the White Wilson Drew company, a wholesale grocery form that marketed "Puck Brand Goods". Look up and you'll see Puck, from Shakespeare's "A Midsummer's Night Dream". This incredibly well-preserved ceramic panel atop this building depicts the company logo which could be found on all of the tins of spices and packaging.



Starting in the 1930s, this was the home for Lucky Heart Cosmetics, one of the first companies to cater to the African-American women market. Note the thankful mural on the side of the building. Paul Shapiro, the son of the founder of Lucky Heart, was one of the original advocates for establishing the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis. When it appeared that the Lorraine Motel would be auctioned and demolished, Paul stepped in and donated \$10,000 to stop the wrecking ball.

Want to count your blessings? Legend has it if you put your hand on the Lucky Heart shamrock luck shall come your way!



Woody Harrelson and Courtney Love spent quite a bit of time in this building in the mid-90s when "The People vs. Larry Flynt" was filmed here.



## **410 SOUTH MAIN ART VILLAGE GALLERY**

For a brief stint in the mid-1980's this was the home of Theatre Works and Blues City Cultural Center. In 1998, artist Ephriam Urevbu stumbled upon this abandoned warehouse which provided enough space for him to create 60' x 90' mural for Wolf Chase Mall. What was going to be his space for one project, turned into his permanent residence and successful gallery, Art Village Gallery, for 15 years.



## **416 SOUTH MAIN NICK'S PLACE**

This Georgian Revival Style building was constructed in 1912 and opened as a men's furnishing store. But who's Nick? Nicholas L. Koleas was the unofficial mayor of South Main through the 1980s. Born on Pontotoc Street in 1912, Nick spent his entire life associated with South Main. His father, a Greek immigrant, built a hotel at 508 S South Main Street when he was a child. Growing up Nick remembered women with buckets of fried chicken they took onto waiting trains to sell to passengers, the South Main restaurants that sold bootleg whiskey during Prohibition and "ladies of ill repute" who beckoned from upstairs windows on Mulberry Street.

After serving in WWII, Nick returned to South Main in 1958. He found success in 1970 with Nick's China, which supplied china to area restaurants to many well known restaurants at the time like Jim's Place East, Pete & Sam's and the North End.

After Koleas retired in 1988, the building at 416 S. Main became the Memphis Center for Contemporary Art for several years where Nick was a volunteer at the center. He was also an avid booster of the struggle to bring new life to South Main. Nick died in 2004 but his name will always hold a special place right here in South Main.

## **418 SOUTH MAIN THE PIONEERS - ROBERT MCGOWAN**

Fifteen years after Dr. King's assassination, when South Main had declined into a haven for criminals, artists Robert McGowan and his wife Annie bought this building in 1983 and renovated it as their home and work space. The reclusive artist and his wife are credited as the earliest pioneers of the area's urban renaissance.

The Georgian revival building was built in 1915 as a soda fixture company with a soda fountain and rooms to rent upstairs. In the 1960s it was Jim's Grill.



## **422-424 SOUTH MAIN NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS MUSEUM**

This elaborately ornamented Beaux Arts style building opened in 1910 as the Tri-Tone Drug Company and Jopling Perfumery with residences above. In the 1960's Bessie Brewer used the top floor as a rooming house. On April 4, 1968, James Earl Ray fired the shot that killed Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. from a bathroom in room 5B that he rented in this building. During his getaway, Ray ditched a bag of his belongings, which included his rifle, in a green bag in front of Canipe Amusement Company at 424 South Main. The contents of the bag ultimately led the authorities to Ray. Ray, who denied his involvement in the murder for 30 years, died in 1998 while serving a 99-year prison term.

Today the building serves as the gift shop and annex building for the National Civil Rights Museum



## 450 MULBERRY

### THE LORRAINE MOTEL AND NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS MUSEUM

Originally built for white railroad passengers in 1920, the 16-room Windsorlorraine Hotel was built on the northern side of this site. Local African American Walter Bailey purchased the hotel in 1945, renamed it for his wife Loree, and expanded it to include a second floor.

The Lorraine ultimately became an African American establishment during the days of segregation, catering to music legends such as Cab Calloway, Count Basie, Ray Charles, Lionel Hampton, Nat King Cole, Otis Redding, The Staple Singers and Aretha Franklin.

While in Memphis for the 1968 Sanitation Workers Strike, Dr. Martin Luther King was fatally shot on the balcony outside room 306 at the Lorraine. The wreath marks the place where Dr. King drew his last breath. Bailey's wife Loree suffered a stroke just hours after the assassination and died 5 days later.

Following the hotel's foreclosure in 1982, an effort to raise funds called "Save the Lorraine" bought the hotel for \$144,000 at auction. Had one of the other 2 bidders won, the hotel would have been razed. The Lorraine closed as a motel in 1988 when sheriff's deputies evicted the last holdout tenant, Jacqueline Smith, to turn the hotel into an \$8.8 million National Civil Rights Museum. (Jackie, who had lived at the hotel since 1973, maintained a vigil outside of the museum for 21 hours a day 25 years.)

The National Civil Rights Museum officially opened in 1991, and expanded the museum in 2002 to include the Young and Morrow building and Founders' Park in front of the Museum. Today the museum is completing a \$25 million renovation and expansion project.



## 431 SOUTH MAIN

You'll notice that this building is the exact duplicate of 409 South Main, with the exception of Puck. Similarly, this warehouse which opened in 1913, housed also wholesale grocery company like 409 South Main called Currie McGraw, as did 421 South Main, which housed Bank Grocery.

One block due west at Front and Nettleton was the headquarters for Piggly Wiggly, and at Front and Huling was D. Canale. Malone and Hyde was also in this vicinity, making this group of warehouses the grocery distribution for Memphis and the surrounding area.

This building was renovated by artist and furniture building Don Estes. Today this building is home to the Memphis Music Foundation, Doug Carpenter & Associates and others.



## 474 SOUTH MAIN FIRE STATION #2

Built in 1952 on the site of a former firehouse that used horse-drawn fire equipment, this building is one of the newer structures in South Main. Influenced by the designs of architect Frank Lloyd Wright, Fire Station Number 2 is an example of an ambitious campaign by city planners to introduce modern architecture to Memphis' public buildings.





### **477 SOUTH MAIN**

#### **MEMPHIS COLLEGE OF ART NESIN GRADUATE SCHOOL**

Built in 1913, for many years this building served as the Lewis Supply Company, a manufacturer and distributor of industrial supply parts.

The building has been restored and repurposed in a very special way. In 2010, a \$2.6 million renovation transformed this dormant building into the Memphis College of Art Nesin Graduate School. Step inside and look at the ongoing art exhibit in the Hyde Gallery that often features the works of students and faculty, or pop into the 477 Gift Shop that offers pieces created by students.



### **508 SOUTH MAIN**

Many South Main hotel owners like Lewis Koleas, whose name is inlaid in the tile below the door, had arrangements with the railroads to house their employees for free. This building was the first of many on South Main to be renovated by Phil Woodard, perhaps the most prolific South Main developer.



### **515 SOUTH MAIN**

#### **THE ALONZO LOTT SCHOOL FOR WAITERS**

After WWII, Memphis enjoyed an economic surge unseen for generations. Servicemen and women who sustained this country's war effort were in a mood to celebrate - creating a demand for good times, good food and good waiters. The school, owned and operated by the late Robert L. Woodard, not only taught the fine art of waiting tables but also served countless meals to the neighborhood's less fortunate.



### **516 SOUTH MAIN**

#### **FRANK JAMES HOTEL**

Built in "19 SPACE 13", as featured on the top of the building, the Frank James Hotel was made entirely of cast stone, creating a castle-like appearance. Famed local developer Henry Turley bought the hotel in 1986 for \$14,000.

### **520 SOUTH MAIN**

#### **THE PULLMAN HOTEL**

The Pullman was one of several small hotels built around 1910 to service the rail passenger clientele, this hotel was named for the Pullman railroad sleeper cars. It earned a reputation of catering to ladies of the evening.

Mark Grawemeyer and his childhood friend Leslie Smith bought the Pullman Hotel and adjoining buildings to the south in the 1990s because they were tired of waiting to be bought all of the buildings by themselves!

If you're looking for a place to take a break from the tour, hop into Grawemeyer's "haunted piano"!



## 531 SOUTH MAIN EARNESTINE & HAZELS

A church, complete with doors, a steeple, and people, once occupied this site in the late 1800s. When it burned down, Pantaze Drugstore was built here. In the late 1950s, Earnestine Mitchell and Hazel Jones opened their sundry store and it was well known that you could buy liquor or go to the upstairs brothel where rooms upstairs rented by the hour.

After being abandoned for years, in 1992 the late Russell George re-opened Earnestine & Hazel's, this time officially as a juke joint. To George's credit, he left everything exactly as it was - peeling paint and all.

Beware! Ghosts are said to haunt this South Main site. Even creepier, the juke box will read your mind and play songs to match your thoughts.



## MAIN AT GE PATTERSON MORRIS CEMETERY

It's called GE Patterson now, but from 1845 - 2000 it was Calhoun Street in honor of Vice President John C. Calhoun who first proposed using Federal funds to improve navigation on the Mississippi in a meeting held here. Incidentally, Calhoun was welcomed by a young lawyer from Memphis named Jefferson Davis.

You'll notice the sidewalks on South Main were built double the normal width to accommodate the extra foot traffic to and from Central Station and Union Station down the street. At the peak of rail service, more than 90 passenger trains pulled into these terminals.

On the north east corner, where American Apparel sits, Morris Cemetery stood on these grounds in the mid-1800s. As the city grew around it, "most" of the bodies were dug up and moved to Elmwood Cemetery.



## 540 SOUTH MAIN THE ARCADE RESTAURANT

The Arcade, Memphis' oldest cafe opened in 1919 by Greek immigrant Speros Zepatos. The original building, a wooden structure with a pot belly stove, burned down in 1924 and the current building dates back 1925 with hopes of later adding a hotel above the restaurant.

Most of Memphis' servicemen in both World Wars ate their last meal at The Arcade before shipping out.

The Arcade stayed open 24 hours a day from 1919 through 1968 when a city-imposed curfew following MLK's assassination forced it to close its doors after dark. Speros had to buy a lock for the door - it had never been locked in 49 years!

Speros' grandson, Harry, now runs the restaurant as the third generation owner. Because of its authentic decor, The Arcade has been featured in more than 40 movies and films!

## 545 SOUTH MAIN





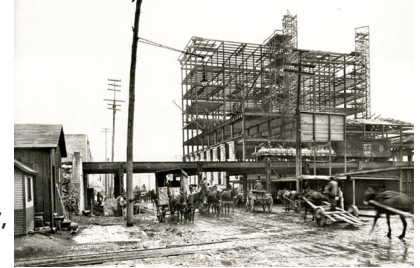
## CENTRAL STATION

Memphis built its first grand train station in 1855 here at the corner of GE Patterson (then called Calhoun) and Main Streets.

The Calhoun Station was first depot in Memphis was constructed here by the Mississippi and Tennessee Railroad around 1855. A more ornate, two story station opened in 1888 by the Illinois Central Line. The Calhoun Station was demolished in 1912-13 to make room for the new Central Station.



Built in 1913, Central Station was the last building designed by the famous architect Daniel Burnham, who was also the architect behind Chicago's 1895 Columbian Exposition.



Central Station commanded the railroad transportation era for nearly 50 years. By 1935, this depot coordinated the arrival and departure for more than 50 trains a day, helping make Memphis one of the busiest inland railroad transportation centers in the country. It was here that Elvis returned to Memphis after his army stint in Germany.



With railroad traffic in decline in the 1960's, passenger traffic trailed off at Central Station, causing surrounding restaurants, shops, and hotels closed. With AMTRAK left as its only use, Central Station fell into disrepair.

In 1999, the Memphis Area Transit Authority opened the renovated facility as apartments and event space. The Memphis Farmers Market uses the outdoor pavilion for its Saturday market.

## 108 GE PATTERSON THE ARCADE HOTEL

This cute courtyard of Rizzo's Restaurant once housed the Winona Hotel, which was built in 1914. IN 1939 it became The Arcade Hotel and remained opened until 1969, right around the time Union Station across the street closed. Each of its 39 rooms had a fireplace but there was a common bathroom for each floor.

The decaying hotel was featured prominently in the 1989 movie "Mystery Train" and was demolished in 1993, shortly after the completion of the film. You can see the hotel in its final days in the background of the movie poster.

