

# Historic Preservation

THE CITY OF PEORIA, ARIZONA

## 2012 YEAR IN REVIEW

**2013  
HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION  
COMMISSION  
REGULARLY  
SCHEDULED  
MEETINGS:**

- JANUARY 9
- MARCH 13
- JUNE 12
- OCTOBER 9

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**2012** brought new gains to the City of Peoria’s historic preservation program. The 2012-2013 Work Plan was implemented and a number of projects were undertaken in support of the work plan including the following:

- Historian Vince Murray of Arizona Historic Research was contracted with and has completed the Weedville Historical Research Report (see page 3).
- The second Annual Historic Preservation

Commission Achievement Awards were presented in April at the Pioneer Days celebration to three successful nominees.

- Interpretive Signs were installed at Palo Verde Park, the first step in implementing the Palo Verde Ruin Interpretive Plan.
- The First Presbyterian Church of Peoria was listed on the National Register of Historic Places based on the City’s nomination.
- Special street signs are under

development for the Old Town Area. The standard green street name signs will be replaced with distinctive brown street name signs that will be topped with coordinating signs identifying the area as Old Town.



National Register marker for Palo Verde Ruin, etched into the sidewalk near the entrance to Palo Verde Park.



Interpretive sign in Palo Verde Park

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF PEORIA NATIONAL REGISTER LISTING

On August 13, 2012, the First Presbyterian Church of Peoria was given the honor of being placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the Keeper of the National Register. Located at the southwest corner of 83rd Avenue and Madison Street, the church is the oldest existing building in Peoria's original town site.

Listing on the National Register provides formal, national recognition of a property's historic significance. The First Presbyterian Church is significant for its ties to Peoria's early development. The church served a key role in Peoria's early com-

munity activities and was a visible symbol of a permanent town center during a time when many of the area's settlers lived on outlying farms, outside of Peoria's town site.

City staff prepared the National Register nomination for the property with the support of the church's leaders, who provided a number of records describing the history of the church building and its connections to the development of Peoria. The property has already been listed on both the Arizona State Register of Historic Places and on the Peoria Register of Historic Places.



First Presbyterian Church of Peoria, present day, looking southwest



First Presbyterian Church of Peoria shortly after its construction in 1899

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION AWARDS

The Second Annual Historic Preservation Commission Awards were presented during the Peoria Pioneer Day Festival on April 12th. The awards recognize people, programs, and projects that help to preserve Peoria's heritage.

This year, three awards were presented. Long-time resident and local preservation advocate Priscilla Cook was honored for Lifetime Achievement. The Peoria Arizona Historical Society received an award for their 1912 Living History Classroom project, which

gave local students the opportunity to experience school life from the early 1900's. The Save Old Main Committee was recognized for their efforts to protect Peoria's original high school building, Old Main, which was constructed in 1922.

Anyone from the public may

submit nominations for the annual Historic Preservation Commission Awards, which will then be reviewed and considered by the Historic Preservation Commission. Nominations for the 2013 awards are due to the City by February 14, 2013. For more information and applications, visit:

[www.peoriaaz.gov/historicpreservation](http://www.peoriaaz.gov/historicpreservation)



Historic Preservation Commission Chair, Shelby Duplessis, with the award winners from left: Priscilla Cook ; Ron Taylor, representing the Peoria Arizona Historical Society ; and members of the Save Old Main Committee.

*Remembering Peoria's Past*

**T H E H O O D B U I L D I N G**

Anchoring the southwest corner of 83rd Avenue and Washington Street, the two-story Hood Building has long stood at the entrance to Old Town Peoria. Named after prominent community member and local real estate investor Mabel J. Hood, the building has been home to retail uses on the first floor including a hardware store, the El Paso Chain Store, Western Auto, Peoria Florist,

and most recently Historic District Resale Mall. The second story, once a furniture store now serves as offices for several small businesses. Soon after it was built in 1920, the second story was called into use for high school classes while the Old Main high school building was under construction in 1921.

The two story brick building has been covered with stucco, and

the original tile wainscoting has been faced with concrete block. The upstairs arched casement windows have also been replaced, and some of the windows have been covered over. Despite these changes, the Hood Building still persists as a dominant part of the Old Town commercial streetscape.



The Hood Building, while occupied by Leonard's El Paso Chain Store, c. 1963



The Hood Building after renovations, May 1964



The Hood Building with its current awning, 2009

**W E E D V I L L E H I S T O R I C A L R E S E A R C H R E P O R T**

Just blocks away from the busy commercial intersection of 75th Avenue and Thunderbird Road, lies an area reminiscent of an earlier era. Originally the quarter section of land from Thunderbird Road to Acoma Drive and from 71st to 75th Avenues has been known locally as Weedville, after the family that settled and founded a religious school and community there. In order to uncover the little-known

history of the area and understand its significance in Peoria's history, Vince Murray of Arizona Historical Research was contracted to conduct research and a preliminary survey of the area. As a result, the Weedville Historical Research Report has been prepared and will serve as a framework to guide future historic preservation efforts in Weedville. A more intensive inventory

survey of individual buildings within the area will be needed to determine eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Once the survey is complete National Register nominations for one or more buildings, or possibly a historic district could then be prepared in order to gain formal national recognition of the area's historic significance.

*"We shape our buildings; thereafter, our buildings shape us."*  
 ~ Winston Churchill

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HISTORICPRESERVATION](http://WWW.PEORIAAZ.GOV/HISTORICPRESERVATION)



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PEORIA, ARIZONA**

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**The City of Peoria Arizona** is Arizona's ninth largest city with a population of 157,618. Peoria is located in the Northwest portion of the Valley of the Sun with the state capital of Phoenix and the neighboring city of Glendale to the east, and the retirement community of Sun City to the west. Originally incorporated as a city covering one square mile in 1954, Peoria now covers almost 180 square miles and encompasses desert landscapes, rural farmland, suburban neighborhoods, a regional lake, as well as Old Town, the area of Peoria's original town site.

**Professional \* Ethical \* Open \* Responsive \* Innovative \* Accountable**

## 2013 Upcoming Events

### February

Peoria Historic Preservation Commission Awards - Applications due February 14th  
For more information visit [www.peoriaaz.gov/historicpreservation](http://www.peoriaaz.gov/historicpreservation)

### March

Arizona Archaeology and Heritage Awareness Month  
For more information visit [www.azstateparks.com/SHPO](http://www.azstateparks.com/SHPO)

### April

Peoria's Arts and Culture Festival/Pioneer Days  
April 6th, Old Town Peoria  
*Peoria Historic Preservation Commission Awards will be presented during the event*  
For more information visit [www.peoriaaz.gov/specialevents](http://www.peoriaaz.gov/specialevents)

### May

National Historic Preservation Month

### June

2013 Arizona Historic Preservation Conference  
June 12th-14th  
Hilton Phoenix/East Mesa, Mesa, Arizona  
For more information visit [www.azpreservation.com](http://www.azpreservation.com)

### December

Old Town Holiday Festival  
Date TBD  
Old Town Peoria  
For more information visit [www.peoriaaz.gov/specialevents](http://www.peoriaaz.gov/specialevents)