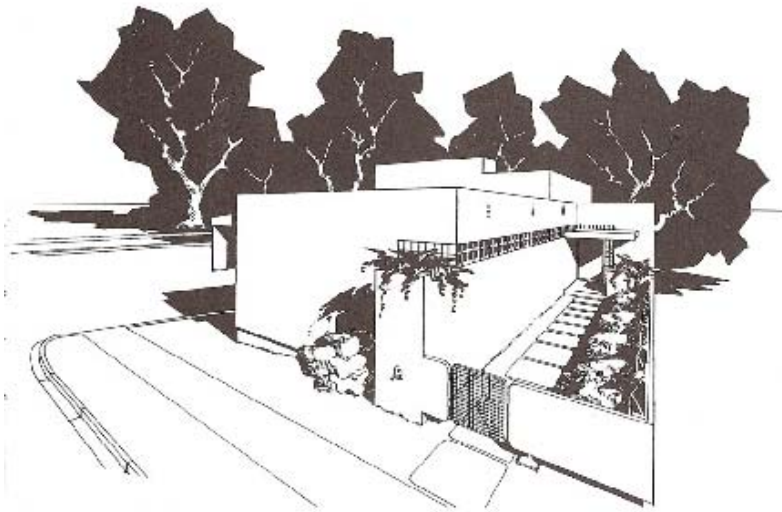


**MID-CENTURY  
MODERN  
ARCHITECTURE  
IN ST. LOUIS COUNTY:**

**OUTSTANDING EXAMPLES  
WORTHY OF  
PRESERVATION**



**St. Louis County  
Historic Buildings Commission  
June 2007**

# Mid-Century Modern: A Preservation Crisis

In 2007 the St. Louis County Historic Buildings Commission marks its fiftieth anniversary as the first official government body created in Missouri to develop a program of historic preservation. Over the past half-century the Commission has worked to identify and encourage the preservation of hundreds of historic buildings. The irony as we reach this milestone is that today the most endangered buildings in the County, as throughout the nation, are ones that were recent, new, or still unbuilt when the Commission was formed. Buildings that were the pride of the region fifty years ago are now being demolished or insensitively altered with little regard for their value to future generations.

What we call “Modern” architecture was revolutionary when it emerged in Europe in the years around World War I. It rejected the popular historical styles of the time, in fact, the whole idea of styles, replacing them with a design approach based on current needs, materials, and technology. The Museum of Modern Art brought the movement to the attention of America in an influential 1932 exhibition entitled “The International Style,” curated by Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson. The first example in this region was Harris Armstrong’s 1935 medical building for Leo Shanley, which received national attention. Armstrong was followed by other daring architects in the years leading up to World War II, including Isadore Shank, Edouard Mutrux, William Bernoudy, Charles Eames, Frederick Dunn, Charles Nagel, Joseph Murphy and Kenneth Wischmeyer. After the war, Modernism was embraced by the younger generation of architects, and it found enthusiastic patrons, not only private residential clients, but major public institutions. In particular, religious groups in this region became national leaders in adopting modern architecture.

The acceptance of modern design began to wane in the 1970s, and by now the achievements of the modern movement dating from the 1930s through the 1960s seem more alien to many observers than the Victorian works they reacted against, a historic reversal of fashion. We know from history, however, that taste is cyclical. Just as the once-scorned achievements of the Victorian era are again admired, so eventually will be the best of the modern movement. That trend has already begun, especially among young people. But running counter to that trend is the increasingly frequent demolition of buildings from this era. At this rate, will anything be left? While Victorian row houses were built by the hundreds, the best modern buildings, particularly the institutional ones, were one of a kind. Once they are gone, they are gone forever.

The criticism most commonly heard about residential buildings of this period is that they are too small. Here again, the wise must be cautious, as the recent fashion for excessively large houses already shows signs of abandonment. Well-made buildings from this earlier era may well become desirable again if they are not torn down too soon.

## A Mid-Century Modern Honor Roll

To draw attention to Mid-century modern buildings, the Historic Buildings Commission has produced this list of representative works, indicating the geographic range, the variety of buildings types, and number of architects. We hope the list includes the most important examples, as recognized in their time and by more recent critics and scholars. The list is not

intended to be comprehensive, however. The architects named above along with such others as Robert Elkington, Charles King, Gyo Obata, Eugene Mackey, Jr., and others, should be classified as masters, and all of their works should be considered with the care and consideration worthy of a master. The same is true of the less prolific designers included in this list, who may have had fewer opportunities but also excelled.

Which are the most endangered modern buildings? Some on this list are in imminent danger, notably the Henry Hampton House, which the City of Richmond Heights has included in a redevelopment buyout area, even though it is not necessary for the development. Very few of these buildings have been designated landmarks by municipal preservation commissions, Oakland and University City being honorable exceptions. Most of the municipalities on this list have no historic preservation ordinances, strong or weak, so most of these buildings could be torn down at the will of the owner. In the circumstances, efforts must focus as much on the individual owners and buyers as on city councils and their supporters, working to educate them in the value of these precious and rare historic resources and to instill pride in ownership.

**NR = listed in the National Register of Historic Places**

Listing in the National Register does not provide legal protection against demolition or alteration except where federal funds are involved, but it does offer the possibility of state and federal tax credits for rehabilitation.

**CL = designated a County Landmark by the St. Louis County Historic Buildings Commission**

Designation by the County Commission indicates that the property is considered to have historic value to residents of the county as a whole. It is strictly honorary, providing no legal protection.

**BEAUMONT RESERVATION -- unincorporated**

- Boy Scout Chapel,, 6480 Beaumont Reservation Drive  
1955, Eric Smith

**BERKELEY**

- former Holy Ghost Catholic Church & School  
6301 Garfield at First; now Harvest Church  
1951-52, Alfred Roth

**BLACK JACK**

- Christ the King United Church of Christ  
(originally called Independent Congregational)  
11370 Old Halls Ferry Rd. at Redman  
1960, Walter Manske

**CLAYTON**

- former Famous-Barr, Forsyth & Jackson  
(now Washington University West Campus)  
1948, Samuel A. Marx, Nol L. Flint & Charles W. Schonne  
Associated Architects with Mauran, Russell & Crowell
- Shanley Building, Maryland & Bemiston  
1935, Harris Armstrong, NR, CL

- Thomas Sherman & Arnold Maremont Houses  
306 and 312 DeMun  
1938, Nagel & Dunn, NR, CL

#### CREVE COEUR

- Nolan Stinson House, #8 The Knolls Lane  
1956, Nolan Stinson
- Priory Chapel (St. Louis Abbey, St. Anselm's)  
500 S. Mason Road  
1962, Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum
- Temple Emmanuel, 12166 Conway Road  
1962, Bernoudy-Mutrux-Bauer
- Temple Israel, Ladue at Spoede  
1962, Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum
- Church of the Open Word (Swedenborgian)  
1038 Dautel Lane  
1958, Erwin Carl Schmidt & Lesley Black
- Monsanto Building K (cafeteria)  
800 N. Lindbergh at Olive  
1967, Vincent G. Kling & Assoc.
- Angelo Corrubia House, 28 Balcon Estates Drive  
1967, Angelo Corrubia (Wedemeyer, Cernik & Corrubia)

#### FENTON VICINITY - unincorporated

- Keightley-O'Neal House, 930 Hawkins Road  
1948, Richard E. Carney, CL

#### FERGUSON

- St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley, 3400 Pershall Rd  
1966-1970, Kenneth E. Wischmeyer & Partners

#### FLORISSANT

- St. Mark's United Methodist Church, 315 Graham Rd.  
1964, Robert L. Fisher & Assoc.

#### GLENDALE

- Carl & Gerti Cori House  
1080 North Berry Rd at Berry Road Park  
1935, Harris Armstrong, NR, CL

#### HAZELWOOD

- McDonnell Aircraft Engineering Campus  
5896 N. Lindbergh at McDonnell  
1960, Harris Armstrong

#### HUNTLEIGH

- John P. Meyer House, 4 Deacon Drive  
1937-1938, Charles Eames, CL
- Guthrie House, 11 Squires Lane  
1956, Bernoudy-Mutrux & Bauer

## JENNINGS

- former Faith-Salem Church, 7348 West Florissant Road  
1956, Frederick Dunn  
now Brotherly Love West Christian Assembly

## KINLOCH

- former Holy Angels Catholic Church, 8122 Scott  
1953, Carroll & Dean, with Alfred Roth  
includes Manresa Retreat Grotto

## KIRKWOOD

- St. Louis Community College at Meramec  
11333 Big Bend  
1966-1971, Smith & Entzeroth
- Grace Episcopal Church, E. Argonne at Woodlawn  
1964, Frederick Dunn
- First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood, East Adams  
1956-1957, Fisher & Campbell
- St. Peter's Catholic Church  
237 W. Argonne bet. Clay & Harrison  
1954-55, Joseph Murphy
- Kirkwood United Methodist Church  
201 W. Adams at Clay  
1964, Schmidt, Perlsee & Black
- Henry and Ann Bauer House, 1964 North Signal Hills Drive  
1949, Henry Bauer
- Charles & Doris Danna House, 369 Rieth Terrace  
1960, Charles Danna and Doris Danna
- Ruth & Russell Kraus House, 120 North Ballas Rd.  
now the Frank Lloyd Wright House in Ebsworth Park  
1951-1955, Frank Lloyd Wright, NR, CL

## LADUE

- Fred Evens House, Litzsinger Road  
1950-1954, Harris Armstrong
- Isadore Shank House, #4 Graybridge Lane  
1940, Isadore Shank
- Harry Hammerman House, 219 Graybridge Lane  
1952, Harry Hammerman
- L. M. Persons House, 7 Warson Terrace  
1936, Wm. P. McMahon & Sons
- Ethical Society Meeting Hall, 9001 Ladue Road  
1961, Harris Armstrong
- Ruth Schweiss House, 4 Daniel Road  
1955, Bernoudy-Mutrux
- Putzel House, 1220 Log Cabin Lane  
1939-40, Nagel & Dunn
- Talbott-Mutrux House, 4 Sumac Lane  
1940, Bernoudy-Mutrux

- William A. Bernoudy House, 9590 Litzsinger Rd  
1950, William A. Bernoudy
- Aaron Fischer House, 9733 Litzsinger Rd.  
1961 (now Litzsinger Road Ecology Foundation), Gustel Kiewitt
- Charles H. Yalem House, 9930 Litzsinger Rd.  
1961
- Louis S. Sachs House, 32 Dromara  
1956, Harris Armstrong
- Louis Dubinsky House, 34 Dromara  
1953, Shapiro & Tisdale
- W. Alfred Hayes House, 22 Trent Drive  
1956, Russell, Mullgardt, Schwarz & Van Hoefen
- John L. Wilson House, 29 Trent Drive  
1961, Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum
- Rudolph & Dorothy Czufin House, 24 Dielman Rd.  
1951, Bernoudy-Mutrux, NR

#### NORMANDY

- St. Ann's Catholic Church, Natural Bridge Road  
1952, Joseph Murphy

#### NORTH COUNTY - unincorporated

- Evarts Graham House, 18 Jamestown Acres  
1940-1942, Harris Armstrong, CL

#### NORTHWEST COUNTY -- unincorporated

- Lambert-St. Louis Terminal  
1956, Hellmuth, Yamasaki & Leinweber  
fourth vault, 1965, Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum

#### OAKLAND

- Harris Armstrong House, 200 South Sappington Road  
c. 1956, Harris Armstrong
- Harris Armstrong studio, 172 Singlepath Lane  
1948-1949, Harris Armstrong
- Sappington Spur district, 4 houses  
1937-1949, Harris Armstrong
- Gustel Kiewitt House, 101 South Brent  
1949, Gustel Kiewitt

#### OLIVETTE

- former Flotken's Super Market, 9643 Olive at Basswood  
1961, Sommerich & Wood

#### RICHMOND HEIGHTS

- Louree-Watts House, 7915 Park Drive, Hampton Park  
1929, Jesse Bowling & Isadore Shank, NR
- Dr. Samuel Bassett office/residence  
1200 South Big Bend

- 1936, Edouard J. Mutrux, NR, CL
- Dr. Henry E. Hampton House  
1751 Laclede Station Road  
1941 & 1954, Harris Armstrong

#### SAPPINGTON AREA -- unincorporated

- Gymnasium, Thomas Jefferson School  
4100 S. Lindbergh Blvd  
1958, Bernoudy-Mutrux
- Lutheran Church of the Resurrection  
9907 Sappington Rd nr Concord School Rd.  
1959-65, Murphy & Mackey

#### SUNSET HILLS

- Arthur Stockstrom House, 13290 Maple Drive  
1950-1951, Harris Armstrong

#### TOWN & COUNTRY

- Theodore & Bette Pappas House, 865 Masonridge Road  
1955-1964, Frank Lloyd Wright, NR, CL

#### UNIVERSITY CITY

- B'nai Amoona Synagogue (now COCA)  
542 Trinity Ave. at Washington  
1945-1950, Eric Mendelssohn, NR, CL
- Joseph Murphy House, 7901 Stanford  
1938 & 1949, Joseph Murphy
- University City Public Library, 6701 Delmar at Kingsland  
1969, Smith & Entzeroth

#### WARSON WOODS

- *Woman's Home Companion* House, 859 Edlin Dr.  
1956, Paul Rudolph

#### WEBSTER GROVES

- Loretto Hilton Center for the Performing Arts  
130 Edgar Road  
1966, Murphy & Mackey with George C. Izenour, Robert Newman, Tyrone Guthrie, & Jo Mielziner, consultants

#### WESTWOOD

- Ralph Cohen House, 10 Westwood Country Club  
1960, Isadore Shank

*June 3, 2007*  
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