

FP-052

SWINE BUILDING

This structure, built for the 1936 Texas Centennial Exposition, today goes by a rather inglorious name - the Swine Building. But it is not just one of the 30 historic structures in Fair Park remaining from that exposition - it is the building many experts consider the best example of that fair's groundbreaking Texanic style.

Called at that time Livestock Building Number 2, the building consists of hollow clay tile and concrete. Its recessed and coffered concrete ceilings, its inset concrete screens and the clean lines of its projecting concrete slabs and ledges reflect excellent craftsmanship for poured-in-place concrete work. Perhaps the primary reason though that the building is so esteemed by architects is that it is the most untouched of the buildings remaining from the 1936 exposition. The doors, interior animal pens, light fixtures, clerestory windows, and even the paint from 1936 are all still visible.

Exposition architect George Dahl painted the building's interior walls and columns one of his favorite colors -- pumpkin. He then accented this pumpkin hue with yellow. The historic paints that you can still see today are "lime wash" paints that chemically bond to the concrete. If you look in those areas of the building that receive the least amount of light, you can really see what the original pumpkin color looked like.

The building originally housed swine, sheep and goats, with swine on one side of the central arena space and sheep and goats on the other. The goats were located on the south side where a corner picture window displayed "Milking Parlor" that produced goat's milk. This display area today is a wooden shed used during the State Fair. Originally the building also featured dormitories on its second floor. These were for the men and boys who came to Dallas to take care of the animals. However, if you look closely you will see that the signs by the interior stairs misspell the word as 'Domitory'.

If you ever rent the film "State Fair" pay close attention to the hog competition scenes. The director filmed that part of the movie right here in the Swine Building.

Today this historic building houses the award-winning swine showcased here during the State Fair of Texas. Be sure you don't miss the separate tour stop that provides interesting details about that very odd, animal-like figure projecting from the front of the building. It has an interesting story to tell as well.

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