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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

_x_ New Submission ___ Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Diners of Virginia

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

Late Victorian and Early Modern design, 1915-1930
Art Deco and Early Moderne design, 1930-1941
Moderne design, 1941-1950
Jet Age Modern design, 1951-1965

C. Form Prepared by

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D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Julie V. Vosnik 6/26/95
Signature and title of certifying official Date
VA. DEPT. OF HISTORIC RESOURCES
Virginia Department of Historic Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Edson H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper for Date 8/18/95

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E. Statement of Historic Contexts

Introduction

From the mid-1930s through the 1950s the diner was the ubiquitous roadside eatery, symbolizing warm comfort and relatively quickly prepared home cooking. This architectural form was significant and it developed in step with the popularization of the automobile during the Great Depression and World War II period. The diner was born amidst the urban environs of the Northeast during the late nineteenth century, but by the late 1920s diners were being located further south and west. Many diners catered to travelers on traditionally well-worn routes. The tavern or inn was the diner's predecessor, developing throughout the eighteenth century and lasting well into the twentieth as a viable form of business. Smaller restaurants, some of them referred to as roadhouses, and diners appeared beside these older establishments. Diners evolved as the demand for quick meal convenience was required by a car-mobile society and during the heyday of diners, from the late 1940s through the mid-1950s it was possible to establish a successful business with a modest investment and a great deal of hard work.

Unfortunately, the growth of the corporate fast-food industry, during the second half of this century, has outdone the diner by refining convenience and swift service to a fine science. Several diners have survived in Virginia because of dedicated clientele, some of whom have defected from fast-food eateries. At one time the establishments that used the diner name in Virginia may have been numbered as high as 100 (this includes built-on-site buildings). Of this group, fewer than 20 of the prefabricated buildings are known to have survived, and fewer are still operating (some are presently vacant or in ruins).

A Brief History of the American Diner

The diner is a purely American form of building. The first diner was the Pioneer Lunch wagon, operated by Walter Scott of Providence, Rhode Island, in 1872.[1] By 1884 lunch wagons had developed from walk-up eateries to indoor stool-at-counter service restaurants.

During the second decade of the twentieth century, the lunch wagon became less of a mobile restaurant, and the introduction of elaborate materials and decorative features became part of the customized package for purchase. During the 1920s the lunch wagon was more often called a diner because of its similarity to railroad dining cars.[2] It was during this period that the diner began to take on its classic form: a stationary restaurant that included the new luxury of booths (initially an idea to attract more families and female patrons).[3] Essentially, by the 1930s, the business of constructing and operating diners had become a fine-tuned system as had the manufacture of the automobile.
With the popularization of industrial design, the diner evolved from a humble wooden wagon to the streamlined design of the 1940s. The streamline strain of American modern architecture was derived from several sources. Coming originally from high-style architecture movements such as European Art Deco and early International style, American architects and industrial designers translated these styles into uniquely American forms that evoked static movement through the use of shaping, and modern materials such as highly polished stainless steel.[4]

The streamline designing proliferated: the shimmering stainless steel curvlinear shape of a classic like the DC-3 airplane was alluded to by vacuum cleaners and irons, some common design cross pollination of the era. Beginning in the 1930s, the Machine-Age restaurant was manifested in the diner. It was the common man's restaurant of the future.

The design references to actual railroad dining cars became popular at this period. This has led to the erroneous assumption that diners were an offshoot of the railroad and trolley car industry.[5] Retired railcars and trolleys were often converted into diner-style eateries during the teens and the twenties, and the monitor roof became almost a standard diner feature through the late forties.[6]

After World War II the diner was transformed into its famous form and image. Baked porcelain enamel was out and the sheen of stainless steel was preferred. Stainless steel and the tremendous amount of surplus metal produced a market for a new aesthetic. Buckminster Fuller's Dymaxion house led the way to the less radical ranch-house form of metal Lustron houses. The war effort had interrupted diner production, but by 1947 the business was back into full swing. While several diner models still used the colored porcelain enamels, there was a move towards tool-machined, patterned stainless steel. Very often the only color introduced into the metal scheme were horizontal trim lines executed with green, red, or blue fleck glass. There was a gradual move away from the train-like monitor roof to a simple flat pitch with a stainless steel crown, often strategically positioned to hide the kitchen fan ducts.

By the early 1960s diners went Jet Age, and tended to adopt the flat minimal roof. The common diner characteristics of this period were a flat roof, larger plate glass windows, and more restaurant-like interiors. Stainless steel was still an important element in the design, but other materials such as thrown-pebble panels and mosaic tiles became popular exterior sheathings. Some of the early 1960s diners featured spikey or zig-zag roof profiles and overhangs with recessed lights.

For a period, starting in the 1950s and extending into the 1960s, older diners were remodelled on site or in the factory by diner manufacturers. The Manno Brothers and O'Mahony Company could update seemingly worn-out buildings into flashy Jet-age establishments. There were also a few free lance designers who traveled the country enticing owners to modernize their businesses.

The success of chain restaurants forced the diner to seek other markets by the 1970s. While numerous older diners were able to survive, the new buildings, produced by a dwindling number of manufacturers, were built on a larger scale. Larger diners had been constructed in multiple sections since the 1940s, but 1970s diners were very substantial looking buildings. Older diners were remodelled or replaced. As a reaction to modernism, a movement to soften design occurred where flat roofs were altered to mansards or gable pitches.

The rediscovery of diners developed with a renewed interest in American Modern design during the 1970s. Architectural historians like Richard J. S. Gutman, American Diner (1979), and Chester H. Liebs, Main Street to Miracle Mile (1985),

refocused attention on the uniquely American character of roadside architecture. In the 1980s, there was a renaissance of the diner exemplified by buildings that incorporated stainless steel, glass block, counter and stools, and booths. In Silver Springs, Maryland, the Silver Diner, designed by Richard Gutman, spurred several other neo-diners in the Washington, D.C. area., including new built-on-site-diners in Potomac Mills, Arlington, and Fairfax County, Virginia.

The Diner in Virginia

The majority of diners in Virginia can be traced to factories located in Massachusetts, New York, or New Jersey, and a few that came from the Valentine Manufacturing Company in Kansas. The prefabricated product was shipped to its site by truck or rail and sometimes by boat. It is usually longer than it is wide, and it always has a counter, usually with stools. Most diners built after World War II include enough space for booths, although there were exceptions. These buildings have an overall feeling of sunlit, polished cleanliness. Virginia includes examples of diner design from the 1920s to the present.

There are other buildings that are diner in name only. A distinction exists between the prefabricated diners and built-on-site buildings that use the diner name. Another distinction exists between diners and converted streetcar restaurants. Virginia includes all of these diner varieties, and there are examples of each type that may be found eligible for the National Register. Only those diners that are prefabricated or built specifically to closely mimic the prefabricated form are eligible for coverage by this document. Other historically significant restaurants may be nominated individually.

The diner business was thriving in the Northeast during the 1920s and slowly made inroads in the South and Midwest, especially near the recently paved highways and growing New South urban areas. Today remnants of this successful industry exist in or near Virginia cities like Richmond, Danville, and Harrisonburg. These markets served townspeople, factory workers, and travelers. Most surviving diners stand along the old tourist and trucking routes. Route 11, which runs roughly north-south through the Shenandoah valley, was a veritable diner alley. Route 29, the Seminole Trail for Florida-bound tourists, had several diner hot spots (other major Virginia routes served by diners include Routes 1, 13, 17, 50, 301, 340, and 250).

A photograph, recently discovered at the Virginia State Library, provides a rare glimpse of early Virginia roadside architecture. The 1940-41 view shows the intersection of Routes 50, 29, 211 and 236, west of the City of Fairfax. The Virginia Diner, a converted streetcar, is shown north of the intersection. This diner was at home with its gas station neighbors, and the Kamp Washington Tourist cottages, a typical roadside assemblage for the 1940s. Across the road was disappearing "rural Virginia"--the 19th-century Black Lantern Inn, and open fields. Within twenty years there would be as many as ten diners in this vicinity of Fairfax, including the Tastee 29 Diner, now listed on the National Register.

Late Victorian and Early Modern design, 1915-1930

The early lunch wagon restaurants were probably limited to the urban areas of the Northeast during the late nineteenth century.[7] An example of an early Virginia mobile eatery called the Skylight Saloon is shown in an 1862 Harper's Weekly illustration. The saloon wagon is shown at Warrenton's courthouse with the occupying Army of Virginia marching into town. The saloon wagon was most likely following the army. While preliminary research has not revealed any evidence of the night lunch wagons in Virginia's late- nineteenth-century industrial cities, there are numerous restaurants that were known as lunches or grills by the 1930s. Most of these establishments were located in urban commercial buildings.

The earliest diners in the South may have come in the 1920s as transportation improvements were made to auto routes. The network of railroads provided the easiest shipping method, but the highway improvement acts that encouraged auto travel in the 1920s brought with it new types of convenient roadside architecture. If any of the wagon-type diners ever made it to Virginia, they probably would have been found in one of the urban centers.

The elaborate lunch wagons of the second decade of the twentieth century were constructed on a wagon frame with a wood superstructure. The most typical roof design was the barrel vault. In many cases, especially in wagons that were more stationary, one or two skylights were added into the roof peak.

In their heyday the wagons included exotic decoration inside and out; some examples from the 1890s corresponded to the complexity found in Queen Anne-style architecture. The exterior wall often featured the name of the business painted in intricate lettering, and sometimes patriot or sylvan scenes were included. Several manufacturers included frosted, colored, and etched-pattern glass windows. The T.H. Buckley Lunch Wagon Builders produced a one-of-a-kind "Tile Wagon" in 1892. The interior included: white ceramic-tile walls, a mosaic tile floor, ivory and gold statuettes of historical figures, and nickeled stools with glass tops.[8] While wagons of this quality never became the norm, elements of this material treatment appeared in later wagons and diners.

Hillsville Diner, Hillsville (c. 1925/1946)

Several examples of the early barrel-vault-roof lunch car still survive in Virginia. The Hillsville Diner in Hillsville is probably the most intact example. The Hillsville is probably the oldest continuously operating diner in the Commonwealth. It was built by the Tierney Diner Company of New Rochelle, N.Y. Mount Airy, N.C. was its first home during the late 1920s when it was reputedly frequented by the young Andy Griffith. It was moved to Hillsville, the Carrol County courthouse town, in 1946. This car retains the form of the nineteenth-century lunch wagon: barrel roof, gable-end transom windows, and sliding pocket door entrance. The interior has counter and stool service with no room for booths. This bright interior includes a marble counter, black and white tiling throughout, original steel grill hoods, 1930s back bar equipment, and oak cabinets with brass cup pulls. This is clearly a rare survivor. As was typical with most early diners that have survived, additions were made to accommodate more customers and improve the kitchen facilities. Food was

originally prepared behind the counter. A later addition to the rear provided a larger kitchen, bathrooms, and a large rear dining room.

The Valley Diner, Toms Brook (c. 1925-30)

The Valley Diner in Toms Brook (Shenandoah County) has been remodeled considerably since it was first opened on Route 11, the old Valley Turnpike, the primary north-south route through the Shenandoah Valley. The wood-frame building still shows its barrel-vault roof, but the exterior walls have been stuccoed and the glass block counter and knotty pine paneling were added in 1940s and 1950s updates. The Valley Diner was known in the 1930s as Bud & Yanks.

Route 11 probably featured several early diners. Harry's Lunch, which still survives as a business in Staunton, began as a barrel-roof diner in Harrisonburg. Some early photographs of the original building survive.[9] Several towns along the Valley Turnpike-- Woodstock, Harrisonburg, and Staunton--were all known to have had diners at various periods. Some diners may have existed in the rural stretches of Route 11 as well.

Virginia Diner, Wakefield (1929/1988)

The Virginia Diner of Wakefield is one of the oldest diner establishments in the state. Founded by D'earcy P. Davis, Sr. in 1929, on what was then Route 53, the original restaurant was a refurbished Sussex, Surry, and Southampton Railroad paymaster's car. This narrow-gauge railcar dated to 1860. The business served peanut farmers, plant workers and truckers. Its tremendous success prompted the need for many additions to the original diner and in 1988, the old dilapidated diner was demolished. A new building was designed by architects Brinkley and Hamilton. William A. Galloway, the present owner, insisted on bringing the original train car reference into the new design. This form is brought through the interior where the original paymaster's brass oil lamps adorn the new space.

The lunch-car type of diner was produced through 1940. The 1930s was an era of transition for the diner in which the old barrel-vault vehicle look would give way to an updated vehicle look, less of the wagon and more like a train car.

Art Deco and Early Moderne design, 1931-1945

Industrial design became more important in the marketing of products during the first quarter of the twentieth century. In the 1930s commercial design was executed on a larger scale and affected numerous common and functional objects. The diner adopted streamlined design characteristics of the 1940s. Metal panels and bright enameled colors were complemented by glass block. Corners were often rounded, and the tile and wood work on the interior included Art Deco motifs. Wood was still a common material on interiors, including wood booths; however, wood gave way to more stainless and tile materials after the war, and the post-war booths were padded and naugahyde wrapped.

Also at this period, the design references to actual railroad dining cars became popular, an influence that would last through the 1940s. Part of the confusion

Between diners and train cars grew out of the fact that trolleys, streetcars, train dining cars, and sleepers were converted over to non-vehicular use. These worn vehicles were bought and inexpensively remodeled. Several unusual examples of conversions exist in Virginia. For example, an 1890s sleeping car has been converted into a house in Ettrick and two former Richmond streetcars were moved and tied together side by side to create a hunting lodge in New Kent County.[10] Most of the converted vehicle diners have disappeared like Charlottesville's University Diner which consisted of two retired streetcars. Southeast of Richmond, near the Fulton train yards, an old rail car served as a restaurant facility, mostly for railyard workers and was later replaced by a trailer restaurant.

Bill's Diner, Chatham (c. 1945)

Chatham has two streetcars on its short Main Street (Route 29). Bill's Diner, also called "A Street Car Named Desire," may be the smallest eatery in the state. A single-truck Birney car[11] once owned by the Danville Power and Traction Co, Bill's has been in Chatham since at least World War II. It was named after Bill Fretwell, the first business owner.

S&K Diner, Chatham (1946)

The S&K Diner is less than fifty yards north of Bill's on the other side of Main Street. A double-truck Birney car that served transportation duty in Danville from 1926 through 1938, the Burnette brothers purchased the car in Danville and trucked it to Chatham before WWII. Steve Law, a recent owner, painstakingly restored the diner. The early 1940s clock with neon light was brought back into working order and years of paint were stripped from the interior roof ribbing to highlight the quality wood construction. The interior space includes counter and table service. The food is prepared in a grill area that is actually cantilevered through the back wall to preserve back bar circulation space.

Sam's Diner, Chesterfield County (c. 1940/1952)

Sam's Diner, located in Chesterfield County, echoes the long thin shape of the Hillsville Diner. A ca. 1940 Kullman Car manufactured in Harrison, New Jersey, Sam Shahda moved the diner from Broad Street in Richmond to Route 1 in the Rayon Park area of Chesterfield County in 1952. The Kullman Company designed the exterior with a low hipped roof, yellow and red porcelain enamel tubes on the lower walls, and showy glass block and stainless steel corners. In contrast to the Hillsville, this diner was not a self sufficient unit. The manufacturer included plans for construction of a kitchen area to the rear of the prefabricated area.

The Sam's Diner interior has an unusual pointed vault ceiling, a formica counter, stainless steel back bar, and some lingering Art Deco design elements, mostly on the mirrors. The tile floor is original and was color coordinated with the formica and porcelain enamel.

The rear kitchen addition, often constructed of utilitarian concrete block became more common after WWII along with bigger dining areas. The advent of extra

modules also occurred after the war. The alternative to the factory-made modules was the connecting of multiple diner buildings. Only one example of a two-diner-cell restaurant survives in ruinous condition at Tasley, on the Eastern Shore. The Tasley Diner dated to the 1930s and had been moved from another location. By the 1940s, diners were so stationary that basements were often built for added storage.

Exmore Diner, Exmore (c. 1940/1953)

Another fine example of pre-war Moderne design, the Exmore Diner is located in the small town of Exmore, on the Eastern Shore. A ca. 1940 Silk City Diner made in Paterson, N. J. (an industrial city once known for its silk mills), the building was moved to its present site in 1953 by Preston Kellam, owner of a produce trucking business. Kellam came across the diner on his way to a Yankees game in New York. When he saw the diner in New Jersey for sale at $5,000, he wired home for money and purchased the building. A few weeks later the diner arrived ready for its second life. Kellam built a simple concrete-block dormitory building next to the diner where truckers could stay overnight. The diner had captive customers.

The monitor-style roof of the Exmore is train-like, a feature that disappeared by the fifties. The exterior sheathing is porcelain enamel with painted steel panels. The eye-catching feature is clearly the round neon-lit clock that sits atop the simple one-bay porch. This is one of the more exquisite diner interiors in the commonwealth. The craftsmanship is evident in the varnished wood cornice band where the manufacturer's tag is still attached. The stainless steel back bar and formica ceilings were standard materials of the day, while the fine tilework on the counter, walls, and floor were materials carried over from the earlier lunch car design. The interior colors are dramatic: yellow, pink, and black. The high back oak booths are unusually intact and also recall a much earlier style of design. Wooden interior details became more rare after the war.

Moderne design/ The Stainless Steel Period, 1945-1960

After World War II the diner was transformed into its famous form. Baked porcelain enamel, like that of the Modern Diner, was out and the sheen of stainless steel was preferred. The Mount Vista of Front Royal, Virginia is a 1957 Mountain View Diner that displays the typical move away from the train-like monitor roof to a simple flat pitch with a stainless steel crown strategically positioned to hide the kitchen ducts. The flat roof became more popular in 1950s diners, possibly a delayed influence of the International Style.

The L&S Diner, Harrisonburg (1947)

The 1947 L&S Diner of Harrisonburg is not a prefabricated diner, but was designed to look like the real thing. Probably the work of D'earcy P. Davis, Jr., this was the only diner in the state designed by an architect before 1991.[12] Davis was the son of D'earcy P. Davis, Sr., founder of the 1929 Virginia diner business in Wakefield. D'earcy P. Davis, Jr. received a degree in structural engineering from Virginia Polytechnic Institute in 1940. After working for the shipyards during the war and later in Richmond, he moved to Harrisonburg where he worked

for the Nielson Construction Company. He eventually worked for architect, Clarence Wenger, and took his architect licensing exam at the University of Virginia. He may have designed the L&S while still employed for Nielson Construction. A Joe Bowman, listed in the Harrisonburg directory in 1946 as a construction engineer, may have played a significant role in the construction of this unusual diner.

Frank Lee and Ike Simmons had the diner built on a triangular lot, just several feet from railroad tracks, and adjacent to the poultry plants. This is an extremely solid, no-frills diner. Its footprint is L-shaped, and the main eating space is of trapezoidal shape. The diner efficiently fills the full envelope of this odd-shaped parcel. Intended or not, it appears along the tracks seemingly as a passenger car when viewed from its north side. The interior has a flat ceiling instead of the typical vault form, and the colorful blue and red formica counter and red naugahyde stools stand out as prominent decorative features.

Nearby, on North Main Street, another diner known as Cap's and later as the C&S, is only partially visible as part of the building that now surrounds it. Cap's appears in the 1937 city directory. Harrisonburg may have had several other diners during the 1930s. In the 1939 city directory, several businesses were called "Lunches." Joe Fadeley ran the Liberty Lunch ("A Good Quick Clean Lunch") at 40 South Liberty Street. The vernacular of the period may have referred to any restaurant building type that served breakfast and lunch as "lunches." When researching diners it is prudent not to assume that restaurants that were listed as diners were not always the prefabricated variety. By 1955, Harrisonburg, a medium-sized Virginia town, had three diner businesses: the L&S, Pye's Deluxe Diner, and another one of the many Virginia Diners (the name was popular).

Tastee 29 Diner, City of Fairfax (1947)

The Tastee 29 Diner of the City of Fairfax is a sharp contrast to the simplicity of L&S. It is unique in several respects. This diner is one of the very few surviving Virginia diners bought new and remaining on the same site since its purchase. The Tastee 29 Diner is also the last intact older diner in the Northern Virginia area. Originally known as the 29 Diner, it became the most recent addition to the Maryland-based Tastee Diner empire that was begun by Eddie Warner in 1938. Eddie started as a dishwasher and worked his way up to owner/operator of four diners in the suburban Washington area.[13] Leonard Milliken, a post-Warner-era partner, bought the 29 Diner business and renamed it the Tastee 29 in the 1970s.[14]

This stretch of Route 29 was once a "diner alley" including the Vincent, Lee's, and Bob's Streamliner Diners, just to name a few. Delmas T. Glasscock, a self-made entrepreneur bought the diner new from Mountain View in 1947. The 29 Diner, with all of its clean, machined features, made it the showiest restaurant for miles around, especially when compared to some of the converted streetcar establishments.

The Tastee 29 is a high-style Moderne work of art. Built in Singac, New Jersey by the Mountain View Diner Company, the diner's exterior combines porcelain enamel tubes, stainless steel prows, glass block, blue and white awnings, and red

and green neon (recently converted to all red).[15] A blue and white scheme is maintained throughout the interior in the Naugahyde, formica, and tile.[16] The back bar consists of continuous stainless steel panels in radiating and diamond patterns. Mr. Delmas T. Glascock, the current and original owner, splurged on extras such as the fine gray-veined marble counter instead of formica and a fine terrazzo floor. One of the most exciting spaces in this Cadillac of diners is the glass block corner, lit by vertical florescent tubes. The Tastee 29 Diner has been fortunate to survive in the commercially threatening environment of Northern Virginia.

In 1991, the City of Fairfax used funding made available through the National Park Service Certified Local Government Program to nominate the Tastee 29 Diner to the National Register of Historic Places. The diner was listed on the National Register on October 29, 1992. It was the first diner to be awarded the honor in Virginia and only the fifth diner in the United States.

Little Chef Diner, Danville (1955)

If the restaurateur couldn't afford a Mountain View, he or she may have purchased a Valentine Diner, the Volkswagen of the industry. The Little Chef was produced by the Valentine Company of Wichita, Kansas. The Little Chef of Danville, ca. 1955, is the double deluxe version. Most likely shipped by rail, this diner arrived with its built-in sign fin and kitchen facilities ready for action. Available in a small, 8 stool version, the Little Chef of Danville had two extra modules added, to include extra stools on one end and a take-out window at the other end.

Elmore W. Payne opened the Little Chef sometime between 1954 and 1955 and operated the business for over twenty years. Its original site was on Riverside Avenue. Payne moved the diner several miles north to North Main Street (Route 29) in 1967. The design has survived with little alteration because the diner has remained functional and has passed through only several owners. Harold Arnold, operating the diner at the time of a recent survey, has been there since the early 1980s.

Walker's Diner, Farmville (c. 1960)

Walker's Diner of Farmville dates to the early 1960s and is an updated version of the Little Chef. The styling of this Valentine Company diner indicates that it may date to the late 1950s. The business was called The Diner when it was first listed in a 1963 Hill Directory; G.B. Rhue was listed as owner at the time. The diner is currently named after its present owner Trent Walker. Walker's Diner sports a Jet Age design, especially in its outwardly slanting sign fin and roof overhang. A common feature that transcends from the Greyhound bus stations and theaters, the integrated vertical fin had a long life as a Moderne commercial design element. The interior of Walker's includes all of it original cabinets, stools, steel counter wall, and circular florescent lights.

Frost Diner, Warrenton (1955)

In sharp contrast to the simple design of the Little Chef, the contemporary Frost

Diner is one of Virginia's most impressive 1950s Moderne stainless steel diners. Built by the Jerry O'Mahony Diner Company of Bayonne, New Jersey, in 1955, the Frost was sparkling new when it arrived at its present site on Route 29 in Warrenton. Stainless by day, neon by night, this diner is eye catching. This O'Mahony model exemplifies its company motto: "In our line we lead the world." The diner was outfitted with postcards, color-coordinated menus, and an interior decor that displayed a full array of modern diner materials - stainless steel back bar, Salmon pink formica, an elaborately detailed hood, and fine construction touches around the ceiling.

Mount Vista Diner, Front Royal (1957/63)

The Frost is one of two examples of the high-style stainless steel diner period that predominated in the mid 1950s. The Mount Vista Diner, a 1957 Mountain View Company Little Falls model, is larger than the Frost but shares similar characteristics. By the mid fifties, the monitor roof had been abandoned, and several versions of the flat roof were popular. The Mount Vista features a crown piece or parapet to hide vent ducts. Moved from Maryland in 1963, the large "DINER" sign on the roof may have had several different positions over time, but it presently rests at the center of the building roof. Both the Frost and Mount Vista are very fine examples of what most Americans know as the diner.

The Mount Vista's interior is colored in green tones from the formica to the patterned terrazzo floors. The asymmetrical building includes an extra module on its north end that functions as a separate private dining area when a built-in slide partition is pulled out.

Jet Age Modern design, 1951-1965

By the early 1960s diners went Jet Age, and tended to adopt the flat minimal roof. The diner of this period often had a flat roof, and more often the eaves were the more significant designed feature of the building. The undulating patterns of zig zag or spikey projections were influences of the Jet-Age style that swept strip architecture. The larger overhangs often include recessed lights and the plate glass windows were much larger. In many ways diner architecture reflected the treatment of other commercial design. The strict rectilinear lines, so popular as a Bauhaus inheritance for 1950s corporate image, gave way to more daring use of materials and colors. From their clean stainless shells of the mid-fifties, the diner evolved to include panels of bright colors, sometimes executed in intricate mosaic tile or solid panels. In many cases these diners were larger, and were shipped in several sections.

Diners were like cars, if your old model wore out, you traded up. There were cases where the same business may have been through three or four diners. Each time the size of the building increased to accommodate more success. The other option was to have your building updated. An older building could get sent back to the factory for updating or some designers offered the service on site. The Blue Star Diner of Newport News and the Marion Diner are probably the results of remodelling jobs.

Marion Diner, Marion (1963)

In 1963, former Fort Dix Mess Sergeant Deward Miller brought a late 1950s remodelled diner to Marion. The O'Mahony Company had completed the Marion Diner in its last years of operation. The form and size of the original building indicate that this was originally a large-sized 1950s diner. The remodelling gave the exterior a deep eave with recessed lights and a spikey Jet-Age vestibule crown. The sign was still trimmed in neon to attract a multitude of truckers traveling Routes 11, and later, Interstate 81.

Blue Star Diner, Newport News (c. 1960/1963)

The Blue Star Diner of Newport News has been run by the Blentson Family since the late 1950s. This reconditioned diner started its life in the New Jersey/Delaware area. The Blentsons bought the building in the late 1950s and opened business in Woodstock, VA. By 1963, they decided to move again to the busy Warwick Boulevard in Newport News. The Manno Brothers Diner Company of New Rochelle, New York was responsible for this reconditioning. The design includes slant out vertical lines on the entry vestibule and aqua panels framed in stainless steel. A shed roof was added to relieve water leakage (this is a reversible treatment). The site includes a moderately elaborate sign featuring a blue neon star supported on two posts that slant into a V-shape. Fanny Blentson was operating the diner in 1993.

Decline and Renaissance

In the late 1950s the fast-food industry began its tremendous ascendence. The diner business went into decline; in many cases the diner's market was bypassed by the modern super highways. From a high of 6,700 diners in 1940, there are about 2000 diners presently left in the U.S. There are less than fifty diners in Virginia and some of them are in ruins like the Tasley Diner on the Eastern Shore.[17]

Many of the leaders in the diner construction industry did not weather the explosion of fast-food chains in the 1960s. The diner was still produced through the 1970s and 80s, but it appeared building-like. Many were "colonialized" or a mansard roof softened the once sharp edges. In the 1970s, large diners affected permanence with semi-masonry thrown-pebble walls. The Amphora in Alexandria is an example of the substantial restaurant-like diner.

Four companies still manufacture diners. Amongst these is the Kullman Company, one of the few survivors. An appreciation of Art Deco and Streamline Moderne architecture that developed in the 1970s has brought back a desire to recreate the diner form from its heyday. Richard Gutman, author and architect, worked with a design group to build the Silver Diner in Silver Springs, Maryland in 1988. In 1992, the Silver Diner at Potomac Mills, near Dale City, Virginia opened. Both of these built-on-site diners exhibit the glass block, stainless steel, naugahyde, formica, and neon that made their ancestors famous.

Virginia diners still fill an important role in restaurant culture. They provide a good, hard living for their owners and they serve every social class in this country. They produce classic American food in an unusually exciting space where conversation is also close at hand.

Endnotes

1. Richard J. S. Gutman, American Diner, p. 2 - 3.

2. Ibid., pp. 4, 16-19.

3. Ibid. pp. 28-29.

4. Richard Guy Wilson, The Machine Age, pp. 174-178.

5. Some diners such the original Virginia Diner on Route 460 were actual trolleys converted into restaurants, but these beat up old denizens of the road were generally frowned upon by the well-established diner manufacturers.

6. Gutman, pp. 16-17.

7. Richard J. S. Gutman, American Diner, p. 2 - 3.

8. Gutman, American Diner, p. 10.

9. The photographs, which were featured in a newspaper article, were displayed at Wampler's Record Store in Harrisonburg, also on Route 11.

10. This was a discovery made by David A. Edwards, architectural historian with Virginia Department of Historic Resources in the early 1990s.

11. The Birney manufacturing company was located in Philadelphia. They manufactured a variety of rail vehicles: train, street, and subway cars.

12. The 1991 Silver Diner of Potomac Mills was designed by a team, which included diner researcher and architect, Richard Gutman.

13. "In Suburban Washington," The Diner (May, 1947): 8-11. This article was provided for Tastee 29 Diner research purposes by Richard Gutman.

14. The building owner is still Delmas T. Glasscock. When the name change was proposed, Mr. Glasscock was hesitant to allow it because of tradition. The business had also been known as Lee's Diner for a period in the 1950s.

15. Since its listing on the National Register of Historic Places in 1992 the neon at the roof ridge and on the sign have been repaired.

16. The original booth fabric may have been black leather.

17. The large diner ruins at Tasley was once a thriving business that had been moved from Onley.

F. Associated Property Types

I. Name of Property Type: Diner

II. Description

The diner has three different basic forms: prefabricated (made in a factory and shipped to site); converted vehicle (trolley, street car, subway car, or rail car); and built on site. There are known examples of all three diner types in Virginia.

Of the three types, the built-on-site diners can only be included if they have essential diner characteristics. They must be designed with the intention of including these features.

The diner characteristics are: 1) the principle block of the building is usually a long rectangle of moderately narrow width (often longer than it is wide), 2) there is always a counter that separates a food preparation area from the public patron space, 3) stools or stool-like chairs should be arranged at the counter, preferably attached to the floor, 4) while some early diners do not have booths, many post World War II diners were designed to have booth space at the outer wall of the public space, and occasionally there is enough space for free standing tables or an inner row of open-sided booths. Some interiors are more free form where several prefabricated sections have been attached to make larger spaces. The large multiple section diner is rare in Virginia. The only historical example known to exist is in Tasley (Eastern Shore), and is presently in ruins.

The following text briefly describes common physical characteristics found in each major context period.

Late Victorian and Early Modern design, 1915-1930

The diner of this period was transitioning from various strains of the Victorian style and assimilated elements of the Art Deco style through the 1920s. The building was built on wheels, like a wagon, but by the 1920s it was in most cases a substantial building with limited mobility. The wheels were more often used to ease transportation to a semi-permanent site.

Common exterior materials: skirt foundation of metal or wood (often replaced by masonry when the building was permanently sited); wood and metal framing; painted metal panels; barrel-vault roof with skylight(s) or a rail car style monitor roof with clerestory windows (beginning in the 1920s); stained, smoked, and colored glass; the primary windows open; transom window(s) in gable ends; corner and entry lamps; and sliding pocket doors.

Common interior materials: tile floors; marble counter; tile counter and outer walls; fully outfitted grill area; steel grill hoods; square and round stool posts with hard-top stools; wooden booths; wooden trim; brass trim; corner hand-wash sink for customers.

Signage: like the early wagons of the late nineteenth century, the advertisements and business names were most often painted on the panels of the diner. Some signs may have been placed on the roof top or on traditional sign posts. It is rare to find original signage from this period intact, although it may be painted over and restorable.

Art Deco to Early Moderne design, 1930-1945

The diner styles of this period include: early (functional) modern[1], Art Deco, and (Streamline) Moderne[2]. Elements of the earlier wheel-mounted wagons persisted as vestiges. The diner was more often stationary by this period. While wood was still a common trim material, there was more use of metal. Late in the 1930s, diners began exhibiting a polished interior that was eye catching and had connotations of cleanliness. The diners became larger and booths were no longer rare. In the early forties some models were introduced as buildings that needed on-site kitchens built. The construction of multiple section models began just before the war.

Common exterior materials: masonry foundation; painted and porcelain enamel panels; monitor roof with clerestory and rounded hipped roofs; glass block; windows opened and units were sometimes configured with a transom-like, fixed upper pane; stainless steel trim; corner and entry lamps; lozenge-shape, glass-panels in doors; multi-color neon trim.

Common interior materials: tile floor; tile counter and outer walls; stainless steel back bar panels; marble or formica counter top; fully outfitted grill areas; stainless steel stool posts with various types of tops; wooden (bent wood in some models), stainless steel, and chrome trim; leather, leatherette and rubber booth and stool cover materials; wood booths; clock mounted above a prominent doorway; mirrors used as decorative elements (some including applied patterns).

Signage: the popular use of neon signage was born out of the late 1930s and would have a lasting impact on commercial advertising through the 1960s. Diners began to display neon trim, neon-lit clocks, and free-standing neon-lit road signs. Mounted, or hanging signs are more often box-constructed sheet metal.

Moderne design/The Stainless Steel Period, 1945-1960

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[1] The early modern design is closer to an engineering aesthetic. A good example of this is found in the design of automobiles and airplanes. Cars an planes from the first quarter of the twentieth century show their machine cores--like souped up bicycles. In the 1930s the vehicle bodies were designed more often to hide the machine, in some cases to great decorative excesses.

[2] Some historians prefer to use Streamline Moderne as a stylistic label. Moderne captures many more stylistic strains that are not necessarily streamlined.

Beginning in the mid to late thirties, there was a move away from the delicate applied nature of Art Deco design and the Streamline Moderne or Moderne style began to make more of an impact on building forms. The vehicle-rooted diner lent itself well to this design trend. The curve was celebrated in corners and in the case of the Sterling Streamliner, a whole end of the building. The Tastee 29 Diner, in the City of Fairfax, VA, features a typical streamline element: curved glass-block corners set upon stainless steel prows. In the 1950s the monitor roof began disappearing and a flat roof, sometimes with an inner parapet, began to appearing more often. While vestibules had been around from before World War II, they were nearly a standard element by the mid 1950s.

Common exterior materials: substantial masonry foundations, front and side stairs, depending on site; stainless steel panels with varied patterns, sometimes including colored fleck glass, colored plastic or metal trim lines; glass block; curvilinear glass corners; ornamented entry hoods; ornamented vestibules (vestibules begin to appear more often); flat roofs, sometimes with an ornamental, set-back, parapet that hid duct work;the most elaborate stainless steel decorative ornamentation occurs at corners, entry bay, and at the cornice line.

Common interior materials: tile or terrazzo floor; stainless steel back bar panels; fully outfitted grill areas; marble or formica counter top; tile counter and outer walls; stainless steel stool posts and seats with naugahyde tops; naugahyde booths; stainless steel trim; clock mounted above a prominent doorway; kitchen space is almost always an addition to the prefabricated section, although the back bar grill and other functional counter-side elements are still included; ceiling design becomes more sophisticated: coved sides are sometimes lit by hidden light sources; air conditioning becomes more common (Tastee 29 Diner still features the outer casing of the water-cooled, Chrysler Air-Temp, air conditioner).

Signage: road side signage, separate from the building is larger and often neon-lit; signs are most often box constructed sheet metal-- painted for daytime, neon-lit for evening; larger signs appear on diner roofs, often neon-lit.

Jet Age Modern design, 1955-1965

This ten-year period brought the most radical change in the diner building form. The medium-sized flat roof diner of the 1950s gave way to large multi-section buildings that eschewed the vestiges of Moderne style for Jet-Age influenced styles. Stainless steel was more often a trim for colorful panels and masonry veneers. From the modest counter-stools-and-booths interior, the new multi-section diners of the 1960s included wide rooms for tables. These interiors began to blend more with common restaurant design of the period. Ultimately the reference to vehicular design disappears and the diner becomes building-like. The last feature to linger was the curved ceiling, which gave way to the common flat form by the mid 1960s.

Common exterior materials: substantial masonry foundations, front and side stairs, depending on site; stainless steel panels with varied patterns, sometimes

including colored fleck glass, colored plastic or metal trim lines; late in the period other materials are introduced into the wall sheathings--most of these are decorative: brick veneer, thrown-pebble panels, permastone, bright-colored, hard-shelled synthetics (Valentine Manufacturing Company uses enameled metal walls); walls extend around prefabricated kitchen modules (in some examples); windows are large fixed plate glass, some diners feature curved glass corners; ornamented entry hoods; vestibules become a common feature and sometimes include a more complex eaves or roof profiles; the most elaborate stainless steel decorative ornamentation occurs at corners, entry bay, and at the cornice line; flat roofs, some with set-back parapet walls, early in the period, later period roofs have deep eaves that often have decorative profile like the zig zag, folded plate, or simple splayed soffits, often with recessed lights.

Common interior materials: terrazzo floor; marble or formica counter top; tile used on walls with other materials such as formica; stainless steel stool posts and seats with naugahyde tops; patterned and plain stainless steel back bar panels; fully outfitted grill areas; naugahyde booths; stainless steel trim; clock mounted above a prominent doorway; kitchen space is almost always an addition to the prefabricated section, the back bar grill becomes less functional late in the period, used mostly for heated or cooled storage and warming; complex ceilings are common, but give way to flat ceilings late in the period.

Signage: large neon-lit road side and building-top signs proliferate. Some of these are still box constructed sheet metal; translucent plastic box signs appear, but do not make an impact on neon signage until the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Post-1965, Restaurant Diners

It is worth noting that the trend towards building-like diners continued. Virginia includes some known examples of these prefabricated buildings. The Amphora Restaurant in Vienna, and the Amphora II in Alexandria are typical of this diner type. The Amphora in Vienna features a mansard roof and crushed stone wall panels. Following a loosely interpreted Mediterranean vernacular style, the building has semi-circular window openings with fixed plate glass.

In recent years several built-on-site diners have appeared in Northern Virginia. Several of these are built with traditional 1940s and 1950s design and material elements. The Silver Diner in Potomac Mills, built in 1988, is the best example of the new traditional-look buildings.

III. Significance

Diners are a unique form of architecture only found in the United States. A factory-built building (in most cases) that evolved from a street-roving, horse-drawn, wagon restaurant, the diner became a stationary eatery with distinctive formal and stylistic elements. The diner has exhibited several styles: Victorian, early Modern, Art Deco, Streamline Moderne, and late Modern. Located in a variety of settings, the diner business in Virginia is often found in or near commercial, industrial, and transportation corridors and centers. While the diner was never as popular in Virginia as in Northeastern states, Virginia

includes examples from just about every period.[3] Diners are recommended significant statewide under Criterion C for their architectural importance.

Criteria Considerations: two considerations may apply to diners. Because the prefabricated sections of diners are designed for site relocation, Criteria Consideration E may apply to a historical Virginia example that has been moved within the state in recent years. Criteria Consideration G may be used for significant Virginia diners that are currently less than fifty years old.

IV. Registration Requirements

A distinction exists between the prefabricated diners and built-on-site buildings that use the diner name. Another distinction exists between diners and converted streetcar restaurants. All of these diner varieties are found in Virginia, and there are examples of each type that may be found eligible for the National Register.[4] Diners to be listed under this document must either be prefabricated, built in a factory and shipped to site, or they must have been constructed with the specific intention to closely resemble the prefabricated form. Other historically significant restaurants that bear the diner name may not meet these requirements, but may be nominated individually.

Examples of ineligible diners include: a restaurant that uses the word diner as part of its commercial name but does not meet the physical requirements outlined below, or a diner-type space that has been constructed in a pre-existing building.
An eligible building should be a notable example of a particular form or style of diner construction. Eligibility of a diner must meet two requirements: 1) It must conform to a specific physical form, 2) it must retain a reasonable amount of integrity. The specifics of these requirements are elaborated below.

1) Physical Form
Characteristics of a diner's physical form required for eligibility are: 1) the principle block of the building is usually a long rectangular shape of moderately narrow width (often longer than it is wide), 2) there is always a counter that bisects or separates a food preparation area from the public patron space, 3) stools or stool-like chairs should be arranged at the counter, preferably attached to the floor, 4) while some early diners do not have booths, many post World War II diners were designed to have booth space at the outer wall of the public space. Occasionally there is enough space for free standing tables or an

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[3] As of 1995, a Victorian-era diner has not been found in Virginia. There are few that have survived in the nation. The Night Owl Lunch is one of the best restored examples of an early night lunch wagon. It is on permanent display at the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan.

[4] As of May, 1995, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources has found several prefabricated and two converted streetcar diners eligible for the National Register.

inner row of open-sided booths.[5]

2) Integrity
As with most buildings nominated for their architectural importance, the eligible diner should retain a sufficient degree of integrity to firmly relate it to its original design. Since diners are heavily-used public spaces and food preparation machinery requires updating (sometimes to meet specific health or building codes), there should be allowances for some replacement materials. Many of the diners surveyed, especially the older ones, have been remodeled with materials sympathetic to the original fabric. A good example is the replacement of original stools with ones that have been salvaged. Other parts of diners are often updated to enhance the design: elaborate formica counters or panels are added; historically appropriate stainless steel is added or replaced; a floor is retiled.

G. Geographical Data

The Commonwealth of Virginia.

[5] Some interiors are more free form where several prefabricated sections have been attached to make larger spaces. The large multiple section diner is rare in Virginia. The only historical example known to exist is in Tasley (Eastern Shore), and is presently in ruins.

H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

As part of the Certified Local Government funded Tastee 29 Diner National Register Nomination project, Marc C. Wagner and Susan E. Smead performed local research on the diner culture of Northern Virginia. An informal statewide survey of Virginia diners was undertaken by members of Preservation Associates of Virginia, Marc C. Wagner and Susan E. Smead, in 1992 for a presentation, "Hoop Skirts on Naugahyde Booths: The Old Dominion's Diners," at the University of Virginia's yearly architectural history conference. The survey involved a month and a half of field work, and research has been continued by Marc C. Wagner since Fall of 1991.

In preparation for the Tastee 29 Diner nomination and for the field work, Richard J. S. Gutman, a nationally recognized diner historian and architect, was consulted for possible diner locations. His data base covers the United States and was begun in the late 1960s. His two books, American Diner and American Diner, Then and Now constitute the most scholarly approach to the subject to date. Richard Gutman's data was confirmed in the field. In addition to diners from the Gutman data base, several were located by consulting David A. Edwards, Architectural Historian with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, and through additional primary research. All current telephone directories for the state were consulted. Attempts were made to contact any restaurant with the word "diner" in its name, and if contact was not made, then local government officials or Chambers of Commerce were contacted.

The following list features basic information about the core group of significant Virginia Diners, arranged by location. Most significant diners have been surveyed, and several of the lesser quality examples warrant further documentation.

Virginia Diners Surveyed 1991-1995

Chatham

A Street Car Named Desire
1 Depot Street
Chatham, VA 24531
Phone: (804) 432-3502

Business Start: 1940s
Model: 1920s Birney, single truck streetcar
Architectural Integrity: 80%+ original features.

S&K Diner
19 South Main Street
Chatham, VA 24531
Phone: (804) 432-3467
Contact: David Sargent

Business Start: 1946
Model: 1926 Birney, double truck streetcar
Architectural Integrity: 80-90% original features.

Chesterfield County/ Richmond Metropolitan

Tex-Mex Cafe (Originally Sam's Diner)
8101 Jefferson Davis Highway (Rt. 1)
Richmond, Va. 23234
Phone: N/A
Contact: presently for sale

Business Start: 1940s
Model: Kullman 1940-41
Architectural Integrity: 80% original features.

Colonial Beach

Colonial Beach Diner (Diner section used as the "Red Skin Lounge"-gutted interior)
(Hunan Diner)
Washington Avenue
Colonial Beach, VA 22443
Phone:(804) 224-8754
Contact for History: T.A. Williams, Attorney, Callas VA, (804) 529-6700

Business Start: c. 1940s
Model: Silk City
Architectural Integrity: exterior-80%, interior-less than 30%.

Danville

Little Chef Diner
2337 North Main Street
Danville, VA
Phone: (804) 836-2228
Contact: Harold Arnold, Owner, Manager, Chef.

Business Start: 1954-55
Model: Valentine (Deluxe Double)
Architectural Integrity: 80-90% original features.

Exmore (Eastern Shore)

Exmore Diner
(Business) Route 13
Exmore, VA 23350
Phone: (804) 442-2313
Contact: Owner/Sam Carter (804-442-9397), Original Owner's son Ron Kellam (Belle Haven, VA), Evening Manager (shift system) Evelyn Pruitt

Business Start: 1954 (in VA), 1940s (in NJ)
Model: Silk City
Architectural Integrity: 80-90% original features.

Fairfax (City)

Tastee 29 Diner (Listed on the State and National Register)
10530 Lee Highway
Fairfax VA 22030
Phone: (703) 591-6720
Contact: Leonard Milliken, Manager

Business Start: 1947
Model: Mountain View 1947
Architectural Integrity: 80-90% original features.

Mama's Restaurant (originally Bob's Streamliner and Beefhouse - now used as a retail space)
9715 Lee Highway
Fairfax VA 22030
Architectural Integrity: exterior encased-not visible, interior ceiling area only original feature exposed.

Farmville

Walker's Diner
307 North Main Street
Farmville, VA 23901
Phone:
Contact: Trent Walker, Owner/Manager (804) 392-8368

Business Start: Late 1950s
Model: Valentine (Deluxe Double)
Architectural Integrity: 80-90% original features.

Front Royal

Sandy's Diner (Formerly the Mount Vista Diner)
1718 Shenandoah Avenue
(Rts.55, 522, 340)
Front Royal, Va.
Phone: (703) 636-9013
Contact: Dena Fragakis

Business Start: 1963-1965 (in VA), 1957 (in Crownsville, MD)
Model: Mountain View Serial # 489 "Little Falls" 1957
Architectural Integrity: 80-90% original features.

Harrisonburg

L&S Diner
255 North Liberty Avenue (Rt. 11)
Harrisonburg, VA 22801
Phone: (804) 434-5572
Contact: Teresa Hammer (waitress)

Business Start: August 1947
Model: designed to simulate prefabricated building by architect D'earcy P. Davis, 1947
Architectural Integrity: 80-90% original features.

Friendship House (formerly C&E Diner)
North Liberty Avenue, about 2 blocks east of L&S Diner. The Diner is embedded into a cinder block structure, but retains some of its original interior. Late 1930 diner.

Architectural Integrity: exterior-encased, diner roof line barely visible; interior about 40% original features.

Hillsville (Court House)

Hillsville Diner
525 Main Street
Hillsville, VA 24343
Phone:
Contact: C. Dempsey "Mac" McPeak, Jr. (10 year owner) (703) 236-7647/ Bernice McPeak (703) 728-2074

Business Start: 1946 (in VA), 1930s (in Mount Airy, NC)
Model: J. O'Mahony 1925-1930
Architectural Integrity: more than 80% original features from 1940s period.

Luray

Dixie Diner
East Main Street (Route 211)
Luray, VA
Phone: (703) 743-6305
Contact: Faheem and Karen Ahmed (owners/operators)
Original Owners: Helen and Jim Bradford for 35 years

Business Start: late 1950's
Model: Maybe a Valentine that has been remodeled or converted trailer home
Architectural Integrity: less than 40%-interior and exterior; the property includes a good 1950s neon, free-standing sign.

Marion

Marion Diner
Routes 11 and 16
Marion VA 24354
Phone: (804) 783-2862
Contact: Reba and Ronald Lefler (Business Managers), Rt. 1, Box 586, Marion Va 24354
Original and current owner: Deward Miller (703) 783-7331

Business Start: Early 1960s
Model: Silk City reconditioned by O'Mahony
Architectural Integrity: 80% or higher of reconditioned version.

Newport News

Blue Star Diner
9955 Warwick Boulevard (Route 17)
Newport News, VA
Phone: (804)
Contact: Fanny Blentson, owner & operator
87 Rivermont Drive, Newport News VA

Business Start: 1960
Model: Manno Brothers, 1958
Architectural Integrity: 80-90% original features.

Tasley (Eastern Shore)
Rts. 13 & 26
Tasley VA

Closed/Dilapidated

Business Start: 1930s
Model: 2 O'Mahonys connected end to end

Toms Brook

Valley Diner
Rt. 11
Toms Brook VA 22660
Phone:(703) 436-3331
Contact:

Business Start: 1930-1940?/ On site 1932
Model: Tierney or O'Mahony
Architectural Integrity: high integrity to 1940s/50s remodelling.

Vienna

Amphora Restaurant
377 Maple Ave.
Vienna
Phone: no current information available
Contact: no current information available

Business Start: 1970s?
Model:?
Architectural Integrity: high.

Wakefield

Virginia Diner
Rt. 460, P.O. Box 310
Wakefield, VA 23888
Phone: 1-800-868-6887
Contact: James Galloway, Owner

Business Start: 1929
Model: 1860 Paymaster's Car and additions demolished, but new building makes reference to the car and original brass lamps are reused.
Architectural Integrity: building is a modern replacement for original diner.

Warrenton

Frost Diner
55 Broadview Avenue
Warrenton, VA 22186
Phone: (703) 591-6720
Contact: Leonard Milliken, Manager

Business Start: 1955
Model: O'Mahony
Architectural Integrity: 80-90% original features.

Winchester

Triangle Diner (exterior encased in T-111, but interior very good)
Rt. 50 East
Winchester VA 22601
Phone:
Contact:

Business Start: 1950s
Model: O'Mahony
Architectural Integrity: exterior encased, but features still visible, interior-80% or better; the property includes a very nice neon-lit, free-standing, clock sign.

Built-On-Site Diners (Partial List)

This list does not all of the Virginia buildings that include the word "diner" in their name. Some of these businesses may have started in a prefabricated building, while others are look-alike, built-on-site buildings. These are the best known examples of this diner form.

Arlington

Bob & Edith's Diner
2310 Columbia Pike
Arlington
Built: 1969; replaced a building that dated to the 1940s or earlier.

Charlottesville

Blue Moon Diner
West Main Street
Charlottesville

Built: 1940s
Comment: started as "Waffle House"

Elkton

Ray's Diner

Needs more survey

Falls Church

Donut Dinette
Lee Highway and Wallace
Falls Church
Comment: former Donut Dinette
Built: sometime between 1952-1955

Front Royal

Fox Diner
20 South Street
Front Royal
Comment: former Donut Dinette

Built: 1955

Nick's Good Food Diner
522 North Royal Ave.
Front Royal

Built: 1951

Stanley

Hawksbill Diner
Rt. 340
Stanley
Phone: 703-778-2006
Contact: Woody and Nancy Atkins

Winchester

Amherst Diner

Needs more survey
Coffelts Diner
South of Winchester on Rt. 522

Donut Deluxe
North side of Winchester on Rt. 11
formerly part of the Northern Virginia Donut Dinette chain
Built: probably late 1940s

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The field work and the subsequent ongoing study has relied on the important research and data gathered by Richard Gutman. His work provides a national historic context. Architectural historian, Richard Guy Wilson, has provided valuable support for the study of recent architecture, and Roadside editor, Randolph Garbin has also encouraged public interest in Virginia's restaurant heritage.

Institutions vital to this study include the University of Virginia's Fiske Kimball Library; the Library of Virginia, and the Society for Commercial Archeology at the Smithsonian Institution.

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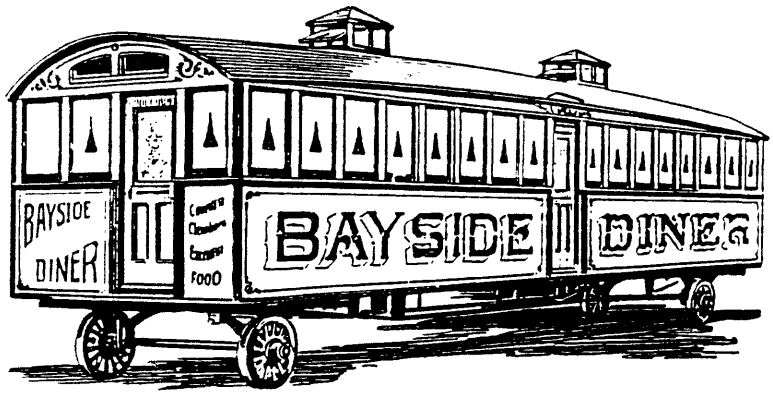

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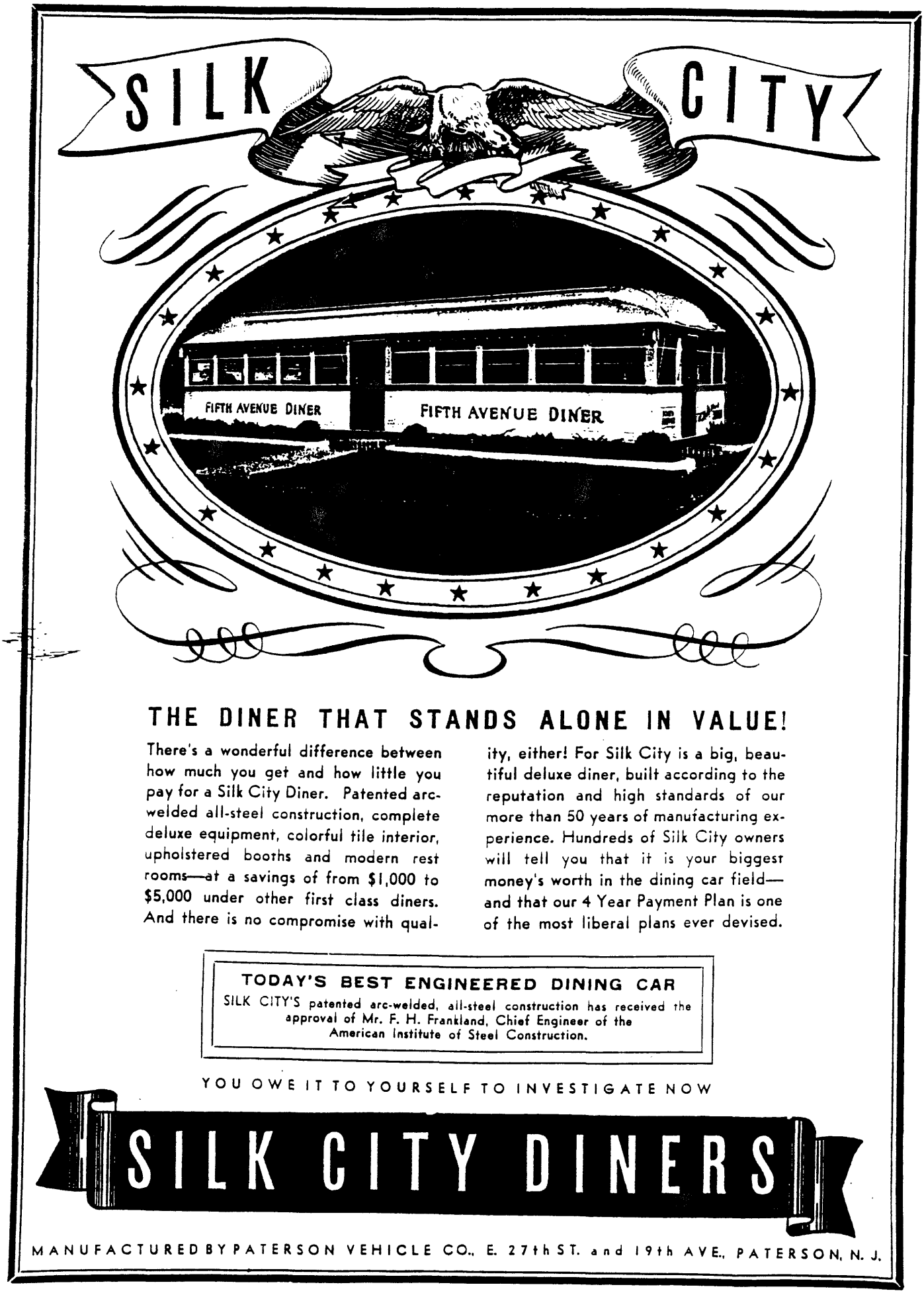
12. Jerry O'Mahony, Inc. advertisement from Diner Magazine (1927). Richard and Kellie Gutman Collection.



13. Silk City Diners advertisement from Diner Magazine (May, 1941). Richard and Kellie Gutman Collection.

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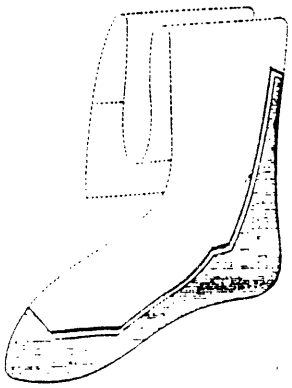
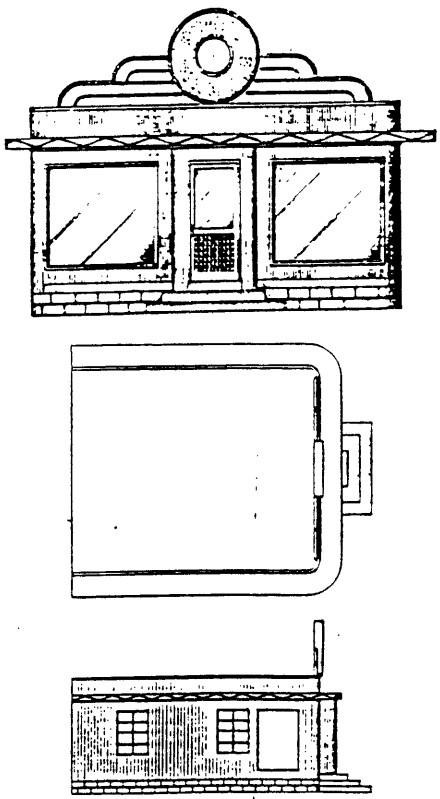
14. Kullman Dining Car Company, Inc. advertisement from Diner Magazine (May, 1941). Richard and Kulli

161,412
LADY'S STOCKING OR SIMILAR ARTICLE
Irving Belaief, New York, N. Y., assignor to Dainty Maid Hosiery Co., Inc., New York, N. Y., a corporation of New York
Application April 14, 1950, Serial No. 9,211
Term of patent 7 years
(Cl. D47—7)



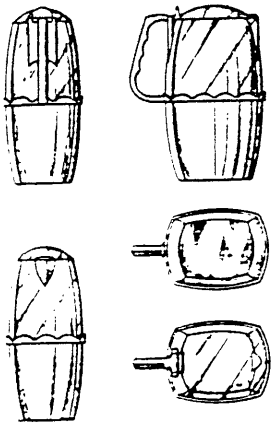
The ornamental design for a lady's stocking, or similar article, as shown and described.

161,413
DINER OR SIMILAR ARTICLE
Allen M. Berryhill, Charlotte, N. C., assignor to Do-Nut Dinette, Incorporated, Charlotte, N. C., a corporation of North Carolina
Application December 27, 1948, Serial No. 150,379
Term of patent 14 years
(Cl. D13—1)



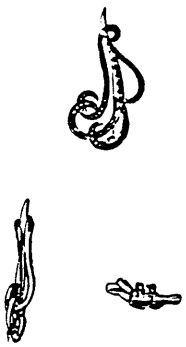
The ornamental design for a diner or similar article, as shown and described.

161,414
PITCHER OR SIMILAR ARTICLE
Charles O. Bliss, Hollywood, Calif.
Application February 3, 1950, Serial No. 7,712
Term of patent 14 years
(Cl. D44—21)



The ornamental design for a pitcher or similar article, as shown and described.

161,415
BROOCH OR SIMILAR ARTICLE
Marcel Boucher, Eltingeville, N. Y.
Application July 21, 1950; Serial No. 11,299
Term of patent 3½ years
(Cl. D45—19)



The ornamental design for a brooch or similar article, as shown.

15. Patent for the Donut Dinette from Official Gazette (January 2, 1951).