NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

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Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name MONUMENT OF STATES

other names/site number FMSF# OS00584

2. Location

street & number intersection of East Monument Avenue and Lakeview Drive N/A ☐ not for publication

city or town Kissimmee N/A ☐ vicinity

state Florida code FL county Osceola code ~~001~~ 097 zip code 32640

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Alissa Slade Lotan 10/20/15

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Deputy SHPO
Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Historic Preservation

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

☒ entered in the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet

☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

12-8-2015

Monument of States
Name of Property

Osceola Co., FL
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ private
- ☒ public-local
- ☐ public-State
- ☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- ☐ buildings
- ☐ district
- ☐ site
- ☐ structure
- ☒ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
1	0	objects
1	0	total

Name of related multiple property listings
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

"N/A"

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION/CULTURE; monument/marker, work of art

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION/CULTURE; monument/marker, work of art

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

NA

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Poured concrete
walls Concrete, affixed stone
roof
other Painted exterior

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☐ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ **B** removed from its original location.

☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.

☐ **D** a cemetery.

☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ **F** a commemorative property.

☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION & CULTURE

Period of Significance

1943

Significant Dates

1943

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Bressler-Pettis, Charles; Kissimmee All States Tourist Club

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) has been requested
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
#

☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State Agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other

Name of Repository

#

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References
(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	460324	3129580
2			
3			
4			

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Estabrook, Desiree; Hart, Michael, Florida State Historic Preservation Office staff

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date October 2015

street & number 500 South Bronough Street telephone 850-245-6333

city or town Tallahassee state FL zip code 32399-0250

Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items
(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner
(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Kissimmee, City Hall

street & number 101 Church Street telephone 407-847-2821

city or town Kissimmee state Florida zip code 34741

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

SUMMARY

The Monument of States is located just south of downtown Kissimmee, in Osceola County, Florida. Positioned along the south side of the intersection of East Monument Avenue and Lakeview Drive, the monument is frequently visited by both pedestrian and vehicular traffic (Photo 1). Composed of over 100 individual contributions of rocks and minerals, the monument stands at a height of fifty feet, with a base of sixteen square feet, directly north of the ca. 1929 Mediterranean Revival Style community center building (FMSF# OS564)., First planned in 1926, this city block historically served as a public space for the downtown area and residential development to the east. Located along the waterfront of Lake Tohopekaliga, this park attracted many visitors and provided the ideal location for the Monument of States to be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. The monument was designed by Dr. Charles Bressler-Pettis, president and active member of the Kissimmee All-States Tourist club, to rally Americans after the attack on Pearl Harbor. At Pettis's request, each state, along with numerous counties, foreign countries, and private individuals, donated rocks for placement on the monument. President Franklin Roosevelt even sent a stone from his Hyde Park estate to be added to the tower. More than seventy years later, the Monument of States still bears importance to the community as a cultural landmark and folk art curiosity. It was selected by the national "Save a Landmark" program to undergo cleaning, repair and repainting on November 7, 2001 through a partnership between the American Automobile Association and the Hampton Inn.[1] It retains a high degree of integrity in its design, workmanship, materials, feeling and association with mid-20th century tourism attractions.

SETTING

The Monument of States is located south of downtown Kissimmee, which serves as the county seat for Osceola County. Kissimmee boasts an increasing population of more than 66,000 residents. Located 20 miles south of Orlando, the town is frequented by tourists on their way westward to the Walt Disney World parks and Universal Studios attractions.

[1] Hampton Inn "Save-a-Landmark" Program publication, synopsis of activities between 2000-2011; news.hampton.com

The Monument itself fronts the present-day Berlinsky Community House (formerly Kissimmee Community Center) at 300 East Monument Avenue (Photo 2). It is positioned along Monument Avenue, a major thoroughfare that extends from the northern downtown commercial area southward to Lakeshore Boulevard. Wide sidewalks direct pedestrian traffic around the monument, community center, and north towards the commercial shopping area. Landscaping and site improvements were made in 2001 through the "Save a Landmark" program. The original sidewalk is still extant adjacent to the base, which details the donors for the concrete in 1941, as well as the accolades of the shuffleboard club in 1942 (Photos 3, 4).

The general topography is characterized by flat land, with an average elevation of 70 feet above sea level. The grounds are carefully landscaped in manicured shrubbery and immature tree plantings, with some palm trees throughout the property. An arbor within a circular arrangement of plantings forms an outdoor sheltered area for gatherings. This space formerly contained the tennis courts, as reflected in historic aerials. The original Kissimmee All-States Tourist (KAST) club shuffle board courts occupied a space just southeast of the monument and community center (Figure 1). The gable roofed structure formerly sheltered the courts from the elements, and had the same vernacular treatments as that of the monument, with similar styled lettering and rocks embedded within the cast concrete support columns (Photo 5). To the dismay of local residents, the courts and associated buildings were demolished in 2010 to make way for a picnic pavilion and restrooms as part of the Lakefront Park redevelopment project.[2]

The monument and accompanying Lakefront Park are just east of the National Register-listed Kissimmee Historic District (NR 1994).

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The Monument of States is an irregular quadrilateral step-pyramid (Photo 6). There are 21 varying tiers, with the bottom tier measuring 16 square feet and the top 2 ½ square feet. The monument's solid concrete foundation is 3 feet thick and 22 total square feet in size. The foundation has an estimated weight of 100,000 pounds and is reinforced with 3 ½ tons

[2] "KAST club cast out in Kissimmee"; Old Florida Blog, Sunday, February 28, 2010.

of steel rails. To promote drainage, the foundation sits upon a mound of natural earth.[3] The monument stands 50 feet tall and is crowned with a 3 foot concrete sphere (Photo 7). Perched on the sphere is a solid concrete American Bald Eagle with a wing-span of 6 feet (Photo 8). The eagle was designed by Dr. Charles Bressler-Pettis and J.C. Fisher. Unveiling of the Monument of States took place on March 28, 1943 with a dedication speech made by United States Senator Claude Pepper.[4]

Planning for the Monument of States started in 1941 as a response to the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Dr. Charles Bressler-Pettis, an active member of the Kissimmee All-States Tourist club, partnered with J. C. Fisher to design a monument that would stand as a symbol of American unity in a time of international crisis. Construction began early in 1942 with the assistance of locals and members of the club. Names of those donors who provided concrete for construction are inscribed on the sidewalk adjacent to the monument. Individual names are listed directly under a carved 'Honor Roll of Cement Donors, Dec. 21 1941', and include A.W. Spunner, M.L. Spunner, the Enoch Herzbergs, the Carl Schmidts, among many others. Local organizations are also listed, including the fire department, Orange County High School band, Osceola County Courthouse, and Orange Blossom Lodge No. 80 AFAM (Ancient Free & Accepted Masons). Many local businesses contributed as well, including the Piggly Wiggly grocery market, Roll's Market, Trent Cabinet Shop, Riedel Motors, and G.W. Pearsons Co. to name a few. The local Methodist and Presbyterian churches also donated materials. A pamphlet was later produced that named all of the 507 private and business donors who supplied a bag of cement towards construction.[5]

The Monument resides in the Lakefront Park area of downtown Kissimmee, near the shores of Lake Tohopekaliga. The lakefront area has been a center of activity in Kissimmee since its formation. Beginning first as a shipping center in the 1880s, it evolved into a recreational greenspace with the creation of Lakefront Park in 1926. Since that transition, Lakefront Park has been a focal point of civic activity with organizations such as the American Legion and All States Tourist Club having headquarters in the area.[6]

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[3] Old Monument Flyer.
[4] Orlando Sentinel. "This Is A Monument to the Gilded Age" June 14, 1992.
[5] Ibid.
[6] City of Kissimmee Lakefront Park, Site Analysis Report. October 2007

ALTERATIONS

The Monument of States has not been altered from its original design (Figure 3). General maintenance activities, including cleaning and repair, have extended the life span of this massive vernacular work of folk art. Upon close inspection, only a few of the embedded materials are missing or have been removed over time, as the large majority of rocks, bones, and donated materials remain in-situ. To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the monument, the town of Kissimmee rededicated the monument on March 28, 1993 and placed a time capsule behind one of the plaques. The capsule is scheduled to be reopened in March of 2043.[7]

The Lakefront Park has undergone numerous changes over the years, with the removal of tennis and shuffleboard courts in 2010. However, the community center, which historically housed the functions of the Kissimmee All-States Tourist club, retains most of its physical integrity and serves as the backdrop for the Monument of States.

[7] Kissimmee Parks & Recreation brochure c.2012, created by the Kissimmee All States Tourist club and available through the Kissimmee Main Street Program.

SUMMARY

The Monument of States (FMSF# OS0584) is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places for local significance under Criterion A in the area of Recreation and Tourism. The period of significance is 1943, for its date of construction. As the creation of Dr. Charles Bressler-Pettis, the monument was built in 1943 with a two-fold purpose: to be a commemorative piece and a draw for local tourism. As a product of World War II, it served as a unifying sculpture to bond together the states after the attack on Pearl Harbor in December of 1941. In its design, each state would donate a rock particular to their location for placement on the monument. Pettis would also add his own collection of rocks from his prior travels all over the United States. Over time, cities and even other countries would send objects to affix to the towering monument at the request of Pettis, thereby creating an evolving and visually prominent tourist attraction. Interest in this roadside monument dwindled after the 1971 opening of Walt Disney World in Orlando to the northwest, as flashy and large-scale tourist destinations would supersede the older, static attractions in the coming decades. The Kissimmee Monument of States stands as an important example of mid-twentieth century tourism efforts before the large theme parks came to dominate the Florida landscape and attention of visitors.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Local History

The first settlers to the area came to occupy the areas adjacent to Shingle Creek, just west of present-day downtown Kissimmee. The spot earned its name from the abundant cypress wood available, which residents used to mill building materials and roof shingles. By November 10, 1873, the first post office opened to service this area with Clement R. Tyner as postmaster.[1] James P. Wilson assumed the position on September 28, 1877, but the post office was discontinued after 1878. Other sources suggest it carried on until the turn of the century under the truncated name of 'Shingle'.[2] Early settlers of the area include the

[1] Ancestry.com. *U.S., Appointments of U. S. Postmasters, 1832-1971* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010.
[2] Don Simmons, Post Offices in the United States (1893) Simmons Historical Publications 1991 Melber, KY

families of Yates, Bronson, Steffe, and Babb that engaged in cattle and agricultural operations.

The town of Kissimmee originated from the Allendale community located on the north shore of Lake Tohokepeliga. Allendale was founded by former Confederate Major John Howard Allen of Winchester, Kentucky in 1883.[3] He served as the City of Orlando's second mayor from 1877 to 1878.[4] By 1879, it is recorded that Henry Matthews constructed a home for Allen on Paradise Island in the northern part of Lake Tohokepeliga.[5] He captained one of the first cargo steamboats along the Kissimmee River, the Mary Belle. The ship transported goods, primarily lumber, from Lake Tohokepeliga down to Fort Bassenger. By 1883, construction was completed for a boat launch for the Mary Belle, as well as for the largest sawmill in the area and a general store. As a result of Allen's shipping service, many new settlers chose to build homes in Allendale rather than in nearby Sanford. The growth of this area, into what eventually became Kissimmee, was furthered by the influence of Hamilton Disston from Philadelphia.

As owner of the Disston & Sons (Saw Works), Hamilton Disston transformed the town into a major transportation hub with his river improvements and canal networks. Before the Civil War, the federal government transferred ownership of several million acres to the State of Florida, which formed a board of internal improvements to manage disbursement of the property. This land had several intended uses, mostly centered on the promotion of railroad, canal, and related construction projects. After the war, this Internal Improvement Fund was mired in debt, compounded by a court order that placed the group in receivership by 1877. At risk of losing title to the land, the State of Florida negotiated a land deal with Disston in 1881 that he was entitled to half of the land drained and cleared, which encompassed several million acres south of present-day Orlando. Due to the impending legal proceedings, title could not be legally transferred. In a bold move, state Governor William D. Bloxham granted him four million acres of swampland in central Florida for one million dollars, thus clearing the debt of the Internal Improvement Fund.[6] This deal

[3] Looks What's Happened in Osceola County. Pp. 12
[4] Political Graveyard online; http://politicalgraveyard.com/bio/allen5.html#706.85.53
[5] Orlando Sentinel. *Ex-Confederate's Riverboat Landing Carves The Beginning of Kissimmee*. July 23, 1995
[6] J. E. Dovell, "The Railroads and the Public Lands of Florida, 1879-1905," 34 (1955): 236-58

helped save the state from bankruptcy during the post-Reconstruction period, and also made Disston the single largest private landowner in the country.[7] "Kissimmee City" opened in 1881 as the northern terminus for his dredging operations.

With the establishment of drainage canals, the Disston effort increased accessibility of the region's transportation network of rivers for moving product from the interior. Canal construction and river widening made water transportation possible between the lakes near Kissimmee and south to Lake Okeechobee, and then westward from the Caloosahatchee River to the Gulf of Mexico. The benefits were numerous. New land was opened up for agriculture, where Disston grew sugar cane, but this also encouraged further settlement in the area. Moreover, with new water routes from major in-land lakes to the Gulf of Mexico, towns like Kissimmee became major commercial locales. Transportation and commerce received another boost from the opening of the South Florida Railroad in 1882 that connected Kissimmee and Sanford to the north. Eventually this line would extend southward to Tampa by 1883.[8]

On March 23, 1883, after a vote of 33 to 3, Kissimmee incorporated as a city and T.A. Bass was elected as the first mayor.[9] It is believed that the city derived its name from the Ais Caloosa Indian's word "Cacema," meaning "long water."[10] Soon after, in 1887, Osceola County was formed from the split of Orange and Brevard Counties, with Kissimmee serving as the county seat. Kissimmee would further expand influence to the east via the completion of the St. Cloud and Sugar Belt Railroad in 1888, and north via the Florida Midland Railroad to Longwood and Apopka in 1890.[11] These lines were intended to ship agricultural product to market; the Sugar Belt Railroad primarily carried sugar from Disston's plantation in St. Cloud.[12] Kissimmee would have its first railroad station in 1889

[7] Riverboats, Railroads, and Highways. Pg. 22-23
[8] Historical Resources of Kissimmee Survey Report, URS, 2008.
[9] Orlando Sentinel. *Kissimmee at 110 Put a Fresh Coat on Its Pioneer Past*. July 4, 1993
[10] Orlando Sentinel. *Historians Try to Trace Origins of Indian-named Places*. November 16, 1986
[11] Gregg Turner. A Short History of Florida Railroads. Arcadia Publishing, 2003.
[12] Orlando Sentinel. *Sharing Tales Of Early Settlers Will Preserve St. Cloud's Past*. April 21, 2002; Pat Dodson "Hamilton Disston's St. Cloud Sugar Plantation, 1887-1901" The Florida Historical Quarterly, Vol. 49, No. 4 (April 1971).

along Ruby Avenue, just west of the area that would eventually become Kissimmee's public park and stage for the Monument of States.

The Panic of 1893 stalled growth in Kissimmee, and ruined Disston. Hard freezes in subsequent years destroyed local citrus crops. Settlers who would have been lured to Kissimmee ventured further south to developing areas like Miami. Even the shipping business that Disston worked to bring to Kissimmee migrated further south to Lake Okeechobee by 1917.

Few historic buildings remain from Kissimmee's founding period during the late 19th century, as a historic fire destroyed the downtown commercial core and necessitated rebuilding with masonry after the 1920s. The appearance of downtown Kissimmee today largely reflects this early-twentieth century period of growth. Commercial businesses lined the two-lane Broadway Avenue running from the southwest to northeast direction, and industrial use was relegated to the south. Historic Sanborn maps are illustrative of the former industries once in this area: citrus packing houses, cattle ranching and processing facilities, railroad-related structures and the train yard, and lumber milling activities, including veneer fabrication.[13] Previously viewed as unattractive land given the proximity of the industrial uses, lots adjacent to the riverfront area were quickly developed during the 1920s. Coinciding with the Florida Land Boom, the population of Kissimmee nearly doubled from 2,722 in 1920 to around 5,000 by 1925. Nine subdivision plats were recorded between 1924 and 1926.[14] However, most residential properties were constructed later as infill in older, platted sections.

After the land speculation downturn at the end of 1926, the city of Kissimmee attempted to bolster the local economy by establishing Lake Front Park, bordered by Ruby Avenue (now Lakeview Drive) on the west and Monument Avenue along the eastern side, just south of downtown. Although development was slow to occur during the 1930s, World War II ushered new residents to the area, and subsequently, the housing demand increased.

[13] ProQuest's Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867-1970; http://sanborn.umi.com; Kissimmee, Osceola County for April 1904, February 1926, March 1930
[14] Historical Resources of Kissimmee Survey Report, URS, 2008.

The Cape Breeze subdivision, between Drury Avenue and Neptune Road just east of Lake Front Park, is one such example of residential housing stock infilling previously empty blocks, which were first platted in 1911 along the north shore of Lake Tohopekaliga.

Following the end of the shipping boom, Kissimmee reverted back to its cattle roots. It became Florida's cow capital and, after its formation in 1934, the headquarters for the Florida Cattlemen's Association. While cattle would remain the dominant industry in Kissimmee for most of the 20th century, it would also serve as a source of tourism in Kissimmee as numerous rodeos brought in thousands of visitors each year during the 1940s and 1950s. The Silver Spurs Rodeo, which held its first event in 1943, gained recognition as the largest rodeo east of the Mississippi River.[15] Although the tourism industry continued to grow in the Orlando-Kissimmee region throughout the later 20th century, Kissimmee remained an agricultural community, primarily focused on cattle, until the 1970s.

Kissimmee would gain national recognition after being discovered by Earl Tupper in 1951. Although his brand of household re-usable plastic containers were manufactured in South Grafton, Massachusetts since 1946, Tupper purchased several hundred acres north of Kissimmee to serve as the headquarters for the sales division of Tupperware Home Parties Inc.[16] Initially, the base of operations staffed a few salespeople, but would soon blossom into a sales training center with annual homecoming jubilees for its sales force in Kissimmee. Brownie Wise is credited with the initial success of the Tupperware brand by implementing the direct marketing strategy of selling wares at organized home parties, a technique she learned while selling Stanley Home Products in the early 1940s.[17] She outsold Tupperware products better than the stores which stocked them, prompting Tupper to invite her to serve as the vice-president for Florida operations starting in 1951. However, their relationship soured and Wise would leave the company by 1958, shortly before Tupper sold the company.[18] The Kissimmee area would remain relatively quiet until

[15] Our History. http://www.silverspursrodeo.com/silver-spurs-rodeo-history/
[16] Tupperware Brands Inc. https://www.tupperwarebrands.com/company/heritage
[17] American Experience: Brownie Wise. http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/biography/tupperware-wise/
[18] Rick Kilby. *Central Florida's Shrine to the Tupperware Party*. February 9, 2012. http://studiohourglass.blogspot.com/2012/02/central-floridas-shrine-to-tupperware.html

the construction of the Walt Disney World Resort in 1971 to the northwest, and the area saw an immediate growth in the tourism industry. By 1979, Osceola County was the fastest growing county in the state, with a population that was rising steadily.[19]

Roadside Attraction Context for Central Florida

The increase of automobile usage in the 1920s bolstered roadside tourism in Florida. This led to the construction of new highways throughout the state with U.S. Route 1, which ran as far north as Fort Kent, Maine down along Florida's east coast by 1922, and ultimately reached Florida's southernmost point in Key West by 1938.

Gardens and other attractions showing off Florida's natural beauty would develop during the 1920s. The most famous of these attractions was the Bok Tower Gardens completed in 1929 by Edward Bok, author and editor of the *Ladies Home Journal*. Bok's nationally-recognized gardens and Singing Tower with 60-bell carillon drew hundreds of visitors, many of whom came by car, and encouraged further roadside tourism development. "This landmark started the boom in Florida roadside tourist attractions…and is still Florida's most important roadside attraction."[20]

While the end of the Florida Land Boom (1926) and beginning of the Great Depression (1929) slowed the growth of Florida tourism, they did not kill it. Due to their accessibility and relative inexpensiveness, Florida's roadside attractions become popular destinations for families looking to the escape the harsh reality of the Depression.[21] During the period, attractions remained small and continued to rely on exotic plants and animals, coupled with the Florida sun, to draw in tourists.

World War II created a temporary hold on Florida tourism, and many attractions closed in the early 1940s. Visitors were discouraged by the lack of vacation time and resources, such as gasoline. This hold was short-lived, however, as tourists began to flood back to Florida

[19] Allan Feldt, Robert W. Marans, Kathleen L. Vakalo, Leon A. Pastalan. Retirement Communities: An American Original. Pg 140.
[20] Ken Breslauer, Roadside Paradise: The Golden Age of Florida's Tourist Attractions 1929-1971 (St. Petersburg, FL: RetroFlorida, Inc, 2000) p.22.
[21] Breslauer, p. 12.

after the conclusion of the war. The end of rationing and increased leisure time allowed people to travel more freely. Additionally, many airmen who either trained in Florida or were stationed here would return to the state to settle here with families. In 1948, about 4 million tourists traveled to Florida and by the end of the 1950s, there were about 12 million.[22] The rise in car ownership not only increased the amount of attractions, but also increased other facets of the industry like motels, restaurants, and gas stations.

One such attraction to grow and flourish during the post-war years was Gatorland, located approximately 13 miles north of the Monument of States. Initially known as the Florida Wildlife Institute, this attraction opened in 1949 on a borrow pit site from which dirt fill was taken for road construction. The parcel of land was located along Highway 17/92 and U.S. 441, which at that time was the state's second-most traveled highway.[23] Alligators and snakes were the first specimens, and its owner, Owen Godwin Sr., subsequently changed the name of his operations to Snake Village and Alligator Farm to sound less like a government institution. His attraction gained notoriety for the alligator and crocodile shows that were assisted by Seminole Indian handlers. One such 15 foot specimen imported from Miami, known as "Bone Crusher", was promoted as the largest captive crocodile at the time. By 1954, Gatorland assumed its final name and incarnation as an exhibit that brought visitors close to native Florida fauna and flora while fostering an understanding for many of the animals on exhibit. Godwin's youngest son, Frank, designed the trademark cast-concrete Gator head and open jaws that served as the main entrance for the park in 1962. It still remains on the park property, but is no longer used as an entrance.

Charles Bressler-Pettis

Charles Bressler-Pettis was born in Grant City, Missouri in 1889 to Manuel Bressler and Nellis Pettis. He graduated from the University of Missouri in 1913, and from Harvard Medical School in 1917. In the early years of World War I, Pettis served in the Harvard surgical unit in the British Army Royal Medical Corps as a lieutenant. Pettis was then commissioned as a first lieutenant by the United States military following the U.S.'s formal entry into the conflict in 1917. He was called to active duty on March 1, 1918 and

[22] Donald D. Spencer, *50s Roadside Florida* (Atglen, PA: Shiffer Publishing, Ltd. 2009), p.11
[23] Harris, Michelle. *From Tails to Tales*. Online history publication from Gatorland. 2012.

was assigned as an assistant instructor to the Medical Officers' Training Camp in Greenleaf, Georgia. Pettis was later transferred to the Army Medical School in Washington D.C. in December 1918. Not long after, Pettis was discharged on December 19, 1918.[24]

Following the war, Pettis spent ten years living in Nice, France before returning the United States. After his return, he married Laura Mead, a physical education teacher from Chicago. Despite his medical degree, Pettis hardly practiced as a physician, aside from a brief period where he served as the doctor for the Osceola High School football team during World War II. It is believed that Pettis attended medical school as part of a deal to inherit a large sum of money.[25] This sum of money would allow Pettis to devote his time to traveling, art, and community service.

While in Kissimmee, Pettis had a reputation as a colorful and active figure in the community. As a member of the Lion's Club in Kissimmee, Pettis was granted the title of "ambassador of good will" for his service in both Kissimmee and other parts of the country. Reflecting his colorful personality, Pettis often drove a purple and gold Cadillac with a life-sized lion sculpture affixed to the roof and "KissMe" on the doors - his preferred name for the town.[26] Pettis also served as president of the Kissimmee All States Tourist (KAST) club. KAST, formed in 1934, aimed to be a recreational organization for seniors by seniors. The organization catered to seasonal retirees who lived in the Kissimmee area. The organization arranged numerous social events including sing-a-longs, bingo, and most importantly, shuffleboard.

Pettis died on May 13, 1954 in Kissimmee. Parts of his remains were interred in the Grant City Cemetery in Worth County, Missouri;[27] the other remains were entombed within the Monument of States in honor of his contribution. The city ordinance of Kissimmee

[24] Harvard´s Military Record in the World War. California State Library; Sacramento; Harvard´s Military Record in the World War
[25] Dr. C.W. Bressler-Pettis Left A Piece of Himself in Monument. Orlando Sentinel. December 30, 2007.
[26] Jim Abbott, *Quirky Monument has ties Kissimmee's Past*, Orlando Sentinel, http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/2009-12-06/travel/orl-travel-abbott-120609_1_attraction-tower-monument-avenue
[27] Charles Wesley Bressler-Pettis, MD. Missouri Gravestones. http://missourigravestones.org/view.php?id=748362

regarding burials and cemeteries was amended preserve Pettis's remains in the monument.[28]

Monument of States

Designs for the monument were conceived as early as September of 1941. Through research, it is plausible that Pettis's designs were influenced by a similar attraction, the Fireplace of States in Bemidji, Minnesota. While there are no specific accounts of Pettis being in Bemidji, it is known that he owned a residence in McFarland, Wisconsin and frequently traveled around the country. However, it was not until after Japan's attack on the naval base at Pearl Harbor in December 1941, that Pettis was able to put the monument into construction.

Pettis's goal was to create a symbol of national unity following the attack on Pearl Harbor. The monument was not only a representation of unity, but even the construction was a massive community undertaking. The cornerstone was laid on January 11, 1942. Local businesses and residents donated more than five hundred bags of cement for the monument. The Kissimmee All States Tourist club provided a majority of the volunteer labor. Rocks for the monument were brought in from all over the country and abroad. One particular contribution from Palos Park, Illinois, just southwest of Chicago, came from Pettis's cousin and mayor of Palos Park, Dr. A.M. Bressler. [29] This rock in particular came from the Calumet-Saganashkee canal. Pettis provided rocks gathered from his own travels, and wrote letters to state governors asking for rocks from their states. Franklin Roosevelt sent a stone from his Hyde Park estate to be added. Local sources mention that people visiting Kissimmee donated rocks from their hometowns to be added to the monument.[30]

The monument was dedicated on March 28, 1943 by Senator Claude Pepper. At the time of its completion, the monument consisted of 1,500 stones from 48 states and 21 countries. It

[28] Mark Pino. *Dr. C.W. Bressler-Pettis Left A Piece of Himself in Monument*. Orlando Sentinel. December 30, 2007.
[29] Chicago Tribune. "Most Unique Monument Has a Southwest Flavor" January 4, 1994.
[30] *Doctor's Love of Area Fueled Drive for Monument*. Orlando Sentinel. July 20, 1990

is mentioned that Pettis had collected over 23,000 stones, many from his own travels around the nation, and more continued to arrive even after his death in 1954.[31]

The monument continued to be a popular tourist attraction in Kissimmee up through the 1970s, until the opening of the Walt Disney World Resort. Kissimmee continued to grow as a tourist destination, which supplanted cattle as the city's dominate industry, but interest in attractions not affiliated with Disney declined. A 1986 *Orlando Sentinel* article stated that while basic maintenance had been kept up, the monument was in dire need of a large-scale renovation.[32] Although the chairman of the Lakefront Advisory Board saw it no more than a "a hunk of stacked cement", others better remembered for what it stood. On November 7, 2001, as part of their Save-A-Landmark program, Hampton Inns and the American Automobile Association (AAA) organized a volunteer restoration of the monument.

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

The Monument of States is locally significant as an object under Criterion A for Recreation and Tourism. The period of significance is 1943, and represents a period of Florida history before the massive commercialization of tourist attractions that came following the completion of Walt Disney World in 1971. As the creation of Dr. Charles Bressler-Pettis, the monument was constructed in 1943 with a two-fold purpose: to be a commemorative piece and a draw for local tourism. After the attack on Pearl Harbor in December of 1941, it served as a unifying sculpture to bond together the states. Construction required contributions from multiple entities, including cities, counties, states – even other countries. As part of the design, each state would donate a rock particular to their location for placement on the monument. Over time, cities and even other countries would send objects to affix to the towering monument, thereby creating an evolving and visually prominent tourist attraction. Although nearly demolished in 1986, efforts through the Kissimmee-St. Cloud Visitors Bureau and Kissimmee-Osecola County Chamber of Commerce saved the monument with local support.[33]

[31] http://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WMEDTH_Monument_of_States_Kissimmee_FL
[32] Orlando Sentinel. "Neglect Tarnishes States Monument" May 28, 1986.
[33] Ibid.

Although other extant tourist attractions from this period are nearby, such as Gatorland and the Tupperware historic museum (both located about 14 miles north of the Monument of States), few smaller-scale vernacular attractions remain in Florida. The Coral Castle attraction in Miami (NR 1984) was under continual construction by one man, Edward Leedskalnin, from 1923 until his death in 1951. According to local tradition, he single-handedly moved 1,100 tons of coral rock (native oolithic limestone) to create an elaborate sculpture garden of stone. Leedskalnin earned his income from tours he gave of the property, and visitors flocked to this attraction to marvel at the engineering behind his living quarters, sundial, rock furniture, and fountain. The site even remained unscathed during the Category 5 Hurricane Andrew in 1992. Another example of vernacular construction (albeit on a much smaller scale) is the Walk of Fame on the Rollins College Winter Park campus (Figure 4). Started by Rollins President Hamilton Holt in 1929, the pathways between buildings were lined with stones engraved with the names of famous men and women, and these stones were particular to the contributor's birthplace. It is unknown if Dr. Charles Bressler-Pettis ever visited this site; however, he may have heard of it since Winter Park is only 25 miles north of Kissimmee.

As a comparable resource to the Monument of States, the Fireplace of States was constructed in Bemidji, Minnesota as a WPA-era project ca. 1934 (Figure 5). Equally compelling in its function and design, it featured a stone from every state along with contributions from Minnesota counties and Canadian provinces. Research suggests that Dr. Charles Bressler-Pettis may have visited this attraction during his travels across the United States. Per census records, he owned a residence in McFarland, Wisconsin during that time. However in 1995, the Fireplace of States was moved from its original location to the Bemidji Tourist Information Center.

Despite similarities with other resources, the Monument of States in Kissimmee still stands as a poignant reminder of the efforts of Dr. Charles Bressler-Pettis and his creation of a concrete amalgamation of his travels and passion for community-building. The Monument is an important example of mid-twentieth century efforts to attract tourists before the large-scale theme parks came to dominate the Florida landscape and attention of visitors. It retains integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association with the early history and tourism efforts in Kissimmee, and continues to serve as a draw for both residents and visitors alike.

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PHYSICAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

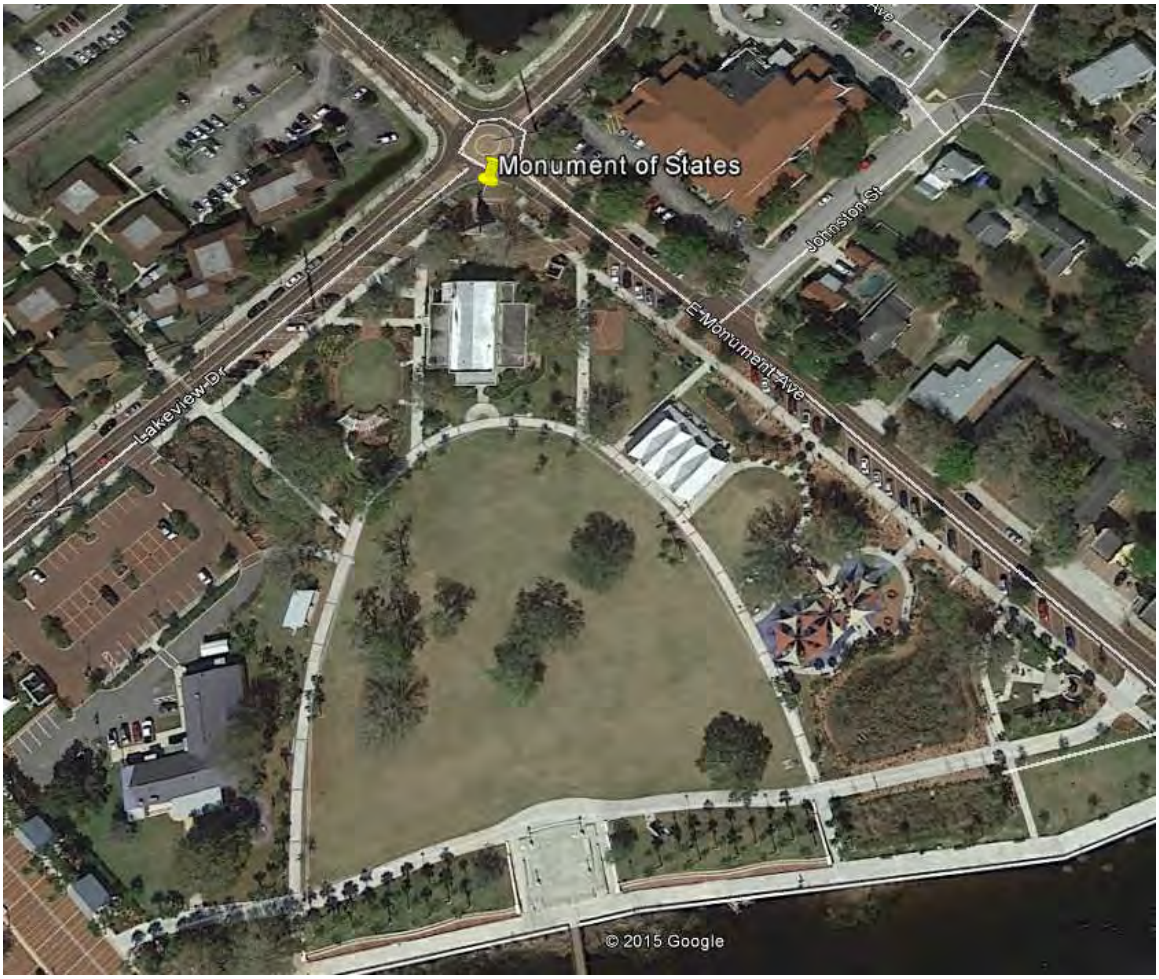
Physical Address: 300 East Monument Avenue

Parcel # 22252900U001500000

ALL LAND LYING S OF BLKS 23 & 24, S FLA R R SURVEY & N OF LAKE SHORE DR LESS COM AT INTER OF NLY R/W LINE OF RUBY AVE & WLY R/W LINE OF JOHNSTON ST, S 46 DEG E 199.98 FT TO POB; N 44 DEG E 20 FT TO POB; CONT N 44 DEG E 187.57 FT, S 48 DEG E 163.52 FT, S 12 DEG E 1 05.24 FT, TO NLY R/W LINE OF LAKESHORE BLVD, S 77 DEG W 159.15 FT, N 47 DEG W 163.80 FT TO POB

BOUNDARY JUSTIRICATION

This property is historically associated with the Monument of States, and the boundary remains consistent with its original design, layout, and position.



MONUMENT OF STATES
Intersection of E. Monument Ave. & Lakeview Dr., Kissimmee, Osceola County, Florida

Latitude: 28°17’30.32” N
Longitude: 81°24’16.62” W

UTM References

Zone	Easting	Northing
17R	460324	3129588

PHOTOGRAHIC LIST

1. Monument of States, Kissimmee
2. Osceola County, Florida
3. Kissimmee Main Street
4. 2014
5. View at peak of monument, looking southeast
6. Photo #1 of 8

Items 1 – 4 are the same for the following photographs.

5. Monument as viewed from intersection of Lakeview Drive and E Monument Ave
6. Photo #2 of 8

5. 'Honor Roll' inscribed on cement, north side of monument
6. Photo #3 of 8

5. Continuation of 'Honor Roll' inscribed on cement, north side of monument
6. Photo #4 of 8

5. Kissimmee All-States Tourist Club shuffleboard court, prior to demolition, ca.2010
6. Photo #5 of 8

5. North side of monument, with Community Center in background, facing south
6. Photo #6 of 8

5. North side of monument from above, with Community Center in background
6. Photo #7 of 8

5. Top of monument, facing south and overlooking Lakefront Park
6. Photo #8 of 8

FIGURE LIST

Figure #1 1959 Aerial view of Lakefront Park, the KAST Shuffleboard courts, the Kissimmee Community Center, and the Monument of States, all contained within the parcel south of the intersection of Monument Avenue and Lakeview Drive (historically south of Posseil Avenue and north of the waterfront). *Credit: Aerial Photography: Florida Collection Florida Department of State, State Library and Archives of Florida.*

Figure #2 Ca. 1950s image of the KAST Club playing at their shuffleboard courts facility, with the Monument of States in the background. *Credit: State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory, https://floridamemory.com/items/show/75109*

Figure #3 Historic images of the Monument of States, taken from private collections.

Figure #4 The Walk of Fame on the Rollins College Winter Park campus, started by Rollins President Hamilton Holt in 1929. Along pathways, stones were engraved with the names of famous men and women that were gathered from their birthplace. It is unknown if Dr. Charles Bressler-Pettis ever visited this site; however, he may have heard of it since Winter Park is 25 miles north of Kissimmee. *Credit: Top image courtesy of State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory, https://floridamemory.com/items/show/165321; bottom image courtesy of Rollins College archives*

Figure #5 As a comparable resource to the Monument of States, the Fireplace of States was constructed in Bemidji, Minnesota as a WPA-era project ca. 1934. It featured a stone from every state along with contributions from Minnesota counties and Canadian provinces. Research suggests that Dr. Charles Bressler-Pettis may have visited this attraction during his travels across the United States. Per census records, he owned a residence in McFarland, Wisconsin during that time. The Fireplace of States was moved from its original location in 1995 to the Bemidji Tourist Information Center. *(Images from auction sites.)*

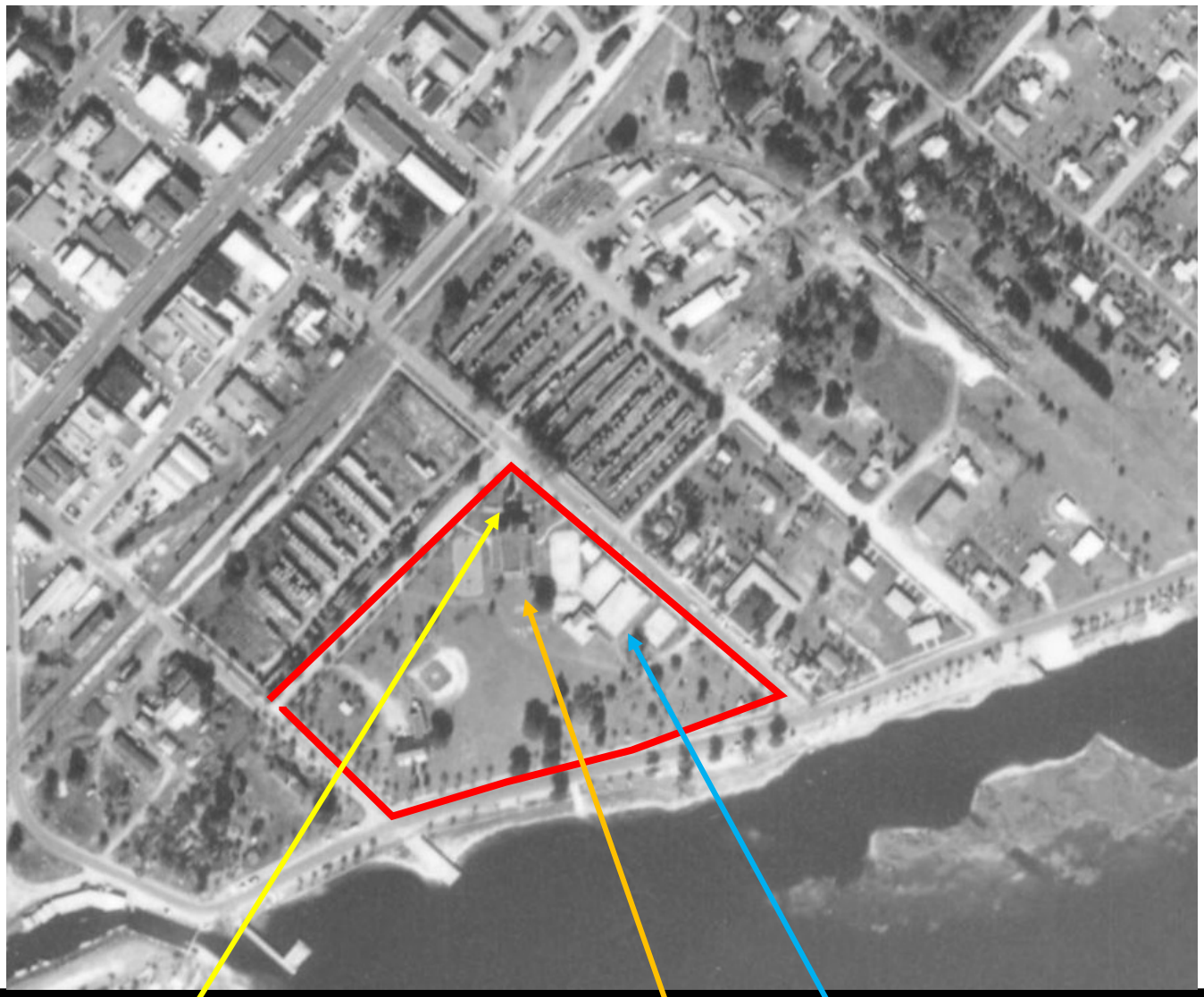
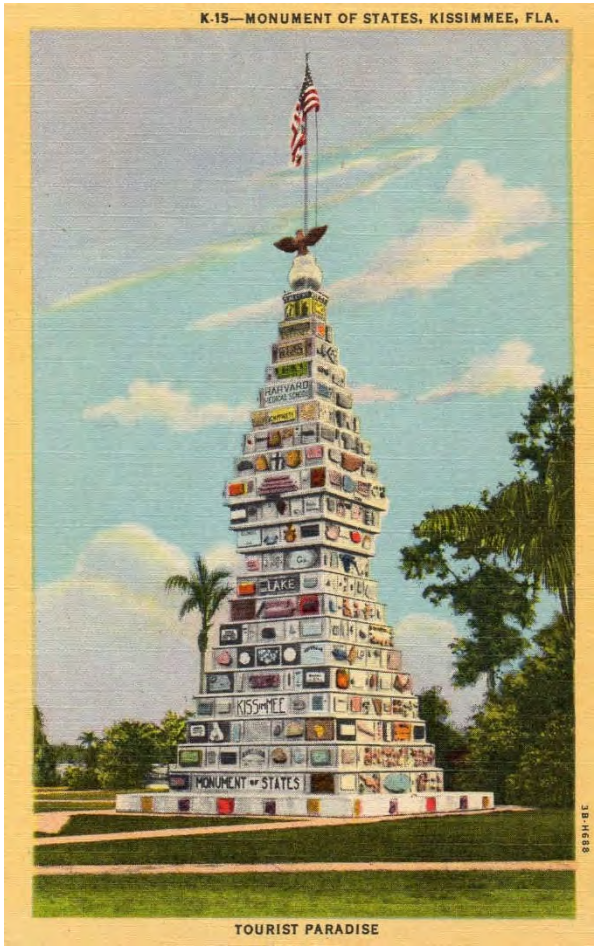


Figure 1: 1959 Aerial view of Lakefront Park, the Kissimmee Community Center, the Monument of States, and the Kissimmee All-States Tourist Club shuffleboard courts, all contained within the parcel south of the intersection of Monument Avenue and Lakeview Drive (historically south of Posseil Avenue and north of the waterfront).

Credit: Aerial Photography: Florida Collection Florida Department of State, State Library and Archives of Florida.

Figure 2: Kissimmee All-States Tourist Club shuffleboard court, with the Monument of States in the background.

Credit: State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory, https://floridamemory.com/items/show/75109



1950s linen postcard

1960 photograph

1967 glossy postcard

Figure 3: Historic images of the Monument of States, taken from private collections.

Figure 4: The Walk of Fame on the Rollins College Winter Park campus, started by Rollins President Hamilton Holt in 1929. Along pathways, stones were engraved with the names of famous men and women that were gathered from their birthplace. It is unknown if Dr. Charles Bressler-Pettis ever visited this site; however, he may have heard of it since Winter Park is 25 miles north of Kissimmee.

Credit: Top image courtesy of State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory, *https://floridamemory.com/items/show/165321; bottom image courtesy of Rollins College archives*

Ca. 1940 linen postcard

Ca. 1950 photograph of interior

Figure 5: As a comparable resource to the Monument of States, the Fireplace of States was constructed in Bemidji, Minnesota as a WPA-era project ca. 1934. It featured a stone from every state along with contributions from Minnesota counties and Canadian provinces. Research suggests that Dr. Charles Bressler-Pettis may have visited this attraction during his travels across the United States. Per census records, he owned a residence in McFarland, Wisconsin during that time. The Fireplace of States was moved from its original location in 1995 to the Bemidji Tourist Information Center.

MONUMENT WORLDS
TOURIST PARADISE
KISSIMMEE
AMERICAN LEGION
KISSIMMEE

LAKE
KISSIMMEE
FLORIDA
MONUMENT OF STATES

HONOR ROLL

CEMENT DONORS

DEC. 21, 1941

A. W. SPUNNER
M. L. SPUNNER
THE ENOCH HERZBERGS
THE CARL SCHMIDTS

" [illegible]
" [illegible] WALLACE
" [illegible] EAST.
[illegible] BAND
[illegible] COURT HOUSE
ORANGE [illegible] LODGE No. 80, A.F.&A.M.
W. PERSONS CO.
[illegible] WINDLY
[illegible] MOTORS
[illegible] FUNERAL HOME
ROLL'S MARKET
THE IT CABINET SHOP
THE QUALITY SHOPPE
THE METHODIST CHURCH
" PRESBYTERIAN "

CHAMPIONS
FLORIDA SHUFFLEBOARD ASS'N
14TH ANNUAL TRN'M'NT.

KISSIMMEE, FLA.
FEB 11-13 1942

MEN'S DOUBLES —

H. WOOLMAN
M. HENDERSON

T. SARANDIS
J. ANSCHUTZ

WOMEN'S D'BLES

KISSIMMEE
ALLSTATES TOURIST CLUB
KAST CLUB
KAST CLUB

MONUMENT
TOURIST PARADISE
AMERICAN LEGION
LAKE
MICHIGAN
KISSIMMEE
OSCEOLA COUNTY
FLORIDA
ONUMENT OF

MONUMENT
TOURIST PARADISE
KISSIMMEE
AMERICAN LEGION
KISSIMMEE
HARVARD
MEDICAL SCHOOL
KISSIMMEE

MONUMENT
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KISSIMMEE
HARVARD
MEDICAL SCHOOL
WYOMING
V