

# Mr. Roosevelt Comes to Champaign County: An Examination of the New Deal

Fellowship Lesson 2009  
Marshall Schacht (St. Joseph-Ogden High School)  
Champaign County Historical Archives

## **Lesson 3: The Buildings of the PWA**

In this lesson students will examine several buildings that stand as lasting and functional symbols of the contributions of the New Deal (specifically the Public Works Administration) to life in Champaign-Urbana. One purpose of this lesson is to demonstrate the fact that history is alive around them. The buildings in focus in this lesson are Leal Elementary School, Champaign Central (formerly Junior) High School, Champaign City Building, Champaign National Guard Armory and the Illini Union.

Students will follow along a pictorial essay of the buildings: [“PWA Buildings”](#) (powerpoint)

As students examine the pictures of these PWA projects they will be asked to describe noticeable features of the exteriors of each building (color, brickwork, style, symbols, etc.)

See : [The Buildings of the PWA Worksheet](#)

Students will also consider the importance of each individual project.

- Why would the PWA complete the project?
- What impact would the project have on the community?

After they visit each of the sites they will be asked to point out similarities across the sites. Also, for what reasons would we see noticeable differences.

At the end of the lesson, students will be asked to consider the following questions:

- Why is it important to study these (and others) historical buildings?
- What types of protection should they be given?
- What type of building should be given special consideration for protection and preservation?
- Is this worth the time, effort and funding given the other needs of government’s attention?
- What other methods could be undertaken to preserve landmarks?
- What buildings or landmarks in your community are deserving of protection?

Resources used in this lesson (photos taken by Marshall Schacht during the Summer of 2009):

- Photos of Leal Elementary School (Urbana)
- Photos of Champaign City Building
- Photos of Champaign (Junior) High School
- Photos of Champaign National Guard Armory
- Photos of Illini Union