

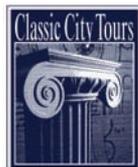
W a l k i n g T o u r OF ATHENS MUSIC HISTORY



Photo: Van Burns



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This *Walking Tour of Athens Music History* (keyed to the map on the back cover) was initiated in 1998 by **Athens Welcome Center** Director, Laura Straehla with assistance from intern, Michelle Williams. With permission, *Flagpole Magazine* redeveloped the walking tour for inclusion in their 1999-2000 *Flagpole Guide to Athens*. For this, *Flagpole* music editor Ballard Lesemann did additional research and interviews with those knowledgeable about the Athens Music Scene 'back in the day,' including: John Seawright, Kurt Wood, William Orten Carlton, Greg Reece, Michael Lachowski, Jared Bailey, Jeff Walls, Barrie Buck, Tony Eubanks, and Curtis Crowe, among many others. The tour was revised in 2001, 2008, and again in 2011, in its present form with updates and editing assistance from Paul Butchart, Greg Reece, and Van Burns, under direction of Athens Welcome Center Director, Evelyn Reece.

To see early footage of the Athens music scene and for further commentary, watch the 1987 film *Athens GA: Inside/Out*, available for purchase at the Athens Welcome Center and athensmusic.net. While the focus of this Walking Tour is on the past, Athens music history is still being made every night in clubs, restaurants, practice spaces, and parties throughout the city. Some of the clubs on the Walking Tour are still going strong. Many venues not listed in the Walking Tour are places where future legends of the Athens music scene are being birthed today. Check out the weekly listings in *Flagpole Magazine's* "Live Music" section in "The Calendar" to find out where music is made and where you too can become part of our history.

1 **300 N. Thomas Street:** In the early 1980's, in the present day location of **The Classic Center**, was **Sparky's**, a seafood establishment featuring local musical acts and the **Athens Folk Music and Dance Society's "Hoot"**. In the Classic Center's loading dock area on Hancock Avenue, was a popular dance-oriented college club called the **Madhatter**. It had a large back room, drawing sizeable crowds for national touring acts, such as the Blasters, Jerry Lee Lewis, and R.E.M., as they gained fame and required larger concert halls. Across Hancock Avenue, the **Rockfish Palace** was originally established in 1987 by local musician Brian Cook (of Time Toy) as a small dive for rock, blues, and punk bands. The joint had a small bar, small stage, and an open-air backstage. Early gigs included Sleepy La Beef, Tinsley Ellis, and the Plasmatics. The venue became more of an established club by the time J.R. Green took over in 1988. He booked such acts as Widespread Panic, Bloodkin, Hasil Adkins, Southern Culture on the Skids, Gamble Rogers, GWAR, and Five-Eight. The club closed in the early '90s and was reopened as a popular dance club/cabaret **Boneshakers** before being demolished in 2006. Today, The Classic Center is northeast Georgia's regional convention center and performing arts theatre. More than 350,000 people from the Southeast attend over 800 events annually in this large venue. Performances from Willie Nelson to Tony Bennett to Smashing Pumpkins, and Broadway musicals *Mama Mia* and *Cats* are just a few shows reflecting the variety of entertainment that continues today.

Call the Athens Welcome Center to book a guided Music History Tour or other special tours at 706-208-8687.



2 260 N. Jackson Street: Off the beaten path at the time, **Wax Jr. Facts** served as a “junior store” for Atlanta’s popular Wax ‘n’ Facts from 1982-1984. The shop was a focal point of the early Athens music scene. Michael Lachowski (of Pylon) co-managed the store, which was well known for its occasional extravagant beer parties. **Jackson Street Books** has long since occupied this location.

3 140 E. Washington Street: Kyle Pilgrim and Duck Anderson bought the fledgling **Uptown Lounge** in April 1984 and gradually built it into a prime live music venue. Early on, many up-and-coming local acts considered this venue a hip alternative to the larger 40 Watt Uptown. Widespread Panic started out here in the mid ‘80s as a weekly house band. By 1987, the Uptown was booking national acts such as the Pixies, Let’s Active, Alex Chilton, Soul Asylum, Jane’s Addiction, Butthole Surfers, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Black Flag, Dinosaur Jr., Meat Puppets and hosting local favorites Mercyland, the Bar B Q Killers, Widespread Panic. R.E.M. also played a few legendary unannounced shows here, once under the name Hornets Attack Victor Mature, debuting songs from the album *Life’s Rich Pageant*. The Uptown closed at this location in early 1990.

This location also housed various rock clubs and discos -- **The Chameleon Club** (AKA the “Ham Leon”, when two letters dropped from the sign), **The Shoe Box**, and the **Atomic Music Hall** from 1990-1997. The Atomic Music Hall gained recognition as one of the more vital underground rock clubs during the mid-to-late ‘90s. The Atomic hosted local benefit gigs and ‘redneck’ punk-rock show-cases, including Trash Fest and Beef Stock,

and regularly booked up-and-coming local bands like Harvey Milk, Redneck Greece, Kincaid, Jucifer, Trinket, Space Cookie, and Buzz Hungry. The club and also attracted national touring acts such as Hole, Cake, Man or Astro-Man?, the Oblivions, and Drivin’ N Cryin’.

4 195 W. Washington Street: Monroe Bowers “Pink” Morton built the **Morton Building** around 1910, which housed one of America’s first African-American built, owned, and operated vaudeville theatres. Entertainers



Photo: Van Burns



including Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Cab Calloway, and Bessie Smith performed here through the 1920s, '30s, and '40s. Members of the B-52s worked in the El Dorado (later the Bluebird) restaurant in the northwest corner of the building in the 1970s. Several Athens rock bands including the B-52s and the Bar B Q Killers practiced in the back rooms through the 1970s and '80s. A segment of the film, *Athens GA: Inside/Out*, featuring an REM performance was filmed in the pre-restored Morton Theatre. After extensive restoration in the early '90s, the theatre reopened as a community performing arts center. It is now a popular venue for a wide variety of theatrical and musical performances, including the annual *Flagpole Athens Music Awards*.

5 **285 W. Washington Street:** Jared Bailey and Barrie Buck moved the **40 Watt Club** to its present location in the old Potters House building in April 1991, with shows by the Flat Duo Jets and a reunited Pylon. The space has decorative acoustic baffles by artist Patti Torno and spacious backstage dressing rooms. The club has continuously hosted a wide variety of local bands and such major touring acts as: Jonathan Richman, Pavement, Run DMC, Snoop Dogg, The Cramps, Cracker, Junior Brown, Mike Watt, Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, Salt 'n' Pepa, Sebadoh, Sugar, The Fall, X, Vic Chesnutt, OK Go, Nirvana, the Black Crowes, Drivin' N Cryin', and Patti Smith. The 40 Watt still hosts renowned local, national, and international acts and continues as the longest running music venue in Athens' history.



Photo: Van Burns



6 **256 W. Clayton Street:** Originally known as the **Coffee Club 11:11**, this was the location of R.E.M.'s second show, the first show using their official name. The police raided the club during that performance, photographed drinking patrons, and closed it down for lack of a proper license. This spot was also the third and the fifth location of the **40 Watt Club**. Steve Allen, who invested in the 40 Watt, moved it here in 1981. It hosted many local bands such as the Side Effects and Oh OK, plus fledgling touring acts like Jason and the Nashville Scorchers. It was a real “dive” with a small stage and dressing rooms off the front entrance. After the 40 Watt relocated to its fourth location on East Broad Street (see #17), Jared Bailey and Barrie Buck returned the 40 Watt to this location in June 1987, for incarnation number five.

Housing 40 Watt Club number five, the ‘new’ club was a decent room with a small bar, small restrooms, and a solid stage. Bands loaded in from the Clayton Street entrance, with patrons entering at the rear through the “beer garden” adjacent to the parking lot. National bands played here regularly, including: Fugazi, Bob Mould, Billy Bragg, The Melvins, Kilkenny Cats, Robyn Hitchcock, Volcano Suns, Porn Orchard, Buffalo Tom, Gypsy Cab Company, Five-Eight, The Jesus Lizard, etc. R.E.M. also played several unannounced shows and filmed the video for “Turn you Inside-Out” here. This incarnation of the 40 Watt closed in the summer of 1990. The venue has since reopened as the ever-popular **Caledonia Lounge**, which continues the alternative music tradition today.

7 **184 W. Clayton Street:** A music club and bar, **The Last Resort** began in 1966 down the street from three finance companies. It was said that if you were turned down by all three, the bar was your “last resort”. This pre-scene bar and music club mostly featured bluegrass, folk, jazz bands and stand-up comedy, such as Steve Martin. For a time, it was owned by pioneer Athens musician Terry “Mad Dog” Melton. In 1978, the B-52s played their fourth Athens show here – an amazing performance. Memorable performers included Randall Bramblett, the Sunbelt Millionaires, Gamble Rogers, and Jimmy Buffet. Guadalcanal Diary played its first Athens show here. Under the ownership of Lynn Miller, the venue expanded to encompass the garage space next door, but the now larger music hall was unable to draw crowds to fill it. The last Resort closed in the mid ‘80s. The space was briefly occupied by a camera shop and in 1992, it was reborn as the Last Resort Grill. Today it remains an upscale restaurant identified by its expansive vegetable mural facing Hull Street, which was painted by artist Dave Jenkins over an earlier mural by Charles Gardner.

8 **59 W. Clayton Street:** **The Georgia Bar** opened in 1986 and is still going strong today. This small room, with a large main bar and killer popcorn machine, has hosted occasional local bands over the years, but is mainly a gathering place and headquarters for the music scene, where anybody can run into somebody. In 2006, after Beck’s show at the Georgia Theatre, he and bandmates did a surprise post-concert performance ensconced in wigs at this tiny bar. This impromptu gig can be viewed today on *YouTube*. The Georgia Bar is part of the “Barmuda Triangle” along with The Globe and The Roadhouse around the corner on Lumpkin Street.



9 **199 N. Lumpkin Street:** A college student and townie hangout in the mid '80s, Abbot's Pizza was popular for its cheap beer and pizza combo. It morphed into the beach-themed Athens Yacht Club, hosting blues and cover bands in the late '80s. After an extensive remodel, **The Globe** opened here in 1990 as a European-inspired pub, frequented by academics, internationals, musicians, and artists. The Globe remains a pub and occasionally hosts live music and film screenings upstairs.

10 **215 N. Lumpkin Street:** Converted from an old movie theater to a music hall by Hap Harris and Sam Smartt, **The Georgia Theatre** opened on January 11, 1978 with Sea Level playing. David Allen Coe followed soon after and the Police played a memorable show here during their first American tour in 1979. The B-52s also played the Georgia Theatre that year, under the owners' condition that they themselves pre-sell \$1500 of advance tickets for the show, before letting the band play. Tyrone Davis, B.B. King, Muddy Waters, and Tom Waits all played the Theatre in the early days. While Harris and Smartt were ahead of their time, it was difficult to make ends meet; they kept it alive almost three years and pulled the plug in 1980. The old hall then limped along as the Carafe & Draft, a movie theater with occasional live music, until Kyle Pilgrim and Duck Anderson re-opened it as a live music and movie venue in 1989, again named the Georgia Theatre. These partners made it a legendary music Mecca, hosting the likes of Widespread Panic, David Allen Coe, Winton Marsalis, Ice-T, Warren Zevon, Rev. Horton Heat, Phish, Jorma Kaukonen, The Dave Matthews Band, Bela Fleck, Hootie and the Blowfish, GWAR and many, many local bands. A portion of the R.E.M. video for "Shiny Happy People" was filmed here.



Photo: Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation

The success of the Georgia Theatre later continued under the ownership of Wilmot Green. Following his tasteful improvements to the building, a fire all but destroyed the old landmark on June 6, 2009, burning the interior and leaving only the exterior Art Deco walls intact. Efforts are well underway to rebuild and reopen the Georgia Theatre in August of 2011 with assistance from the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation. To learn more about the Georgia Theatre's rehabilitation and how you can help, go to: www.georgiatrust.org/preservation/georgiatheatre.php.

11 **140 E. Clayton Street:** In 1988, within a small basement storage space below a downtown sidewalk, local musicians Jim Stacey, Dave Levitt, Beth Hale, Mindy Jacques and Chris DeBarr opened **The Downstairs** as a café with an eclectic schedule of live music. By day, patrons were free to pick records from a



bin to play on the turntable; by night, local and national acts such as Smoke, LaBrea Stompers, No Man, Porn Orchard, The Killbillys, The Woggles, Steve Young, Butch Hancock, and DQE were normal fare. It closed and, after extensive renovations, re-opened as **DT's Down Under**, a more mainstream music venue featuring folk, rock, and jazz acts. It has since been reinvented, but the space remains a bar with live music.

12 197 E. Clayton Street: This small local music shop, **Wuxtry Records**, was established in 1975 and was then known for its wide selection of mainstream and obscure vinyl, cassettes, CDs, and publications. Pete Buck (of R.E.M.) worked as a clerk and record enthusiast at its original location in the small building next door with striped awnings and at its sister store, Wuxtry Café (5120 Baxter St.) in the late '70s and early '80s. Wuxtry owner, Dan Wall, and his staff have been major supporters of the Athens music scene for decades. Stop by Wuxtry Records today for rare and mainstream offerings, local, national, and world.

13 171 College Avenue: Above The Grill restaurant, the third floor of this historic building is the location of the original **40 Watt Club**. In 1978, Pylon drummer Curtis Crowe hosted a Halloween party in a small room on its third floor. Pylon held its debut show here in February 1979. It was dimly lit, with a single 40-watt light bulb. Noting its minimalist lighting, a guest coined the moniker "40-watt club" and the name of the legendary venue was born.

14 128 College Avenue: A large competitive music shop, **Ruthless Records** became **Downtown Records** in 1989. Both had wide selections of mainstream artists and

independent releases. They stocked plenty of local bands' cassettes and discs. Downtown Records became **Big Shot Records** and moved next door to 114 College Avenue. Big Shot later moved to 264 E. Clayton Street before closing down for good and becoming the current location of **School Kids Records**.

15 100 College Avenue: On the second floor of this building at the east corner of Broad and College (currently Starbucks), Curtis Crowe and Paul Scales opened the second **40 Watt Club East** in May of 1980. The Side Effects performed the first night and Love Tractor performed soon after. Patrons entered on the College Avenue side (sometimes through the sandwich shop) and paid a small cover charge to see up-and-coming local bands and New York acts such as The dB's, Raybeats, and the Bongos. The club had a small P.A. system and no air conditioning. R.E.M. played a few early gigs here throughout 1980.

16 229 E. Broad Street: An early Athens rock record store, **Chapter 3 Records** carried hip and hard-to-find underground vinyl and press. The psycho-punkabilly band, The Cramps played upstairs in Chapter 3's storage room in December 1980 after a sketchy gig was canceled at the Georgia Theatre. Alex Chilton of Box Tops fame reportedly ran sound for them. Pylon also played a fraternity party upstairs in this location.

17 382 E. Broad Street: On the south side of Broad was the location of the fourth 40 Watt Club, billed as "**The 40 Watt Club Uptown**." Doug Hoescht opened the club here on April 22, 1983, which he managed and booked. Far more 'upscale' than the previous spots, this 40 Watt soon became the largest club in town. The Replacements, The Lyres,



Kilkenny Cats, Time Toy, Dreams So Real, Jason and The Scorchers, The Plague, 10,000 Maniacs, Suicidal Tendencies, Final Frontier, Mantra Factory, and Bad Brains played here — need we say more? It was a ‘helluva’ club through the mid ‘80s. Club employees Jared Bailey and Barrie Buck continued as managers after Hoescht suddenly left town. This location closed in March of 1987.

18 **286 Oconee Street:** This large warehouse space served in the early ‘70s as the **B&L Warehouse**, as cheap-beer/student-oriented watering hole that hosted rock & roll cover bands in a cavernous room. The B&L gradually evolved into a big music club around 1981 and turned into the I&I Club in 1982, after Tyrones burned down. Iggy Pop played a show that year. The entrance was up a long staircase at the back of the building. Pylon practiced upstairs and performed all-age shows here in 1981 and ‘82. Other memorable gigs included Jason & the Scorchers, Guadalcanal Diary, Leon Russell, and XTC. After a short comeback as **Buckhead Beach**, it was later used as a band practice space, artists’ studios, and a keg-party room. After substantial renovations, it now houses the University of Georgia’s Division of Public Affairs and Police Department, in what is named the Hodgson Oil Building, recalling its original use as a cottonseed oil company.

19 **394 Oconee Street** (cover photo): Bill Berry, Pete Buck, Mike Mills, and Michael Stipe of R.E.M. practiced here in the old St. Mary’s Episcopal Church (“The Church”), where they played their first-ever gig at Kathleen O’Brien’s birthday party on Saturday, April 5, 1980 (the Side Effects Opened). Only “The Steeple” remains, as the church was torn down in 1990 to make way for the adjacent condominium

complex. Next door is **Nuçi’s Space**, a non-profit musicians’ resource center established by the family of musician Nuçi Phillips, who died in 1996 after a long bout of depression. Nuçi’s Space is a present-day musicians’ anchor, functioning as a user-friendly musician’s support center, with affordable practice space, and a network of mental health support.

20 **393 Oconee Street:** Across the street from the R.E.M./St. Mary’s Steeple was **Stitchcraft**, a sewing factory, now the parking lot of Waterford Place Condominiums at the Oconee River. The large industrial complex had spaces that were cheaply rented by artists and musicians. Throughout the early and mid-1980’s Paul Thomas (of X-Ray Café) and Chris DeBarr (of Downstairs Cafe) arranged several shows each month in a large boiler room that was first adapted as Pat Goslee’s art studio. The unofficial club became known as **Lunch Paper**. Bands played in this cinder-block sunken room, under high ceilings with large industrial windows and an outdoor space, where large crowds watched from outside. No bar, no restrooms. Couches came and went. BYOB. Memorable performances include: The Replacements, R.E.M., The Primates, The Tragic Dancers, and poet Allen Ginsberg. R.E.M. also performed the song “I’ve Got You Babe” for the film *Just Like a Movie* at Stitchcraft. Other rooms in the building were rented as practice spaces (and sometimes residences) for many local bands. The Primates’ practice space is well-remembered for their outrageous Halloween parties.

21 **Trestle in Dudley Park:** Along the Oconee River Greenway in Dudley Park, stands what is left of an old railroad trestle that was featured on the back cover of R.E.M.’s 1983 debut album *Murmur*. With the international



success of R.E.M., the trestle's iconic image has been known all over the world since the early 1980's. In 2000, CSX Railway began demolition of the trestle. After world-wide outcry, the destruction was soon halted by a memo of (then) Mayor Doc Eldridge and with the subsequent purchase of the *Murmur* trestle by the local government to prevent its demolition. Efforts have since been underway to convert the old railway for adaptive reuse in the Rails-to-Trails program, which turns abandoned railroads and into natural trails for biking and walking.

22 **1016 E. Broad Street:** At the Oconee River, downhill from Athens' commercial downtown, **Weaver D's Fine Foods** serves up traditional soul food. R.E.M. used proprietor Dexter Weaver's slogan "Automatic for the People" (featured on the restaurant's sign) as the title of its 1992 album. You can still enjoy a meat-'n-3 southern spread at this favorite local eatery. For more information about the restaurant and its recipes read: *Automatic Y'all: Weaver D's Guide to the Soul* by Dexter Weaver with Patrick Allen, available at the Athens Welcome Center.

23 **112 S. Foundry Street:** World headquarters for *Flagpole Magazine*, which Jared Bailey founded in October 1987, as the "Colorbearer of Athens Alternative Music", shortly after he and Barrie Buck re-opened the 40 Watt Club on Clayton Street. Bailey saw the need for a publication to call attention to the Athens' new music scene, and *Flagpole* has been doing so ever since.

24 **Corner of Foundry Street & E. Broad Street:** At this northeast corner, where a grassy lot now meets the eye, was **Tyrone's O.C.**, a fertile hotbed of underground activity in the burgeoning music scene. It succeeded the old Chameleon ("O.C.") nightclub in late 1978. Pylon made its club debut here, while R.E.M. played many early shows (2-night weekends, monthly). Other local acts included Randall Bramlett, Michael Guthrie Band, Turtlebay, Silent Partner, De Boiz, Love Tractor, Limbo District, Little Tigers, and the later famous T. Graham Brown. The club was beginning to gain an international reputation when it burned down in January 1982.



Photo: Evelyn Reece



Driving Points of Interest:

★ **297 Cemetery Street:** Nestled behind Sanford Stadium, off E. Campus Road, lies **Oconee Hill Cemetery**, 100 acres of one of the more scenic landscapes in North Georgia. An excellent example of the fashionable natural landscape cemetery movement, this mid-19th Century cemetery is the resting place of many of the founders of Athens, as well as the B-52's Ricky Wilson, Widespread Panic's Michael Houser, and Vic Chesnut. In the early 1980's, Athens downtown bars closed at 1 a.m. on Friday, and Midnight on Saturdays. After closing time, restless members of the 'scene' would find themselves wandering around Oconee Cemetery. R.E.M.'s song "Stumble" tells the story of one such excursion. For more information about Oconee Hill Cemetery, go to: www.oconeehillcemetery.com or read Charlotte Marshall's book: *Oconee Hill Cemetery of Athens, GA: Volume I*.

★ **Sanford Drive at Hooper Street:** **UGA Memorial Hall** was built to commemorate students and faculty lost in WWI, Memorial Hall's ballroom space hosted fraternity mixers, concerts, and comedic groups, such as Warren Zevon, the B-52's, Andy Kaufman, and Second City Comedy. The University of Georgia's student-run college radio station, WUOG, began operations on the top floor in 1972. Many an Athens music aficionado spun vinyl in this tiny room. DJ's such as Greg Germani (*Who Put the Bomb*), Kurt Wood (too many shows to name), Greg Reece (*Dirt Roads & Honky-tonks*), and William "Ort" Carlton (*Ort's Oldies*) expanded the musical tastes of all in the listening area by playing rarely heard tracks and new tunes from ALL genres. It was on WUOG that R.E.M. was first broadcast; a live recording of "Hippy, Hippy Shake" was played in the summer of 1980. Drummer Bill Berry was also in a short-lived combo of its

radio personalities. To this day, WUOG offers regular specialty shows, continuing a music philosophy that strives to include artists whose music is rarely heard elsewhere.

★ **Off Lumpkin Street & University Court:** **UGA Legion Field.** Spanning the early 1980's to 2000, the University of Georgia hosted free concerts in the summer. Bands such as Asleep at the Wheel, Los Lobos, the Blasters, the Gang of Four, Wet Willie, Pearl Jam, and the Chickasaw Mudd Puppies played these university-funded gigs. An overflow crowd of 12,000 people attended an R.E.M. show in this grassy, dusty field. For four years beginning in 1979 the Student/ Human Rights Festivals were held at Legion Field.

★ **100 Smith Street: Stegeman Coliseum,** constructed by UGA's Ag Department in the 1960s, was home to rodeos, basketball, and music concerts such as Neil Young, Frank Zappa, Kenny Rogers, Bob Dylan, Ike & Tina Turner, Seals & Crofts, Boston, Atlanta Rhythm Section and Marshall Tucker Band and the B-52's, to name a few. It was THE place to see national acts since the 1970s. Today it primarily hosts UGA Gymnastics and Basketball, but also was the venue for rhythmic gymnastics and volleyball during the 1996 Olympics.

★ **137 Hoyt Street:** An old railroad freight depot called **The Station**, on Hoyt Street between Dougherty Street and College Avenue, was occupied by several bars, music venues, discos and cafes through the 1970s and '80s. **TK Hardy's Saloon**, located on the south end, opened in 1971 and hosted various classic rock and country bands into the late '80s. At this location in 1975, **Locomotion** was a short-lived, high-minded coffee house and screening room. A jam session held there spawned a noise band called Night Soil that evolved into the Zambo Flirts with Ricky



Wilson and Keith Strickland, later of B-52s fame. In the late '80s and '90s, the Flying Buffalo hosted a weekly series of acoustic shows by such local performers as Nathan Sheppard and Stewart Marshall. The Grit opened as a tiny restaurant/coffee house/performance space/hangout in 1986 and hosted many underground acts. The annual, beery "Stationfest" featured a plethora of local rock bands through the early '90s. Hoyt Street North booked indie-rock and punk bands in the early '90s. The freight depot building burned down in 1996. The passenger depot in this historic railroad area is now home of the Athens Community Council on Aging.

★ **100 Block of Barber St. - Sidewalk of the Stars:** Following a party in 1981, a group of scenesters walking from Pylon Park to 169 Barber St. noticed newly poured cement on the sidewalk. Ever mischeiveous they wrote the names of the popular local bands of the time who lived on Barber street at the time and christened it *Street of Stars*.

★ **199 Prince Avenue:** In a room that is now the kitchen of **The Grit** vegetarian restaurant, Leslie Michel kept a small late-night café called the **Night Gallery** in the early 1980s. In this hangout, the front rooms were usually filled with art and were occasionally cleared out for local bands and theatrical shows. Boat Of, a band featuring Mike Greene (of The Fans), Michael Stipe, and a naked drummer performed once or twice. Band members and artists hung out after the bars closed, sitting out on their cars drinking. The upstairs of the Grit was where the Squall played during what was the infamous Snow Party, people were dancing upstairs, and outside sledding down the hill from the Camak House. The Grit opened here in May 1990. The independent film company C-00, comprised of Jem Cohen, Jim McKay, and Michael Stipe,

kept offices upstairs here. For more information about the Grit and for recipes read: *The Grit Cookbook: World-Wise, Down-Home Recipes* by Jessica Greene and Ted Hafer, available at the Athens Welcome Center.

★ **653 N. Milledge Avenue:** In this house on February 14, 1977, the B-52's played their very first show, which many say is the beginning of the currently internationally famous music scene. Even though music had been made for years in Athens, it was the B-52's who made the world wonder what was going on in this sleepy little college town. Non-musician locals were soon motivated to pick up instruments, just to see what they could create.

★ **1294 Prince Avenue** (vacant lot): In the heart of the Normaltown neighborhood, **Allen's Hamburgers** opened in 1955, where there is now a vacant lot. Through the years, they occasionally hosted local talent alongside their regular fare of hamburgers, fries, and cold beer. The Normaltown Flyers were a popular band that began playing regular gigs there in the 1970s and, with a few personnel changes, are still going strong. This was long before Athens bands like Pylon, The B-52s, and R.E.M. got their start downtown. Many Athens musicians such as Randall Bramblett, Harold Williams, and Davis Causey were regulars at Allen's, and they are still making good music today. The old Allen's remained a favorite local dive, with a stream of steady shows until long-time owner Danny Self died in 2002. Under new management it remained open, but closed on Dec 31, 2003 and was torn down soon after. Allen's lives on in the B-52s' "Deadbeat Club", a paean to their early days in Athens. Under new ownership, the food, music, and remnants of the old décor survive in Allen's new location at 810 Hawthorne Avenue.

