

This Place Matters

Roanoke, Texas



This Place Matters is a movement to take photos of historic buildings community by community with the This Place Matters signage.

The goal is to remind people in each community about the significance of these buildings and encourage others to begin the campaign. Below are photos of Places that Matter in Roanoke Texas.



Standing ready to protect the former Silver Spur Saloon in Roanoke, Texas, are Chad Congos and John Lotz. The stately landmark was built in 1886 and operated as a dance hall, saloon, brothel and later a pool hall. With a sizable investment from the City and state award winning restoration, This Place Matters not only for its historical significance but because it now serves as the Roanoke Visitor Center and Museum.



When Roanoke High School in Roanoke, Texas, was torn down and a new elementary school was built in 1992, the stone arch from the original entryway was saved and incorporated into a rock wall around the school which was built during the depression. Current students Reagan Smith, Amelia Gillander and Samantha Smith say, "This Place Matters!" Reagan and Samantha's grandmother Wanda Smith attended the old high school.



The Gillespie House was built in 1909 in Roanoke, Texas as a residence for banker, John Gillespie and his family and later was the home of influential businessman, Hise Seagraves. Sidi Davis (with her granddaughter Alexandra Davis) demonstrated how much “This Place Matters” to her by preserving it as the Oak Street Cottage. This beautifully restored building was recently a bed and breakfast and now serves as a popular scrapbooking retreat center.



Thomas Brand, a prominent businessman, constructed this building as a furniture store for the Roanoke, Texas area in 1906. Later the building housed Bourland's Lumber and Dry Goods store. For several decades, James Noah and his father, Monroe, operated a grocery store here. It is now home to nationally known Babe's Chicken Dinner House, whose steady crowd of customers shows This Place Matters to many folks from around the state! Babe's employees certainly agree as they prepare to welcome the hungry customers who often wait outside for up to two hours in the Texas heat for a table.



Hugh W. Jenkins settled in Roanoke, Texas, in 1905 and quickly gained prominence in the community, amassing land as well as cattle. He acquired this site in downtown Roanoke for his hardware store in 1915. Jenkins became the first mayor of Roanoke, and is credited with, among other things, bringing a modern water system to the town. The staff of Mi Familia Restaurant that serves traditional Tex-Mex favorites in this treasured, historic building knows “This Place Matters”



Old friends Emily Ragsdale and Alberta Lincecum sit on the porch of what’s known around Roanoke, Texas, as the Hood-Jenkins House. It was built in the early 1900’s by Berry Hood. In 1905 the house was given as a wedding gift to his daughter Hattie when she married Hugh Jenkins, who became the first mayor of Roanoke. Alberta, whose mother Una Brand was Jenkins’ second wife, still lives in the home. She says, “This Place Matters because it has stayed in the family since it was built!”



Angie Granados, a member of the Historical Society Board of Roanoke, Texas, says, "This Place Matters!" This is the McDonald House, built in 1908; however the original land survey dates to October 1871. Mr. McDonald was the station master for the railroad and served in that capacity for 32 years. The house now serves as retail space in the middle of busy and fast growing Oak Street.



Former army barracks were moved in to Roanoke, Texas, from Abilene in 1940 to serve as residences. Raymond Clark, a local carpenter, purchased one for his family. Ann French Clark, his daughter-in-law, lived in the home after she married Clark's son John. The building now houses Denton County's only 4-star restaurant, The Classic Café. Francis Silman, Manager; Ann French Clark; Curtis Wells, Owner and Charles Youts, Executive Chef know This Place Matters because it contributed as one of over 40 popular restaurants to Roanoke's official designation as The Unique Dining Capital of Texas in 2009!



Bill Manire stands in front of his childhood home as current residents Karen and Dennis Wiechman sit on the porch of The Manire House in Roanoke, Texas. It is believed that Manire's step-grandfather, Martin Van Buren Elsea, a Civil War veteran, built the house in the early 1900's. In 1922 he sold it to his step-son, Ernest Manire, an influential businessman and owner of a grocery store. Bill Manire is one of seven children his parents raised in this three-bedroom prairie farm style house, all of whom graduated from college. Karen, a member of the Roanoke Historical Society Board wants the whole community to know This Place Matters!



Wanda Ragsdale Smith, a member of the Roanoke Historical Society Board and her mother Emily Ragsdale, the oldest lifetime resident of Roanoke believe This Place Matters because it was their home for many years in Roanoke, Texas. The home was built in the late 1800's. The Ragsdale family moved into this home in 1944; one of only two double shotgun houses remaining in Roanoke.



Lloyd Beckett's home was built in the late 1800's by the Texas and Pacific Railroad for the purpose of being home for the Railroad Section Foreman. It faces the train tracks which still run through Roanoke, Texas, transporting cargo to widespread destinations across the country. This Place Matters because Roanoke was settled when the railroad came through here.



Continental Bank Building – KTS Salon owner Kevin Shoop and stylists Chris Morris and Kim Franks join members of the Roanoke Historical Society Board. Along with Micah Petrie and Lydena Sumrall (in pioneer dress) they all gather in front of this historic building in downtown Roanoke, Texas, because they know This Place Matters! Originally the Continental State Bank, it was erected in 1906. In 1936 Claude "Buster" Fanning, Roanoke's second mayor purchased it. He opened a credit union in the building which then became known as "Buster's Bank." The building was listed in the National Register in 1986 and has the original safe intact. The building is still owned by the Fanning family.



Cody Sumrall and his horse, Libra, love small town life in Roanoke, Texas – and think This Place Matters because of its link to interesting history. It was the home of Eugie Thomas, who was the daughter of Bob & Almeady Jones, both of whom were born to black slave mothers and white fathers. They assisted with the Underground Railroad which helped runaway slaves find freedom. Members of the Jones family were highly respected citizens of Roanoke, and owned one of the first completely integrated cafes in Texas.



This Place Matters to the men of the Roanoke, Texas, Masonic Lodge #668 which received its charter in 1888. Their current building was built in 1908 and was awarded a Texas Historical Marker in 1991. The building was moved 60 feet back from its original location on the lot because it was virtually on the property line and increased traffic on Historic Oak Street made that location untenable.



Mayor of Roanoke, Texas, Carl E. (Scooter) Gierisch, Jr. and his wife Shannon, proudly state that This Place Matters. This water tower was built in 1936 (work began on the project in 1933 when Roanoke, Texas was incorporated) and it provided a dependable water system for the whole city. It still stands on Oak Street as a landmark for those seeking the shops and restaurants lining the street of the Unique Dining Capital of Texas, as named by the Texas Legislature in 2009.



The Tidwell house was built in the early 1900's for the Ben Turk Hambright family of Roanoke, Texas. Mr. Hambright worked in the Continental State Bank and at one time was the station master for the railroad. Two generations of the Noah family, James and Monroe, later owned the home and a grocery store on Oak Street. Bobby and Ann (Price) Tidwell relax on their porch – This Place Matters to them because Ann grew up in this house.



Charles Stone, who had a ranch outside of Roanoke, Texas, built this bungalow and several of the historic buildings in town including the Continental State Bank where he was a director. He later bequeathed this home to the local Presbyterian Church to be used as a parsonage. It is now home to the pet grooming business, Pretty Paws and is located along historic Oak Street. Patricia Zehner of the Roanoke Historical Society Board believes This Place Matters.



Dr. Steve Stork, a member of the Roanoke Historical Society Board, stands in front of the late 1800's house that once belonged to John and Mary Jones, an influential and respected family in the early days of Roanoke, Texas. Mr. Jones, better known as Farmer Jones, owned a grocery store on Oak Street and at one time owned the Silver Spur Saloon building. This Place Matters because it is one of the oldest homes in Roanoke.



A significant building in the history of Roanoke, Texas, is the Pacific Hotel/ Raibourn Home – c. 1869. It was a hotel for the railroad and later became a private residence. Now it is home for the McCullough family who know This Place Matters. With help from the City, they moved the Victorian farm house in 2007 within the residential part of historic downtown Roanoke. A three year restoration project is almost complete! The McCullough's were able to save and reuse most of the original materials. Mark says "I hope others will step up to help save additional structures before they are gone; you cannot replace history."