

TOUR OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Please respect private residences and those sites that are not open to the public and view them from the street.

NR: National Register
THM: Texas Historical Marker
RTHL: Registered Texas Historic Landmark
AHL: Arlington Historic Landmark

As you drive this route, try to visualize the places on the "trail" before they were part of Arlington. Remnants of the Eastern Cross Timbers oak forest, stream valleys with their characteristic willows, pecans, and cottonwoods, and the rolling land all give glimpses of the physical setting in which the following events and places developed.

Entertainment History

1. 2. 3.

Arlington has long been known as an entertainment center between "Cowtown" and "Big D." In 1933, people traveled from throughout the United States to place bets on the horses at W. T. Waggoner's Arlington Downs Racetrack located on E. Division. Another popular place was the gambling casino at Top O' Hill Terrace on W. Division. Today, Arlington continues to be one of the state's premiere destinations for entertainment venues like Six Flags Over Texas, Hurricane Harbor, Amerquest Field (home of the Texas Rangers) and, in the future, the Dallas Cowboys Stadium. When visiting Six Flags Over Texas, look for its Historical Centennial Marker and other historical markers located at the Carousel, Cable Tool Rig and Narrow Gauge Railway **(1)**, and the stone murals at Amerquest Field **(2)**, which depict historical Texas scenes. See the decorative watering trough **(3)** which is all that remains of Arlington Downs Racetrack, located just N.E. of the intersection of Six Flags Dr. and Division. Step back in time and enjoy your tour through Arlington's history!

4. Eastern Star Home, 1201 E. Division

This impressive Georgian Revival structure was completed in 1924 for the wives of aged Masons. Memorabilia, such as the many beautiful gowns worn by Worthy Grand Matrons, photographs, scrapbooks and more were once on display. The facility is now closed and former residents were moved to the Texas Masonic Retirement Center. This home was used as a temporary shelter after Hurricane Katrina in September 2005.

5. Pulley Home, 201 E. North

Built around 1921, this home exemplifies the asymmetrical bungalow architectural style. W. J. Pulley opened Pulley Footware in 1929. He married Nannie McKnight who was Arlington's first telephone operator when Southwestern Bell established service here in 1903.

6. Kooken School, 423 N. Center

Originally known as "North Side School," the present brick building was a 1935-1937 WPA project. The school was named after John A. Kooken, a long-time superintendent of the Arlington School District. J. L. Hill was the first principal.

Center and Division Streets

In the early 1920s, Division was known as the Bankhead Highway which was named after "The Father of the Good Roads in the United States," Senator John Hollis Bankhead. The highway designation changed through the years to the Pike, U.S. Hwy 80, Division St. and SH 180. Center St. was the old military road and formed the town's north-south axis. The first traffic light in the city was located at the intersection of Center and Division.

Significant structures associated with Arlington's history are located on three of the four corners of these streets. Hi-way Drug was on the S.W. corner and only a foundation remains today. The Cooper Hotel, which is now a pawn shop, was located on the N.W. corner and the First United Methodist Church, then the Centenary Methodist Episcopal Church South, is located on the N.E. corner. The Thannisch-Vandergriff building is located on the S.E. corner.

7. Centenary Methodist Episcopal Church South (First United Methodist Church), 313 N. Center (THM)

In 1878, a group of Methodists met in Schults' lumberyard at Mesquite and Front Streets and organized the first church in Arlington's original township. Property was purchased from the T&P Railroad and the first church was built in 1885. The Centenary Methodist Episcopal Church South, the first brick church, was built in 1907 on the N.E. corner of Center and Division Streets where Vandergriff Chapel, built in 1965, is now located.

8. The Cooper Hotel (Top Dollar Pawn), 300 N. Center

Built in the early 1920s by James Newton Cooper, it was once home to Texas Motorcoach Depot, a floral shop and the Rainbow Grill Restaurant. The building is currently occupied by a pawn shop and is an example of a downtown historic building that has received a makeover with a modern facade.

9. Thannisch-Vandergriff Bldg, 100 E. Division

This building is characteristic of the 1920s Commercial Style. Decorative brickwork patterns adorn both stories, while terra cotta embellishments highlight the second story roofline. Built in 1928 for J.C. Thannisch as an automobile dealership, the first six-cylinder Chevrolet in the area was showcased at the grand opening. T.W. (Hooker) Vandergriff purchased the building circa 1938 and a car dealership remained at this location until 1966.

10. Arlington Theater (Johnnie High's Country Music Revue) 224 N. Center

The Arlington Theater was built by O'Rourke Construction and managed by Harold Eppes. The theater touted a baby cry room and one of the state's largest refreshment bars. The opening night feature attraction was "Story of Seabiscuit" on February 10, 1950. This structure is currently owned by Johnnie High and continues to be a popular location for nationally known country western music reviews.

11. Old Post Office (Worthington National Bank) 200 W. Main (NR)

This structure depicts Classical Revival architecture and was constructed by the Federal Works administration in 1939. The mural reflects one of Arlington's major industries during the Depression and can be viewed inside the bank.

12. Knapp Heritage Park, 201 W. Front

The heritage center site was donated by the grandchildren of James & Mildred Knapp. James Knapp was a prominent attorney and land developer. He was also instrumental in the development of many of the highways serving Arlington today such as SH 360. The Jopling-Melear and Watson cabins, which date to the mid 1800s, in addition to Knapp's office and a 1910 one room schoolhouse are also located within the park. Tours available by appointment, call 817-460-4001.

The Old Town historic District

The District is in the city's original town site and represents the largest group of intact early 20th century homes in the city. It is bordered by Sanford on the north, Oak St. on the west, Prairie St. on the south and Elm St. on the east.

13. Hutchison-Smith Home (NR, RTHL), 312 N. Oak

Built around 1896, this L-plan Queen Anne residence with jigsaw trim is located on land once owned by I. L. Hutchison, arlington merchant and pioneer. It was purchased in 1919 by S. T. Smith and owned by this family until the late 1970s.

14. Douglass-Potts Home, 206 W. North (NR, RTHL)

Built in 1907, this was the home of City Marshal/Chief of Police Wilson M. Douglass and his wife Clara Ramsey Douglass. W. A. Potts purchased the home in 1919 and it remained in his family until 1987. The house is an L-shaped post Victorian vernacular.

15. Dickerson Home, 400 N. Pecan (NR)

This home was built in 1918 by Martin Luther Dickerson and his wife Blanche Baker Dickerson. He was a cotton broker in Arlington and Ft. Worth. The bungalow is owned by a descendant of the Dickerson family.

16. Mount Olive Baptist Church, 301 W. Sanford St. (THM)

Mount Olive Baptist Church was one of the early churches established in 1897 in the heart of "The Hill," where most African Americans settled. It was then re-built at 402 N. West St. (now N. L. Robinson Dr.). The present building was occupied in 1989.

17. Emanuel Church of God in Christ, 515 Indiana (THM)

This church was a vital part of the heritage of the surrounding area, known as "The Hill." As early as 1895 residents came together to form this community church. The current sanctuary was constructed in the late 1930s and worship services are still held here regularly.

18. Texas Masonic Retirement Center, 1501 W. Division

The Mission Revival style Center has been an Arlington landmark since it was opened by the Masons' Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Texas in 1911. The home, which is the only one of its kind in Texas, is open to all Texas Masons and their spouses. The Masonic Home's Grace Woodward Museum contains a variety of memorabilia. Call 817-275-2893 for museum hours/tours.

19. Top O' Hill Terrace, Arlington Baptist College, 3001 W. Division (THM, AHL)

In 1926, Fred & Mary Browning purchased this property and began converting the structure into a casino. They later added an escape tunnel and secret room to hide gambling paraphernalia during raids by the Texas Rangers. Dr. J. Frank Norris, co-founder of Fundamental Baptist Bible Institute which later became Bible Baptist Seminary, was a vocal critic of gambling and vowed to someday own the property. In 1956, under the direction of Dr. Earl K. Oldham, the Bible Baptist Seminary purchased the property and relocated here. Tours are conducted by appointment. Call 817-461-8741 for museum hours/tours.

West Abram Street

Many of Arlington's finest homes were located here since the 1902 Interurban trolley ran along this street from Ft. Worth to Dallas. It provides a relatively intact streetscape from the early 1900s.

20. Historic Fielder House, 1616 W. Abram (THM, RTHL)

The Fielder House was built in 1914 by prominent banker James Park Fielder and wife, Mattie. Fielder was an Arlington commissioner and served on the original board of the present UTA. This two-story brick Prairie-style home was built on a 215 acre site surrounded by live oaks, orchards and gardens. Once known as "Home on the Hill," today it is the home of the Fielder Museum, the Arlington Historical Society and the Arlington Preservation Foundation. Call 817-460-4001 for hours/tours.

21. John M. Elliott Home, 1210 W. Abram

John M. Elliott and his wife, Sally Russell Elliott, purchased this home on Abram St. John was a director of the Citizens National Bank at the corner of Main and Center. Built around 1913, this home is an outstanding example of a hipped roof bungalow with classical influences. The porch and entry detailing are especially noteworthy, as is the cross-hatched wood that adorns the windows.

22. Vaught Home, 718 W. Abram (NR)

This classical revival home with Doric columns was built for T. J. Trammell and purchased by Alex Vaught around 1907. This structure has undergone modifications in the recent years, including remodeling that added the Georgian Revival portico.

23. W. A. Thornton Home, 719 W. Abram

This structure, built around 1906, is a hybrid form of domestic architecture, which includes a hipped roof and inset porch, common characteristics of regional vernacular architecture. The first gas lights in Arlington were in this home.

24. Old Arlington High School (UTA) 211 S. Cooper

The Arlington School District built its first high school on the corner of Cooper and Abram in 1922. It became Ousley Jr. High in 1956 when a new high school was constructed on Park Row. In 1968, AISD sold the building to UTA and the School of Social Work opened here.

The University of Texas at Arlington (UTA)

Arlington College opened in September 1895 as a private school with 75 students on a site near the present UTA Hereford Student Center. In 1967, with the college's eighth name change, it became known as the The University of Texas at Arlington. Ransom Hall, built under the affiliation of Grubbs Vocational College, was completed in 1919 as the first administration building. It housed most of the school's academic classes, as well as the library and auditorium. Preston Hall was originally built as a science hall by North Texas Agriculture College in 1928. Both Preston and Ransom Halls have Romanesque Revival detailing.

South Center Street historic District

William Rose platted this area in 1916, which is known as the William Rose Addition. These Craftsman inspired bungalows and Tudor homes represent the best group of these architectural styles in Arlington. Many of the city's early merchants and craftsmen lived in this area near downtown.

27. Mayor William H., & Ollie Gibbins Rose Home, 501 S. Center (NR)

This home was constructed in 1916 for Mayor William H. and his wife, Ollie Gibbins Rose, and was the first home built in the South Center Street Historic District. Rose, elected mayor in 1919, is remembered for numerous civic, infrastructure improvements and the authorization of the first City Charter in 1920. This home is owned by descendants of the original family.

28. Slaughter-Geer Home, 505 S. Center (NR, AHL)

Zachary Taylor Slaughter constructed this house in 1917 for his father, Henry Jones Slaughter, and his stepmother, Betty Slaughter. He co-founded the Sewell-Slaughter Hardware Store and in 1917 opened Arlington's first Ford dealership. This home is owned by descendants of the original family.

29. Arlington Cemetery, 801 Mary (THM)

The Arlington Cemetery was established in 1899 when William W. McNatt sold the land to the town of Arlington. The original City Cemetery, the McNatt Cemetery, the Masonic Cemetery and the Arlington Cemetery are located within the current cemetery boundaries. Early settlers, seven postmasters, 11 mayors and veterans of the Civil War through current wars are interred here. The Arlington Cemetery Association was chartered in 1923 and cared for the cemetery until the City of Arlington assumed maintenance.

30. Ghormley-Arnold Home, 404 E. First

This vernacular, modified L-plan home has a classically detailed porch. It was built around 1906 for Dr. W. I. Ghormley. John E. Arnold and his wife, Minnie Curtis Arnold, purchased this home

in 1919. It has been restored and is an excellent example of adaptive reuse as an office.

31. McKinley-Woodward Home, 400 E. First

This Queen Anne L-plan home with Victorian detailing was built in 1893 by Jesse Stanley McKinley, Arlington's first hardware merchant. His daughter, Frances, and her husband, Dr. Valin Woodward, were subsequent owners of the home. This structure is believed to be one of the oldest in the city.

32. Old Mayor's House, 814 E. Abram

This outstanding Tudor Revival home with Romanesque arched doors and stained glass windows was built around 1928 by cattle broker Dave Martin. It was once owned by B. C. & Francine Barnes. Barnes, for whom the house was named, was mayor of Arlington from 1947 to 1951.

33. Meadowbrook Park, 1400 Dugan

Meadowbrook Park was built in 1923 with the assistance of the Arlington Rotary and is recognized as Arlington's first public park. It featured a swimming pool, nine-hole golf course and a monkey zoo in a sandstone structure. Golf legends Ben Hogan and Byron Nelson led golf clinics here. The Arlington Garden Club planted and maintained a rose garden in the park. The Arlington Sculpture Foundation, Inc. is creating an on-site sculpture garden.

Historic Structures No Longer Existing

34. T&P Depot Site, 110 N. Center

The depot was built in 1904 and remained until 1952. The Texas & Pacific Railroad established the city of Arlington by selecting a parcel of land for the steam locomotives to receive the water and wood needed to operate. A 1/2 square-mile tract, bordered by East, West, South, and North streets, was surveyed for businesses and homes.

35. Mineral Well (1892-1951), Intersection of Center and Main Streets

The mineral well pictured above was a familiar Arlington landmark for almost 60 years. The original well was drilled by a wood-powered steam engine in 1893. Troughs were built which provided water for animals. In 1910 the Commercial Club funded the construction of a new mineral well in which water flowed through lions' heads mounted on a four-sided structure. Through the years, the well was the focal point for political rallies, parades, cotton sales and even for the sale of mineral water in various forms. In 1951, the structure was razed and the well permanently capped under the intersection's pavement. The next time you drive through the intersection of Center and Main Streets, think of another bygone Arlington landmark.

SOURCES & CREDITS

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Inquiries regarding landmark preservation designation and historic preservation should be made to the City of Arlington Neighborhood Services Department at 817-459-6777.

Many of the individual historical markers in Arlington are listed in this web site. For a complete listing with descriptive information, visit www.ci.arlington.tx.us/landmark and click on historic properties.

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