



Jayn Higgins can proudly claim ties to Historic Southside since birth. She came from St. Joseph's hospital right to the corner of Hattie and New York. She is a third generation resident of the area. Her family traveled to Terrell Heights from the cornfields of Sulphur Springs TX in the 1930s on search of a better life. Her extended family have been consistent residents of the neighborhood for the last 90 years. As a proud alumni of Little Tommy Tucker nursery school, Our Mother of Mercy Catholic School and Van Zandt Guinn schools in our neighborhood, Jayn later moved to the Carver Heights neighborhood and eventually out of state. No matter where she has travelled, her Southside roots have stayed with her. She has purchased and rehabbed two homes on Terrell St., both of which have a direct connection to the first Black Millionaire in Texas, William Madison "Gooseneck" McDonald.

Upon returning to Texas in the early 2000's Jayn happened upon a home which was being restored on East Humbolt Street. This home was being remodeled as the Lenora Rolla Heritage Center Museum. As Jayn became more curious about the site, she was invited to become a Board Member of the Tarrant County Black Historical and Genealogical Society, the owners and residents of this home. This was the official start of her journey to learn about and preserve the history of Historic Southside. As a young child in the 1960s Jayn can recall a vibrant neighborhood full of pride in home ownership and thriving businesses. She remembers neighbors who knew everyone on the block and participated in various clubs and social events. Jayn has been honored to collaborate with the Ft. Worth Museum of Science and History on exhibits honoring William Madison McDonald and civil rights attorney Judge L. Clifford Davis. She manages a YouTube channel for the Tarrant County Black Historical and Genealogical Society which features the series "Moments in Tarrant County Black History". Jayn has served as Historian for HSNA for the last three years. She developed the "Know Your Hood" presentation which highlights a different structure in the neighborhood and the history of its residents. Jayn modestly admits that she does not feel "seasoned" enough for the title of "historian" but will proudly wear it when bestowed by others. Like many other members of her family Jayn is a proud educator with 40 plus years of experience in working with students with

disabilities. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Education from UNT and a Masters in School Psychology from Howard University. Jayn is very excited about the upcoming Juneteenth Museum as well as other projects that are enhancing the neighborhood. She is an active member of our Steering Committee.

Among Jayn's favorite memories of historic Southside are the following photos, which are currently part of a collection on the Portal to Texas website.



Photo of May Pearl McDonald, 5th wife of William Madison "Gooseneck" McDonald, standing in front of their home located at 1201 E. Terrell Ave.



Photo of Martin Luther King's visit to Fort Worth, where he reportedly stayed in our neighborhood at the home of Vada Felder and Lucille B. Smith, also pictured.



Photo of Calvin Littlejohn, Photographer extraordinaire. He provided rich pictorial history of Black life in Ft. Worth from the 1930s to the 1990s.



Picture of faculty at I.M. Terrell, circa 1930s. Many of these teachers lived in Terrell Heights, including Hazel Harvey Peace, shown above.



Photo of William Madison "Gooseneck" McDonald in his office at Fraternal Bank and Trust, circa 1920s.



Jayn's family church, Mt. Zion Baptist church where she was baptized.



The Grand Theatre, Fort Worth