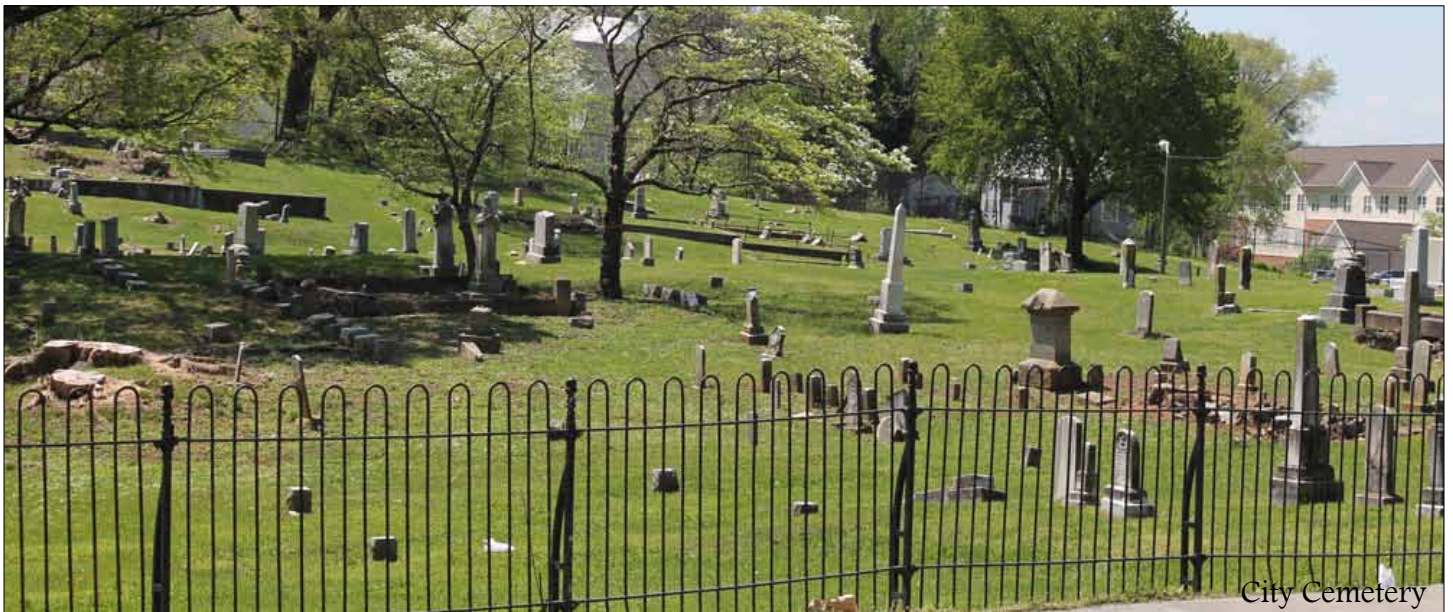




ROANOKE  
VALLEY  
PRESERVATION  
FOUNDATION

2013 Endangered Sites List  
Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation



City Cemetery

Since 1996, the Roanoke Preservation Foundation has annually announced a list of significant historic, natural, and cultural sites in the Roanoke Valley that are in eminent danger of being lost due to deferred maintenance, demolition, or incompatible development. The intent is not to shame or punish the current owners, but bring attention to these sites and encourage their preservation and stewardship.

In no particular order of severity or significance, these sites are considered endangered:

In celebration of the Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation's 25th anniversary, the Endangered Sites Committee elected to revisit past sites to celebrate those preserved, reflect on those lost, and recognize those still in danger. Of the more than 100 sites listed since 1996, approximately 41% have been preserved or are no longer in danger, 24% have been lost to demolition, and 35% are still endangered. This list includes nine past sites and one new site for 2013.

## 1. Riverdale/Huff-Rutrough House – New for 2013

Location: 1905 Riverdale Road SE, City of Roanoke

Description: This two-story brick residence was constructed ca. 1863 or shortly thereafter by Isaac Huff and his wife, Maria. Inconsistencies in the brick work suggest that it was constructed shortly after slaves were emancipated in the Roanoke Valley as their skills could not easily be replaced. Huff sold the farm to prominent banker and developer, Peyton Terry, who operated the farm as a dairy. The dairy was managed by Huff's son-in-law, Frank Rutrough, who eventually took ownership when Terry suffered financial setbacks. In 1916, the farm was subdivided to accommodate home sites for American Viscose workers.

Threat: Riverdale is threatened by neglect by its current owner. Numerous code enforcement violations have been placed on the property with the most recent resulting in the demolition of the home's two porches, one original and the other added in the 1910s.

Recommended Action: Riverdale is a rare example of a Civil War period brick house. A survey conducted for compliance with Section 106 in relation to the demolition of



Riverdale prior to demolition of porches in April 2013.

the front and rear porches concluded that the house and site are potentially eligible for inclusion on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. The owner should relinquish ownership of the property to a preservation-minded buyer. Nominating the site to the state and national registers should also be explored to make available state tax credits for its rehabilitation.



Riverdale in 2001.  
Photograph courtesy of Roanoke City Real Estate Dept.

## 2. Claytor Memorial Clinic – Listed 1996

Location: 431 Old Gainsboro Road, City of Roanoke

Description: The Claytor Memorial Clinic was constructed in 1947 in the Art Deco style by Dr. John B. Claytor and his wife when they realized many of their eight children would be entering the medical field. The clinic was named in honor of Roberta Woodfin Claytor, the family matriarch who died in 1946. The clinic is a significant resource to the Gainsboro Historic District which is listed on both the state and national registers.

Threat: The Claytor family and other healthcare professionals worked in the clinic until it was damaged by fire in 1995. Since that time, it has been unoccupied and neglected.

Recommended Action: The owner should relinquish the building to a preservation-minded buyer if unable to adequately maintain the building. Its restoration would not only contribute to preserving Roanoke's African-American heritage, but to the future health of the surrounding neighborhood as well.



Current condition of Claytor Memorial Clinic.

## 3. City Cemetery – Listed 1996

Location: Tazewell Avenue SE, City of Roanoke

Description: Dating from the late 1800's, City Cemetery is the final resting place for many of Roanoke's prominent citizens including several mayors and the granddaughter of renowned

patriot, Patrick Henry. It also contains many Civil War graves. The cemetery has a picturesque quality with mature trees and headstones featuring classic iconography surrounded, in places, by decorative wrought iron fencing.

**Threat:** Many of the headstones have been pushed over, broken, or removed by vandals. There are also urination stains on several headstones left by people using



Current condition of City Cemetery.

the cemetery as a camp. In recent years, many groups, including the RVPF, have made efforts to maintain the cemetery. Cleaning and reaffixing headstones is a delicate task, however, and can cause greater harm if executed improperly than leaving them in their current state.

**Recommended Action:** The Belmont Neighborhood Foundation has recently received a grant from the City of Roanoke to have additional lighting and security fencing installed around the perimeter of the cemetery which will go a long way to securing the cemetery at night. For its long term preservation, however, a sustainable maintenance plan needs to be implemented to ensure work is carried out properly. The RVPF has begun to explore funding options for a cemetery workshop conducted by professionals at City Cemetery.

#### 4. Tanyard House – Listed 1996

**Location:** Located at the corner of Clay Street and Thompson Memorial Highway in the City of Salem on the east edge of the Monterey property, an 1853 Greek Revival dwelling.

**Description:** The Tanyard House is a small antebellum frame dwelling associated with the Chapman Tan Yard. It is believed to have been constructed in 1852.

**Threat:** When first listed, the Tanyard House was owned by the Burke family who resided in Monterey. Their intention was to preserve the building and protect it from the pressures of encroaching development. However, since Roanoke College acquired the property in 2002, the Tanyard House has been neglected. It is



Tanyard House in 1996.

now threatened by neglect if the need to expand surrounding development such as Roanoke College or the Roanoke County Court Complex does not lead to its demolition first.

**Recommended Action:** Roanoke College should preserve the building as it is a significant piece of Salem's history. It could also serve as a teaching tool and project for students interested in historic preservation.



Current condition of Tanyard House.

## 5. Roanoke Red Sulphur Spring Cottage – Listed 1999

**Location:** On the grounds of Catawba Hospital, Roanoke County

**Description:** This ca. 1858 weatherboard cottage is the only remaining structure from the Roanoke Red Sulphur Spring Resort, aside from the iron gazebo marking the spring. The resort opened in June 1858 by several men from Salem and was eventually owned and operated by Joe Chapman. He advertised his water as valuable in the treatment of lung disease all over the country. At the height of popularity, the resort accommodated 300 guests. The cottage can be seen in an Edward Beyer painting of the resort completed shortly after the resort opened.

**Threat:** The resort continued to operate until 1908 when the first tuberculosis sanatorium in the state was established on the site. The cottage was used for patients until more permanent facilities were built, at which time its use was discontinued. It has remained vacant and neglected since that time.

**Recommended Action:** This building represents a significant piece of the Roanoke Valley's history.



Edward Beyer painting of Roanoke Red Sulphur Spring Resort from 1858. The cottage is located to the right of the iron gazebo which is still present on the property as well.

The Hospital should secure funding to stabilize the cottage.



Condition of the Roanoke Red Sulphur Spring Cottage in 2002.

## 6. Hester House – Listed 1999

Location: 203 Union Street, City of Salem

Description: The former home of Frank S. Hester is an impeccable example of a Free Classic Queen Anne ca. 1891. It is located within an intact block of well maintained homes of equivalent age and similar style.

Threat: Vacant and neglected, the Hester House has been allowed to decay with wood cladding exposed to the elements, rainwater seeping in through the roof, and chimney mortar crumbling away.

Recommended Action: The loss of this home would not only be a tragedy in and of itself, but also damage the continuity of the streetscape. The owner should relinquish the property to a preservation-minded buyer if disinterested in preserving the home.

This section of Union Street is an intact block of well maintained Queen Anne homes.



Current condition of Hester House.



## 7. Preston House – Listed 1999

Location: 1963 West Main Street, City of Salem

Description: This ca. 1821 Federal style dwelling was built for John Johnston on land previously owned by John Cole, who hosted a 12 year old Davy Crockett on the property around 1798. The property was then sold to Charles I. Preston in 1879 and his descendants retain ownership of the property today.



Current condition of the Preston House.

Threat: The Preston House is threatened by neglect and encroaching suburban development. It is flanked by a fast food restaurant and a gasoline station. Despite the loss of context, the dwelling's interior and exterior details retain their integrity.



The Preston House is surrounded by commercial development, including a restaurant to the west and gasoline station to the east.

Recommended Action: In 1999, the RVPF suggested the house be used as a bed and breakfast or welcome center to historic Salem due its proximity to I-81. These are still viable options. The land associated with the house should also be preserved to retain its remaining context and potential archaeological deposits from encroaching development.

## 8. 400 block of Gilmer Avenue – Listed 2006

Location: 401, 405, 411, and 415 Gilmer Avenue, City of Roanoke

Description: The north side of the 400 block of Gilmer Avenue was once home to several prominent African-Americans at a local and national level including Oliver Hill, famed civil rights activist and lawyer, at 401 Gilmer Street; Dr. Edward Dudley, Roanoke's first black dentist, and his son, Edward Jr. who was ambassador to Liberia and later a judge on the New York Supreme Court, at 405 Gilmer Avenue; Dr. J.H. Roberts, one of Roanoke's first black doctors, at 411 Gilmer Avenue; and Rufus Edwards, a Norfolk & Western Railway brakeman and union officer, at 415 Gilmer Avenue.

Threat: Some progress had been made on the street when the Oliver White Hill Foundation acquired and restored 401 Gilmer, leasing it to Washington & Lee's School of Law for a legal aid office offering pro bono services. This endeavor was short lived, however, with the office now closed. The house is still in use from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday by the Oliver Hill Mentoring Program for 3rd through 5th graders in the Roanoke City Public Schools system. The daughters of Dr. J.H. Roberts continue to be great champions for the preservation of Gilmer Avenue and the Gainsboro Neighborhood as a whole.

Recommended Action: This area needs to see a concerted effort to ensure the stability of the neighborhood and the preservation of these four buildings. Even though it is a national register district, it has no local designation which would increase the standard of property maintenance.

Current condition of 400 block of Gilmer Avenue.



## 9. Compton-Bateman House/Villa Heights – Listed 2007

Location: 2750 Hoover Street NW, City of Roanoke

Description: Constructed ca. 1835 on land originally owned by the prominent McClanahan family, the Compton-Bateman House is one of the few remaining antebellum homes in the City of Roanoke. It was constructed as a simple two-story brick home and later embellished in the Greek Revival style in the early 1900's by the Compton family. The Batemans were the last family to use it as a residence until they deeded it to the City of Roanoke for use as the Villa Heights Recreation Center in 1958.

Threat: The Compton-Bateman House closed as a recreation center in 1999 and eventually was placed on the market for sale or lease. In 2011, a fire destroyed a portion of the roof which has not been repaired. Insurance money is available to either make repairs or demolish the building; however, the offer will expire in June 2014. If a suitable buyer or tenant is not found by the end of May 2013, the City will consider using insurance funds to demolish the building.

Recommended Action: In order to adequately protect this property, a preservation-minded buyer with an appropriate rehabilitation plan and end use would need to acquire the building. Proposals to the City must include details of the intended use, the proposed terms and conditions of purchase, proposed method of financing, and proposed purchase price.



Compton-Bateman House prior to fire.



Compton-Bateman House on fire.  
Photograph courtesy of The Roanoke Times.



Fire damage to the interior.



## 10. Denton House – Listed 2009

Location: 509 Roanoke Road, Botetourt County

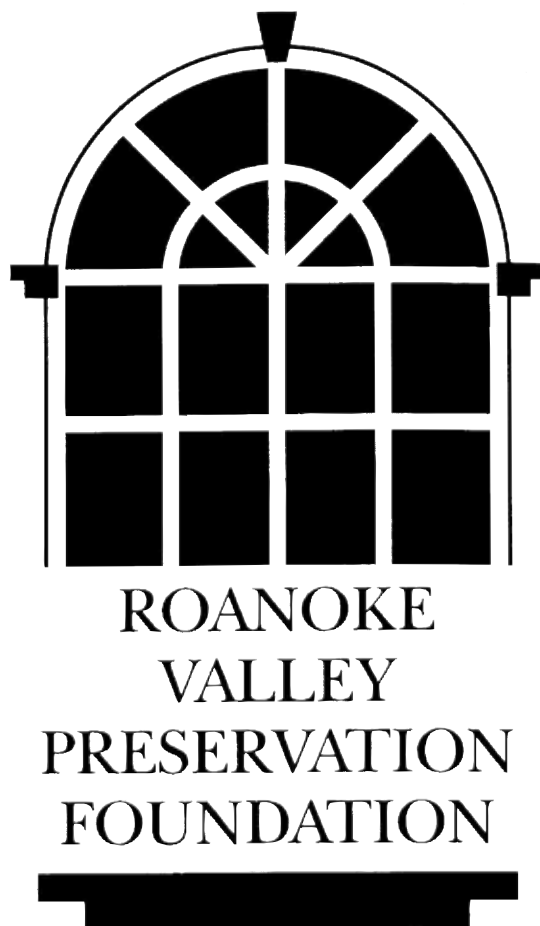
Description: The Denton House is a ca. 1850 Greek Revival dwelling built by Robert A. and Ann Moomaw Denton. Their son, Theodore Denton who was a successful farmer, fruit grower, canner, banker, and minister, lived in the house for most of his life. It remained the family home well into the 20th century. It is an excellent example of a house of this type, with few other examples in the area.

Threat: In the mid-2000's renovations on the Denton House began to convert the home into a restaurant. The owner also made dramatic cuts to the hillside on which the house sits to access lots created at the rear of the property. The restaurant elected to open at another location and renovations ceased. This left the home in an unfinished state, leaving crucial elements exposed such as the roof which is only covered with tarpaper in some areas. A number of windows have also been broken allowing access for wild animals and porches have begun to fail.

Recommended Action: The owner should actively be seeking a preservation-minded buyer. In the interim, however, the building should be stabilized and secured to ensure it does not deteriorate further.



Current condition to the Denton House.



## Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation

The Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation is a non-profit, 501c3 organization created for the purpose of promoting the preservation of the historic, natural, and cultural resources of the Roanoke Valley.

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