In 2004, the UTA Library began scanning a selection of photo negatives donated by Gordon Smith. Gordon and his father W.D. were local commercial photographers who had been taking (and collecting) photos of the Fort Worth area since the 1920s. A selection of images, primarily in and around downtown Fort Worth, were selected to be digitized and were put online: [http://www.uta.edu/library/digital/wdsmith/](http://www.uta.edu/library/digital/wdsmith/).

IDEA: the evolution of Evolution

While scanning these images, I realized that many of the buildings pictured are still standing. Our initial trip to take the current photos took place on a Sunday and we only used images that had a description of the location accompanying the negative or were of easily recognizable structures (see below).

Original (1945) and Digitized

Fort Worth Post Office

Born Digital (2012)

Fort Worth Court House

Original W. D. Smith Project
Fort Worth Public Library (1941)

Description & Challenges

As the Evolution project got underway, we were able to locate many more of the sites from the WD Smith photos with a little research. Several of the businesses pictured still existed and in some cases were still using the building in the image. (Justin Boots)

Of course, many of the buildings have since been torn down either to be replaced (Montis, on left) or simply because they were no longer needed (Bowie Drive-In, below).

After we had determined the location of the site, we then had to photograph it. In some cases, this meant merely taking dozens of photos so that we could later compare them to the original to see which looked best. In other cases, we had to brave traffic, fences, railroad tracks and private security in order to accomplish our goal. As we continue this project, we hope to add more images to our collection and be able to receive feedback from past and current Fort Worth residents who might be able to shed some light on the identity of some of our as yet unknown locations.