

Heart of A Small Town: Photographs of Alabama Towns

Robin McDonald

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With 126 color photographs and 30 quotes from noted Alabama storytellers, Robin McDonald creates the "mood" of small towns everywhere as they quietly retire from service.

Heart of a Small Town is Robin McDonald's paean to a time when small rural communities all over this country bustled with life. Concentrating on Alabama, he draws his subjects from those areas of the state that have been bypassed by major highways and left somewhat deserted. Places like Verbena, Mentone, Burnt Corn, Newbern, Epes, and Enterprise; places in the Black Belt, in Wiregrass Country, in the Piedmont. There he records common objects—screen doors, broken sidewalks, storefront displays, neon signs, rusting pickup trucks, kudzu-covered walls, and church windows—with an uncommon sensitivity.

Matched with quotations from writing that grew out of these places, the images take on an unusually vibrant life. Robin McDonald's photographs are animated and enriched by the lyrical quotations borrowed from southern writers, some less well known, like Augusta Evans Wilson and Viola Goode Liddell, and some well known, like Truman Capote, Zelda Fitzgerald, James Agee, Vicki Covington, and Rick Bragg. They echo with the hopes and joys and the struggles and grief of folks who have called these places home.



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