
'Take me back to Turkey (Texas)' where the music Swings
and Bob Wills is still the King

Bob Wills Day: 'Always in April in Turkey, Texas'

Turkey, TX – The small West Texas town of Turkey, Texas has welcomed tens of thousands of attendees to the annual Bob Wills Day festival since 1972. From as far away as Australia, England, Germany and Japan, attendees range from babies to 90-year-old 'dancers.' As the 43rd celebration approaches in 2014, the jam-packed tribute to the legendary Bob Wills has also become legendary!

For some, Bob Wills Day is a pilgrimage, a step back in time and a connection to a history rooted in the cotton fields and expressed in a uniquely American music form; for others, it is a fun-filled festival of dancing, jamming and enjoying friends.

In the week prior to the last Saturday in April, RVs, chartered buses and cars with license plates from across the country will begin to circle the open lots in Turkey. By Thursday, the town is teeming with visitors. Music is heard from all directions. People enjoy Saturday's outdoor concert with the Texas Playboys, the fiddle contest, Main Street parade, Thursday through Saturday night dances, shopping in the vendors' tents and gift shops, visiting the Bob Wills monument in City Park, enjoying the Bob Wills Museum with live entertainment on the museum stage, having lunch at the Hotel Turkey, the cook-off or the Saturday barbeque, or meeting and greeting others and sharing stories.

In addition to special appearances by members of the Texas Playboys (Bob's band,) entertainment features Texas Western Swing Hall of Fame inductee, Billy Mata; Asleep at the Wheels' Jason Roberts aka 'the Texas Fiddleman," who plays Bob Wills in the critically acclaimed play, "A Ride with Bob;" Jake Hooker and the Outsiders; plus the ever popular Jody Nix and the Texas Cowboys and Dr. Charles R. Townsend as Master of Ceremonies.

BOB WILLS MUSEUM IN TURKEY, TX

The Bob Wills Museum is located in what used to be Turkey's elementary school at Sixth and Lyles Street. In 2011 and, in honor of the 40th Anniversary of Bob Wills Day, the museum underwent a massive renovation, including the addition of a stage for live entertainment. Today, the museum continues to welcome visitors throughout the year and with extended hours plus entertainment during the week of Bob Wills Day. The museum is dedicated to sharing the story of Jim Rob Wills, the boy 'from between the rivers' who became the great Bob Wills.

TURKEY, TEXAS

In the early 1920's, 'Uncle' John and Emma Wills moved their family to a 600-acre ranch/farm between the Big Red and the Little Red Rivers just north of Turkey, Texas. The oldest child, Jim Rob ('Bob'), was not born in Turkey, Texas, yet the yellow house between the rivers was home to him and his family and it is fitting that Turkey calls him 'son.'

In 1970, Bob Wills suffered a debilitating stroke. His spirit remained strong and, for the next few years, he experienced an outpouring of tributes. As others recognized him, he wanted to give something back to Turkey, Texas.

As a result, his wife Betty and the founders of the Bob Wills Foundation set about to create Bob Wills Day. Thankfully, Bob was able to attend the first three years, was present at the dedication of the Bob Wills monument and was witness to the tens of thousands of attendees. By the fourth year, he had slipped into a coma and, with Betty at his side, he died in May 1975.

BOB WILLS FOUNDATION OF TURKEY, TEXAS

The Bob Wills Foundation of Turkey, Texas, a 501(c)(3) public charity, is operated solely by volunteers and was established in 1971 to preserve and share the music and life of Bob Wills as a unique and central figure in American history and as a beloved son of Turkey, Texas.