



Dallas County Pioneer Association

P.O. Box 12496 Dallas TX 75225 214-944-5400

Founded 1876
Reorganized 1979

SPRING - 2009
www.dallaspioneer.com

DALLASITES RECOGNIZED AS TEXAS HEROES

In a recent tribute by the Texas Historical Commission, it was noted that Texas has always been known for its heroes. From Sam Houston, Jose Antonio Navarro, Audie Murphy, Ann Armstrong, and others, our state's heroes have been larger than life and dedicated to making our state a better place.

The Texas Historical Commission reviewed the activities of outstanding Texans philanthropists who provide support for a wide variety of projects. They have been selected as *heroes*. Through the Friends of the Texas Historical Commission, they make an annual contribution of \$1000 or more to help preserve Texas' rich historical legacy and they are invited to special events throughout the year.

Over 45 individuals across the state were named, and those *heroes* from Dallas County include: Ebby Halliday Acers, Diane & Stuart Bumpas, Richard H. Collins, Peter & Edith O'Donnell, Billie Leigh Rippey, & Marcus Watson. *Congratulations, Heroes!! And Thank You Very Much!!!*

DALLAS HISTORY CONFERENCE AN OUTSTANDING SUCCESS

By Marjori Sharp

Kudos to Mike Hazel, who is a Board Member of our DCPA, for chairing the splendid Tenth *Legacies* Dallas History Conference held recently at Dallas City Hall. Many Pioneer members were present. Pioneer Association's former President Howard Cox presented his program & he was introduced by DCPA President David Vilbig.

At the Conference was a gathering of some dozen Dallas History oriented groups of which the DCPA was the first to be formed in 1875. The theme of the Conference was "Dallas Lost And Found: More Hidden Treasures & Forgotten Stories" and isn't that what the DCPA is all about? Interesting subjects included Dallas street names, downtown shopping, & Dallas hotels. The conference was a treasure of information & enjoyed by all.

Who was Emma Peak? On Nov. 2, 1920, she became the first woman in Dallas County to vote.

Spring Meeting

MARCH 5, 2009

PROGRAM BY HOWARD COX

"DALLAS DAIRIES"

HOWARD WILL DISCUSS THE HISTORY OF DAIRIES INCLUDING: METZGER, TENNESSEE, BLUFFVIEW, SCHEPPS, & MORE.

He gratefully acknowledges the research & photos provided by Nancy Kurrus, Bertha Fritz, & Ann Gracey Williams.

Activity Center
Cochran Chapel United Methodist
Church

9027 Midway Rd @ NW Hwy

Meet at 5:30 pm

Catered dinner (\$15) at 6:00 pm

Program follows at 7:00 pm

Reservation by Monday March 2nd

214-944-5400

HISTORIC HIGHLIGHTS

Highland Park was incorporated in 1913, Hockaday School was founded and a new dorm was under construction at SMU. The University opened in 1915 with 706 students. The Union Station railroad terminal opened in 1916, bringing all passenger service to one location. The same year Oak Cliff and Forest High Schools opened and Robert L. Thornton opened a new bank on Main Street.



REMEMBERING THE MERRELL FAMILY

Eli Merrell arrived in Dallas in 1840 and settled at that time on farm land in the Walnut Hill Lane area. Eli, a native of Randolph County, North Carolina, established his home and family near what is today the 4000 block of Merrell Road. He farmed the level land nearby and depended on the nearby creek for water. His third wife, Mary Ann McKay Merrell, (2 earlier wives had died) raised 17 children — 6 of them hers and 11 from the previous marriages. In their farm home, they met the challenges of windy, cold winters and blistering, hot summers.

One of the children, Benjamin, was interested in Dallas County management and he served as the first Dallas County Tax Assessor. He also taught in the first Dallas school. One of Benjamin's daughters, Nancy, enjoyed a long life and passed away in 1942. Her father, Benjamin, was one of the 91 taxpayers on the county lists when she was born.

One of Nancy's brothers, John M. "Joe" Merrell, had served in the 19th Texas Calvary during the Civil War and he passed away in 1931 at the age of 84. Another Benjamin child, Mary Ethel, married into the Cochran Family that founded Cochran Chapel Methodist Church in 1844. We all admire the pioneer family members who steadfastly handled the harsh challenges and founded Dallas County.



ESTABLISHING SOUTHERN DALLAS COUNTY

The interesting ancestors of all Pioneer Association members carved out lives in early Dallas County. Some lived in the southern area including the Niblo Family, the Penn Family and the folks who occupied the Sloan Cabin.

On land located near what is today Interstate 20 and the escarpment, and also near the banks of the Trinity River, are archeological sites eagerly documented by local historians. A major "find" discovered in the early 1990's were layers of mussel shells left by early inhabitants. Some shells were used as decorations, such as beads and buttons worn by the folks, and others were thrown away after eating the mussels for nourishment.

The Penn Farm was established when John Wesley Penn bought the property in 1859. The family lived on the farm until 1970. The Army Corps of Engineers purchased the property in 1975 and today, much of the old Penn property is covered by Joe Pool Lake.



LOOKING BACK IN HISTORY.....

The Medical Arts Building, constructed in 1923 in downtown Dallas, was the first building in the world to rise nineteen stories and built with reinforced concrete. It was built in the shape of a cross for good ventilation before air conditioning was introduced as a marvelous, mechanical invention. Dallas resident, Mrs. D. R. Weyand, who was then 91 years old, received a handwritten thank you note in 1941 from Queen Elizebeth of England, thanking her for knitting garments for British soldiers during World War II. . . . And how proud we are of Jack Kilby of Texas Instruments who invented the integrated circuit in 1958, right here in Dallas.





CEMETERY NEWS By Frances James

Two thousand dollars was recently donated to DCPA by the Ft. Worth Avenue development group for the "beautification" of the Western Heights Cemetery. Dan Fauver and some of his volunteers from the Texas Youth Commission have worked two separate days at the cemetery so far. They have re-erected eleven headstones so far. One of the discoveries is a sunken stone for a World War I Vet whose first and last names are unknown but ELAM is a name visible on the headstone. It is so deep in the ground they are still digging and will need some help from the tripod lifting equipment to get it out from the tree roots and stones. We will try and do some research on who this is as soon as we get some dates to go by.

An effort will be made to get signage for the two structures in Garland south of I 30 that mark the remains of the cemetery where James and Margaret Loving's graves are as well as Lisbon Housley, Myers Family members and West family members. Documents, maps, and interviews with local people reveal this cemetery was completely destroyed when Interstate 30 was constructed in the 1960-1970's. On the Dallas Historical Society's Cemetery Bus Tour in October, one of the people on the tour said he drives past the area every day. He volunteered to take his weed whip in his car and keep the high weeds cut down and he'll clean up any bottles or trash that's dumped there. The City of Garland officials will be given the necessary paper work about the cemetery. It is against the law to build on a known site! There are For Sale signs on nearby property but the current economy may help protect this area.

Sales of the book, "Dallas County History From The Ground Up" Vol. I continue and the Dallas Public Library has ordered 2 copies. When an additional 5 books are sold, the proceeds, totaling \$375.00 will be added to the DCPA Cemetery Fund. These funds will be used to pay for signs on current Garland City property. Vol. II of the book will be available in a few weeks.



FINAL FAREWELL Jack Homer Hittson passed away on Feb. 10, 2009. He was born June 19, 1925 in Palo Pinto, Texas and is a fifth generation Texan. He and his wife, Elizabeth, were longtime member of the DCPA and many of his relative also belong to our association. Jack is also survived by his four children: Dr. William Jack Hittson, Dr. Suzanne Laura Hittson, Dr. Jeffery Roy Hittson, and the Hon. Carol Hittson Kent who recently was elected to the Texas Legislature. Jack served as a Navy Pilot during World War II and graduated from Baylor College of Dentistry. He practiced dentistry in Panama and Alaska. before he established one of the first orthodontics practices in North Texas. His interests included working with the YMCA, Boy Scouts, and the Masons. Many of his cousins are members of the DCPA including the Browders, the Sharps, Thompsons, and the Johns. Services were held Sat. Feb. 21, 2009 with internment at the Hittson Family Cemetery in Palo Pinto, Texas.



Kraft's Philadelphia Cream Cheese was first introduced at the Texas Centennial in Dallas in 1936. They should have named it *Dallas Cream Cheese*.





Visit our Website at: www.dallaspioneer.org

The Dallas County Pioneer Association is dedicated to preserving The History of Dallas County and those who settled here before 1880. Any person who is interested may apply for membership regardless of when they, or their ancestors, came to Dallas county. Contact the Membership Chairman for an application.

Membership Dues

\$20 per year \$200 Life Membership
\$30 Couple \$300 Couple Life Membership

The association meets quarterly for dinner and a program on the first Thursday of each March, June, September, and December. The meeting room opens at 5:30 pm. for fellowship; dinner is served at 6:00 pm. and the program starts promptly at 7:00 pm. Visitors are welcome.

Phone: 214-944-5400

Association Officers

President	David Vilbig
Vice Pres.	Dianne Janisek Reed
Secretary	Marsha B. Leach
Treasurer	Charles W. Powers
Historian	Eva Jane Morgan
Programs	Committee
Sunshine	Mildred Coffey
News Editor	Pat Randolph

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