

Lake Cities

Legacy

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THE
LAKE CITIES LEGACY

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1836 - 1986

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Meetings held at Historical Society executive offices , located at Country Lane and west side of I-35 highway . Time to be set one month in advance , with public announcement in the local paper .

REFLECTIONS FROM HICKORY CREEK

When Texas won its independence in 1836 , the only humans that lived in Denton County were Indians .

The Indians were attracted to the southern part of Denton County because of the many cold-as-ice fresh springs . They provided plenty of pure water .

Clean fresh air and a bountiful supply of grain , fruit , and a variety of wild game made this area an ideal lodging place . The native roots and herbs were used for medicinal purposes - the wild cherry is used today in cough medicine . Wild bees stored their honey in caves and hollow trees . Grapevines , bearing varieties of the muscat grape grew in lavish profusion over the trees along the rivers and creek beds .

Indian villages are known to have been located on Little Elm , Big Elm , Clear Creek , Hickory Creek , and Denton Creek .

What was later to be known as Fish Trap Crossing was the cross-roads of an early east-west Indian trail .

The cluster of towns now known as the lake cities area , was inhabited by Indians until about 1865 .

Indian authorities explain that the Wichita Indians held their ceremonial dances , such as the one called "The Horn Dance" , near the present town of Lake Dallas .

In 1949 , a Mr. Boyd Armstrong kept a landscape nursery at the former old Tom Grady Place . It is about a mile and a half east of the railroad tracks on the old McKinney Road . Armstrong claimed that all the old timers had told him about the ancient Indian Dance Bowl , or Ceremonial Ground that was visible at that location .

There was an Indian campground and burial place between the large two Elms about a miles south of Dickson Bridge , east of Garza - the town now called Lake Dallas .

Off to the southwest of Denton County was a spring on Dry Fork of Hickory Creek , which was used by the Indians as a supply for their water .

Since the late 1800's , the underground water tables have been all used up , and man-made lakes and reservoirs are now being used for water .

An Indian burial ground was located near the old bridge over Big Elm , on the old McKinney Road . Both were covered over with water when they built the Garza-Little Elm reservoir , also known as the west end of Hickory Creek .

In 1924 a skull and other Indian bones were discovered while the men were excavating for the Lake Dallas Dam .

The site of Pickneyville is thought to have been a former Indian campground - perhaps a tradin post and village . A race track , many arrowheads , and other artifacts have been found there .

In 1894 some bones of a giant mastadon were found near Mingo . Jim Gurley discovered the skeleton of a huge prehistoric animal near Denton , in the year 1919 .

In 1953 , on the M. Calvert farm about 5 miles south of the city of Denton , an amazing discovery was made . It was the bones of a prehistoric mammoth elephant . One tusk measured 9 feet , 2 inches , in length . The bones were believed to be parts of a skeleton belonging to the Parelephas Columbi , an animal , when living , was 10 feet high and about 20 feet long .

An exciting and even surprising discovery was made in 1956 while workmen were excavating for fill dirt on the Garza-Little Elm reservoir .

REFLECTIONS FROM HICKORY CREEK

Evidence was found that this region was occupied 37,000 or 40,000 years ago by the Clovis man , according to archeologists . Hearths , arrow points , and bones of animals characteristic of that time , were found in abundance .

Located in southwest Hickory Creek , the intersection of Strait Street and Harbor Grove , there are the remnants of what once was a buffalo wallow . The buffalos would gather there to roll in the shallow pool of mud and water .

Indian hunting parties would follow the buffalo , killing them for food , as well as the skins , which made beautiful robes and blakets . The Bison , a proper name for the American buffalo , was the main source of food for the Indians . They used every part of the animal for meat , its hide , intestines , blood , sinew , and bone . Its meat , smoked and dried until it was hard as a rock , was known as "jerky" . It was also pounded into powder and mixed with wild berries and fat . This Indian recipe was known as pemmican .

At the time that white man first came to America , the Bison was estimated to number 60,000,000 . A full-grown bull measured 5 to 6 feet at its shaggy , massive shoulders . It weighed 1,800 to 2,000 pounds .

When the settlers came , They killed the Bison for sport , as well as food . When the railroads came , the large herds of Bison were fired upon by men shooting from moving trains , for fun and target practice . They were also killed because they interfered with the building of the railroads . Besides creating a nuisance , they brought the Indians , who fought with the white men .

The site of what is now called the town of Lake Dallas was first called The French Settlement . It was settled in 1852 by the McCurley and French families , who lived on McCurley Prairie , West of Wantland Lake .

When the Missouri , Kansas , and Texas (Katy) Railroad came to the French Settlement in 1881 , the name was changed from The French Settlement to Garza . That was the name of a man who operated a camp for a camp for a crew of rail cutters . The railroad crew moved on , but Mr. Garza stayed to build his home , in what is today known as Lake Dallas, Texas .

In April , 1908 , the town of Garza was growing , and the local business men decided that unless they moved the whole town , there would be no room for expansion for their business houses .

Citizens J.M. Sanders , H.P. Swisher , and W.R. Matherly were among those that made all the preparations ; abstract figures , hiring a surveyor , filling out the bond , etc., . Then they drew up plans and moved the whole town one quarter of a mile north of its original location . After that it was called " The New Town of Garza . "

Efforts Underway to Save Bridge After Nearly a Century of Service

June Tyler of Copper Canyon is leading efforts to save the Old Alton Bridge, the last of nine iron suspension bridges built in Denton County in the 19th century.

County Commissioner Lee Walker has applied for federal funds for the extension of FM 2499 through the area, which could mean destruction of the 1887 bridge, originally called the Pratt Truss Bridge. It spans Hickory Creek on Old Alton Road connecting Bartonville with Teasley Lane.

The vanished town of Alton predated the City of Denton as county seat. Besides the bridge, all that remains of Alton is a cemetery and a church.

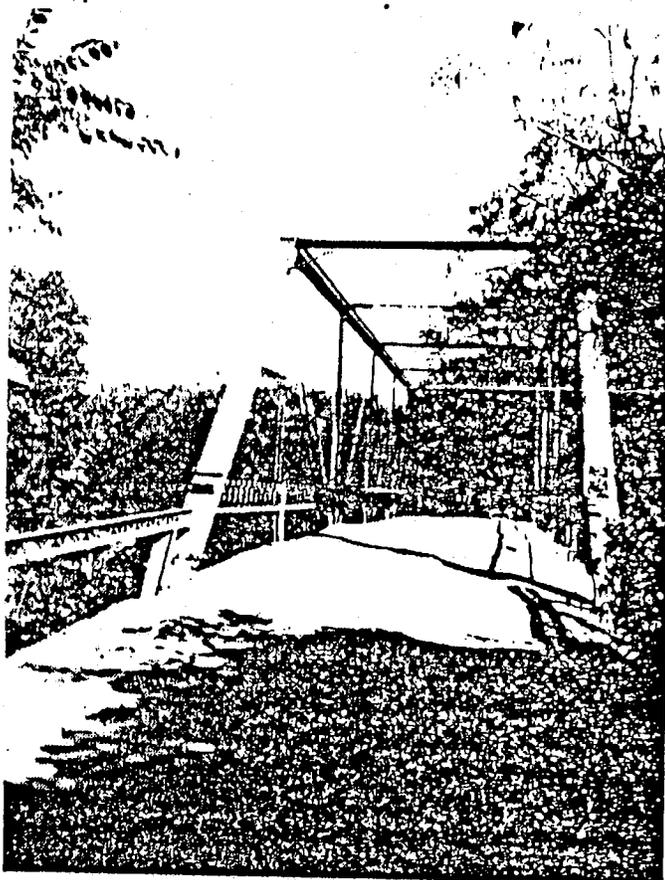
Denton County owns the bridge, but it goes over Army Corps of Engineers' land.

Because of its age and high aesthetic value in a setting of arched trees and heavy undergrowth, Ms. Tyler researched the bridge's history and enlisted the aid of the Corps of Engineers. She has also obtained 100 signatures on a petition calling for its preservation, and on November 7 she reported to the Denton County Historical Commission, which will apply to have the bridge listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Once something is listed there, it cannot be destroyed.

In order to be named in the register, there must be proof a structure is 50 or more years old. Besides two "1887" imprints found on the superstructure, Ms. Tyler gained further proof from interviews with two lifelong County residents, Ray McLeod, 78, and George Edward Jones, 83, who vouched that it had been there as long as they could recall.

Since the bridge is only one lane wide, and FM 2499 is expected to eventually be a six-lane thoroughfare diverting vehicle traffic through the area, Ms. Tyler hopes the old bridge can be preserved as part of a horse/foot trail.

After the presentation, the historical commission approved support of the campaign (only a historical society can petition the National Register). The group



This 19th century iron bridge is in danger of being destroyed.

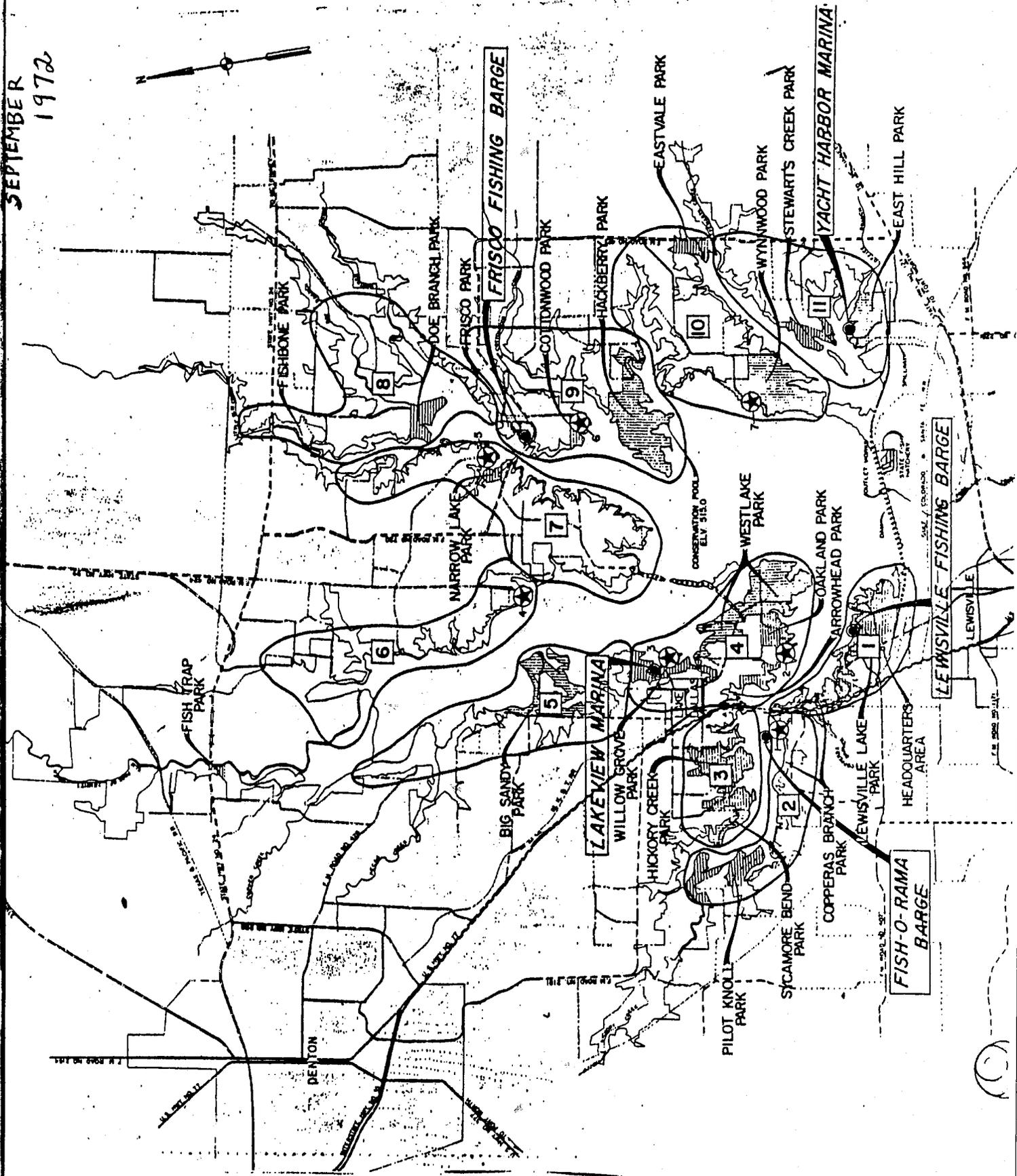
also agreed to send a letter to Commissioners Court to let them know of the action and to inform them that they must have the permission of the Army Corps of Engineers to do anything to the structure.

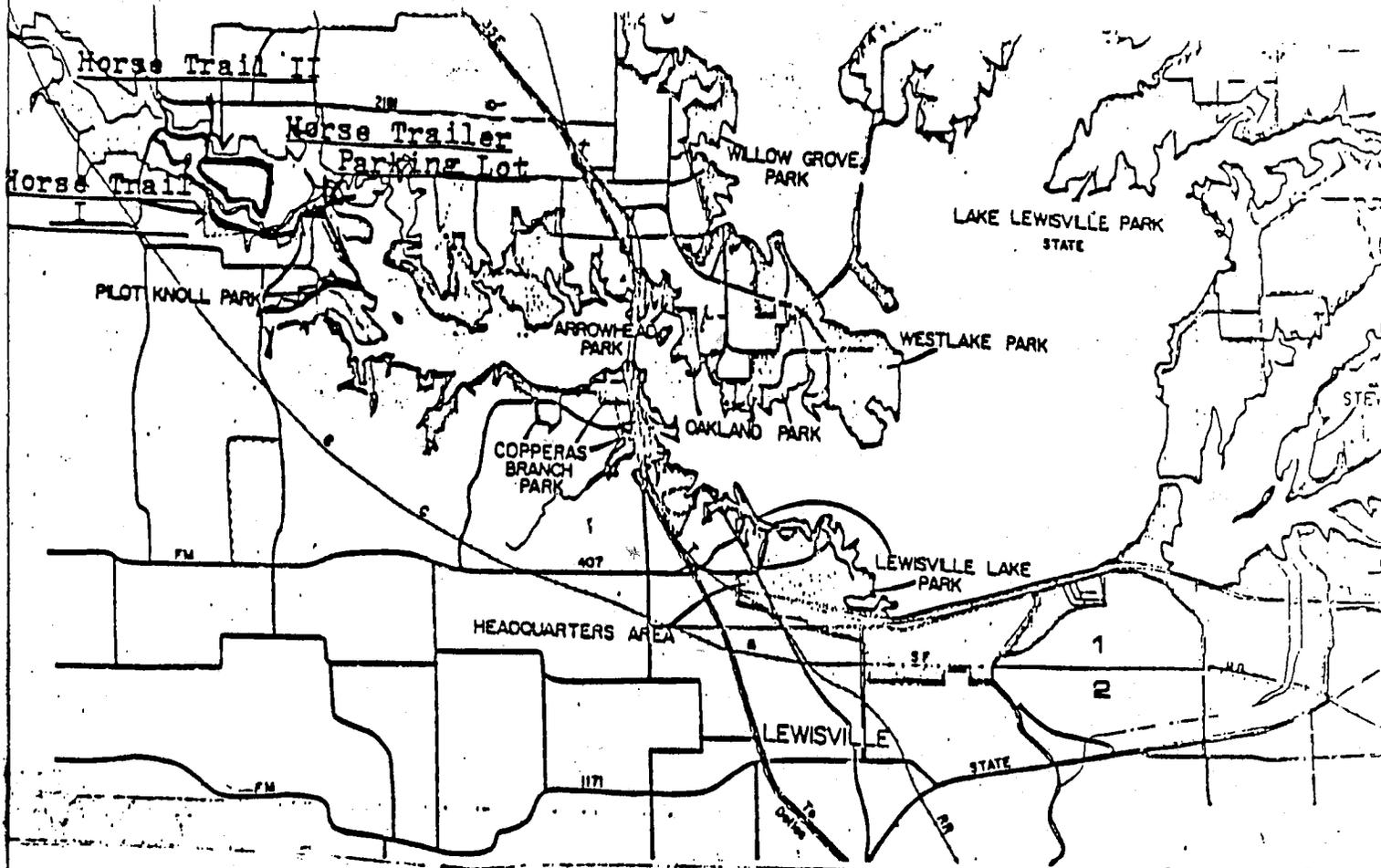
Yvonne Jenkins, former chairman of the commission, praised Ms. Tyler's "beautiful job of documentation" and said, "The role of the historical commission should be to preserve what's left of the past." Dr. Bullitt Lowry, the commission's new chairman, called Ms. Tyler "hero of the month."

Memo: At this time, there are no historical markers in south Denton County. Let us not lose anymore of the Lake City History. Help June Tyler now.

Belle Cox

SEPTEMBER
1972





DATE: 1985

Congressman Tom Vandergriff, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers and a group of North Texas horse owners working together have created an unique recreation facility for horse and rider. The facility consists of two horse trails marked with "Trail" signs and/or white dots and a horse trailer parking lot in the Hickory Creek area of Lewisville Lake as indicated on the above map.

Horse Trail I is on the south side of Hickory Creek and can be accessed from the Horse Trailer Parking Lot and at the main entrance to Pilot Knoll Park. To access from the Horse Trailer Parking Lot, look for the low place in the barricade that enclosed the parking lot and have your horse step over it. Please stay on the Horse Trail when riding in Pilot Knoll Park. Horses are not permitted in the camping, picnic or the other developed areas of the park.

Horse Trail II is on the north side of Hickory Creek. It can be accessed near the south east corner of the bridge that crosses Hickory Creek on Copper Canyon Road or over a two foot post and rail jump on the south side of FTMR 2181 (Teasley Lane). There is room from parking horse trailers on the sides of Copper Canyon Road and FTMR 2181 (Teasley Lane).

Also, please do not ride on private property.

*
JUNE TYLER
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT
RURAL ROUTE 2, LOT 12
MOBILE DRIVE
LEWISVILLE, TEXAS 75067
TELEPHONE (817) 455-2423

March 16, 1986

Belle Cox
P. O. Box 1222
Lake Dallas, Texas 75065

Dear Mrs. Cox:

It was nice meeting you at the March 13, 1986 meeting of the Denton County Historical Commission. I appreciate your offer of help with the Old Alton Bridge preservation project.

It would be extremely useful if you and the other people who have an interest in saving Old Alton Bridge would write letters to all the following persons

- 1) asking for their support in the efforts to save Old Alton Bridge and
- 2) asking them to appropriate some money for the future maintenance of Old Alton Bridge.

Colonel Albert J. Genetti, Jr.
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
P. O. Box 17300
819 Taylor Street
Fort Worth, Texas 76102

Congressman Dick Arney
250 South Stemmons, Suite 210
Lewisville, Texas 75067

Commissioner Lee Walker
Joseph A. Carroll Courts Building
401 West Hickory
Denton, Texas 76201

Comissioner Ruth Tansey
Joseph A. Carroll Courts Building
401 West Hickory
Denton, Texas 76201

Enclosed are copies of some newspaper articles about the efforts to save Old Alton Bridge.*

Sincerely yours,

June Tyler
June Tyler, C. P. A.

Lake Dallas
Sesquicentennial
"Garza Day"
Saturday
May 10, 1986

Dear friends

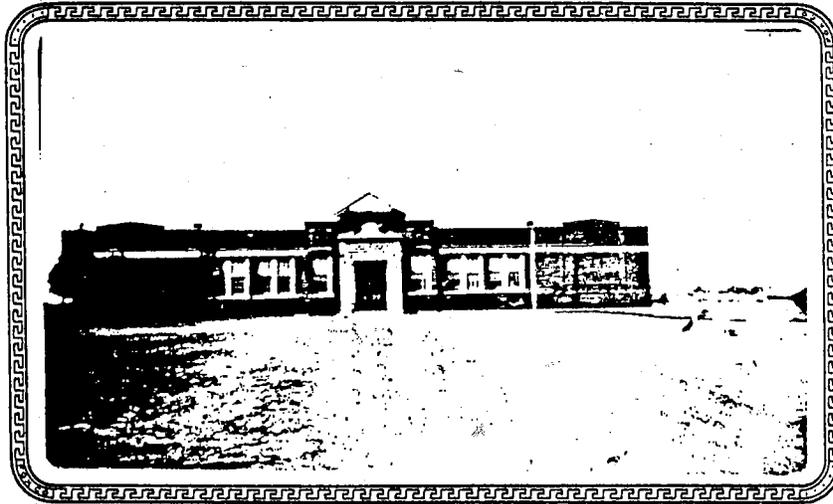
The City of Lake Dallas plans for Garza Day is taking shape very nicely. Presently the plans include having a wide variety of Arts and Craft booths, Food, Drinks, and other assorted merchant booths. The day will start very early for setting up the booths. A large parade will start the activities between Ten and Eleven AM with the activities continuing through out the day. There will be many interesting things for the whole Family, including horse drawn wagons to ride, music and other entertainment. So plan to attend and make a day of the first annual Garza Day.

The next planning meeting will be held at 7:00 PM, March 24th, at Lake Dallas City Hall. Other meetings are April 14th and April 28th same place and time.

We have ample space for everyone. Booth space is outside NO SHADE and with NO cover or tables provided. Booth's will be assigned when money is received, best spaces first.

Any questions about joining the activities or getting a booth, Please contact Fred Long, Chairman 817-497-4700 or Belle Cox, Lake Cities Historical Society, 817-497-3628

LAKE DALLAS SCHOOL
1929-1986
Scheduled to be torn down in May , 1986



We are very grateful to people like Mrs. Mildred Gumm Kirby , who was gracious enough to let us borrow this picture of the little red brick school house in Lake Dallas , called "The Alamo". Also the following letter :

"I am sending the picture of the Lake Dallas school . When you read me some of the names of the old settlers , I don't remember a mention of my Mother and Dad , Harman and Maude Gumm . They moved there in 1929 , when he retired from the railroad company in Dallas. There was also Abe and Maude Feaster - the Groces , and Herschal and Ruby Farrow , which was my sister . The Holloways - they had the only cafe in Lake Dallas . The Whitmores , Red Blocker and family - the Sargents - they had a grocery store and post office .

There were two grocery stores , two or three service stations, a telephone office , three churches and one school .

That was our town .

Everyone , as I remember , went to church on Sunday , ' there was nothing for young people to do for fun . '

Once a year a medicine man came through selling medicine . Everybody dressed in their best and went , sat on the ground and watched . Didn't anyone have much money to buy .

The best part was going to Hickory Creek - swimming in our clothes and swinging on a grapevine out over the waters - which our parents didn't know .

Some of the people gave house dances , to which everyone went. Those that didn't have cars , rode horses or walked .

That is what I remember of Lake Dallas , Some people may not think it was much fun , but to me it was great . I live in Dallas now , but I always enjoy going back to Lake Dallas , and seeing my friends of yesterday . "

Mildred Gumm Kirby

Come to see us often , Mildred , and write again soon .
The Editor

HISTORY OF HICKORY CREEK , U.S.A.

The year it all began was 1961 . A group of people living on, or near the banks of Hickory Creek got together and decided they would like to become a town . The waters of Hickory Creek have also been known as Garza-Little Elm Reservoir , created by the United States Corps of Engineers , Fort Worth District . This West arm of Hickory Creek is an extension of Lake Lewisville , which was formerly called Lake Dallas .

The Town of Lake Dallas was named for the man-made lake in the year it was created , 1927 . But that is another story , let us now return to Hickory Creek .

The Town of Hickory Creek , consisting of approximately two square miles , is located on both sides of I-35 . On the East side in nestles between the lake and Lake Dallas , the town .

Back in 1961 , the group who wanted to form a town , passed around a petition , and it was signed by the following people : Mr. and Mrs. U.W. Scoggins , Mr. and Mrs. Lee Newsome , D. L. Barnes , Mrs. Doris Sasse , Mr. and Mrs. W.K. Pressley , Mr. and Mrs. J.M. Smith , Mr. and Mrs. Duvall Williams , Mrs. Dorothy Seawright , C.A. Sikes , Mr. and Mrs. M.O. Henner , E.W. Kinder , Dr. and Mrs. W.H. Bryant , C. Niebal , Mr. and Mrs. Edward Sasse , Mr. and Mrs. W.P. Harvell , Roy T. Harvell , Mr. and Mrs. Steven A. Howard , and Mrs. W. A . (Maude) Bradshaw . The name of the town was to be Hickory Creek .

The petition was duly processed and all preliminaries were taken care of on April 29 , 1963 , an election was held to determine whether or not the the Town of Hickory should be incorporated for municipal purposes as a town under the Commission Form of government . Nineteen people voted . All voted "Yea."

On August 10 , 1964 , the East side of I-35E highway was annexed.

On April 5 , 1980, they changed to the Aldermanic Form of government .

The following people have served as Mayors and Commissioners : Duvall Williams , Perry Harvell , J.M. Smith , Albert D. Schneider , Harold Hunsaker , Edmond S. Bright , R.N. Starned , Louise Eix , James R. Volts , Ray Means , Jr. Jack Harris , L.D. Smith , Jim Swan Bob Mohn , Roy Crawford , Eugene Ezell , Doris Sasse , Dan Savage , Ron Vanzura , Peter Naff , Don Carlton , Richard Haas , Carol Hasten , Ron Hewitt , Sidney Randolph , and Lon Brown .

Some of the citizens that have played a vital part in the Lake Cities area and lived in Hickory Creek are : Texas power and Light manager, Mike Murphy , Fred Stevens , Telephone company manager , Edmond Bright , Lake Cities State Bank Director , Attorney William N. (Bill) Stokes , Martin Highbaugh , Manager of Lake Cities Municipal Utility Authority , Lake Dallas Independent School District Superintendent , Bob Jameson ,

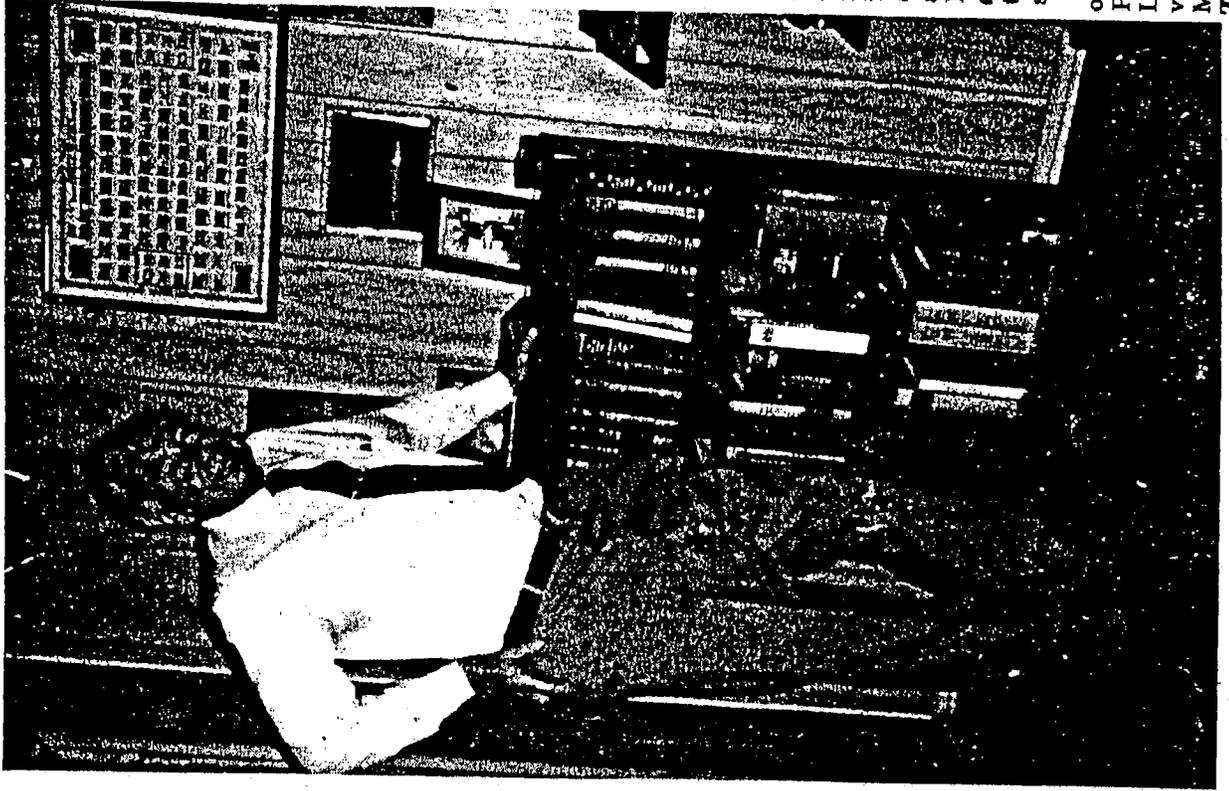
Teachers residing in Hickory Creek and teaching in The Lake Dallas school system are Panette Bryant , Roy Crawford , Mary E . Eldridge , Grace Means , Glenda Randolph , and Jo Themar .

On the school board , members from Hickory Creek are : Ron Hamby , Sue Anderson , James Wood , Dirk McWilliams , Lon Brown , A.D. Cates , and Ivan Bounds .

Hickory Creek has a population of approximately 1,900 in this year of Texas' Sesquicentennial , which is 1986 . Homes and property are valued at approximately \$120 million , according to the school districts assessment .

Profile:

Bill Stokes



His friends call him "Bill," and he puts one at ease with his warm and caring manner. A native of Vernon, Texas, Bill is a graduate (A.B.) of Baylor University in Waco and a doctor of jurisprudence from Yale University. He came to the Lake Cities area after retirement as president of the Federal Intermediate Credit Bank of Houston. Here he opened what he described as a "country law" office, and in this capacity he has served the citizens of this area for the past thirteen years.

Bill began his career in the Farm Credit system as an attorney in the Washington office of the Farm Credit Administration. This was in the exciting new deal days when the system of farm credit banks and associations was being expanded materially. He left Washington after a year and returned to Texas as general attorney first for the Houston Bank for Cooperatives, then in the same capacity for the Federal Land Bank. In between these assignments he served as an assistant district attorney in Harris County.

After service in World War II as a communications officer, Bill returned to the Farm Credit system, first as president of the Houston Bank for Cooperatives, then in the same capacity with the Federal Intermediate Credit Bank.

His interests are many: he is a gourmet cook, general counsel for the Texas Folklore Society, in which he takes an active interest. He gives lectures periodically on such diverse subjects as Shakespeare, Robert Browning, Tennyson and other literary greats. Some years ago he and his wife Ann Bradshaw Stokes donated to Baylor University an important collection of autograph letters of the poet Robert Browning; and in 1979 he gave to the University an important collection of rare Shakespeare books, which he collected for over a half century.

In the Lake Cities area he has served as legal advisor for the Lake Cities Municipal Utility Authority, Lake Dallas Telephone Company and Lake Cities State Bank; he also serves as a member of the board of directors of the Bank. At the present time he claims to be semi-retired, but he still is busily occupied with legal chores for these institutions and for anyone in Lake Cities area in need of advice or service. Much of his work is what he describes in legal latines as "pro bono," that is, without compensation. "I can't charge a fee to people who depend on social security," he avers. His primary activity at this time is as trustee for the Ann Bradshaw Stokes Foundation, which was established in the will of his wife Ann Bradshaw Stokes. The Foundation makes grants to the drama departments of Texas colleges and universities for student scholarships or departmental projects.

Bill is the author of three books, "Credit to Farmers, a History of Federal Intermediate Credit Banks", "Oil Mill on the Texas Plains", a history of the giant Plains Cooperative Oil Mill in Lubbock, and a biography of Sterling C. Evans. The latter volume is in the hands of publishers and is expected off the press March 1, 1985. In addition, he has published chapters in *T for Texas*, and a symposium on Texas Agriculture published by the Texas A&M University Press.

Bill Stokes

GRAND FATHER OF BELL CO

While the country was in the excitement of the presidential election, there passed quietly away a man who has for years been one of the most honored citizens of Texas and especially of Hunt county.

After an illness of one week Capt. Ben A. Vansickle died Tuesday afternoon at his home south of this city. Capt. Vansickle was born in San Augustine, Texas, 96 years ago when Texas was a province of Mexico. In his long life this noble pioneer has been a citizen of the Republic of Mexico, Republic of Texas, the United States, Confederate States, and again of the United States. Could an account of his eventful career be written it would rival in interest the lives of Boone, Kenton, Crockett or any of the early heroes of the western wilds.

Capt. Vansickle fought in the war for Texas' independence and took part in the battle of San Jacinto in which fight he was wounded. When the war with Mexico broke out, he entered the United States army and was with the victorious legions that fought that war to a successful finish. He was also a participant in the Indian wars in Texas in which he had many thrilling experiences. When the Civil war broke out he enlisted in the Confederate army and bore his part in that gigantic struggle.

Capt. Vansickle published one of the first papers in South Texas bringing a press from New York to Vera Cruz where it was hauled to Texas. Later he studied law and practiced in Sulphur Springs, until in 1862, he made his home in Hunt county where he has lived ever since.

A PIONEER DEAD.

He Passed Peacefully Away on Tuesday Afternoon.

CAPT. BEN A VANSICKLE.

Ninety Six Years Old—Born in Texas
When a Mexican Province—Fought
in Three Wars—Was a Distinguished Soldier.

He was within four years of rounding out a century of life, and some years ago was a frequent visitor to this city, but of late years has but rarely been able to come in from his home.

Capt. Vansickle leaves a large circle of relatives down to great grand-children.

Among the children who survive him are: Mrs. W. B. Horton, Greenville; Mrs. W. B. Sampson, living near Vansickle; Mrs. Clay Oldham, of Merkel; Mrs. Hendrix, of California, and one son, Tom Vansickle. His wife survives him and has reached the age of 90 years.

His home for years has been in the Vansickle neighborhood named in his honor.

The funeral was set for 2 o'clock this afternoon and burial in the Vansickle cemetery.

The surviving relatives will have the sympathy of the whole community in the death of this noble pioneer.

Benjamin A. Vansickle. Born 6 April, 1809. Died 8 Nov. 1904.

PEDIGREE CHART

15 February, 1986
DAY

Carrie Christina Kippler Horton
NAME OF PERSON SUBMITTING CHART

301 Lakeview Drive
STREET ADDRESS

Lake Dallas, Texas 75065
CITY STATE

NO. 1 ON THIS CHART IS
THE SAME PERSON AS NO. 2
ON CHART NO. _____
Edd Kopppler

Carrie Christina Kippler Horton

BORN 7 February 1918

WHERE Brown Street, Lawrenceburg, Indiana

WHEN MARRIED 1 December 1935 Corpus Christi, Texas 7:15p.m.

DIED

WHERE

Clarence Elbert Horton

NAME OF HUSBAND OR WIFE

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Christina Kippler

BORN

WHERE

DIED

WHERE

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WHEN MARRIED
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DIED
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Wilhelm Kepler Jahre

BORN 1812

WHERE Germany

WHEN MARRIED

DIED 1872

WHERE Harrison, Ohio

Frau Von Kuningunda

BORN 1833

WHERE

WHEN MARRIED

DIED 1886

WHERE Harrison, Ohio

BORN

WHERE

DIED

WHERE

QUERIES

Do you know any of these people ?

DURHAM , WILLIAM GREEN = From Durham , North Carolina , Kentucky , Arkansas , and Texas . Was a Confederate soldier in General Bragg's 9th regiment , enlisting in March , 1861 , at Senatobia , Mississippi . Need any information concerning him before 1861.

BOSHER , (DeBOSHEUR) , John C. Breckenridge = Left home and loved ones , with his bride , Sabra Anne Glover . They came to Texas in a covered wagon . Date unkown . They lived in Wharton , Texas , Collin County , Dallas County , and Hunt County , Texas . She died in 1908 , and is buried at Princeton , Texas . He died in 1917 , due to the flu epidemic , at Farmersville , Texas . I need their birthdates . Did his family come from the state of Virginia ?

VANSICKLE , CAPTAIN BENJAMIN A. = Lived in Texas under all six flags . Was with General Sam Houston at the Battle of San Jacinto . Practised law in Sulpher Springs and Dallas , Texas . Was the first postmaster between Greenville and Royce City , Texas . Legend has it that he brought the first printing press to Texas via Vera Cruz . I am trying to verify this , and would be grateful for any information concerning where the printing press was from , or where Vansickle lived before coming to Texas .

Belle Cox
P.O. Box 1222
Lake Dallas , Texas
75065

I am searching for descendants of Wilhelm Kepler Jahre . Born 1812 in Germany . Died 1872 in Harrison , Ohio . Also Frau Von Kunigunda , born 1833 , died 1886 , Harrison, Ohio . Do you know anyone by the surname of Kipler , Kepler , or Kipler , or related families ?

Carrie Horton
P.O. Box 683
Lake Dallas , Texas
75065

For Norwegians In America

The Lake Cities Historical Society has on hand two books that are very interesting as well as a tremendous help to those that are researching ancestors both here and in Norway .

One book , entitled HOW TO TRACE YOUR ANCESTORS IN NORWAY , should be read first if one plans to start researching family names and places . Listed are places in the United States that sell maps , both historical and modern , that contain valuable aids such as the location of place names , buildings , churches , farms , roads , and railroads . The official maps are published by Norges geografiske oppmåling (The Geographical Survey of Norway) , abbreviated NGO . NGO have also a comprehensive collection of early (historical) maps. Whiteprints of these maps can be obtained directly from NGO . You can get a recent map catalogue and more information by writing to Norges geografiske oppmåling , N-3500 Hønefoss , Norway .

The Norwegian Emigrant Museum , Utvandrer-museet , Strandveien 100, N-2300 Hamar , is now located at Domkirkeodden , Hamar . It has much to offer in Norwegian history of migration to America , collections of letters written Norwegian immigrants in America , and private collections , parish registers of 2,000 Norwegian congregations in America , and recorded history on microfilm . This book contains too many very important sources of information to be listed here . It is published by THE ROYAL NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS , and Gunvald Bee (+) / Jan H. Olstad / Yngve Nedrebo .

The other book , authored by Einar Haugen and Victor S. Thomas , Professor of Scandinavian and Linguistics , Harvard University , is valuable for genealogy and student research . The 35 page book entitled THE NORWEGIANS IN AMERICA 1825-1975 also has an extensive bibliography .

To obtain these books and brochures , write to : NORWEGIAN INFORMATION SERVICE , 825 Third Avenue , New York , N.Y. 10022 . There is no charge for the above .

Also , Irene Varvayanis , with the Norwegian Information Service was kind enough to furnish the following information :

The Norwegian Society of Texas , P.O. Box 5176 , Dallas , Texas zip code 75222 and / or the Royal Norwegian Consulate General , 2777 Allen Parkway , Suite 1185 , Houston , Texas , 77019 .

News from Norway to North Texas :

As you probably know , a book about Norwegians who emigrated to Texas 1835-1900 was published in Norway in 1982 . The book is titled Norgei Texas by Mr. Odd M. Syvertsen .

The book states that a lot of people came from a place named Mjaland , in Norway . Norway citizen Arne Mjaland informs us that only two farms are located in Mjaland .

Arne collects old pictures and postcards , and will exchange with other collectors , or historians that would like to receive a few pictures of the two farms . Write to : Arne Mjaland , Nordasv 46, 4760 Birkeland .

Birkeland. 11/3-86

Dear Belle Co.

Thank you for your letter of Feb 1 which I got yesterday

It was very kind of you to send those postcards, thank you! I hope you have some more around the house, I collect up to about 1960.

It was interesting to read about the magazine you plan to print. I would like very much if you would print my letter in your next quarterly.

I would like to get a copy of the Greenville Herald Banner

I am sure your historical association will find some of the descendants from people in Mjaland.

I am sending you a few copies of another picture I have of Mjaland. You may do what you like with them. Perhaps

You meet somebody descendant

from people in Mjaland, and
you may hand over
pictures if anybody
want them.

You could may inform
them that I collect old
postcards.

(If it is cards of
cars, cowboys and
other interesting items
I even collect modern
cards.

1982 PICTURE OF FARM
AT MJALAND, NEAR
AMLI, NORWAY



Sincerely,

Asne Mjaland

Nordst. v. 46

4760 Birkeland

NORWAY

KEN LASATER , MASTER OF WESTERN SWING
by Belle Cox



Ken Lasater of Hickory Creek often hosts jam sessions at his home, with several friends interested in western swing music.

If you like Western Swing , you will be happy to hear that we are experiencing a surge of revival in this particular category of country music .

Ken Lasater , well known performer on the electric steel guitar has always specialized in this style of music , and was one of the first to play an electric steel guitar .

He recalls that Bob Dunn took a standard guitar , placed a microphone under its strings , hooked it up to an amplifier , and that was the birth of the very first electric steel guitar !

Ken has an album dated 1935 . On the cover is a picture of the legendary Bob Dunn playing this rudimentary and primitive instrument, the guitar that is a tradition with Western Swing music.

At that time , Ken was just a lad in his teens , and was entranced as he sat watching Bob play on his improvised electric steel guitar , which became a sensation to to all music fans back in the 1930's .

KEN LASATER

Bob Dunn soon became Ken's mentor and his idol . He would even sit in for Ken at the Forest Avenue Club in Dallas , Texas . Ken attributes much of his success as a musician to the inspiration he recieved from Bob Dunn , of The Musical Brownies , a very popular group at that time associated with W.B.A.P. radio station .

By the age of seventeen , Ken was playing in Oklahoma , and when he was eighteen , he joined Pinky Dawson , on K.R.L.D. radio station in Dallas , Texas . Since then , he has performed on practically all North Texas radio stations with many different bands . Western Swing was spawned in Texas along with the electric guitar , and Ken has a strong desire to preserve this traditional Texas music history. Just as the Blues is to New Orleans , so Western Swing is to Texas . He has a strong sense of history , and is proud of the fact that that he was one of the first to bridge the gap from that first electric steel guitar to the much improved , highly technical instruments with pedals that are used today .

Ken has a son , Clint , who was an honor roll student and music Major at N.T.S.U. He recalls , with a mischievious twinkle in his eyes , a conversation he had once with his son . In answer to a question , he told Clint , " Oh sure , I can read music . But I just don't let it effect my playing . "

Although retired , Ken likes for friends to drop in for jam sessions . The welcome mat is always out at the cozy little home he shares with his wife Gladys , in Hickory Creek , Texas . They have only been married about six years , but have known many years .

Gladys was married to the late Dick Dyson , who was a musical star and close friend and colleague of Ken's .

After Dena , Ken's wife died , the two renewed their acquaintance. It was a lucky day for Western Swing fans when Gladys and Ken decided to get married . They have combined a remarkable collection of music memorabilia . Gladys has gathered pictures , news clippings , musical items , and placed them in albums , preserving the history of Western Swing .

Gladys also enjoys sewing , decorating fancy cakes , and working in ceramics . She has a daughter , Sherri Parriette , of Rockwall, Texas and a son , Jim Dyson , who lives in Quinlan , Texas . Odis Dyson , the oldest son , lives in Houston , Texas .

Ken has , besides son Clint , two daughters , Sandra Burden , of Lewisville , Texas , and Donna Lyons , who lives in Sanger , Texas .

For approximately three decades , the country music King was Western Swing . Ken strongly emphasizes the difference between Country Western , and Western Swing . Western Swing lyrics , basically , tell a sad love story , perhaps of an unrequited love , or bittersweet memories of a long lost lover . The tunes are often light hearted and the lyrics are teasing , even tantalizing . In some selections there is a variety of fun and frolic , special renditions of old-fashioned Texas humor , and all were suitable for dancing .

During the 1940's and '50's , Western Swing spilled from Texas ballrooms , juke boxes , and radio stations .

Ladies wore full skirts , and twirled around the dance floors with ribbons , flowers , and bows in their hair . There is a tradition

Ken Lasater

in Texas , of wearing special " square dance dresses " . These are the ultimate in feminine dance dresses , with many petticoats , lace ruffles and ribbon bows that swirled beneath a full skirt as the lady circled and twirled about the dance floor . This writer recalls her own dress of this type that had 27 yards in the skirt , and little puffed sleeves that fell from the shoulder .

To Western Swing music , they danced - and still do - the Paul Jones , Bunny Hop , Jitterbug , Waltz , and many folk dances , such as the Schottische .

A family could pile the kids into the back of a pick-up or station wagon , and attend a barn dance or a backyard barbeque with friends , without fear of lyrics from a song that contained violence and other topics that were unsuitable for tender little ears .

Ken Lasater had one request before I took my leave . " Would you please print in your article , that I wish to express my thanks to a friend , Big Jim Sarver , disc jockey on K.N.O.N. radio station." (He has been playing some of his music for his fans .)

For all you Western Swing fans , here is good news . Rodney Pirtle, a newcomer to Western Swing has recently released a double album and cassettes entitled , Western Swing , Moving into the Big Band Era . Three instrumentalists on the album are former members of Bob Will's Texas Playboys . They are: accoustics base player, Joe Frank Ferguson electric guitar , Eldon Shamblin , and Leon Auliffe ; electric steel guitar . You all remember LEON - Bob Wills would sing , " TAKE IT AWAY LEON !

This new album can be found at the Melody Shoppe , North Park and Prestonwood , Hstings in Preston Center , at Frets and Strings on Lovers Lane (Miracle Mile) , the Galleria on Valley View , and also at the Bob Wills Museum in Fort Worth .

Now who said Western Swing is dead . Why , it aint even sick ! It is alive and well in North Texas .



front row ,
left to right:

Bob Dunn
Milton Brown
(holding
mike)
Tom Cunningham
(manager)

Back row ,
left to right:

Papa Calhoun
Cecil Brower
Jessie Ashcock
Wanna Coffman
Durwood Brown
Ocie Stockard

MILTON BROWN AND HIS MUSICAL BROWNIES

HISTORY OF CORINTH BAPTIST CHURCH

The Corinth Baptist Church was organized on November 3, 1887, in a little log school house called Sand Hill. And the church was christened Sand Hill Baptist Church.

Charter members were Mr. and Mrs. J. S. McMath and their daughter, Edwina; Mary and Sallie Durham; and J. M. Grady.

Edwina McMath, now Mrs. S. J. Lane, is the only living charter member.

The committee organizing the church was composed of the Rev. R. T. Yeats, J. A. Moore, and the following deacons: J. R. Burton, W. C. Raines, J. W. Cook, and R. W. Terrell.

In December, thirteen members were added to the church by letter.

We have no record as to when the church joined the Denton County Baptist Association. We find, however, that in the fifth annual session of the county association, which met September 12, 1890, messengers were listed from the Sand Hill Church. The church has continued as a member of the Denton County Baptist Association until the present time.

The church erected its first building in the winter of 1894, and began using it for services in April, 1895. J. S. McMath donated the lot for the building, which was located south of the Sand Hill School, on the road going into Denton.

At about the time that the building was erected, the church voted to change its name to Rock Hill Baptist Church. The congregation worshipped at this location for seven years.

In March, 1902, the building was destroyed by fire, and immediately the congregation made plans to rebuild. A committee was appointed to solicit funds for this purpose. This fund-raising committee was composed of J. D. Barton, J. D. Harbert, R. S. Barnes, L. E. Coleman, A. L. Richardson, and H. J. Coleman. During the time when there was no church building, the congregation worshipped in a vacant house located on the J. D. Harbert farm.

In the early summer of 1902, the congregation decided to move the church to a more central location. W. V. Pockrus donated the lot for the building, which eventually was located just north of our present location. Until the building could be erected, a brush arbor was erected for purposes of worship.

The church had a great revival in August. Since the funds were coming in very slowly for the construction of the new building, a deacon asked for permission to solicit funds among the sister churches of the county. This

request was granted to T. L. Anderson, and by the help of other churches in Denton County, the congregation was able to complete its new building and to move in for worship in November, 1902.

At this time the name of the church was changed from Rock Hill to the Corinth Baptist Church.

In 1946, under the leadership of the pastor, the Rev. W. E. Vaughn, the church was moved to the present location in Corinth, on the highway. Brother J. D. Brown and his wife donated the lot. The church building was moved and remodeled, but it soon was found to be inadequate for the church's growing needs.

In 1953, the church built the present building under the able leadership of the pastor, the Rev. Carroll Weedon.

From this little church have gone many noble men and women to bless the world, and from its coffers have flowed thousands of dollars to the "uttermost parts of the earth," to tell the sweet story of the cross and the undying love of Christ for a lost world.

Year	Baptisms	Total Membership	Value of Property	Receipt of Gifts	Pastors
1956	9	169	\$6,500.00	\$5,041.82	Charles Johnson, Interim
1955	5	163	5,000.00	5,314.15	Carroll Weedon
1954	7	140	5,000.00	4,745.20	Carroll Weedon
1953	11	153	3,000.00	4,249.40	Carroll Weedon
1952	11	140	3,000.00	3,000.00	Carroll Weedon
1951	9	126	3,000.00	5,217.83	Carroll Weedon
1950	9	100	3,000.00	1,243.01	Carroll Weedon
1949					Carroll Weedon
1948					C. E. Newman
1947	11	111	3,500.00	1,482.18	J. B. Oliver, 1st and 4th
1946	8	81	3,000.00		W. E. Vaughn
1945	6	91	1,000.00		W. E. Vaughn
1944	6	91	1,000.00		Bryan Judge
1943	9				D. H. Sperring
1942					
1941	13	74	1,150.00		Frank Pratt
1940					Frank Pratt
1939					
1938					
1937					
1936	7	81	280.00		J. H. Young
1935	5	76	280.00		J. H. Young
1934	16	63	280.00		Earl Barr
1933					Adolph Lofman
1932	2	60	1,000.00		Silas Carr
1931	4	55	1,000.00		G. W. Godwin
1930	7	40	1,000.00		Cecil Goffand
1929	1	73	2,000.00		T. J. Gamble
1928					T. J. Gamble
1927	23	78	1,200.00		B. F. Foreman
1926	1	71	1,000.00		B. F. Foreman
1925		75			W. L. Brumlow
1924	5	37		177.31	J. Carl McReynolds
1923					R. J. Shelton
1922					R. J. Shelton
1921					R. J. Shelton
1920	2	48	1,000.00		J. H. Larkin
1919		37			B. F. Sizemore
1918	3	47	1,000.00		G. W. Farrington
1917	3	50	1,000.00		G. W. Farrington
1916		50	1,000.00		G. W. Farrington
1915					G. W. Farrington
1914	3	79	1,200.00		J. W. Balthrop
1913	8	80	1,200.00		J. W. Balthrop

Year	Baptisms	Total Membership	Value of Property	Receipt of Gifts	Pastors
1912		67	\$ 700.00		J. W. Balthrop
1911		57	700.00		J. W. Balthrop
1910		32	700.00		T. C. Griffith
1909		22	700.00		J. F. Hodnett
1908		29	700.00		T. Estell
1907					W. A. Smith
1906		41	800.00		W. A. Smith
1905		42	800.00		W. A. Smith
1904	2	65	800.00		H. C. McBrayer
1903	1	65	800.00		H. C. McBrayer
1902	11	66			No pastor; salary used for new building
1901	2	59	700.00		B. F. Sizemore
1900	8	66	700.00		M. F. Wheeler
1899	4	74	700.00		M. F. Wheeler
1898	1	73	700.00		M. F. Wheeler
1897	11	74	700.00		J. D. Ballard
1896			700.00		J. D. Ballard
1895			700.00		R. L. Scruggs
1894	1	41			F. L. Dupont
1893	1	45			J. D. Ballard
1892	14	40		Sunday school organized	J. D. Ballard
1891	6	33			S. A. Beauchamp
1890					J. A. Amos, W. M. Pipkin, B. S. Gay
1889					J. W. Mitchell
1888		29			T. John Turner
1827		6			T. John Turner

Blanks in the above tabulation indicate, in most cases, that no information was available.

No property was owned by the church before 1895.



Older girl - Cletice Garrison
Baby - Aleta Garrison Ford
Taken at Garza about 1906

An interview conducted 11th day of March , and 19th day of March ,
1986

by Letitia deBurgos

Oleta Garrison Ford and James Travis Ford , 3313 Walton Drive,
Corinth , Texas

Born in Garza , 25th day of January , 1913 . Mother , Ethel Hammods Garrison was widowed in 1912 . She bought 48 acres of land at Corinth and moved her family there . The farm had a four-room house , a water well , and a few out-buildings . Living was hard .

Mrs. Garrison married Jonas Fuson and moved to Haso , New Mexico . They lived there about four years . Calvin Fuson was born there , July , 1916 . Mrs. Ford remembers a cow ate her favorite ate her favorite dress off the clothes line .

The family bought 80 acres next to their land in Corinth and moved back . America Fuson was born here the 11th day of August , 1918 .

They grew peanuts as a cash crop .

Dr. Taylor was the local doctor .

The school was a three-room building on the West side of I-35 highway . Grades , 1 through 9 . High school was in Denton . A bus took them there . In the Corinth school , they walked and carried their lunches .

Mrs. Ollie Robertson and Beatrice Brown were teachers there . Hazel Harbert was Oleta's best friend . The girls played baseball and basket ball . They played the Lake Dallas girls' team .

Oleta Garrison married James Travis Ford in Denton in 1941 . They started going together after a church social for three years . The young couple lived with the older Fords for two years . Then they moved to an old house on Mrs. Ford's present land . This house was destroyed by a storm , and the present house was built to replace it .

Some of the families in the area were : the Browns , Fords , Bound , and Fowler . *

Father , Daniel Garrison , born Denton County , 8th day of March , 1882 . Died 25th day of August , 1912 .

Mother , Ethel Hammods Garrison , born in Kentucky , 1887 . Died 29th July , 1964 . Cletice Garrison* born 21st. oct. 1909, Oleta Garrison Ford.

Father Benjamin Hammods , born in Kentucky , died in Texas , 26th day of February , 1918 .

Mother , Virginia Hammods , born in Kentucky , 1st. day of April , 1848 . Died in Texas , 11th day of February , 1937 .

They came to Texas approximately 1884 .

Monroe Ford and Florence Fuller Ford both came to Texas from Kentucky .

James Travis Ford and Oleta Garrison Ford

↓
Kenneth Wayne Ford

1* Daniel Garrison was in charge of the Lake Dallas Telephone Co.

2 * Cletis Garrison died 3rd day of August , 1982



Daniel Garrison
Ethel Hammocks Garrison

Father's Farm
between Dargy
and Corinth



America ↑
Fuson
Cole - Abbott
at Family Home
Corinth

↑ Ethel Hammocks
Garrison
Cletice Garrison
Daughter

1st
COUSIN
Oshia Hammocks
Dargent

Our farm was located at the fork of Stewart Creek and the Elm fork of the of the Trinity River . All is now under Lake Lewisville except one corner located in Stewart Creek Park . This was part of our pear and peach orchard .

I was born February 17 , 1894 , when my mother , Letitia Myers McWhorter was forty years old . She had one more baby after me , at forty-five , James Burton , Jr. When Jimmie was about four months old , my older sister , Ida Mae , died of poison after the birth of a very weak little girl . No one knew what to do , so Ma put big , healthy Jimmie on cow's milk , and breast fed her own granddaughter. In all , twelve children were born at Stewart Creek . Ten lived to be grown . The last children were delivered by Dr. Newton . Women today talk about the difficulty of having children after thirty - five !

I remember our white one-story house well . There were four tiny rooms , loft , and back porch .

The boys slept in the loft with our hired man .

No screens at windows or doors . Screens didn't come for many years .

It was the job of one of the younger children to stand during the meals and wave a tree branch of leaves back and forth to keep the flies off .

The kitchen was about ten feet from the right corner of the back porch . It was made of logs with a dirt floor . Later it was covered with boards . Inside was a big wood cook stove , long wood table , two benches , two chairs , and a wood safe where the cooked food was stored . There were shelves on one wall for pots , pans , a big box of Arbuckle coffee , and a big box of Mother's Oats . Ham, bacon , and whatever game the boys had found , hung from ceiling beams . Against one wall was a tall bench for a water bucket with a tin dipper . This is where the kids washed the dishes . All cooking , eating , ironing , and kid washing was done in this one room. In one corner was a big wood barrel of flour . In another corner was a big wood barrel of sugar . Ma watched the sugar barrel like a hawk to keep our fingers out . How we loved her vinegar and green grape pie ! The extra canned food , butter , milk , and eggs were kept in the storm cellar . This was a favorite place for mice and rats .

The washing was done outside by the windmill . First , everything was boiled in a big iron kettle on legs over a fire built on the ground . One of the younger kids stood by the kettle with a long wooden pole and kept the clothes punched down . Then everything was scrubbed on a washboard in a "No. 2 " tin tub . Next , they were rinsed through two waters . The white things got a third rinse in blued water . The younger ones carried all the water for the washing . Almost every piece was starched with boiled starch . Finally all was hung out to dry , praying the line wouldn't break again . Next , a day of ironing done by all the girls . Irons were heated on the cook stove . A hot job during a Texas summer . Women of today couldn't live through one wash day like this .

There was Bartman's General Store about four miles away . Maybe twice a year all the kids would get one penny for candy for all of us . We would all walk to the store for that great treat . The Stewart Creek Methodist Church was close to the store . We didn't go often . I think getting all those kids ready was just too much for Ma .

We had no close neighbors , so we played with our brothers and sisters . We had rag dolls Ma made . We strung China berries for beads , and played dress up in old rags . At Christmas , we got one small store-bought toy , one orange , and one piece of store-bought candy . It was the bright spot of the whole year . Once Pa loaded all of us in our wagon long before daylight , and took us to Denton to the circus . All I remember were the clowns and a real lion . We never forgot that trip .

Each family turned their horses together in the river bottom. This lead to various kinds of trouble . A certain old man would catch someone's horse , then say it came to his barnyard , and he would make the owner pay to get it back . There's a dark mutter that one of our kin was caught stealing horses and was hung close to Little Elm .

The girls made all the feather beds and pillows from feathers we saved . We made our quilts , too . Sheets were made from un-bleached muslin . We had geese . One old grey gander hated me . Everytime he saw me , he would start hissing , stick his neck out , spread his wings , and start running for me . Someone would have to save me , screaming and kicking .

Holding a live goose between your knees , picking feathers , is one messy job .

Some years in the spring , several wagons of people would camp on Stewart Creek where Cottonwoods were thick . They made chairs , settees , swings , from the saplings . Then they would go around to all the farms and sell the things they had made . If there was no money , they would trade for food .

Once a year Pa would ride to Lewisville to have our wheat and corn milled . On one trip he brought one bolt of brown checked material , one bolt of blue checked material , and one bolt of ribbon. Ma and all the girl's dresses , and the boy's shirts were made from that . On this trip Pa got a little drunk and dropped the ribbon , unrolling it all the way . Next day we had to ride back and roll it up .

Another year he came walking home carrying his saddle . Ma didn't say a word .

Our older brother told us Pa got into a fight over a card game and someone shot his horse out from under him .

All the girls were dressed alike . We had a bath in the wash tubs once a week . Our hair was combed and braided tight as an onion skin . Don't you know we smelled .

Ma made beautiful lace sitting in her bedroom . We girls did all the chores with Ma keeping an ear close to the wall . When any of us got into a fight , she would come out of her room without a word , take the broom , crack us on the head , and go back to her lace making . We didn't fight much .

You could eat off the floors , they were so scrubbed with home-made lye soap . The men and boys had to take their field shoes off

on the back porch and wash their face and hands before they could come in , regardless of the weather .

Later , Pa built a lean-to down the left side of the house , and a front porch . We thought we were rich .

None of us started school before we were eight or nine . All the families got together and built a one-room school house close to the church .

We walked to school . If the weather was really bad , Pa would let the three youngest ride one of the farm mules to school .

Our teacher was whoever could read , write , and do numbers .

The pay was whatever the various families could scrape up . Students of today are so fortunate. Pa finally decided that his large family needed a regular school . In 1902 he moved us all to Carrollton , Texas .

* * * * *

* Nannie McWhorter James died 22nd day of February , 1985 at the age of 91 .

* * * * *

Denton County census : 10th day of August 1870
James Burton McWhorter - age 22
Sarah McWhorter - Mother
Susan Royally - Maiden Aunt

Denton County census : 3rd day of June , 1880
James Burton McWhorter
Letitia Myers McWhorter - Wife
Sarah McWhorter - Mother
Susan Royally - Maiden Aunt
Children : Nora , William ,
Ida Mae .

* * * * *

This story written by: Letitia de Burgo , Lake Dallas , Texas

An interview conducted 6th day of March , 1986

by Letitia deBurgos

Ellis Varge Bunch and Margaret Siebert Bunch , 1403 Shady Rest Lane
Corinth , Texas

Mr. Bunch's father , while still a member of the Dallas , Texas Police Department , bought 98 acres in 1934 , formerly belonging to Mr. Bounds . This land went from Shady Rest Lane to the lake at Cemetery Inlet . There was a farm house , two-storied barn , and a storm cellar . The Bounds farm had one of the finest orchards in Denton County . There were three families in the area of 300 acres . The Bunch , Adrian , and Ford families .

The local school was a one-room building across I-35 Highway . All grades were taught here . There was an average of eight to ten students . This building also served as a Methodist Church . There was no fire department . The Denton Sheriff was the law . There were few problems . No one locked a door .

Ray Meadows ran the area for six terms as the Mayor . Taxes were small . On 98 acres , school tax was \$26.00 , county tax was \$6.00 . There were no paved roads to be taxed . Paved roads started appearing in the early 1950's . The nearest store and filling station was on I-35 Highway and Walton Street . It was owned and operated by the local Methodist preacher . Harvell later ran the store .

If you wanted a telephone from the Lake Dallas Telephone Co. , you had to pay for stringing the wire . No telephone poles were used . The wire was strung trees , the top of barbed wire fences , and sometimes on the ground . If your telephone went out , you had to find the break yourself . Sometimes it was caused by the cattle . Wall-mounted crank phones that rang the operator were used until the early 1950's .

Swimming in the lake was great , and so was the fishing . Cat fish were caught weighing 75 and 80 pounds .

This area raised cotton and peanuts . Turkeys and hogs were also important cash crops .

Mr. Elbert Bunch put in his first garden with Ellis Bunch and a nephew pulling the plow . The next year they got a horse , a work horse named Maude , that was with them many years .

Mr. Ellis Bunch built his first glass greenhouse in 1965 , and raised bedding plants . He expanded to five greenhouses . He was well known for his superior tomatoe and pepper plants . The greenhouse had started as a hobby . Mr. Bunch himself built all five . He is now retired , but still gets calls for his tomatoe plants , He closed his greenhouses in 1982 .

Ellis Varge Bunch , born ; Leonard , Texas , Margaret Seibert Bunch , born; Dallas , Texas .

Elbert Van Buren Bunch , born 1881 , Fairmont , Ga. Estella Estes Bunch , born 1894 , Leonard , Texas

Carl O Siebert , born Dallas , Texas . Bertha Sartor Bunch , born ; 1890 , Joplin Mo.

Carl O. Siebert's father and mother came from Berlin , Germany , to Dallas , Texas. Older daughter died on high seas coming over .

The Fishing Lady

by Belle Cox

Maude Bradshaw was an elderly widow who lived in a little redwood cottage on the cliff that overlooks the west end of Hickory Creek. The house nestles in a grove of trees and is just a short walk to the lake. She had a boat and her dock resembled a covered wagon that was floating at the water's edge. The flooring was made of wooden planks, and a metal roof curved down, forming an arch. It was attached to slender strips of bent wood.

My son, Ron, and I have spent many days fishing with Maude and her little coonhound, Rosita.

Rosita had long slim legs and she could run like the wind along the flower bordered path through the woods. She would chase rabbits over the ridges and into the ravines. And she would bark until we all came to admire her when she had a racoon up a tree. She would spend hours trying to climb that tree.

Maude was rail thin, barely five feet tall. She was fiercely independent, and tough as a piece of rawhide. Afraid of nobody, or anything, she killed dozens of snakes each year. Reaching her pistol, always in her gingham apron pocket, she would whip it out and fire away.

I remember one year, the lake was up, we had a lot of rain. The snakes were swinging from the tree limbs. I don't know if they were just trying to get away from the water, or if they were after the birds. Whatever, Maude grabbed her rusty, but trusty, old rifle and promptly reduced the local snake population. That old rifle looked just about as big as Maude. And so did some of those snakes.

Back in those days, it was a quiet, peaceful corner of the lake, and sometimes we would take the boat out and run a trotline from one side of the cove to the other. The heavy cord was strung with large fishhooks laden with raw meat or dough-bait.

The turtles were a source of never ending aggravation for Maude. The wily creatures were always stealing her bait. Regardless of whether it was a choice piece of chicken or just a wiggly worm, one simply did not mess with the lady's bait. But someone forgot to tell the turtles. They would slyly separate the bait from the hook and take off, leaving Maude in a fit of anger and vowing her revenge.

Her favorite way to fish was with a cane pole. Lying quietly beside her, Rosita kept her eyes riveted on the float, or cork, that was attached to the fishing cord, and floated on the water.

When it dipped out of sight suddenly, Rosita would leap quickly out of the way. It had not taken her long to learn that when the cork bobbed instantly below the surface of the lake, Maude usually jerked a wet and floppy fish from the hidden depths of the water.

The fish always had other ideas, with a frisky flip of the fin, they would stun Rosita with a sharp wet smack across her face, or perhaps wiggle off the hook and slip back into the water, taking the lure with them.

As the years passed, Ron and I spent all our spare time at the lakehouse with Maude and Rosita. I lived and worked in Dallas, but having known Maude since I was a teenager, I felt she was family.

Then Maude suffered a stroke, and she called me to come and get her. She was in a nursing home, separated from her beloved Rosita.

So I moved in permanently, and never left her until her death when she was 88 years old. When I needed to go grocery shopping, or other errands, I would call Ron to come and sit with Maude until I returned.

The last words she said to me in the hospital were, "Take good care of my little Rosita."

Just about every day Rosita and I walk to the lake, where the old rustic wooden steps led down to the dock. As we stand at the top of the rocky cliff, we say a little prayer for Maude, our old fishing buddy. Somehow, as we watch the sun slip below the rim of the lake, we know that Maude is happy. That she is waiting for us on a heavenly pier in the soft silver clouds, watching little fishes float by on gossamer wings, and that her fishing pole is solid gold.

*Dedicated
to my friend, Maude
March, 1986
Belle Cox*

*Maude Bradshaw
1892-1980*