



# Making History in the Prairie

Grand Prairie Historical Organization

Volume XIX  
February 2010

## **IMPORTANT NOTE: MEETING LOCATION DETAILS**

**Our meeting this month is February 13th at 10am**

**WHICH IS SATURDAY** and will be held at the

**Arlington Baptist College / “Top O’Hill Terrace”**

**3001 West Division, Arlington, Tx 76012**

**Cost for the tour is \$5 and lunch is NOT provided.**

**It will last approximately 2 hours**

**Please RSVP to Angela Giessner at 972-262-5151**

## **2009 Historical Markers in Grand Prairie**

*Guerrero Dean Funeral Home just received a city historical marker (#64) for their building at 500 E. Main Street that was originally construction by Lovell O. Turner in 1941. The City of GP also awarded marker #65 to the Railroad in Jan 2010. In 2009 the City awarded the following markers :*

**#58** - Don Juan’s Romantic Mexican Food Restaurant, 325 E. Main St.—1950,

**#59**-St John Baptist Church , 1701 W. Jefferson—1921,

**#60** McIntosh Chapel CME Church, 2129 Beaumont Street—1949

**#61** Morning Star Baptist Church, 2251 El Paso—1952

**#62** Uptown Theater, 120 E. Main St.—1950

**#63** Evening Chapel AME Church, 1832 WE Roberts St —1915

Help us keep our Organization running by paying your GPHO dues today. Make checks payable to GPHO for \$15. Address is on the last page of the newsletter

**Election of Officers:**  
**Bobby Donaldson,**  
**Committee Chair,**  
will present a slate of  
new officers at the  
next meeting.



Quote of the Month :

***“If you find yourself in a hole,  
the first thing you need to do is  
stop digging”***

## DALWORTH PARK, TEXAS THE MODEL CITY – “A UTOPIA”

Many of us know where the current Dalworth community is. However, few know the origin of the original Dalworth Park.

Grand Prairie had been a municipality for six months when the Dalworth Realty and Improvement Co., with a capital stock of \$500,000, received its charter to build a “Utopia community”. Dalworth was the brain child of Col. Frank P. Holland of Dallas, who envisioned a pre-planned model city free of debt: Its water works, sewer system, street paving and sidewalks all paid for before a single home was built. This plan included a 100-acre park and provided its residents with a simple, healthful life with Dallas and Fort Worth near at hand.

To get an idea of where Dalworth Park was, picture the area in Grand Prairie bordered by NW 4<sup>th</sup> to the East, the County line to the West, Sherman St to the South and Hill Street (Marshall at the time) to the North. The Dalworth community we know now was part of that area, but today it's the south section of this plot, south of the railroad tracks.

The 1,200-acre community (just west of Grand Prairie at the time) was located on the highest ridge between Dallas and Fort Worth, according to Col. Holland and his associates, Reginald v. Holland and George D. Allen. The railway tracks, Interurban line and the main road between the two large cities ran through the middle of their “utopia” town. Even the artesian water beneath the land was deemed ideal by the investors, who proclaimed it soft and free from minerals “so that is fine for irrigation.” Mr. Allen predicted about \$400,000 would be spent in 1910 to prepare the model city.

Dalworth Lots went on sale September 15, 1910, with home seekers given priority over speculators. Prices ranged from \$450 to \$1,200 for lots north of the railway and \$200 to \$400 for lots south of the line. Lots north of the railway had building restrictions and the lots south of the railway had no building restrictions.

Dalworth grew quickly, and within three years included a Motor Inn, broom and mop mfg. and a business college. A post office also was established in March 1913, but because the name was similar to Dalworth, Texas, postal officials changed the community's name to Dalworth Park.



### Life Members of the Grand Prairie Historical Organization

Judy Armstrong, Billy Joe Armstrong, Carol Bell, Grant Bell, Brian W. Bingham, Verna Brown, Jo Robertson Campbell, L.R. Cannon, Ouida Chapman Lewis, Lisa Chennault Brown, Helen Chennault, Thomas Chennault \*, Thomas B Chennault, City of Grand Prairie Marketing, Joe W. Colwell, Marge Copeland, H. Victor Copeland \*, Jerry Corley, Cheryl Friman Dover, Charles and Janice England, Kirk and Marcy England, Olive Galloway, Norma Hale, Marvin J (Jack) Hays, Lee D. Herring, Thomas Hight, Jorja Jackson Clemson, Vera Jinks, Marie Kerr Stufflebeme\*, Blythe Kizziar, Duane McGuffey, Kenneth R. Miller, Lynn Motley, Betty Phillips, Charles Powers, Bob Roberts, Susan Shuffler, Fynlon and Eugenia Simpson, Ouida Daugherty Smith, Amy Sprinkles, Donald Stanfield, Joyce Colwell Stanfield, Angela Sutton Giessner, Donald Taylor, Ruthe Thompson Jackson, Laura Thompson Potter, Paul and Madie Vernon \* Deceased

The first Postmasters to serve Dalworth Park were Ellis Mitchell, Nov 29, 1912; Sam A. McIlhenny, August 8, 1915; Robert H. Armstrong, January 2, 1920; and the last to serve was Mrs. Georgia Helms 1943. We are told the first Post Office was located at the northwest corner of Houston and N.W. 16<sup>th</sup> Street. The Dalworth R & I officed in this building. The Post Office was later moved to the corner of Dallas and N.W. 16<sup>th</sup> Street.

Dalworth Realty and Improvement Company developed Dalworth as the model city. Dalworth Park, in the blackland belt, is the geographical center of the best part of Texas and called the garden spot of the Great Southwest. At the time, a circle of 100 miles with Dalworth Park as the center contained: over 14,000 rated business homes, 60% of the business homes of the state, \$713,347,280 of the assessed value of the state, almost 4,000 miles of railroad and 618 railroad stations, 1,198 cities towns and villages, 1,500,000 acres of land under cultivation, 2,000,000 people (almost half the population of the state) and about 80% of these were white. Within this circle was produced one fifth of the entire cotton crop of the United States.

### **Censuses:**

**1920 - 332 people,**

**1940 - 534 people (7 businesses)**

A 100,000 gallon steel water tower was erected between 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> streets and Ft. Worth. The first high-class "Automobile Inn" in Texas (The Dalworth Inn) was built on Dalworth St. & N.W. 14<sup>th</sup> and destroyed by fire sometime in the early 1930's.

Spikes Brothers Broom and Duster

Factory was built on the corner of Hwy 80 and N.W. 13<sup>th</sup> St.. Dalworth Business College was built on the northwest corner of Houston Street and N.W. 15<sup>th</sup> Street which is now known as the Anderson Building. The college occupied the first floor and the second floor was modern apartments. This building was later a very exclusive dance hall called "The Rainbow Gardens." Since the closing of the dance hall, this building has been occupied by several different businesses and is currently an events venue that can be rented out for company parties and weddings.

The Dalworth Co. built its first office building on the northeast corner of N.W. 16<sup>th</sup> Street and Fort Worth Street. This building was later the Seventh Day Adventist School. In 1936 the school was closed and all of the students went to Grand Prairie Public Schools.

In 1912 the J. J. Spikes family moved their broom and duster company from Dallas to Dalworth. Several of their employees were Seventh Day Adventist and they also relocated to Dalworth. On August 10, 1912 the Dalworth Seventh Day Adventist Church was chartered with a total of 23 charter members. Some of these members included George and Dina Liggett (paternal grandparents of Carol Liggett Anderson Bell), as well as Alphonse and Agnes Scheppler (great grandparents of Carol).

Carol recalls; ***"In the old church building in Dalworth, there was a baptistery under the podium, and I remember it being pretty scary in there. I also played the piano occasionally for that church when I was a teenager and attended regularly with my family. My aunt, Varina Liggett Hight, was also very involved, as was her sister, Lottie Liggett Reeves. When the new building on Tarrant Road was planned, my family***



**Brian W. Bingham**  
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The Men who signed the Grand  
Prairie Chamber of Commerce  
Charter in 1945

M. (Buck) Morgan  
BUILDER, REAL ESTATE, THEATERS

E. Carlisle Smith  
ARCHITECT

Louis Hulcy  
MGR - LONE STAR GAS

G.W. Bingham  
BINGHAM & FIELDS FINANCE COM-  
PANY

Anson B. Brundrage  
NEWSPAPER PUBLISHER

L.J. Goodson  
CONSTRUCTION

Sam A. McIlhenny  
REAL ESTATE DEVELOPER

C.D. Millar - DRUG STORE

R.E. Ostroot - HARDWARE STORE

C. R. Sargent - GROCERY STORE



*(Scheppler) donated the land. My grandmother's brother, Earnest Scheppler and his family, were also involved with the church. I have my great grandmother's diary from 1915, and she frequently mentions going to church by buggy."*

About this same time, the Dalworth Company, headed by Leslie Thompson, donated to this group a building sight. The church was built on the southeast corner of Dallas St. & N.W 15<sup>th</sup> Streets.

One of the two churches was the St. Cecilia Catholic Church on Dalworth Street. The Hugh Cowdin family lived in the two story white house on Dalworth and donated the land for the church which had a membership of about 30. It was a mission church serviced by Father Zachary between 1930 and 1942. Father Zachary was at St. Edwards in Dallas and was the mission priest for St Cecilia and St. Luke's in Irving.

Few of the old homes still stand: Luther Spikes' home at 1826 Ft. Worth St., the Young home at 1902 Ft. Worth St.; and George Spikes' was at 401 N.W. 16<sup>th</sup> St.

The Mayor, Mr. George Spikes, the two city council members, Mr. Luther Spikes and Mr. S.A. McIlhenny, along with the citizens of Dalworth Park agreed to be annexed by the City of Grand Prairie, Texas on March 15, 1943.

*Thank you to Bobby Donaldson for  
doing the research and putting this article together.*

**THE HISTORIC ANDERSON BUILDING**  
EST. 1915

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Col. Frank P. Holland—original plan  
designer of Dalworth Park