

Next Meeting Scheduled for 11-15-05

The next meeting of the GP Historical Organization is scheduled for November 15th. Please call Angela Giessner for reservations at 972-262-5151. When you call, please provide Angela with an update on your address, phone number, email address and your

Birthday. We are try to put together a GPHO Directory. In our November Meeting, John Wylie will make a presentation on the 125 year history of the First United Methodist Church in Grand Prairie. The FUMC Pastor, Jim

Brown, is scheduled to be on hand.



Inside this issue:

Eddlemon's Years of Service to G.P.	3
Lennox Hotel is next Historical Bldg	1
Membership Info	4
Purpose and Dues	4
Where ARE YOU?	2
Quote of the Month	2
Retraction to Last Issue.	2

Points of Interest

- **Next Meeting is 11/15**
- **Please send us your stories of Grand Prairie. You can email, mail or call me. If you're in Grand Prairie, I'll be glad to stop by and write it out. Without these stories, our newsletter would not be of much interest.**

In a dedication ceremony on November 8th, the Lennox Hotel became Grand Prairie's historical landmark #53.

Opening in fall 1951, the Lennox Hotel, located just off Main St. at 110 NW Second St., stood as a prestigious hotspot in the City of Grand Prairie. The three-story, yellow-brick building, built by Dallas real estate magnate Leo Corrigan, featured more than 110 rooms, coffee shop, banquet/ballroom and air conditioning.

The hotel's dining room hosted social events such as weddings and birthdays. Serving as the first home of the Grand Prairie Family YMCA, which operated until 1958, the Lennox Hotel also became the birthplace of Inglewood United Methodist Church.

In March 1965, Corrigan sold the building to W.A. "Buster" Standifer, a lawyer who added a first-class restaurant. However, as motels became more abundant along Interstate 30, Lennox drew fewer out-of-town guests, and the hotel fell into disrepair, closing in 1985.

Rumors of famous guests at the Lennox Hotel include basketball star Wilt Chamberlain, Martin Luther King Jr. and Johnny Crawford, who played Chuck Connors' character's son, Mark McCain, on the TV series "The Rifleman".

In 1992 the building was donated to the city, which leased it to National Church Residences (NCR), a not-for-profit corporation committed to serving older adults' housing, social and hu-

man needs, in a 99-year, \$1 per year agreement.

NCR renovated the facility, providing 40 federally subsidized apartments for indigent senior citizens. Each apartment consists of a living room, bedroom, small kitchen, bathroom and walk-in closet. Planters, trees and a large fenced-in side garden beautify the outdoors for the residents. Residents use the former dining area as a community activity room. The front desk is set up just the way it was when it was a hotel.

From functioning as a hotel, church, YMCA and now the current Lennox House retirement complex, the building continues to stand as a significant piece of Grand Prairie history and is set to be the next Historical Landmark.



Retraction to Last Issue

You may remember, in my first newsletter I told you I was “green” and “inexperienced” when it comes to newsletters. Boy was I right!

In that last issue I attempted to provide a story on some of my Family history. After doing so, I realized I had made several mistakes in the story.

I have never published a newsletter before and have learned a great deal. I have learned



that there is a lot of research that should go into a story prior to publication, even when the story is about your own family. Between 2 young children, leading a group of Cub Scouts and running a business, I have my hands full and did not take the necessary time to research everything before publishing.

In my article I said that my Grandfather and Grandmother moved 32 times in 33 years. This is incorrect. I also failed to mention that my Grandfa-

ther (G.W. Bingham) was one of the founders of the GP Rotary Club and GP Lions Club. In a future issue we will do a story on the Grand Prairie State Bank and how Durwood Sutton later became President and CEO.

I respectfully apologize to anyone that may have been offended for the mistakes in my story. In future articles I'll do my best to get the facts straight before publishing.

Brian W. Bingham



WHERE ARE YOU?

Please verify your address, phone number, birthday, and email address with Angela. We are putting a directory together and need to verify your information. You can call

972-262-515 or email
agiessner@sbcglobal.net



Eddlemon's - A Grand Prairie Tradition



Joe Eddlemon, Mrs. Eddlemon, Johnny Eddlemon and David Eddlemon

John Wylie and Associates—November Presentation

John and Barbara Brixey Wylie have been professional genealogists for fifteen years. In addition to doing research for clients, they have presented seminars for genealogical audiences in 29 states and have been published in nearly a dozen national & regional genealogical periodicals.

John recently completed four years on the Board of the Association of Professional Genealogists (APG). He serves the National Genealogical Society (NGS) as a member of their technology committee. One of GENTECH's founders, he served as its president for five years before it merged with NGS. John

currently serves the Dallas Genealogical Society as Vice-President for Education. Earlier he served that society as Director for Special Interest Groups and on the Records Preservation Committee. He is the 2004 recipient of the Dallas Genealogical Society's Lloyd Bockstruck Distinguished Service Award.

Barb is Program Chair for the Grand Prairie Genealogical Society. Before moving to Grand Prairie, she edited the *Garland Quarterly* for eight years and published a newsletter for descendants of her indentured servant immigrant ancestor. She served a three-year term on the

GENTECH Board of Directors and was general chair for its 1997 National Conference. Recipient of four Texas State Genealogical Society writing awards, she is also a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists.

They and other members of the History Committee of Grand Prairie's First United Methodist Church recently published a book, *First United Methodist Church, Grand Prairie, Texas: 125 Years in the Heart of the City*. The Wylies will be sharing some of that history at the November meeting.



First United Methodist Church has received their History books mentioned in the last newsletter. It is a first class publication.

Books are now on sale at the Church Office.

We will try to have some available at the November 15th meeting of the GPHO. If you are interested in a copy, bring cash or check (payable to FUMC) in the amount of \$35.

John Wylie Consulting

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There are three kinds of men: The ones that learn by reading; The few who learn by observation; The rest of them have to pee on the electric fence.

Will Rogers

Eddlemon's - A Grand Prairie Tradition since 1953

For those of you who don't know me, my name is Johnny Eddlemon. Thank you for the opportunity to tell you about my family and our business in Grand Prairie. We own and operate Eddlemon's Food Shop, located at 105 Clarice Street on the corner of Center and Clarice Street. Today, Mother Eddlemon, David, Joe and Johnny Eddlemon run the family business. We lost our father, Oscar, on January 13, 1986.

Our family business was established in August of 1953 by my mother and father, Oscar and Rebecca Eddlemon. They were brought to Grand Prairie from Alice, Texas where Daddy managed the Coca-Cola warehouse for his friend, Sam Dunham, who owned the Coca-Cola franchise for south Texas. My uncle Jack Plummer was selling his small grocery store, so here we came. At that time, it was an up and coming thing to have a drive in grocery store. Oscar and Rebecca were on the cutting edge!

How many of you can remember:

Coca Cola and milk in returnable bottles

Grand Prairie Laundry in the same block as our store on Clarice Street

Hill's Barbershop on our block

Bob's Burger & Shake in one of our buildings

In 1953, our business was outside of the city limits. My brother David sold fireworks there

In the 50's cotton pickers would come by the store on their way to Florence Hill to pick for the farmers

Also, about that time, we sold lots of block ice to construction workers that were developing Inglewood Estates

One of my many fond memories is: For Sunday, after church, neighborhood ladies might have ordered a roast to be cooked complete with vegetables and gravy. What a deal! We also made smokie burgers, 8 for a dollar with a free package of buns! Or, how about a filet and baked potato for \$1.99? (Those days are gone). Our greatest reward was to have happy customers.

Over the next several years, our business flourished in every way. We had three stores, one on S.W. 3rd Street & Freetown Road, one on Clarice St., and one on Northwest 7th Street. We had fresh meat markets in each store where we processed and sold freezer meat to probably most of you who are reading this newsletter. We also sold barbeque by the pound or made sandwiches to go. No one could ever be luckier than the Eddlemons to have made so many lasting friendships in this great town.

During the years that we had several stores, our family employed many fine Grand Prairie residents. Some were students going to high school or college, the best butchers in the metroplex, and part-time jobs on the side. Among our distinguished employees, you might think of Bill Arnold, State Representative. We are proud of his and everyone's accomplishments.

Beginning in the early 1970's large grocery stores began to cut into the business of small grocery shops. At that time, we began to look at other options to satisfy the community's needs. We scaled our operation down where our family was primarily all we needed to run the business. We have one location today where we still enjoy a great barbeque business and now a full-time catering operation.

Although there are few of us Eddlemons, with the help of our families and friends, we boast that we can cater for groups of as few as 50, and we have served as many as 3700 guests at one party.

Need to feed a modest group of 1500 a steak dinner complete with drink and dessert? No problem. Or maybe a Hawaiian Luau in your back yard? Among our clients, we are proud to serve city and school functions, Foleys, American Eurocopter, Hanson Concrete, Nestle Waters, Nissan Motor Corporation, Pollock Paper, and many private occasions.

Since the opening of the "famous" Ruthe Jackson Center, we are honored to be a part of their operation. We have forged a great relationship with their fantastic staff and feel that we have "classed up" our catering business since our teaming up with this new Grand Prairie venture.

Oscar Eddlemon served our city in many capacities; he was a member of civic clubs, and active in the organization of Grand Prairie Boy's Baseball Association. Rebecca Eddlemon was continuously active in P.T.A., Spade & Shovel Garden Club and the Gopher Mothers Club. She also worked as an Election Official for many years. Both were charter members of Indian Hills Baptist Church and later Inglewood Baptist Church. Respectfully, Oscar and Rebecca worked to make Grand Prairie a better place. They truly have had a love for our city.

Finally, I want to reintroduce my family. Rebecca Eddlemon (a.k.a. Mee-Maw), we are so fortunate that you're still able to come work with us each day. You lend dignity to our business. Oscar Eddlemon (Daddy), we miss him so much. We learned a lot from him and think of him every day. David Eddlemon (my oldest brother), is married to Diane (Plattner) Eddlemon and has two daughters, Teresa and Susan and 4 grandchildren. Joe Eddlemon (my middle brother) has one daughter, Elizabeth, and she attends Jackson Middle School. And myself, Johnny Eddlemon, married to Karen (Hale) Eddlemon with two sons Corey and Kelly and two granddaughters.

We love Grand Prairie and all it stands for. We work and play here and enjoy our town. Our city has grown so much and offers more and more to its population each year. Our greatest reward is still "Happy Customers and Friends"! Please come by to see us. Thanks Grand Prairie for allowing us to be a part of your lives!

Johnny Eddlemon

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Preserving the History of
Grand Prairie



Grand Prairie Historical
Friends and Members

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The Grand Prairie Historical Organization's purpose is to search out, record, collate, preserve, and pass on to the next generation, the history of Grand Prairie, Texas, and its Southwest Dallas County environs, including the appropriate marking of authentic historical sites.

The dues year of the Organization shall be from January 1 in each year through Dec. 31 of the same year. The following classes of membership apply:

Regular Membership: The annual dues for single members shall be fifteen dollars (\$15.00) and twenty-five (\$25.00) for couples .

Life Membership: Any person 45 years or older who contributes \$200 shall be a member for life without further payment of dues.

Gold Star Membership: Payment of 10 years in advance, \$150 (no age limit).

Patron Membership: Any person who contributes five hundred dollars (\$500.00) or more to the Organization shall be a Life Member thereof and shall, in addition thereof be appropriately recognized as a Patron of the Grand Prairie Historical Organization.

Corporate Membership: Any small business that contributes \$250.00 shall be classified as a corporate member.

Dues should be mailed to

Angela Sutton

Giessner

Farmers Insurance

2509 S. Carrier

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**Downtown Grand
Prairie facing West
just East of Center
Street. This picture
is from a postcard
dated 1935.**