

# PEARLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Pearland Historical Society

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Dedicated to preserving the history and heritage of "Old Pearland"

## President's Message

Do you find it hard to believe it is now 2008? Here we are now approaching the end of the decade when it seems such a short time ago that the doomsayers were predicting the year 2000 would bring all sorts of catastrophes - - computers would shut down, electricity would quit flowing through the lines, drinking water would be rationed and grocery stores have nothing but empty shelves. That does seem long ago but isn't it amazing how fast those eight years have zipped by..

The past year has been a very significant and eventful year for the **Pearland Historical Society**. In **September** we had an historically significant dedication ceremony for the placing of a **Texas Historical Marker** at **Zychlinski Park**. The event was made even more significant by the attendance of retired **Major General William Willoughby**, the great grandson of our town's founder, **Witold von Zychlinski**. **General Willoughby** also had just completed "**The Zychlinski Family**" history and presented copies to our **Society**. On the same day we put down our long awaited "**Time Capsule**" which is to be opened in the year 2007. The great part of the time capsule was the many family histories which we received and placed copies in the time capsule. Then in **October** we had another great "**Reunion Luncheon**" with over 200 persons attending.

Thanks to **Society Member Ray Kliesing**, we finally got a nice web site

On a sad note, as usual we did lose a number of our members and **Pearland "old timers"** during the year. We lost our oldest native born female citizen,

**Lois Hunter Bundy**, who passed away in **November** at the age of 101 and also our oldest native born male citizen, **Roy F. "Dude" Martin**, who passed away in **May** at the age of 91.

Let's all make an effort in 2008 to bring more younger people into our **Historical Society**.

2008 should be a very interesting year. We will be electing a new president; and there are several local elections coming up which will also be interesting. And of course, the **Pearland Oilers** should have another exciting football team this fall. They have a high number of returning starters from their 11 - 1 bi-district championship team of 2007 returning.

I hope all of you had a wonderful 07 and that 08 will be a very happy and healthy year for everyone and all will participate in **Historical Society** activities.

Mickey Mark

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**Don't forget our regular Quarterly Historical Society Meeting, Tuesday night, January 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 P.M.**  
**Please note this meeting will be at The Pearland Church of Christ on Grand Blvd. Coffee, soft drinks, homemade cookies and visits with old friends follow the meeting. See you there.**  
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*Thinking about this year being an election year brings to mind a quote from Mark Twain: "Suppose you were an idiot; and suppose you were a member of Congress. But then I repeat myself."*

*And in the same vein an e-mail from Society Member Carl Talbot contained this jewel.*

*"I don't approve of political jokes. I've seen too many of them elected."*

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### What's Happening

We were all very saddened at the passing of Society member **Lois Hunter Bundy** on Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>. **Lois** turned 101 last August and was the oldest native born **Pearland** citizen. Even after entering the nursing home, **Lois** remained very interested in **Pearland** history and always looked forward to our **Reunion Luncheons**. She will be greatly missed and long remembered.



Mrs. Lois Hunter Bundy and Mary Sue Powell

Other **Historical Society** members who we lost during the past year are **Roy F. "Dude" Martin, Gene Bittick, Clarence Smith, Roy Armstrong and Splon Lane**. My goodness, we did lose a big chunk of **Pearland** history with the passing of those members. **Dude**, of course, was the oldest native born male. We all remember "**Brother Clarence**" and the customer friendly **Pearland Hardware Store** he ran. **Roy Armstrong** loved to tell stories about earlier days in **Pearland** and was the first person to show up at **Historical Society** meetings and **Reunion Luncheons**. **Gene Bittick's** roots in **Pearland** remained firmly entrenched although he had not lived here most of his adult life. **Splon** was featured in a Newsletter story awhile back about his cartoon character "**Bozo Texino**" he tagged on

box cars for so many years. When we lose so much history, it always reminds us of the old country western song entitled "**Who's going to take their place.**"

In the last issue of the **Newsletter**, we mentioned that member **Dorothy Maness** was having a rough recovery after having colon cancer surgery in September. **Raymond** reports **Dorothy** still can't get by without her walker and her appetite is still not good but they are working on it. **R. E. and Dorothy** will be moving to **Groesbeck, Texas** early this spring. They have purchased a home there near their daughter. We hate to see them leave **Pearland** but hope they will enjoy the small town life in **Groesbeck**.

Many of you who are on our e-mail list are aware of the tough time member **Nancy Phillips** is going through in her treatments for Adenoid Cystic Carcinoma. **Nancy** has started her radiation treatments and continues to see her surgeon and dentist.

**Society Member Mary Helen Miller** had a radical mastectomy on Dec. 28<sup>th</sup>.

Keep **Dorothy and R.E., Nancy and Larry, Mary Helen** and our other members who may be going through some rough times in your prayers.

Since the last Newsletter both **Rosalie Miller Acree and Dekla Halik** have moved to the **Trinity Oaks Assisted Living** facility here in **Pearland**.

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### Who are the oldest native born?

*With our losing both **Lois Hunter Bundy** and **Roy "Dude" Martin**, who are now the oldest native born female and male **Pearland** residents? It appears that **Society Member David Scott** is probably the oldest male. **David** will be 88 years old on Jan. 16<sup>th</sup>. Happy 88<sup>th</sup>, **David**! **David** also underwent cancer colon surgery last fall and says he is feeling good now. Who is the oldest native born female? Let us know who you think it would be.*

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And now for some good news. Congratulations to **Society Member Vi Price**. She got a new great grandson, **Davis Ryan Newstead**, born Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>. Parents are **Heather and Steven Newstead**. **Heather** is **Vi's** granddaughter.

Members **Lester and Lillian Hood** are very proud grandparents. Their granddaughter **Jennifer Schmidt** recently took the oath and was admitted to the **Texas Bar Association of Texas**. **Jennifer** received her law degree from **George Washington University** and got her bachelor's degree from **Tulane**. She is working in **Houston** as a corporate patent attorney. Their other granddaughter, **Kathryn Schmidt** is a senior at **Notre Dame** hoping to be admitted to medical school next year with the ambition of becoming a pediatrician. **Lester and Lillian** are justifiably proud.

Do you know who the Secretary of State for the State of Texas is? That's the question **Margie Lawrence** was asking everyone at the **Reunion Luncheon**. I didn't either and really didn't even know we had a **Secretary of State**; but **Margie Lawrence** was very happy to tell you that the **Secretary of State** is her grandson, **Phil Wilson**. **Margie** taught so many of us during her tenure as music teacher at **Pearland**. Our **Historical Society** also owes her a debt of gratitude for the Historical book she put together for the bi-centennial back in 1976. Her first husband, **Sam Wilson**, also taught many of us shop and woodworking back in the late 40's and early 50's. We all remember his subtle sense of humor. He died from cancer in the early 50's. **Margie** is justifiably proud their grandson is the new **Secretary of State for the state of Texas**.



Margie's grandson Steve Wilson

The below article was taken from the web site of the **Texas Secretary of State**..

## **Secretary of State of Texas – Phil Wilson**

pg. 3

*As the 106th Secretary of State, Phil Wilson is one of six state officials to form the Executive Department of the State of Texas in accordance with the Texas Constitution. He was appointed by Governor Rick Perry and sworn in on July 1, 2007.*

*As Secretary of State, Phil Wilson is the chief elections officer for the state, chief international protocol officer for Texas, maintains business and public filings, and acts as the Governor's chief liaison on border and Mexico affairs.*

*Previously, Secretary Wilson was responsible for Texas' economic development and job creation initiatives as Governor Perry's Deputy Chief of Staff. Wilson also served as the governor's official designee on the \$200 million Emerging Technology Fund and the \$185 million Texas Enterprise Fund. Under his leadership, Texas leveraged more than \$10 billion in capital investment to create more than 45,000 new jobs.*

*Secretary Wilson was influential in landing one of the largest job creation projects in the country with Countrywide Financial's decision to create 7,500 jobs in Texas; additionally, he helped secure one of the largest capital investments in the state's history with Samsung's recent investment in Austin. Wilson will continue oversight of these programs as Secretary of State, leading efforts to bring more investment, jobs and economic growth to Texas.*

*A native of Brownwood, Texas, Wilson has a long, distinguished career in Texas government, serving in key advisory roles for three statewide elected officials. Wilson spent more than 10 years as a key aide to U.S. Senator Phil Gramm, serving as an East Texas Director based in Tyler and later as State Director in Dallas. Additionally, he was Director of Communications for Railroad Commissioner Charles Matthews. In 2002, Wilson was named Director of Communications for Governor Perry, where he was responsible for development and management of the governor's message and media strategy.*

## **Bill Bradley Recalls Days in the Fig Fields**

Member **Bill Bradley** several years back sent the following recollections about his work in the fig

fields around **Pearland**. Many of our older members remember their first jobs were working in the fig fields which covered the fields between **Pearland and Friendswood** and further to **League City**. When **Frances Jamison** passed away several years ago, the last fig field in the **Pearland** area also passed away.



**Bill Bradley at H.S. Society Luncheon**

*“When I was a kid, Blanche and Roy Rutherford, who to me were “Mom” and “Pop” had about 70 acres of Magnolia Figs. To me there seemed that there was always something to do in the fig orchard. In the spring, you had to pull the “suckers” or sprouts that would sprout up from the base of the tree then you had to hoe around the tree to remove the grass and weeds. Then there was a never ending job of keeping the middle between the trees clean. I think Pop wore out an old Fordson tractor and a tandem disk doing this. I am not talking about a Ford tractor with hydraulic lifts. I am talking about an old Fordson that had nothing on it but a drawbar and maybe a belt pulley. Keeping the middle clean was done in the spring and summer when the heat from the sun was hot and the heat from the engine of the tractor coming up in your face made it a fairly hot job. It was my job to keep the tractor driver supplied with cool water. Sometimes I would be playing or otherwise occupied with what I was doing and would forget but when I heard Pop holler “water”, I knew that it was time to drop everything and get that cool drink of water out there. Then there was the job of spraying.. Spraying was done with a mixture of “Blue-Stone”, copper sulfate, lime and water. We sprayed the leaves of the trees to keep down rust on the leaves that would cause the leaves to drop*

*off and would supposedly lower production. The first spraying we did was done with a pressure pump with a long handle that operated like a pitcher pump. I got my share of operating that handle of that pump to supply pressure to the spray nozzle while the person handling the nozzle walked around the tree and sprayed it. This method was slow and a lot of work so Pop bought a spray rig with a big wooden tank and a pressure pump that was run by a one cylinder gasoline engine with two fly wheels. This rig cut the spraying time in half because it would operate two nozzles as a man on each side of the spray rig walked around and sprayed his row of trees as we pulled the rig down the middle.*

*After the spraying came the picking. The picking was done by hand as the pickers walked around the tree picking all the figs that were ripe enough. As the fig was broken off the branch there was always juice on the stem of the fig that made it necessary to wear cotton gloves. As the gloves became saturated, it was necessary to keep changing gloves because that juice would eat on your hand. Then in the late fall when the trees were dormant, you pruned the trees back and hauled off the cuttings and burned them.”*

**Editor’s Note:** Thanks, Bill for the memories. What do you think the EPA today would have to say about all that spraying? Obviously it didn’t hurt Bill any.

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**The Torch has passed!!!!**  
After 47 years, on Jan. 1, 2008 the David L. Smith Realty announced a change in brokerage from David L. Smith to Susan Smith Lenamon. How nice it is for David Smith to be able to pass the torch to his daughter, Dr. Susan Smith Lenamon. Susan retired after many years as a teacher and administrator in the **Pearland School District**. She then went back to school, got her real estate license and is now accepting the torch to continue a 47 year old tradition. Congratulations.

### **The Park on Orange Street**

The **Pearland Parks Department** is currently working on a nice neighborhood park on **Orange Street**. The Park is on 2.5 acres of the original 10

acre tract which was the homestead of **Robert L. and Julia Martin Hunter**. Robert L. Hunter's family were members of the **Stephen F. Austin** original 300 dating back to the 1820's. **Julia Hunter Martin** was the daughter of **Samuel Pleasant Martin and Elmira Munsell Martin**. They came to **Pearland** in 1892, two years before **Witold von Zychlinski** filed the plat creating the town of **Pearland**.

At the October meeting of our **Historical Society**, a unanimous vote was received to submit a request the **City of Pearland** to name the park "**Robert L. and Julia Martin Hunter Park**." According to **Parks Director Jon Branson**, the **Pearland Parks Board** will be taking up the question of the naming of the Park at the next meeting coming up this month. Considering the historic "**Old Pearland**" site and the fact the park is located on the former **Hunter** estate, it certainly seems an appropriate name. In fact, it probably meets the criteria to become a designated historical site by the **Texas Historical Commission**.



**Robert L. Hunter with daughter Lois Hunter Bundy and son William "Billy" Hunter at the Hunter 10 acre estate on Orange St. around 1919.**

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**More Memories from Bill Bradley**

At a very appropriate time, **Bill Bradley's** daughter, **Historical Member Carolyn Bradley Collmorgen** sent an e-mail with this story regarding **Lois and Earl Bundy** dating back to the 1920's.

In the early 1920's **Roy and Blanche Rutherford** who were Mom and Pop to me moved from the **Hudson farm** to the **Bundy Place**. The **Bundy's** moved away and rented the home place out and maybe communications were not too good and they didn't tell Earl. When he came back from the war, he came to **Pearland** and the old home place.

**Mom and Pop Rutherford** welcomed him in and he stayed with us for four or five days or maybe a week. **Earl** went to work and we would see him from time to time and it didn't seem long before we heard that he and **Lois Hunter** were going to get married. Back then **Pearland** was not all that big and news traveled pretty fast. If you traded at **George Long's** store and if there was something that you hadn't heard, **Aunt Kate** would bring you up to date. I knew **Lois and Billy Hunter** even though they were a little older than I was and I went to school with **Elmira and Robert**. Since I was still going to school I knew **Fay Brookshire** as a teacher in **Pearland School**. I knew that **Billy and Fay** were going together but I also knew that **Billy** had at least one rival. I was so glad when **Billy** won out. All's well that ends well.

**Bill Bradley**

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**Memories from Family Histories:** Earlier in the Newsletter we mentioned receiving several family histories which were placed in the time capsule. These histories will certainly give those persons who open the capsule in 2057 a lot of great stories about early days of **Pearland**. The following are a few excerpts from some of the histories. In future issues we will be quoting more family histories.

*Segelquist Family History – by Kenneth "Corky" Segelquist.*

*"Well, we arrived in the Pearland area, I think it was 1939, I'm not too good at remembering dates. It was during the "great depression "and things were tough. We moved into a little two room house (shack) in the middle of a cow pasture out on the prairie. This was on the Joe D. Hughes Ranch some six or seven miles west of Pearland. We had come down to Texas from Kansas City,*

*Mo. My Dad had lost his job there; and one of my Dad's rice farmer brothers, Carl, had moved us to this area and helped Dad get into the rice farming business. You see, we had lived in "the lap of luxury" in K.C. with inside plumbing, electricity, daily ice delivery, and a furnace in the basement. Out there on the prairie we had none of those conveniences. We had a 22 foot deep well right outside our back door with a pitcher pump on it for water. You could get potable water in those days in a well no deeper than that. Out back and down a little, my Dad built a little necessary house - - a one seater. We had no electricity. We used coal oil lamps for light and burned wood for heat. The little house had been used to store cattle feed in so, we cleaned it up, painted it bright green inside, and moved in. It became our home, and was darn glad to have it. We had been living one place and another with relatives and such for a couple of years.*

*Mr. D. L. Smith was the manager of the ranch; and his son, David, was a couple years or so older than I was. When it came time for me to start school in Pearland, I rode with Mr. Smith and David to the school. David showed me which room to go to (second grade) and I went in. The teacher, Miss Humber, asked me my name and I told her. She asked me what my address was; and I told her we didn't have an address - - that we lived in the middle of a cow pasture on the prairie. It seemed that was all she needed to know. So, there I was a member of the Pearland School. Some years later I graduated from that same school. Till that day my parents had never gone in to register me or "sign me up". It was a different time - - - easier and more laid back in many ways.*

Editor's Note: That is just a portion of **Corky's** 4 page family history. Fascinating reading. **Mr. Ed Segelquist** later became the **Justice of Peace in Pearland** and served several terms in the 50's and 60's. Do you think when it is read in 2057 people will wonder why in the world the **Segelquists** didn't just get a government subsidy?

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*My Pearland Story – by Suzanne O'Day Elliott*  
*As I write our family history for the time capsule, I am proud to say that six generations of my family have called Pearland home. Our Pearland story began when my great grandparents, Chris and*

*Elsie Yost arrived in Pearland in 1910. Chris Yost was born in Neuchatel, Switzerland in 1864; and his wife Elise Mollett was born in Zurich, Switzerland in 1874. They were married in Switzerland and had one daughter, my grandmother, Lydia. She was three years old at the time they immigrated to the United States. They arrived in this country with one dime to their name and settled in Kansas in 1896. Chris farmed and did some carpentry work there. Three other children were born in Kansas: Bertha, Erma and John Yost. Their dream was to become landowners, and since land was scarce and expensive in Kansas, the family of six loaded their belongings into railcars and made the journey to Texas in 1910. Once in Pearland, Chris and Elise bought 276 acres, which was the area that is today the Sleepy Hollow Subdivision, where I live. Several of my relatives also still live in the area that was the old home place. They farmed the land and raised figs, cotton, corn, peanuts and produced hay on the property. Once settled in Pearland, the last of their children, Lloyd was born.*

*My grandfather, Pat O'Day was born near Dublin, Ireland; and his family settled in Minnesota after their arrival in the United States. Many of my relatives still call Minnesota home and some made their way into Canada to settle. My grandfather headed south. Pat left Minnesota by train with his friend Slim Olin and made his way to Pearland. He was a hardworking man and began O'Day Drilling in 1912. He drilled water wells in the area. I am proud to say that O'Day Drilling Co., Inc. is the oldest family company still in operation today in the Pearland area.*

Editor's Note: **Suzanne's** story continues and tells of the terrible hurricane of 1915, **Mr. Pat's** service in **World War I** and about the life of her **Father, Orlen "Pat" O'Day**. A really interesting story. Sometime back, we had a story in the **Newsletter** about the **O'Day Drilling Company** being the oldest business in Pearland and about the great number of young men who had worked for the **O'Day's**. **Suzanne's** story also portrays a similar background to many of the families who came to **Pearland** lured by the promise of "cheap land and perfect climate." Many came from the mid-west states.



Mr. Pat O'Day in WW1 Uniform

**Stephen C. Cogbill Family History**  
**By Charles "Chink" Logan**

*My grandparents were good enough to take me and my younger brother Billy, together with one other cousin into their home while we were growing up. They had raised 12 children of their own so I do not suppose three more was all that much of a challenge. Our Mother, Clara, was an employee of S. W. Bell for 41 years and worked out of town and helped provide the means to keep the family afloat especially during the "Great Depression" years that began in the 1930's. We couldn't have had a better life regardless of any other home in which we might have lived. Steve and Eta Jane were originally from the four corners area of Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma and Arkansas. Their parents were small farmers in southwest Missouri in the rural area south of Joplin and Neosho. Steve's first job was working as a blacksmith in the lead and zinc mines of southeast Kansas and northeast Oklahoma.*

*The husband of their oldest daughter, Ova, had found carpenter work in Houston at the beginning of the depression and convinced Steve to move to Texas. After living in the Broadmoor area of southeast Houston for a few months the family moved to Pearland around 1930. They found a two bedroom house on a 10 acre tract of land on Galveston St. where they lived for ten years. The house was demolished but "Lively Hair Designs" at 2403 Galveston St. is now there.*

*Pearland at that time was no more than a small cross roads community about half way between Houston and Alvin. Santa Fe railroad had a train or two coming through each day and one can still recall the lonesome steam whistles from the trains as they crossed Manvel Road. What little work available were odd jobs around town and labor in the hayfields. The going rate was \$1.50 a day. That 10 acre plot was put to good use also with plenty of corn, tomatoes, Irish and sweet potatoes and other vegetables to keep things going.*

*State Highway 35 and FM 518 were both oyster shell roads during the early years. It was in 1935 that a new concrete highway was completed all the way from the Harris-Brazoria county line.*

Editors Note: **Chink's** well written story continues and gives a great deal of **Pearland** history as well as the interesting history of the **Cogbill** family. What is so evident in nearly all of the family histories is those families which came to Pearland in the earlier years all worked tremendously hard to make ends meet; but it is also evident there are a lot of good memories.

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You can go to the Pearland Historical website at [www.pearlandhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.pearlandhistoricalsociety.org) and view this Newsletter with pictures in living color. Also visit the website to look for updates from time to time.

**DON'T FORGET OUR HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEETING, TUES., JAN. 15<sup>TH</sup> AT 7:00P.M. PLEASE REMEMBER THE MEETING WILL BE AT THE PEARLAND CHURCH OF CHRIST. COOKIES, COFFEE, COLD DRINKS AND VISITATION FOLLOW THE MEETING. SEE YOU THERE.**

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## Pictures from the Reunion Luncheon of 2007



**Rutherford Sisters. Lois Rutherford Cheek & Millie Rutherford Hood**



**David Smith with daughters Susan Smith Lenamon & Leah Smith Bateman**



**Cousins. Carleen Nichols Mark and Carolyn Garner McCoy**



**Candle holder for candles lit in memory of members who passed away in 2007. Stand made by David Scott.**



**Herbert Jamison & Norma Rae McCormack Kelly**



**Teachers Oleta Campbell Hawkins & Hazel Skinner Muetz with 1939 grad Luciele Seger Anderson and 1938 grad Ernest Cogbill (background)**



**Helen Cunningham, Carrie Ann Keith Mitchell, Barbara Jane Hornbeck Cosper, Jerry Mitchell & Luther Cunningham**



**Claudia Martin & Mary Kliensing Yost**



**Marian Knapp Mathews, Dekla Halik & son Carl Halik**



**Rudy Sandoval & Mickey Scott**