

PEARLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Pearland Historical Society
P. O. Box 1333
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Dedicated to preserving the history and heritage of "Old Pearland"

President's Message

Each year when 9-11 rolls around it is always a rather emotional time remembering that terrible morning. It is certainly a day that all of us will remember as long as we live. It ranks right up there with **Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941**. Most of us probably remember exactly where we were and what we were doing when we got the news about the planes flying into the twin towers. This year was particularly touching because of being the 10th anniversary. How time does go by. I pulled out the **Newsletters of September and October** of 2001 to review what was going on in the life of our **Historical Society** 10 years ago; and further in the **Newsletter** you can read about it. I think, like I was, you will be amazed that 10 years has passed since some of the things written about did occur. Also it will again remind us of the need for involvement of younger persons in our Society.

That is what makes our annual **Reunion Luncheon** so entertaining. We visit with old friends we haven't seen for awhile and remember those who are no longer with us and reminisce about earlier days in **Pearland**. So, if you haven't made your reservation yet, please remember this year the cost of a lunch ticket at the door is \$15 per person vs \$10 per person for advanced reservations. A reservation form is attached to this **Newsletter**. Don't miss this fun day.

Mickey Mark

What's Happening

The honored class at our luncheon this year will be the class of 1961. Invitations went out to the following members: *Patricia Rowe Allaway; Jodie Benes; Kathy Kagy Bowerman,;Waynell Miller Burkett; Betty Howard Burrus; Betty Ford Chappell; Doris Kyser Clements; Steve Cogbill; Julie Fite Cooper; Roger Farmer; Tim and Dorothy Kremling Coppinger; Raynell "Winky" Stark Foote; Marion Keith Jeffries; Kenneth Johns; Mitzi Eignus Hiers;Trent Klopp; Rita Hall Livingston; Betty Nan Porter McGee; Curtis Oblinger; Charles "Cookie" Savell; Lucretia "Cricket" Spencer Szako; Randall Townsend; Margaret Keith Triplett; Joe Waddle.*

Our selection of homes in **Old Pearland** for **Pearland Historical Society** historic home markers will resume this fall. We have suspended nominations while **Committee Chairman Dwight Bittick** has been spending the summer at the **Villages in Florida**.

Please remember our Quarterly Historical Society meeting, Tuesday, Oct. 18th at 7:00 P.M. at the Knapp Center on Park Street. Coffee, cold drinks, home made cookies and visitation follow the meeting. Hope to see you there. All who have e-mail will receive a reminder a day or so prior to the meeting.

Kyler Cole, Pearland Old Townsite Coordinator, has resigned his position with the **City** to take a position in **Sugar Land**. We are sorry to see **Kyler** leave and appreciate the attention and improvements he instigated in the old townsite. Good luck to **Kyler** in his new position.

Among our Members



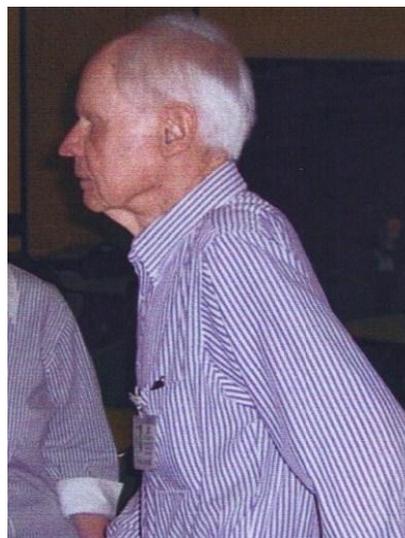
Emma Jamison Wells

Emma Jamison Wells, Pearland's oldest native born citizen, passed away **July 23rd**. **Emma**, who would have been 98 on **November 1st**, was a delightful person who led a very, very active and full life up until going into **Windsong Nursing Home**. Our sincerest sympathies go out to daughters, **Margie and Wanda**; and to all the **Jamison** family. **Emma** was a **Pearland** jewel who will be long remembered.



Rosemary Raney

Another **Pearland** jewel was **Society Member Rosemary Raney** who passed away **August 12th**. Although **Rosemary** was living in a **Nursing Home** in **Brownwood, Texas** to be near her daughter, **Linda**, her heart remained in **Pearland**. **Rosemary** loved **Pearland** and always looked forward to our luncheons and always had a smile on her face. Those of us who rode **Bud Griffin's** big bus out west of town will remember **Rosemary** as one of the "big bus" high school girls along with **Helen Benes, Lois and Millie Rutherford, Gracie Rodriguez, Anita Lopez, and Lois Watson**. Our sympathies go out to all the **Raney** family. We will certainly miss **Rosemary** at the **October** luncheon.



Ernest Cogbill

Society Member Ernest Cogbill passed away **Sept. 26th**. **Ernest** was a member of the first graduating class of the brand new **Pearland High School** in 1938. He was the 3rd youngest of 12 children. **Sister Mildred Cogbill Ritchey** and brother, **Basil**, are **Historical Society** members. Our sympathies go out to all the **Cogbill** family.

Long time **Pearland** resident, **Mrs. Mary Christensen**, Mother of **Society Member David Christensen** passed away **August 4th** at the age of 96. Our sympathies go out to **David** and all of the **Christensen** family.

1971 PHS graduate, **Kenneth Kliesing**, passed away **August 24th**. **Kenneth**, who lived in **Sugar Land**, was the son of **Charles and Ruby Richardson Kliesing**. He was the cousin to **Society Members Ray Kliesing and Karen Kliesing**, and nephew of **Society Members Sidney and Reba Kliesing**. Many of you will remember **Charles** was the oldest son of **Raymond Kliesing**.

Society Member Mary Helen Miller has been going through a rough fight with **non-Hodgkins Lymphoma** and is currently confined to the **Houston** area taking chemotherapy treatments. The good part is **Mary Helen** reports the treatments are working and she is looking forward to seeing old friends at the luncheon.

Society Member Lois Rutherford Cheek has also been diagnosed as having lymphoma. Please keep **Mary Helen** and **Lois** in your prayers.

As mentioned earlier, **Lois** was one of the “girls of the big bus”. The picture below was taken at one of our **Reunion Luncheons** a few years back before **Helen Benes Cates** passed away.



Girls of Big Bus: Rosemary Driesch Raney, Millie Rutherford Hood, Helen Benes Cates, Lois Rutherford Cheek

Other **Society Members** who belong to the “**Big Bus Group**” are **David Smith, Juanita Stone Sutherland, Carrie Ann Keith Mitchell, Johnnie Haskins, Tunney Johnston, my**

brother Roy D. Mark and myself. I would imagine there will be some “big bus” memories brought up at our luncheon on Oct. 22nd.

It is good to report that **Society Member Michalyn Miller Ordeneaux** is doing very good after recently undergoing a double mastectomy. **Society Member David Smith** celebrated his 85th birthday **August 15th** with an all day come and go birthday party at his office on **Broadway**. The party was arraigned by daughters **Leah Smith Bateman** and **Susan Smith Lenamon**. Other **Society members** who were classmates with **David** and who recently turned 85 are **Charles Logan, Roy Mark and Evelyn Martin Lawhon**. Happy 85th to all of our members who were in **PHS** class of 1943.

Thanks to **Brenda Martin Riggs, Secretary of our Historical Society** for the following story about **Coach Buck Brooks**, a man of whom so many of our members have some great memories.



Buck Hannan Brooks
Pearland ISD, Head Basketball, Football and Track Coach, 1947 - 1956

Coach Brooks was born January 31, 1912, in Montalba, Texas to Etta Auld and Buck Hannan Brooks, Sr., a farmer. He was the youngest of seven children. Siblings were George, Joe Bailey, Ernest, Jack, Ilene and May Etta Brooks. He attended Montalba Elementary School and graduated from high school in Palestine, Texas. Montalba is ten miles north of Palestine in Anderson County.

He served in the U.S. Navy as a boilermaker during World War II. He received his Bachelor of Science degree from Sam Houston State Teachers College in Huntsville, Texas in 1947 where he was awarded an athletic "T" for a basketball letterman. During this time it was the norm to teach prior to receiving a college degree.

He taught in Sour Lake, Texas in the 1946-47 school year and came to Pearland in 1947 as a teacher/coach. During his tenure at Pearland he was the Head Coach (Varsity Coach is the terminology today) for basketball, football and track.

He was our sixth grade teacher in 51-52, Class Sponsor our Sophomore year of 1955-56. This was his last year to teach in Pearland – a total of nine years. During the 1955-56 school year Coach Brooks became engaged to Elizabeth DePriest, a Pearland ISD seventh grade teacher. They were married August 4, 1956, at Prairie Chapel, Bethany, Missouri. During the 1956-57 school year Coach Brooks purchased a home in Spring Branch where he coached and taught Industrial Arts and Elizabeth taught Jr. High English in the Spring Branch ISD. They both received their Masters Degrees from Sam Houston State Teachers College in 1963.

Buck Hannan Brooks III was born was born in the Spring Branch Community Hospital July 19, 1962. The family traveled extensively throughout the United States with their camper, also traveling to Nova Scotia, Mexico and Canada. Coach Brooks designed and built a log home near Carbondale, Colorado, where they planned to retire the end of the 1973-74 school year. Fate intervened and Coach Brooks passed away May 3, 1974, and is buried at Memorial Oaks Cemetery, Houston, Texas. Elizabeth and son, Buck III, returned to Missouri where he entered 7th grade. Continuing his education, he received a B.S. degree from Northwestern Missouri State College and his Masters at University of Arkansas in 1987. March, 1996, Buck III married Lynne Martin, an elementary teacher. March 25, 1998, Zachary Paul Brooks, Coach Brooks' grandson was born. Buck III is currently working for the Missouri Department of Transportation. Elizabeth Brooks was a guidance counselor and elementary principal. She lives on an ancestral farm in Missouri

homesteaded by her grandfather in 1892 and is active in her community and church work.

When we received the story from **Brenda** about **Coach Brooks**, we asked **Society Members** to give us a brief comments about their memories of **Coach Brooks**. Following are a few comments:

Tom Hunter:

"I'm not sure, but I think it was in the fall of 1956. I had walked across the old high-school baseball field on Plum Street, across from the Parkers' house, and found a baseball in the high grass. I saw Coach Brooks at the football field and walked over to ask him if I could keep the ball, since I assumed it belonged to the school. Some of the football players laughed at me, but Coach Brooks told me I could keep the ball and said there was no shame in being honest. As you can see, I've never forgotten the gesture."

Marjorie Lawrence:

"At one time "in those years", Woodie Hornburg planned a birthday party for her husband, Charles Hornburg, the band director---and it was all to be a big secret. Well, Buck went up to Charles at school, tapped him on the shoulder and asked, "What time is your surprise birthday party?" Another remembrance of Buck---When my husband, Sam Wilson,died,. he brought an old football helmet over to our house for our son, Sammy. He kept this for years as one of his prized possessions."

Mickey Scott:

"Several recollections about Coach Brooks:

- 1. I transferred from Alvin Jr. High to Pearland in November, 1952. I remember Coach Brooks teaching Civics, and our classroom was the first 3 or 4 rows in the old auditorium.*
- 2. I also remember the warm up shoot arounds at the beginning of basketball practice. Coach sometimes would respond to a challenge from Weldon Flanakin to a shooting contest. As I remember, Coach Brooks always won, much to the consternation of Weldon and the delight of everybody else.*
- 3. I remember Coach Brooks and Coach Backhaus living upstairs in the gym which was accessible*

from the boys dressing room. It was rather drafty in the winter and probably hot in the summer. In the '50's I guess that was one of the perks of being a coach of a "big city" school!

4. Then there was the beautiful two-tone green 1953 Mercury hardtop that he drove. That car was the envy of most of the guys I knew. And, being a single man, Coach was always a neat dresser. "Looking good on the boulevard!"

5. As a junior, I had back pain from playing football and many Saturday mornings Coach Brooks would take me to Houston to a chiropractor for an adjustment. On one of those trips, we stopped in at a sporting goods store, I think it was Holt's. I remember marveling that he spent \$5.00 for a new dress shirt! For somebody who mostly wore shirts made by my mom I thought that was quite an extravagant expenditure.

6. Then there were the guys who were identified by a red stripe across their behinds, that were noticeable after basketball practice. During "lay-up drills", anyone who missed a shot got a "shot" across the behind from Coach's little tape-wrapped cedar paddle. It's amazing how that paddle could improve one's shooting skills, or at least, one's memory.

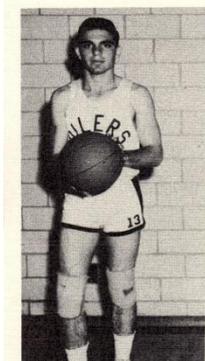
I have very fond memories of Buck Brooks as a teacher, coach, and friend."

Ken Eddings:

"I do have a few memories of Coach Buck Brooks. While he was my coach for three years in high school in football and basketball, my memories mainly are from basketball, 1953, 1954, 1955. Coach Brooks believed in set plays for the offense and had some very good ones. I think, though, that the players actually enjoyed freelancing better. Coach Brooks often called this style of play, Run! Holler! and Shoot!, which you can tell he was not totally fond of. Coach would impress on us that free throws were very important to the game, and could be game winners. He therefore wanted everyone to strive to shoot 80% of their free throws. He was very good at shooting free throws and used the underhand shot. Coach Buster Lawhon was his assistant and thoroughly loved the game, and while he had an injury that he received in WW2, he did not let that slow him down. He loved for the current high school players to play the Exes on Sunday afternoons the year around. During practice we would do lay ups over, and over and over, until you

were proficient at it. Improvement was brought on by getting Pops with a paddle if you missed the lay up. One last memory of a coach involves a classmate of mine, and while he is deceased, the story is true. Weldon Flanakin and I were the guards on the basketball team, and during the games that we held a lead in the closing seconds or minutes of the game, coach would call time out and instruct us to pass the basketball as much as possible to kill time and, NOT TO SHOOT THE BALL. Weldon would evidently forget and come across the mid court line for a few steps and unload a shot. I would look over to the side line and see Coach Brooks throwing down the white towel on the floor in frustration. He always carried white towel around with him on the court. I liked Coach very much as a coach and a human being."

Editor's Note: I recall watching one game in the old oval top gym when Ken and Weldon were playing. Can't recall their opponent but just as Ken described, Pearland was leading by something like two or three points and Coach Brooks was trying to get them to "freeze" the ball. Weldon got the ball in one of the far corners of the court and launched a what would be a 3 pointer in today's game. Coach Brooks pounded the floor with his towel just about the same time as the ball swished through the net.



Weldon Flanakin

Bill Stone:

"There are many stories about Coach Brooks. After all, he took us to the Regional Football Playoffs in 1950. But there is one personal story that I still remember well. I was on the basketball team, although not all that great, and had my nose broken in a game by a wild flying elbow. There was blood everywhere, so Coach Brooks took me, in that Mercury Club Coupe, to a doctor in Houston. Anyway, after the doctor looked me over and said I would make it, although with an imperfect nose, Coach Brooks took me to a restaurant for

breakfast. There he bought me my very first ever PECAN WAFFLE. That doesn't sound like much now, but to a 16 - 17 year old boy from the tiny town of Pearland, Texas, it was and still is a memorable event."

Carrie Ann Keith Mitchell:

"Coach Brooks was one of my 7th grade teachers and I can still see the twinkle in his eyes. That year our class field trip was to visit the Battleship Texas. He personally escorted our class around every inch of the ship and explained every detail to us, as he had served on it during WW11. He was so proud of his service to our country. He also had a knack for making one do their very best. Coach Brooks was without doubt one of my favorite people. What a great teacher!!"



**Coach Brooks with summer track girls three of whom are Historical Society members.
L.R.: Peggy Palmer Maraskin, Brenda Martin Riggs, Buck Brooks, Lynn Thurman and Carolyn Garner McCoy**

Looking Back

The “**Buck Brooks**” story certainly brings back a lot of memories of days past in **Pearland**. Don’t the years really zip by? We previously mentioned about how fast the 10 years since the 9-11-01 tragedy had passed. Looking through old Newsletters really does make one realize how much has happened within our Society in those ten years. Below are just a few quick quips to refresh your memory.

In 2001 the **Historical Society** petitioned the **City of Pearland** to designate **Fite Road** as “**Historical Doherty Road.**” After much quibbling back and forth it did become “**Historic Doherty Road**”.

Thanks to efforts by our **Historical Society** and particularly by **Marguerite Massey Smith, Alvin Community College** and **Pearland School Board** agreed to deed **Zychlinski Park** over to the **City** to remain a park for **Pearland** citizens.

Editor’s Note: This came after several years of dedicated work by Marguerite and the Historical Society.

Also and again thanks to the dedicated work and research of **Marguerite Massey Smith** both the old 1937 high school building and **Zychlinski Park** were designated as **Texas Historical** sites. The ceremony at the old high school in August 2001 designating it as a **Texas Historical** site was attended by **Congressman Tom DeLay** and teachers **Oleta Campbell Hawkins, Hazel Skinner Muetz and Billy Wall**. In a follow up to the old school being designated an historic site, our **Historical Society** was instrumental in obtaining a one million dollar grant to upgrade the entire **Pearland Community College** facility on **Grand Blvd.**

Then in **2007** a **Texas Historical Marker** was placed in **Zychlinski Park**. At the same time a time capsule was placed at what was home plate when the park was used for town team baseball. The capsule is to be opened in 2057.

In looking back at the last ten years, the biggest story for our **Historical Society** and for **Pearland** history was the discoveries that **Witold von Zychlinski** was actually a **Polish** nobleman and that **Mark Belt** was a real person and not a railroad term. What a surprise it was to all back in 2005 when **Society Member Tom Hunter** talked to **Zychlinski’s** great grandson and actually got a picture of **Pearland’s** founder. Then when we did the Park dedication in 2007, the great grandson, **Major General William**

Willoughby came down for the dedication ceremony. **General Willoughby**, who gave our **Historical Society** a copy of a book of the history of the **Zychlinski** family continues to search for information as to what happened to **Witold** after he left **Pearland**. **Tom** and **Dwight** also are continuing the search.

Then just last year, **Society Member Dwight Bittick** found the answer to the century long question as to whether the original name of the railroad siding and the first post office called **Mark Belt** was the name of a real person or simply a railroad term. Not only did we learn he was a real person but thanks to the work of **Dwight** and **Tom Hunter**, we now have a complete history of the man and his picture hangs in **City Hall** along side of **Witold von Zychlinski's** picture. The great **Pearland** history book which **Victor Coppinger** financed back in 1994 for the 100th year anniversary of the founding of **Pearland** needs to be updated with this information.

Looking through the Newsletters of the last 10 years not only makes one realize the changes the years have brought, but it also brings back a lot of sad memories of both **Historical Society** members and **Pearland** citizens who are no longer with us. It also makes one realize how quickly generations pass and the need for our **Historical Society** to look for younger members to fill leadership and committee slots.

In reading **Newsletters** of the past I came across a quote that seems really true in this time of high inflation and low income. It was comedian **Jackie Mason** who made the following comment:

“I have plenty of money to last me through my retirement years unless I buy something.”

Who Is Now Pearland’s Oldest Native Born?

With the passing of **Emma Jamison Wells**, who was **Pearland’s** oldest native born citizen, comes the question – who now holds the distinction of being **Pearland’s** oldest native born? We know **Society Member David Scott**, who turned 91 last **January**, is the oldest native born male **Pearland** resident. Do we have older native born **Pearland** citizens? Let us know if you know of one.

David Scott also is responsible for our tradition at our **Reunion Luncheon** of lighting candles for our **Historical Society** members who have passed away since our last luncheon. **David** made the candle stand and suggested the traditional ceremony. Individual candles are lit for **Historical Society** members and one large candle for long time **Pearland** citizens. Here are the names of our members for whom candles will be lit this year. The following picture is **David** beside the memorial candle holder which he made.



- Dorothy Maness*
- Margery Johnston*
- Carrie Mae Cogbill*
- Judy Rowe Boemio*
- Emma Jamison Wells*
- Rosemary Raney*
- Ernest Cogbill*

Thinking about the class of 1961 being the honored class at our luncheon this year also brings up thoughts about what **Pearland** was

like 50 years ago and how different things are today.

In 1961 the population of **Pearland** was listed as 1497 residents. Today **Mayor Reid** tells us we are nearing 100,000. In 1961 **Pearland** had only been an incorporated city since 1959. Serving on the **City Council** at that time were **Tom Alexander, Lloyd C. Hawkins, W. E. Parker, and David Smith.** Mayor was **E. T. Gibbons.** **City Marshall** was **Jack Miller.**

The head football coach in 1961 was **Jim Davis,** an **All American** lineman from the **University of Oklahoma** who was hired at the start of the 1960 season. In the 1960 season the **Oilers,** playing Class A football, won 3 and lost 7. They defeated **Danbury, C. E. King** and **East Bernard.** In 1961 **Pearland** won two games and lost 8, beating **C. E. King** and **East Bernard** again. However most of the losses in 61 were close scores and the **Oilers** of the fall of 1962 won ten straight games before losing bi-district to **Three Rivers.** Can you imagine anyone in **Pearland** envisioning that 48 years later the **Oilers** would win the **5-A Texas State** championship? The good thing about those teams of the early 60's is they wore maroon uniforms – not black.

It is also interesting to look at some national statistics of 1961. Here are just a few.

- Yearly Inflation Rate USA 1.07%*
- Yearly Inflation Rate UK 2.9%*
- Average Cost of new house \$12,500.00*
- Average Income per year \$5,315.00*
- Cost of a gallon of Gas 27 cents*
- Bacon for 1LB 67 cents*
- Eggs per dozen 30 cents*
- Bottle of coke: 10 cents*
- Avg. Price of new Chevy or Ford: \$2500*
- Cost of a stamp: 4 cents*
- Movie ticket 50 cents. Popcorn at movie 10 cents*

John F. Kennedy inaugurated as President in 1961; and the Russians put the first man in space.

It is doubtful any of us remember what the guest speaker talked about at our graduations. Most talked about how to live a productive life; but do you think anyone could have looked into his crystal ball and predicted the conditions in which we all live today. Certainly no one predicted we would all be sitting at computers sending e-mails, texting friends nor taking pictures with cell phones. It's always fun to look back and remember the **Pearland** we knew 50 years ago. Don't miss the **Reunion Luncheon.**

Still looking back, **Society Member Brenda Martin Riggs** sent this picture of the **Robert L. Hunter** home on the land which **Hunter Park on Orange Street** is a part. It appears that work on **Hunter Park** is still being delayed due to **Pearland** budget restrictions.



Robert Lee and Julia Iva Martin Hunter's house on 10 acres in Pearland possibly about 1910.

Lois Josephine Hunter [Bundy] [born 1906] standing; William Wallace Hunter [Born 1909] in carriage.

Be sure to get your tickets for the annual Pearland Historical Society Reunion Luncheon Saturday, Oct. 22nd at Pearland Community Center. Tickets are \$10 per person if purchased prior to the luncheon. Tickets at the door will be \$15 per person. Fill out the attached reservation form and mail soon to make your reservations for this fun day. See you there.

