

PEARLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Volume 24, Edition 2

April, 2019

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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"

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Well, if you're like me, you've spent a lot of time lately sweeping oak leaves and trying to remember what color your vehicle is due to all the pollen. Welcome to spring!! The new officers have spent the last few months sweeping too. Who knew you had to pack a lunch to change a bank account? We changed account signers and added an account and Paypal for the depot project. The office lease and insurance policies have been updated. **Marsha** has the financial records organized. We've been organizing the office files, photos, back room, etc. **Brenda** and I have sorted through records and photos to organize as well as find items for her upcoming book. It is thought that as many items as possible should be out on display. We are working on that as room allows. It is sad that we don't have more photos, especially of more recent times. The day of taking pictures, going to the drugstore to get them developed, and putting them in an album (usually with no names) is ancient history. Now we take photos with our phones and send them to **Facebook** or the **Cloud** (wherever that is). Where will that **Cloud** be in another 125 years? So please, if you have any photos, articles, etc. from the last 125 years that relate to the history of **Pearland**, we would love to have them.

We are saddened that one of **Pearland's** oldest and well known citizens, **David. Smith**, has

passed away. Also gone is **Pearland and Dallas** football player, "**Champ**" **Dickerson**.

Please consider honoring your family with a paver on sale to benefit the **Depot Restoration Project**. Direct any questions on this to **Donald Hayes**.

Remember, we are honoring the **class of 69** at this year's luncheon. If you have any contact information for any of those class members, let **Brenda** know. Hope to see you at the next meeting.

Jerry Johnston

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EDITOR'S COMMENT

When I first joined the **Historical Society** back in **1994**, **Susan Smith Lenamon**, was **President** of the **Society**. The **Historical Society** was trying to increase membership and I had just got a new computer, so I suggested we send out a **Newsletter** prior to each quarterly meeting. So from **June, 1994** to today I have been writing the **Newsletter**. I told **Jerry** and the other officers I would be glad to continue writing the **Newsletter**. It is interesting to go back and read the **Newsletters**. Originally, I couldn't put pictures in so for the first couple of years there are no pictures. At that time, **Susan** was **president**. **1st vice president** was **Peggy Long**.

2nd vice president was Thelma Blau. Treasurer was Alta Carbone; and Secretary was Juanita Stone Sutherland.

The first member spotlight story was about **Josie Heflin**, who was at that time **96 years old** and living alone in the old house with the big oak tree on **Main Street** next to the bank. An interesting tidbit in the story was **Josie** telling about she and her **Mother** planting the oak tree in **1927** in memory of her **Father** who had just passed away. So we have documentation as to the age of the old tree which still stands. I have heard people speculate that the tree was probably 150 years old. In reading through the old **Newsletters**, it brings back a lot of memories of old time Pearlanders who contributed so much to our community.

I do want to thank **Luther Cunningham** and **Peggy Long** for all they contributed to our **Society** in their positions of **1st Vice President and Treasurer**. They both did a great job.

Mickey Mark

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New officers: **Jerry Johnston, (President)**
Brenda Martin Riggs,(1st V. President);
Donald Hayes, (2nd V. President); Karen
Kliensing, (Secretary) and Marsha Swenson
McDaniel (Treasurer)

WHAT'S HAPPENING

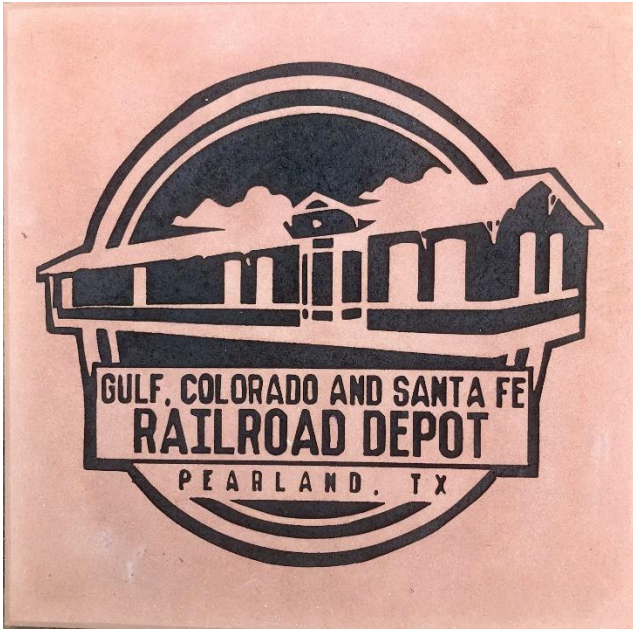
In the **January** issue of the **Newsletter Don Hayes** reported about the progress of the **Old Depot Renovation Project**. He reported that

our **Historical Society** had entered into a **“Memorandum of Understanding** with the **City of Pearland** to act as the non-profit organization to receive project donations. Below is **Don’s** update:

The public fundraising effort to restore the depot is officially underway. Memorial brick pavers, bearing your name, your family’s name, or even your business name and logo can be purchased from www.pearlanddepot.com or www.visitpearland.com. Prices start at \$150 for a 4”x12” paver with 3 lines of text. Pavers will be installed at the depot site in Heritage Park, and will remain as a testament to your family’s contribution to history for the next Pearland’s 125 years!

Pearlander Kurt Hopfe, Senior Vice-President for Allegiance Bank, has secured a donation of \$5000 to the Pearland Historical Society for the production of a documentary video on the history of the Gulf, Colorado and Santa Fe Depot. The project, assisted by the Pearland Convention & Visitors Bureau, will produce a documentary feature that will be shown both during the fundraising window, as well as after the Depot has been officially opened for visitors.

Pearland newcomer Linda Jaffe has made an enormous contribution to the Depot project in her brief time here. Linda’s extensive background in the grant-writing process has been instrumental in assisting other museums and historical societies in places like Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA in securing the grant funding necessary to open and operate museums like ours. With Linda’s guidance, the project has applied for half a dozen grants, requesting a total to date of \$130,000. Successful grant awards will be announced as they are confirmed.



Editor's Note:

The old depot project is certainly a worthy and historic project. In several of interviews with long time Pearlanders, they reminisced about the depot being a social gathering spot where the local residents would gather to greet friends returning home to **Pearland** after riding the train into **Houston** to do grocery shopping.

Mrs. Lois Hunter Bundy recalled that when **World War I** ended in **1918**, people gathered at the old depot and marched down to the **Old Settlers Cemetery** for a celebration picnic. The depot represents a lot of Pearland history. Let's hope the renovation project is successful.

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Don Hayes also sent this note about an upcoming "ArtWalk"

Heidi Wiess with the Pearland Alliance for Arts & Culture has asked the Society to participate in another ArtWalk, taking place on Friday, May 3, from 5pm to 9pm. This is similar in scope to the ArtWalk & Open House that we participated in back in December. **Paulisa Winsong, who operates the art gallery across Broadway (next to Four Friends Tea Room), will**

also be participating with an open house & art demonstration.

In addition to promoting Society memberships and the status of the Depot Project, I would like to offer some type of brief historical lecture. The topic could be anything of local interest, and should probably be no longer than 20-30 minutes with time for Q&A included. As far as I know, we don't have the capability of paying a speaker's fee, so the lecture should be pro bono. I would like to see if any of you have any ideas of topics and/or speakers that I can contact to help secure them for the evening.

I have a few ideas of my own, but would be interested to hear yours as well.

Editor's Note: If you have not been inside our Historical Society home recently, you would be pleasantly surprised. The new officers have rearranged things and put out interesting individual pictures, documents, etc. Visitors during the Art Walk will find it very educational as well as interesting. Also when you attend the next meeting you will be surprised at the difference.

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Old Rice Dryer Demolished

A bit of Pearland history was demolished recently when the old rice dryer was torn down to make room for a 17 acre business development. Many of our older members will remember when rice fields were pretty much everywhere west of **Pearland**. **Jerry Johnston's** grandfather and family had big plots of land in rice. The fields were kept covered with water until it was time for harvest. Then the water would be drained from the fields and after drying out enough for the cutters and threshers to work, the rice would be cut, baled and stacked in the field to dry. As I remember it took about a week for the stacks to dry. Then the thresher would take the baled rice and separate the hulls from the rice. I remember one year (1940) I

believe when it rained all during the threshing season and the farmers took some really big losses.

So it was really a blessing to the farmers when the dryer was built and as soon as the rice was cut, the bales were taken to the dryer to be dried and separated

Also some of our older members will recall that at the end of the harvest season the **American Rice Co.** would give a free barbecue dinner down at the dryer. It was open to the public and offered free barbecue and beer. I don't think this went on for very long, because of the gambling (dice and card games) and the fights and many drunks.]



OLD RICE DRIER

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AMONG OUR MEMBERS AND OLD TIME PEARLANDERS

As **Jerry** mentioned in his message, we lost one of **Pearland's** outstanding citizens when **Society Member David Smith** passed away **March 3rd**. **David**, who was 92 years old made many personal contributions to **Pearland**. He and **Frankie** made virtually every call for the **EMS** when it was first established. That was just one of the many contributions he made to our City. Our deepest sympathies go out to his daughters **Susan, Martha and Leah** and families.



David Smith at a PHS luncheon

Albert Lawrence Ball, father of **Society member Albert Levi Ball** passed away **March 24th** at the age 86. **Albert** was the son of **Albert Eli and Frances Coppinger Ball**. **Albert** had lived in **Pearland** for over 50 years. His Father was a telegraph operator for the **Santa Fe Railroad**. His Mother was part of the long time **Pearland Coppinger** family. Our sympathies go out to **Albert Lawrence** and family.

Long time **Pearlander Shirley Cousins** died **Feb. 4th** after a long period in the nursing home. **Shirley**, who was a retired teacher, is a sister to **Society Member Phyrne O'Day**.

1974 PHS grad Mark Pridgen passed away recently in **Austin, Tx**. **Mark** had throat cancer. Our sympathies go out to his brother **1976 grad Paul Pridgen** and wife **Nancy**.

Retired Pearland police chief, Cris Doyle, passed away recently. **Chris** was a **1974 Pearland High School** grad. He became police chief in **1999** and retired in **2017**. He was the longest serving police chief in **Pearland's** history.

Please keep **Peggy Long**, who did an outstanding job as **Treasurer** of our society for many years, in your prayers. **Peggy** was diagnosed as having chronic leukemia back in **December** and at the end of **January** she fell and was running a high fever. She went into the hospital and then into a nursing home in **Friendswood**. Recently she started running a

fever again and is back in **Southeast Memorial Hospital** as the **Newsletter** is being written.



Peggy and Brenda at a PHS luncheon

Also please keep **Society Member Karan Scott Wheelock** in your prayers. **Karan** recently went through heart surgery

Just heard today (**April 8th**) that **Society member Luther Cunningham** had a mini stroke and is in **Southeast Memorial Hospital**. The stroke affected **Luther's** vision to the extent he could not drive.

Editor's Note: Luther was out of the hospital and at "Old Codgers Coffee Site" on Weds. April 10th and except for the vision problem is doing very good.

Please keep **Luther** and other members going through health problems in your prayers.

Just another reminder. Brenda Martin Riggs, is still looking for pictures for her old Pearland Historial Book. If you have any early Pearland pictures to share, please e-mail them to Brenda Riggs at pearland.brendariggs@gmail.com

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Vietnam Veterans

Society Member Diane Kliesing Day recently sent a list of **Pearlanders** who served during the **Vietnam War**. Did anyone know that **March 29th** was **Vietnam Veterans Day**? **Diane** also sent a list of **Pearlanders** who served during the

Korean War. So far as I know there is no **Korean Veterans Day**. Below are the lists which **Diane** sent:

Vietnam Veterans

Ronald Allen Alexander; Danny Ray Conaway; Margarito Almarez Fermamdez. Jr.; Ray Lee Greer; David Earl Griffin; Jack Wesley Haltom, Jr.; Stanley Lester Honeycutt; Delbert Lee Jamison; Mickey Mark Johnson; Myron Thomas Kliesing; Terry Vascal Knight **; Roy Forrest Martin III; Manuel Milstead; Don Wayne Nelson; Jose Pena, Jr. **; Richard Lee Weaver.

Note: Terry Knight and Jose Pena, Jr. were killed in Vietnam.

Korean War Veterans

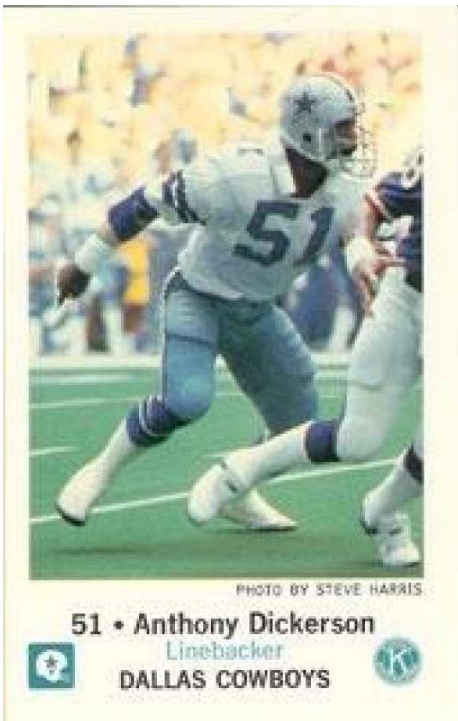
Bobby Cline Burkett; Jimmy Cantu; John Carl Conaway; Donald Alton Ellis; Emilio Tamayo Fernandez; John Tamayo Fernandez; Carl Lesley Garner; Wayne Willard Garner; Marcus Gonzales, Jr.; Thomas Dexter Gray; Jon Grafton Hawk; Donald Alfred Kliesing; Sidney Ray Kliesing; John D. "Mickey" Mark; Jose Pena, Jr.; Rosendo Pena; Eufemio Gutierrez Ramirez; Kenneth Robert (Corky) Segelquist; LeRoy Vasser Watson.

Editor's Note: On the time line of Pearland history on the wall of our Society building is a list of Pearlanders who served in WWII. There are pictures and list of those killed in the War.

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In his message **President Jerry Society Johnston** mentioned that **Anthony "Champ" Dickerson** had passed away. Many of you long Oiler fans will remember **Champ**, a member of the class of **1975**, as one of the **Oilers** most outstanding athletes.

Champ was badly injured when he fell in his home and passed away March 21st,



Champ starred as a three year starter at running back and linebacker while at **Pearland**. His successful career in **Dallas** included three trips to the NFC title game

After graduating from **Pearland**, **Champ** attended **Henderson County Junior College**. He then transferred to **Southern Methodist**. He was co-captain at **SMU**. His professional career began in **1978** when he was signed but waived by the **Toronto Argonauts of the Canadian Football League**. A year later **Champ** played 10 games for the **Calgary Stampeders** before being released.

The **Dallas Cowboys** signed him in **1980** as an undrafted free. In **1983** he had 114 tackles, recovered three fumbles and forced two fumbles; and recorded 10.5 sacks which was the most by any **Cowboy** until **2006**. **Champ** was part of a **Pearland High School** team which also starred quarterback **Ricky Churchman** who starred for the **University of Texas** as a defensive back; and later had a short stint with the **San Francisco Forty Niners**.

An interesting part of reading about **Champ's** professional career was his comment that when he signed with the **Cowboys** his starting salary was **\$28,500** per year. Hard to believe when you see what the pro players are making today.

As usual we will need help from members of the **PHS** graduating class of fifty years ago (1969) in getting addresses and contacting members of the class. Usually the members will be planning a separate celebration at about the same time as our luncheon and one of their members works at getting notifications to all class members. We normally send out invitations to our luncheon in the spring. We would certainly appreciate any volunteers from the **class of 69** in providing us with names and addresses of class members. Our luncheon is scheduled for **Saturday, Oct. 26th**. Any help in contacting 1969 grads would be appreciated

Any help would be greatly appreciated.

DON'T FORGET OUR QUARTERLY

MEETING COMING UP THURS NIGHT

APRIL 18TH AT 7:00 P.M. AT OUR

HISTORICAL SOCIETY HOME ON

GALVESTON AVENUE. COOKIES,

COFFEE, COLD DRINKS AND

VISITATION WILL FOLLOW. ALSO YOU

WILL ENJOY SEEING THE MANY NEW

PICTURES AND DOCUMENTS WHICH

ARE ON DISPLAY. SEE YOU THERE

The next two pages are forms for ordering paver bricks for the old depot project.



Restore the Pearland Depot

Donate a Brick or Bench

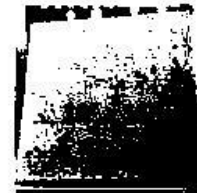
Help us restore the Pearland Depot by donating to personalize your very own brick or bench. The donations will be used to restore and preserve the Gulf, Colorado and Santa Fe Railroad Depot on Liberty Drive in Pearland. Your **BRICK** will be installed to create a lasting walkway in the heart of the Depot site for visitors to use and enjoy for years to come. Your **BENCH** will be installed around the Depot grounds for museum goers to sit upon while visiting Pearland's restored Depot. *All bricks and benches will be made of concrete material.*

To donate, simply select the brick or bench option below, fill out the reservation form below and email to: ksinistore@pearlandtx.gov. For any further information, please call Kim Sinistore at 281.997.5971.

Donate a BRICK --- (16 characters per line, all capped in Helvetica)

- _____ 4" x 12" - 2 lines of copy - \$150.00
- _____ 8" x 12" - 4 lines of copy - \$300.00
- _____ 12" x 12" - 6 lines of copy - \$400.00
- _____ 16" x 16" - 14" x 14" engraved area copy or logo - \$500.00

4" x 12"



Donate a BENCH --- (customized message; special engraving form provided)

- _____ 14" x 48" x 3" - sits on 2/22" tall bases - \$1500.00

RESERVATION FORM:

Contact Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email Address _____

Phone _____

PAYMENT INFORMATION:

TOTAL PAYMENT: \$ _____

Make check payable to "Pearland Historical Society"

(Payments for the memorial bricks and benches are received by the Pearland Historical Society, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Tax ID 76-0256510)

Mail check with completed form to:

Pearland Convention & Visitors Bureau, 11200 Broadway Street, Suite 1390, Pearland, 77584

Completed order includes: Reservation form and engraving form filled out and payment.

This project is a collaborative effort among the Pearland Citizens Depot Committee, Pearland Historical Society and Pearland Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Brick Engraving Form

Print your brick inscription in the boxes below, up to 16 characters per line, *including letters, spaces and punctuation.*

Return your completed engraving form by email or fax to: ksinistore@pearlandtx.gov | 713.436.5091 fax
For any further information, please call Kim Sinistore at 281.605.9461/281.997.5971

4" x 12" brick (\$150) – 2 lines of copy, 16 characters per line, Helvetica, all caps

8" x 12" brick (\$300) – 4 lines of copy, 16 characters per line, Helvetica, all caps

12" x 12" brick (\$400) – 6 lines of copy, 16 characters per line, Helvetica, all caps



16" x 16" brick (\$500) – 14" x 14" engraved area with customized copy OR logo

PLEASE CALL FOR SPECIAL ENGRAVING ORDER FORM!