



Making History in the Prairie

Grand Prairie Historical Organization

GPHO Volume XIII

May 2008

**It's Time For
A CHANGE
ELECT
JOHN W. DAUGHERTY
MAYOR**

A big THANK YOU to Helen Chennault, who donated a bronze bust of Pete Emmons to the GP Historical Organization. The bust is a sculpture by Jack Wilson. Thanks Mrs. Chennault for your generosity.

As you may know, Thomas B. Chennault recently passed away. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Chennault family. Mr. Chennault was a long time client of my Fathers, (Barley Bingham) and I always considered him to be my first insurance customer back in 1988 when I took over Barley's Agency.

Brian Bingham

Congratulations to Angela S. Giessner for being awarded the Women in History Hall of Fame award by the Soroptomist of Grand Prairie. What a fantastic honor. Be sure and congratulate Angela when you see her.

NOTE OUR CHANGE OF MEETING LOCATION

The next meeting of the GP Historical Organization is

May 15th at the

Mountain Creek Retirement Facility

2305 Corn Valley Rd

Grand Prairie, Texas 75051

972-237-2515

www.mountaincreekretirement.com

Please call Angela Giessner for reservations,

972-262-5151—seating will be limited

The Mountain Creek Retirement Facility is going to help sponsor our lunch for this meeting. Your cost will be the same, \$5 for members, \$10 for non-members, but the meal will be an upscale buffet style lunch.



Jim

Gatewood

Back by popular

demand, Mr. Gatewood will be our Speaker at the next meeting. It will be held at the Mountain Creek Retirement facility in Grand Prairie

At the end of WWI, Love Field became a Mecca for gypsy barnstorming pilots and a flying circus was formed called Slats Rodgers and the Love Field Lunatics. The circus was used as a cover for the delivery of his bootleg whiskey. When Roosevelt was elected President of the United States in 1933, he repealed the Volstead Act. The sixteen year window of time for bootleg-

ging slammed shut. Mexico beckoned to Slats and he became a rum runner involved in a small revolution. Later he left Mexico a rich man.

With the gold he brought out of Mexico, he purchased an airfield in Mission, Texas and went into the crop dusting business.

A Texas historical

marker stands today near a cantina at the McAllen International Airport Terminal honoring Floyd (Slats) Rodgers.

**SLATS RODGERS
AND THE
LOVEFIELD LUNATICS**



JIM GATEWOOD

President Corner : Life Member Awards Recognition

We have an exciting meeting planned for Thursday May 15th at the Mountain Creek Retirement Center on Corn Valley Rd. We will honor all our current Life Members with a special Recognition. Please plan to join us beginning at 11:30.

We'll also form our Centennial Committee who will help us with our plans for celebrating The City of Grand Prairie's 100th birthday in 2009.

We have received our first copy of the book, Historic Grand Prairie. It looks fantastic ! Not sure if we will have copies to sell at the next meeting, but if we do they will be available. See you on May15th!!!!!!!!!!!!

The Daugherty Family History in Grand Prairie, Texas

The first Daugherty came to Texas when the frontier was still threatened by the Comanche Indians, and the Republic of Texas was at the dawn of its birth. William Daugherty rode his horse from Arkansas and began a legacy that is still moving forward today.

William Daugherty moved his family of eight sons and one daughter to the Republic of Texas in January, 1845, following the death of his wife, Sallie, in 1842. The family settled in Cherokee County where the Comanche Indians had only recently been removed from the territory and were not happy about it. The first vote he cast in Texas was for a delegate to the Annexation Convention.

Being a man of deep faith and feeling the need for a religious presence in this otherwise wild and unruly area of the Republic, William Daugherty accepted the offer of a position with the Methodist Protestant Church in the Republic and was assigned a circuit that ran from Cherokee County over 800 miles south to the Valley skirting the Indian Territory along the way.

By December 29, 1849, when Texas became the 28th state of the United States, the Texas Rangers had pretty well ameliorated the Indian threat on the Texas frontier and Texans found themselves looking for new adventure. Interrupted by the Civil War, Texans found themselves eager for expansion after this all encompassing conflict. The Daugherty clan began branching out, establishing ranches on the western frontier southward to the Valley. They also began migrating eastward into what was part of the Peter's Colony, the Blackland Prairie region of Dallas County.

Samuel Houston Daugherty, the grandson of the Rev. William Daugherty, with his wife, Lydia Jane West Daugherty, and their two sons and two daughters moved into an area of Southwest Dallas County and established a farm on land that is now under Mountain Creek Lake and part of Prairie Lakes Golf Course. One of their sons, John Mitchell Daugherty married Bertha Robenus Taylor on January 29, 1915, and they began their life together by settling in on the Daugherty farm and beginning a family. In addition to farming the family farm, John Mitchell, or Chaffee as he was affectionately known, was foreman of the nearby Wolcott Ranch and superintendent of the school established on the ranch. A happy-go-lucky Irishman, Chaffee and his wife Bertha had seven children: Marie,



Life Members of the Grand Prairie Historical Organization

Judy Armstrong, Billy Joe Armstrong, Carol Bell, Grant Bell, Brian W. Bingham, L.R. Cannon, Ouida Chapman Lewis, Lisa Chennault Brown, Helen Chennault, Thomas Chennault, Thomas B Chennault, City of Grand Prairie Marketing, Marge Copeland, H. Victor Copeland, Jerry Corley, Cheryl Friman Dover, Charles and Janice England, Kirk and Marcie England, Olive Galloway, Norma Hale, Marvin J (Jack) Hays, Lee D. Herring, Thomas Hight, Jorja Jackson Clemson, 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 Daughtery Smith, Amy Sprinkles, Angela Sutton Giessner, Donald Taylor, Ruthe Thompson Jackson, Laura Thompson Potter, Paul and Madie Vernon

Imogene, John Wilburn, Ross, Lucille, Kenneth, and Johnne Rae. All the Daugherty children were delivered by Dr. H. V. Copeland at home on the farm between 1915 and 1928.

Tragedy struck the Daugherty family when on January 14, 1929, Chaffee died of pneumonia at the age of 34. Dr. Copeland made the trek to the farm on horseback every day for two weeks ministering to Chaffee trying to save his life. However, this was before the discovery of penicillin and nothing could be done. At the time of Chaffee's death, Bertha Daugherty was pregnant with her seventh and last child, Johnnie Rae. With her oldest son, John, being only ten at the time, Bertha could no longer run the farm. It was the middle of the depression and the taxes were due. So, Bertha moved her brood to town, Grand Prairie. She bought a house on the north side of Main Street (U.S. Highway 80) in the middle of 400 block. She had a small shed built behind the house and bought wringer-type washers and began a business taking in laundry to raise her seven children. Her grandchildren remember her having a cow, lots of chickens, a large garden, and several fruit trees behind her house. Bertha was not alone because her parents, S. E. and Ella Dora Taylor, also lived on Main Street as did many brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, and cousins on both sides of Main Street from 3rd Street to 5th Street. A devoted Baptist, Bertha saw that all her children were baptized in the Trinity River by the preacher of the First Baptist Church.

As her children grew, Bertha saw them branch out to form families of their own with other early settlers of what is now Grand Prairie:

Marie married Gene Motley from one of Grand Prairie's oldest families. Their son, Lynn, recently retired from Lockheed-Martin and is now president of the Grand Prairie Historical Organization.

Imogene married Roland Davie who was one of the early postmasters of Grand Prairie. They had two sons, David and Roland, Jr., who now reside in Burleson, Texas.

John married Ernesteen Heard of Wills Point and had two daughters, Ouida and Patricia Ann. Ouida lives in Grand Prairie and Patricia resides in University Park, Florida, near

Sarasota.

Lucille married Jack Smith; and their son, Ken, is a physician in San Antonio.

Ross Smith was married briefly and had no children.

Ken and Ethel Daugherty had three children, Patrick, Kay, and Michael who died in childhood.

Johnne Rae married Jeff D. Gentry who was descended from another old Grand Prairie family. They had two children, Marcy of Houston and Jeff, Jr. of Salt Lake City, Utah.

Lynn Motley, Ouida Daugherty Smith, and Kay Daugherty are the only descendants still living in Grand Prairie. All the children and grandchildren except Jeff D. Gentry, Jr. proudly attended Grand Prairie High School. Lucille, Johnne Rae, Ouida, Patricia Ann, and Marcy were cheerleaders. All the cousins Ouida, Patricia Ann, Ken, Lynn, David, Roland, Marcy and Jeff graduated from college and were the first in the family to do so.

In 1948, John W. Daugherty, who was in the wholesale and retail oil and gas business, was elected to the Grand Prairie City Council. At the time of his election, Grand Prairie was operated under the mayor/commissioner form of government with each commissioner in charge of managing a department. John Daugherty managed the police and fire departments. During his tenure, the all volunteer fire department became more professional by hiring some paid staff while continuing its volunteer tradition. The number of policemen was increased and the first motorcycle policemen, Fred Conover and Johnny Vandergriff, were hired.

In 1953, John W. Daugherty was elected mayor of Grand Prairie. Elected with other like-minded young men (Charles Powers, John Henry, Bill Ellis, and Sam Pettigrew). At 34, John Daugherty was the old man on the council. Remembering the late night annexation by Dallas of the unincorporated land selected by defense company North American in their move to the area; and stung by Arlington's annexation of the unincorporated land between Grand Prairie and Arlington that General Motors wanted for its plant, the Whiz Kids, (as the youthful council had been dubbed by the press), began to take advantage of the newly created Texas Annexation laws. They annexed land north that would have encompassed the present day D-FW International Airport and south almost half way to Waco. Of course, these actions greatly



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Brian W. Bingham—VP

Carol Bell—Treasurer



angered Dallas and Arlington. Undeterred, Mayor Daugherty and the council continued to press forward with an aggressive agenda.

A new addition to City Hall and new police, fire, and library facilities were built. A library and swimming pool were built in the previously ignored Dalworth Community. The ensuing administration upon taking office appeased Dallas and Arlington by deannexing the land and the Whiz Kids and their supporters were left with memories of what Grand Prairie might have been.

Ouida Marie Daugherty Smith

To be continued: In the next newsletter the Carlyle Smith family will be featured. Find out how the Scots (Smiths) and the Irish (Daughertys) commingled.



From left to right:

John W. Daugherty, Patricia Ann Daugherty, Ouida Marie Daugherty, Ernesteen Heard Daugherty