

ON



TRACK

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After delays, Museum re-opening set for May

Delayed by weather and unresolved questions on the fate of the Pace and Lyles houses, a date for the re-opening of Landmark's Depot Museum is now tentatively set for May at its new location on Sixth Street and Walnut, the

centerpiece of a new entranceway to Downtown Garland from Walnut Street.

The Depot has been repainted and repaired and after plumbing and other installations, including landscaping, are completed,

the museum's contents will move in, with refurbished display cases and other additions, according to Landmark President Janice Black. Detailed plans for the "grand" re-opening will be announced later, she said.



History Bit

KRLD: Garland's Twin Towers

When they were erected in 1937 on a patch of land at Saturn Road near Miller Road south of downtown Garland, they could be seen for miles, nothing but farm fields and a few houses surrounding them.

The twin broadcasting towers were built by KRLD about ten years after the station itself was born. Its call letters came from its creators, Radio Labs of Dallas. Later, the letters fit nicely when the station was acquired by the Dallas Times Herald.

Early on, KRLD ran 10,000 watts, and in 1941, went to a powerful 50,000 watts. Very briefly, its signals also sent TV to viewers across North Texas, as well as AM and FM radio signals. In 1955, the TV signals moved to Cedar Hill where Channel 8 also had towers.

One tower is 492-feet tall, the other 475 feet. Today, they are still in operation, sending AM signals out to listeners.

After early mishaps, the towers have remained staunchly erect for more than 60 years.

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Willis Winters: A man for all seasons

By Rudolph Bush
Dallas Morning News
(By permission of *The Dallas Morning News*)

When Willis Winters was a boy, he spent hours playing in the drafting and planning room of the Garland Parks Department, where his father, Cecil, was the director.

But the man who would become director of Dallas' parks system never thought back then of following his father into civil service. Willis Winters' passion was architecture. "I'm one of those people, I knew what I wanted to do for a living at the earliest age," Winters said. "I always wanted to be an architect."

He's been that, and more. Today, Winters can look back on a career as an award-winning architect, one of Texas' pre-eminent architectural historians, a renowned preservationist, the author of six books, an accomplished photographer.

More important, he looks forward to shaping the future of Dallas' parks. For all he's achieved, he said, becoming Dallas park director in February was the high point of his career.

It almost didn't happen.

Two years ago, Winters nearly died of a mysterious pulmonary infection while vacationing in Santa Fe, N.M. After months in the hospital, including an induced coma and many rounds of antibiotics and steroids, he emerged weakened but determined to return to the Park and Recreation Department.

Recovery has been difficult, and remnants of the disease remain with him. He's had one hip replaced. The other must be done soon. Doctors replaced a mitral valve in his heart last year. At 56, his hair is grayer and thinner.

But his mind remains focused on his vision for the city's park system.

Winters says he's seeking new public-private partnerships of the sort that made Klyde Warren

Park possible. Though he offered scant details, he revealed that one such partnership is in the works for Pacific Plaza, a long-planned but unfunded park at Live Oak Street between Harwood and St. Paul streets

His grand vision will require an enormous commitment from the city. But Winters believes it will make Dallas stronger and better.

"The best thing that happened to our city since the centennial [the 1936 celebration at Fair Park] was the decision of Boeing to go to Chicago instead of Dallas," said Winters.

One reason cited by Boeing officials for that 2001 decision was the perceived high value that Chicago places on quality of life.

The rejection spurred civic, business and political leaders in Dallas to address shortcomings in their city. Many had to do with parks and overall beauty.

Winters, who joined the park department in 1993, has been integral in the push for more green spaces downtown. Before he took over this year, his duties as an assistant director included coordinating the park department's downtown efforts.

But running the entire department is much different. Winters is quick to acknowledge that he's a different kind of leader from his predecessor, Paul Dyer.

Before retiring, Dyer spent 31 years with the city, 20 of them as park director. He was a master of the city's bureaucracy, securing money for parks even in times of budget cuts.

Winters knows he's less adept at pulling the levers, less polished at recognizing and satisfying the many competing demands from politicians and their constituents.

"Probably the biggest struggle for me is managing the politics," he said. "I've learned a lot of hard lessons, and I'm committed to addressing my political shortcomings."

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A new direction after son's death

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Virginia McAlester, a historian and preservationist who has collaborated with Winters, believes he is exactly the person the city needs as it begins to recognize the importance of saving its past while building a future.

"What's remarkable about Willis is how many aptitudes he has," she said. She pointed to the diversity of his work, from being the foremost historian of Fair Park to documenting the architecture of the Park Cities in a book co-authored with McAlester.

Winters probably wouldn't have come to work for the city if not for an economic downturn in the late 1980s and early 1990s. At the time, he was an architect by day and an architectural photographer by night. But finding work — or getting paid for the work he did — was becoming more difficult.

Want Ad Caught His Eye

One morning in 1992, sitting at La Madeleine on Lemmon Avenue, he was flipping through the want ads, looking at possible jobs for his unemployed architect friends. By chance, he saw that the city was seeking a superintendent of design and construction in the park department.

He sent in his application the day before the deadline.

After he was hired, his first assignment was working with a team to get Fair Park ready for the 1994 World Cup.

It proved to be eye-opening.

Fresh coats of paint had passed for maintenance. The Centennial Building's roof had been patched so many times — with new layers just added over the old — that it was seven inches thick and a threat to the structure.

Today, Fair Park is in its best shape in decades, thanks in large part to Winters and Louise Elam, a longtime park and recreation architect.

Dyer credits Winters with improving the appearance of parks throughout the city.

"They say appearance is everything, and our appearance improved dramatically while Willis was over capital development," Dyer said.

Winters says he's prepared for the physical struggles still ahead of him. And he's faced terrible challenges before.

Tragedy in the Family

In 2005, his son Will, a football player at Woodrow Wilson High School, died of a blood clot after routine surgery.

The loss shook Winters and his wife, Jan, to their core. "I think about him all the time," Winters said.

To honor his son's memory, he turned to architecture and design. Randall Park is just across the street from Woodrow Wilson. Winters created a plaza there to provide a more inviting space for students.

Winters says he's feeling stronger every day. He lives downtown. His goal is to walk to City Hall twice a week come January.

Recently, he took his longest walk yet, from City Hall to Dealey Plaza to view preparations for the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

Winters was a key player in Dealey Plaza's restoration and has long pushed for better funding for its upkeep.

The walk was tiring but good, he said. It gave him a sense of moving forward with strength.

At the same time, he said, he's careful to recognize his physical limitations. He tries not to let everyday stresses wear him down.

Correction

A story on W.C. Daugherty Elementary School in the October-November-December 2013 issue, mistakenly stated that the school, opened in 1952, was Garland's second elementary school. It was the third. B.H. Freeman Elementary, opened in 1949, was the second.

Kennedy Memorial

Garland, joining Dallas and other cities, remembered the Nov. 22, 1963, assassination of President John F. Kennedy on on that date last November in a Plaza Theatre program.

Participating were Mayor Douglas Athas; Garland historian Michael Hayslip; former Dallas Police homicide detective Jim Leavelle of Garland; the Rev Ken Ashlock, pastor emeritus of the New Liberty Baptist Church; Ricky McNeal, president, and Annie Dickson, vice-president, of the Garland NAACP; Jennifer Nguyen of the Garland Community Multicultural Commission, and Tony Torres of the Garland Association for Hispanic Affairs. Leavelle was the Dallas officer handcuffed to Lee Harvey Oswald, assassin of the President, when Oswald was fatally shot by Jack Ruby in the basement of Dallas Police headquarters.

Hayslip recalled Garland's link to the fatal day: A Garland resident, Bill Wiseman, was a sheriff's deputy who probably was the first lawman to enter the Texas School Book Depository after the fatal shots were fired from that building; the President's death certificate was signed by Justice of the Peace Theran Ward of Garland; Leavelle, and Beverly Oliver, a dancer/singer of Garland who was a friend of Ruby's.

"Garland escaped being called the 'suburb of hate,' " said Hayslip, "but we've participated in the changes, the sobriety that comes with proximity to an event where violence supplants the legal system. Let's hope our connection continues to be peaceful."

Towers fell in 1940, 1948

(Continued from Page 1)

In January, 1940, the 475-foot south tower collapsed, crashing to the ground during bitterly cold weather. Two employees were on duty at the station below, but the structure fell away from it and no one was injured.

About eight years later, in December, 1948, a guy wire supporting the north tower gave way and the tower collapsed, dragging its companion tower with it. Again, no one was injured, though a garage on the property and two cars were damaged. The towers later were rebuilt, and have not suffered falls since then.

The most cause for concern, which continued into the 1950s, was the strong transmitter signals, which resulted in regular interruptions of telephone conversations, and, strangely, broadcast through whatever electrical appliances residents might have plugged in. One resident reported that every time she connected her electric iron, she received KRLD's radio programming.

Since 1996, KRLD has been owned by CBS.

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Do you hear a waltz?

Garland, the musical

His brain is alive with the sound of music.
And words.

By day, David Case is a systems engineer at Raytheon in Garland. In whatever time he can scrape together outside his paying job, he's a playwright and a musician, and his latest project, more or less complete, is a musical history of Garland, tentatively titled *The Garland Waltz*.

When it's all done, he'll be looking for a producer, and hoping that it will be staged in the city that inspired it.

Briefly — or maybe not so briefly — it's a musical based on Garland history from earliest days in the late 1850s through the late 1930s when industries began to move in and start what became the incredible 1950s growth that made it Dallas County's second largest city.

Actually, the play begins in 1946 after the end of World War II, with an ancient man looking back on his life in the area and relating stories to a schoolboy working on a town history assignment (think maybe of *Camelot* when King Arthur describes the idyllic place to a young boy). As he talks, the scenes change, moving from one historical era to another.

The story is sprinkled with names of real Garland settlers and movers and shakers and city officials, with characters singing and dancing through events that shaped the modern city: the early settlements of Duck Creek and Embree, the towns' fierce rivalry, and the later peaceful bonding into the city of Garland; the tragic interlude of the Civil War; the killer 1927 tornado, and the first move of industries into the city.

To carry the story along, Case, along with fellow musician Marc Witmer, has composed almost a dozen songs, with toe-tapping melodies calling for dancing not yet choreographed.

In fact, the first scene begins with a rousing number called "The Hustle, The Bustle," which introduces the city of 1946, at war's end, the old man looking out a window onto a busy

street where a parade is in progress for mayoral candidate Curtis Crossman.

*The hustle, the bustle as the city sings its
sweet refrains,
The rumble, the bumble of autos and the
aeroplanes;
The banging, the clanging of the workers
and the passing trains,
I love the beat the Garland street sustains!*

Another song happily praises the tough life of pioneers:

*A pioneer's life is a tedious life
Six days a week;
It's thresh the wheat, hunt for meat,
Even when your bones all creak!*

With allowances to keep the action going, Case has shaped the play to follow events factually, including real names that longtime residents of the city will recognize quickly. He has been writing and shaping it for about five years, since an actress in a play he wrote suggested the tribute to Garland. He based much of the story on "Garland: Its Premiere Century," by Michael Hayslip, preeminent Garland historian and one of the founders of the Landmark Society, which he presently serves as curator of its museum.

Case notes that Garland's official establishment came in 1891, which makes 2016 its 125th anniversary.

"That would provide an opportunity for a major production," he said. "With the relocation of the Landmark Santa Fe Depot Museum and railcar to a new, prominent location and the redevelopment of downtown Garland, this could be part of a major event. It might be a way for the city to draw out-of-towners and boost tourism."

The future awaits.

Landmark Depot Crossing

393 N. Sixth Street
Garland TX 75040

The Depot Museum and the Rail Car are operated by the Garland Landmark Society, a non-profit and volunteer organization.

The structure will remain closed while undergoing repairs and renovation at its new site. A date for reopening and hours of operation will be announced.

Admission will remain free, though donations are encouraged

Website

www.garlandhistorical.org

Membership

Memberships are available at these rates:

Individual \$15
Couple \$20
Corporate \$100

To join or renew, enclose payment with this information and mail to:

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