



Fair Park, then and now

RESTORER TRACES HISTORY OF DALLAS PARK



Photo by Bill Dickson.

Winters signs his book, *Fair Park*, at Depot Museum

In 1886, a group of Dallas businessmen was granted a charter to develop some 70 acres in East Dallas as the Dallas State Fair and Exposition. This highly successful venture was the first step in building what is today known as Fair Park, the site, in 1936, of the

Texas Centennial Exposition, a world class fair which introduced Dallas to the world, and today one of the nation's most notable and unique city parks. The man charged with directing its

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The Name Game

In this issue, we're tweaking *On Track's* design, with future plans to e-mail issues to our members who wish to receive it electronically.

Those who prefer the printed version will still get it by mail.

And we wondered if a name change is in order. We can keep *On Track*, or we can give it a new title.

Among titles suggested: *The Station Agent*, *The Garland Telegraph*, *The Depot*, *All Aboard!*, *Roots*.

Help us: Offer your own title, or vote for the current name. Landmark directors will consider entries and decide the question.

Send suggested names by June 1 to:

nameit.game@yahoo.com

HISTORICAL QUARTERLY PRAISES LANDMARK'S KATE JAMES BOOK

"Her writing has flair and her sense of humor comes through in her words," writes Texas historian Jennifer Lawrence in a review of the Landmark Society's *Sketches of Kate James: Dallas County Pioneer*.

The review, in the January issue of Texas State History Association's *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, cites the book's editor, Michael Hayslip, for "an admirable job of compiling the memoirs and

other excerpts into a visually stimulating and cohesive look at life on the frontier of North Texas."

The book was published last summer by the Landmark Society and is for sale at the museum or by mail. Details can be found at the Society website, www.garlandhistorical.org.

Based on Mrs. James' reminiscences of early

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Park renovation continues as a work in progress, says planner

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renovation and restoration traced the park's history for Landmark Society members at the group's annual meeting Monday night, April 4, at the Depot Museum.

Willis Winters, assistant director of the Dallas Park and Recreation Department, and director of Fair Park's on-going revitalization, related how the city and private donors have financed the revitalization that he has directed since 1993 when he joined the Dallas Park Department.

Using slides to illustrate his story, Winters began with the opening of the park in 1886 as the Dallas State Fair. North of the site east of downtown, a competing, but smaller, fair was staged in what is now Cole Park near the present North Dallas High School. That venture folded after its initial year, and its organizers joined the State Fair group.

In its early years the fair's chief attractions were livestock and agriculture and the principal entertainment was horse racing.

Races were staged at a one-mile track at the center of the fairgrounds.

By 1897, a mammoth wooden Exposition Building designed by Dallas architect James Flanders was the Fair's pride, and at that time was the largest building in the city.

As the years passed, the fair continued to make improvements, though its basic layout remains today as it was in the beginning.

The year after the Chicago world's fair in 1893, Winters said, Flanders went to the Windy City and bought back to Dallas much of statuary remaining from that exposition and installed the pieces around the fairgrounds to enhance the landscape.

Winters revealed that the first auto races in the United States were staged at the Dallas fair in 1902-1903. Just before the 1903 fair, the Texas legislature banned betting on horse races, ruining a prime source of revenue for the fair's operators. This, said Winters, resulted in a serious financial difficulty that caused the

fair association to make a deal with the city, deeding the fairgrounds to Dallas in exchange for \$125,000 cash to retire debts. The reorganized fair was named the State Fair of Texas.

The greatest transformation came in 1934, when Dallas won a competition with Houston and San Antonio to stage the 1936 Texas Centennial Exposition. That win came principally because Dallas already had a noted park with enough exhibition spaces to build on.

The Centennial opened in June, 1936, and in its short 6-month run, attracted 6.5 million people.

Winters has supervised the park's renovation to successfully restore 27 buildings from that exposition to their original splendor. Today, they form the largest concentration of Art Deco architecture in the United States, which helped the designation of Fair Park as a National Historic Landmark.

After his talk Winters signed copies of his book, *Fair Park*.

Landmark Officers and Directors, 2011-2012

Officers and directors of the Garland Landmark Society were unanimously reelected at the April 4 annual meeting and will continue to serve until the next annual meeting in April, 2012.

Officers

President	Joann Nelson
Vice President	
Development/Museum Affairs	Michael Hayslip
Corresponding Secretary	Mary Dingle
Recording Secretary	Wylene Taft
Treasurer	Tammi Omer
Curator	Bill Dickson

Directors

Janice Black	Bob Dunn
Robert Compton	Jay Jones
Claude Doane	Pete Nelson
Bill Dunn	Florence Stone
Chuck Cabaniss	
(emeritus)	



Times remembered, from the Garland Landmark Society Photo Archives

Garland Shopping Center (shown in the photo above in 1956) was the first retail center of its kind in the city when it opened in 1953, its 26 shopping spaces covering approximately 10 acres at Garland Road and Miller Roads.

That parcel and many acres around it had once been farm land; the several acres west and north of the retail center were developed as Williams Estates, moderate to

expensive residential housing. Its promoters called this new residential area of fine homes "The Highland Park of Garland."

Among tenants in the new \$750,000 center were Skillern Drugs, J.C. Penney and Wyatt Grocery, M. E. Moses and Rick Furniture Company. On the eastern border of the center, fronting Garland Road, were more shops and a restaurant. The

original grocer, Wyatt, was succeeded by Kroger and the center continued to flourish until that store moved nearer downtown. The center's decline sped in the 1970s as more tenants moved out. By the 1990s, it had become largely vacant.

The remaining buildings on the site were demolished in March. No plans have been announced for its use.

New book tells the story of Garland football from 1906 through 2009

Chuck Cabaniss, emeritus director of the Landmark Society, is co-author with fellow Garland High School graduate Scott Meyers, of the recently published *Garland Football: A Century of Championship Competition*. The 352-page, illustrated book covers Garland High School football from its first team, fielded in 1906, through the 2009 season. Information on ordering the \$24.50 book may be had by calling Cabaniss at 214-348-9185 during the day or by e-mailing Meyers at wiseowl182@yahoo.com.

Randy Howald: Landmark's Webmaster

"It keeps me active, alert," says Randy Howald, showing a list of the websites he's created and which he maintains at his home on Randolph Drive.

Among the dozens of websites he presides over is that of Garland Landmark Society, which he created for the group six years ago, and to which he regularly adds more material. Right now, he's preparing to install photos and names of all Garland's mayors to the website.

In addition to the Landmark, Howald is the webmaster for a host of commercial, educational and private sites, which he maintains from a laptop Dell that, at the ripe old age of six, is still a reliable workhorse.

These sites are all his children, so to speak, but he's proudest of the comprehensive website that he created, researched and adds to weekly --

Texans in the Civil War (<http://www.angelfire.com/tx/RandysTexas/>). Its 800 pages are filled with information on Texas Confederate soldiers -- biographies, graves and cemeteries, with a separate division on Walker's Texas Brigade. Building upon basic information from other sources, Howald has made the site his own, gathering information from readers who regularly visit the site and adding facts he has dug up on his own. He makes weekly forays to Texas cemeteries, seeking out the graves of soldiers, taking photos, and adding them to the bank of information.

It all started about ten years ago, says Howald, when he discovered in an heirloom dresser, a paper that had been trapped behind a drawer. It was a Republic of Texas deed and survey dated 1845 for land in Lamar (now Hopkins) County, part of which

had eventually been owned by one of his ancestors.

Howald, retired from the heating and air conditioning business, was immediately captured, and, teaching himself, set up the website that stores the material he was digging up. One thing led to another until he was researching and creating websites for others as well.

Last November, Howald was diagnosed with lung cancer and has been undergoing radiation and chemotherapy since then, but that setback has only slowed him slightly. He expects to complete his treatments in May, and is hoping the news will be good after that.

In the meantime, he's anxious to continue developing his own website, and to keep the flock of other sites he's created up to date.

By Robert Compton.

New exhibits underway, more planned for depot

Plans are underway to install new exhibits and re-arrange some of the current displays at the Garland Depot Museum.

The station master's office, fronting the depot and to the right of the main entrance, will be one of the more noteworthy transformations, offering exhibits that represent Garland culture shortly after the turn of the century.

A new display of period ladies' hats has been added and the dress exhibit has been moved from the waiting room to join the hats in the expanded exhibit area.

Visitors entering the museum come into the depot's original waiting room, and exhibits there will represent some of the businesses that originally surrounded the nearby Public Square. These include a period generator, cash register, and advertising case.

An ornate grand piano that previously had occupied a space in the waiting room has been removed to storage to make room for a planned new interactive exhibit that explains how Garland got its name.

Changes for the baggage room are still in the planning stages.

_ Bill Dickson.

Some things we accomplished in 2010

- Began installation of new exhibits, and moved other exhibits to set themes.
 - Published and distributed the 2011 Landmark calendar in mid-September, 2010.
 - Garland Cultural Arts Commission approved grant for exhibit displays.
 - Several Landmark-published books and other historical materials offered for sale at the depot museum and on GLS website. These include *Garland, Its Premiere Century* by Michael Hayslip, *Sketches of Kate James: Dallas County Pioneer, Religious Life in Garland, Texas, 1840-2001* by Dr. Carr M. Suter Jr., *Map of Historic Garland, Texas*, and Landmark calendars, 2001-2011.
 - New museum security system installed.
 - Historic photo collections and new photo donations are accessioned and digitized.
 - Opened the museum for special tours and presentations on request of several organizations.
 - Continually updated photographs, maps and other documents and added these to website.
 - Plan re-design of GLS newsletter, and increased number of articles and pictures.
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Join or renew your membership and help us preserve and exhibit Garland history

Please complete this form and return it to renew membership or to join Landmark

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ **Work Phone:** _____

E-mail: _____ **I would like to volunteer:** _____

Annual membership: Individual \$15 Couple: \$20 Corporate \$100

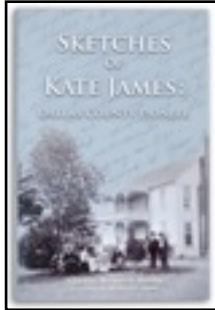
Mail form to: Garland Landmark Society, P.O. Box 462232, Garland TX 75046-2232

Quarterly cites book's value for descriptions of pioneer life

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life in the settlements around what is now Garland, her journals begin in the 1850s when she came as a child with her family to North Texas. Those

observations were originally published in *The Garland News*. Hayslip, the great-great-grandson of Ms. James, edited those journals, added many notations and added notes from other journals of the period.



“What is most valuable about the work,” continues Ms. Lawrence, “is the first-hand descriptions of how the family coped with the Civil War, how some household items were made, and the detail of what went into successfully handling pioneer life. Most amusing in the book is the chapter devoted to women’s fashions through the decades as James turns her wit on the ever-changing dictates of the ‘Goddess of Fashion.’”

An earlier review in the Dallas County historical magazine, *Legacies*, also praised the book for its value to historians.

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

Hours of Operation

First and third Saturdays

of each month

10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

Off-hour tours available on request

Museum Phone: 972-205-2996

or Joann Nelson, 972-564-1054

Admission: Free

Donations are encouraged

Garland Landmark Society
P.O. Box 462232
Garland TX 75040-2232

