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Sic transit gloria arboris

Farewell, Good Cemetery Oak

It's not certain when it was born, nor is there a firm date for its death.

The acorn which gave it life probably was buried in the nourishing earth by a squirrel or a bird. Its age at death was estimated to be approximately 179 years, based on trunk rings.

Scientifically, the Red Oak was *Quercus Shumardi*, but it was known familiarly as the Cemetery Oak. It was at its splendid best in 1995, at nearly 70 feet tall, with a crown spread of 95 feet and a trunk circumference of more than 14 feet at chest height (4 1/2 feet from the ground).

That was the year the Texas Forest Service designated it as Metroplex Champion, calling it the largest of the

species known in all of Dallas, Tarrant and eight adjoining counties.

Its death of *Ganoderma applanatum*, a wood decay fungus, after a long illness, came at the spot where it first saw life, a tract of land now known as the historic Knights of Pythias Cemetery at South Garland Avenue near Miller Road.

Surviving is its longtime companion, the Incline Cedar (*Libocedrus decurrens*), a 63-foot tall tree with a crown spread of 29 feet and a trunk circumference of 90 inches at chest height.

That tree is also distinguished -- in 1998, it was named the Texas

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PART II

Roach Feed & Seed:

Changing with city

(Mike Hayslip concludes the story of Roach Feed & Seed Company, one of Garland's oldest businesses, that he began in the October-November-December, 2011, issue of ON TRACK.)

At the close of WWII, during which W. H. Roach had died, the grocery inventory was sold to Lee Bexley, who began offering it in his meat market. By then known as Roach Feed and Seed Company, the store had become firmly established with the regions on its agricultural clientele.

It flourished under the watchful eye of Haskell L. "Hack" Roach, who had also joined Earl McDaniel, Sr. to purchase what became the Roach & McDaniel Grain Co. Known informally as "the mill," the grain operation dated from 1936, when it had been erected on the south side of the Katy tracks, east of 4th Street, as a branch of Carrollton's Blanton Grain Company. Although the facility processed some wheat, it was primarily designed to

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Roach Feed & Seed: Into the future



Garland Landmark Photo by Bob Compton

Jack McDaniel, outside his office in today's Roach Feed & Seed on Garland's Main Street.

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shell corn, bailing the shucks and accumulating the kernels for bulk shipments. McDaniel had later been named the mill's manager and moved with his family to the Rose Hill Community, now Garland, so he smoothly rose into the partnership with Roach.

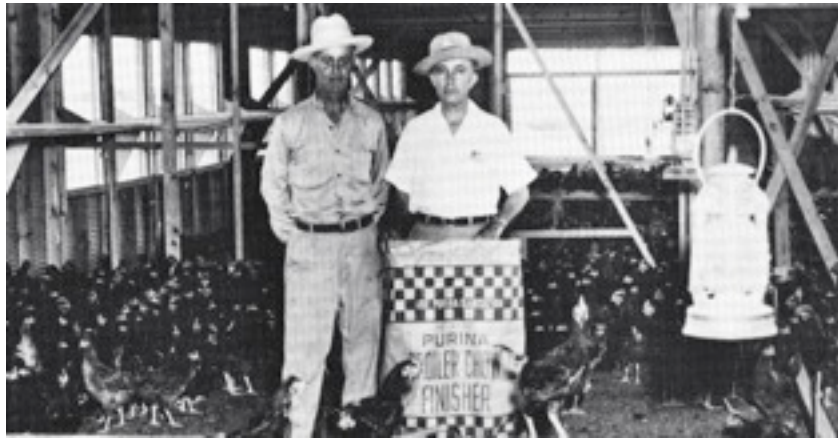
While Roach & McDaniel always operated separately from Roach Feed & Seed, their customer bases overlapped, and each supported the other. Roach Feed and Seed, for example, stocked and urged local farmers to plant white as well as yellow corn, which was processed at Roach & McDaniel for one of its rapidly expanding customers, the Frito Company. Frito's chip recipe called for a specific white-to-yellow corn ratio to achieve the optimum chip product.

Earl "Jack" McDaniel, Jr. had joined Roach Feed & Seed as a store employee in 1949, and in 1952 he purchased his father's interest in Roach & McDaniel Grain Co. Without changing signs or stationery, the younger McDaniel thereby "overlapped" his way into a partnership with Haskell Roach, and both businesses continued without interruption.

But immediately prior to WWII developers had begun converting parcels of Garland's rich farmland to housing developments, and by the start of the '50s agriculture was on the wane. Development intensified as another generation of soldiers returned from war.

Since only one nursery had opened to serve the householders, the store expanded its stock of lawn and garden supplies, adding a detached building on the

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W.C. Warren, left, and Haskell L. Roach in Warren's 1950s broiler facility promoting Ralston Purina, one of their feed suppliers.

(Continued from opposite page)

store's north side to house bedding plants.

Garland's shift away from agriculture continued, and by 1961 much of Garland's farmland had been planted with homes and industries, so the mill was sold to a cattle feeding operator, who closed it a few years thereafter. The building was demolished in the late '60s, opening the land for eventual construction of Garland's downtown DART station.

Roach Feed & Seed kept in step with the local economy, eventually restricting plant sales to the warm months and devoting the auxiliary building to pets and supplies.

In 1980, Scott Freeze, Jack McDaniel's son-in-law, had joined the firm, and soon thereafter customers were buying Roach proprietary brands in several product lines.

Roach, born near the end of the 19th Century and tempered by the lessons of two national depressions and two world wars, continued working at the store until the age of 91, dispensing advice and manning the counter when needed. His efforts with the Chamber of Commerce, the Garland City Council and the development of Lavon Lake water supply had underscored the link between businesses and the communities they serve.

Jack McDaniel, also active in local improvement efforts and donor of the city's Pace House, served on the Dallas County Horticultural Committee, where he helped establish its Master Gardener program. McDaniel was succeeded on that committee by Freeze, now the store's manager, and Shana Carter, now its assistant manager.

Guided by successive, but overlapping, generations from two families, Roach Feed & Seed has continually reshaped itself to serve the needs of a changing customer base. The staff represents more than 125 years of service, and the merchandise is more residential than in the beginning, often organically based.

But unchanged is belief that if customers are well-served, profits will accumulate in the old Anheuser-Bush safe.

The Museum

**200 Museum Plaza
Downtown Garland**

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



Membership

Memberships, renewable each January, are available at these rates:

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

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

**Garland Landmark Society
P. O. Box 462232
Garland TX 75046-2232**

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Death of a champion

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Forest Service State Champion -- no other tree of its kind was registered in Texas. TFS said its origin is uncertain because its kind is native to the U.S. Pacific Coast. Legend has it that W.B. Bell planted the seeds, possibly brought from California by cousins, near the family plot around 1932.

The Knights of Pythias fraternal order began developing the acreage as a cemetery around 1900, when the oak already was almost 70 years old. The cemetery now is maintained by the Garland-Mills Cemetery Foundation.

Limbs had been removed from the tree for a period of

months to prevent dead wood from falling onto traffic lanes on nearby South Garland Avenue.

Steve Houser of Arborological Services in Wylie had helped care for the tree for several years. In recent months, a core sampling had shown the tree's trunk to be hollow, and it was removed over several days in November.

Arborists left a stump more than three feet high, which preservationists hope can be treated so that the rings that measure its life span can be counted by visitors.

An informational marker detailing the history of the oak and the cedar, and citing their uniqueness was installed near the Cemetery Oak a few years ago.



Landmark Photo by Bob Compton

Its huge stump serves as monument to the Cemetery Oak.

What lies beneath Garland's Public Square?



Crowd on the Square in 1915 for Dollar Day event by local merchants, from Landmark archives.

Garland's Public Square has served many purposes since it took shape around 1900 -- wagon yard, gathering place for community events, watering hole of sorts, and with advent of the automobile, parking space for motor vehicles.

Historical lore says there was once a sizable water well in the center of the Square, but records are scarce. Landmark vice-president Mike Hayslip, curious about the rumored well, compared notes with fellow city history buff Jerry Flook, who had found stories about the Square in a search of *Garland News* archival volumes at the Landmark Museum.

An August, 1914, story reported that "a big well in the center of the Square has been completed." It was "45 feet deep, and 34 1/2 feet across," and "when filled, it will furnish all that Garland can use for the stores and for the livestock of customers."

The stage had been set for the public well in 1908 when the *News* story reported that city councilmen would discuss a "water trough" on the Square, using water from private wells near the Citizens National Bank on the Square's east side.

More change was coming. A 1909 story said the city council had voted to fence off a 50-foot court in the center of the square, equip it with hitching racks, and build a bandstand and install gasoline arc lights that would "burn all night." In the 1915 Landmark archival photo above, and others taken at the same time, there

is no sign of the bandstand, or the water well, though there appears to be a fence of some sort in the center of the picture where the crowd is gathered.

The photograph shows no evidence of water, but part of a fence is visible in the center of the crowd. It could mark a speaker's stand, though it is in the northern part of the Square, rather than at its center. At top right, an overhead tank can be seen above and behind the buildings on the Square's east side, and to the left of the water tower, there is a windmill.

The photograph above, and others taken about the same time, were acquired by Landmark about five years ago. Neither these photos or earlier photos in Landmark's collection show the bandstand or the well.

Hayslip says that City of Garland engineering employees during the massive 1976-1978 Square/Plaza construction project, including current City Manager Bill Dollar, confirmed that remnants of a concrete dome topping masonry walls of a cistern-like reservoir were exposed. The dimensions approximated those described in the 1914 newspaper story. That unexpected discovery delayed the project until the remains could be broken up and the hole filled.

Of historical interest: the white building at the end of the Square's east side, the City National Bank, later evolved into Nicholson Hall which housed city offices and the Garland Public Library.

Annual meeting is scheduled for April 2, 2012

Monday, April 2, 2012, has been set as the date for the annual meeting of the Garland Landmark Society, outgoing President Joan Nelson announced.

A slate of new officers will be chosen at the 7:30 p.m. meeting, with names to be offered by a nominating committee of board members Jay Jones, Bob Compton and Bob Dunn.

Current officers, in addition to Ms. Nelson, are Mike Hayslip, Vice President Development/Museum Affairs; Debbie Goldin, Corresponding Secretary; Wylene Taft, Recording Secretary; Mary Dingle, Treasurer,

and Bill Dickson, Curator. Ms. Dingle and Ms. Goldin are completing their first terms, and Mr. Dickson his second. Ms. Nelson, Mr. Hayslip, and Ms. Taft are completing their limited 3-year terms as officers in their positions, though they may be elected to other offices.

Society members also will have an opportunity to inspect substantial changes and additions to historical exhibits, and addition of new display cases and new items installed in the last few weeks. Planning and display of the exhibits has been led by Ms. Dingle, Ms. Taft, and board member Janice Black, under the supervision of Mr. Dickson.



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