

PEARLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Pearland Historical Society

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“Dedicated to preserving the history and heritage of “Old Pearland”

President's Message

In spite of **Hurricane Ike's** best efforts to sabotage our annual **Reunion Luncheon** by damaging **Pearland City Hall** so badly it had to be moved to the **Community Center** thus excluding the **Historical Society's** use on October 25th, the event turned out as great as always. Thanks to the **Pearland School District** for the use the cafeteria at **Pearland Jr. High West**. The facility was great and for some reason everyone seemed really upbeat at the luncheon. Maybe it was because we had 5 different classes being honored. Whatever it was, it was a great luncheon and everyone seemed to have a great time; and of course we all enjoyed the home grown apples **George Cates** brought from his orchard up in **Dudley, Missouri**. Every year our **Reunion Luncheon** seems to be more meaningful. With the population of **Pearland** nearing 100,000, the history of the little community we all knew and loved becomes more relevant. How many of you have been to the shopping center out in **Shadow Creek Ranch** just across Highway 288. It is called "**Pearland Town Center**". It is a beautiful shopping center with some great restaurants and neat shops. We ate at a restaurant there awhile back with our son and daughter-in-law: and I just kept thinking "and this is **Pearland**." But also to all of us older **Pearlanders** and for factual history, the center of **Pearland** will always be the intersection of Highway 35 and 518, **Broadway at Main**. Those of us old enough remember the old drugstore on one corner and the **Crossroads Inn** on the corner cattycornered across the intersection. By the way, if anyone has a photo of the **Crossroads Inn** we sure do need one for our files.

Congratulations to the **Pearland Oilers** football team for another great season. The **Oilers** compiled

a 13 – 1 record while advancing to the finals of their region before losing to **Hightower** high school of the **Fort Bend School District**. Which brings up another bit of **Pearland** history which has become somewhat distorted. When **Pearland High School** was started again in 1937 after 22 years of **Pearland** area high school age kids being bused to **Webster**, one of the new teachers, **Oleta Campbell** (later to become **Mrs. Lloyd Hawkins**) took a vote of the students to come up with a team name, team colors and the name of the school year book. Because **Pearland** was in sort of a mini oil boom with wells being drilled at **Hastings** and **Manvel**, the students voted that the athletic teams be called "**Oilers**". They voted the year book would be called the "**Gusher**"; and they voted the team colors would be **MAROON AND WHITE**. Today when you attend a **Pearland Oiler** game, you will see our football team decked out in black uniforms with a bit of maroon trim and the stands filled with students wearing T-shirts saying "**Black is back. Go Oilers.**" I keep threatening to get a T-shirt which says "**Send Black Back. Our colors are MAROON AND WHITE**" I know from conversations with graduates from the past that I am not alone on this.

I hope all of you had a great **Christmas** and 2009 (can you believe that) will be a happy and healthy year for all of our members. Mark **Saturday, October 24th**, on your calendars and plan to attend our annual **Reunion Luncheon**.

Mickey Mark

Don't forget our quarterly Historical Society meeting, Tuesday night, Jan. 20th at 7:00 P.M. at the Knapp Senior Center. Cookies, soft drinks, coffee and visiting with old friends follow the meeting.

Among Our Members

Society Member and early **Pearland High School** teacher, **Mrs. Oleta Campbell Hawkins** passed away December 9th at the age of 93. **Mrs. Hawkins** had lived alone in her home on **Grand Blvd.** until just a couple of months ago when she moved into a Nursing Home in **Katy** near her son, **Lloyd**. Our deepest sympathies go out to **Lloyd and Cheryl** on the passing of their Mother. **Oleta Hawkins** held a very special place in the hearts of many of us in the **Historical Society** who were privileged to have been one of her students back in the late 30's and early 40's.



Oleta Campbell Hawkins with son Lloyd and daughter Cheryl at a Reunion Luncheon

In 1937 **Pearland** had a brand new high school after 22 years of **Pearland** youngsters having to be bused to **Webster** due to the destruction of the **Pearland High School** in the hurricane of 1915. The newly hired **Superintendent B. B. Ainsworth** had the chore of hiring a complete staff for the new school of which the citizens of **Pearland** were rightly so proud. One of the teachers was **Oleta Campbell** who was hired to teach business training, business law, typing I and Spanish. Also hired was the first coach and science teacher, **Lloyd C. Hawkins**, who had been an outstanding football and basketball player at **Stephen F. Austin College**. **Oleta Campbell** had taught 2 years at **Lovelady High School** and by fate had returned to **Stephen F. Austin** to complete her major in business.

Upon their arrival in **Pearland** in the fall of 1937, **Oleta Campbell, Lloyd Hawkins** and other teachers were encouraged by **Superintendent Ainsworth** to initiate social activities for the students. **Oleta Campbell** and **Lloyd Hawkins** started dance classes in the old gymnasium. Former students often fondly recall learning to dance and dancing with **Oleta Campbell** and **Hazel Skinner (Muetz)**.

Oleta Campbell and Lloyd Hawkins were married June 11th, 1939 and except for the **WWII** years when **Coach Hawkins** was in the Navy and a year or so when they lived in **Vanderbilt, Texas**, the **Hawkins** maintained their home on **Grand Blvd.** in "**Old Pearland**". **Oleta Campbell Hawkins** will long be fondly remembered by all of her former students.

George William Warfield, father of **Society Member Greg Warfield**, passed away October 27th at the age of 94. Sympathies are extended to members **Greg and Kathy Warfield** and family.

Wanda Shannon Jamison had surgery to implant a new kneecap on December 1st. She was in **Methodist Hospital** for 3 days and then recuperated in **Windsong Village** in **Pearland** for a couple of weeks. **Wanda** reports the surgery went well. Please keep **Wanda** in your prayers. She has gone through a lot of pain in the last year and hopefully the new knee cap will give her a lot of relief.

Long time **Pearland/Manvel** resident **Lorraine Talbot** died December 20th of congestive heart failure and pneumonia after a lengthy illness. **Lorraine** was the widow of **George Talbot** and sister-in-law of **Historical Society Members Carl and Jennie Talbot, Pat Talbot Burkett and Fay Talbot Whatley**. Our sympathies go out to all of the **Talbot** family.

Long time **Pearland** resident **Melvin Triplett** passed away November 25th. **Melvin** was the son of **Dan and Vera Triplett**.



Melvin Triplett

Society Member Kathleen Childress Holt e-mailed the obituary of former Pearland girls basketball coach Carolyn Miller who passed away December 23rd. Many will remember Miss Miller for the great job she did coaching here in Pearland back in the 60's. Carolyn Miller had quite an athletic background. She was a 3 time all-American at Wayland Baptist College and won the national free throw shooting contest in 1959. She was a member of the USA Russian Tour, the World Tournament Team, played in the USA Pan American Games and in South America and was a member of the US Olympic Committee from 1967-1971. She was also in Wayland College's basketball hall of fame. Prior to her retirement in 1988 she taught and coached for 29 years in several Texas Institutions including Stephen F. Austin State University leading the SFA women's basketball team to their first State Title. Carolyn Miller had quite a career.

Some Good News

Society Member Delores Long Stevenson had hip replacement surgery on December 17th. It is good to report Delores is doing really well after the surgery. She finished therapy Jan. 8th and is back driving again. Way to go, Delores.

Danny Green, 1966 PHS grad and son of Society Member Nancy Green, was featured in a Houston Chronicle sports page story back in November. Danny has had a great career as track coach at the Woodlands High School. At the age of 60 Danny is the only boys cross country head coach The Woodlands and, formerly, McCullough High School, has had in its existence. He announced his retirement at season's end after 33 years at as head coach. During that span, Danny's teams won the district 31 times, regional 26 times and were state champions 14 times. In the story in the Chronicle, Danny was hoping to win one more time before his retirement. For the record, the

Woodlands did give Danny that 15th title. What a great career. Congratulations Danny, enjoy your retirement.

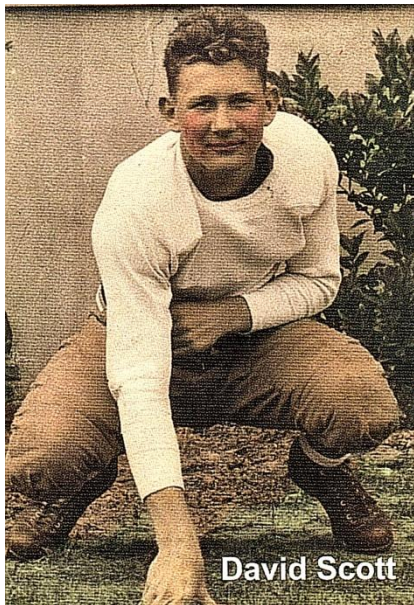
Congratulations to Society Member David Smith on the arrival of his 13th great grandchild. Luke MacFadden Davis arrived 10/29/08 weighing in at 8 lbs., 9 oz. His father is Terry David Davis, grandmother is Martha Smith Singleton. Aunt and uncles are Susan and Ben Lenamon and Leah and Dwight Bateman.

Pearland's oldest native born citizen, Historical Society Member Emma Jamison Wells turned 95 last November 1st. If you think Pearland has changed a lot over the years, just talk to Emma and ask her about what life was like back when she was a youngster living on the farm on Yost Road! She is always a joy to talk with and although life was hard back in her young days you always get the impression that growing up in a large family with a lot of daily chores left Emma with a lot of great memories.



Emma Jamison Wells – Pearland's Oldest Native Born Citizen

The oldest native born male citizen, Society Member David Scott will turn 89 on Jan. 18th. Those of you who attended Pearland Oiler football games this past season are aware that David is featured in a story in the program sold at the games. He is recognized as the person who scored the first Pearland Oiler touchdown in a game with LaMarque in the fall of 1937.



David Scott – 1937 Oiler

Dr. David Davis, of the **Pearland Reporter News**, put together the program which along with the story and picture of **David** also has a lot of **Pearland** football history in the program with pictures of the **Oiler** 6-man championship teams of 41, 47, 48 and the 11 man championship team of 1950. Also there are pictures of and stories about coaches **Lloyd Hawkins** and **Buck Brooks**. **Luther Cunningham** commented that the program, which sold for \$5 was better than the annuals back when he was in school.

Society Members **Peggy and Edwin Long** and **Joyce and Wayne Long** enjoyed **Corky Segelquist's** **Alco Tour to Branson, Mo.** over the Thanksgiving holidays. **The Long's** reported they had a great time and saw some good shows. **Corky** puts together some great tours.

I had some words with my wife and she had some paragraphs with me.

Sigmund Freud

Old Townsite Association

Many of you are aware that there is now a **Pearland "Old Townsite Association"**. The association was formed by **Kyler Cole**, who is an employee of the **Pearland Economic Development**

Corporation. Along with many other duties **Kyler** is the "**Old Townsite Co-coordinator**".



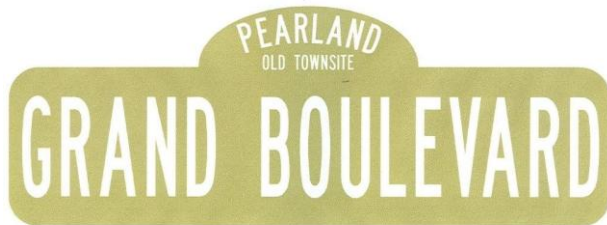
Kyler Cole – Old Townsite Co-coordinator

Kyler was raised in **Pensacola, Florida**. He is a graduate of **West Point**. He served six years in the **U.S. Army** with his last tour of duty being in **Afghanistan**. He was a captain. **Kyler** does have a connection with **Brazoria County**. His wife, **Shannon**, grew up in **Damon** (or as we oldtimers used to say "**Damon Mound**"). Also **Shannon's** great aunt and uncle, **Amelia and Alfred Lehring** lived in **Pearland** back in the 30's and 40's and are both buried in **South Park**. **Kyler** says he tried to find an address from old correspondence but back in those days mail just came to "**Pearland, Texas**". **Kyler** and **Shannon** have purchased a home in the **Southdown Addition of Pearland**. **Shannon** is an elementary school teacher in **Fort Bend County**.

Kyler has done a great job in forming the "**Old Townsite Association**". Even if you do not live in the old town site which is the area originally platted by **Witold Zychlinski** back in 1894 (**Orange to Walnut – north to south; Galveston to Austin – east to west**), you will find the meetings very interesting and informative about what is going on in "**Old Pearland**" and what is being planned for the future. The next meeting will be Thursday, February 5th, at 7:00 P.M. Location is undetermined at this time but e-mails will be sent out with the information. At the **December** meeting, **Danny Cameron, Public Works Director for Pearland** gave a very interesting report on current activities and future planed projects for the old townsite. **Danny** reported sidewalks would be poured along

Galveston and Plum (work is now completed), and alleys will be cleaned up. He also reported that the **Texas Dept. of Transportation (TXDOT)** is planning on proceeding with the widening of **Highway 35** (Main Street) from the **Beltway to Walnut** although starting time is still not known.

Kyler reported that approximately 130 “**Old Townsite**” street signs would be going up probably in about 2 months. Also “**Old Townsite**” monuments will be placed at the junction of **Broadway and Walnut** both on the east side and west side of “**Old Pearland**”. Local architect **Jack McGuff** has been commissioned to design the monuments.



New Street Signs for “Old Pearland”

Hunter Park Delayed

Kyler Cole also advised that work on **Hunter Park** has been set back to 2010 due to costs incurred by the City as a result of damages from **Hurricane Ike**. Our **Historical Society** will proceed with preparing documentation for a Texas State Historical Marker. The site of the park on **Orange Street** was part of the homestead of **Robert L. and Julia Martin Hunter**. **Robert L. Hunter** was the grandson of **Dr. Calhoun Hunter**, one of the original 300 in the **Moses Austin** settlement; so the property does have a very strong **Texas** historical background and should easily qualify for a **Texas Historical** marker. Currently **Pearland** has five **Texas Historical** markers – “**Old Settlers Cemetery**”, “**Old Depot**”, “**First Methodist Church**”, “**Original Pearland High School**” and “**Zychlinski Park**.”

It’s called “Pear-land” – not “Pearl un”

Doesn’t it irritate you when you hear someone on TV or radio talk about someone or something in **Pearland** and pronounce it Pearl-un with the emphasis on “Pearl”? **Society Member Tom Hunter**, up in **Denver, Colorado**, recently e-

mailed a very interesting thought about how to tell if someone is “one of us” – that is a true **Pearlander**. Here is **Tom’s** e-mail:

*“Several years ago, my mother called and said she had received a ballot in the **Pearland Historical Society Newsletter** requesting that members vote on whether **Pearland** should return to its original designation of **Pear Land**, because of the confusion over the pronunciation. She asked how she should vote. I asked her to vote for **Pearland**, because it served as a shibboleth.*

*“**Shibboleth** is defined as ”
‘a word or pronunciation that distinguishes people of one group or class from those of another’
and ‘a custom that betrays one as an outsider.’
(**Judges 12: 4-6**)*

*“In **The Book of Judges**, after the **Gileadites** had secured a passage over the **Jordan River**, they stopped each man and asked him to say the word **Shib' boleth**. The **Ephraimites** were apparently incapable of pronouncing the word properly, saying, **Sib' boleth--and were then put to the sword.***

While I don't support that extreme a measure, I do like the fact that you can tell immediately whether someone is "one of us; a member of the tribe; an oldtimer" or a "newcomer and outsider" by their pronunciation.”

Tom reported that one day while driving home he had turned on the radio and heard national radio host **Hugh Hewitt** reading an article from the **New York Times** written by **Dexter Filkins**, author of the book “**The Forever War.**” **Tom** said the first words he heard **Hewitt** read were “the men who fight **America’s** wars seem invariably to come from little towns and medium size cities far away from the nation’s arteries along the coast. Line up a group of marines and ask them where they are from, and they will give you a list places like **Pearland, Tex.; Lodi, Ohio; Osawatomie, Kan.**” **Hewitt** repeated the segment at the top of the hour and read the opening paragraphs of the article describing how **Lance Cpl. William Miller**, age 22 of **Pearland, Texas** was mortally wounded in the tower of a minaret in the **Battle for Falluja**.

Tom bought **Filkins’** book and sent copies of several chapters to me. The author and another

correspondent were embedded with a platoon of **U.S. Marines** including **Lance Corporal William L. Miller** of **Pearland**. Chapter 11 is entitled “**Pearland**”. In this chapter the author states, “Usually I would ask them where they were from. It was always some place I’d never heard of. **Pearland, Texas, Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, Starkville, Mississippi.**” **Filkins** wrote, “**Lance Corporal William L. Miller**, twenty-two, **Pearland, Texas**. The town made me think of pearls.” The **Marines** had cleared the insurgents out of **Falluja** after a very heated battle. The correspondents heard there was a dead insurgent on the 2nd floor of a building and wanted to go up and get a picture of the corpse. The **Marines** told him they would go up first to make sure all was o.k. **Billy Miller** went up first. As the **Marines** went up the stairs, a shot rang out. **Billy Miller** was killed.

The book is about the **Iraq** war and the men who fought in the war. The author carries a lot of guilt and self blame about the manner in which **Billy Miller** died. He tells of meeting **Billy’s** parents, **Susie and Lewis Miller** at a memorial ceremony in **North Carolina**. He was reticent about meeting them; but **Lewis Miller** told him, “We’re so grateful to you; if it weren’t for you, we would never have known how our son died”. He asked them about **Pearland**. “**Pear-land**”, **Lewis Miller** replied, “**Pear-land**. We’re known for our pears.”

It is **Pear-land**, not **Pearl-un**. We now know what a shibboleth is and **Dexter Filkins** knows how to pronounce **Pearland**; and even dedicated his book to **Pearland’s Billy Miller**.

Author’s Dedication

*To Kalid Hassan and Fakher Haider;
friends and colleagues who were killed
while looking for the truth, and
Lance Corporal William L. Miller,
who went first.*

(Editor’s Note: The memorial in **Zychlinski Park** has **Lance Corporal William Miller’s** name listed at the top of the monument.)



Lance Corporal William Miller

Ring around the Oak Tree

Have you ever noticed the big oak tree in the yard on the corner of **Grand Blvd.** and **Plum Street**. For those old enough to remember, it is in the yard of the house where the **John Watson** family lived for so many years back in the 30’s and 40’s. Thanks to **Society Member Carl Talbot** for the photo below and for relaying the story told to him by former **Pearlander Bruce Wall** who grew up in the old home on the corner of **Plum and Houston** as a neighbor to the **Watson’s**. **Bruce** recalled that the **Watson** family planted the a little oak tree and placed the steel wagon wheel rim around it for a flower bed border back in the late 30’s or early 40’s.. As the tree has grown through the years it has completely filled up the steel wagon rim and lifted it from the ground.



Next time you drive down **Grand Blvd.** or **Plum Street** take a look at the old oak tree. It’s not often you see a big tree with a wagon rim around it. Just a bit of “**Old Pearland**” trivia.



Friends Tea Room – Broadway

Do You Remember When?

Do you remember when the **Friends Tea Room** on **Broadway** was the home of **Jim DeLawder’s** father? It is always encouraging when the **Historical Society** has younger members who exhibit an interest in “**Old Pearland**”. One of those members is **Linda Eastridge Kinkade**. **Linda** is a 1982 graduate of **PHS** and has taken a very active interest in our **Society**. Back in **November Linda**, e-mailed asking for information on the **Friends Tea Room** on **Broadway**. She was planning a party at the **Tea Room** for her daughter **Sophie’s** 5th birthday. I knew the building was the home of **Jim DeLawder’s** father back in the 40’s but that was about all I knew. An e-mail to **Jim DeLawder’s** daughter, **Historical Society** member **Iona Mae DeLawder Walzel** in **Richmond**, uncovered a bit more information. **Iona Mae** said her grandfather built the house completely by himself and he was not a carpenter by trade and it took 2 or 3 years for him to build the house. **Iona** said her grandfather used some kind of varnish or shellac with linseed oil on the walls and they remained sticky as long as she could remember. **Linda** promised to touch the walls and let us know if they were still sticky when her daughter had the party. (They were not.) Long time **Pearlanders** will remember the **DeLawder** house on the corner of **Broadway** and **Houston** with **Jim’s** father’s house next door. Also on that block were the home of **Mr. & Mrs. Sam Scott (David’s** parents) and the house that sat on the corner where **Joan’s Beauty Shop** now sits. The story which went around about the elder **DeLawder’s** house was that it was built to resemble a ship because he had been a sailor. **Iona Mae** says as far as she knows her grandfather was never a

sailor, wasn’t much of a carpenter and just built the house in the simplest, easiest way he could. Thanks, **Linda**, for the nudge to find history of an old home; and thanks **Iona Mae** for the info. Many of the old homes in **Pearland** have interesting stories to tell.



Society Member Linda Eastridge Kinkade w/daughters Shelby (12), Sophie (5) and husband Brian who was salutatorian of 1982 PHS class and National Merit Scholar

A Look Back at the “Good Ole Days”???????

No doubt our country and the whole world are going through some rough economic times right now; but don’t you get a kick out of it when you hear or read people comparing these times to the great depression of the 30’s. We placed quite a number of “**Old Pearland**” family histories in the time capsule which is to be opened in 2057. Those who are comparing today’s economy to the depression days of the 30’s ought to read a few of those histories and they would quickly see that life today is far different than those “good ole days.” Also they would learn what it was like to live in **Pearland** and surrounding areas in those bygone days. Here are a few excerpts.

From **Carrie Ann Keith Mitchell’s** family history: **Carrie Ann** grew up out on **Stone Road** and says her recollections focus on **Pearland** “as to what it was really like ‘out in the country’”

Some of my earliest memories are my Dad and Mom and me milking cows by hand and putting the milk in a bottling machine (quart size jar) and my Dad driving every day into Houston delivering

the milk to his customers' door step. He would return with several 100 lb. blocks of ice to put in the large ice box to keep the 5 and 10 gallon stainless milk cans cold so the milk would stay cold until the next day's delivery. There were six dairies between Doherty Road and Stone Road that Borden Creamery started buying all the milk and cream available, so a delivery truck would pick up the milk cans and deliver to the creamery. When I was about 8 or 9 my family decided to change the herd of milk cows to beef stock and get away from having to milk twice a day 7 days a week. At that time Texas (Brazoria County) had an open range law that livestock could graze on any unfenced acreage. We herded the cattle to keep them from Cullen (Old Chocolate Bayou Road) so cars wouldn't hit them; and of course we penned them up at night. We grazed the land between Garden Road to the east, 518 (Broadway) to the south and Cullen to the west and Clear Creek to the north. We also raised hogs, chickens, turkeys, guineas, ducks and geese. We sold fresh turkeys (not frozen) to several grocery stores. My Mother would dress (feather, gut and clean) the turkeys where they would be ready to cook. We also sold chickens, ducks, and geese, fresh eggs and butter.

My fondest memory of Christmas excitement was going down to Clear Creek with my Dad and cutting a tree to decorate. I think back now, and it wasn't even a pretty tree by today's standard; but I was so excited. The other fond memory was seeing a high stepping horse and carriage driven by the butler of Mr. Bagnolli, who owned European Import Co. in Houston, coming Christmas eve, carrying several large baskets full of European cookies, candies, plum pudding, fruit, etc for each of the families in the area. He and his wife owned the largest and fanciest house in the area. I was so impressed. Now in 2007, it is nothing to see million dollar homes in the area.

And from Florence Jamison Gum's "Story of the Twelve Jamison Children"

"Our parents eked out a living by raising cattle, hogs, poultry and making hay. We had a large hay barn out back of the house near the cow lot. We had eggs and milk for family use, but also sold eggs and butter over the years to help out with the grocery bills.

"We had enough to eat, a few clothes to wear and even though our home did not have any modern conveniences (electricity, running water, air conditioning, fans, refrigerator, washing machine or telephone, our situation was like a lot of other families. We had an outdoor privy (toilet) some distance from the house. Without electricity, we used kerosene lamps for lighting. A wood burning heater kept us somewhat warm in the winter. Our mother and older sisters did the weekly wash, using tubs and a washboard. Wringing the wet wash by hand was quite a chore. The wash was then hung to dry on clotheslines, which were strung between trees.

"A fond memory is hog butchering time! Ah, fresh meat for the table. During the summer of 1932, Emma, Allen, Herbert, Quinton and Florence (when she was old enough) worked in the fig orchards and were paid seven cents for each 3-1/2 gallon bucket of magnolia figs we picked."

Even though almost all of the family histories in the time capsule tell of those hard scrabble times of growing up in the 20's, 30's and 40's, invariably the writers will comment that although the times were rough, they would not even think about trading their childhood days with kids of today. They recall the games they played with hand made toys, ice cream socials and yes, dancing lessons and dancing with **Oleta Campbell Hawkins** and **Hazel Skinner Muetz**. Won't the openers of the time capsule in 2057 be amazed?

Time to Pay Dues
Just a reminder that dues for 2009
became due on Jan. 1st. Dues are \$15
per year per member. Mail dues to
Pearland Historical Society, P.O. Box
1333, Pearland, Texas 77588

When you go into court, you are putting yourself in the hands of 12 people who weren't smart enough to get out of jury duty.

