

# PEARLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Pearland Historical Society

P. O. Box 1333

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Dedicated to preserving the history and heritage of "Old Pearland"

## President's Message

Here it is **January** again and another year has whizzed by. Where do these years go? Seems like only a short time ago and the national news media was talking about **Y2K** (The Year 2000) and how all the computers were going to malfunction and airlines would shut down, electrical grids would fail, etc.. If you remember in the early part of the year **2000 Home Depot** and **Sears** were deluged with people wanting to return the home generators they had purchased in anticipation of **Y2K**. And now here it is 2015 and 14 years have passed.

In those 14 years we have lost a lot of **Historical Society** members and old time **Pearlanders** – people who had contributed greatly to the community of **Pearland**. Each year at our **Reunion Luncheon** we light candles in memory of those who have passed away that year. . Further in the **Newsletter** is a list of those we lost in 2014. Our **Historical Society** really needs to pique the interest of "**younger Pearlanders**". Any ideas you might have to stimulate the interest of a younger group of **Pearlanders** would certainly be welcomed.

Our next regular meeting will be **Thursday, January 15<sup>th</sup>**, at our home site on **Galveston Avenue**. We are hoping to have **State Representative Ed Thompson** there to give us a brief update as to what is new this year in **Texas**.

The **State Legislature** will be in session at the time but **Ed** says he would probably be able to make the meeting to give us a briefing. Those on the e-mail list will get a notice about the meeting advising if **Ed** can be there.

**John D. "Mickey" Mark**

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## What's Happening?

Our **Reunion Luncheons** seem to get better as each year passes. The one last **October** was no exception. We had well over two hundred people at the luncheon; and the class of **1964** had an excellent turnout; and they seemed to really have a great time. If you would like to see a lot of great pictures of the luncheon, you can go to the **Pearland Historical Society Facebook** page and see the pictures taken and placed on **Facebook by Historical Society Member David DeHoyos**. **David** does a great job putting pictures on the site; and our thanks go out to **Ray Kliesing** for the job he does in maintaining the site. A few pictures are on page 8 of this **Newsletter**.

Our **Wednesday** night work group took a break for the holidays but will again be back on **Wednesday** nights working on various historical projects. Currently we are still working on a large map featuring roads named for old time **Pearland** families. Another project we will try to get started this year is a video disc of around

20 minutes or so which would be a synopsis of **Pearland** history. We would expect to have a disc for each one of the **Pearland** schools. In the last issue of the **Newsletter**, we mentioned two donations to our **Museum**. One was a hand sewn blouse made by **Jose Frankenberger Heflin** around **1915**. This donation was made by former **Pearland** school teacher **Bettye Wright**. The other donation was the donation of a baseball signed by all the **Pearland Little Leaguers** and a program from the **2014 Little League World Series** donated by **Rusty and Dawn Smjastrla**, parents of **Pearland Little League** player **Cole “Smash” Smjastrla**.

At the luncheon last fall, **Lloyd Hawkins** (member of class of **1964**) donated a football signed by members of the **PHS team of 1963**. The ball was presented to **Lloyd** by **Coach Jim Davis** because **Lloyd** had scored 4 touchdowns in **Pearland’s 82 – 0** victory over **Houston Lutheran**. Thanks, **Lloyd**.



**Lloyd Hawkins with football from 63 season**

Our luncheon next fall will be on **Saturday, October 24<sup>th</sup>**. We will be honoring the **class of 1965**. We need names and addresses of members of the **class of 65** so we can mail out invitations with prepaid return envelopes for response by around **mid-June**. If you know any names and addresses of members of **class of 65**, it would be appreciated if you would e-mail them to my e-mail address – [mark325@prodigy.net](mailto:mark325@prodigy.net)

Some of you are aware but our luncheons will no longer be at the **Community Center**. The **City**

**of Pearland** is going to remodel the **Center** to make it into office spaces. If you remember, back in **08** after **Hurricane Ike** we could not use the **Community Center** and had the luncheon in the cafeteria of **Pearland Jr. High West**. The school district is working with us for us to use a school district facility this year. We will be presenting the possible sites on the agenda of the next meeting **January 15<sup>th</sup>**.

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**Among our Members**

Long time **Pearlander** and **Historical Society** member **Claudia Martin** passed away **October 22<sup>nd</sup>** at the age of **95** just two days before our luncheon. We were all saddened to hear of **Claudia’s** passing; and we all knew that if possibly able **Claudia** would have been at the luncheon. **Claudia** was a person who could light up a room with her presence and with her quick wit. Our sympathies go out to daughters, **Charldine, Sandra, Brenda and Iva Darlene (Cookie)**. **Claudia** and husband, **Dude**, were near legends in the little community of **Pearland**. Our deepest sympathies go out to the family. She will be greatly missed.



**Claudia Martin**

We were saddened to hear that **Eren DeLange**, daughter of **Society Member Jacalyn Miller DeLange** passed away on **November 18<sup>th</sup>** at the home of her parents. **Eren** was **33** years old. Our sympathies go out to **Jacalyn** and family.

**Historical Society member Guy Bittick** passed away **December 1<sup>st</sup>**. **Guy**, a **1956, PHS** graduate had gone into the hospital for heart surgery. The surgery appeared to be successful; but **Guy** had a stroke during or shortly after and never regained consciousness. He was in hospice for about a week before passing away. **Guy** was the 2<sup>nd</sup> oldest of the 6 **Bittick** boys. Brothers, **Gene, Garland and Richard** preceded **Guy** in death. Brothers **Dwight and Sammy** both live here in **Pearland**. **Dwight** has done a lot of historical research for our **Society** and has come up with a lot of facts previously unknown. **Guy** was one of those persons whom you never heard a negative word – a really likeable fellow. He will be greatly missed. Our deepest sympathies go out to **Guy’s wife, Nancy** and to all the **Bittick** family. The **Bittick** family came to **Pearland** in **1953** (I believe). **Guy** was living in **Humble** at the time of his death. He was a regular at our **Reunion Luncheons**. The picture below was taken at a recent luncheon.



**Dwight (left) and Guy Bittick at Reunion Luncheon**

Longtime **Pearlander** and **Historical Society** member **Basil Cogbill** passed away **December 20<sup>th</sup>** at the age of **97**. **Basil’s** parents, **Stephen and Etta Cogbill** came to **Pearland** in **1930**. **Mr. Cogbill** established a stonemasonry and blacksmith shop near the corner of **Highways 35 and 518**. **Basil** took over the business and worked as a sheet metal fabricator until his retirement. **Basil** also served on the **City**

**Council** when **Historical Society** member **Dan Keller** was the mayor. At the time of **Basil’s** death, **Dan** sent the following e-mail:

*“ Basil served on city council when I was “The Youngest Mayor” and Aubrey Ellis was “The Youngest Councilman” in the state. Basil was the “Anchor” of the city council. He was always calm and collected. He shouldered the criticism of the most angry, most loud, most descending and most disruptive at council meetings. He was always the first to start and the last to leave the “D.I.Y.” projects we did like our work on building the council meeting room and adjoining first city jail. He was truly one of the “Devoted Souls” who wanted to see Pearland rise up from its Saturday night Cut and Shoot reputation and become a “Real City” in the face of seemingly overwhelming opposition that wanted to see it “stay as it is”.*

**Basil** had been in **Colonial Oaks Nursing Home** for about 5 years before his death. Our sympathies go out to **Steve and Elaine** and all the **Cogbill** family.



**Basil Cogbill**

**Society Member JoAnn Suttle Mark** passed away **January 8<sup>th</sup>**. **JoAnn**, who had been in a nursing home for a year or so recently fell and broke both of her hips. She went into hospice in **Pleasanton, Texas** a short time ago. **JoAnn** was

preceded in death by husband **Roy D. Mark**, last **May** and by her son **Roy Suttle Mark** about 4 years ago. She is survived by daughter **Glenda Mark Martin** and family, **Pleasanton, Tx.** and son **Boyd Mark** and family, **Indialantic, Florida.** **Roy and JoAnn** were regular attendees at our annual **Reunion Luncheon**



**JoAnn Suttle Mark**

Several other long time **Pearlanders** or ex-**Pearlanders** passed away over the last several months.

Longtime **Pearlander Wilma Wilson Notheis Koob** passed away **November 15<sup>th</sup>**. **Wilma** was the **Mother of Wayne, Jimmy and Elaine Wilson and Walter (deceased).** **Wilma** was another one of those persons about whom everyone spoke the highest. A really nice lady. **Wilma** had been under the care of **Wayne's** oldest daughter, **Tracy Wilson Turner**, for the past 3 years. Our sympathies go out to all the **Wilson** family.

Long time **Pearlander Doris Hosmer** passed away **November 23rd** at the age of **94.** **Doris** was a **Lieutenant** serving in the **Army Nurse Corps** during **WWII.** She had retired from

**Alvin Hospital.** She is survived by daughter **Barbara Hosmer Smith** and by her son **Gary Hosmer** and their families.



**Doris Hosmer**

Former **Pearlander Harold "Happy" Williams** passed away the day before **Thanksgiving.** Although **Hap** had lived in **Alvin** for many years, many of our **Historical Society** members will remember **Hap** from his school days at **PHS.** Although he didn't finish high school, he was in the class of **1951.**

Another former **Pearlander** whom many of our members will remember quite well, **William "Bill" Perdue**, passed away **December 1<sup>st</sup>** in **Ingram, Texas.** **Bill** was **78** years old and was a retired **Captain** in the **Houston Police Department.** He went to school in **Pearland** in the **50's**, but graduated from **Pasadena High School** in **1954.**

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Society member **Brenda Martin Riggs** retired from her position with the **Pearland Independent School District** effective **January 1<sup>st</sup>**. At the time of printing our Newsletter, we didn't have all the information about how long **Brenda** had worked for the school district and how many different positions she had held during all those years. We will have additional information in the next issue of the **Newsletter.**

Brenda served as secretary of our **Historical Society** for many years. Enjoy your retirement, **Brenda**; and here's wishing you a long and healthy retirement.



**Brenda with current Secretary – Karen Kliesing**

### **Looking Back**

Earlier we mentioned how the years whiz by and how it seems as if **Y2K** were just a year or so ago. In thinking about honoring the graduating class of **1965**, fifty years ago, don't you imagine those members of the class of **65** will be all abuzz about how 50 years have flown by and how **Pearland** and the world has changed in those 50 years? It is interesting to go back and read old **1964 and 65** issues of the "**Pearland Progress**" which are at our **Historical Society** site to try to find what was going on in **Pearland** and the world the year our honored guests were graduating from high school – **1965**.

Here are just a few things to think about. The first thing we all talk about is how **Pearland** has changed, how much we have grown and how bad the traffic is now as compared to 50 years ago.

In **1960** the population of **Pearland** was **1497** and in **1970** it had grown to **6444**; so one would imagine the population in **1965** was around **3500**. Fifty years later we are well over **100,000**.

Previously we mentioned **Lloyd Hawkins** had donated an autographed football from a game where the **1963 Oilers** beat **Houston Lutheran 82 – 0**. The **63** team had a record of **9 wins and 2 losses**. The team of 1964 (65 grads) unfortunately had a season of **3 wins, 6 losses and one tie**. The **Oilers** defeated **Klein, Tomball and Santa Fe** and tied **Sweeny**.

**Mayor of Pearland** in **1965** was **John Kegley**. In **April of 65** **Victor Nolen, Joe Dan Calvin and Basil Cogill** were the winners in the race for **City Council**. **Vic Nolen** polled 132 votes, **Joe Dan Calvin** 203 and **Basil Cogbill** 164.

Elected to the **Pearland School Board** were **Dr. Freddy Cessac, H. D. "Buck" Johnston and H. L. Freidrich**.

Something the grads of **65** had to look forward to was not a pleasant thought – "the war in **Vietnam**". The first **U.S.** combat troops arrived in **Vietnam in 1965**. By the end of the year **190,000 U.S.** troops were in **Vietnam**. It would be interesting to know how many of our 65 grads were drafted or volunteered for service during the **Vietnam War**. I know we had some **Pearlanders** killed in **Vietnam** but cannot recall any names except **Terry Knight**. Can anyone help?

The **Reverend Martin Luther King** led the march in **Selma, Alabama** in **1965** where more than **2600** were arrested during demonstrations against voter rules.

A few more interesting facts from 1965.

*U. S. Federal debt - \$118.23 billion  
(Isn't our debt now around 18 trillion?)*

*Unemployment in the U.S. – 5.2%*

*Cost of a first class stamp – 5 cents*

*Avg. cost of a new home in U.S. - \$21,500.00*

*Avg. cost of a gallon of gas – 31 cents  
(Probably more like 24 cents in Pearland)*

*Cost of a dozen eggs – 53 cents per dozen*

*Cost of a gallon of milk – 95 cents.*

*Of course things didn't seem so cheap back in 1965 since the average yearly wage was \$4658.72*

*Another topic often discussed among the coffee group is the astounding salaries of major league athletes in today's times. Another interesting stat is that the average major league baseball salary in 1965 was \$17,000 per year.*

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*Some Thoughts from Will Rogers*

*“Never slap a man who's chewing tobacco.”*

*“Never miss a good chance to shut up.”*

*“The quickest way to double your money is to fold it and put it back in your pocket.”*

*“Lettin the cat out of the bag is a whole lot easier than putting it back.”*

*“Good judgment comes from experience and a lot of that comes from bad judgment.”*

### **21<sup>st</sup> Year for the Newsletter**

We are now into the 21<sup>st</sup> year of the publication of your **Pearland Historical Society Newsletter**. The first **Newsletter** was written in **June, 1994**. At the time **Susan Smith Lenamon** was president of the Society. First vice president was **Peggy Farthing Long**; 2<sup>nd</sup> vice president was **Thelma Blau**; Treasurer was **Alta McCormick Carbone**; Secretary was **Juanita Stone Sutherland**.

It is both interesting and somewhat sad to read the old editions of the **Newsletter** and read the interviews and stories from long time **Pearlanders** who are no longer with us. The first edition contains an interview with **Josie Frankenberger Heflin**. At the time **Josie's**

home was still where the historic oak tree on **Main St.** still stands. In her lifetime **Josie** had seen our country go from horse and buggy, to trains and airplanes and to astronauts walking on the moon. She said that she thought the best things that ever happened in **Pearland** were getting electricity in 1925 and natural gas in the 30's.

In an interview with **Lois Hunter Bundy** for the **October, 1994 Newsletter**, she was asked what were her best memories of early **Pearland** life. Her reply was that it was of her Father's return from his once a month wagon and team all day jaunt into **Houston** to **Henke and Pillot** to pick up groceries and supplies. She and little brother **“Billy”** would be watching and waiting as **“Papa” (Mr. Lee Hunter)** drove up in the wagon because they knew he would have a stick of peppermint candy for the children and a big stick of bologna for his wife, **Julia**.

Also in that issue in the **“President's Message”** **Susan** commented that the annual luncheon was superb with great weather and a good time by all. She further commented that **Josie Heflin** was the oldest native **Pearlander** in attendance and **Peggy Long's** new grandson, **Michael Bates**, was the youngest.

In the **April, 1995** issue the **“Member Spotlight”** was on **Mary Lee Smith Miller** who had recently moved from her home on the corner of **Orange and Austin Streets** to **Holly Hall** where she still resides today. As most of you are aware, **Mary Lee** had her **104<sup>th</sup>** birthday last **August 22<sup>nd</sup>**.

In the interview, **Mary Lee** reminisced about growing up on a ranch west of **Chocolate Bayou** road and riding horseback with water up to the belly of the horse from the **Smith** home to where the present **Harrisburg State Bank in Houston** now stands.

One thing **Mary Lee** stated in the interview which new comers to **Pearland** will find hard to believe was that when she and **Jack Miller** married in **1935** they moved into the house **Jack** had built for them on the corner of **Orange and**

**Austin** and thinking about how far out in the country they were with nothing but bare prairie with no trees in sight.

In 1995 the interview with **Roy “Dude” Martin** took up two **Newsletters** to cover all the memories **Dude** had of early **Pearland** days. One thing in **Dude’s** interview was really shocking. Although he and **Claudia** had five children, **Dude** was drafted into the **Navy** during **WWII**. While in the **Navy**, **Dude** and several of his shipmates were given the duty of appearing in the background of a movie named “**Stars and Spars**” starring **Janet Blair**. **Dude** and his shipmates were filmed hoisting the hero onto their shoulders while his companions were singing “**For he’s a jolly good fellow.**” **Dude** said the movie was released about the time he got out of the **Navy**; and he and **Claudia** and kids went to see it several times. Each time the hero was hoisted on his companions’ shoulders, the kids would all shout out “**there’s Daddy.**”

Another interesting interview was with **Jewel Haskins Benes**. Many of you certainly remember the **Benes** dairy out west on **518**. A lot of our members also probably had **Jewel** as a teacher. After growing up on the **Haskins** dairy farm further out **518**, **Jewel** went to college and got her teacher’s certificate. Her first teaching job was in 1938 teaching at the “**Latin American**” school in the little white school building which sat back from the road a bit from where **Tunney’s** lawnmower shop sat. **Jewel** said she spoke no **Spanish** at the time; but she had no problems and the children all learned **English** very quickly.

Many of us old timers often talk (complain) about all the traffic we now have in **Pearland**. In the interview, **Jewel** told of her husband, **Joe Benes**, one day going to the dentist in **Alvin**. He didn’t have a ride home, so he decided to start walking. **Joe** walked all the way to **Pearland** without a car passing him and then almost to his home (3 miles west of Highway 35) before a car finally came along and picked him up. Today when you see cars lined up back to back for

miles on **518** it is hard to even imagine someone walked from **Alvin** and then out west another two miles before a car even passed him. How times have changed.

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**DAFFYNITIONS**

***Adult:** A person who has stopped growing at both ends and is now growing in the middle.*

***Chickens:** The only animals you eat before they are born and after they are dead.*

***Beauty Shop:** A place where women curl up and dye.*

***Secret:** Something you tell to only one person at a time.*

***Egotist:** Someone who is usually me deep in conversation.*

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**Just a reminder. Historical Society yearly membership dues became due on January 1<sup>st</sup>. Please see the membership form at the end of this Newsletter.**

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**Don’t forget our quarterly Historical Society Meeting Thursday night, January 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 P.M. at our Historical Society home on Galveston Ave. As usual homemade cookies, Coffee and cold drinks and visitation follow the meeting. See you there.**

**A Few pictures from the Luncheon**



**Suzanne O'Day Elliott, Jayne Ann Miller and Connie O'Day**



**Carolyn Garner McCoy and Dixie Farthing Kowis handing out badges**



**Marilyn Harris Bullard, Jackie Martin, Helen & Luther Cunningham**



**Class of 64 members Terry McGowen, Ron Harpole and Ronny Burkett**



**David Scott and Luther Cunningham preparing for candle lighting ceremony.**



**Wayne Wilson & Mike O'Day**



**Lunch is served – foreground is Marvin Wisely and daughter Janice.**



**Tommy Hunter lighting candle in memory of his Mother, Veora Hunter.**



**Peggy Long with daughter Lisa DeHoyos – welcoming luncheon guests.**



**Standing in line for lunch**



**We filled the Community Center**

**MEMBERSHIP FORM - - - - PEARLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ covering membership dues of \$15 per person for the following persons for the year 2015. Is this a gift membership?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Cash Payment \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

e-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

**Note: Dues paid in the last quarter of the year cover the following year:**

**Mail to: Pearland Historical Society, P.O. Box 1333, Pearland, Texas 77588**

**Please note: If you are paying for a gift membership, please give the name and address of the person who presenting the gift so we can notify the recipient.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



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