

Awardees 2013

Collin McKinney Achievement Award

Chestnut Square Historic Village – Pat Rodgers and Terri Monk

In 2011 The Heritage Guild of Collin County received a grant from Collin County Historical Commission to develop a trolley tour of McKinney's Historic District. The purpose of the tour was to share McKinney's history and historic architecture with the citizens of McKinney and visitors to McKinney. Pat Rodgers, the Heritage Guild of Collin County board chairperson, developed the tour route, investigated the history of the stops along the way and developed a script for the tours. She recruited docents to lead the tour and created large reproductions of pictures of the structures on the tour as they were in the 1800's

Tours start at Chestnut Square and are held on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month at 11 a.m. In 2012, 250 people took the trolley tours throughout McKinney's Historic District.

In 2012, Terri Monk, the educational director for Chestnut Square, created a second script for a trolley tour of Historic McKinney. The audience for this tour was schoolchildren. It is a shorter tour and focuses more on the history of the early businesses in McKinney. Midway through the tour, a stop at Goodies Texas, a downtown treat shop allows children to learn about the inside of the historic downtown drugstore and buy an old-fashioned treat. The tour is offered to home school groups, private schools, scout groups and parties by reservation. Thank you to Pat Rodgers and Terri Monk.

Excellence in Historical Education

Rebecca Hunter

Rebecca Hunter's creative ideas along with Judy Rucker's led to an educational curriculum unit that would not just benefit Prosper's rich history, but also one that could be used or adapted in many other Collin County school districts. The 20 page self guided curriculum was written and first presented in 2012. It was created as an introduction to younger elementary aged classes as a "traveling exhibit" on cotton and its history in Collin County. Real Texas cotton bolls, old farm tools used for harvest, along with working field instruments and home sewn historical costumes are all part of this portable exhibit called "King Cotton". Rebecca was responsible for collecting many of the items displayed and used in this program.

Rebecca was the leading writer, researcher, developer, trainer, and coordinator of this outstanding classroom presentation. Along with the written guide, she also developed a PowerPoint presentation as part of the curriculum. In addition, Rebecca recruited and motivated over a dozen volunteers who would become the docents to this classroom program. Once the volunteers were organized into teams, she continued on her path of excellence by ensuring that the volunteers would be properly equipped with hands-on training and classroom management tips. The traveling trunk with the "King Cotton" curriculum was presented to 17 different 3rd grade elementary classes made up of 375 young county residents last year.

Without Rebecca Hunter, the heritage of Prosper's rich cotton history could not have been preserved and imparted with such excellence. Her impact on younger generations of Collin County residents has and will continue to be immeasurable.

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Leadership in Preservation Award

Guillermo Alvarez

Guillermo Alvarez is a brilliant preservationist specialist. Some of the buildings that he worked on were the Farmersville Feed and Seed, the Farmersville Times building, the May building, The French Bunny and Main Street Antique building. Because of Guillermo Alvarez, the lovely town of Farmersville is being restored to its nineteenth century beauty.

His most recent preservation work was the replacement of 1865 cypress siding on the 1865 Bain Honaker House. Alvarez knew only one source for the expensive wood; a man in the Louisiana swamps whose cypress was at least 100 years old had been in 18 inches of water all that time. He matched the wood on the Bain Honaker House precisely and dealt with attention only a lover of these antebellum beauties could do. Guillermo knew of the budget constraints and constantly worked with the Farmersville Historical Society to cover costs, delay costs, shave costs, whatever was needed to be done to assure an excellent job. He consistently displayed character and integrity throughout the project. Guillermo is now the resident preservation specialist who continues to work on the Bain Honaker House. He just finished putting piers on our north side to keep the porch from falling off, totally replaced a parlor window and surrounding area that had rotten beyond repair and is now beginning work on the soffit around the north side of the house. Also Guillermo has done extensive work for Bob Heath in Wylie's downtown historical quarter. He is certainly a proficient in his preservation work.

Living Legacy Award

Peggy Mitchell and Dorothy Mitchell Johnston have rich roots in Collin County.

Peggy and Dorothy work every day on cataloging and organizing their collections, which are housed in the Mitchell House, the Wetsel House and in Dorothy's home in Plano.

Peggy lives in her original family- the Mitchell House, which is built in the shape of a cross with two identical porches on the east and west sides.

Born ten years apart they received their education and graduated from Plano High School in downtown Plano in 1938 and 48, respectively. They are lifetime members of the First Christian Church of Plano where they have served as teachers and historians. They have maintained the archives for the church and are frequently asked to display this rich history as they did during the 150th anniversary of the Church and the Collin County Historical Commission's Preservation Celebration in 2010.

Peggy has worked as a window designer for Neiman Marcus for 16 years. She traveled all over the world and collected pre-Columbian artifacts that are in the Mitchell House. She has taken candid photos of life growing up in 1940's Plano which have been featured in several local authors' books. In addition Peggy Mitchell was Chairman of the Summervale County Historic Commission while living in Glen Rose, Texas. She and her husband bought the Inn on the River and converted the former hospital on the Brazos River to a 19 room Bed and Breakfast. Today it is a registered Texas Historic Landmark. Dorothy Mitchell Johnston served as a draftswoman in World War II and could draw anything in detail to scale. Dorothy worked in the oil and gas fields and collected early maps like the 1800s Collin County map with the original landowners throughout the state.

Both Peggy and Dorothy were instrumental in organizing the Historic Landmark Commission in Plano in the 1980's. The Mitchell family bought the Wetzel House from Plano and saved it from demolition. Both sisters worked diligently to organize and designate the Haggard Park Historic District and have influenced public artworks in Haggard Park. The sisters are cat lovers and native plant enthusiasts, and Peggy is an artist.

These charming ladies continue to preserve their family home, the old barn, garage and the Wetzel House, picking up debris from the yard and painting to keep the weather from deteriorating the wooden structures. They continue to be called upon to provide old photos and expertise when projects arise by the City of Plano, the Parks and Recreation Department or the Library. The sisters have contributed immensely to the Cox School Museum.

Peggy Mitchell and Dorothy Mitchell Johnston are Living Legacies.

Young Visionaries Award

Annalisa Erder

Annalisa Erder has been a dedicated volunteer at the Heritage Farmstead Museum for over four years. She has been a camp counselor for several of the Farmstead's summer camps, has been a docent and tour guide for children's tours, and special events.

Annalisa was the Historian and New President of the Museum's Apprentice Program, a project based program for middle and High School student to volunteer at the Farmstead and take on leadership roles.

Annalisa has received several honors in High School. She has been a member of Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society at Richland College since the 11th grade and is now member of Mu Alpha Theta Math Honors Society. Also she performed leading roles in theater at John Paul II High School and was on the High School Forensics Team. Annalisa will be graduating from Richland Collegiate High School this spring and has already earned 70 hours of college credit from Richland College.

Annalisa will start at Texas A&M University in the fall, majoring in nutritional sciences. She then plans to attend optometry school and work in the field. Her interest in optometry was furthered when she learned Ammie Wilson had cataract surgery in the 1920s and lost an eye. She plans to help others maintain ocular health in order to foster future generations.

Other Nominees for the Preservation Celebration Awards 2013

Caleb Eichenberger-Gay Young Visionaries Award has been a part of the Cemetery Association of Murphy annual Memorial Day observances. Since the events inception, Caleb has masterfully and poignantly played “Taps” at the end the Memorial Day programs that honor the veterans buried in the historic Decatur-Maxwell-Murphy Cemetery.

Caleb has played his trumpet with the Plano East marching band, and wind ensemble. Also he is active the Canyon Creek Presbyterian youth choir and the Dixieland Jazz Band. Caleb will graduate from Plano East Senior High School this spring and will be going off to the University of Arkansas this fall. He still plans to return to play taps for future Memorial Day observances at the cemetery.

Steve Hoegger Leadership in Preservation Award In 2012 the Foote Chapel at Historic Chestnut Square Village was in dire need of a good, solid coat of paint. The bids that came in for the Chapel were prohibitive. Steve Hoegger and Associates made a bid of over \$47,000. This included stripping and sanding all paint down to the wood, replacing rotted wood, priming multiple coats and brush painting the entire exterior. After submitting the bid, Steve Hoegger authorized a donation of \$28,500 to make the job a possibility. His crew of ten descended on the Chapel and made it look brand new. Mr. Steve Hoegger through his skilled employees and monetary contribution to the Heritage Guild of Collin county has shown his dedication and not only to the history of Collin County but to doing historic restoration the right way.

Jim and Betty Hughes Leadership in Preservation Award Jim and Betty Hughes serve on committees which meet with the Prosper City Council members to encourage the town leaders to preserve and renovate the Prosper historical downtown district. As members the Prosper Historical Society, they have led the group as it has created a museum in the Prosper Independent School District’s Administration Building where documents, artifacts, and photographs about Prosper’s history are displayed. Jim and Betty diligently and graciously remind city government and community leaders of the importance of preserving houses, building and other sites in Prosper. Jim and Betty Hughes offer many services to Prosper. They are active members in the Prosper ex Student Association, and help organize and support Prosper Five 0 an organization that assists senior citizens. Since the celebration of Prosper’s Centennial in 2000 both have led the Preservation for the History of Prosper. Both serve as leaders in Prosper United Methodist Church and help take care of the Walnut Grove Cemetery. Jim and Betty’s contributions to the Prosper Historical Society Museum serve as examples of their dedication to the preservation of Prosper’s heritage. Betty maintains notebooks that contain letters, newspaper articles and family mementos. Whenever former resident return to town for a visit, Betty opens the museum at any hour for them and allows them to reminisce as they enjoy the exhibits. At community events Jim and Betty man a booth for the Historical Society and collect items to add to the museum during the year.

On May, 2011 on Prosper’s Founders’ Day, Jim Hughes received the award for Prosper’s Outstanding Citizen. He and Betty exemplify all this award implies. They are well

known for their work in preserving historical facts and working to preserve historic buildings and homes in Prosper.

Cindy Johnson Living Legacy Award Cindy Johnson has lived in McKinney since 1994. In 1998, while at TI, she became a board member at the Heard Natural Science Museum and Wildlife Sanctuary. During her nine years on the Heard board of directors she served as Treasurer, Vice Chair and Board Chair. Since 2007 she accepted the Executive Director of the Heritage Guild of Collin County.

Cindy has a strong business philosophy. First she believes history is approachable which has led to the development of strong education programs including out reach to local schools, trolley tours of McKinney's historic living history events, and events built around McKinney's past such as the Ice Cream Crank-Off. Second, Cindy believes that places like Chestnut Square should be a major asset to the community. In 2012 10,000 hours of volunteer were logged and \$99,000 in Community Development was funded in 2012. Third, Cindy believes non-profits with viable missions can be financially self supported. As a result the wedding rental business uses the historic Foote Chapel and Bevel House Reception Center. The Farmers Market makes use of the grounds and is the number two market of its size in Texas. Living history event and the prairie Adventure Camps use the grounds. Finally, Cindy believes in mission forward thinking. That is why she stepped forward and took on the Doc and Clyde's Ice Cream Freezer Exhibit (the largest in the world according to the Guinness Book of World Records).

William Jowers Leadership in Preservation Award William Jowers has served the Cemetery Association of Murphy since 2008. He is noted most for his willingness to handle the complete set-up and take down of equipment, awning, chairs, tables, water coolers, etc for the annual Memorial Day observances held at the Decatur-Maxwell-Murphy Cemetery. William has made fence and stone repairs, and has been on site multiple times to direct youth group volunteers in clean-up projects. During the fall bulb-planting events at the Cemetery, William has hauled the many bags of soil and mulch needed to apply in front of markers so planting could take place. Besides set-up of the events William Jowers has read appropriate patriotic poems at the annual Memorial Day program, and served as emcee when he was the president of the Association. Members of the Murphy Association refer to him as "Director of Maintenance" which is based on his dedication to the preservation of the Decatur-Maxwell-Murphy Cemetery.

Tom Keener Excellence in Historical Education Award is known as "our local historian" who has spent countless hours interviewing long time residents and families of the Allen area. Tom was instrumental in collecting family photos which are the framework of the Allen Heritage Guild's collection. He has done endless research in the County archives to learn about Allen's history—he even has a book started on the History of Allen, and many of his historical stories can be found on the pages of the *Allen Image* magazine.

During the past few years Tom has served as the Cultural Arts Director of the Allen Public Library. Citizens of Allen have been entertained with a Russian concert pianist, Native American folk dances and the daughter of Roy Rodgers and Dale Evans. History lessons seem to be his "stock in trade." Tom Keener has brought history to life with the

Tuskegee Airmen and recently the History of the Passover. Also he wrote and researched the City of Allen's Tales of Allen video series with cameo appearances

Claudia Kraemer Excellence in Historical Education Award Claudia Kraemer has been active in the Heritage Association of Frisco for many years. She is an expert genealogist and she teaches classes so others can learn about their lineage. Claudia is also a media and graphics expert whose contributions to the organization and museum in this area include making graphics that beautifully and professionally explain the exhibits at the museum. She also interviews area persons and records their histories for the Heritage Collection. She spent a year and hundred of hours formulating decades of historical media and cataloging and organizing the collection of over 60 historical stories so that they are properly preserved for future generations.

Gwen Bloomquist Neumann Living Legacy Award In 1970 Gwen Neumann became an organizing member and first President of the Collin County Genealogical Society which not only serves local members, but genealogists across the U.S. with roots in Collin County. She has assisted others by presenting numerous talks and workshops across Collin County on topics ranging from "Beginning Genealogy" to "Courthouse Research." Gwen helped preserve local records by surveying cemeteries, transcribing county records and submitting them to CCGS' *Collin Chronicles: Records of Collin County Texas* where it resides online. Further, under Gwen's leadership as the Book Committee Chairperson and taking advantage of her fundraising expertise, CCGS has donated more than \$150,000 (equaling more than 10,000 books, microfilm, periodicals, maps and other items) to the Genealogy, Local History, Texana, Archives department of the Plano Public Library.

Gwen was the organizing President of the Collin McKinney Chapter of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, and a charter member of Plano's Mary Shirley McGuire Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. and served on the Collin County Historical Commission. She co-authored the first five volumes of Revolutionary War Period Bible, Family and Marriage Records Gleaned from Pension Applications, 1981-1984, and four books of Dallas County history. Gwen Neumann has been a leader, volunteer, fundraiser, researcher, author and mentor to countless many for more than 40 years in Collin County..

Mitchell Shepherd Young Visionaries Award in 2013 has spent over 13 hours and over 6 weeks every Saturday morning working in the yard raking leaves, and cleaning the porches for the residents at the Heritage House, an Assisted Living home at 17th Street and H Ave. in Haggard Park Historic District in Plano. Twenty bags of leaves have been collected so far and there are future plans for painting.

Mitchell is an 8th grader at Schimelfening Middle School and is in all honors classes. He is a member of the National Junior Honor Society, runs track and plays saxophone in the Wind Ensemble.

