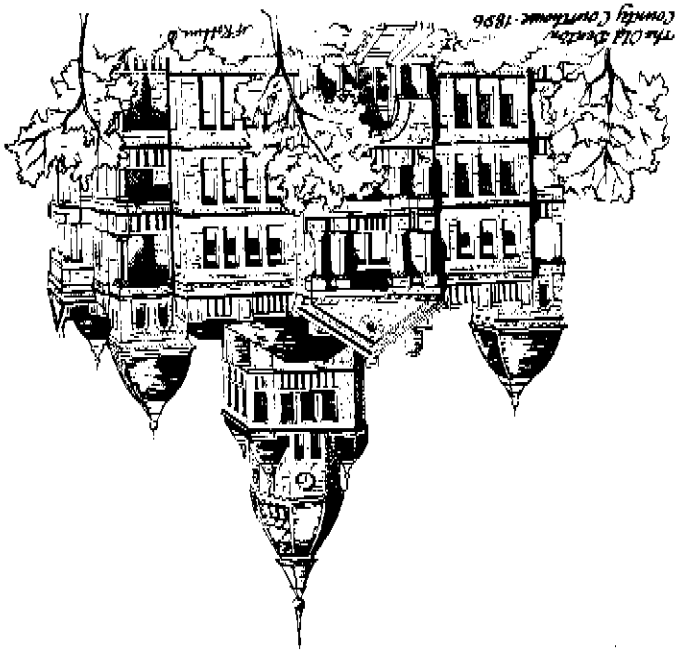
The Courthouse on the Square, Denton County, Texas, constructed of limestone taken from a quarry north of the city, was completed in 1897. The Commissioners Court, acting as their own general contractor and hiring day laborers during the 1893's depression were able to build it for $179,000. Protected as an historical structure by the Texas Historical Commission and National Register of Historic Places, its functional and sentimental value would be difficult to estimate. Restored to its original grandeur by a bond issue (1985-87), the building now houses the administrative branches of government and the Denton County Historical Museum, Inc.

Stamp

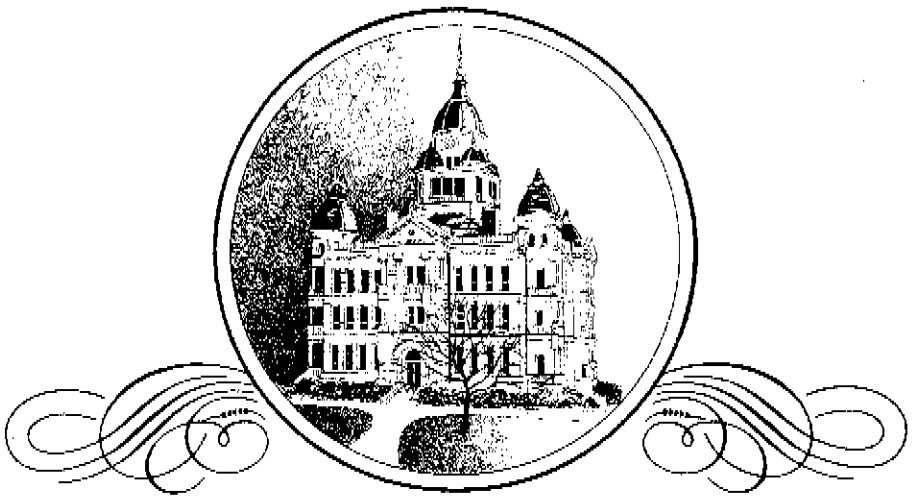


Courthouse on the Square

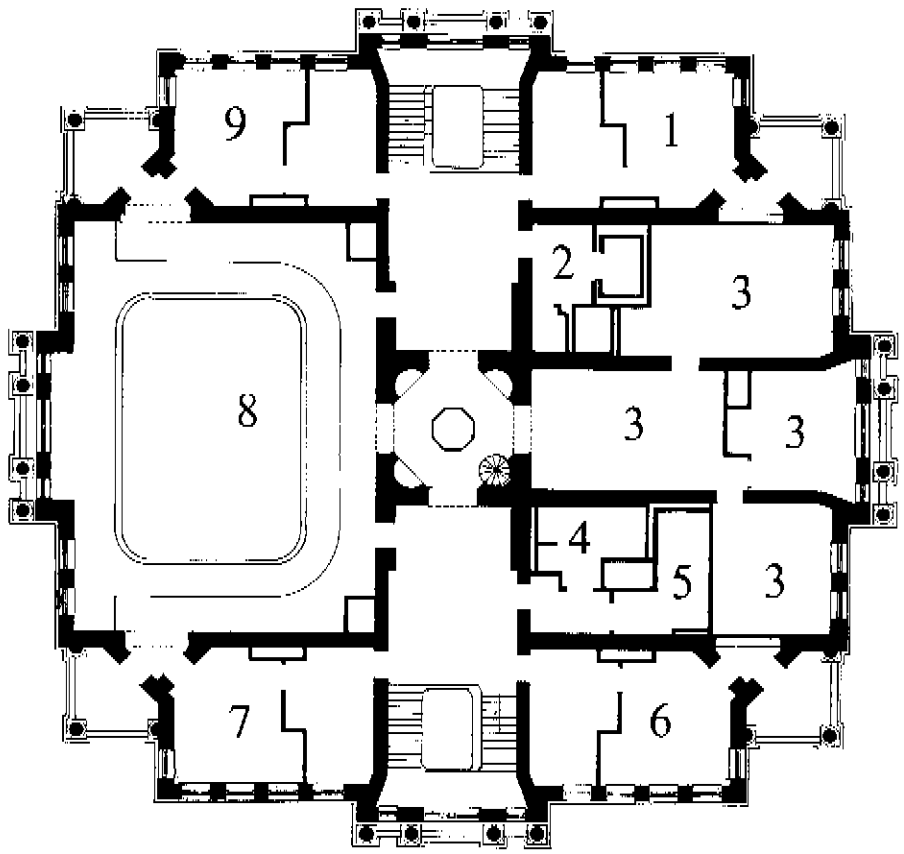
In late 1894, a flashing streak of lightning struck the original courthouse erected on the Square, which led to eventual condemnation of the structure. Architect W. C. Dodson and contractor Tom Lovell completed this structure in 1896 at a cost of $179,000.00. The three story structure has walls of tan quarry-faced sandstone in ashlar pattern with column shafts of pink granite from Burnett. As projects of the Denton County Historical Commission, the structure received the Texas Historical Commission marker in 1970 and was accepted for the National Register of Historic Places in 1977. Its functional and sentimental value today would be difficult to estimate.

Martha F. Robbins · 1423 Oakland, Denton, Texas 76201

Denton County Courthouse-on-the-Square



1896-1987



Third Level

1. Commissioner Precinct 2
2. Elevator
3. Commissioners Court Services
4. Men's Room
5. Women's Room
6. Commissioner Precinct 3
7. Commissioner Precinct 4
8. Court Room Gallery
9. Commissioner Precinct 1

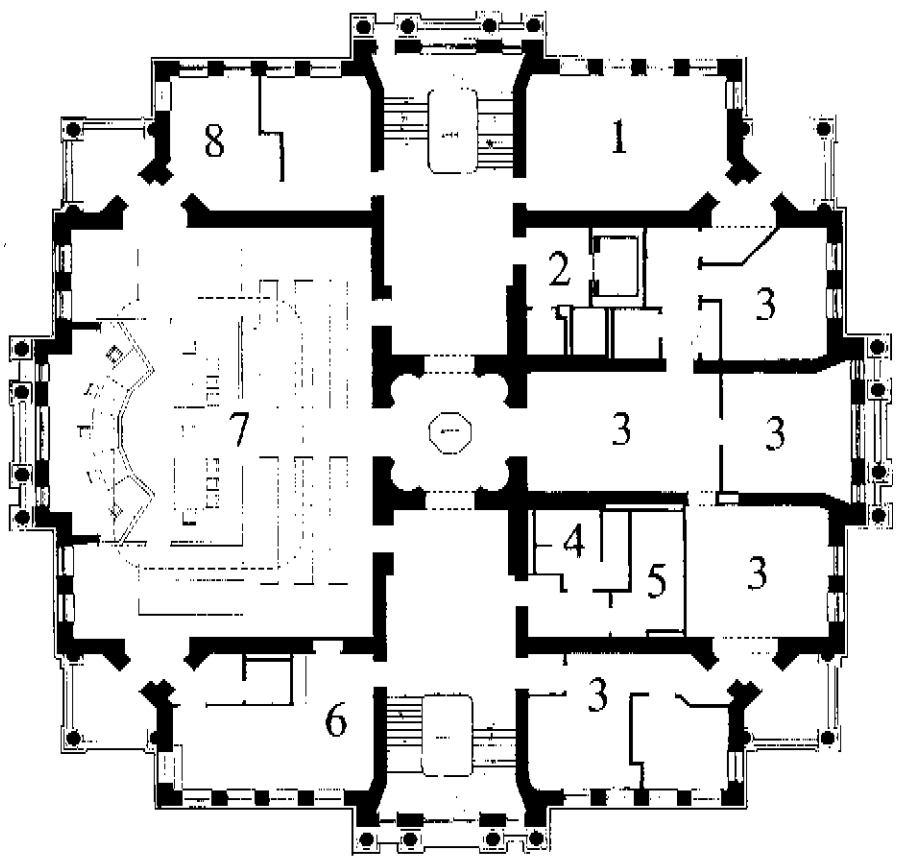
Courthouse History

Built between 1895 and 1897, the grey stone courthouse of Denton County has served the county's citizens for almost a century. In 1895, after demolishing the previous courthouse which had developed serious problems, the Denton County Commissioners Court advertised for an architect to build a new one, and on August 9, 1895, hired W.C. Dodson of Waco. Excavation began late in October, and in November the county employed Tom Lovell as construction superintendent. On February 8, 1896, amid great pomp and ceremony, the cornerstone was officially laid. With local stone, brick, and mortar; sandstone from Mineral Wells, and columns of Burnett granite, the structure grew during 1896. Originally budgeted at $100,000, the job eventually cost more than $147,000, and the courthouse was dedicated on May 21, 1897. Few major changes had occurred in the old courthouse when most of the county's agencies in 1978 moved to the Carroll Courts Building several hundred yards to the west. In 1985 the citizens of Denton County voted in favor of a $3,000,000 bond issue to restore the structure, and the Commissioners Court appointed Lee Walker, County Commissioner, Precinct 3, to spearhead the project. The Court also hired Ward Bogard, architect, and Johnny Pittman, construction manager, to carry out the work on the courthouse. Today the restored Courthouse-on-the-Square is being rededicated; it will house the Commissioners Court, the county Historical Commission, and the county's museum.

Bullitt Lowry
Chairman,
Denton County Historical Commission
November 21, 1987

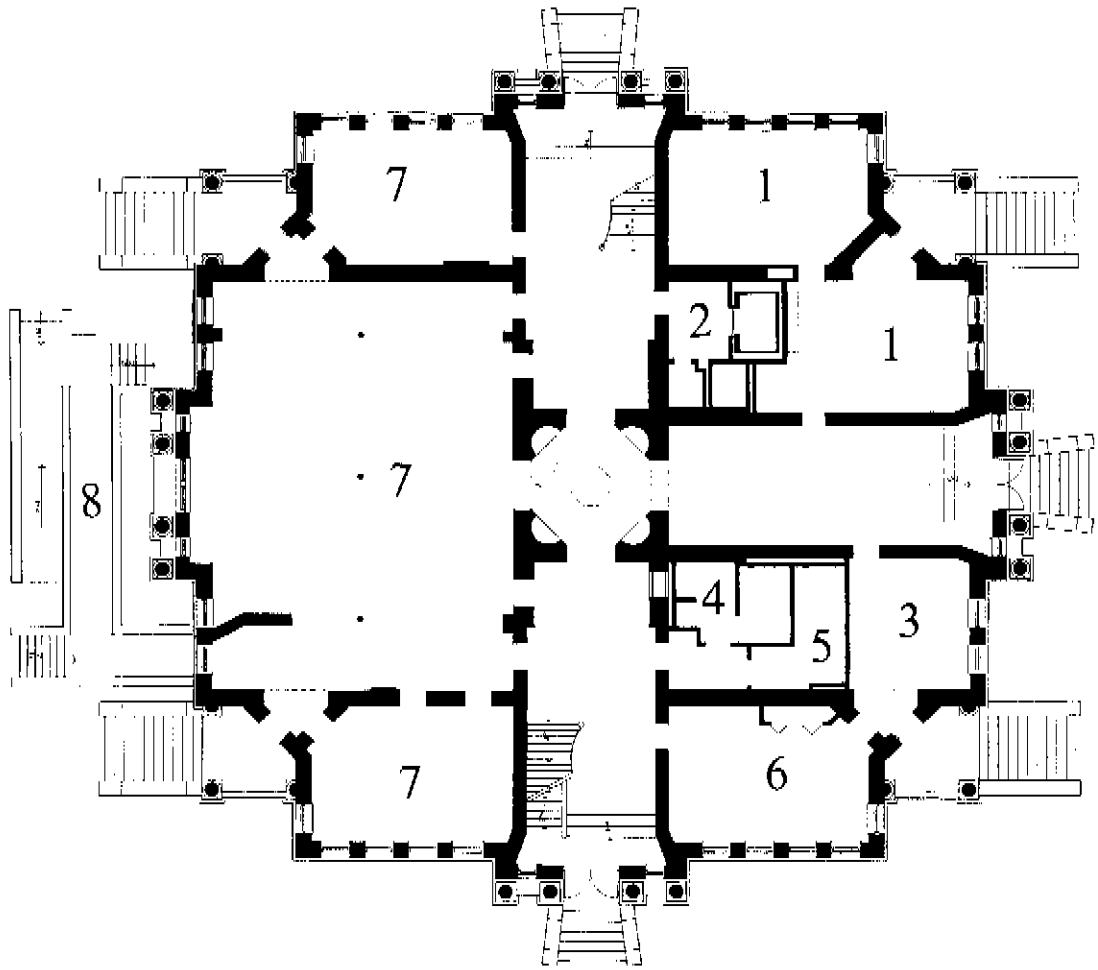
Host Committee

Vic Burgess, County Judge
Ruth Tansey, Commissioner, Precinct 1
Sandy Jacobs, Commissioner, Precinct 2
Lee Walker, Commissioner, Precinct 3
Don Hill, Commissioner, Precinct 4
Ward Bogard, Architect
Johnny Pittman, Construction Manager



Second Level

1. County Judge
2. Elevator
3. Judge's Staff
4. Men's Room
5. Women's Room
6. Conference Room
7. Commissioners Court
8. Commissioners Court Services



First Level

1. Historical Commission
2. Elevator
3. Archives
4. Men's Room
5. Women's Room
6. 1896 Room
7. Museum
8. Handicapped Entrance

Building Committee

Ward Bogard
Vic Burgess
Eric Jacobson
Yvonne Jenkins
Mark LeMay
Bullitt Lowry
Johnny Pittman
Lee Walker
James Wells

With Special Thanks to

Barbara Bowman
Ronald L. Siebler
Nita Starnes
Donna Stewart

On behalf of the citizens of Denton County, the Commissioners Court, Host Committee and Building Committee, we wish to thank the individuals and organizations listed below for their generous contributions.

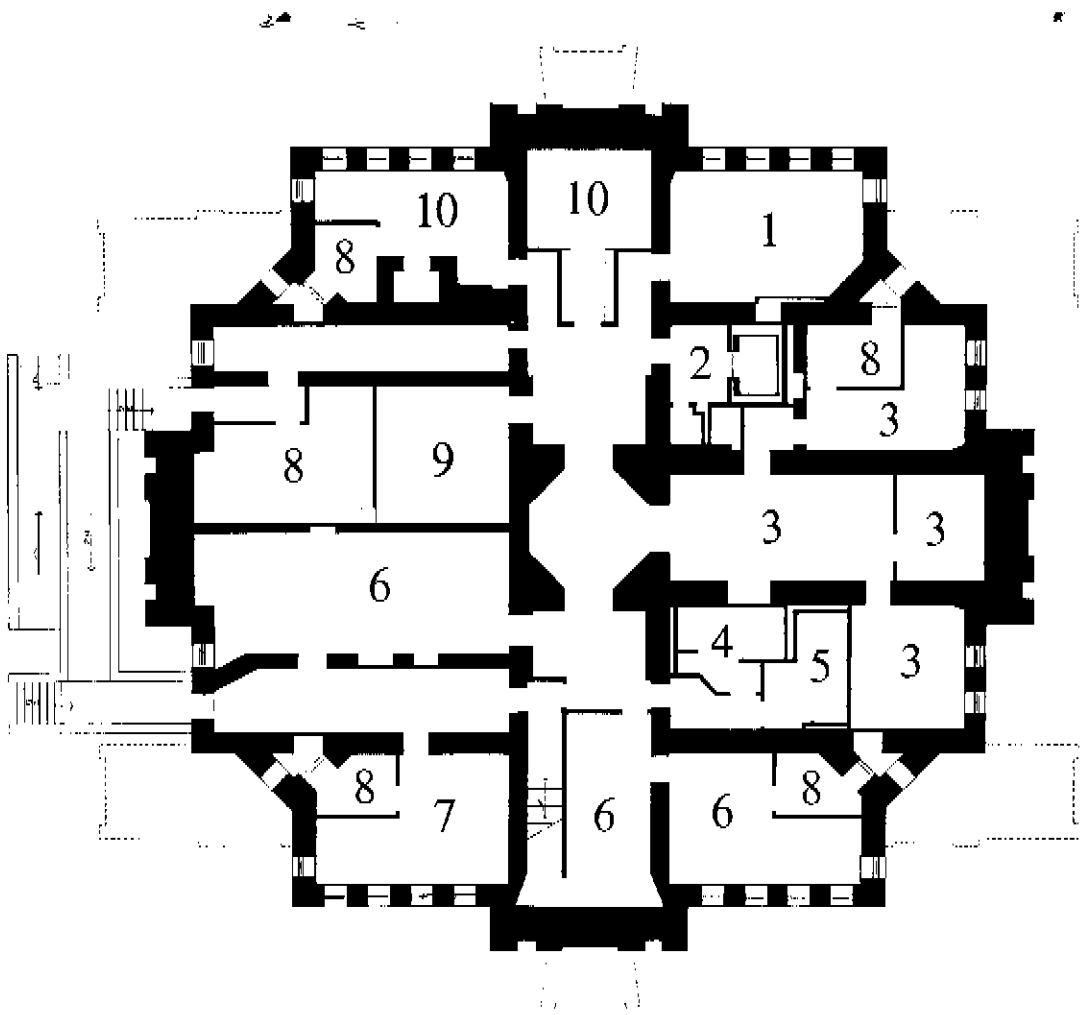
Friends of the Courthouse

Barbara Fisher, Chairman

Faye Atkins
Betty Duncan
Dianne Edmondson
Carol Evans
Joy Green
Billie Johnson
Sue Kelly
Lynette Lane
Margie Martin
Dana Miller
Lou Anne Morales
Claudia Mulkey
Carol Narsutis
Gayle Stickels
Barbara Vick
Lessell White

Donations to Courthouse Landscaping

Big Tree Farm
Calloway's Nursery
Denton High School Agricultural Department - Mr. Bland
Evergreen Nursery
Frenchys
Garden Culture Club
Harpool's Garden Center
Hoe & Hope Garden Club
Land-O-Lakes Garden Club
Little Elm Garden Club
Meador Nursery
Oak Garden Club
Twilight Garden Club



Ground Level

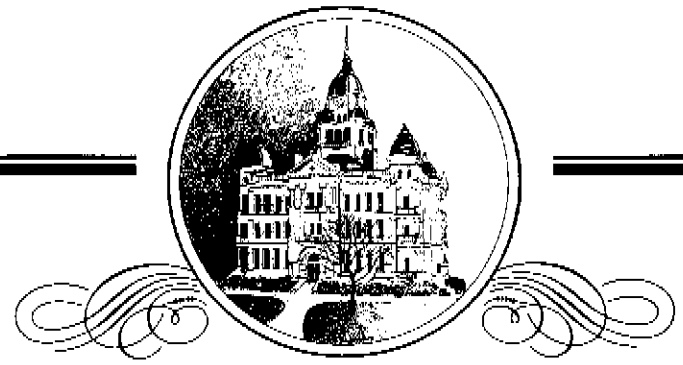
1. Employee Break Room
2. Elevator
3. Historical Commission
4. Men's Room
5. Women's Room
6. Print Shop
7. Mail Room
8. Mechanical
9. Electrical
10. Building Maintenance

Donations

Mr. & Mrs. T.H. Atkins
Rex Beasley
Mr. & Mrs. A.T. Boyd
Mr. & Mrs. Garland R. Boyd
Mr. & Mrs. J. Brown, M.D.
Artie Burnett
Leon Callihan
Olive Chambers
Lynn & Jerry Cott
Mr. & Mrs. R.S. Daniel
Mrs. John W. Daws
Denton Business & Professional Women's Club
Denton Highnoon Lions Club
Elizabeth DiGregorio
Mr. & Mrs. W.R. Duncan, Jr.
Jim Fisher
Mr. & Mrs. J.B. Floyd, Jr.
Friends of the Courthouse

Pat Guyer
Dr. Mark Holt
Mr. & Mrs. George Hopkins
Mrs. A.W. James
Sue Kelly
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Lamb
Lynette Lane
Lewisville Area Republican Women's Club
Lewisville Chamber of Commerce,
Kay Jones
Marsha Marlett
Mr. & Mrs. J.T. McCarroll
Pat McEuin
Dr. & Mrs. Walter Miller, Jr.
Bernice Boyd Mitchell & Members of the Boyd Family
Tom Mitchum
Mr. & Mrs. C.P. Mulkey

Mrytle Nall
Frances Noles
Kathryn Penton
J. Newton Rayzor
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Robinson
Mr. & Mrs. Jack Schmitz, Jr.
Margarite Schulze
Shirley Spears
Tom Stickels
Phoebe L. Tarver & Family Members
Mr. & Mrs. Joe C. Thomas
Dr. & Mrs. Price Truitt
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Kathy Weaver
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Wheeler
Mr. & Mrs. Terrill Wheeler
Veneta Young



Courthouse Dedication Ceremony

Saturday, November 21, 1987

AGENDA OF EVENTS

Welcome ..... Lee Walker,
Denton County Commissioner
Precinct 3

Master of Ceremonies ..... Bill Melton,
Dallas County Treasurer
President,
Texas Association of Counties

Invocation ..... Rev. Bill Crouch,
First United Methodist Church, Denton

Posting of the Colors ..... Denton High School ROTC Unit,
National Anthem ..... Northwest High School Band
State Song

Introductions ..... Bill Melton

Greetings ..... Vic Burgess,
County Judge

History ..... Bullitt Lowry,
Chairman,
Denton County Historical Society

Keynote Speaker ..... H. Ross Perot, Jr.

Closing Remarks ..... Bill Melton

Benediction ..... Rev. Mark Chew,
Pleasent Grove Baptist Church, Denton

Monument Unveiling ..... Lee Walker

Ribbon Cutting ..... Members of
Commissioners Court

Open House ..... 12:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Special Limited Edition Commemorative Coins will be available for sale
in the Courthouse Museum for $5.00 each.

Post-it® Fax Note 7671	Date 10-27	# of pages ▸ 1
To Norma Gamble	From Robin Myles	
Co./Dept.	Co.	
Phone #	Phone # 382-7895	
Fax # 565-8693	Fax #	

Subject: The Denton Teddy Bear parade
Date: Wed, 15 Oct 1997 16:01:37 -0400
From: Robert Kemp <bob@toad.net>
Organization: Kemp Balloons
To: cvb@iglobal.net, dcoc@iglobal.net

I was able to locate this e-mail address, if it's the wrong place please forward to Parade Chairperson for their consideration:

I came across your Home Page on the web and thought you might be interested in bringing some Large Parade Balloons to to this event. Kemp Balloons, The Largest Parade Company in the U.S., has built Large Parade Balloons like Woody Woodpecker for Macys Thanksgivings Day Parade. We also have a big selection of Medium Theme Balloons and Characters of all shapes and sizes. Many balloons can be illuminated and are sometimes used to direct patrons to different features within an event. Logo balls are another inexpensive way to get the message out and add greatly to the festive atmosphere. Kemp Balloons' professionally trained staff of artists will work with you to enhance your event. We can also supply matching Tee Shirts for any Character or Logo if needed. Please let me know if I have sent this information to the wrong e-mail address or if you have any questions feel free to e-mail me. I can also send you additional information by mail.

My goal is to bring some of our Balloons to this event. Lets make it happen !.

[Visit our Parade Balloons Home Page at {http://www.webcraftstdo.com/kemp/index.htm}]

[For more information please contact me at {bob@toad.net}]

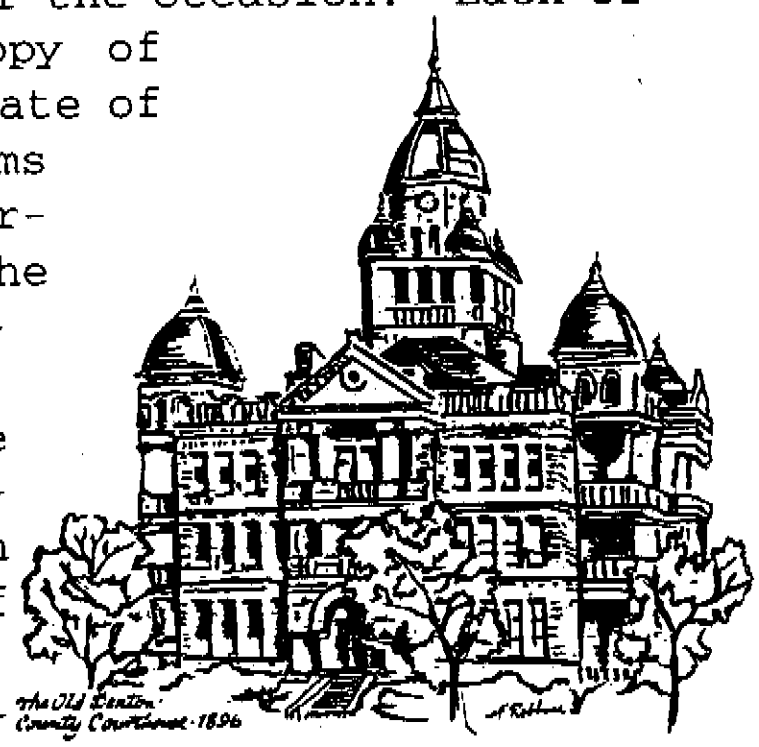
Thanks,
Bob Kemp Jr.

VISUAL TREASURES OF THE COURTHOUSE

The Denton County Courthouse is one of Texas' most treasured pieces of architecture. On November 1, 1895, The Pilot Point Post- Mirror wrote, "A point of beauty and durability, it... will be the pride of the people of Denton County." Today the courthouse still proudly stands as the center of Denton's downtown square.

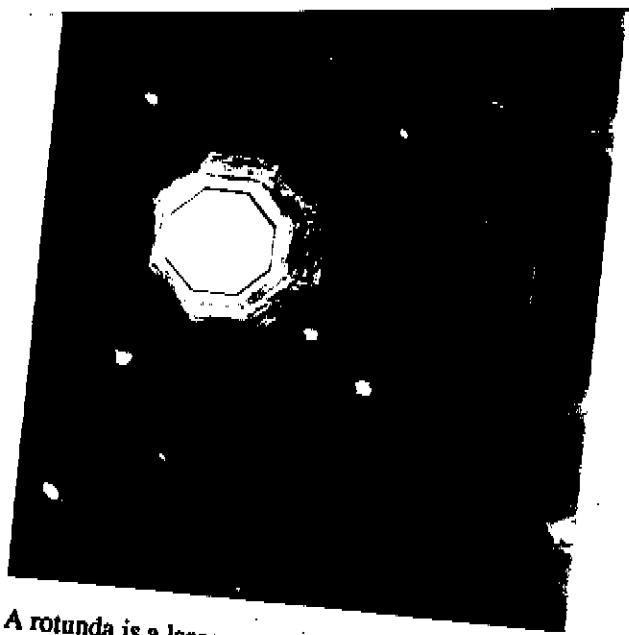
Did you know that the estimated cost of the court house was $150,000? In 1895, that was an ENORMOUS amount of money!

Many stone cutters, bricklayers, and laborers from everywhere worked very hard to build the beautiful courthouse. The blue granite cornerstone, found on the corner of the courthouse, was laid on February 8, 1896. Many people gathered on this bright, winter day for the occasion. Each of the city's newspapers, a copy of the constitution of the State of Texas, and many other items were placed inside the cornerstone. Can you find the cornerstone on the courthouse?

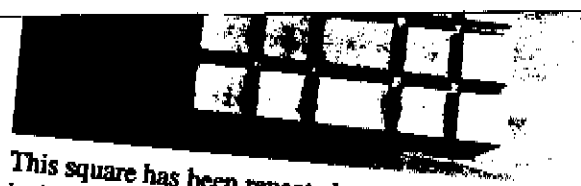


Today, the Courthouse is a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark and is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Look inside for Courthouse Treasure Hunt Activities!

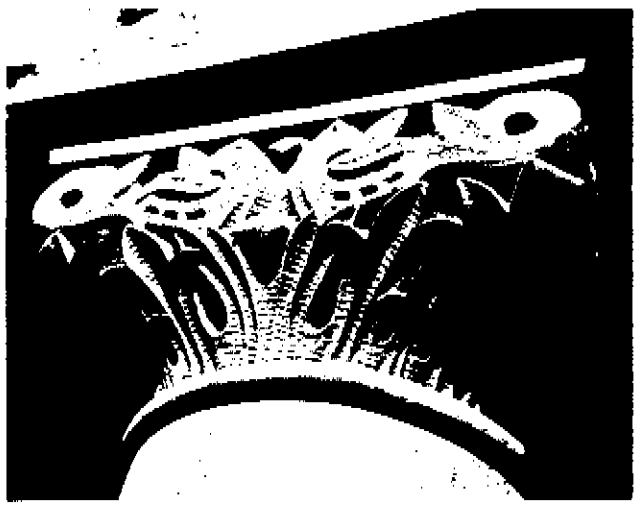


A rotunda is a large central area covered by a dome. What shape is the rotunda in our Courthouse? Where must you be to see this view in the Courthouse?



This square has been repeated over and over and over inside the Courthouse. How many little shapes are inside one of these squares?

The Courthouse is filled with hidden details. Can you find this little detail inside the Courthouse?



This is called a capital. It can be found near the top of the columns. The Courthouse capitals have curved shapes that resemble plants. Look closely and see ALL the details!

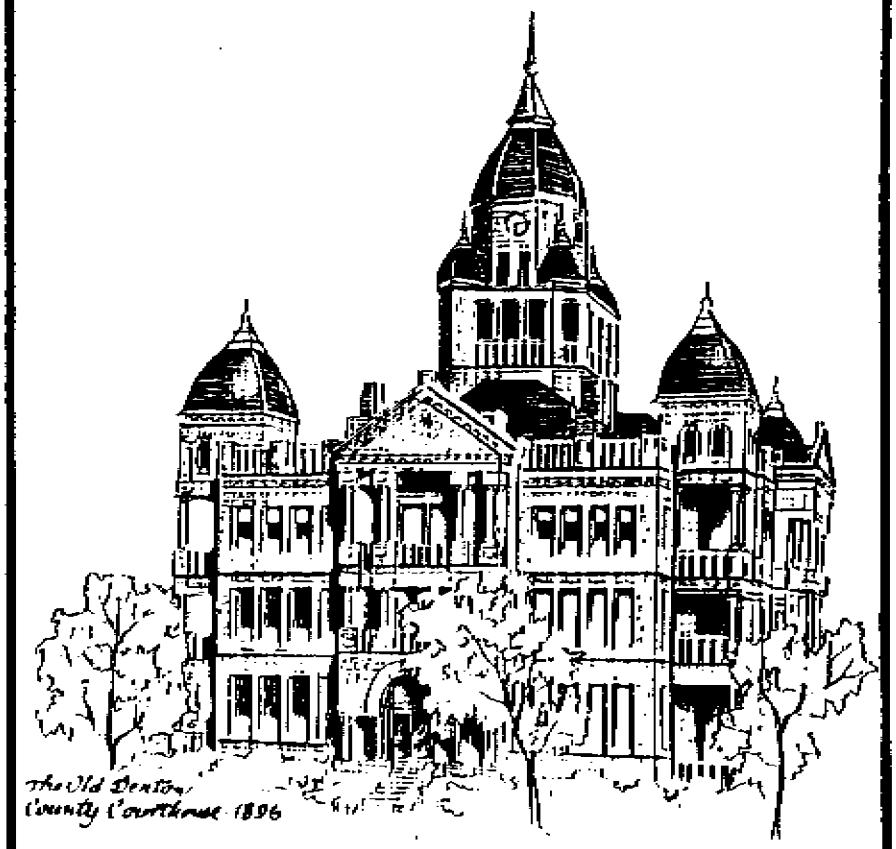
You must walk under this curved ARCH before entering the Courthouse. Where can you find other ARCHES at the Courthouse?

Shapes and textures

DENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM
Is Located on 1st Floor of the Courthouse-On-The-Square
817-565-8697 or 1-800-346-3189

DENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Is Located on 1st Floor of the Courthouse-On-The-Square
817-565-8697 or 1-800-346-3189

THE HISTORICAL MARKERS OF DENTON COUNTY, TEXAS



DENTON COUNTY
HISTORICAL COMMISSION

HISTORICAL MARKERS IN DENTON COUNTY

THC - Texas Historical Commission Marker
NRHP - National Register of Historic Places
HLC - City of Denton Historic Landmark (Separate List)
DAR - Daughters of American Revolution (Private)

Yr. Approvd.	Markers	Location	Type, Category
1967	Flower Mound Presby. Church	Flower Mound	THC, Site
1984	The Mound	Flower Mound	THC, Site
1990	Bethel Community Church & Sch.	Flower Mound	THC, Subject
1977	Medlin Cemetery	Trophy Club	THC, Site
1984	IOOF Cemetery	Roanoke	THC, Site
1986	Continental State Bank	Roanoke	NRHP
1990	Masonic Lodge	Roanoke	THC, Institution
1978	Elizabeth Cemetery	SH 114 @ I35	THC, Site
1936	Denton County (State Hwy. Mkr)	Courthouse lawn	THC, Subject
1981	City of Argyle	Argyle	THC, Site
1981	Prairie Mound Cemetery	Argyle	THC, Site
1976	Graham-Argyle Cemetery	Argyle	THC, Site
1981	First United Methodist Church	Argyle	THC, Site
1982	Johns' Well & Camp Ground	Argyle	THC, Site
1930	Old Alton Cemetery	South of Denton	DAR
1986	Old Alton Bridge	Denton County	NRHP
1970	Denton County Crthouse on Sq	Denton	THC, NRHP (77)HLC
1977	City of Denton	Denton	THC, Site
1936	John B. Denton gravesite	Denton	THC, Person (36)
1973	Lacy Hotel	Denton	THC, Site
1981	Scripture-Deavenport House	Denton	THC, Struc, HLC
1918	Confederate Memorial	Courthouse Denton	Private
1985	St. James AME Church	Denton	THC, Institution
1982	Oakwood Cemetery	Denton	THC, Site
1965	University of North Texas	Denton	THC, 1st Site
1965	University of North Texas	Denton	THC, 1st Bldg Site
1976	Old Main, TWU	Denton	THC, Structure
1982	University Gardens, TWU	Denton	THC, Site
1936	Pioneer Woman statue, TWU	Denton	Private
1989	Rayzor-Graham House	Denton	THC, HLC, Struc.
1995	Historical Bldg (Curry Hall)	Denton UNT	THC, Structure
1995	Immaculate Conception Church	Denton	THC, Subject
1973	Gregg Ranch	Krum, S'west	THC, Site
1936	John Chisum Ranch	Bolivar	THC, Site
1970	Bolivar	Bolivar	THC, Site
	Bolivar	Bolivar	Prvt (Venezuela)
1987	Ed & Bess Forester Ranch	Bolivar	THC, Site
1986	Noah C. Batla Stock Farm	Sanger	THC, Site
1972	Presbyterian Church	Sanger	THC, Institution
1976	Jacob Frederick Elasser House	Sanger	THC, Site
1976	William Partlow House	Sanger	THC, Site
1976	Tyson Cemetery	Sanger, FM 455 N	THC, Site
1978	City of Pilot Point	Pilot Point	THC, Site
1981	Church of Christ	Pilot Point	THC, Site
1984	Pilot Point Post Signal	Pilot Point	THC, Subject
1986	Good Hope Cemetery	Aubrey Area, east	THC, Site
1973	Oak Grove Methodist Church	Oak Grove	THC, Site
1973	Wm. E. Bates Gravesite	Oak Grove	THC, Person
1975	Little Elm	Little Elm	THC, Site

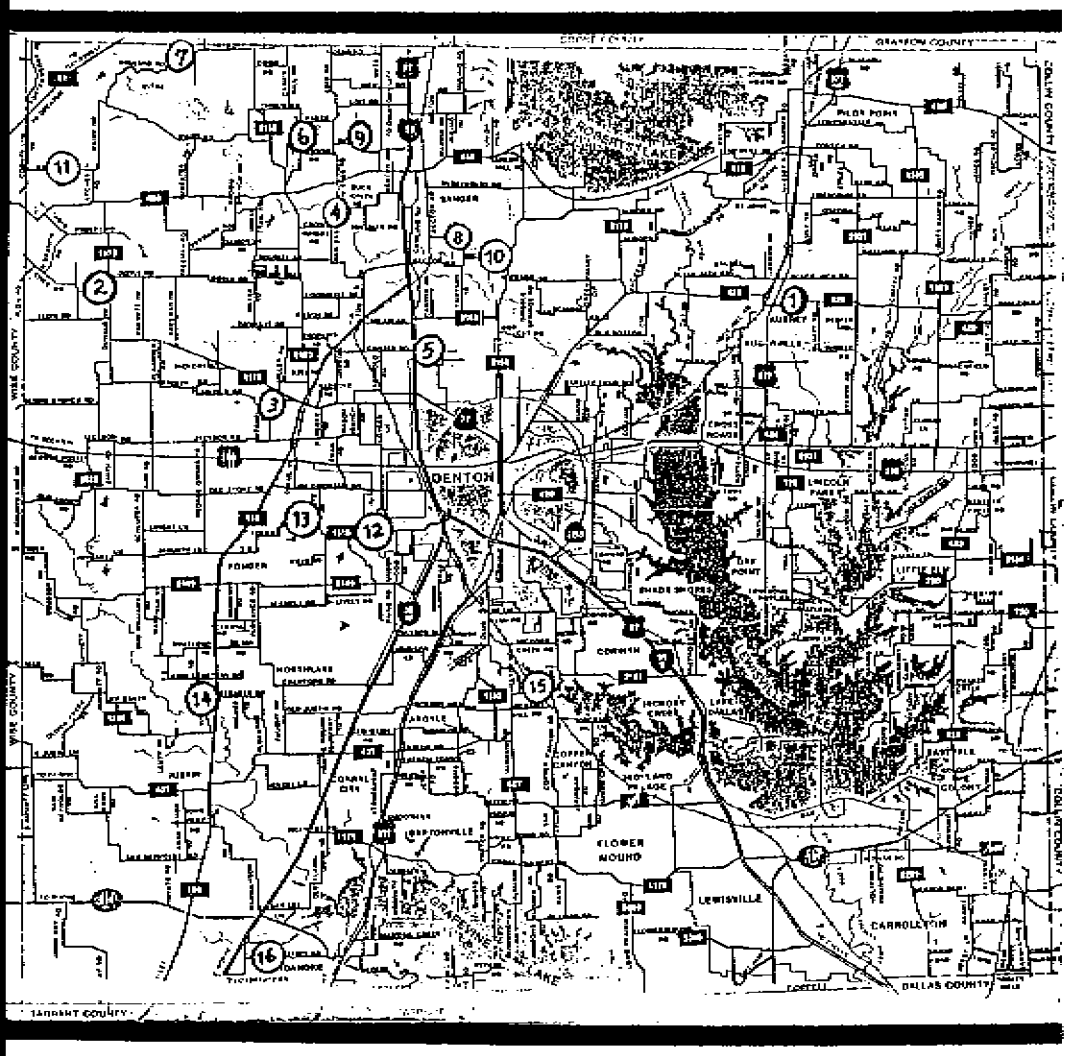
HISTORICAL MARKERS IN DENTON COUNTY

Yr. Approvd.	Markers	Location	Type, Category
1975	Hedgecoxe Ver. Peters Colony	The Colony	THC, Event
1970	Peters' Colony	Lewisville	THC, Event
1986	Bridges Cemetery	The Colony	THC, Site
1969	Wm. Dickerson-Milliken House	Lewisville	THC, Structure
1965	W.H. Jones House (Mkr removed)	Lewisville	THC, Structure
1985	McCurley Cemetery	Lewisville	THC, Site
1980	Lewisville Archaeological Site	Lewisville	THC, Site
1986	Old Hall Cemetery	Lewisville	THC, Site
1984	First Baptist Church	Hebron	THC, Institution
1984	Furmanus Cemetery	Carrollton	THC, Site
	19th Century Kiln Sites:		
1982	Cranston Site	Denton County	NRHP
1982	Roark-Griffith Site	Denton County	NRHP
1982	J.C. Lambert Site	Denton County	NRHP
1982	A.M. Serren Site	Denton County	NRHP
1982	Wilson-Donaldson Site	Denton County	NRHP

SUMMARY:

53	THC Markers
8	National Register of Historic Places
3	Private
64	

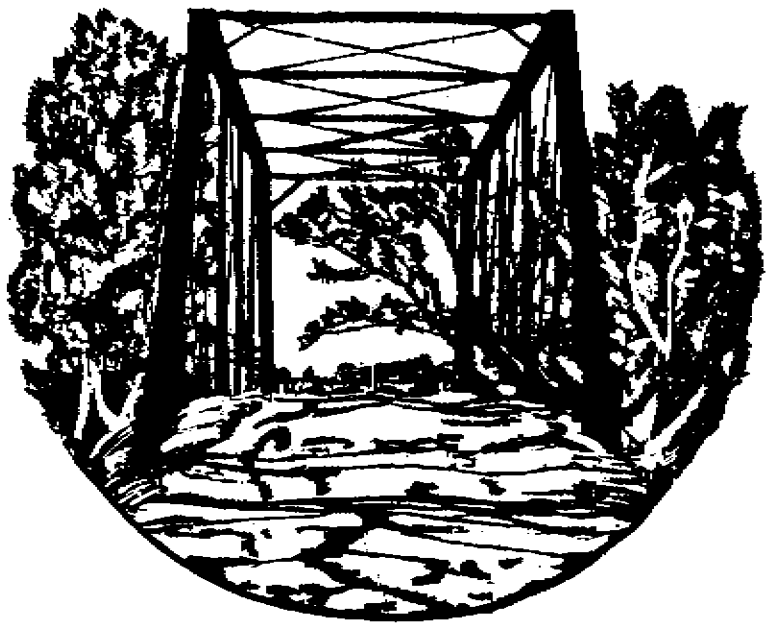
Published in cooperation with
Denton County Commissioners' Court
Denton City Council
Denton, Texas



DENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
DENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM
Are Located in the Courthouse-On-The-Square
110 West Hickory, Denton, Texas
817-565-8697 or 1-800-346-3189
Fax 817-565-8693

Published in cooperation with
DENTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' COURT
DENTON CITY COUNCIL
Denton, Texas

HISTORIC IRON BRIDGES OF DENTON COUNTY TEXAS



DENTON COUNTY
HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ELM FORK, TRINITY RIVER, FM 428 (#1)

This bridge, c. 1912, was built by Austin Brothers Bridge Company. Located just west of Aubrey and was a part of a feeder road between Aubrey and Denton; and Aubrey and Sanger which served as mail routes between these communities. Originally located in Prct. 1, the Commissioner was J.F. Morgan.

SOUTH HICKORY CREEK AT DONALD ROAD (#2)

This bridge, built in 1903, is located south of what is now FM 1173. It is a steel elevated superstructure with no visible markings or plates. The bridge served as part of a postal route in far northwest Denton County and southern Cooke County. Span 59' 0", width 17' 0", concrete roadbed.

NORTH HICKORY CREEK AT PLAINVIEW ROAD (#3)

Constructed in 1903 by George E. King Co., this bridge is a steel elevated superstructure with no visible markings or plates. Located in northwest Denton County it served as part of a service road to FM 1173. Span 12' 0", width 12' 0".

CLEAR CREEK AT SAM BASS ROAD (#4)

Located near Duck Creek Cemetery and served far northwest Denton County residents and Wise County residents as part of their postal route. The bridge was constructed by Austin Brothers Contractors at a cost of $1,500 in 1908. Span 150', width 12' 6".

MILAM CREEK AT GANZER ROAD (# 5)

This bridge was constructed in 1904 by George King Construction Co. and currently provides service to I-35 from Hawkeye, Hopkins and Ganzer roads. Span 25' 0", width 12' 7", Rail 5' 6".

DUCK CREEK AT SAM BASS ROAD (#6)

Located northwest of the town of Sanger and serves, Nance, Chisum, Lois and Betty Roads by connecting them to I-35 which then leads north into Cooke County. Span 40' 0", width 13' 0", Rail 4' 7".

DUCK CREEK AT GREGORY ROAD (#7)

Constructed by King Iron Bridge Co., Cooke County line. Services Pollard, Gregory and Hoehn Roads into Cooke County. Span 65' 0", width 16' 7", Rail 7' 0".

CLEAR CREEK AT RECTOR ROAD (#8)

Built by Austin Brothers in 1907 and serves Rector Road which is a connector road from the town of Sanger to I-35. Span 113' 2", width 12' 8".

DUCK CREEK AT BELZ ROAD (#9)

Feeds east into I-35 and northwest into Cooke County. No identifying markers or plates to determine when built or by whom.

CLEAR CREEK AT NICKOLSON ROAD (#10)

Built by Austin Brothers in 1907 and currently provides service to FM 2164 to the east and I-35 by Rector Road to the west. Span 137' 2", width 12' 2", rail 8' 0".

CLEAR CREEK AT WAIDE ROAD (#11)

This bridge provides service from Wise County to FM 2450 and northwest Denton County. situated northwest of the town of Bolivar and was constructed in 1908 by Austin Brothers Contractors. County Commissioner was J.M. Gary. Span 215' 0", rail 8' 0".

HICKORY CREEK AT TOM COLE ROAD (#12)

This bridge has no markings or plates except "rebuilt 1974 by Hap Salmon" (C.R. "Happy" Salmon). Span 129' 0", width 12'0".

HICKORY CREEK AT SKILES ROAD (#13)

Situated east of Ponder and provides service between FM 156 and the Wise County area. The bridge has no visible markings or plates except "rebuilt by Salmon 1974." Span 64'0", width 21'0".

DENTON CREEK AT TOM COLE ROAD (#14)

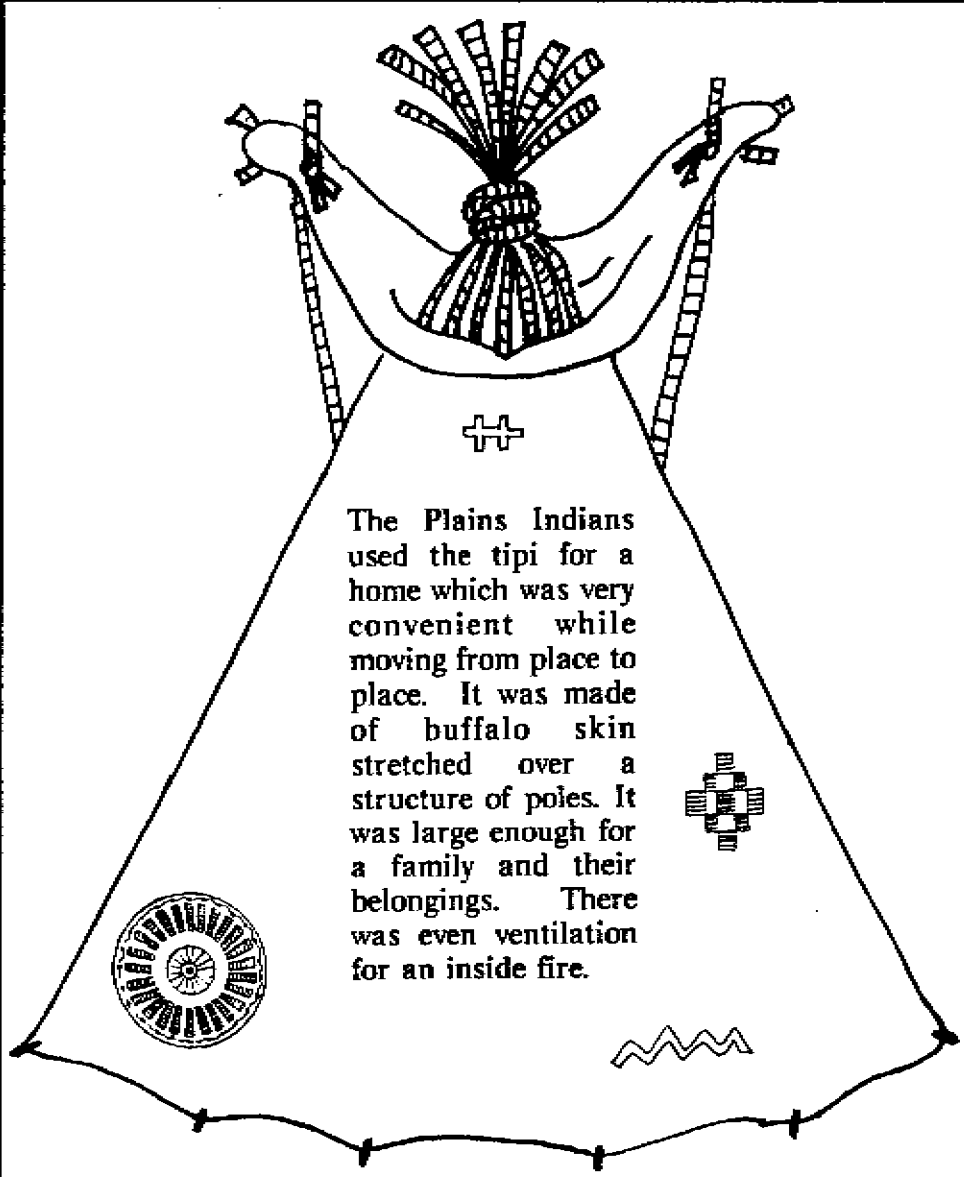
Built in 1910 by Austin Brothers. This bridge is in good condition and provides service between FM 156 and the Wise County area. Span 84'0", width 15'9".

HICKORY CREEK AT COPPER CANYON ROAD (#15)

Located on Hickory Creek at Copper Canyon Road just south of the Village of Alton, the 1851 site of Denton County government. Built in 1884 by the King Iron and Bridge Manufacturing Company of Cleveland, Ohio and stands alone as the last remaining Pratt Truss Bridge in Denton County. The Old Alton Bridge was included in the National Register of Historic Places, July 8, 1988.

HENRIETTA CREEK AT LITSEY ROAD (#16)

Located west of Roanoke and provides service from Grapevine Lake to I-35 and the northern part of Tarrant County. Built in 1904 by the George King Bridge Co. at a cost of $1,780. Unlike other bridges surveyed, this bridge has cable supports across the span.



The Plains Indians used the tipi for a home which was very convenient while moving from place to place. It was made of buffalo skin stretched over a structure of poles. It was large enough for a family and their belongings. There was even ventilation for an inside fire.

DENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
DENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM
Are Located in the Courthouse-On-The-Square
110 West Hickory, Denton, Texas
817-565-8697 or 1-800-346-3189
Fax 817-565-8693

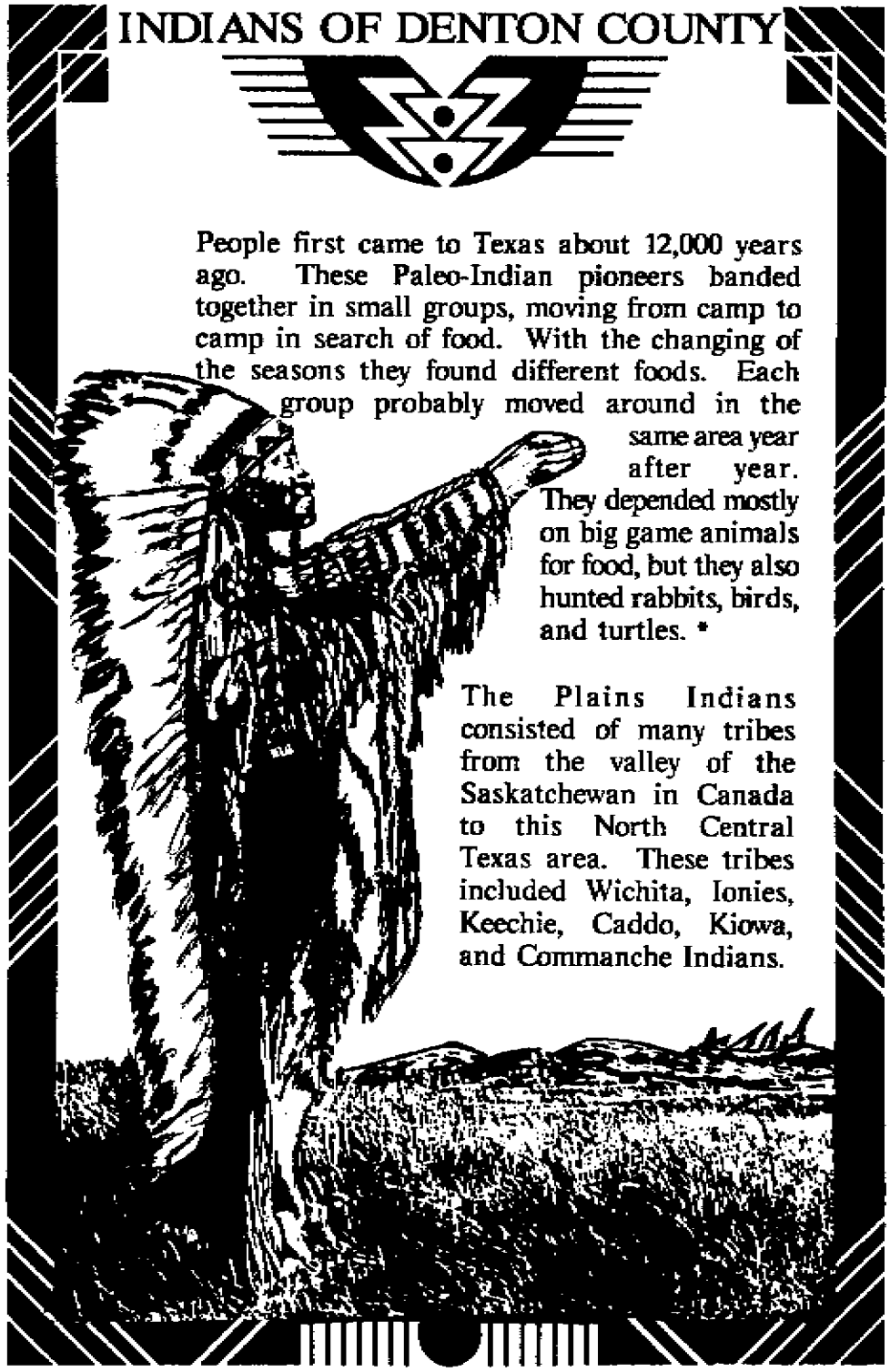
Published in cooperation with
DENTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' COURT
DENTON CITY COUNCIL
Denton, Texas

* Texas Historical Commission,
Living with the Texas Past Series, No. 1.

INDIANS OF DENTON COUNTY

People first came to Texas about 12,000 years ago. These Paleo-Indian pioneers banded together in small groups, moving from camp to camp in search of food. With the changing of the seasons they found different foods. Each group probably moved around in the same area year after year. They depended mostly on big game animals for food, but they also hunted rabbits, birds, and turtles. *

The Plains Indians consisted of many tribes from the valley of the Saskatchewan in Canada to this North Central Texas area. These tribes included Wichita, Ionies, Keechie, Caddo, Kiowa, and Commanche Indians.



For 300 years, the Wichita Indians were dominant in this North Texas Central area. From 1830 - 1843, the Ionies, Keechie, and Caddo Indians were in Denton County. In fact, John B. Denton, the namesake of Denton County and the City of Denton, was killed during a skirmish with the Keechie Indians whose village stretched three miles long on the banks of the Trinity River. In 1847, the United States Congress passed a bill for Calvary regiments to protect the Texas wilderness. With this bill soldiers were posted at Hickory Station on Hickory Creek until 1850. During the Civil War, Denton County organized a group called, "home guards" made up of men and boys to protect this area. With the end of the Civil War, Confederate and State troops were dissolved leaving no protection against Comanche and Kiowa raids. In 1868, Indians raided the Denton area and took 1000 horses. After that, the Indians bravely marched through the city of Denton on horseback carrying their weapons which infuriated and frightened the townspeople. In 1873, the last Indian war in Denton County took place between 40 settlers and 300 Comanches. Colonel R.S. Mackenzie and his men, "Mackenzie's Raiders," joined the settlers in their effort to defeat the Indians.

The Plains Indians had their own form of government and law, as well as, their own sign language. The social structure was strictly adhered to. The men were hunters, warriors, and head of their household. Young men were allowed to listen to meetings but they had to be quiet until an elder invited them to speak. The women gained respect by their creative skills and hard work. Young girls were not allowed to run in the camp, they stayed near their homes, and were accompanied when going out. Before marriage, girls had to learn how to make and decorate moccasins, sew and design beadwork, dress and tan hides of game, and cook. Because horses furnished great wealth and power, men offered them as a marriage proposal and if the young woman gave the horses water or let them mingle with her father's herd then she accepted the proposal. Within a few days the marriage ceremony with a huge feast was given.

Indians had many types of ceremonies and rituals. Each of their ceremonies was to please the spirits and ask for strength or guidance. Indians would perform ceremonies before competitions in horse races, archery, wrestling, and lacrosse. As music was a very important part of their rituals and daily life, the Indians made and used instruments such as the flute, rainstick, and drum. Every man had his own song which he had received in a vision. This song was sung as a remembrance of the powerful spirits he had encountered in the dream and his wife would sing it as a lullaby to their children. Indian children were treasured by their parents and entire tribe for they ensured the continuance of the tribe.

The Plains Indians ate a variety of foods. Because they traveled, most of the tribes were hunters and gatherers. Some tribes did stay in one place and planted crops. Beans, corn, pumpkins, and squash were raised for food and used for trade with other Indians. The Plains Indians gathered many fruits, vegetables, roots and stalks. Wild fruits included persimmons and berries. Some vegetables were peas, onions, and prairie turnips. The roots and stalks included a sweet thistle that tasted like bananas. Herbs and spices such as sage, milkweed buds, and rosehips were also used. The mainstay of their diet was the buffalo, however, they did hunt other wild game.

Everyday clothing was made from plain, unadorned hides of buffalo, deer, and other game. In the winter, the fur was left to keep them warm. Articles of clothing included dresses, shirts, leggings, moccasins, belts, underclothes, and breechcloths. They also wore mittens, boots, robes, coats, and capes. For ceremonial occasions, Plains Indian women often created stunning, elaborate dresses. The number of beads worn on a garment symbolized one's wealth and status, while the pattern identified their tribe. Beads and ornaments made from shells, bone, and quill were used prior to the appearance of European traders who offered glass beads, tin cones, brass bells, and tacks in exchange for furs.

HISTORY OF DENTON, TEXAS

* 1800's-- Denton's biggest commercial market was cattle. Most of the land was used for either cattle grazing or crops.
* 1836 -- At this point in time Denton County was part of the Red River County. Mexican government controlled this area of Texas at that time.
* January 4, 1841-- W.S. Peters came to North Texas and formed the Peters Colony.
* 1844 -- A section of Peters Colony was given to new settlers. This became Denton's first settlement, known as the Bridges Settlement. Eventually the Bridges Settlement became the city of Pilot Point.
* 1845 -- Alton was name as the first County Seat in Denton County.
* 1846 -- Richard Ellis, Seccession Convention President of Denton County, organized Denton County with the help of 200 voters.
* The County and the City of Denton was named after Captain John B. Denton. Capt. Denton was killed in the battle at Keechi Valley in May of 1841. Although this battle was to have legally cleared the area of Indians they continued to be a threat.
* April 11. 1846 -- The First Legislature of the new State of Texas created Denton County. Later that same year the County Seat was moved to Pickneyville.
* 1855 -- C.A. Williams, sheriff and historian, sold the land that is currently known as the townsquare to Denton County.
* 1858 -- Chinn's Chapel was completed by Elisha Chinn, a pioneer settler from Alabama.
* Many men's clubs were established in Denton in the late part of the 1850's. One such club was The Independent Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.) established in 1859.
* 1868 -- Subscription Schools were available for Denton school children to attend. These schools were attended only during the summer (three months out of the year).
* 1870 -- Sam Bass arrived in Texas from Indiana.
* 1874 -- Sam Bass purchased a race horse named the "Denton Mare".
* 1876 -- Joseph A Carroll was named as the 16th District Judge in Denton.
* 1878 -- Sam Bass died as a result form a failed robery attempt on July 21, 1878 (his 27th birthday).
* 1890 -- Denton had its first college. The North Texas State Normal College(NTSNC), now The University of North Texas (UNT).
* 1895 -- By this time in history there had been three legal executions for murder in Denton County. Denton County became the location for these executions due to a change of venue for those indicted.
* September 23, 1903 -- Texas Woman's University opened its doors as the College Of Industrial Arts.

ACROSS

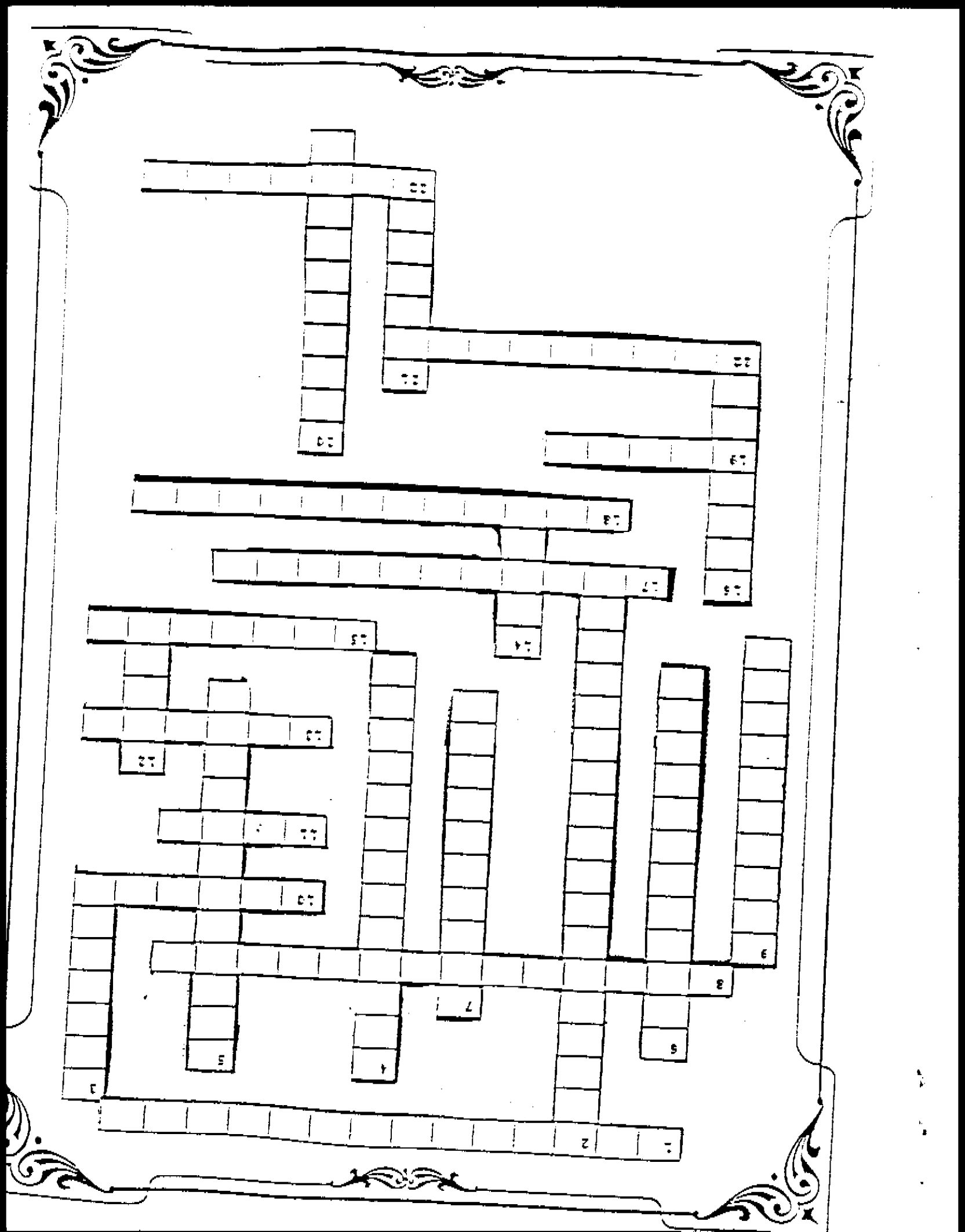
1. Who was the 16th District Judge in 1876?
8. In 1836 what county was Denton County a part of?
10. Our city was named after Captain John B. _____.
11. Abbreviation for International Order of Odd Fellows.
13. What was the biggest commercial market in the 1800's?
15. Who continued to be threat even after the battle at Keechi Valley?
17. Who built Chinn's Chapel?
18. Who was the Seccession Convention President in 1846?
19. How many legal executions happened in Denton by 1895?
22. The College of Industrial Arts opened it doors on _____ 23, 1903.
23. Who was the outlaw that moved to Denton in 1870?

DOWN

2. What was the name of the Denton schools in 1868?
3. What government controlled this area in 1836?
4. Where was the 2nd County Seat located?
5. What was created on April 11, 1846?
6. What battle was Capt. John B. Denton killed in?
7. What was the name of the race horse Sam Bass purchased?
9. What town did Bridges settlement become?
12. Where was the 1st County Seat located?
14. What was the name of the 1st college in Denton County (1890)?
16. The first colony was settled on January 4, 1841 by _____.
20. Who was the Denton sheriff in 1855?
21. Name the 1st Denton settlement, established in 1844.

Word Bank

Alton
Bridges
C.A. Williams
Cattle
Denton
Denton County
Denton Mare
Elishja Chinn
Indians
I.O.O.F.
Joseph A Carroll
Keechi Valley
Mexican
N.T.S.N.C.
Pickneyville
Pilot Point
Red River County
Richard Ellis
Sam Bass
September
Subscription Schools
Three
W.S. Peters



HISTORY OF THE DENTON COUNTY COURTHOUSE ON THE SQUARE

In 1856 the County Seat was moved to Denton. The very first courthouse was built on the North side of the square. The wood frame courthouse burned in 1875 destroying all of the County records. Some of the townspeople felt the Sam Bass and his gang were responsible for the fire. That rumor was never confirmed.

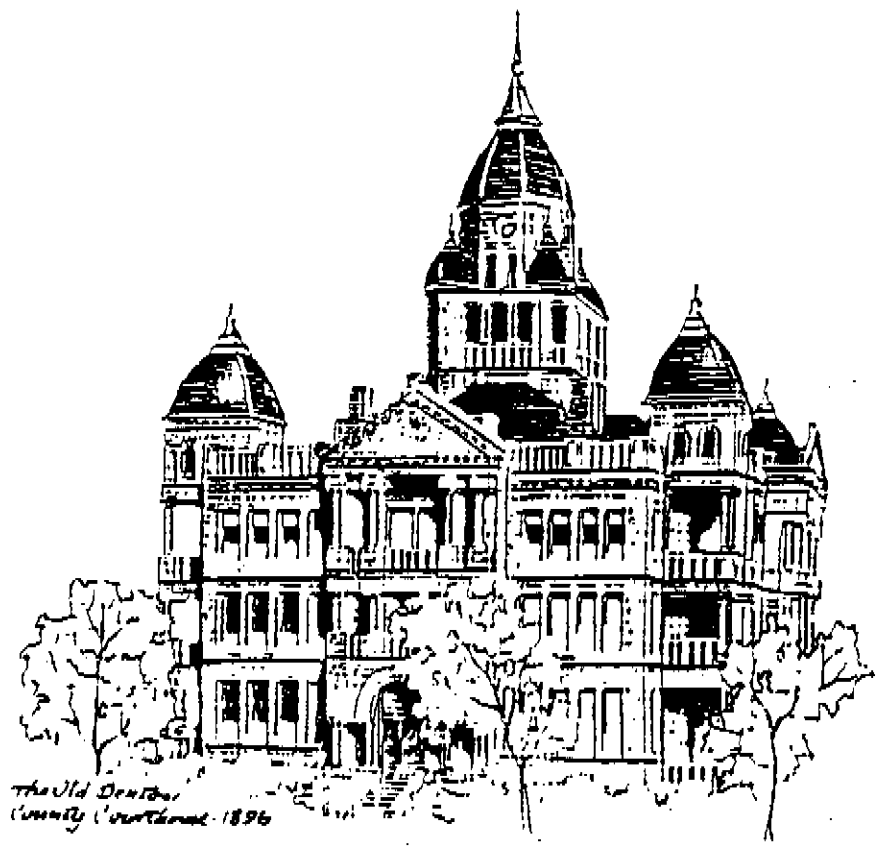
In 1877 another courthouse was built. The second courthouse was constructed of brick. In September of 1894 disaster struck again, this time in the form of lightening. The building was not destroyed but the damage was extensive. The courthouse was condemned as a result.

Between 1895 and 1896 the current Denton County Courthouse was built. The first architect of the current courthouse was James Riley Gordon. W.C. Dodson was hired to take his place for reasons never revealed. The courthouse was constructed of limestone and pink granite. Dodson liked using materials native to the area. Origanially the source of lighting for the courthouse was gas. In 1939 electricity replaced the gas lighting. The center of the courthouse is called the Rotunda.

The Courthouse on the Square houses many services and attractions. The Denton County Historical Museum is located on the first floor. Open Monday - Friday 10:30am to 4:30pm and Saturdays from 1:00pm to 4:30pm. Admission to the museum is free. Many historical artifacts can be viewed daily in the museum as well as in the courthouse hallways. Tours of the courthouse and museum are conducted by volunteers. The Commissioners Court is housed on the second floor. There are four Denton County Commissioners. The Fire Marshall is located on the third floor.

In 1985 the Denton County Courthouse on the Square received some restoration. Restoration means that work was done to make the building look like it did when it was first built.

The namesake of Denton County and The City of Denton was Captain John B. Denton. On the courthouse lawn is a burial site for Capt. Denton.



QUESTIONS

1. What was the first Denton County Courthouse constructed of?

2. How was the first courthouse destroyed?

3. The second courthouse, built in 1877, was made of_____.

4. What destroyed the second courthouse?

5. What is the current courthouse constructed of?

6. What was the major power source in the courthouse prior to 1939?

7. Who was the first architect of the current courthouse?

8. Who was the second architect of the current courthouse?

9. What is found on the first floor of the courthouse?

10. Who conducts the museum tours?

11. What offices are on the second floor?

12. How many County Commissioners are there?

13. What is the name of the center of the Courthouse?

14. Who is buried on the courthouse lawn?

15. What office is on the third floor of the courthouse?

16. What happened to the Courthouse on the Square in 1985?

Argyle

In 1876, a railroad surveyor named Argyle after a Frencch garden.Argyle also has a "Wolf Tree", farmers used to hang dead wolves in the area. They have since stopped doing this. A mysterious bank robbery has not been solved since 1912. Two men robbed the Argyle State Bank of $1,700.00--and got away with it. In 1976, Argyle had its Centennial Celebration

Aubrey

Founded in 1870 by Nooh Edwards, Aubrey is one of the cities in Denton County that grows peanuts. After many disasters, fires and tornadoes, the one thing that stopped Aubrey from growing as big as Dallas was the automobile. Farmers could then drive to bigger cities to shop insted of going to Aubrey.

Bartonville

The first County Seat of Denton County was in Alton, which is near the town of Bartonville. The Double Oak School is the only school still standing from the 1800's. Also in this time period the Chinn's Chapel and Cemetery was built by Elisha Chinn in 1858.

Bolivar

In 1850, Bolivar's name was New Prospect. In 1861, the townspeople voted on the name of Bolivar. The famous Denton County outlaw, Sam Bass, worked on a local man's ranch as a ranch hand. The Dad Egan Ranch. A hotel in the 1880's that was owned by Jess Sartin had a flowing well in its lobby.

Cielo

This lake community was stared in 1936 and died in 1943. Cielo is east of I35 and next to Shady Shores. Now Cielo hosts a private airpot and at one time a movie production company. The movies that made Cielo famous were "The Killer Shrews", "The Giant Gilla Monster", and "My Dog Buddy".

Flower Mound

Flower Mound is located in an area called the East Cross Timbers. This area was heavily populated by a forest when the settlers arrived. In 1844, a family bought the land with the "mound". Before the family bought the land, the Wichita Indians lived on the land. It is believed that no structure has been able to stay on the 50 foot mound.

Bridges/Hebron

The Bridges Colony, the oldest settlement, is located in what is now The Colony. It was renamed to Hebron after the name of Bridges. The original settlers of North Texas were from the Peters Colony, some of them founded Bridges/Hebron in 1843, two years before Texas became a state. In 1884, the Furneaux family built a mansion to copy the one they owned in France.

Justin

Justin is located near the Denton Creek in West Denton County. This creek would flood so much that farmers could not travel north or west until the creek waters went down. In 1845, the year Texass became a state, some French settlers were headed to Hebron, most were pushing handcarts, and settled on the area that is now Justin. The weather turned bad, their doctor left for Pilot Point and most of them got sick. They all moved to Dallas or Illinois.

ACROSS

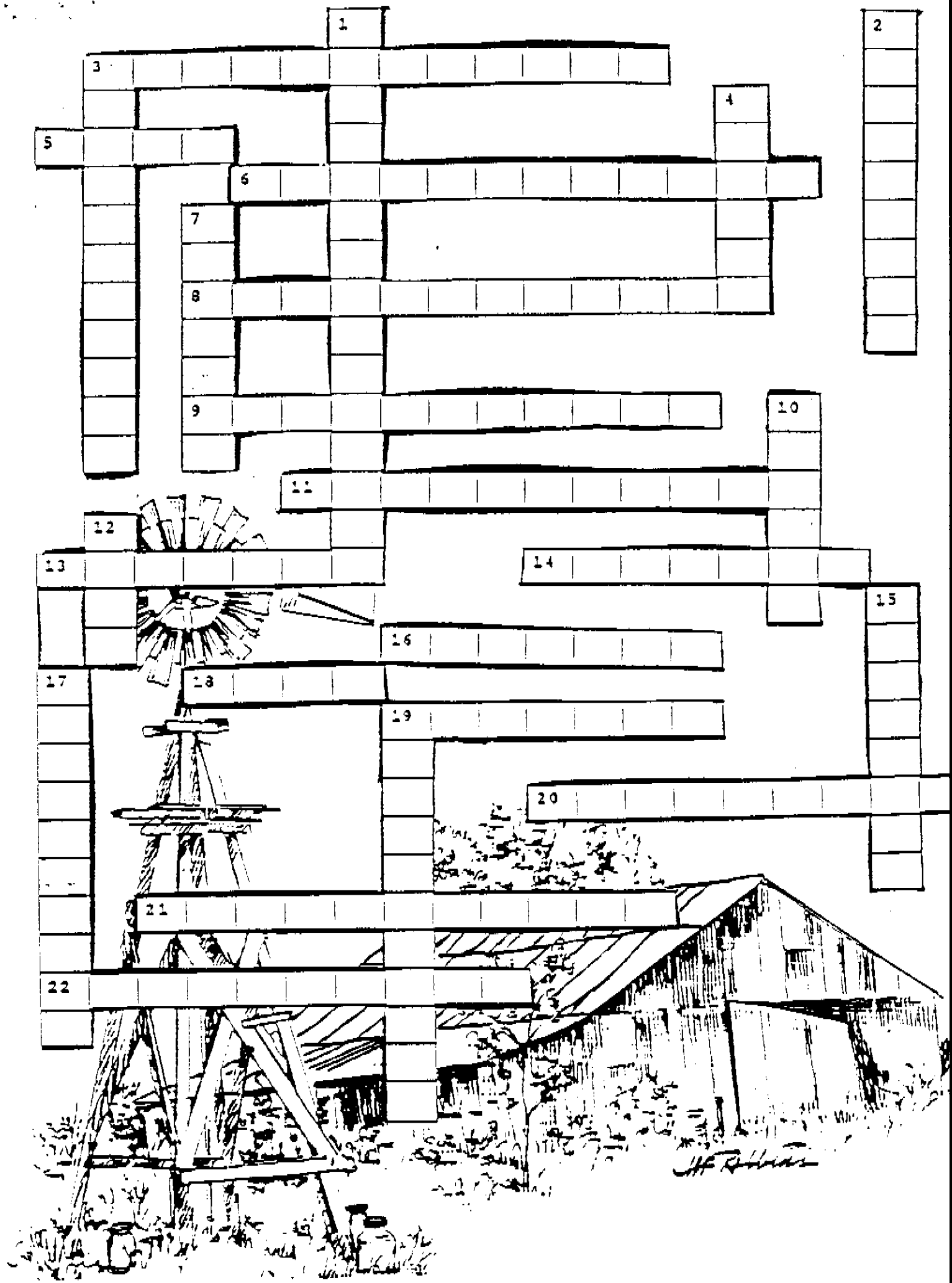
3. What was Argyle named after?
5. Argyles famous_____ tree.
6. Elisha Chinn's Church built in 1858.
8. Ranch that Sam Bass worked on.
9. Founded Aubrey in 1880's.
11. City of Bolivar's first name, 1850.
13. Aubrey's biggest commercial market.
14. Cielo community currently has an _____.
16. Flower Mound is located in East Cross _____.
18. Cielo is _____ of I35.
19. Name of the oldest settlement that became Hebron.
20. Bartonville's historic school.
21. Name of Justin creek that always flooded.
22. Invention that stopped Aubrey's growth.

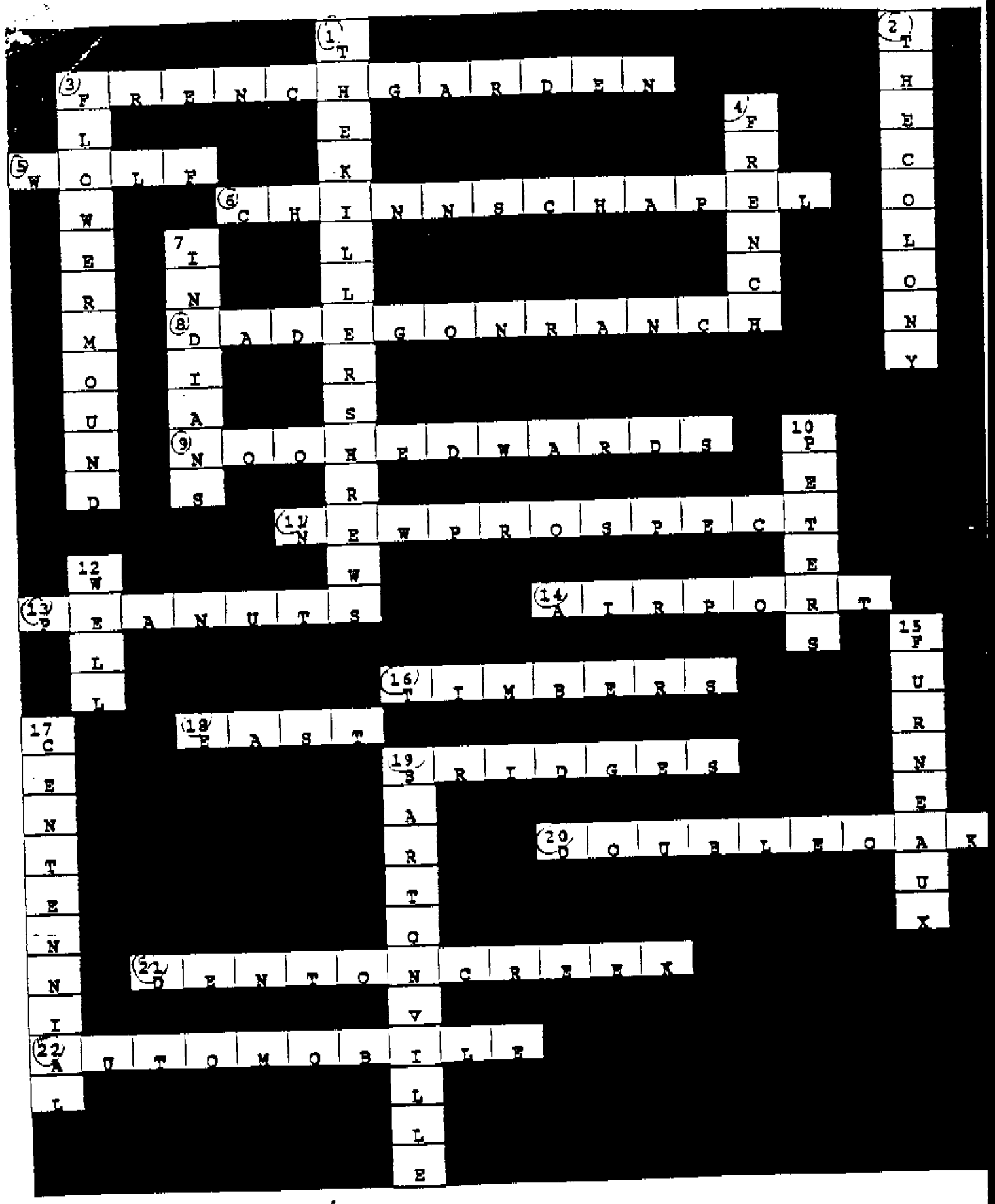
DOWN

1. First movie filmed in Cielo.
2. Hebron/Bridges is now located in _____.
3. Town's name for 50 foot mound.
4. Nationality of 1st settlers in Justin.
7. The Wichita _____ inhabited Flower Mound.
10. Hebron was part of the _____ Colony.
12. Jess Sartin's hotel lobby had a flowing _____.
15. Famous Hebron mansion built in 1884.
17. 1876-1976 marks Argyle's _____ Celebration.
19. Alton, the 1st County Seat was located near _____.

Word Bank

Airport
Automobile
Bartonville
Bridges
Centennial
Chinn's Chapel
Dad Egon Ranch
Denton Creek
Double Oak
East
Flower Mound
French
French Garden
Furneaux
Indians
New Prospect
Nooh Edwards
Peanuts
Peters
The Colony
The Killer Shrews
Timber
Wolf


1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22



Krum

The heirs of Charles Despallier, who fought and died in the Alamo, were given 1,920 acres of land in 1857. Around 1888, the railroad came to Krum and the old Santa Fe Depot Freight office was built. In May of 1963, this landmark was finally demolished. Justin, Ponder, and Krum are all in Denton County's "Breadbasket" area where grain and dairy products are most abundant.

Lake Dallas

Garza, the original name of Lake Dallas, is in the South Denton County area.
On November 10, 1927 the town of Garza changed forever, the dam on the Elm Fork of the Trinity River was completed. The lake created by this dam was called Lake Dallas. In 1908, the family of the Gotchers donated land for the town square of Garza.

Lewisville

In 1847, Basdeal W. Lewis secretly traded for 240 acres of land for a trading post. He disappeared and another trading post started up. These men named the settlement that followed, Lewisville, after Mr. Lewis. In 1925, Lewisville became a town and M.D. Flagg was its first mayor. The Lake Dallas Reservoir was enlarged. The new dam located in Lewisville was renamed the Lewisville Dam in 1955.

Little Elm

Founded in 1845, Little Elm has one of the smallest Post Offices in the nation. When the Garza-Little Elm Lake (Lake Lewisville) was built the town of Little Elm had to be moved or else drown in the waters. Mrs. J.M. Harris said in her book, 112 Years in Little Elm, "Little Elm isn't large and some of it is not even pretty but it still produces some good people." (1956)

Pilot Point

Settlers came to Pilot Point in 1846, a year after Little Elm. The first Denton Newspaper was called the "Vedette". After the Civil War it was only six columns wide. Also, the first Denton college was in Pilot Point, called the Franklin College. This college did not close until there were two colleges in Denton. In 1907, Pilot Point had the largest Cotton Gin in Texas.
It made about 8,000 bales of cotton in a year.

Ponder

The first name of the town of Ponder was Gerald. They could not keep the name Gerald because there was already a town in Texas with the same name, so the citizens chose the name Ponder. This name came form theor best citizen, W.A. Ponder of Denton because he held the most land to the west of Ponder. Noted as the highest town in Denton County, Ponder is 735 feet above sea level. Ponder is surrounded by ranches.

Roanoke

The first name of Roanoke was Medlin, followed by Garden Valley then its name now. This town was founded in 1847. It was named after a railraod workers hometown of Roanoke, Virginia. Before the Civil War, a ghost town was found near Roanoke, Elizabethtown. It died when the railraod went through Roanoke and Justin. Smiley Moore used to have an Indian Museum on the southren edge of Lake Grapevine.

Sanger

In 1886, a family named the Readys were on their way west when a blizzard forced them to stop in Texas. They liked the area they stopped in and decided to stay. As new families kept coming, a town was forming. Many suggested names for the town, one name was Huling but there was already a Texas town named Huling. Another name was New Bolivar, they were so close to the present site of the old Bolivar that they could not use the same name. The Santa Fe Railroad Company suggested the name of Sanger for a town from the Dallas pioneer family named Sanger in 1887.

Southlake

Two historic churches are located in Southlake, Lonesome Dove Church and Whites Chapel. Whites Chapel was founded by Stephen B. Austin in 1872. Initially from Dade County, Georgia, Austin's group met in his home beforethe church was built. In 1846, the Rev. J.A. Freeman and eleven others organized the Lonesome Dove Church. They originally met in a log cabin which is now underneath Lake Grapevine .

ACROSS

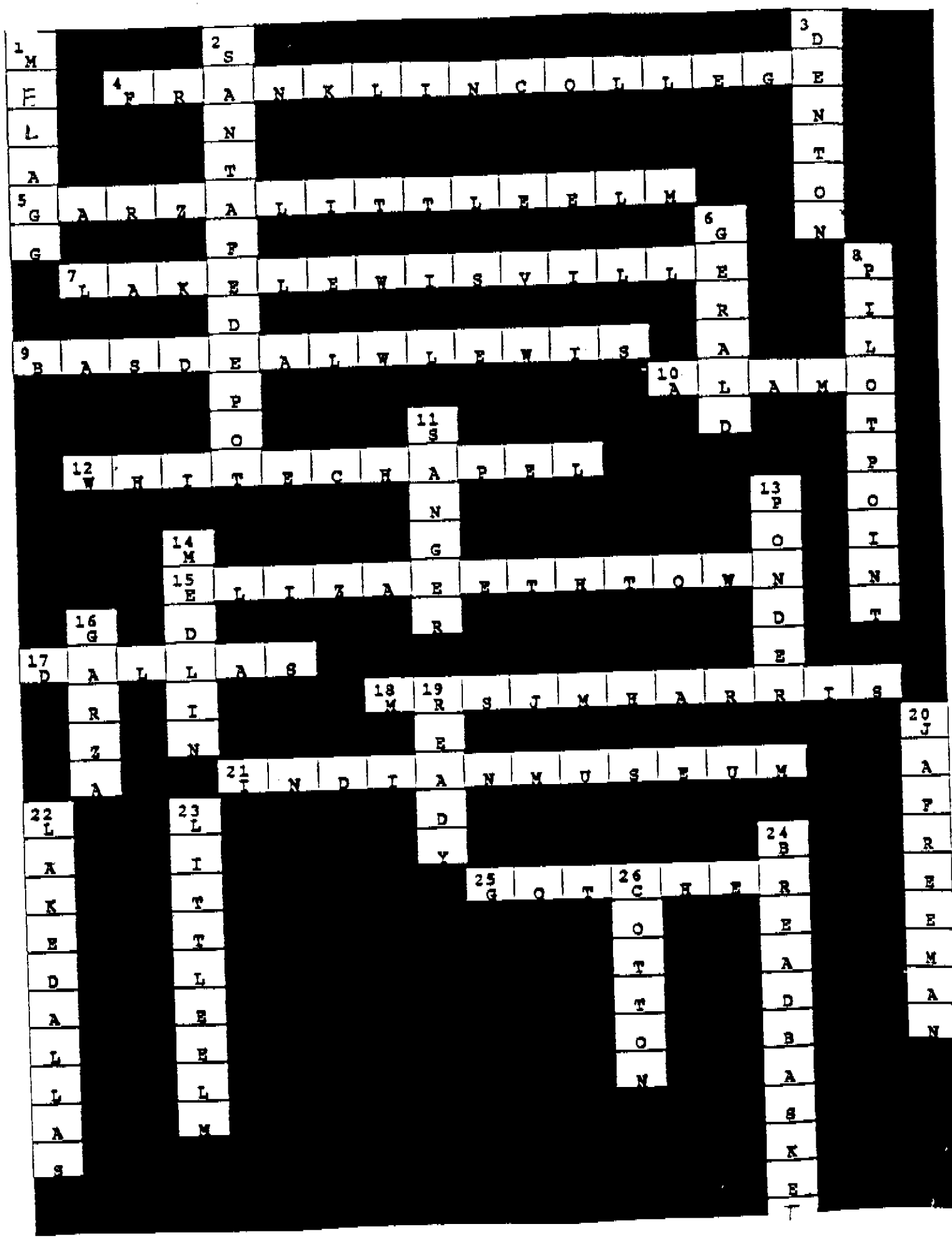
4. 1st College in Denton County.
5. Original name for Lake Lewisville.
7. Caused Little Elm to move.
9. Lewisville named after_____ .
10. Krum started by heirs of the _____.
12. S.B. Austin chapel founded in Southlake.
15. Name of Ghost town near Roanoke.
17. Sanger named for pioneer family from_____.
18. "112 Years in Little Elm" by _____.
21. Smiley Moore's business.
25. Name of family that donated town square to Garza. (Now known as Lake Dallas)

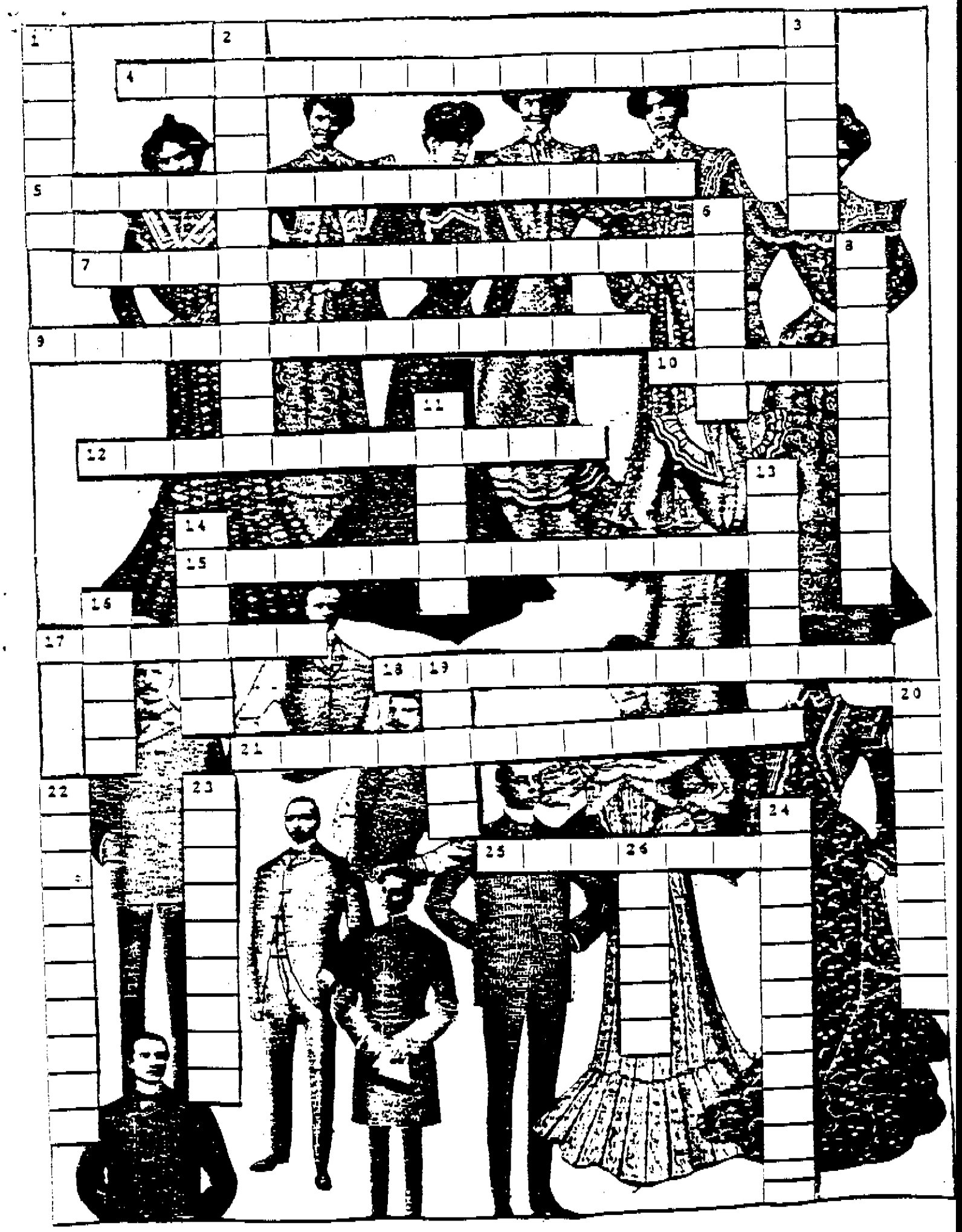
DOWN

1. First Lewisville mayor.
2. Krum landmark that was demolished in 1963.
3. Ponder named for W.A. Ponder form _____.
6. 1st name of town of Ponder.
8. The Vedette, Denton County's 1st newspaper published in _____.
11. Town that was born in a blizzard.
13. Highest town in Denton County.
14. 1st name of the town of Roanoke.
16. Original name of Lake Dallas.
19. 1st family of Sanger.
20. Lonesome Dove Church founded by _____.
22. Name of new lake opened on Nov. 10, 1927.
23. Home of one of the smallest Post Offices.
24. Krum is in Denton's "_____" area.
26. Texas' largest ____ gin located in Pilot Point.

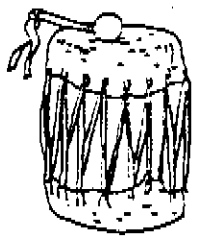
Word Bank

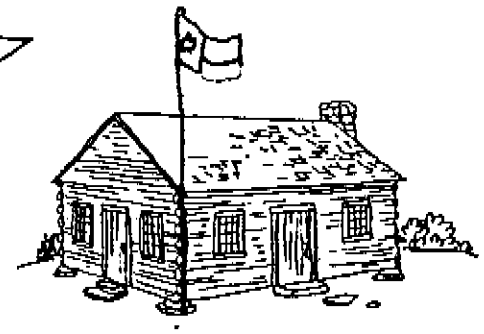
Alamo	J.A. Freeman
Basdeal W. Lewis	Lake Dallas
Breadbasket	Lake Lewisville
Cotton	Little Elm
Dallas	M. Flagg
Denton	Medlin
Elizabethtown	Mrs. J.M. Harris
Franklin College	Pilot Point
Garza	Ponder
Garza Little Elm	Ready
Gerald	Sanger
Gotcher	Santa Fe Depot
Indian Museum	White Chapel


1 M
2 S
3 D
4 F
5 G
6 G
7 L
8 P
9 B
10 A
11 S
12 W
13 P
14 M
15 E
16 G
17 D
18 M
19 R
20 J
21 I
22 L
23 L
24 B
25 G
26 C

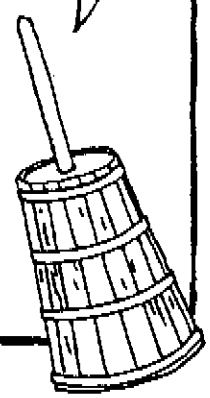

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26

COLOR AND QUIZ





What is a flat iron ?



What is a Groundhog Kiln ?

Where is the Indian drum found ?

For whom is Denton named for and where is he buried ?

Where is the butter churn to be found in the Museum ?

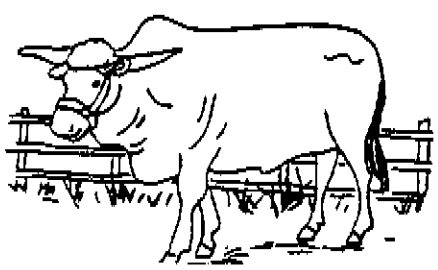
Was the first Denton Courthouse made of logs ? Bricks ? or Stone ?

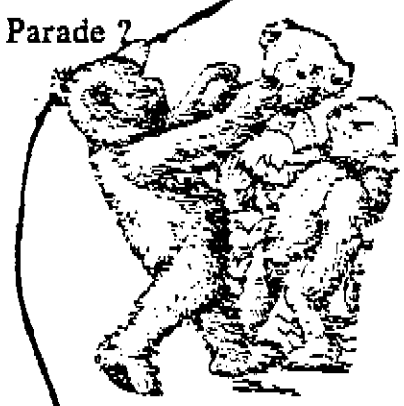
Who was Jingle-Bob John? Why was he nicknamed Jingle-Bob John?

What is in the Doctor's saddlebags ?

When is the Teddy Bear Parade ?

Please come !





DENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM
Is Located on 1st Floor of the Courthouse-On-The-Square
817-565-8697 or 1-800-346-3189

NEW BOOKS IN GIFT SHOP

The Museum Gift Shop has books educators will find useful. They include a series (*Amanda Goes West*, *Amanda's New Life*, *Amanda's Home on the Range*) which relive history through Amanda's journey by wagon train from Tennessee to Texas where she settles with her parents in 1838. Amanda's journal focuses on the hardships and allure of pioneer life. Paper dolls of Amanda's husband and family are also included.

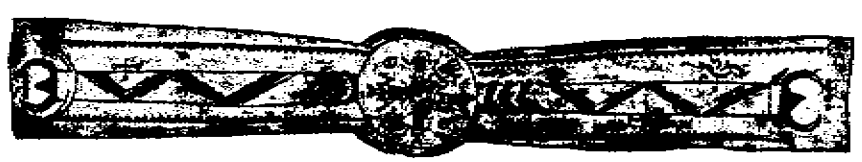
Other books of interest include *The Authentic Life of Billy the Kid*, *Old Indian Legends*, *Tales of Old Time Texas*, *Seven families of Pueblo Pottery*, *Horse and Buggy Doctor*, *Learn About Texas Dinosaurs* (a learning activity book), *Calico Chronicles, Texas Women and Their Fashions 1830 - 1910*, *The Buffalo Soldiers*, *Tumbleweed Tom on the Texas Trail*, *The Story of Texas*, and *Inside a Teepee*.

PLAN A WALKING TOUR OF DOWNTOWN DENTON

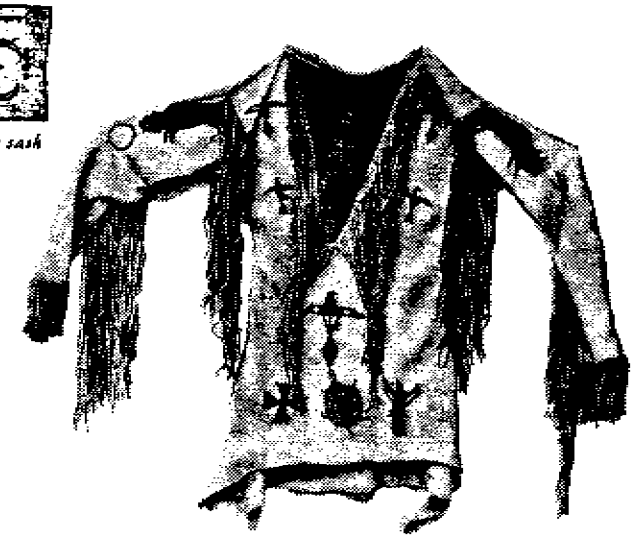
While visiting the Museum, you may want to take advantage of other field trips offered by downtown businesses. The newspaper, Evers' hardware, the police department, the fire department, library, First State Bank, Visual Arts Center, Carroll Courts Building (lawyers and judges) and City Hall also welcome field trips. TEACHERS MUST MAKE ARRANGEMENTS WITH EACH OF THESE BUSINESSES INDIVIDUALLY!!

Sack lunches can be left at the Museum if need be until lunch time. The city park is only a short walk from the Museum or you can picnic on the Courthouse lawn.

Buses can park on the First State Bank parking lot on E. Hickory.



Apache medicine sash



INFORMATION PLEASE!

Teachers, do you need more information about the history of the town or community to help your students develop roots in their new home? Call or write our office to see what our vertical file has to offer.

WHAT IS A TRAVELING TEACHING KIT?

A trunk filled with turn of the century artifacts (some replicas) chosen because of their special use by the early settlers of Denton County, Texas, and the Southwest.

Students in most cases can handle the artifacts (teacher discretion is advised), discuss its use and what has replaced it in today's society. Often, the discussion will evolve into grandparents, antiques, etc.

A Traveling Teaching Kit can be a carousel of slides with a narrative. (Projector will not be furnished as most schools have them.)

Each kit has a set of instructions. Please read them carefully.

We look forward to serving the needs of the school children of Denton County. Call us to reserve a kit. FIRST CALL, FIRST RESERVED!!

KITS AVAILABLE:

Early Denton County Kitchen — Teaching manuals with narratives to use with your students in learning how the kitchen items were used in the early days, and to provide a new insight to our modern day appliances. Artifacts such as an iron, a nutmeg grater, a flour sifter, a rolling pin, and an iceman's delivery card are included.

Early School Kit — Use the teacher's manual with items such as slates, school bells, McGuffy readers, and a dunce cap.

Ask about Artifact Bingo Kit

Jones Farm and Archeology Kit — This kit was prepared by the University of North Texas. The teacher's manual provides details on a "dig" with pictures and archeological artifacts like petrified wood, brick fragments, horseshoe nails, and cartridge shells.

Slides of Early Denton — From the prairie to the sod house, to the outhouse, from the split rail fence to barbed wire, in a carousel with a teacher's narrative to provide you with a trip back in time.

Videos — Available from the Museum in the Fall of 1996.

Traveling teaching kits can be delivered to the Denton County Satellite Office near you. Just follow these steps:

◆ Call the Museum office to reserve the kit you want to use.

◆ Tell the Museum staff person you want to have the kit delivered.

◆ The staff will give you a date and a place to pick up the kit. You will pick up the kit at the County government office agreed upon and return the kit to the same government office.

◆ Before you return the kit to the County government office, turn the card over in the plastic packet and the Museum's return address will appear. The Denton County Mail Van will return the kit to the Museum for you.

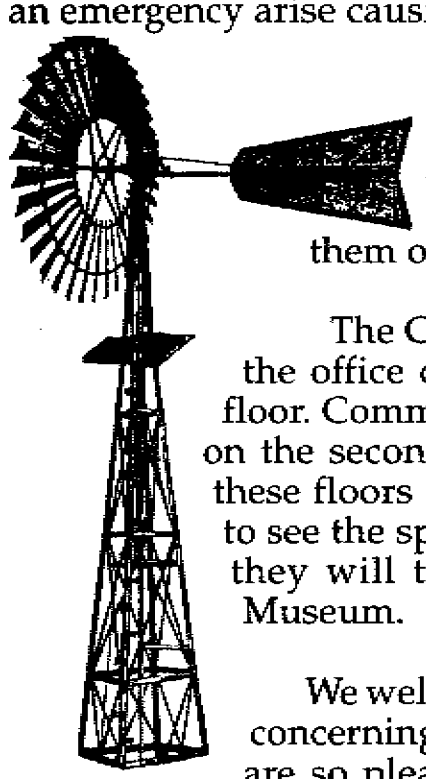
We want to make it easy for you to use the Traveling Teaching Kits.

The Historical Museum is pleased to provide a tour of the Museum in the Courthouse-on-the-Square in the county seat of Denton County, Texas. To make the trip educational and fun, we are enclosing some information sheets for you to use in preparing your classes for the tour.

Boys Bathing Suit

1. a brief history of Denton County.
2. a brief history of the Courthouse.
3. a guide titled "Visual Treasures of the Courthouse" most students are very excited at the prospect of looking for these treasures as they tour the Courthouse.
4. additional items may be included as they become available.

Your confirmation is very important. Please advise our office should an emergency arise causing changes in your plans.



Tour guides for school classes are Volunteers who may drive a great distance to provide your special tour. Often the tour guides are retired teachers who reside in all parts of Denton County. It is difficult to cancel them on short notice, Please try to meet your schedule.

The Courthouse-on-the-Square is a working building. This means the office of the Museum and Historical Commission are on the first floor. Commissioners and the County Judge with their staffs are housed on the second and third floor. Your classes will be taken to these floors to visit the hall exhibits, courtroom and to see the special features of the building. Of course, they will tour the first floor exhibit areas of the Museum.

We welcome teachers' suggestions and questions concerning the programs the Museum provides. We are so pleased you are choosing to visit and look forward to helping you.

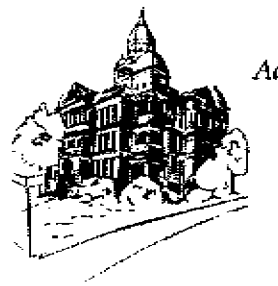
See you at the Courthouse!

EDITORIAL STAFF

Norma Lynn Gamble
Museum Director

Holly Hervey
Collections Management Assistant

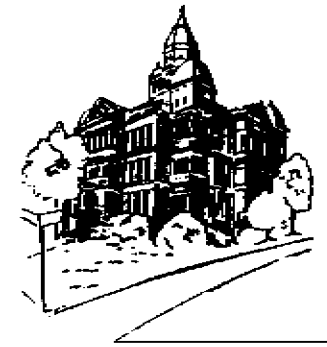
June Hood
Staff Volunteer Coordinator



Gayle Stickeles
Administrative Secretary

Dorothy Chastain
Museum Assistant

Cindy Norman
TWU Intern



MUSEUM MUSINGS

SPECIAL EDITION FOR EDUCATORS

PLAN A FIELD TRIP TO THE MUSEUM

Have you visited the Museum?

Do you know the Museum has exhibits of rare dolls, Sam Bass, guns, Victorian fashion, an old-time kitchen, bedroom, parlor, early pottery kilns, archeological sites, and early photographs?

Visiting the Museum is an excellent field trip. Students are divided into small groups and given tours by Museum staff and volunteers.

Please call the Museum to arrange a tour. It will be a trip your students will remember for a lifetime.

Museum Musings is published by the
DENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM, INC.
501C3 NON PROFIT CORPORATION

HOW TO CONTACT THE MUSEUM

CALL US AT:
817-565-8693
OR 817-565-8697
OR TOLL-FREE 1-800-346-3189

(THE 1-800 NUMBER IS FOR THE COUNTY SWITCHBOARD. ASK THE SWITCHBOARD OPERATOR FOR THE MUSEUM.)

WRITE US:
PO BOX 2800
DENTON, TEXAS 76202

OFFICE HOURS:
8:00 - 5:00
MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY

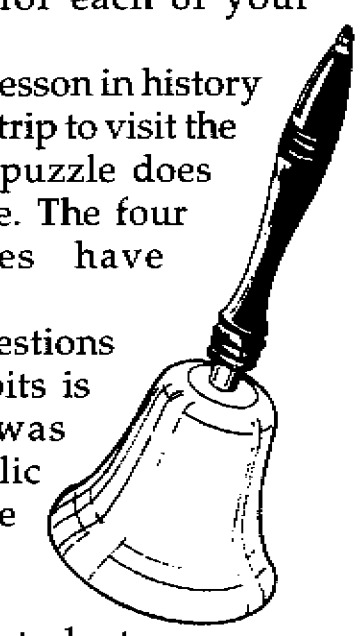
MUSEUM HOURS:
MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY 10:30 - 4:30
SATURDAY 1 - 4:30

SPECIAL TOURS FOR GROUPS OF 10 OR MORE ARE AVAILABLE.
SPECIAL TOURS MUST BE SCHEDULED IN ADVANCE

. . . . . .

SOMETHING NEW JUST FOR CHILDREN!

Crossword puzzles featuring facts from Denton County history with narratives, puzzles, clues and answer sheets are included in this packet. You may make copies for each of your students.



This is a good lesson in history before you make the trip to visit the Museum. The first puzzle does not need a narrative. The four remaining puzzles have narratives.

A sheet of questions about current exhibits is included. This was prepared by a public school teacher for use before and after the trip to the Museum. The middle school students using this list had fun and learned new facts about Denton County.

Dear Teachers,

The Historical Museum is pleased to provide a tour of the Museum in the Courthouse-on-the-Square in the county seat of Denton County, Texas. To make the trip educational and fun, we are enclosing some information sheets for you to use in preparing your classes for the tour.

1. a brief history of Denton County.
2. a brief history of the Courthouse.
3. a guide titled "Visual Treasures of the Courthouse"
   most students are very excited at the prospect of
   looking for these treasures as they tour the Courthouse.
4. additional items may be included as they become available.

Your confirmation information is very important. Please advise our office should an emergency arise causing changes in your plans.

Tour guides for school classes are *Volunteers* who may drive a great distance to provide your special tour. Often the tour guides are retired teachers who reside in all parts of Denton County. It is difficult to cancel them on short notice. Please try to meet your schedule.

The Courthouse-on-the-Square is a working building. This means the office of the Museum and Historical Commisson are on the first floor. Commissioners and the County Judge with their staffs are housed on the second and third floor. Your classes will be taken to these floors to visit the hall exhibits, courtroom and to see the special features of the building. Of course, they will tour the first floor exhibit areas of the Museum.

We welcome teachers' suggestions and questions concerning the programs the Museum provides.

We are so pleased you are choosing to visit and look forward to helping youin any way we possible.

Sincerely,

Norma Lynn Gamble

Norma Lynn Gamble
Museum Director

Museum Musings

Special Edition For Educators

published by the Denton County Historical Museum

Traveling Teaching Kits Are Available Now

What is a Traveling Teaching Kit?

A trunk filled with turn of the century artifacts (some replicas) chosen because of their special use by the early settlers of Denton, Texas, and the Southwest.

Students in most cases can handle the artifacts (teacher discretion advised), discuss its use and what has replaced it in today's society. Often, the discussion will evolve into grandparents, antiques, etc.

A Traveling Teaching Kit can also be a carousel of slides with a narrative. (Projector will not be furnished as most schools have them.)

Each kit has a set of instructions. Please read them carefully. (Identical kits are available where shown.) Your use will determine whether we prepare additional kits.

We look forward to this new method of serving the needs of the school children of Denton County. Call us to reserve a kit. FIRST CALL, FIRST RESERVED!

The Museum can also have Traveling Teaching Kits delivered to the Denton County Satellite Office near you. Just follow these steps:

- Call the Museum office to reserve the kit you want to use.
- Tell the Museum staff person you want to have the kit delivered.
- The staff will give you a date and a place to pick up the kit. You will pick up the kit at the government office agreed upon and return the kit to the same government office.
- Before you return the kit to the government office, turn the card over in the plastic pocket and the Museum's return address will appear. The Denton County Mail Van will return the kit to the Museum for you.

We want to make it easy for you to use the Traveling Teaching Kits.

How To Contact The Museum

Call us at
817-565-8693
or 817-565-8697
or toll-free 1-800-346-3189

(The 1-800 number is for the county switchboard. Ask the switchboard operator for the Museum.)

Write us at
PO Box 2800
Denton, Texas 76202

Office hours are 8:00 - 5:00 Monday through Friday.

Traveling Teaching Kit Descriptions

Early Denton County Kitchen - Teaching manuals with narratives to use with your students in learning how the kitchen items were used in the early days, and provide a new insight to our modern day appliances. Artifacts such as an iron, a nutmeg grater, a flour sifter, a wooden rolling pin, and an iceman's delivery card are included.

Early School Kit - Use the teacher's manual with school items such as slates, school bells, McGuffy readers, and a dunce cap. Two of these kits are available.

Jones Farm and Archeology Kit - This kit was prepared by the University of North Texas. The teacher's manual provides details on a "dig" with pictures and archeological artifacts like petrified wood, brick fragments, horseshoe nails, and cartridge shells.

Slides of early Denton County - from the prairie to the sod house, to the outhouse . . . from the split rail fence to barbed wire . . . Approximately 44 slides in a carousel with a teacher's narrative to provide you with a trip back in time. Five of these kits are available.

Speakers Are Available for Your Schools

AVAILABLE ON A VERY LIMITED BASIS AT THIS TIME

Volunteer speakers will come to your school. They can use a teaching kit, or speak on subjects that co-ordinate with the teacher's lesson plan. Speakers are usually volunteers. They are grandparents, retired teachers, and retired businessmen who enjoy working with children. Call the Museum after September 1st 1993 to arrange for a speaker to visit your class.

New Books in Gift Shop

The Museum Gift Shop has recently received a shipment of several books educators will find useful. They include a series (Amanda Goes West, Amanda's New Life, Amanda's Home on the Range) which relive history through Amanda's journey by wagon train from Tennessee to Texas where she settles with her parents in 1838. Amanda's journal focuses on the hardships and allure of pioneer life. Paper dolls of Amanda's husband and family are also included. Other books of interest include *The Authentic Life of Billy the Kid, Old Indian Legends, Tales of Old Time Texas, Seven Families of Pueblo Pottery,* and *Horse and Buggy Doctor.*

Information, Please

Teachers, do you need more information about the history of the town or community to help your students develop roots in their new home? Call or write our office to see what our vertical file has to offer.

Plan a Field Trip to the Museum

Have you visited the Museum? Do you know the Museum has exhibits on rare dolls, Sam Bass, guns, Victorian fashion, and an old-time kitchen, bedroom, and parlor? Visiting the Museum is an excellent field trip. Students are broken up into small groups and given tours by Museum staff and volunteers. Please call the Museum if you are interested in arranging a tour. It will be a trip your students will remember for a lifetime.

Plan a Walking Tour of Downtown Denton

While visiting the Museum, you might also want to take advantage of other field trips offered by downtown businesses. The newspaper, Evers' hardware, the police department, the fire department, library, First State Bank, Visual Arts Center, Carroll Courts Building (lawyers and judges) and City Hall also welcome field trips. *TEACHERS MUST MAKE ARRANGEMENTS WITH EACH OF THESE BUSINESSES INDIVIDUALLY!!* Contact numbers may be requested from the Museum.

Sack lunches can be left at the Museum if need be until lunch time. The city park is only a short walk from the Museum.

Buses can park on the First State Bank parking lot on E. Hickory.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Statement of Purpose:

The purpose of the Denton County Historical Museum is to collect and preserve historical material on Denton County, Texas, to interpret this history, to own property, to publish material, to conduct educational programs, and to do anything that is worthwhile to achieve this objective.

Acquisition Policy:

It is the policy of the Denton County Historical Museum to collect only those artifacts, publications, archives material, and other materials related to life in Denton County, Texas. The Museum should collect only those things of that nature it is able to care fore, preserve, store, and exhibit in a manner acceptable to the museum field at large. The acquisition committee will report from time to time all new acquisitions for the approval of the governing board, and no material will be taken into our collection until so approved.

Tax Deductibility:

All donations to the Denton County Historical Museum are deductible from taxable income in accordance with provisions of the Federal Income Tax Law: however, the Museum assumes no responsibility for evaluating donations.

DENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM COLLECTIONS POLICY;

1. Types of Collections maintained in the Museum.
   a. Permanent exhibit collections. Items that relate directly to the Museum's purposes and are the finest items available. Used only for exhibition. Most are original and priceless.
   b. Study Collections. Fine items used for changing exhibits, classroom study, or loan to other museums and institutions. Are usually duplicates or worn items that still maintain a teaching quality, but not exhibition quality.
   c. Expendable Collections. Items donated primarily for their tax advantage, and are usually traded or sold to other museums. These items are important as they create funds enabling the Museum to purchase an occasional artifact or material that relates more to its purpose or for its exhibit program.
2. Gifts or bequests to the Denton County Historical Museum are accepted with the understanding that they are unrestricted offers without limiting conditions as to placement, exhibit, or ultimate disposition and that all rights of publication become the property of the Museum upon acceptance of the gift or bequest.
3. The Museum has a policy of changing the material on exhibit in order to preserve it from ultraviolet light, dust and insects. For this reason, no donations can be considered on exhibit permanently.
4. All donations are tax deductible.
5. In the event the Museum Committee does not accept this gift, all items must be removed from the Denton County Historical Museum within thirty (30) days of notification. All items not removed by this deadline shall automatically become the property of the Denton County Historical Museum and shall be subject to disposal.

ECONOMIC IMPACT GENERATED BY TRAVELERS IN DENTON COUNTY'S CITIES

	1989	1990	1991
Expenditures	$80 million	$91.4 million	$94.6 million
Payroll	$17 million	$20 million	$21 million
Jobs	1,530	1,780	1,820

Denton County ranked 22nd among the 254 counties in traveler economic impact in 1991.

These figures are according to research from the state commerce department.

".....whenever there is a draw on taxes, people want to know what's the return; what they are getting for their money," said Stan Hodge, research coordinator.

Economic impact is defined in the study as measures of spending, employment, payroll, business receipts and tax revenues. Payroll is defined as salaries, wages, commissions, bonuses and vacation allowance.

"The Denton County Historical Museum is one of the county's major tourist attractions."*

*FROM DENTON RECORD CHRONICLE
FEBRUARY 1993
DAN BLEDSOE, STAFF WRITER

DENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM, INC.
PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

Book/Publication	Price
Alvin M. Owsley of Texas, by Marion S. Adams	$10.00
Amanda Goes West	$ 5.95
Amanda's Home on the Range	$ 6.95
Amanda's New Life	$ 5.95
A young girl's adventures in the West plus paper doll cut-outs	
An Illustrated History of Denton County, by E. Dale Odom	$24.95
Argyle Community History, by Jenkins & Watson	$ 3.95
Building the Denton County Courthouse, by Bullitt Lowry	$ 5.00
Denton County, Texas Historical Markers & Their Locations, DCHC	$10.00
Denton County, Texas Wills (1876-1940), D.C.G.S.	$25.00
Centurama - 100 years of progress in Denton County	$ 3.00
Denton Review, Historical Society of Denton County	$ 2.50
Denton Woman's Club Cookbook	$17.95
Eakins Cemetery, Denton County, Texas	$10.00
History & Reminiscences of Denton County, by Ed F. Bates	$16.00
History of Denton, From its Beginning to 1960, by Dr. C. A. Bridges	$15.75
IOOF Cemetery, DCHC	$20.00
Mattie's Story, Great-great granddaughter of John B. Denton	$15.00
Name Index for History & Reminiscences of Denton County	$ 6.00
This was published to be used with the original book that did not have an index. Current edition has index.	
Peters Colonists-2 vol. set. Story of early North Texas Settlers	$10.00
Ponder Rodeo, City of Ponder's early rodeo days	$15.00
Quakertown, 1870-1922 History of a black community in Denton	$13.05
Recipes and Recollections, Denton County Historical Commission	$10.00
*Story of Sanger, by Eunice S. Gray	$11.60
W.R. Strong, His Memoirs, ed. Pete A.Y.Gunter & R. A. Calvert	$ 5.00
112 Years in Little Elm, Narrative of Little Elm's earliest community	$17.50

Books purchased in person will be price plus 7.75% sales tax.
Books shipped will be price plus $5.00 (includes tax). Add $.50 (50c) for each additional book.
*Story of Sanger $15.00 includes tax,shipping & handling

ORDER FORM

Name of Book/Publication	#Ordered	Amount

NAME:_____ SHIPPING_____
ADDRESS:_____
CITY,STATE,ZIP:_____ TOTAL_____

Please make all checks payable to:
DENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM
P.O. BOX 2800
DENTON, TEXAS 76202
Books are sold through the Museum.

Denton Record Chronicle, Index to Obituaries, Vol.1	$20.00 + tax
Denton Record Chronicle, Index to Obituaries, Vol.2	$20.00 + tax

SAM BASS EXHIBIT

The items in this case were loaned to the Museum by a Denton family who asked that their name not be displayed. The gun is one reputed to have killed Sam Bass. According to the story related by Henry Lucian Moore, handy man for Sam Bass, "The Bass gang entered a store where the Rangers had been tipped off as to Sam's whereabouts. When a gun fight broke out, Bass was killed by one of his own gang members. The gun was shoved in Henry Moore's hands, and he was told to 'shut and get.' Moore fled to Arkansas fearing for his life. After approximately one year, he returned to Denton where he continued to maintain silence regarding the events relating to the Bass shooting."

The stone china soup tureen and coffee pot were reputed to have been used by Sam Bass. They came into the possession of Bass's cook after his death.

The painting of the frame building is of the Lacy Hotel which stood on the Northeast corner of the square, where the Texas Building is now.) When Sam Bass first came to Denton in 1872, he was employed as a stable hand there.

The gravestone rubbing is of Bass' gravestone at Round Rock, TX, where Sam is buried. This is the second or third nice stone that has been placed at his grave. As you can see, people have been "chipping away" pieces as souvenirs.

The legend of Sam Bass is one that is well known around Denton County, but there is very little factual information that we have about him. One thing for sure: he was not a very successful outlaw; he could not make a living at it. He had much more success racing his horse, the "Denton Mare."

(Prepared in 1979 by Thelma Stevens, Director of Museum)

SEWING AREA IN BEDROOM

Most homes about the turn of the century had an area set aside for sewing. The sewing area might be a part of the family bedroom. It might be a part of the parlor (during the week, of course), and even a few women were fortunate enough to have a separate room designated as a sewing room. Most of the garments worn by the women and children were made at home. Most of the household linens (such as sheets, pillowcases, dish towels, quilts and many other items) were made by hand, as well.

Many activities took place in the sewing area. New garments were made, and mending was done. Quilts were pieced together, cotton was carded for their stuffing, and then they were quilted. Most women made all their own knitted items: stockings, sweaters, caps and mufflers. Things that most of us take for granted were all made at home. Located in the exhibit is a working sewing machine, patented in 1903.

Note the trundle bed under the bed and the bed (foot) warmer. A quilt beater rests atop the quilts in the wooden chest. A wardrobe (free-standing closet) housed the limited clothing of the pioneer families.

DONORS: Bed, c. 1890, James Thomason, Denton; Sewing Machine, c. 1903, Lucy Faught, Argyle; Wooden Quilt Chest, Williams Estate, Denton; Shoe collection, Mr. & Mrs. Coit Carpenter, Denton; Rocker, Mary McNath, Denton; Seatee, Lamp, Eunice Gray, Sanger.

UNT HISTORICAL COLLECTION: Spinning Wheel, Wicker Bed, Round-top Trunk, Lamps, Room Accessories.

JUDGE JOSEPH A. CARROLL

Born near Louisiana (Pike County) Missouri, November 28, 1832. Moved to Denton in early 1850's. Founded Abstract Company in 1856. (Operated as Jagoe Abstract since 1874.) Licensed to practice law with W.T.G. Weaver in 1858. Married Cecelia Jane Burris (1842-1869) of Denton on December 28, 1858.

Entered the Civil War in 1861 as a private and soon became a lieutenant with Welch's Company. Transferred to De Morse's 29th Texas Cavalry in 1862 and was discharged as a Major in June of 1865. Married Martha Inman in September, 1870. Elected District Judge, 16th District, February 16, 1876. Re-elected in 1878. Did not seek re-election in 1880. Fifth person to serve as 16th District Judge. Chairman of the 5th Congressional District Democratic Committee.

Organized the Exchange National Bank (First State Bank, now located at the same site) in 1881 and served as president. Mayor of Denton, 1890-91, member of IOOF Lodge, member of syndicate that organized and founded the Normal College (now University of North Texas.) Died October 12, 1891. Buried in the IOOF Cemetery in Denton. Joseph A. Carroll Courts Building named in honor of him in 1976. The Seat of County Government moved to the Courts Building in 1978.

(The desk, safe and bookcase belonged to Judge Carroll. The desk and bookcase were obtained in the summer of 1986 at the Wright-Williams Estate Sale. The safe was donated by the J. W. Jagoe III.)

TOYMAKING

"Few historical examples of American toys remain, primarily because toys were made from whatever materials were at hand and were not considered enough to save. Both practical and religious factors, moreover, discouraged the introduction of toys into the life of the American child. Lack of shipboard space prevented the earliest settlers from bringing toys to America. As they labored to create new homes in the wilderness, they had little time for play, and those children who did not die in infancy worked alongside their parents in the effort to survive.

"Gradually, as life became easier for parents, their attitudes about children changed. A few pieces survive. At first, religiously-oriented toys were allowed--objects that were directly related to biblical tales. Noah's Ark was a toy boat with a removable top, inside of which were stored dozens of miniature animals. Children were allowed an increasing variety of playthings, all of which were made by hand from available materials.

"The growth of manufacturing after the Civil War also signaled the growth of the commercial toy industry. Wooden sleds, rocking horses, and other items appeared in mail-order catalogs and general stores stocked more and more factory-made toys. Many people, especially in the isolated mountain communities of the South, could not afford manufactured toys. They continued to make their own--sewing dolls from scraps of material, whittling animals from scraps of wood and crafting miniatures of the adult environment from whatever was at hand. These toys were exquisite in their simplicity of design and inventive use of materials."

SOURCE: BY THE SOUTHERN HANDS, Jan Arnow, Roundtable Press Books, Oxmoor House, Birmingham, AL., 1987

SAM BASS EXHIBIT

The items in this case were loaned to the Museum by a Denton family who asked that their name not be displayed. The gun is one reputed to have killed Sam Bass. According to the story related by Henry Lucian Moore, handy man for Sam Bass, "The Bass gang entered a store where the Rangers had been tipped off as to Sam's whereabouts. When a gun fight broke out, Bass was killed by one of his own gang members. The gun was shoved in Henry Moore's hands, and he was told to 'shut and get.' Moore fled to Arkansas fearing for his life. After approximately one year, he returned to Denton where he continued to maintain silence regarding the events relating to the Bass shooting."

The stone china soup tureen and coffee pot were reputed to have been used by Sam Bass. They came into the possession of Bass's cook after his death.

The painting of the frame building is of the Lacy Hotel which stood on the Northeast corner of the square, where the Texas Building is now.) When Sam Bass first came to Denton in 1872, he was employed as a stable hand there.

The gravestone rubbing is of Bass' gravestone at Round Rock, TX, where Sam is buried. This is the second or third nice stone that has been placed at his grave. As you can see, people have been "chipping away" pieces as souvenirs.

The legend of Sam Bass is one that is well known around Denton County, but there is very little factual information that we have about him. One thing for sure: he was not a very successful outlaw; he could not make a living at it. He had much more success racing his horse, the "Denton Mare."

(Prepared in 1979 by Thelma Stevens, Director of Museum)

VICTORIAN PARLOR AND MUSIC ROOM

The Victorian Era spans the reign of Queen Victoria, who ruled Great Britain and Ireland from 1837 to 1901. Her influence is seen in the architecture of the Denton Courthouse on the Square which was completed in 1896 and restored in 1987.

The Victorians had a taste for highly decorated buildings, and their taste also greatly influenced the exterior, as well as the interior, of their homes.

The furniture in our Victorian Parlor and Music Room characterizes their love of ornate and flowery carved furniture. Heavy rich velvets and elegant damask complemented their heavily embellished furniture. Fringe was used to add a finished touch of elegance to the draperies, lampshades and upholstered pieces. The Victorians had a taste for the exotic, and they accessorized their homes with ferns, peacock feathers, statues, clocks, candelabrum, oriental prints and rugs and Japanese fans.

The Victorian believed in progress. During the Victorian Age the great inventions of electricity, gas power, hot-and-cold running water, and central heating were made. Lighting went through many changes during the Victorian Age from candles to kerosene lamps to gaslights and then to the electric light bulbs. The Victorians were careful to keep the house well ventilated because they worried about fumes from the gas lights. With central heating, floor plans changed, and rooms did not have to be shut off to hold fireplace heat.

FAMOUS VICTORIANS: Pres./ Lincoln, Buffalo Bill, Jane Addams, Catherine Beecher

MUSIC: Brass Bands, Barbershop Quartets, Invention of Trombone, Develop Larger Symphonies

SAM BASS SONG

Sam Bass was born in Indiana. It was his native home–
When at the age of 17, young Sam began to roam,
He first came out to Texas a cowboy for to be
A kind-hearted fellow you scarcely ever see.

Sam used to deal in race stock, had one he called "The Denton Mare"
He used to match scrub races, he'd take her to the fairs.
He always coined the money, he spent it mighty free,
Drank plenty of red whisky where ever he might be.

Sam had four companions, four bold and daring lads--
Jim Murphy, Jackson Underwood, Joel L. Collins and "Old Dad."
Four bolder, reckless cowboys the "wild west" never knew
They whipped the Texas Rangers and chased the "boys in blues."

Sam had another comrade he called "Arkansas" for short
He was killed by Texas Rangers, who thought it was great sport.
Sam left the Joel L. Collins Ranch in merry month of May
With a herd of Texas cattle the Black Hills for to see.

They sold out in Kansas City and all got on a spree,
A tougher bunch of cowboys you will seldom ever see.
On their way back to Texas they robbed the U.P. train--
They broke up in couples and started out again.

Joel L. Collins and his pardner were overtaken soon
And with their hard earned money, they had to meet their doom--
Sam got back to Texas, all right side up with care
He rode right into Denton...his old friends met him there
Sam met his death at Round Rock...July 21st
They riddled Sam with bullets and emptied out his purse.

As remembered in 1977 by Novelene Porter McDonald, former Denton resident as it was sung to her by her father, Charlie E. Porter (1872-1925) of the Bolivar area. Mrs. McDonald states there are several more verses to the song. Mrs. McDonald was living in Graham, Texas at the time she sent this information to us.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE - COBBLER'S TOOLS

"Shoes and boots, worn as protective footwear are ancient items of dress. In early civilizations shoemaking skills were developed to a high degree; styles and variety were produced by the artisan, but the process was slow and expensive. Modern mass production depended upon the development of shoe machinery, which began about the middle of the 19th Century. The industry logically developed most extensively in the more highly industrialized nation.

"The first type of footwear was a simple wraparound strip of leather (the basic construction of a moccasin), held together on the foot with rawhide lacings.

"In 1818 "lasts" (wooden forms) for shaping shoes were made in rights and lefts. Another milestone was reached in 1846 when Elias Howe invented the sewing machine. Previously, the majority of shoes were made by attaching the sole to the upper part with tacks, nails, or wooden pegs; any sewing was done by hand.

"Since time immemorial the basic materials for shoes and boots have been leather, used for uppers, linings, counters, inner soles, welting and other parts. Though still dominant, leather is being replaced by other materials, particularly in the component parts of shoes."

SOURCE: ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA, 1972

The 19th Century shoemaking capital of North America was located in Lynn, Massachusetts where two London-trained shoemakers and their "hydes" first arrived aboard the Mayflower in 1629. By the year 1855 over 15,000 men and women were employed at the trade in Lynn and their annual production amounted to four million dollars worth of handmade footwear. Fifteen years later, in 1870, the work force had dropped slightly, but machines for pegging and stitching enabled employees to raise production to eleven million pairs of boots and shoes worth over seventeen million dollars.

SEWING AREA IN BEDROOM

Most homes about the turn of the century had an area set aside for sewing. The sewing area might be a part of the family bedroom. It might be a part of the parlor (during the week, of course), and even a few women were fortunate enough to have a separate room designated as a sewing room. Most of the garments worn by the women and children were made at home. Most of the household linens (such as sheets, pillowcases, dish towels, quilts and many other items) were made by hand, as well.

Many activities took place in the sewing area. New garments were made, and mending was done. Quilts were pieced together, cotton was carded for their stuffing, and then they were quilted. Most women made all their own knitted items: stockings, sweaters, caps and mufflers. Things that most of us take for granted were all made at home. Located in the exhibit is a working sewing machine, patented in 1903.

Note the trundle bed under the bed and the bed (foot) warmer. A quilt beater rests atop the quilts in the wooden chest. A wardrobe (free-standing closet) housed the limited clothing of the pioneer families.

DONORS: Bed, c. 1890, James Thomason, Denton; Sewing Machine, c. 1903, Lucy Faught, Argyle; Wooden Quilt Chest, Williams Estate, Denton; Shoe collection, Mr. & Mrs. Coit Carpenter, Denton; Rocker, Mary McNath, Denton; Seatee, Lamp, Eunice Gray, Sanger.

UNT HISTORICAL COLLECTION: Spinning Wheel, Wicker Bed, Round-top Trunk, Lamps, Room Accessories.

LOOM WEAVING
Produced Family Textiles

"Having a loom and spinning wheel were luxuries not all families possessed, but most men had enough building skills to construct them, even though they might be crudely made. Commercially made ones were not available in Texas until the 1840's. Tools for making the cloth (the wheel for spinning yarn and the loom for its weaving) were important to most families. Clothing was not ready made in those days. As soon as they could get the wool, cotton, or flax, women immediately set up their production.

"A sturdy fabric would result from the combination of cotton or linen (derived from flax) used for a warp yarn in the loom and wool for the weft. This homespun fabric, referred to a linsey-woolsey or linsey-homespun, was considered by some to be coarse and ugly. It was, nevertheless, so important to the colonists that the woman of the house was reluctant to have anyone else cut into the goods. She felt more skilled at making use of every inch! It took almost two weeks of steady and earnest labor to spin enough thread for a dress; then it took another week to weave the fabric. Depending on the style and complication of construction, it could take an additional week to cut and stitch the garment, always by hand, as the sewing machine was not invented until 1846 and not generally in use in Texas until after the Civil War.

Preparing the fiber for the loom was a family affair. Even little children could help by picking out the trash from the cotton and getting it ready for the older girls, who kept the spinning wheel and loom humming a good part of every day. Daughters accepted willingly their role in helping produce the cloth."

SOURCE: CALICO CHRONICLE
Texas Women and Their Fashions, 1830-1910
By Betty J. Mills, 1985

THE KITCHEN

One hundred years ago, kitchen stoves were made of cast iron or steel and burned wood or coal. Fuel had to be fed into it by hand and temperatures were difficult to regulate. Afterwards, it had to be cleaned and the ashes carried away. On cold days the oven warmed the entire kitchen, but on hot days it turned the kitchen into an inferno.

Perishable foods were kept cool in an "icebox" (an insulated box or cabinet with a block of ice inside to keep the air cool). A well-insulated icebox could keep food cool for days. The iceman delivered blocks of ice in his wagon. He used a large pair of tongs and slung the ice block over his shoulder, which was covered by a leather pad.

In the 1920's, electric refrigerators became available but were quite expensive. Ice boxes were still commonly in use during the 1930's and 1940's and were in use longer in rural areas slow to get electricity.

A century ago, kitchens had only a pump and no running hot water. Hot water for dishwashing had to be pumped and heated on the stove.

Kerosene or oil lamps gave way to the light bulb in the early twentieth century when electricity became available.

Ice first came to Denton in 1874, but it was used exclusively by the butcher shops and saloons. Little ice was used in private homes. Milk, butter and cream were kept cool in wells, springs or cisterns. When ice became more plentiful and less expensive, the "ice box" made its appearance in private kitchens. In the 1930's electric refrigerators began to replace the old-fashioned "ice box."

DOLLS

"As the favored toy of children since the beginning of recorded history, the doll has served as the best friend, confidant and child of children everywhere.

"Tombs of ancient Egypt have yielded carved and painted dolls with flat, wooden bodies and hair formed of threaded clay beads. As early as 600 B.C., the children of ancient Greece played with jointed dolls with movable arms and legs, as did Roman children three centuries later. Dolls from every culture and every era have provided portraits of the dress and customs of the times.

"Children in the early days of this country owned dolls that were formed and styled from skills learned from the Indians and made of materials that were abundant--apples and nuts, corncobs and cornshucks--and decorated with pokeberry juice for the mouth and with dots of soot for the eyebrows and hair."

SOURCE: BY SOUTHERN HANDS, Jan Arnow
Roundtable Press Books, Oxmoor House,
Birmingham, AL., 1987

FASHIONS OF YESTERYEAR

"Clothing was necessary to lift the morale and strengthen the resolve after the necessities of settling had been met. Women, who were shapers of the family, began craving and desperately needing something suitable to wear.

"Frocks made of homespun were often referred to as the "heavy dressers" and were often made of linsey-woolsey, homespun and dyed from natural resources. Favorite colors were tender brown, olive, amber, vanilla and grayed delicate tones.

"The general look of the classic dress was sturdy, the color drab, but trimmed with a handmade lace collar and brooch, it became a lady's good dress.

"The jewelry that so-called fashionable women brought with them to Texas were fragments of their previous way of life. The necklaces, high standing combs, earrings and matching bracelets came out on special community dances and occasions.

Hair weaving was an old art by the time the early settlers brought their heirloom pieces to Texas. In its early history, woven hair bracelets, brooches and necklaces were part of the grieving process after the loss of a loved one. Hair was retrieved from the deceased and woven into a keepsake. Later it became a friendship fad. Girls and women saved their hair in a jar and then wove it into jewelry pieces to wear or to give as gifts.

SOURCE: CALICO CHRONICLE
Texas Women and Their Fashions, 1830-1910
By Betty J. Mills, 1985

"LET THERE BE LIGHT"

"Artificial light provided by oil lamps enabled the members of a nineteenth-century household to live independently of the natural cycle of day and night. Sperm oil, produced from the Sperm Whale, provided the best and brightest flame, although lard oil, cottonseed oil, castor oil, and turpentine were burned as substitute due to the expense of sperm oil.

"A new fuel, kerosene, was introduced in 1854. Innovation on burners, lamps, and chimneys designed specifically for kerosene continued throughout the remainder of the century. Later lamps gave off more light. The earliest kerosene lamps burned at six to twenty candle power, while lamps of the turn of the century burned at sixty to eighty.

"Lamps created numerous chores: daily chimney wiping and wick trimming, weekly washing of chimneys and shades, and periodic rewicking and dismantling for thorough cleaning with soda, inside and out. Unpleasantly sooty and smelly, these tasks had to be done for decent light: untrimmed wicks flickered, and dirty chimneys or shades dimmed the light. Unfortunately, all lamp soot did not remain in the chimneys or find its way onto the wife's hands and rags. Like the soot and smoke from wood and coal fires, it found its way onto every surface in the home. The accumulated grime was so staggering, and keeping up with it on a daily basis was so impossible, that the practice of "Spring Cleaning" was necessary for a truly clean home."

SOURCE: Never Done: A History of American Housework by Susan Strasser 1982 - Pantheon
Books, New York.
RESEARCHED BY: Cindy Vranesa, Docent

THE SAM BASS CONNECTION

By 1864, Sam Bass, was an orphan and the family livestock and farm tools were auctioned off in Woodville, Indiana. At the age of 18, after a fight with his uncle over his gambling, Sam left to make his way to Texas. On his way to Texas in 1870, he met the Robert Mayes family from Denton who knew the trails, so Sam joined their party.

He worked on a ranch, then ended up working for the sheriff, Dad Egan, who had 12 acres on the west side of Bolivar Street, north of town. Among other things, Sam hauled freight by wagon. Sam also worked for awhile as a livery stable boy at the Lacy Hotel. He had not, at that time, entered a criminal career; and, in fact, was of a very gentle, courteous, and industrious nature.

Sam and a son of the sheriff together bought a chestnut-sorrel mare from Mose Taylor at Little Elm, then called Hilltown. They named her Jenny. She was fast, and soon Sam was winning races and money with what became known as the Denton Mare. Sometimes 500 or 600 people would come to see her run. The sheriff didn't like his hired hand associating with gambling and racing, so he told Bass to choose. So Sam went on trips to race the mare; added a con game with compatriots to fleece money out of the rubes by posing as a horse trainer and talking them into betting against Jenny while he bet on her. He finally sold the mare in San Antonio and decided to buy cattle and drive them north a make a lot of money. At Deadwood, in Dakota Territory, he did a little mining and lost some of the cattle money to some real gamblers.

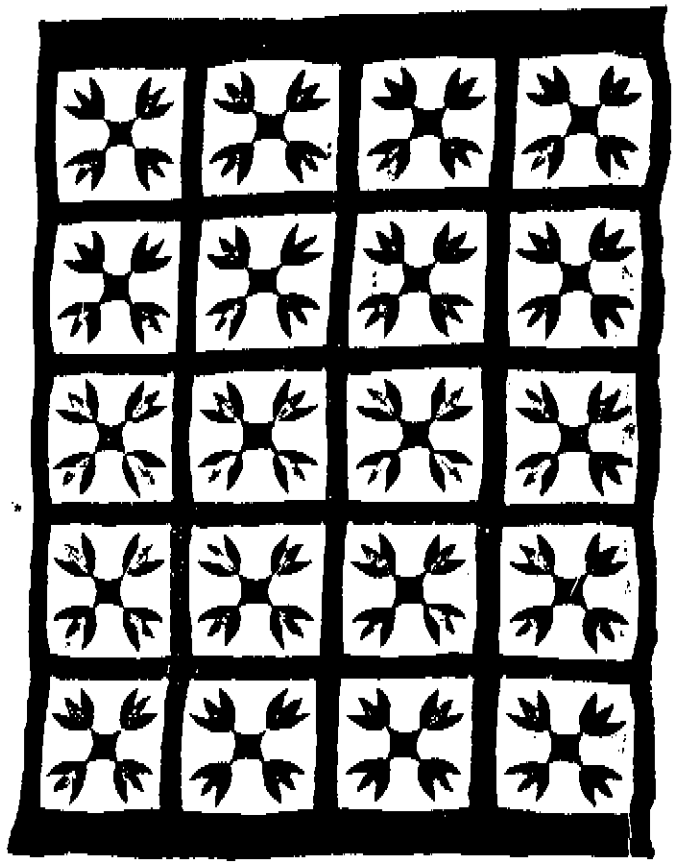
After trying freighting, he and a partner decided to rob stage for a living. On their first attempt, the stage's horses bolted, the driver was shot and killed and the bandits got nothing except a $500 reward posted on them as murderers.

They graduated from stages to trains, and finally hit it lucky holding up a Union Pacific train near Big Spring, Nebraska, taking three boxes with $20,000 in new gold coins each, a haul of $60,000. Feeling safe after getting out of Nebraska, Bass headed back for Denton. He arrived and camped out in various places around the county. It was 1877. Bass and a couple of companions went to San Antonio on a spree, followed by two deputies and a Pinkerton man trying to capture them. Nine miles west of Ft. Worth, they decided to rob a stage, but the haul was only about $43.00, and they gave each of the two victims back $1 for breakfast.

In January of 1878, Bass and company robbed a stage between Fort Worth and Weatherford. It was Sam's ninth stage robbery. A month later at Allen, south of McKinney, they got $1,280 robbing a train. In March, a train was robbed at Hutchins of about $500. Then one at Eagle Ford, and one at Mesquite. Meanwhile, rewards and posses mounted.

Denton became a major dateline in newspapers across the country as Rangers, sheriffs, deputies, marshals and citizens sought Bass. A Pinkerton man took a job in Wheeler's saloon in Denton seeking undercover information. Armed posses roamed the county. Meanwhile the Bass gang was scoping the state looking for a bank to rob. A reluctant member of the gang, Jim Murphy of Denton, tipped Rangers that Bass and company were headed for Round Rock. Bass and another gang member were stopped on a Round Rock street by a deputy sheriff who didn't know who they were but thought he saw a gun. In an ensuing fight, the deputy was killed, another deputy wounded and one gang member killed. Bass, wounded, got away. A company of rangers standing by tracked him down and captured him, bleeding and helpless in a liveoak thicket. The shooting was on Friday. On Sunday, Bass said, "The world is a bobbin' around," and died. It was July 21, 1878, Bass' 27th birthday.

(Keith Shelton, Executive Editor
Denton Record-Chronicle
May 15, 1988.)



TURKEY TRACKS OR WANDERING FOOT

TURKEY TRACKS, OR WANDERING FOOT: QUILT, BY DELILAH COX KING C. 1877.

DONATED TO THE DENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM BY FRANCES MIERS MULLER (MRS. MAITLAND ALLYAN MULLER), WHITTIER, CALIFORNIA.

THE QUILT WAS MADE C. 1877, BY DELILAH COX KING FOR HER GRANDDAUGHTER-IN-LAW, LUCY ELLA BEALE, WHO MARRIED FIRST, GEORGE ANDREW SMITH, AND SECOND TO R. T. HAWKINS. DELILAH, WHILE MAKING THE QUILT, RELATED TO LUCY ELLA MANY STORIES ABOUT THE KING FAMILY, FROM WHICH GEORGE ANDREW SMITH DESCENDED.

DELILAH COX KING (1806-1884), AND HER HUSBAND, JOHN KING (1800-1846), WITH NINE OF THEIR CHILDREN, MADE THE TEDIOUS TREK FROM MISSOURI IN 1845/1846, AND BECAME THE FIRST SETTLERS IN THE EASTERN DENTON COUNTY AREA WHICH LATER BECAME KNOWN AS THE LITTLE ELM COMMUNITY. MR. KING DIED IN THE SUMMER OF 1846. DELILAH KING REMAINED AN OUTSTANDING PIONEER WOMAN OF DENTON COUNTY. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THIS REMARKABLE WOMAN AND HER DESCENDANTS IS IN THE RESEARCH FILE OF THE DENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION.

THE QUILT'S PATTERN HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED AS TURKEY TRACKS. ITS EARLIER NAME, WANDERING FOOT (OR, WALKING FOOT) WAS CONSIDERED TO POSSESS A MALIGN INFLUENCE; CHILDREN WERE NOT ALLOWED TO SLEEP UNDER IT, AND NO BRIDE WOULD HAVE ONE. THIS SPELL WAS BROKEN LATER WHEN SLIGHTLY ALTERED AND RE-NAMED AS TURKEY TRACKS. THIS PATTERN IS NOT INCLUDED IN MANY BOOKS ON AMERICAN QUILTS.* IT IS BELIEVED THAT THE MATERIALS USED IN THIS QUILT HAVE BEEN HAND DYED, PERHAPS FROM NATIVE PLANTS DYES.

---

*BACON, LENICE INGRAM. AMERICAN PATCHWORK QUILTS. NEW YORK: WM. MORROW & CO., 1973.
MCKENDRY, RUTH. TRADITIONAL QUILTS AND BED COVERINGS. NEW YORK: VAN NOSTRAND REINHOLD, C. 1979.

PRIMATIVE RUG LOOM

The Heirloom Master Weaver was built by the Lansing Loom Works (c. 1906-1910). Of primative design with two harnesses, only a Plain or Tabby weave can be produced with this loom. The loom could only be used to weave rugs. With four harnesses, a pattern weave could be produced.

To WARP or DRESS a loom is to place all the verticle threads through the loom.

The loom was donated by Rainy Sears. The North Texas Handspinners Guild restored and warped the loom.

POTTERY MANUFACTURING IN DENTON COUNTY BEFORE 1900

Texas' first potters were Caddo Indians, who used the sandy clays of East Texas to make small storage vessels. They added small bits of bone to the clay to give it additional strength, built it up into pots by both coil and slab method, and fired it at low temperatures to produce the type pottery known as earthenware.

The Anglo-American settlers who colonized Texas between 1820* and 1860 brought with them a method of making pottery which was totally new to Texas, although it had flourished in the American South for at least a century before arriving here. This was the technique of making salt and alkaline glazed stoneware; pottery in which the clay was fired at a temperature high enough to cause it to vitrify, or become non-porous. Whenever they could find suitable clay these craftsmen set up a pottery and began supplying their neighbors with stoneware.

The frontier potter's basic tools were the kick-wheel and the groundhog kiln. The kick-wheel was simply an iron potter's wheel mounted in a wooden frame and connected to a flywheel, powered by a foot treadle at the base. The potter sat on a bench attached to the edge of the frame and kicked the treadle, turning the wheel and shaping the clay with his hands. The finished, unglazed bodies were placed on shelves in the pottery to dry until there were enough pots to fire in the kiln.

The kiln was a tunnel-like chamber similar to a grounhog's burrow, lined with brick. It narrowed toward the far end, where a flue rose up through the ground to a short chimney. The kiln frequently was dug into the side of a hill or on sloping ground. The earliest known kiln in the South is at Yorktown, Va. They were still in use in Texas in the 1800s. When the potter prepared to fire a load of pots, he had to crawl into the kiln, painstakingly arrange the pots so they did not touch and work backwards toward the door. He laid a wood fire in the firebox, lit it and closed the kiln. The heat from the fire was drawn over the pots and up the flue by the draft from the chimney.

Rock salt was thrown into the kiln to glaze the pots. The salt vaporized, freeing the sodium which combined with the silica on the clay pot's surface to produce a glassy, grey glaze. Another glaze favored by potters was an alkaline glaze made from wood ashes and applied to the pot before it went into the kiln.

decorated some of his pots by drawing designs on them--usually cros-hatching -- before they were glazed with cobalt salts. In the 1870s, Cranston, like many Texas potters, abandoned the salt glaze and began to use a dark brown glaze, called Albany slip after its wource in the clay pits near Albany, New York. He did not live long enough, however, to work with the smooth white glaze called Bristol glaze that became popular at the turn of the century. Cranston's son, George, also was a potter. After his father died, he left Denton County and went to work the Wilcox clays in Wood County. George Cranston made pots until the beginning of this century.

Since brick and pottery shards are practically indestructable, many of the kiln sites remain as overgrown mounds of broken brick. In fact, applications are pending for five pottery sits in Denton County for the National Register of Historic Sites. In other cases, the kilns were torn down and bricks reused; occasionally a few bricks on a farmhouse chimney will bear the signs of salt glaze, acquired when they were on the interior of a kiln.

Since relatively few Texas potters marked their pots, it is extremely difficult to identify a pot on a dealer's shelf. A few potters did use marks. The only sure way to attribute an unmarked pot to a particular potter is through its provenance, its history of ownership. If it belongs to a descendant of the potter, its history is usually fairly clear. If it has been used a long time in a household near a pottery, chances are good it was made in that pottery; pots were seldom sold more than 50 miles from their source. Unfortunately, it is difficult to get an accurate provenance from a dealer, so buying an unmarked pot in an antique shop is always a risk.

Adapted for use from an article
by Mr. Lonn Taylor, Museum of
New Mexico

PUEBLO GROUPS: Santo Domingo, Zuni, Acoma, Laguna, Hopi, Santa Clara

The Pueblo paints designs on before firing. Colors used are minerals suspended in water, except for a black made from bee weed. Brush is a yucca leaf that has been chewed to expose fine fibers. Designs are applied freehand. Shiny black pottery is made by smoking in a kiln which is made of dried animal manure. The mass is set alight, then smothered with powdered fuel. The smoke cannot escape and the carbon in the smoke deposits on the pottery. The shiny finish is made by rubbing the pottery with a smooth stone prior to firing.

Pueblo organized collective activities and have produced sharply defined collective concepts and art styles. Most subjects have prescribed conventional forms, and the same combination of form elements occur over and over with minor variations. ---"art for art's sake is a concept that is almost unknown in Indian cultures--- but by and large every product made by an Indian artist has a function and is created by him primarily to serve a given end. Artistic merit is simply considered a necessary by-product of good workmanship. The close relationship between aesthetic and technical perfection gives the work of most Indian artists a basic unity rarely found in the products of an urban civilization."

Jars for carrying and storing water are the most common vessels made by Pueblo potters. Most of the patterns on the painted pottery were adapted from the designs used earlier in their basketware. Many different styles of painting evolved. The Spanish conquest brought a decline of painting arts.

SOURCE: INDIAN ART OF THE UNITED STATES
by Frederick H. Douglas and Rene D'Harnoncourt
Museum of Modern Art, 1941, New York

Researched by: Kelly Swisher, Docent

pj

DENTON COUNTY COURTHOUSE ON THE SQUARE

In Texas, during the last quarter of the 19th century, the most prevalent type of governmental building was the County Courthouse---a structure which housed the offices and records of the county. The Courthouse also functioned as visual evidence of civic stability and political stature.

The Denton County Courthouse as built in 1896-1897 by architect, W. C. Dodson who was from Waco, Texas. Dodson built a series of courthouses throughout the North Texas area:

Fannin County---1888	(Bonham)	Hood County----1891	(Granbury)
Hill County-----1889	(Hillsboro)	Parker County--1885	(Weatherford)
Coryell---------1898	(Gatesville)		
Lampasas County-1883			

Dodson, who was in charge of designing and building the Denton County Courthouse, believed in using the materials that were presently at hand. This is why the building is made out of local materials---the limestone came from the Ganzer Quarry north of Denton; the pink granite from the Burnet area. Each courthouse that Dodson built was a challenge and he made a progression of style changes that culminated in the Denton County Courthouse. The resulting architecture was rustic, dynamic and uniquely American. Dodson was paid approximately $7500.00 for his work. Our Courthouse was built by contract--piecework and day labor. An ad in the DENTON GLOBE DEMOCRAT on April 24, 1896 read: "Wanted--15 or 20 non-union stone cutters in Denton County New Courthouse/ Wages 40 cents per hour". (Stonecutters were called Masons). The cornerstone was laid on February 8, 1896 and the building was completed on May 21, 1897. The cornerstone lists the names of the men responsible for the building--the architect, contractor and County Judge and Commissioners--C. W. Bates, J. M. Miller, J. F. Morgan and W. N. Jackson. The structure is a Texas Recorded Landmark, was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1977, is a State Archelogical Site and has been awarded the City of Denton Historic Landmark medallion.

The Courthouse on the Square structure had three types of stone:

1. Limestone--quarried from ledges of limestone, Ganzer Quarry
2. Pink Granite Columns-from Burnet County. There are 80 columns and were polished in Ft. Worth and were among the first to be finished with electrically powered equipment.
3. Sandstone

DENTON COUNTY COURTHOUSES

The picture of the oak tree was taken about 1905. The tree has since been struck by lightning and completely destroyed. It was under this tree in 1847 that court was held. Later, a log courthouse was built - the whole building wasn't as large as this room.

After the county seat was moved to Denton in 1856, a frame courthouse was built on the north side of the square where the Photography and Jewelry Store are located. It was this building that burned in 1875, destroying all the county records. (Some say that it was arson - done by members of the Sam Bass gang, but this was never proven. Also, it was said that Sam Bass never operated his illegal activities in Denton County.)

After the fire in 1875, a fine brick courthouse was built on this site. The people thought that it would last for many years. Actually, it lasted only for about 20 years. In September 1894 it was struck by lightning which did considerable amount of damage. By the spring of 1895, the Commissioners Court voted to build a new courthouse. The old building was torn down and the brick was sold to a man from Bolivar, Mr. Crow Wright, who used it to build the Wright Opera House - one of the finest of its kind in this part of Texas. The building is still in use - now it is Kibler's Office Supply.

The courthouse built in 1896 was this building, and we are more proud of it than ever. It is one of the Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks, a State Archelogical site, and is on the National Register of Historic Places. The building was built to last -- and last it has. Restored in 1986-87 to its former grandeur, the Courthouse on the Square now houses the County Commissioners' Court and support staff, plus the Historical Museum and Commission. Restoration costs were 4.1 million dollars, of which 3 million was by bond issue approved by the citizens of Denton County. Other branches of County government are located at the Carroll Courts Building and other sites throughout the City and County.

Dr. Rebecca Mortimer Evans

DR. EVANS WAS BORN IN PITTSBURG, PA. ON SEPTEMBER 14, 1872. HER PARENTS WERE JOHN GRIFFITH EVANS FROM WALES AND ANNIE MORTIMER FROM IRELAND. DR. EVANS GRADUATED FROM NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY IN CHICAGO. ONE OF THE FIRST WOMEN DOCTOR'S IN DENTON, SHE OWNED PROPERTY AT 311 AND 307 W. HICKORY IN DENTON. HER MEDICAL PRACTICE WAS LOCATED AT THE 307 HOUSE. DR. EVANS DIED IN DENTON ON OCTOBER 30, 1947. BOTH STRUCTURES HAVE SINCE BEEN DEMOLISHED.

SOME OF THE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT IN "A VISIT TO THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE CAME FROM HER OFFICE.

EXAMINING TABLE MEDICAL TESTING KIT
BODY SCOPE MISC. MEDICAL EQUIPMENT
TYPEWRITER METAL SUPPLY CABINET

THESE OBJECTS WERE DONATED TO THE MUSEUM BY EARL ASHER IN MEMORY OF:

REBECCA PATRICIA McELROY ASHER
MARGARET McELROY
DR. REBECCA M. EVANS

STRANGE MALADIES TOOK THEIR TOLL

You have probably never heard of or worried about many of the illnesses that killed Denton area residents in the days before effective diagnoses, "wonder drugs" and more sophisticated medical practices.

The death register of an early Denton funeral home indicates diseases of long ago and accidents typical of any time were taking their toll on the local populace in the years from 1901 to 1905.

Listed in the Register were such cause of death as:

Brain Fever
Brain Trouble
Congestion of Brain
Inflammation of Brain
Bowel Trouble
Inflammation of Bowels
Child Birth & Still Born
Typhoid Fever
Pneumonia
Dysentery
Consumption
Bright's Disease
Diphtheria
Paralysis
Cholera
Dropsy
Sepsis
Whooping Cough
Meningitis
Old Age
Old Age & General Disability
Fever
FLUX
Malaria
Congestion
Rheumatism Complications
Smallpox
Scarlet Fever
Scarlatina
Bluing Mouth
Catarrhal Fever
Asthma or Tuberculosis
Bronchitis
Tonsillitis
Vertigo
Hernia
Rupture
Hemorrhage
Cancer
Cancer of Old Age
Cancer (operated on)
Tumor
Cancer on Womb
Female Trouble
Heart Failure
Confinement
Blood Poisoning
La Grippe
Teething
Abscess
Complications

ACCIDENTS

Wagon Ran Over Head
Broken Limb
Fell From Buggy
Horse Kick
Horse Falling
Killed by Horse
Killed in Storm by Barn
Fall in City Hall
Burned
Scalded
Found Dead
Strangulation
Drowned in Slop Can
Shot Self in Head

SOURCE: Denton Funeral Home Records - DENTON RECORD CHRONICLE, 7/4/76

JAIL HOUSES OF DENTON COUNTY

ON THE FIRST TUESDAY OF NOVEMBER, 1856, AN ELECTION WAS HELD IN DENTON COUNTY FOR THE PURPOSE F RELOCATING THE COUNTY SEAT NEARER THE CENTER OF THE COUNTY. WITH 136 VOTES CAST, THE COUNTY SEAT WAS MOVED TO ITS PRESENT DAY LOCATION, COMPRISED OF 100 ACRES, THE COUNTY COURT RESERVED THE COURT SQUARE, ONE LOT FOR THE COUNTY COURTHOUSE, ONE FOR THE COUNTY JAIL (THE 200 BLOCK OF NORTH LOCUST STREET), AND AN ENTIRE BLOCK OF ABOUT FOUR ACRES FOR SCHOOLS AND CHURCHES (WHERE THE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH NOW STANDS).

"BY 1868, DENTON HAD NO JAIL, AT LEAST NO JAIL SUITABLE FOR HOLDING PRISONERS CHARGED WITH SERIOUS CRIMES. MEMORIES OF OLDER CITIZENS ARE NOT CLEAR ON THE POINT, BUT IT APPEARS THAT FOR A FEW YEARS A SMALL CALABOOSE WAS BEHIND THE COURTHOUSE ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE SQUARE".

BY THE CLOSE OF THE CIVIL WAR A SMALL LOG JAIL HOUSE, OR CALABOOSE, STOOD JUST EAST OF THE OLD POST OFFICE (AT THE INTERSECTION OF N. LOCUST AND McKINNEY STREET). W. LEE McCORMICK DESCRIBES THE JAIL AS:

1. THE FIRST JAIL ERECTED IN DENTON WAS A LOG STRUCTURE, BUILT IN THE POST OFFICE BLOCK, AND PROBABLY NEAR THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF THE BLOCK, AND WAS DESTROYED BY FIRE. THE JAIL WAS A TWO-STORY HOUSE BUILT OUT OF HEWN LOGS. THE WALLS WERE TRIPLE. THE OUTSIDE AND INSIDE LOGS WERE LAID HORIZONTALLY, AND THE MIDDLE LOGS WERE PLACED PERPENDICULARLY. THE FLOOR WAS DOUBLE LOGGED. PRISONERS WERE CARRIED UPSTAIRS AND LET DOWN THROUGH A TRAP DOOR.

2. SINCE THE FIRST BUILT JAIL APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN BURNED ABOUT 1866 OR 1867, THE DENTON COUNTY SHERIFFS' PUT THEIR PRISONERS IN JAILS OF NEIGHBORING COUNTY SEATS. IN THE SPRING OF 1870, A REDDISH BROWN SANDSTONE JAIL HOUSE WAS BUILT ON THE SPOT SOME TWO OR THREE DOORS NORTH OF THE MIDDLE LINE ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE SQUARE, AND WAS BUILT FOR $3600.00.

3. "IN 1877 OR 1878, A NEW ONE-STORY BRICK AND STONE JAIL HOUSE WAS ERECTED AT ABOUT 402 NORTH ELM STREET. IT WAS MUCH LONGER THAN IT WAS WIDE AND STOOD WITH ONE LONG SIDE NEAR THE STREET."

4. A NEW AND LARGER TWO-STORY BRICK JAIL WAS ERECTED JUST NORTH OF THE OLD ONE IN 1891. "THE BRICK USED IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE COUNTY JAIL WAS MADE BY R.B. HARRIS AT THE OLD BUSHEY BRICK PLANT SOUTHEAST OF DENTON, HE HAVING LEASED THE PLANT AFTER SECURING THE CONTRACT FOR FURNISHING THE BRICK."

THREE LEGAL EXECUTIONS FOR MURDER IN DENTON COUNTY

1879 and 1895

A CHANGE OF VENUE FROM MONTAGUE COUNTY BROUGHT THE MURDER TRIALS OF GEORGE BROWN, JR. AND ANDREW BROWN TO DENTON COUNTY. TRIED BEFORE THE 16th DISTRICT COURT IN MARCH OF 1878, THE BROWN BROTHERS WERE CONVICTED AND PUNISHMENT WAS ASSESSED AT DEATH.

APPEALS WERE TAKEN IN BOTH CASES, BUT THE JUDGMENTS OF THE LOWER COURT (PRESIDED OVER BY JUDGE J.A. CARROLL) WERE AFFIRMED, AND ON NOVEMBER 21, 1879, THE TWO MEN WERE EXECUTED BY HANGING FROM THE GALLOWS NORTH OF THE JAIL. THE BROTHERS WERE BURIED AT THE OAKWOOD CEMETERY IN DENTON. R.A. HOPKINS WAS THE DENTON COUNTY SHERIFF AT THE TIME.

THE LAST HANGING WAS OF J.Q.A. CREWS, INDICTED IN COOKE COUNTY FOR THE MURDER OF MR. AND MRS. MURRELL, WHO SECURED A CHANGE OF VENUE TO DENTON COUNTY. TRIED AT THE SPRING TERM OF THE 16th DISTRICT COURT, CREWS WAS CONVICTED AND THE PUNISHMENT WAS ASSESSED AT DEATH. CREWS WAS EXECUTED ON OCTOBER 4, 1895 AT THE GALLOWS ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE JAIL AT 402 N. ELM. THE GALLOWS WERE ENCLOSED WITH BOARDS TO MAKE IT AS PRIVATE AS POSSIBLE. THE WIFE OF CREWS AND HIS BROTHER CLAIMED THE BODY FOR BURIAL. SAM HAWKINS WAS THE DENTON COUNTY SHERIFF AT THE TIME.

SOURCE: HISTORY AND REMINISCENCES OF DENTON COUNTY, ED. F. BATES, 1918.

KNOWN INFORMATION ABOUT JOHN B. DENTON

Although Denton County was created by an act of the First Texas Legislature on April 11, 1846 and named for John B. Denton, there is very little factual information known about him. Mr. Denton was killed in an Indian fight on May 24, 1841, two years before there were any white settlers in the land that became Denton County.

In 1905, Rev. William Allen wrote a book, Life and Times of Captain John B. Denton. This book was published by R.R. Donnelley & Sons Co., Chicago, Ill. From it I have gleaned the following facts:

1. "In the wilds of Tennessee, on the morning of the 28th of July, 1806, a note rang out on the morning air, that the population of Tennessee had increased. That a child was born. It was John B. Denton." (page 68)

2. "His father moved to Clark County, Arkansas, when John B. was quite a small boy. Soon thereafter losing his wife, he bound his two sons, William and John, to a Colonel Wells, who was a blacksmith, to learn the trade. William, who was several years the oldest, went to work and learned the trade. John B., being too young to put at the forge, was taken charge of by Mrs. Wells, and put at all sorts of menial labor, such as carding, spinning, milking of cows, and doing housework generally." (page 145)

3. "At about twelve years of age he discovered his miserable condition, and left his oppressor and wrought for himself." (page 146)

4. "At the age of eighteen years he married a Miss Mary Greenlee Stewart of Louisiana. She was sixteen years of age. She taught him to write his name.

5. "They became members of the M.E. Church, and not long afterwards he was licensed to preach. He became a traveling preacher in the Little Rock Conference. In a short time he distinguished himself as an orator of the highest type." (page 146)

From History of Denton, Texas by Dr. C. A. Bridges (Published by Texian Press, Waco, Texas, 1978), I quote from pages 16 - 21:

"John Bunyan Denton was a pioneer Methodist preacher from Arkansas, who came to Texas on January 2, 1837. Arkansas claimed a large part of Texas before 1819 and continued to claim portions of northeastern Texas as a part of Miller County, Arkansas, until 1840. The Arkansas Methodists, more or less naturally claimed denominational jurisdiction over the region north of the Sulphur Fork of the Red River. Consequently their conference sent preachers to Sulfur Fork Circuit which included present-day Bowie, Red River, Lamar, and Fannin counties. To this circuit John B. Denton was appointed for the year 1837. Denton had a large family, and the salary of a frontier preacher was too small to support it. After serving this circuit for only one year, he was 'located' in 1838 at his own request. He returned to the rank of a local preacher, took up the practice of law with a fellow Methodist minister, John B. Craig, as a partner at Clarksville. In 1840 Denton was a law partner of Edward H. Tarrant. He continued to preach wherever and whenever he could and became noted as an orator and as an Indian fighter. On the side he was a farmer, a stockman, and a sort of local politician. Denton was a Mason. He became a member of McFarland Lodge No. 41 under charter from the Grand Lodge of Louisiana in San Augustine, Texas, in 1837, but in 1840 he became a member of DeKalb Lodge No. 9 under charter from the Grand Lodge of Texas. Denton probably helped to organize the DeKalb Lodge. In 1840 Denton was defeated by a few votes for a seat in the upper house (Senate) of the 5th Texas Congress by Robert Potter. Potter had been one of the signers of the Declaration of Texas Independence, the first secretary of the Texas Navy 1836, and in other ways had taken a prominent part in the affairs of the Texas Republic. In 1842 Potter was killed in the Moderator-Regulator conflict in east Texas.

"John B. Denton was never a citizen of Denton County, nor was he a 'ranger' or militiaman in a professional sense; yet he was in the general area of the upper Trinity valley on numerous Indian campaigns, sometimes as a private member of the party. About 1839, perhaps as a volunteer chaplain, Denton accompanied a body of troops which camped at Hackberry Camp at the mouth of Denton Creek on Elm Creek in present Denton County. There Denton delivered what probably was the first, certainly one of the first, sermons ever preached on Denton County soil. General Thomas J. Rusk was present and is said to have been charmed at Denton's eloquence. Ed F. Bates mentions the same or similar meeting in a camp on Long Prairie in the southern part of the county.

"Late in 1840 one of the numerous Indian raids into northeast Texas culmunated in an attack upon the home of Captain John

Yeary in south .st Fannin County. Yeary and his wife were wounded and many horses from his neighborhood were driven off. In April, 1841, another group of Indians attacked the Ripley home in the same area and killed four or five members of the family. A retaliatory expedition of seventy or eighty men was hurridly organized. It was on this expedition that Captain John B. Denton was killed.

"Seemingly many expeditions of this kind were made into the upper Trinity River valley, of which no detailed accounts were made. For that reason it is almost impossible to follow exactly any one specific expedition. It appears that perhaps three expeditions followed the Ripley attack mentioned above - - one in which Denton was killed, and two in July, one led by General E. H. Tarrant and the other by General James Smith. Probably many men were members of more than one party, and in after years in trying to relate what actually happened they confused the expeditions until now it is difficult to harmonize all of the details of any one particular campaign.

"John Henry Brown says that James Bourland was in command of the expedition that resulted in the battle of Village Creek, and there is considerable reason to believe that that is correct, in spite of the fact that numerous writers have more or less vaguely listed General E. H. Tarrant as the commander. Tarrant almost certainly was present on the expedition, but apparently he acted only as a sort of senior advisor. Tarrant was a regular commissioned officer of the Texas Ranger forces, and he properly might have led such an expedition upon orders from the Government of the Republic of Texas. This expedition was a volunteer posse of frontier citizens hastily gathered and acting on their own authority and responsibility. This expedition was not ordered, organized, or paid for by Texas officials. Tarrant probably avoided or declined command because of possible complications with his official duties. He went along as a private citizen and a volunteer. His rank and experiences were recognized and respected, and his advice was probably followed. A couple of months later, acting under official orders from Austin, Tarrant led one official expedition and Smith led another into the same general area and for the same purpose.

"John Henry Brown says that the Denton or Village Creek expedition was organized on Choctaw Bayou, eight miles west of Old Warren on May 4, 1841, moved west to the barracks (now Denison) built by Captain W. G. Cooke, spent two or three days there, then moved west by way of Gainsville and southwest to Bridgeport, where they thought the Indians were living. They

found no Indian there and moved south toward the Brazos, then northwest to Trinity, and camped at the mouth of Fossil Creek, now within the limits of Ft. Worth. On the next day came the battle in which Denton was killed. The expedition camped that night again at the mouth of Fossil Creek and returned to Cooke Barracks by a route that led up west of the East Cross Timbers.

"The account recorded by Ed F. Bates is:

'They took the trail which led west up by Bonham, crossing East Fork near the present town of Weston in Collin County, Little Elm, about one-fourth of a mile above the present bridge on the McKinney Road; and Big Spring Creek (or Big Elm) at the McKinney road bridge. Then they turned nearly south to Bird's Station, afterwards known as Birdsville, Tarrant County, where they scattered and the trail gave out. It would not be followed. This showed the Indians' cunning habits and the care he had for his family. The Indians were then approaching their village about 8 or 10 miles away, and succeeded in throwing their pursuers off about 10 miles west of them up on Clear Fork, west of Fort Worth.' "

(NOTE: Although the text reads that the above paragraph was Ed F. Bates' account, the footnote credits it to Frederick Webb Hodge's Handbook of American Indians, Vol. 1, pp.682-683. TRS)

Continuing with Dr. Bridges' account:

" Since the Bates account represents the whites as following the trail of the red man only a few days after the Ripley murders in May and the Brown account does not, it seems very probable that the Brown account is partly confused with the July expedition of Generals Tarrant and Smith. John Henry Brown says that between July 15 and July 20, 1841, General James Smith led a body of State militia and General Tarrant led another expedition against the Indians of the Trinity area. Failing to find the Indians, Tarrant returned home. General Smith continued the search, however, and made an attack upon the Keechie village but found the former camp deserted when he got there. Thus, it appears that in 1841 Tarrant made two trips -- one in May and one in July, and that the scene of the Keechie village battle was visited twice within two months -- once by Tarrant in May, and once by Smith in July.

"The details of the battle itself seem more definite. The Keechie village was near a ford on Village Creek about six miles east of Fort Worth, between Handley and Arlington. The attack upon the village resulted in the defeat and dispersal of the Indians. The white men recovered 'some eighty head of horses

and fifteen or twenty head of cattle'. A few hundred yards of South Village Creek from the point where it flows into the Trinity River, Denton was killed while on a sort of scouting trip after the skirmish was over. After recovering Denton's body, the white party went up the Trinity, perhaps to the mouth of Fossil Creek where they encamped for the night. On the morning after they started the return trip moving north and east and stopped at about 10 or 11 o'clock and buried Denton on Oliver Creek near its mouth on Denton Creek and not far from present-day Justin."

In 1917 Mr. Ed F. Bates wrote the first history of Denton County. The History and Reminiscences of Denton County was first printed in 1918 by the McKnitzky Printing Company of Denton, Texas. In 1976, a Special Reprint was done by the Terrill Wheeler Printing, Inc. Denton, Texas. In his book, Mr. Bates draws frequently from the work published by Rev. William Allen. The portion which deals with the death of Captain Denton is reprinted in Mr. Bates' book exactly as it was given in Rev. Allen's book, The Life and Times of Captain John B. Denton. In Mr. Bates' book the account is found on pages 18 - 23.

THE STORY OF THE FIGHT AND CAPTAIN DENTON'S DEATH
(Special to The Dallas News)

Waxahachie, Texas, October 6, 1900

Rev. Andrew Davis was a member of the company commanded by General Tarrant at the fight with the Indians in which Captain John B. Denton was killed, and an eye-witness of his death and burial. He was at the time but thirteen years of age, and in all probability the only survivor of the heroic band of pioneers. Since the discussion anent the death and burial of Captain Denton, Mr. Davis has received a great many letters urging him to write a full history of the fight and the circumstances connected with the killing and burial of Captain Denton for publication, and in compliance with those letters he today handed the News correspondent the following article:

"In the spring of 1841 the campaign was made in which John B. Denton was killed. The company was made up by General Tarrant, a lawyer, who at that time lived in Bowie County. He finally moved to Ellis County, where he died. There were many of the most prominent men in North Texas in this company, some of whom were Colonel Coffey, James Bourland, William Bourland, Mack Bourland, Colonel Porter, Henry Stout, Dick Hopkins, John B. Denton, Clabe Chisum, J. L. Lovejoy, Colonel Bill Young,

Captain Yeary. These are sufficient. Many of their names have faded out of my memory. It would not be proper for me to attempt a history of the whole campaign, but to fix attention directly upon the occasion of the killing of J. B. Denton and the circumstances connected with it.

"Denton was killed (as I might say) on our return home. On the day before the taking of the village, a lone Indian was discovered. General Tarrant divided the company, and ordered them to cut him off from the timber and capture him. This was nicely and quickly done. The capture of the Indian occurred on the high prairie some ten miles west of the village, at a point not far from where Fort Worth is located. Tarrant left the prairie and went into a secluded place on the river. There we remained all night. About sunset every precaution was made to kill our prisoner. He was placed upon an elevated spot a few paces from the company. He was then placed with his back to an elm tree, his hands were drawn around the tree and made secure, and his feet were tied together and secured to the tree. Then twelve men with their guns were ordered to take their positions before the Indian. The scene was an awful one in its solemnity, to me and to all. The men were ordered to present arms. At this moment, the alarmed and terror-stricken Indian became greatly excited, and in great agonly of spirit he cried aloud, 'Oh, man! Oh, man!' While he did not utter the above words with distinctness, yet it was more like these words than any other. General Tarrant sent Captain Yeary with an interpreter to the prisoner to see if he would reveal anything, for prior to this he had been sullen, and would not say a word. He was made to understand that if he would tell where the village was, and how to find it, he should not be hurt, and he made a full revelation of the whole matter, and closed by saying, 'We be friends.' He was untied, but kept under guard all night. After dark Tarrant sent ten men under Henry Stout, who was ordered to the village and reconnoitered the same, and selected the point of attack, to report by four o'clock in the morning. This was done, and by daylight all were in motion under the guidance of our trusty pilot, for the village, which was reached about nine o'clock in the morning.

GENERAL TARRANT LED THE ATTACK AND THE INDIANS WERE ROUTED

"From our position we could see the Indians passing about in every direction. We were ordered to deposit our baggage and free ourselves of every incumbrance, and be ready for the charge in five minutes. When the time was up, General Tarrant said, 'Are you ready?' the response was in the affirmative. Then Tarrant in a low, yet clear, distinct voice, said, 'Now, my brave men, we will never all meet on earth again, there is great confusion and death ahead. I shall expect every man to fill his place and do his duty' The command to charge was given. A

level prairie, bout three hundred yards ide, lay between the command anu the first huts. The distance was measured off in less time than I am in telling it. In a moment the sound of firearms, with a voice of thunder, rang out over the alarmed and terror-stricken inhabitants of that rude city of the wilderness. Tarrant and James Bourland, with Denton, led the charge, while every other man followed with the best speed his horse could make. I was riding a mule furnished me by Aunt Gordon, (God bless her memory!) She was my friend in orphanage and helplessness -- well, pardon the digression. That mule was a mule, and just like its kind, was slow, and made me among the last to reach the enemy. As I passed the first huts I saw to my right a number of Indians, I fired into the crowd with the best aim my excited nerves would allow. In a moment our men came upon them from a different direction, and for a short time the work of death was fearful. It was here that my mule was shot from under me. I felt like I had lost my best friend. The air was full of bullets and I took to a tree. In a moment, however, I saw a number of our men on foot, some of them from choice, and others, like myself, because they could not help it. I left my tree and joined them. In less than an hour the willage was cleared of Indians, and it seemed like the work of death was done.

"Covered with dust and dirt, and wet with sweat, and almost famished, both for food and water, Tarrant called the company together, at a little spring. On roll call it was found that not a man had been killed; a dozen, perhaps, had been unhorsed. Quite a number were hatless, as many as eight or ten were slightly wounded, but none in a painful manner. Many had made narrow escapes from death as their rent clothes abundantly testified. Tarrant commended the men for their good behavior, and said, 'Thank God, we are all here. You have had water, repair to the nearest huts and get your hands full of dried buffalo meat, and in fifteen minutes be ready for further advance.' My, my, how the buffalo meat was used up by those hungry men!

"At the expiration of fifteen minutes, Tarrant called the men together and ordered John B. Denton and Henry Stout each to take a squad of twenty men and pursue the retreating Indians, as a great number of them had fled north into the Trinity bottom by two paths leading out of the village. It so happened that I fell into the squad of men commanded by Captain Henry Stout, who took the trail that led from the northeastern portion of the village. John B. Denton, with his men took the trail which led from the northwestern part of the village. Within about sixty yards of the river the trails came together. When Captain Stout came to this point, he halted and addressed his men, 'Here the trail

from the west unites with ours; a great many Indians have gone out on both trails. From the large cottonwoods in view, we are near the river. I think it is imprudent for a little squad of men to enter into such a trap, for if the Indians make a stand at all it will be at the river.' Just at this point someone said, 'I hear the sound of horses' feet.' Captain Stout replied, 'That is Denton. We will wait until he comes and we will consult.'

"When Captain Denton came up he said, 'Captain, why have you stopped?' Stout repeated to Captain Denton what he had just said to his men, but added 'I am willing to go as far as any other man.' Instantly and without a word, Captain Denton spurred his horse on the path, Captain Stout followed, and their men dropped into line, and the little company, in death-like silence, moved on towards the river. We found no prepared ford, but merely a well-worn buffalo trail, which led down into the river, and went out some eighty yards below. The north bank of the river was high and covered with a closely set undergrowth of brush. Here the Indians had secreted themselves.

"When the company reached the point apposite and under the Indians they opened a deadly fire upon us, it being mainly directed on our men in front. Captain Denton was instantly killed, and Captain Stout had his arm broken. In this condition of affairs no word of command was given. The scene of death and the moment of suspense was awful to endure. Captain Yeary called at the top of his voice, 'Why in the h___ don't you move your men out to where we can see the enemy? We will all be killed here.'

"The men began at once a kind of irregular retreat, and Captain Stout had so far recovered from his shock as to be able to say, 'Men do the best you can for yourselves, I am wounded and powerless.' About this time some one said, 'Captain Denton is killed.' The shot was so deadly that there was no death struggle. He had balanced himself in his saddle, raised his gun and closed one eye, intending to deal death to the enemy, when the death shock struck him. When his death was discovered his muscles were gradually relaxing, and his gun yet in his hand was inclining towards the ground. The men nearest him took him from his horse and laid him on the ground, and then we returned to the command at the village. We feared that after we left that the Indians would scalp Captain Denton and otherwise mutilate his body, but this was not done. A squad of men was sent back to the river to get Denton's body, which they did.

"I am glad to this day that I was of the number to volunteer to go back and if need be, to brave death to recover the body of

Captain Denton. About 4 or 4:30 p.m. the body of Captain Denton was securely tied upon a gentle horse, and the command moved out from the village with some eighty head of horses and fifteen or twenty head of cattle taken from the village. We moved up the river to a point not far from Fort Worth and there spent the night. Early next morning we crossed the river at a point where the timber was narrow. After crossing the river we traveled in the direction of Bird's Station, aiming for Bonham as our objective point. At about 11:00 a.m. we halted on a prairie on the south side of a creek with a high bank on the north. On one of these elevations Captain Denton was buried. I have never for a moment doubted but that I could find the identical spot. The tools with which this grave was dug were brought from the village and they were ample for the purpose. If, therefore, any person has found a shallow grave and is of the impression that it is the grave of Captain Denton, he is mistaken. His grave was dug a good depth, a thin rock was cut so as to fit in the bottom of the grave, similar rocks were placed at the sides and also at the head and foot. Another rock was placed over the body and the grave filled up. Thus was buried one of God's noble men."

Following the appointment of Rev. William Allen by the Old Dettler's Association in August of 1900 to write a biography of Captain John B. Denton, a great deal of public interest was generated. Surprisingly, the fact of Captain Denton's lost remains seemed to become a focal point. A committee was formed to locate and identify the remains of John B. Denton. Testimony was gathered and some of the accounts were published in The Dallas News -- probably in 1901. One such account appears in The Life and Times of Captain John B. Denton on pages 33 - 36.

TESTIMONY OF CAPTAIN ROBERT H. HOPKINS, SR.
(Special to the News)
Denton, Tex. Sept. 20

"The controversy over the burial-place of Colonel John B. Denton, for whom this county was named, is attracting a good deal of attention not only here, but in other portions of the state, and a number of letters have been received anent the matter. Captain Robert H. Hopkins, Sr., of this city, gave his version of the affair, which he had from several survivors of the company of which Denton was captain, as follows, to the News correspondent to-day.

"All accounts agree that Colonel Denton was killed on Village Creek, in Tarrant County, east of where is now Ft. Worth.

Uncle Johnny L ejoy, who was with Denton at the time he as killed, and who lived in this county up to his death, often has told me the entire story. Clabe Chisum, the father of John S. Chisum, and also with Denton when he was killed, and to his son John told, as near as he could, the exact location of the grave, which he thought was somewhere on Denton Creek, also named for Denton. John Chisum came to Denton County in 1854, not 1855, as Colonel John Peter Smith of Ft. Worth states, and after he had roamed all over Denton County with his herds, at last came upon the place which, from the description given him be his father, he believed to be the burial place. An elm-tree near by had been marked, according to his father's statement, and such marks as described on an elm-tree he found on Oliver Creek, near its mouth on Denton Creek. John Lovejoy told him that if he found the body, he would find that certain teeth had been filled, and when he had dug open the grave the body was found just as his father had stated. The filled teeth were also found, as described by Uncle Johnny Lovejoy, and to make the identification more complete, a blanket exactly like that in which he had been interred was discovered wrapped around the bones. A tin cup, trinkets, and other articles known to have been buried with him were also found in the grave, making the identification certain. Chisum took up the remains and carried them in a box to his home, near Bolivar, on Clear Creek, northwest of this city. He kept them in this box for several years, and they were still there when he sold the place to Mr. Waide. The bones began to get musty and damp and in the way, however, and Waide took them out and buried them, still in the old box, in one corner of the yard. The Waides have lived on the place ever since; Jim Waide, a son, is still there; and if the body has ever been disinterred and buried elsewhere, none of them has ever known of it. In my mind there is no doubt that the remains are still where Waide buried them."

On November 28, 1901, the remains of Captain John B. Denton were reinterred on the Denton County courthouse lawn. An account of the funeral was published by the Record and Chronicle of Denton. Mr. Ed F. Bates, in his book The History and Reminiscences of Denton County, reprints that account on pages 24 and 25.

"The movement begun more than a year ago by the Old Settlers' Association of Denton County to locate the remains of Captain John B. Denton, pioneer and border hero, for whom this county and city are named, and, if found, to give them a public burial, culminated last Thursday afternoon when his bones were given their last interment, and with befitting ceremonies. Captain Denton surrendered his life in a public cause -- the defense of the border from the ravages of the Indians, and it was singularly appropriate that his new grave is in the public soil, the southeast corner of the court house yard. Another appropriate

feature of the final ceremonies was the presence of the faculty and students of the John B. Denton College, an institution named in his memory, and an enduring monument to his bravery, courage, and high-mindedness.

"The lower floor and galleries of the district court room were crowded when Rev. Wm. Allen, the chairman, arose at 1:30 and announced in a few words, the purpose for which they had gathered. Rev. Allen, himself a pioneer, and an early minister of the gospel, when the days of Texas were young, occupied the chair, and on his left sat Rev. J. W. Chalk, another old-time minister, who vividly recalled the memories of another day. In state in front of the judges' bench, lay in a handsome coffin, the remaining bones of the man in whose honor the services were being held. In front of the bier sat three living descendants, two sons, Rev. J. F. Denton of Weatherford, and Rev. John B. Denton, Jr., of Clay County, and a grandson, Prof. William Baker of Ellis County. After a few prefatory remarks by Rev. Allen, 'America' was sung, led by President Thurmond of the John B. Denton College. A prayer by Doctor W. C. Lattimore of the First Baptist Church followed, and a quartet gave a rendition of 'It is Well With My Soul.'

"The Rev. Wm. Allen delivered an address on the life and character of John B. Denton, which was followed by an address by Rev. J. W. Chalk. Rev. Allen then introduced in turn the two sons and the grandson of Captain Denton, each of whom made short, but feeling, talks of thanks and gratitude for the honor bestowed through their ancestor on them. The quartet rendered 'Some Sweet Day' and 'Rock of Ages', during the singing of which the pall bearers, Messrs. E. B. Orr, L. Willis, J. M. Swisher, John W. Gober, J. H. Hawkins, and W. C. Wright, lifted the coffin and bore it to the grave in the court house yard, followed first by the relatives present and then the spectators. And the body of John B. Denton, preacher, lawyer, Indian-fighter, pioneer, and hero, was in its last resting place, the third since his death in 1841. The first was on the banks of Oliver Creek; the second, when his friend, John Chisum, exhumed the remains from there and gave them burial at the Chusim Ranch near Bolivar (now known as the Waide place); and the third burial, in the court house yard at Denton."

In 1936, the State of Texas errected a state historical marker over John B. Denton's grave.

Prepared for the Denton County Historical Commission by Thelma R. Stevens, Office Manager.

History of Denton, Texas

In 1836, Denton County was a part of the Red River County. The Mexican government had control of the area called Texas at this time. Denton's biggest commercial market was cattle, most of the land at this time was either for cattle grazing or crops. January 4, 1841, W. S. Peters came to North Texas and formed the Peter's Colony. Three years later a section of land was given from the colony to bring in new settlers, this became Denton's first settlement, The Bridges Settlement, in 1844. Eventually, the Bridges Settlement became the city of Pilot Point. Richard Ellis, the Seccession Convention President of Denton County in 1846, organized Denton County with the help of two hundred voters. The county and city of Denton was named after Captain John B. Denton, who was killed in the battle of Keechi Valley against the indians. Although this battle legally cleared the area of Indians, they were still a threat to the Peters Colony April 11, 1846 the First Legislature of the new State of Texas created Denton County by a law and in the same year the second county seat of Denton was moved from Alton to Pinckneyville. Alton was Denton's first county seat. Although settled in 1845, Chinn's Chapel was built in 1853 by Elisha Chinn. Many men's clubs were established in Denton in the late part of the 1850's, one club was the Independent Order of Odd Fellows in 1859, now known as I.O.O.F. The sheriff at that time (around 1855) was an historian who sold the land for the current Denton town square. His name was C. A. Williams. In 1868, Denton had a school, although the students attended only three months out of the year. These schools, called Subscription Schools, were attended in the summer only. The 1870's in Denton was an adventurous time. There were three legal executions on the courthouse lawn, the 16th District Judge in 1876 was Joseph A. Carroll, and Denton had an outlaw. This famous outlaw was Sam Bass and he had a race horse named the "Denton Mare." By 1890, Denton city had it's first college, the North Texas State College, or NTSC. Now known as the University of North Texas. Texas Woman's University opened it's doors on September 23, 1903 as the College of Industrial Arts, CIA.

JOHN SIMPSON CHISUM

1824 - 1884

Researched and written by Beth Bowers, Docent.

Legends and myths of the past century have clouded the facts about John Simpson Chisum, most prominent cattleman of that era whose first ranch was in Denton County near Bolivar between 1854 and 1864.

In Paris, Texas, as a boy of seventeen, John listened to his father, Claiborne Chisum, tell of his experiences as a member of a frontier band of Indian fighters who skirmished with the Keechies on the Trinity River in the heartland of Texas.

Deeply moved, Claiborne told how his friend, Captain John B. Denton, of Clarksville, was killed by an Indian bullet on May 24, 1841, and of how Denton's blanket-wrapped body was buried on a high bank of Oliver Creek, with a "blaze on a big elm tree nearby" to make the grave.

He asked John, his eldest son, to find that grave someday and move his bones to a decent place. It was 19 years before John was able to keep the promise he made his father.

RANCHING IN DENTON COUNTY

Leaving Paris after a shattered romance, Chisum came to Denton County with a small herd of scrawny cattle, branded with the "Long Rail", a slash down the animal's right side from shoulder to hip, visible for a half-mile or, as Chisum expressed it, "from hell to breakfast."

Later, realizing how easily the brand could be altered, he added an ear mark. Splitting the calves ears from bottom to top, he created what became known as the "jingle-bob ear". After that, Chisum's spread became known as the "Jingle-bob Ranch".

Chisum's men established a store at a site he named "Bolivar" for the Tennessee town where he was born.

By the spring of 1857 Chisum and his men successfully drove a thousand head of Texas longhorn cattle to Little Rock, arriving in July. Not all drives ended well. One drive to Jefferson, Texas, found the packer broke and out of business. The cattle were sold at great sacrifice.

MOVING DENTON'S RESTING PLACE

It was in the spring of 1860 that Chisum called on John Bourland, a surviving member of the Indian fighters who had buried Denton, to command a search party for the grave. The bones were placed in a sack and carried back to the ranch in a sperm candle box. There they were buried in one corner of the ranch yard where they lay undisturbed for 40 years.

INDIAN SKIRMISHES

Since his ranch was near Indian territory, among Chisum's many harrassments were Indian raids. The Indians drove off cattle and horses. If settlers tried to follow and recapture their animals, the U.S. Government intervened. There were bloody fights between the Indians and settlers.

CIVIL WAR

The Civil War brought more complications. Chisum's spread was the biggest source of beef for the Confederate forces. The longest cattle drive of 750 head was in December, 1861, all the way to Vicksburg, Mississippi. Cattle were taken over the "Big River" in barges. Some drivers deserted Chisum to join the Rebel Army.

Throughout the war, Chisum delivered many herds but never accepted Confederate money. Playing it safe, he insisted on payment in gold which he carried home in saddle bags hidden under provisions in the wagon.

ON TO BROWNWOOD

To Chisum, the territory around Denton was "thickening up with tenderfeet" and in the spring of 1864 he moved his household to wider space near Brownwood. Cattle were moved 2,500 to the herd every two to three days, until 8,000 were moved.

Long before leaving Bolivar, Chisum had hand-written a deed (still in the possession of the family) selling his spread to his loyal foreman, Jim Waide, conveying his 160-acre homestead--a land grant from the State of Texas--to his faithful friend.

MOVE TO NEW MEXICO

Even more exciting days lay ahead for Chisum. After feeling crowded in the Brownwood area, he moved for the last time to New Mexico in 1874. He had many adventures--ranching years, the blazing guns of the Lincoln County War, his association with Billy the Kid, and his unsuccessful battle with throat cancer. He died in Eureka Springs, Arkansas in 1884.

Chisum moved through the southwest as a titanic force toughened and calloused by failure and success with a characteristic grin, a loud guffaw, earthy cowboy language, an imposing character who is credited with the beginnings of the cattle industry in two states.

****

CHISUM/CHISHOLM TRAIL

There is some confusion about John Chisum and the Chisholm Trail. The latter was made by Jesse Chisholm, an itinerant merchant who drove his trading wagon over the trail from San Antonio, Texas, to Abilene, Kansas.

The wheels left marks in the grass and ruts in the earth to mark the way. Actually Chisholm never drove a cattle herd, but many a Texan drove his longhorns to market over this trail.

NORTH TEXAS INSTITUTE *for* EDUCATORS *on the* VISUAL ARTS

This activity was designed by the North Texas Institute for Educators on the Visual Arts for children and their parents or teachers to experience the architecture of the Courthouse on the Square through the elements and principles of art. This brochure was originally designed for use at the September 15, 1990 County Seat Saturday. Because of the enthusiastic response, the Institute has trained Historical Museum Docents to continue working with the community to enhance the appreciation of this historical building.

The Institute is part of a national movement to reform education in this country that has occurred during the last decade. A major part of this effort has called for an expansion of education in the arts. The Getty Center for Education in the Arts has supported a national movement called "Discipline-based Art Education" that recognizes art as an essential component of the general education of every child in grades K-12. DBAE recognizes four disciplines: aesthetics, art criticism, art history and art production. This activity addresses several aspects of the DBAE approach.

The North Texas Institute for Educators on the Visual Arts was established in 1990 to provide three weeks of summer training for teachers, administrators, and museum personnel and year-round activities in staff development for participants. The North Texas Institute for Educators on the Visual Arts, a consortium of the University of North Texas, area school districts, museums, arts councils and state agencies, is one of six regional institutes in the United States supported by a five year matching grant from the Getty Center for Education in the Arts. It is also supported by a one-year matching grant from the Texas Commission on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Greater Denton Arts Council and the Arts Guild of Denton.

Drawing by Martha Robbins
Photographs by William McCarter
Text by Cassandra Broadus

COMPLIMENTS OF:
DENTON CO. HISTORICAL MUSEUM
P.O. BOX 2800
DENTON, TEXAS 76202

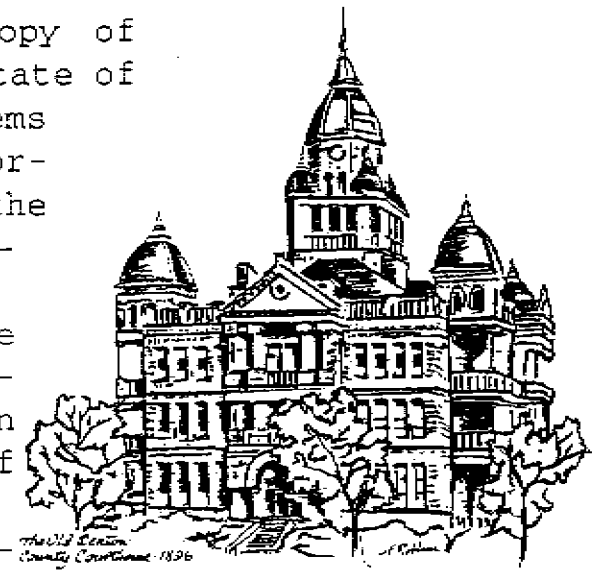
817-565-6693 817-565-8697
800-346-3189

VISUAL TREASURES OF THE COURTHOUSE

The Denton County Courthouse is one of Texas' most treasured pieces of architecture. On November 1, 1895, The Pilot Point Post- Mirror wrote, "A point of beauty and durability, it... will be the pride of the people of Denton County." Today the courthouse still proudly stands as the center of Denton's downtown square.

Did you know that the estimated cost of the court house was $150,000? In 1895, that was an ENORMOUS amount of money!

Many stone cutters, bricklayers, and laborers from everywhere worked very hard to build the beautiful courthouse. The blue granite cornerstone, found on the corner of the courthouse, was laid on February 8, 1896. Many people gathered on this bright, winter day for the occasion. Each of the city's newspapers, a copy of the constitution of the State of Texas, and many other items were placed inside the cornerstone. Can you find the cornerstone on the courthouse?



Today, the Courthouse is a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark and is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Look inside for Courthouse Treasure Hunt Activities!

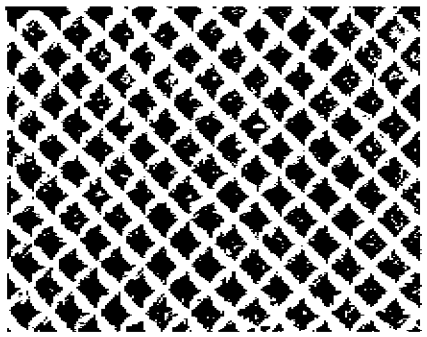
This is called a capital. It can be found near the top of the columns. The Courthouse capitals have curved shapes that resemble plants. Look closely and see ALL the details!

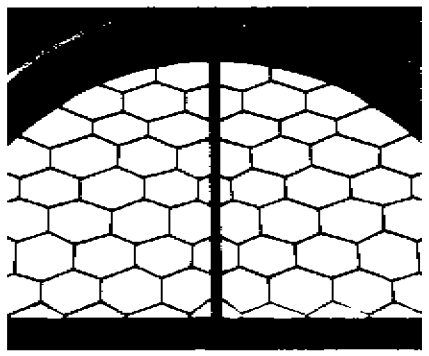
The Courthouse can be seen from many points of view.

Can you locate the viewpoint where this picture was taken?

You must walk under this curved ARCH before entering the Courthouse. Where can you find other ARCHES at the Courthouse?

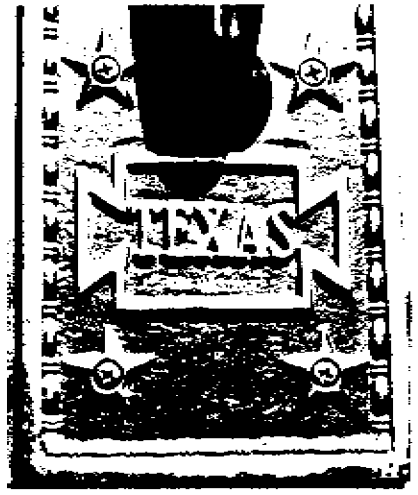
Shapes and textures can be repeated over and over to make interesting designs.



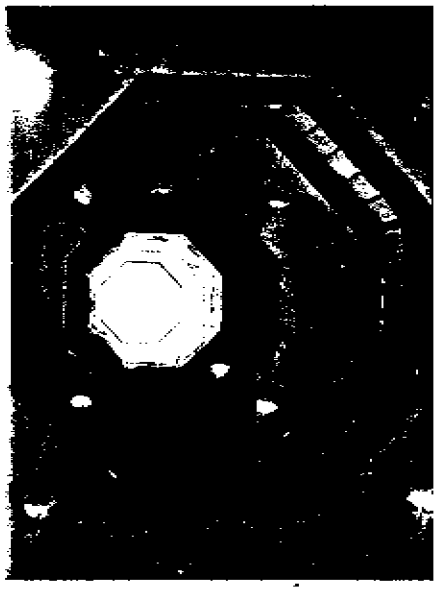


When shapes or textures are repeated, it is called a PATTERN. Can you find these hidden patterns in the Courthouse?

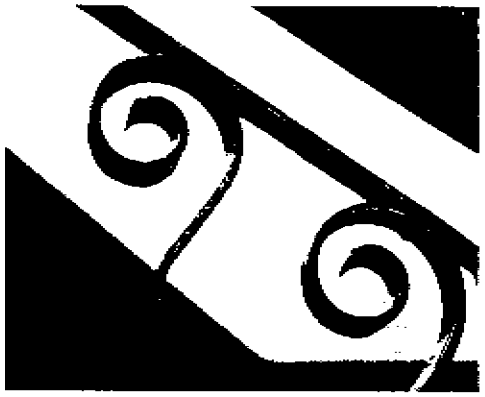
Don't miss seeing the antique objects found during the restoration of the Courthouse! They are displayed on the second floor.



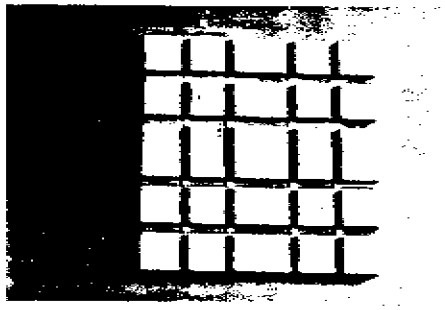
The Denton County Courthouse is a shining "star" for the people of this city. Where might you find these stars? How many stars can you find?



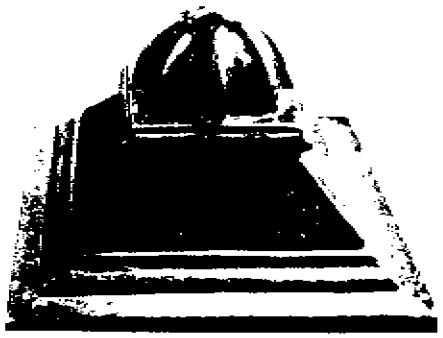
A rotunda is a large central area covered by a dome. What shape is the rotunda in our Courthouse? Where must you be to see this view in the Courthouse?



We found this curved line everywhere inside the Courthouse. Let your fingers swirl around the curved line!



This square has been repeated over and over and over inside the Courthouse. How many little shapes are inside one of these squares?



The Courthouse is filled with hidden details. Can you find this little detail inside the Courthouse?

The Search For John B. Denton's Body

A 1900 Record-Chronicle Ad Helped Historians Find The Grave

An ad appeared in the Denton Record-Chronicle in August 1900 as follows:

"The Pioneer Association of Denton County wishes to hear from anyone knowing anything relating to (1) The spot where John B. Denton lies buried; (2) Whether there is anywhere a portrait of him; (3) his nativity; and (4) Every scrap of history of his life and character. Please report to William H. Allen, Rock Hill, Tex."

In October, 1900 William H. Allen reported to the executive committee of the Pioneer Assn. of Denton County saying:

"My ad in the Record-Chronicle brought many and wide responses. First, may I give you my own personal knowledge and account of my interest in this plan of yours to honor the man for whom this county and city are named.

"I left my Kentucky home on the banks of Green River in October, 1856, and arrived at Colbert Ferry, Red River County, Tex., December 1856. Much to my chagrin, a land fraud took my entire savings of $400. I then moved to Clarksville, not many miles from Red River in 1857. Here I found good friends in the Wright and Chisum families. Dr. James Wright, Clerk of the Territory, helped me to get a school and Claiborne Chisum, Surveyor of the District, gave me a job carrying the chain and compass.

"From Claiborne Chisum, I learned the story of Captain John B. Denton. He told me of his coming to Texas and of his ability as a preacher and lawyer since 1837. He remembered every detail of the Indian fight at Keechi Village where he was killed. He was a member of a party of Indian fighters under Colonel Tarrant when this happened in May 1841. Chisum told me that it was his sad duty to inform his widow and six children of the tragedy and that he promised her and himself that he would one day remove his remains from the unmarked grave on Oliver Creek.

(This is another in a series of historical data collected by the Denton County Historical Survey Committee. The books and papers quoted in this article are in possession of a great-nephew, W. B. Chambers of Sanger. Anyone having historical information of any kind is asked to contact the Denton City-County Library.

"The son of Claiborne Chisum, John Chism, was then in Denton County running cattle over most of the county and that he the older Chisum, had asked his son to look out for the grave from the explicit markings that had been made at the time of his death. Claiborne Chisum died in 1859 without realizing his hopes for finding his friend's grave.

"Later becoming a circuit rider, I preached at John Chisum's ranchhouse and we talked of finding the grave of John B. Denton. Chism said that he would locate the grave before his removal to the Concho where he then had holdings and cattle. He left the county in 1866.

"Upon seeing the ad in the paper, John W. Gober, active member of the Pioneer Assn., sent me a copy of a letter that sentence and "they" in the sec- was living in Roswell, N.M. The letter is dated July 4, 1880."

This is John S. Chisum's letter to John W. Gober:

"The remains of John B. Denton are buried in a small box, six or eight feet from the house at the southwest corner. From the description of James Bourland, W. C. Young and Henry Stout of his burial place, I knew that I had found his grave, and being a friend of Denton's, I took up his remains and carried them home.

"From many circumstances I can say that I am positive that I am not mistaken of their being the remains of Captain Denton, but know they are his and no mistake." John S. Chisum.

The testimony of Robert G. Johnson:

Denton Texas, Oct. 30 1900.

"I was working for John S. Chisum in 1860. About August of that year (1860), Mr. Chisum who knew the location of a grave on the north bank of Oliver Creek, some distance from the water, but still in the creek bottom, took with him James R. Bourland, who was at that time selling goods at Bourland's Bend on Red River, and Felix McKittrick, and they identified the grave as that of John B. Denton, to the satisfaction of Mr. Chisum. Soon after this we were hunting cattle in the neighborhood of the grave and at Mr. Chisum's order took up the bones. Our party at the time consisted of John S. Chisum, Christopher Fitzgerald, an old man whose pick was used while we raked the dirt away with our hands, Reese Hanna, Newt Anderson, Patrick O'Ferrell and myself. And also two Negroes, Phil and Jiles Chisum. We found the imprint of the blanket in which Denton was buried still showing in the soil below the remains. We found all the bones except the last bone of one finger. We found one tooth which was plugged with gold, which we thought further confirmed the identity of the remains. We also noticed that one of the bones of the arm had been broken and healed. So far as I know, no one of the party ever had a reasonable doubt about the bones being those of John B. Denton. The bones were afterwards returned in a sperm candle box in the yard at Mr. Chisum's home near where the town of Bolivar now stands."

Signed, R. G. Johnson

FURTHER TESTIMONY

"I also have letters from the only two men now living who were with Denton when he was killed, Rev. Andrew Davis of Waxahachie and Col. San. Sims, now 82 years of age, Rich Hill, Mo.

The above testimony has been confirmed at length by an article in The Dallas News, Sept. 26, 1900 by Robert M. Hopkins. Others confirming this report are the members of the committee from the Pioneer Assn. of Denton County as follows: D. C. Daugherty, R. E. Bates, John W. Gober, Judge I. D. Ferguson, James Chisum and the Waide brothers.

The Burial on the courthouse lawn, Denton, August, 1901:

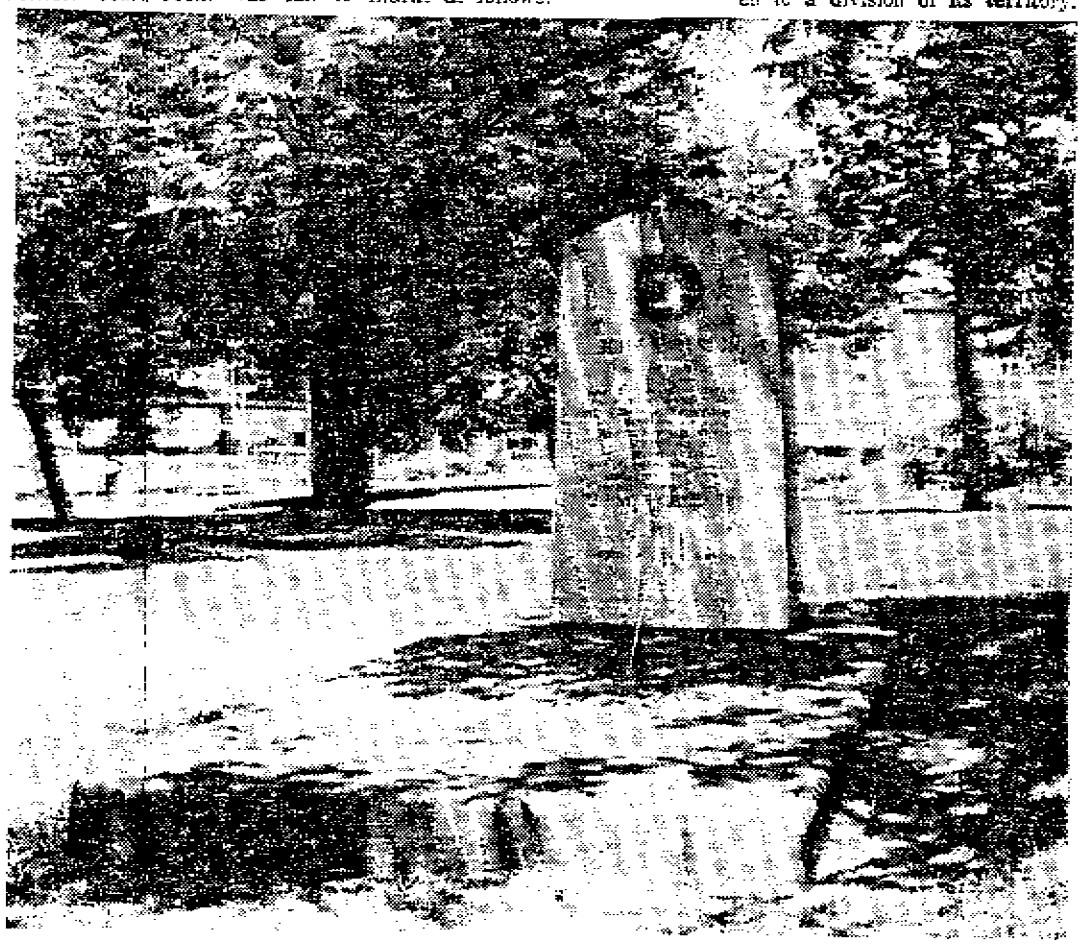
All preparations being completed for the burial of Capt. John B. Denton's remains on the courthouse lawn, Denton, in August 1901, the District Court room was full to overflowing at 1:30 p.m. when the Rev. Wm. H. Allen preached the funeral sermon.

Three living descendants were present, the Rev. J. F. Denton, Weatherford; the Rev. John B. Denton Jr., Clay County, sons; and a grandson, prof. Wm. Baker of Ellis County.

Pallbearers were Messrs. E. B. Orr, L. Willis, J. M. Swisher, John W. Gober, J. E. Hawkins and W. C. Wright.

The Rev. Allen concluded his remarks as follows:

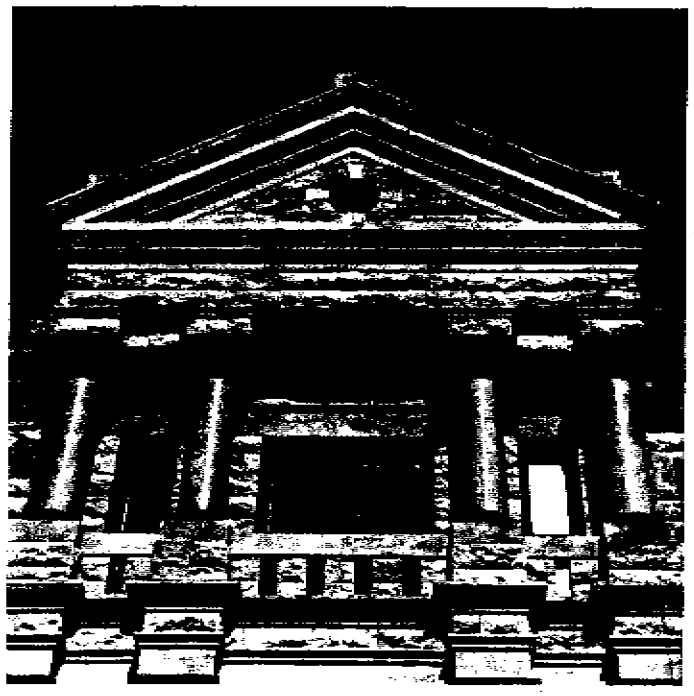
"This honor is given to Captain Denton, not because he was or had ever been a citizen of Denton County. The county did not even exist when he was killed. It is not because he lay in the soil of Denton County for years after he was killed in the battle with the Indians. He is honored because he was a lover of humanity, a patriot, a man of great probity, a man enduring hardships and sacrifice to lay the foundation of this great state. For these reasons his name is given to a division of its territory."



—Denton Record-Chronicle

JOHN B. DENTON'S GRAVE IN DENTON
Under The Shade Of Courthouse Lawn Trees

10. The Courthouse can be seen from many points of view.



Can you locate the viewpoint where this picture was taken?

** Don't miss seeing the antique objects found during the restoration of the Courthouse!**
They are displayed on the second floor.

DENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
DENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM
Are Located in the Courthouse-On-The-Square
110 West Hickory, Denton, Texas
817-565-8697 or 1-800-346-3189
Fax 817-565-8693

Published in cooperation with
DENTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' COURT
DENTON CITY COUNCIL
Denton, Texas

NORTH TEXAS INSTITUTE *for* EDUCATORS *on the* VISUAL ARTS

This activity was designed by the North Texas Institute for Educators on the Visual Arts for children and their parents or teachers to experience the architecture of the Courthouse on the Square through the elements and principles of art. This brochure was originally designed for use at the September 15, 1990 County Seat Saturday. Because of the enthusiastic response, the Institute has trained Historical Museum Docents to continue working with the community to enhance the appreciation of this historical building.

The Institute is part of a national movement to reform education in this country that has occurred during the last decade. A major part of this effort has called for an expansion of education in the arts. The Getty Center for Education in the Arts has supported a national movement called "Discipline-based Art Education" that recognizes art as an essential component of the general education of every child in grades K-12.DBAE recognizes four disciplines: aesthetics, art criticism, art history and art production. This activity addresses several aspects of the DBAE approach.

The North Texas Institute for Educators on the Visual Arts was established in 1990 to provide three weeks of summer training for teachers, administrators, and museum personnel and year-round activities in staff development for participants. The North Texas Institute for Educators on the Visual Arts, a consortium of the University of North Texas, area school districts, museums, Arts councils and state agencies, is one of six regional institutes in the United States supported by a five year matching grant from the Getty Center for Education in the Arts. It is also supported by a one-year matching grant from the Texas Commission on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Greater Denton Arts Council and the Arts Guild of Denton.

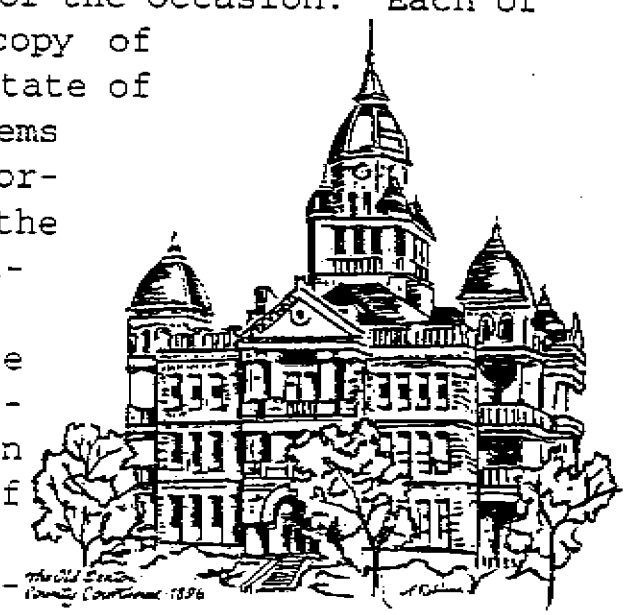
Drawing by Martin Robbins
Photographs by William McCarter
Text by Cassandra Brandin

VISUAL TREASURES OF THE COURTHOUSE

The Denton County Courthouse is one of Texas' most treasured pieces of architecture. On November 1, 1895, The Pilot Point Post- Mirror wrote, "A point of beauty and durability, it... will be the pride of the people of Denton County." Today the courthouse still proudly stands as the center of Denton's downtown square.

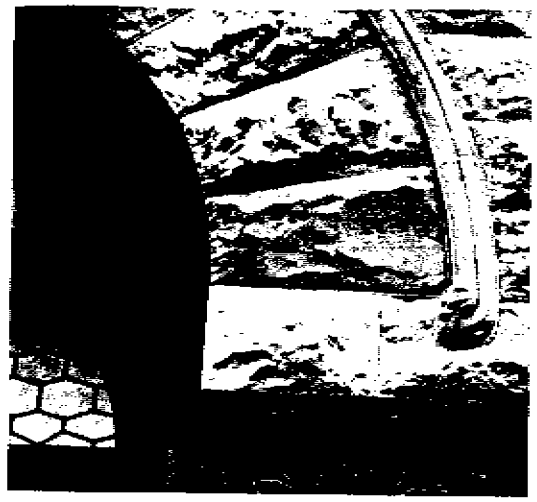
Did you know that the estimated cost of the court house was $150,000? In 1895, that was an ENORMOUS amount of money!

Many stone cutters, bricklayers, and laborers from everywhere worked very hard to build the beautiful courthouse. The blue granite cornerstone, found on the corner of the courthouse, was laid on February 8, 1896. Many people gathered on this bright, winter day for the occasion. Each of the city's newspapers, a copy of the constitution of the State of Texas, and many other items were placed inside the cornerstone. Can you find the cornerstone on the courthouse?

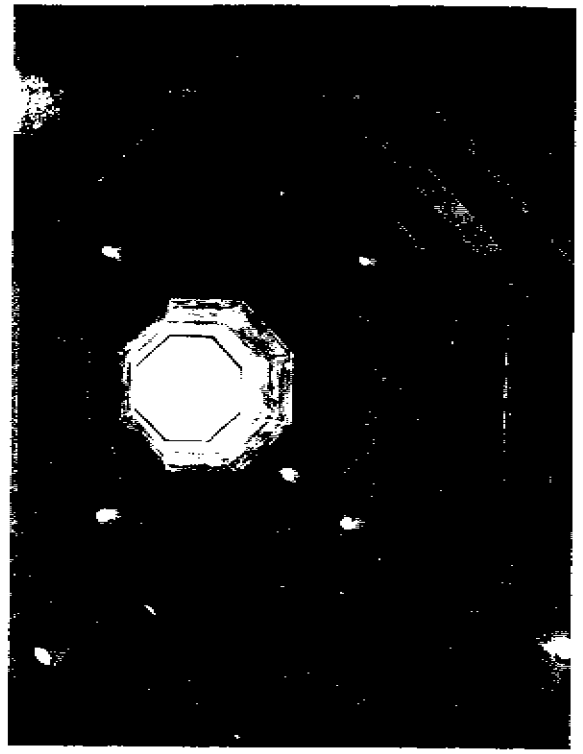


Today, the Courthouse is a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark and is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Look inside for Courthouse Treasure Hunt Activities!



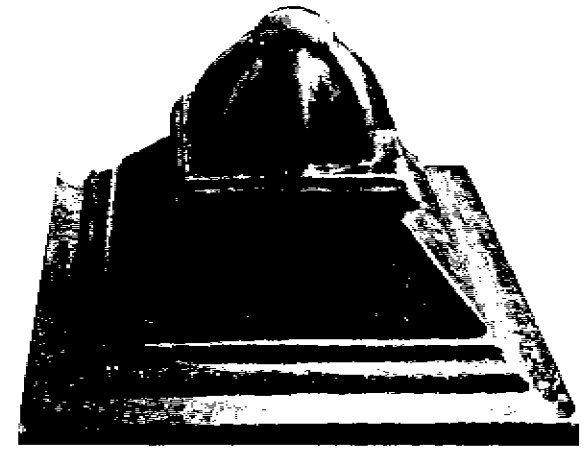
You must walk under this curved ARCH before entering the Courthouse. Where can you find other ARCHES at the Courthouse?



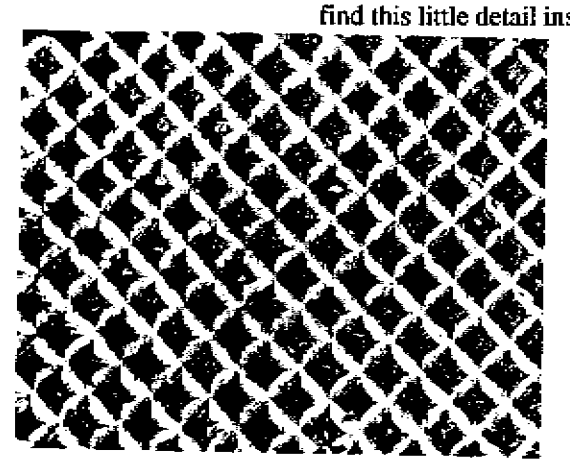
2. A rotunda is a large central area covered by a dome. What shape is the rotunda in our Courthouse? Where must you be to see this view in the Courthouse?

3. The Denton County Courthouse is a shining "star" for the people of this city. Where might you find these stars? How many stars can you find?

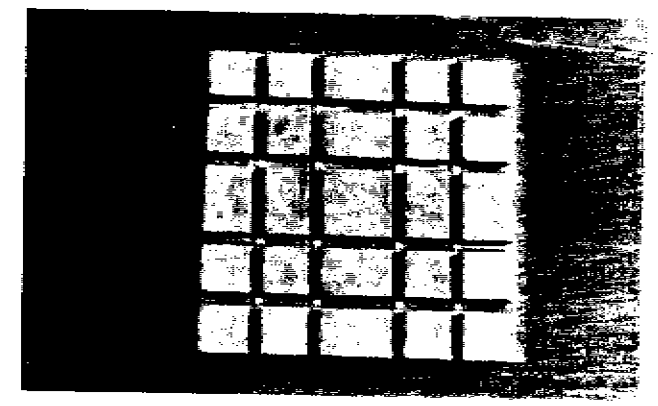
4. This is called a capital. It can be found near the top of the columns. The Courthouse capitals have curved shapes that resemble plants. Look closely and see ALL the details!



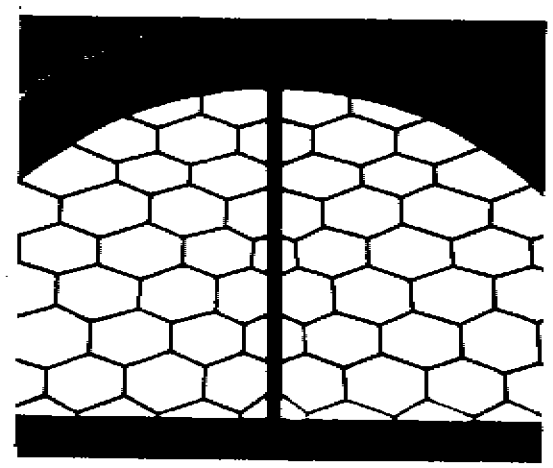
5. The Courthouse is filled with hidden details. Can you find this little detail inside the Courthouse?



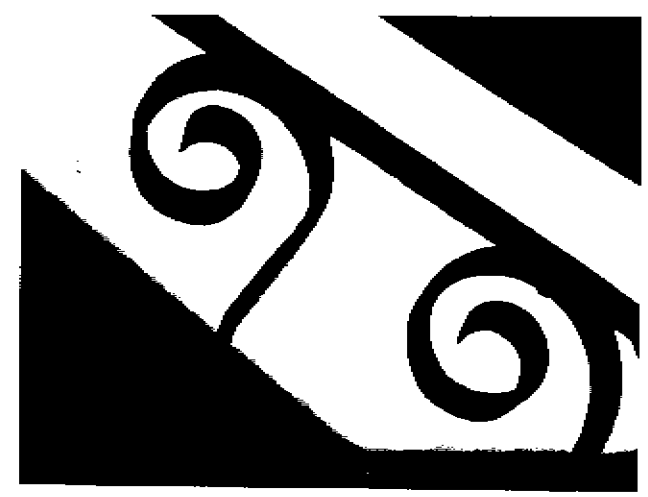
6. Shapes and textures can be repeated over and over to make interesting designs.



7. This square has been repeated over and over and over inside the Courthouse. How many little shapes are inside one of these squares?



8. When shapes or textures are repeated, it is called a PATTERN. Can you find these hidden patterns in the Courthouse?



9. We found this curved line everywhere inside the Courthouse. Let your fingers swirl around the curved line!

Denton County Historical Museum

Article by Norma Lynn Gamble, Museum Director

Denton, TX. Visit the 1896 Courthouse-on-the-Square in the historic downtown Denton, Texas. Located on the first floor in this grand old building is the Denton County Historical Museum. Free admission allows visitors to see special exhibits of American Pressed Blue Glass, antique guns, dolls, early pottery, Indian artifacts and rooms representative of the 1850's to 1920's. History books and Texas items are sold in the Museum gift shop. Family history researchers will find cemetery records and archival documents.

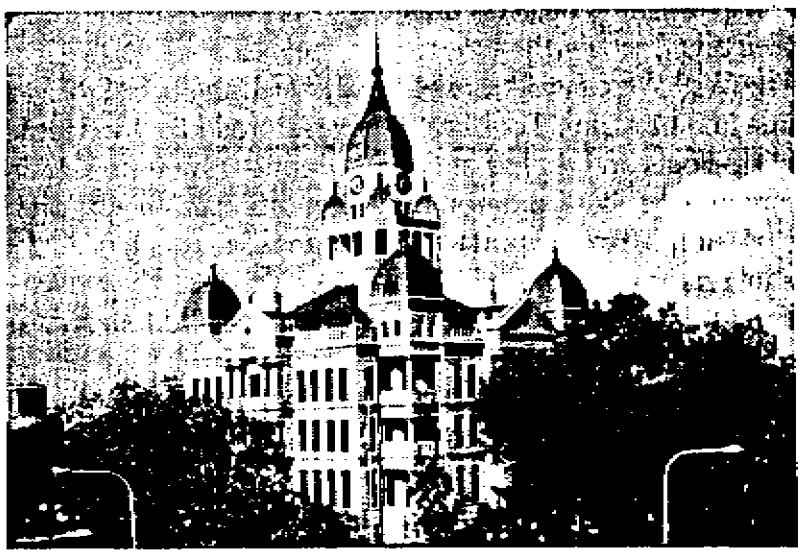
The Courthouse is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is designated a Texas Historical Landmark and one of the most photographed buildings in Texas. Restored to its original grandeur in 1986, the building is handicap accessible.

Antique stores and restaurants surround the courthouse square. Off street parking is available. Three golf courses, public swimming pools with special festivals throughout the year make Denton a great place to stay. Hotels, motels, RV parks are available. Two major lakes are found in Denton County. Both are excellent for fishing and boating with beautiful lakeside overnight accommodations.

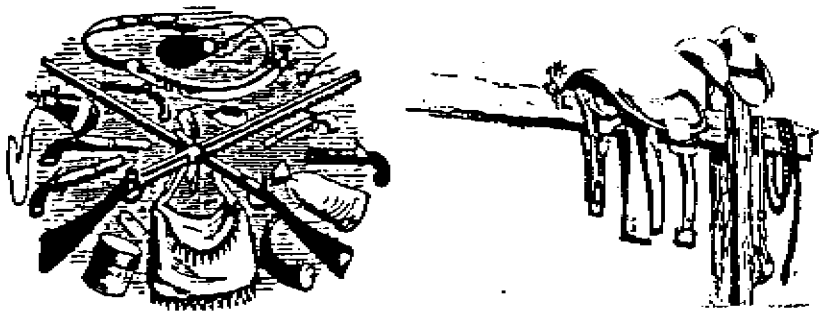
1996 will be a year of many special events with Denton County celebrating its sesquicentennial and the 1896 Courthouse celebrating its centennial.

The first Saturday in December is the annual Victorian Christmas at the Courthouse with a Merry Beary Teddybear Parade for children.

Traveling down I35 south to Texas, you will find stopping in Denton, Texas a must. For more information contact Denton Historical Museum, P.O. Box 2800, Denton, TX 76202 or call 800-346-3189. ■



The 1896 Denton Courthouse, Denton Texas.



A major NASCAR track is opening in the fall of 1996 in Denton County.

Denton County HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Historic Downtown Denton #1 Place to Visit

A treasure waiting to be explored is located on the first floor of the 1896 Courthouse-on-the-Square in historic downtown Denton. The Museum is open free to the public throughout the year except for major holidays. A toll free telephone number 1-800-346-3189 may be used to obtain information.

A trip to the Museum is not complete if you do not stop in the gift shop. History books about Indians, early settlers, local history and Texana are for sale. Cookbooks, stained glass, paper dolls, wooden toys and Texas magnets are just a few of the tempting treasures with a just right price for you. The gift shop is staffed by volunteers who greet all guests, answer questions about the exhibits and remind them to sign the historic guest register, and early 1900's ledger.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SEPTEMBER
Saturday, September 7, *County Seat Saturday Celebration*
Museum open 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Quilt Show 2nd floor Courtroom
Kentucky Covered Wagon

DECEMBER
Saturday, December 7th, *Annual Victorian Christmas Celebration*
Museum Open 10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Huggy Bear & Shaggy Dog 10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Mr. & Mrs. Santa Claus 1:00 p.m.
Merry Beary Teddybear Parade 2:00 p.m.

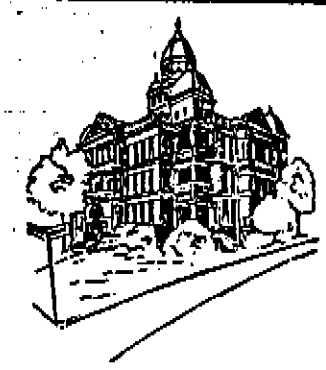
MUSEUM
Hours
Tuesday-Saturday 10:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Closed Monday and Major Holidays
Call us at:
Fax 817-565-8693
or 817-565-8697
or toll free, 1-800-346-3189

Volunteers at the information desk provide help to the public and tourists in locating places around the city of Denton and throughout Denton County. Staffed by volunteers who enjoy people. Volunteers provide group tours for school children, busloads of travelers, seniors from across Texas, business leaders, family reunions, organization club meetings and other special events. Volunteers in the archival workroom clean and catalog documents. Volunteers research the history of arti facts

New exhibits are always in the planning stage. Exhibits on loan from other institutions provide maximum educational opportunities for the public. Special exhibits from the University of North Texas Historical Collection are a major part of the museum's permanent displays.

Special exhibits of family histories are designed with the help of decendents of early families. Contact the Museum office to learn about this program.

Special collections of American pressed glass, native American pottery, armaments, canning jars, wooden tools, dolls, cameras, barbed wire, tin toys, and oil lamps are a few of the artifacts displayed. Room exhibits depict life in the early days of Denton County when ice boxes, woodstoves, butter churns, kerosene lamps, treadle sewing machines, weaving looms, sadirons and long skirts were a part of every day life.



Photograph exhibits show early schools, parades, family gatherings, picnics, funerals, churches, farms and ranches.

The Museum is a research center for family history. Trained staff aid local and out of state visitors to find their Denton County roots.

The Museum is a 501 c3 non profit corporation. Elevators and handicap ramp make the courthouse-on-the square available to all.

You are invited to visit the Museum, share in the fun of re-visiting early days in Denton County, attend special events and become a part of its many volunteer activites.

Schools are encouraged to schedule tours. Special packets of history material are available to teachers upon request. The packet includes a newsletter, brochures about the history of Denton County with crossword puzzles, a treasure hunt of the courthouse and how to plan a successful visit. Traveling teaching kits about early schools, kitchens, archeology and family life may be checked out for off-site use. Artifacts in the kits with narratives and games provide a tool for children to learn about history.

History of the Denton County Courthouse on the Square

In eighteen ninety-six, 1896, the current Denton County Courthouse was built. It was built of limestone from the county. The very first Denton Courthouse was made of wood and was supposedly burned down by the famous outlaw Sam Bass and his gang. In 1877, another Courthouse was built, this second one was made of brick. Disaster struck the second courthouse and it was hit by lightning and condemned. The first architect of the current courthouse, in 1895, was James Gordon Riley. In that same year, a second architect was hired, W. C. Dodson. The man that the county and city was named after, J. B. Denton, was buried on the courthouse lawn. It was not until 1939 that the courthouse switched from gas lighting to electricity. A project in 1985 was voted on by the people of Denton County to help toward the restoration of the courthouse. You can find the courthouse in the middle of the city of Denton, with Oak Street to the North. Once inside the courthouse, the center hall is called the Rotunda. The first floor has the Denton County Historical Museum. Volunteers conduct the museum tours, and in March the museum has a special exhibit for the Women's Right To Vote. The second floor of the courthouse has the Commissioners Court. The Denton County Commissioners for 1995 are: Kirk Wilson, Don Hill, Sandy Jacobs and Scott Armey. The third floor has the Fire Marshall for Denton County.

VICTORIAN PARLOR AND MUSIC ROOM

(Researched by Darlene McNatt, Docent)

The Victorian Era spans the reign of Queen Victoria, who ruled Great Britain and Ireland from 1837 to 1901. Her influence is felt in the architecture of the Denton Courthouse on the Square which was completed in 1896 and restored in 1987.

The Victorians had a taste for highly decorated buildings and their taste also greatly influenced the exterior as well as the interior of their homes.

The furniture in our Victorian Parlor and Music Room characterizes their love of ornate and flowery carved furniture. Heavy rich velvets and elegant damask complimented their heavily embellished furniture and fringe was used to add a finished touch of elegance to the draperies, lampshades and upholstered pieces. The Victorians had a taste for the exotic and they accessorized their homes with ferns, peacock feathers, statues, clocks, candelabrum, oriental prints and rugs and Japanese fans.

The Victorian believed in progress. During the Victorian Age the great inventions of electricity, gas power, hot and cold running water and central heating were made. During the Victorian Age--lighting went through many changes from candles to whale oil lamps to kerosene lamps to gaslights and then to electric light bulbs. The Victorians were careful to keep the house well ventilated because they worried about fumes from the gas lights. With central heating--floor plans changed and rooms did not have to be shut off to hold fireplace heat.

VICTORIAN LITERATURE: Favorite books and stories: Oliver Twist, David Copperfield, Treasure Island, Little Women, Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn.

FAMOUS VICTORIANS: President Lincoln, Buffalo Bill

MUSIC: Brass Bands, Barbershop Quartets

SQUARE GRAND PIANO: Made in 1854 by Gatler Bros. of New York. Shipped around the horn in 1854 to Anaheim Landing, California, which is now a part of Long Beach. It was brought by mule cart to Santa Ana and stayed in the same family for generations. They traded the piano and an organ for a Baldwin Fun Machine. In 1964, Bob Estes of Denton bought the piano and brought it to Denton in a U-Haul trailer.

TOYMAKING AND DOLLS

SOURCE: BY SOUTHERN HANDS, Jan Arnow
Roundtable Press Books, Oxmoor House, Birmingham, AL., 1987

"Few historical examples of American toys remain, primarily because toys were made from whatever materials were at hand and were not considered enough to save. Both practical and religious factors, moreover, discouraged the introduction of toys into the life of the American child. Lack of shipboard space prevented the earliest settlers from bringing many toys to America. As they labored to create new homes in the wilderness, they had little time for play, and those children who did not die in infancy worked alongside their parents in the effort to survive."

"Gradually, as life became easier for parents, their attitudes about children changed. A few pieces survive. At first, religiously oriented toys were allowed--objects that were directly related to biblical tales. Noah's Ark was a toy boat with a removable top, inside of which were stored dozen of miniature animals. Children were allowed an increasing variety of playthings, all of which were made by hand from available materials."

"The growth of manufacturing after the Civil War also signaled the growth of the commercial toy industry. Wooden sleds, rocking horses and other items appeared in mail-order catalogs and general stores stocked more and more factory-made toys. Many people, especially in the isolated mountain communities of the South, could not afford manufactured toys. They continued to make their own--sewing dolls from scraps of material, whittling animals from scraps of wood and crafting miniatures of the adult environment from whatever was at hand. These toys were exquisite in their simplicity of design and inventive use of material."

DOLLS

"As the favored toy of children since the beginning of recorded history, the doll has served as the best friend, confidant and child of children everywhere."

"Tombs of ancient Egypt have yielded carved and painted dolls with flat, wooden bodies and hair formed of threaded clay beads. As early as 600 B.C., the children of ancient Greece played with jointed dolls with movable arms and legs, as did Roman children three centuries later. Dolls from every culture and every era have provided portraits of the dress and customs of the times."

"Children in the early days of this country owned dolls that were formed and styled from skills learned from the Indians and made of materials that were abundant--apples and nuts, corncobs and corn shucks--and decorated with pokeberry juice for the mouth and dots of soot for the eyebrows and hair.

PRIMATIVE RUG LOOM

The Heirloom Master Weaver was built by the Lansing Loom Works (c. 1906-1910). Of primative design with two harnesses, only a Plain or Tabby weave can be produced with this loom. The loom could only be used to weave rugs. With four harnesses, a pattern weave could be produced.

To WARP or DRESS a loom is to place all the verticle threads through the loom.

The loom was donated by Rainy Sears. The North Texas Handspinners Guild restored and warped the loom.

LOOM WEAVING
Produced Family Textiles

"Having a loom and spinning wheel were luxuries not all families possessed, but most men had enough building skills to construct them, even though they might be crudely made. Comercially made ones were not available in Texas until the 1840's. Tools for making the cloth - the wheel for spinning yarn and the loom for its weaving - were important to most families, as there was no nonsense about the need to supply the family with textiles. As soon as they could get the wool, cotton, or flax, women immediately set up their production.

A sturdy fabric would result from the combination of cotton or linen (derived from flax) used for a warp yarn in the loom and wool for the weft. This homespun fabric, referred to a linsey-woolsey or linsey-homespun, was considered by some to be coarse and ugly. It was, nevertheless, so important to the colonlists that the woman of the house was reluctant to have anyone else cut into the goods. She felt more skilled at making use of every inch! It took almost two weeks of steady and earnest labor to spin enough thread for a dress, then another week to weave the fabric. Depending on the style and complication of construction, it could take an aditional week to cut and stitch the garment, always by hand, as the sewing machine was not invented until 1846 and not generally in use in Texas until after the Civil War.

Preparing the fiber for the loom was a family affair. Even little children could help by picking up the trash from the cotton and getting it ready for the older girls who kept the spinning wheel and loom humming a good part of every day. Daughters accepted willingly their role in helping produce the cloth."

SOURCE: CALICO CHRONICLE
Texas Women and Their Fashions, 1830-1910
By Betty J. Mills, 1985

SEWING AREA IN BEDROOM

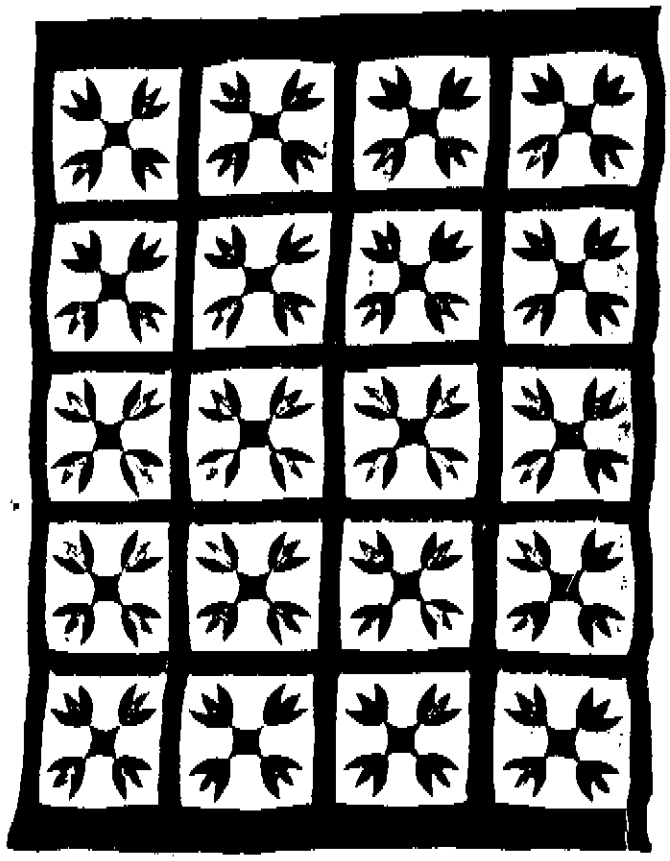
Most homes about the turn of the century had an area set aside for sewing. The sewing area might be a part of the family bedroom; it might be a part of the parlor (during the week, of course) and even few women were fortunate enough to have a seperate room designated as a sewing room. Most of the garments worn by the women and children were made at home. Most of the household linens such as sheets, pillowcases, dish towels, quilts and many other items were home-made.

Many activities took place in the sewing area. New garments were made, mending was done, quilts were pieced, cotton was carded for quilts and then they were quilted. Most women made all their own knitted items; stockings, sweaters, caps and mufflers; things that most of us take for granted were all made at home. Located in the exhibit is a working machine, patented in 1903. the marriage certificate on the wall belonged to a young couple who were married at Bolivar on December 5, 1875. The groom was the local school teacher, Mr. J. R. Harper, and his bride Ellen Sarah Garrison.

Note the trundle bed under the bed and the bed (foot) warmer. A quilt beater rests atop the quilts in the wooden chest. A wardrobe (free-standing closet) housed the limited clothing of the pioneer families.

DONORS: Bed, c. 1890, James Thomason, Denton; Sewing Machine, c. 1903, Lucy Faught, Argyle; Wooden Quilt Chest, Williams Estate, Denton; Shoe collection, Mr. & Mrs. Coit Carpenter, Denton; Rocker, Mary McNath, Denton; Seatee, Lamp, Eunice Gray, Sanger.

NT HISTORICAL COLLECTION: Spinning Wheel, Wicker Bed, Round-top Trunk, Lamps, Room Accessories.



TURKEY TRACKS OR WANDERING FOOT

TURKEY TRACKS, OR WANDERING FOOT: QUILT, BY DELILAH COX KING C. 1877.

DONATED TO THE DENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM BY FRANCES MIERS MULLER (MRS. MAITLAND ALLYAN MULLER), WHITTIER, CALIFORNIA.

THE QUILT WAS MADE C. 1877, BY DELILAH COX KING FOR HER GRANDDAUGHTER-IN-LAW, LUCY ELLA BEALE, WHO MARRIED FIRST, GEORGE ANDREW SMITH, AND SECOND TO R. T. HAWKINS. DELILAH, WHILE MAKING THE QUILT, RELATED TO LUCY ELLA MANY STORIES ABOUT THE KING FAMILY, FROM WHICH GEORGE ANDREW SMITH DESCENDED.

DELILAH COX KING (1806-1884), AND HER HUSBAND, JOHN KING (1800-1846), WITH NINE OF THEIR CHILDREN, MADE THE TEDIOUS TREK FROM MISSOURI IN 1845/1846, AND BECAME THE FIRST SETTLERS IN THE EASTERN DENTON COUNTY AREA WHICH LATER BECAME KNOWN AS THE LITTLE ELM COMMUNITY. MR. KING DIED IN THE SUMMER OF 1846. DELILAH KING REMAINED AN OUTSTANDING PIONEER WOMAN OF DENTON COUNTY. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THIS REMARKABLE WOMAN AND HER DESCENDANTS IS IN THE RESEARCH FILE OF THE DENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION.

THE QUILT'S PATTERN HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED AS TURKEY TRACKS. ITS EARLIER NAME, WANDERING FOOT (OR, WALKING FOOT) WAS CONSIDERED TO POSSESS A MALIGN INFLUENCE; CHILDREN WERE NOT ALLOWED TO SLEEP UNDER IT, AND NO BRIDE WOULD HAVE ONE. THIS SPELL WAS BROKEN LATER WHEN SLIGHTLY ALTERED AND RE-NAMED AS TURKEY TRACKS. THIS PATTERN IS NOT INCLUDED IN MANY BOOKS ON AMERICAN QUILTS.* IT IS BELIEVED THAT THE MATERIALS USED IN THIS QUILT HAVE BEEN HAND DYED, PERHAPS FROM NATIVE PLANTS DYES.

---

*BACON, LENICE INGRAM. AMERICAN PATCHWORK QUILTS. NEW YORK: WM. MORROW & CO., 1973.
MCKENDRY, RUTH. TRADITIONAL QUILTS AND BED COVERINGS. NEW YORK: VAN NOSTRAND REINHOLD, C. 1979.

"LET THERE BE LIGHT"

"Artificial light provided by oil lamps enabled the members of a nineteenth century household to live independently of the natural cycle of day and night. Sperm oil, produced from the Sperm Whale provided the best and brightest flame, although lard oil, cottonseed oil, castor oil, and turpentine were burned as substitute due to the expense of sperm oil.

A new fuel, Kerosene, was introduced in 1854. Innovation on burners, lamps, and chimneys designed specifically for kerosene continued throughout the remainder of the century. Later lamps gave off more light. The earliest kerosene lamps burned at six to twenty candle power, while lamps of the turn of the century burned at sixty to eighty.

Lamps created numerous chores: daily shimney wiping and wick trimming, weekly washing of chimneys and shades, and periodic rewicking and dismantling for thorough cleaning with soda, inside and out. Unpleasantly sooty and smelly, these tasks had to be done for decent light: untrimmed wicks flickered, and dirty chimneys or shades dimmed the light. Unfortunately, all lamp soot did not remain in the chimneys or find its way onto the wife's hands and rags. Like the soot and smoke from wood and coal fires, it found its way onto every surface in the home. The accumulated grime was so staggering, and keeping up with it on a daily basis was so impossible, that the practice of "Spring Cleaning" was necessary for a truly clean home.

SOURCE: Never Done: A History of American Housework by Susan Strasser 1982 - Pantheon
Books, New York.
RESEARCHED BY: Cindy Vranesa, Docent

THE KITCHEN

One hundred years ago kitchen stoves were made of cast iron or steel and burned wood or coal. Fuel had to be fed into it by hand and temperatures were difficult to regulate. Afterwards, it had to be cleaned and the ashes carried away. On cold days the oven warmed the entire kitchen, but on hot days it turned into an inferno.

Perishable foods were kept cool in an icebox--an insulated box or cabinet with a block of ice inside to keep the air cool. A well-insulated icebox could keep food cool for days. The iceman delivered blocks of ice in his wagon. He used a large pair of tongs and slung the ice block over his shoulder (which was covered by a leather pad.)

In the 1920's, electric refridgerators became available but were quite expensive; so ice boxes were still commonly in use during the 1930's and 1940's and longer in rural areas slow to get electricity.

A century ago, kitchens had only a pump and no running hot water. Hot water for dishwashing had to be pumped and heated on the stove.

Kerosene or oil lamps gave way to the light bulb in the early twentieth century when electricity became available.

Ice first came to Denton in 1874, but was used exclusively by the butcher shops and saloons. Little ice was used in private homes. Milk, butter and cream were kept cool in wells, springs or cisterns. When ice became more plentiful and less expensive the "ice box" made its appearance in private kitchens. In the 1930's electric refridgerators began to replace the old-fashioned "ice box."

CINDY11.WRI

TOOLS OF THE TRADE - COBBLER'S TOOLS

"Shoes and boots, worn as protective footwear are ancient items of dress. In early civilations shoemaking skills were developed to a high degree; styles and variety were produced by the artisan, but the process was slow and expensive. Modern mass production depended upon the development of shoe machinery, which began about the middle of the 19th Century. The industry logically developed most extensively in the more highly industrialized nation.

The first type of footwear was a simple wraparound strip of leather (the basic construction of a moccasin), held together on the foot with rawhide lacings.

In 1818 lasts (wooden forms) for shaping shoes were made in rights and lefts. Another milestone was reached in 1846 when Elias Howe invented the sewing machine. Previously, the majority of shoes were made by attaching the sole to the upper part with tacks, nails, or wooden pegs; any sewing was done by hand.

Since time immemorial the basic materials for shoes and boots have been leather, used for uppers, linings, counters, inner soles, welting and other parts. Though still dominant, leather is being replaced by other materials, particularly in the component parts of shoes."

SOURCE: ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA, 1972

The 19th Century shoemaking capital of North America was located in Lynn, Massachusettes where two London trained shoemakers and their "hydes" first arrived aboard the Mayflower in 1629. By the year 1855 over 15,000 men and women were employed at the trade in Lynn and their annual production amounted to four million dollars worth of handmade footwear. 15 years later, in 1870, the work force had dropped slightly but machines for pegging and stitching enabled employees to raise production to eleven million pairs of boots and shoes worth over seventeen million dollars.

LOOM WEAVING

Produced Family Textiles

"Having a loom and spinning wheel were luxuries not all families possessed, but most men had enough building skills to construct them, even though they might be crudely made. Commercially made ones were not available in Texas until the 1840's. Tools for making the cloth -- the wheel for spinning yarn and the loom for its weaving -- were important to most families, as there was no nonsense about the need to supply the family with textiles. As soon as they could get the wool, cotton, or flax, women immediately set up their production.

A sturdy fabric would result from the combination of cotton or linen (derived from flax) used for a warp yarn in the loom and wool for the weft. This homespun fabric, referred to a linsey-woolsey or linsey-homespun, was considered by some to be coarse and ugly. It was, nevertheless, so important to the colonists that the woman of the house was reluctant to have anyone else cut into the goods. She felt more skilled at making use of every inch! It took almost two weeks of steady and earnest labor to spin enough thread for a dress, then another week to weave the fabric. Depending on the style and complication of construction, it could take an additional week to cut and stitch the garment, always by hand, as the sewing machine was not invented until 1846 and not generally in use in Texas until after the Civil War.

Preparing the fiber for the loom was a family affair. Even little children could help by picking the trash from the cotton and getting it ready for the older girls who kept the spinning wheel and loom humming a good part of every day. Daughters accepted willingly their role in helping produce the cloth."

SOURCE: CALICO CHRONICLE
Texas Women and Their Fashions 1830-1910
By Betty J. Mills, 1985

POTTERY MANUFACTURING IN DENTON COUNTY BEFORE 1900

Texas' first potters were Caddo Indians, who used the sandy clays of East Texas to make small storage vessels. They added small bits of bone to the clay to give it additional strength, built it up into pots by both coil and slab method, and fired it at low temperatures to produce the type pottery known as earthenware.

The Anglo-American settlers who colonized Texas between 1820' and 1860 brought with them a method of making pottery which was totally new to Texas, although it had flourished in the American South for at least a century before arriving here. This was the technique of making salt and alkaline glazed stoneware; pottery in which the clay was fired at a temperature high enough to cause it to vitrify, or become non-porous. Whenever they could find suitable clay these craftsmen set up a pottery and began supplying their neighbors with stoneware.

The frontier potter's basic tools were the kick-wheel and the groundhog kiln. The kick-wheel was simply an iron potter's wheel mounted in a wooden frame and connected to a flywheel, powered by a foot treadle at the base. The potter sat on a bench attached to the edge of the frame and kicked the treadle, turning the wheel and shaping the clay with his hands. The finished, unglazed bodies were placed on shelves in the pottery to dry until there were enough pots to fire in the kiln.

The kiln was a tunnel-like chamber similar to a grounhog's burrow, lined with brick. It narrowed toward the far end, where a flue rose up through the ground to a short chimney. The kiln frequently was dug into the side of a hill or on sloping ground. The earliest known kiln in the South is at Yorktown, Va. They were still in use in Texas in the 1800s. When the potter prepared to fire a load of pots, he had to crawl into the kiln, painstakingly arrange the pots so they did not touch and work backwards toward the door. He laid a wood fire in the firebox, lit it and closed the kiln. The heat from the fire was drawn over the pots and up the flue by the draft from the chimney.

Rock salt was thrown into the kiln to glaze the pots. The salt vaporized, freeing the sodium which combined with the silica on the clay pot's surface to produce a glassy, grey glaze. Another glaze favored by potters was an alkaline glaze made from wood ashes and applied to the pot before it went into the kiln.

decorated some of his pots by drawing designs on them--usually cros-hatching -- before they were glazed with cobalt salts. In the 1870s, Cranston, like many Texas potters, abandoned the salt glaze and began to use a dark brown glaze, called Albany slip after its wource in the clay pits near Albany, New York. He did not live long enough, however, to work with the smooth white glaze called Bristol glaze that became popular at the turn of the century. Cranston's son, George, also was a potter. After his father died, he left Denton County and went to work the Wilcox clays in Wood County. George Cranston made pots until the beginning of this century.

Since brick and pottery shards are practically indestructable, many of the kiln sites remain as overgrown mounds of broken brick. In fact, applications are pending for five pottery sits in Denton County for the National Register of Historic Sites. In other cases, the kilns were torn down and bricks reused; occasionally a few bricks on a farmhouse chimney will bear the signs of salt glaze, acquired when they were on the interior of a kiln.

Since relatively few Texas potters marked their pots, it is extremely difficult to identify a pot on a dealer's shelf. A few potters did use marks. The only sure way to attribute an unmarked pot to a particular potter is through its provenance, its history of ownership. If it belongs to a descendant of the potter, its history is usually fairly clear. If it has been used a long time in a household near a pottery, chances are good it was made in that pottery; pots were seldom sold more than 50 miles from their source. Unfortunately, it is difficult to get an accurate provenance from a dealer, so buying an unmarked pot in an antique shop is always a risk.

Adapted for use from an article
by Mr. Lonn Taylor, Museum of
New Mexico

PUEBLO GROUPS: Santo Domingo, Zuni, Acoma, Laguna, Hopi, Santa Clara

The Pueblo paints designs on before firing. Colors used are minerals suspended in water, except for a black made from bee weed. Brush is a yucca leaf that has been chewed to expose fine fibers. Designs are applied freehand. Shiny black pottery is made by smoking in a kiln which is made of dried animal manure. The mass is set alight, then smothered with powdered fuel. The smoke cannot escape and the carbon in the smoke deposits on the pottery. The shiny finish is made by rubbing the pottery with a smooth stone prior to firing.

Pueblo organized collective activities and have produced sharply defined collective concepts and art styles. Most subjects have prescribed conventional forms, and the same combination of form elements occur over and over with minor variations. ---"art for art's sake is a concept that is almost unknown in Indian cultures--- but by and large every product made by an Indian artist has a function and is created by him primarily to serve a given end. Artistic merit is simply considered a necessary by-product of good workmanship. The close relationship between aesthetic and technical perfection gives the work of most Indian artists a basic unity rarely found in the products of an urban civilization."

Jars for carrying and storing water are the most common vessels made by Pueblo potters. Most of the patterns on the painted pottery were adapted from the designs used earlier in their basketware. Many different styles of painting evolved. The Spanish conquest brought a decline of painting arts.

SOURCE: INDIAN ART OF THE UNITED STATES
by Frederick H. Douglas and Rene D'Harnoncourt
Museum of Modern Art, 1941, New York

Researched by: Kelly Swisher, Docent

pj

DENTON COUNTY COURTHOUSE ON THE SQUARE

In Texas, during the last quarter of the 19th century, the most prevalent type of governmental building was the County Courthouse---a structure which housed the offices and records of the county. The Courthouse also functioned as visual evidence of civic stability and political stature.

The Denton County Courthouse as built in 1896-1897 by architect, W. C. Dodson who was from Waco, Texas. Dodson built a series of courthouses throughout the North Texas area:

Fannin County---1888 (Bonham)	Hood County----1891 (Granbury)
Hill County-----1889 (Hillsboro)	Parker County--1885 (Weatherford)
Coryell---------1898 (Gatesville)	
Lampasas County-1883	

Dodson, who was in charge of designing and building the Denton County Courthouse, believed in using the materials that were presently at hand. This is why the building is made out of local materials---the limestone came from the Ganzer Quarry north of Denton; the pink granite from the Burnet area. Each courthouse that Dodson built was a challenge and he made a progression of style changes that culminated in the Denton County Courthouse. The resulting architecture was rustic, dynamic and uniquely American. Dodson was paid approximately $7500.00 for his work. Our Courthouse was built by contract--piecework and day labor. An ad in the DENTON GLOBE DEMOCRAT on April 24, 1896 read: "Wanted--15 or 20 non-union stone cutters in Denton County New Courthouse/ Wages 40 cents per hour". (Stonecutters were called Masons). The cornerstone was laid on February 8, 1896 and the building was completed on May 21, 1897. The cornerstone lists the names of the men responsible for the building--the architect, contractor and County Judge and Commissioners--C. W. Bates, J. M. Miller, J. F. Morgan and W. N. Jackson. The structure is a Texas Recorded Landmark, was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1977, is a State Archelogical Site and has been awarded the City of Denton Historic Landmark medallion.

The Courthouse on the Square structure had three types of stone:

1. Limestone--quarried from ledges of limestone, Ganzer Quarry
2. Pink Granite Columns-from Burnet County. There are 80 columns and were polished in Ft. Worth and were among the first to be finished with electrically powered equipment.
3. Sandstone

DENTON COUNTY COURTHOUSES

The picture of the oak tree was taken about 1905. The tree has since been struck by lightning and completely destroyed. It was under this tree in 1847 that court was held. Later, a log courthouse was built - the whole building wasn't as large as this room.

After the county seat was moved to Denton in 1856, a frame courthouse was built on the north side of the square where the Photography and Jewelry Store are located. It was this building that burned in 1875, destroying all the county records. (Some say that it was arson - done by members of the Sam Bass gang, but this was never proven. Also, it was said that Sam Bass never operated his illegal activities in Denton County.)

After the fire in 1875, a fine brick courthouse was built on this site. The people thought that it would last for many years. Actually, it lasted only for about 20 years. In September 1894 it was struck by lightning which did considerable amount of damage. By the spring of 1895, the Commissioners Court voted to build a new courthouse. The old building was torn down and the brick was sold to a man from Bolivar, Mr. Crow Wright, who used it to build the Wright Opera House - one of the finest of its kind in this part of Texas. The building is still in use - now it is Kibler's Office Supply.

The courthouse built in 1896 was this building, and we are more proud of it than ever. It is one of the Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks, a State Archelogical site, and is on the National Register of Historic Places. The building was built to last -- and last it has. Restored in 1986-87 to its former grandeur, the Courthouse on the Square now houses the County Commissioners' Court and support staff, plus the Historical Museum and Commission. Restoration costs were 4.1 million dollars, of which 3 million was by bond issue approved by the citizens of Denton County. Other branches of County government are located at the Carroll Courts Building and other sites throughout the City and County.

JUDGE JOSEPH A. CARROLL

Born near Louisiana (Pike County) Missouri, November 28, 1832.

Moved to Denton in Early 1850's. Founded Abstract Company in 1856. (Operated as Jagoe Abstract since 1874).

Licensed to practice law with W.T.G. Weaver in 1858.

Married Cecelia Jane Burris (1842-1869) of Denton on December 28, 1858.

Entered the Civil War in 1861 as a private and soon became a lieutenant with Welch's Company. Transferred to De Morse's 29th Texas Cavalry in 1862 and was discharged as a Major in June of 1865.

Married Martha Inman in September 1870.

Elected District Judge, 16th District, February 16, 1876. Re-elected in 1878. Did not seek re-election in 1880. Fifth person to serve as 16th District Judge.

Chairman of the 5th Congressional District Democratic Committee.

Organized the Exchange National Bank (First State Bank, now located at the same site) in 1881 and served as president.

Mayor of Denton, 1890-91, member of the IOOF Lodge, member of syndicate that organized and founded Normal College (now University of North Texas).

Died October 12, 1891. Buried in the IOOF Cemetery in Denton.

Joseph A. Carroll Courts Building named in honor of him in 1976. The Seat of County Government moved to the Courts Building in 1978.

(The desk and bookcase belonged to Judge Carroll and were obtained in the summer of 1986 at the Wright-Williams Estate Sale.)

Dr. Rebecca Mortimer Evans

DR. EVANS WAS BORN IN PITTSBURG, PA. ON SEPTEMBER 14, 1872. HER PARENTS WERE JOHN GRIFFITH EVANS FROM WALES AND ANNIE MORTIMER FROM IRELAND. DR. EVANS GRADUATED FROM NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY IN CHICAGO. ONE OF THE FIRST WOMEN DOCTOR'S IN DENTON, SHE OWNED PROPERTY AT 311 AND 307 W. HICKORY IN DENTON. HER MEDICAL PRACTICE WAS LOCATED AT THE 307 HOUSE. DR. EVANS DIED IN DENTON ON OCTOBER 30, 1947. BOTH STRUCTURES HAVE SINCE BEEN DEMOLISHED.

SOME OF THE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT IN "A VISIT TO THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE CAME FROM HER OFFICE.

EXAMINING TABLE	MEDICAL TESTING KIT
BODY SCOPE	MISC. MEDICAL EQUIPMENT
TYPEWRITER	METAL SUPPLY CABINET

THESE OBJECTS WERE DONATED TO THE MUSEUM BY EARL ASHER IN MEMORY OF:

REBECCA PATRICIA McELROY ASHER
MARGARET McELROY
DR. REBECCA M. EVANS

STRANGE MALADIES TOOK THEIR TOLL

You have probably never heard of or worried about many of the illnesses that killed Denton area residents in the days before effective diagnoses, "wonder drugs" and more sophisticated medical practices.

The death register of an early Denton funeral home indicates diseases of long ago and accidents typical of any time were taking their toll on the local populace in the years from 1901 to 1905.

Listed in the Register were such cause of death as:

Brain Fever
Brain Trouble
Congestion of Brain
Inflammation of Brain
Bowel Trouble
Inflammation of Bowels
Child Birth & Still Born
Typhoid Fever
Pneumonia
Dysentery
Consumption
Bright's Disease
Diphtheria
Paralysis
Cholera
Dropsy
Sepsis
Whooping Cough
Meningitis
Old Age
Old Age & General Disability
Fever
FLUX
Malaria
Congestion
Rheumatism Complications
Smallpox
Scarlet Fever
Scarlatina
Bluing Mouth
Catarrhal Fever
Asthma or Tuberculosis
Bronchitis
Tonsillitis
Vertigo
Hernia
Rupture
Hemorrhage
Cancer
Cancer of Old Age
Cancer (operated on)
Tumor
Cancer on Womb
Female Trouble
Heart Failure
Confinement
Blood Poisoning
La Grippe
Teething
Abscess
Complications

ACCIDENTS

Wagon Ran Over Head
Broken Limb
Fell From Buggy
Horse Kick
Horse Falling
Killed by Horse
Killed in Storm by Barn
Fall in City Hall
Burned
Scalded
Found Dead
Strangulation
Drowned in Slop Can
Shot Self in Head

SOURCE: Denton Funeral Home Records - DENTON RECORD CHRONICLE, 7/4/76

THE SAM BASS CONNECTION

By 1864, Sam Bass, was an orphan and the family livestock and farm tools were auctioned off in Woodville, Indiana. At the age of 18, after a fight with his uncle over his gambling, Sam left to make his way to Texas. On his way to Texas in 1870, he met the Robert Mayes family from Denton who knew the trails, so Sam joined their party.

He worked on a ranch, then ended up working for the sheriff, Dad Egan, who had 12 acres on the west side of Bolivar Street, north of town. Among other things, Sam hauled freight by wagon. Sam also worked for awhile as a livery stable boy at the Lacy Hotel. He had not, at that time, entered a criminal career; and, in fact, was of a very gentle, courteous, and industrious nature.

Sam and a son of the sheriff together bought a chestnut-sorrel mare from Mose Taylor at Little Elm, then called Hilltown. They named her Jenny. She was fast, and soon Sam was winning races and money with what became known as the Denton Mare. Sometimes 500 or 600 people would come to see her run. The sheriff didn't like his hired hand associating with gambling and racing, so he told Bass to choose. So Sam went on trips to race the mare; added a con game with compatriots to fleece money out of the rubes by posing as a horse trainer and talking them into betting against Jenny while he bet on her. He finally sold the mare in San Antonio and decided to buy cattle and drive them north a make a lot of money. At Deadwood, in Dakota Territory, he did a little mining and lost some of the cattle money to some real gamblers.

After trying freighting, he and a partner decided to rob stage for a living. On their first attempt, the stage's horses bolted, the driver was shot and killed and the bandits got nothing except a $500 reward posted on them as murderers.

They graduated from stages to trains, and finally hit it lucky holding up a Union Pacific train near Big Spring, Nebraska, taking three boxes with $20,000 in new gold coins each, a haul of $60,000. Feeling safe after getting out of Nebraska, Bass headed back for Denton. He arrived and camped out in various places around the county. It was 1877. Bass and a couple of companions went to San Antonio on a spree, followed by two deputies and a Pinkerton man trying to capture them. Nine miles west of Ft. Worth, they decided to rob a stage, but the haul was only about $43.00, and they gave each of the two victims back $1 for breakfast.

In January of 1878, Bass and company robbed a stage between Fort Worth and Weatherford. It was Sam's ninth stage robbery. A month later at Allen, south of McKinney, they got $1,280 robbing a train. In March, a train was robbed at Hutchins of about $500. Then one at Eagle Ford, and one at Mesquite. Meanwhile, rewards and posses mounted.

Denton became a major dateline in newspapers across the country as Rangers, sheriffs, deputies, marshals and citizens sought Bass. A Pinkerton man took a job in Wheeler's saloon in Denton seeking undercover information. Armed posses roamed the county. Meanwhile the Bass gang was scoping the state looking for a bank to rob. A reluctant member of the gang, Jim Murphy of Denton, tipped Rangers that Bass and company were headed for Round Rock. Bass and another gang member were stopped on a Round Rock street by a deputy sheriff who didn't know who they were but thought he saw a gun. In an ensuing fight, the deputy was killed, another deputy wounded and one gang member killed. Bass, wounded, got away. A company of rangers standing by tracked him down and captured him, bleeding and helpless in a liveoak thicket. The shooting was on Friday. On Sunday, Bass said, "The world is a bobbin' around," and died. It was July 21, 1878, Bass' 27th birthday.

(Keith Shelton, Executive Editor
Denton Record-Chronicle
May 15, 1988.)

SAM BASS SONG

Sam Bass was born in Indiana. It was his native home--
When at the age of 17, young Sam began to roam,
He first came out to Texas a cowboy for to be
A kind-hearted fellow you scarcely ever see.

Sam used to deal in race stock, had one he called "The Denton mare"
He used to match scrub races, he'd take her to the fairs.
He always coined the money, he spent it mighty free,
Drank plenty of red whiskey where ever he might be.

Sam had four companions, four bold and daring lads--
Jim Murphy, Jackson Underwood, Joel L. Collins and "Old Dad."
Four bolder, reckless cowboys the "wild west" never knew
They whipped the Texas Rangers and chased the "boys in blue."

Sam had another comrade he called "Arkansas" for short
He was killed by Texas Rangers, who thought it was great sport.
Sam left the Joel L. Collins Ranch in merry month of May
With a herd of Texas cattle the Black Hills for to see.

They sold out in Kansas City and all got on a spree,
A tougher bunch of cowboys you will seldom ever see.
On their way back to Texas they robbed the U.P. train--
They broke up in couples and started out again.

Joel L. Collins and his pardner were overtaken soon
And with their hard earned money, they had to meet their doom--
Sam got back to Texas, all right side up with care
He rode right into Denton...his old friends met him there
Sam met his death at Round Rock...July 21st
They riddled Sam with bullets and emptied out his purse.

---As remembered in 1977 by Novelene Porter McDonald, former Denton resident as it was sung to her by her father, Charlie E. Porter (1872-1925) of the Bolivar area. Mrs. McDonald states there are several more verses to the song. Mrs. McDonald was living in Graham, Texas at the time she sent this information to us.

DENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM, INC.
1st Floor, Courthouse on the Square
110 West Hickory Street
Denton, Texas 76201

THREE LEGAL EXECUTIONS FOR MURDER IN DENTON COUNTY

1879 and 1895

A CHANGE OF VENUE FROM MONTAGUE COUNTY BROUGHT THE MURDER TRIALS OF GEORGE BROWN, JR. AND ANDREW BROWN TO DENTON COUNTY. TRIED BEFORE THE 16th DISTRICT COURT IN MARCH OF 1878, THE BROWN BROTHERS WERE CONVICTED AND PUNISHMENT WAS ASSESSED AT DEATH.

APPEALS WERE TAKEN IN BOTH CASES, BUT THE JUDGMENTS OF THE LOWER COURT (PRESIDED OVER BY JUDGE J.A. CARROLL) WERE AFFIRMED, AND ON NOVEMBER 21, 1879, THE TWO MEN WERE EXECUTED BY HANGING FROM THE GALLOWS NORTH OF THE JAIL. THE BROTHERS WERE BURIED AT THE OAKWOOD CEMETERY IN DENTON. R.A. HOPKINS WAS THE DENTON COUNTY SHERIFF AT THE TIME.

THE LAST HANGING WAS OF J.Q.A. CREWS, INDICTED IN COOKE COUNTY FOR THE MURDER OF MR. AND MRS. MURRELL, WHO SECURED A CHANGE OF VENUE TO DENTON COUNTY. TRIED AT THE SPRING TERM OF THE 16th DISTRICT COURT, CREWS WAS CONVICTED AND THE PUNISHMENT WAS ASSESSED AT DEATH. CREWS WAS EXECUTED ON OCTOBER 4, 1895 AT THE GALLOWS ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE JAIL AT 402 N. ELM. THE GALLOWS WERE ENCLOSED WITH BOARDS TO MAKE IT AS PRIVATE AS POSSIBLE. THE WIFE OF CREWS AND HIS BROTHER CLAIMED THE BODY FOR BURIAL. SAM HAWKINS WAS THE DENTON COUNTY SHERIFF AT THE TIME.

SOURCE: HISTORY AND REMINISCENCES OF DENTON COUNTY, ED. F. BATES, 1918.

Denton County Historical Museum Publications For Sale

Alvin M. Owsley of Texas

Amanda Goes West

Amanda's Home on the Range

Amanda's New Life

(A young girl's adventures in the West plus paper doll cut-outs)

An Illustrated History of Denton County

Argyle Community History

Building the Denton County Courthouse

Centurama - 100 Years of Progress in Denton County

Denton County, Texas Historical Markers and Their Locations

Denton County, Texas Will (1876-1940),

Denton Record Chronicle, Obituary Index 1909-1929, Vol 1

Denton Record Chronicle, Obituary Index 1930-1948, Vol 2

Denton Review

Denton Woman's Club Cookbook

Eakins Cemetery, Denton County, Texas

History & Reminiscences of Denton County

History of Denton, From its Beginning to 1960

100F Cemetery

Mattie's Story, Great-great granddaughter of John B. Denton

Name Index for History & Reminiscences of Denton County

Peters Colonists - 2 vol. set

Ponder Rodeo

Quaker town, 1870 - 1922

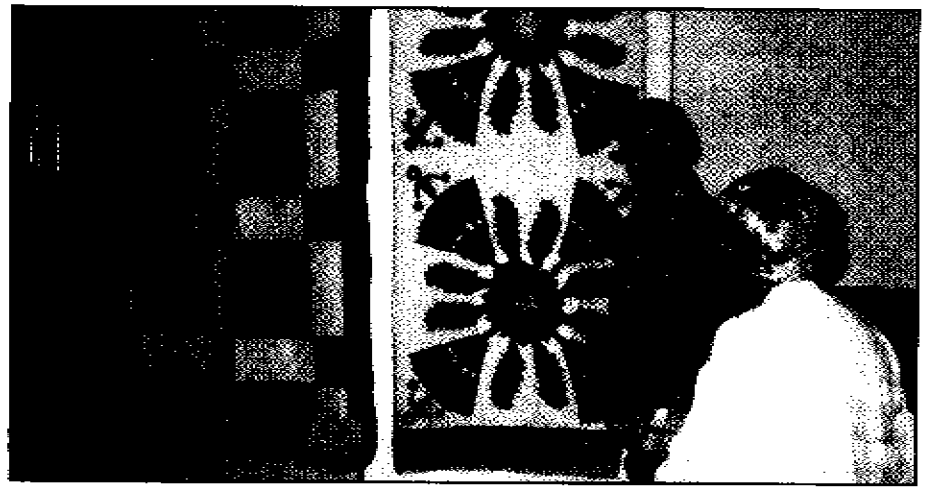
Recipes and Recollections,a cookbook

Story of Sanger

W.R. Strong, His Memoirs

112 Years in Little Elm

Send a self-addressed stamped envelope for price list.



County Seat Saturday is a day replicating the 1800's when the first settlers came to Denton to shop. It's a fun filled and exciting day where visitors can see demonstrations by spinners and weavers, visit color craft booths, exhibitions and all of the other events on the courthouse square. County Seat Saturday had a wide appeal throughout the community. This popular event is held once a year - the next one is scheduled for early September 98.

Genealogical Research/ Research Library/Office and Archives are open Monday - Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Exhibits are closed Mondays . Office is closed on Major Holidays. Handicap Ramp and Elevator available.

Exhibit Rooms Open Tuesday - Saturday 10.30 a.m. to 4:30p.m. Winter Hours Saturday 12 to 4 Guided Tours By Appointment

Call 940-565-8697 for information
Fax 940-565-8693
Mail PO Box 2800, Denton, Tx 76202

COURTHOUSE-ON-THE-SQUARE
HISTORICAL MUSEUM
is located in Historic Downtown Denton 1st Floor,
110 W. Hickory Street in Denton, Texas

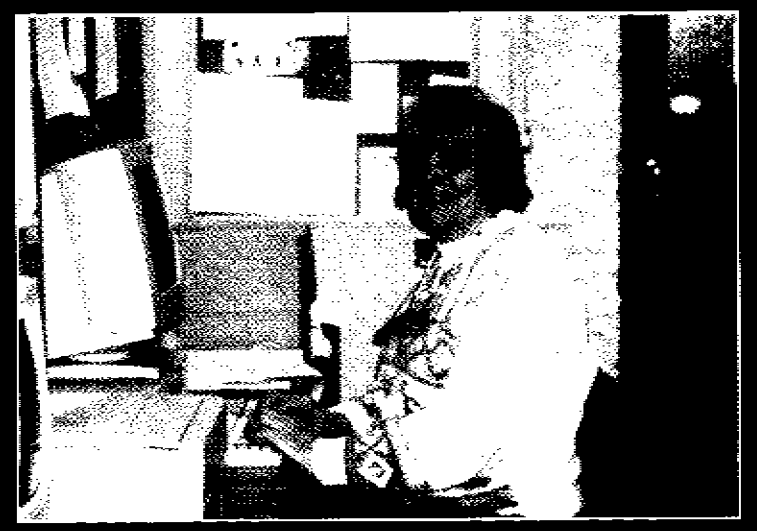
Denton County Historical Museum, Inc.
Courthouse - on - the - Square Museum
P.O. Box 2800
Denton, Texas 76202

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
Denton,Texas
Permit No. 926

COURTHOUSE HISTORICAL MUSEUM HAS A PASSION FOR HISTORY ...page 3

DENTON, TEXAS

Collections, Collections, Collections!



Holly Hervey, Collections Management Assistant

Sharon Phurily, Administrative Secretary helps visiter with research

In every little boy or girl there is the urge to collect, be it paper dolls or baseball cards. Grownup boys and girls collect, but usually on a grander scale. Museums collect much in the same manner, but with broader objectives. Collections of postcards, correspondence, land patent records, wills, deeds, birth and death records are all found in the archives of the Museum in the courthouse. Guns, dolls, dishes, pottery, washing machines, safes, toys, pump organs and aprons are artifacts in the exhibit collection. These collections provide a means of studying the past.

A little boy may keep his baseball cards in a shoe box under his bed. Museums must meet special standards in the care and preservation of its collections. Storage under the bed is not acceptable. special machines chart the temperature and humidity of the storage rooms. Light filters protect artifacts on public display. Knowing how to handle a vase or clean a book requires special knowledge.

Donations to Museums must be cataloged, gift agreements signed by the donor and records kept. Many donations of artifacts are received by the Museum. Policy requires all donors to sign gift or loan agreements to the Museum with all donations cataloged. American Association of Museum guidelines are followed.

Each month proposed donations are reviewed by the accessions committee and accepted by a vote of the board of Trustees.

The Collection Management Assistant is responsible for this work and is helped by trained volunteers. To make a document or picture useful, it must be cataloged so it can be located easily by name, type of object, donor or other special designations.

A major collection of special importance to Denton County is the Jagoe Papers. Through the generosity of this family, documents from the grandfather Joe Jagoe Sr. provide researchers with a look into early Denton County.

The Marvin Loveless Photograph Collection donated by Caldray and Davis is invaluable in its stories of Denton in the 1950's. With over 43,000 negatives, this collection is a major challenge to catalog to allow use by the public. Currently, over 4000 negatives are in use with the remainder in process.

Families are encouraged to donate or allow to be copied their early family photos. Together with family histories, the Museum provides documentary exhibits of early Denton County. Researchers travel to Denton from around the world to seek information on their families. The descendants often find and meet relatives unknown before their trips to the Museum research center.

Writers find the resources a great tool to use for creating novels, both true and fiction. Sam Bass, Alford Grant, and Ann Sheridan are native Dentonites currently being documented in novels whose authors have visited the Museum.

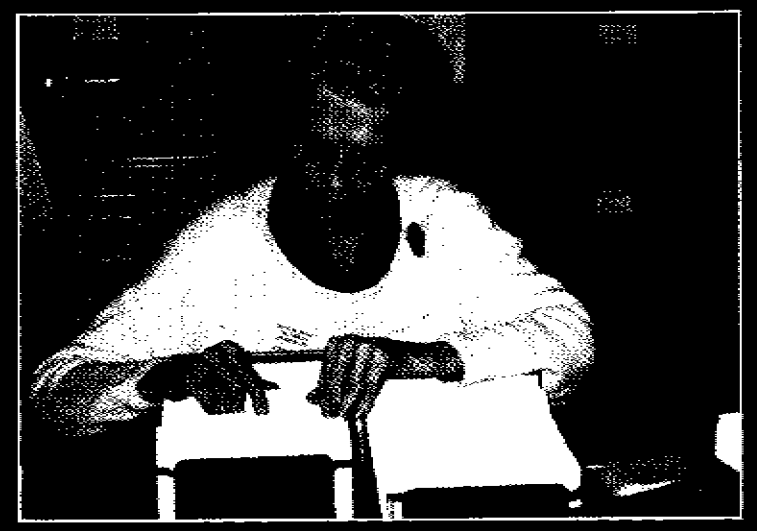
Archives are not open to the public for people to browse through. Procedures for research are in place modeled after the archives at the Texas State Library research center. Museum policies and good common sense.

Reproductions of documents and photographs is available by request. It is a matter of pride for the Museum that many businesses display reproductions from the Museum's collection and researchers from around the world seek information.

During the last four years, a major thrust has been the development of a research center for genealogist, authors and scholars.

Dolena Holms from Canada and Beverly Eliason from Utah are LDS Missionaries Specializing in Genealogy who worked over a year cataloging documents in the "Denton Collection."

Betty Bailey on the right (a retired librarian from the University of North Texas) does cataloging shown with Letitia de Burgos on the left has spent 8 years researching the history of American Pressed Glass and documented 700 plus pieces in museum collection - most of which are blue in color.



Volunteer Silvie Sidaway helps with research

John Samuel Adams, Linda Gloyd, Ron Adams and Jack Adams, descendants of the Medlin family visiting from Oklahoma to research the family history

Family Researchers from out of state.

Retired librarian, Ann Davis catalogs materials in the research center.

Denton County Historical Museum Publications For Sale

Alvin M. Owsley of Texas

Amanda Goes West

Amanda's Home on the Range

Amanda's New Life

(A young girl's adventures in the West plus paper doll cut-outs)

An Illustrated History of Denton County

Argyle Community History

Building the Denton County Courthouse

Centurama - 100 Years of Progress in Denton County

Denton County, Texas Historical Markers and Their Locations

Denton County, Texas Will (1876-1940),

Denton Record Chronicle, Obituary Index 1909-1929, Vol 1

Denton Record Chronicle, Obituary Index 1930-1948, Vol 2

Denton Review

Denton Woman's Club Cookbook

Eakins Cemetery, Denton County, Texas

History & Reminiscences of Denton County

History of Denton, From its Beginning to 1960

100F Cemetery

Mattie's Story, Great-great granddaughter of John B. Denton

Name Index for History & Reminiscences of Denton County

Peters Colonists - 2 vol. set

Ponder Rodeo

Quaker town, 1870 - 1922

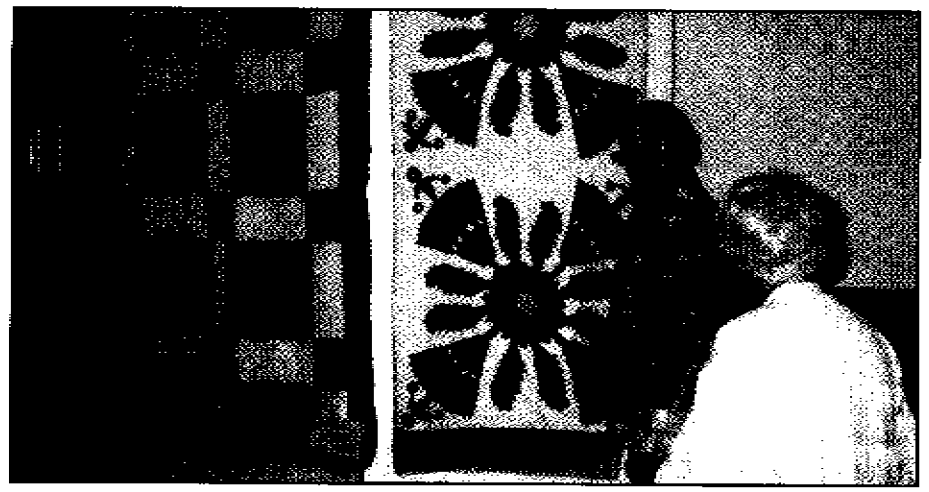
Recipes and Recollections,a cookbook

Story of Sanger

W.R. Strong, His Memoirs

112 Years in Little Elm

Send a self-addressed stamped envelope for price list.



County Seat Saturday is a day replicating the 1800's when the first settlers came to Denton to shop. It's a fun filled and exciting day where visitors can see demonstrations by spinners and weavers, visit color craft booths, exhibitions and all of the other events on the courthouse square. County Seat Saturday had a wide appeal throughout the community. This popular event is held once a year - the next one is scheduled for early September 98.

Genealogical Research/ Research Library/Office and Archives are open Monday - Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Exhibits are closed Mondays . Office is closed on Major Holidays. Handicap Ramp and Elevator available.

Exhibit Rooms Open Tuesday - Saturday 10.30 a.m. to 4:30p.m.
Winter Hours Saturday 12 to 4
Guided Tours By Appointment

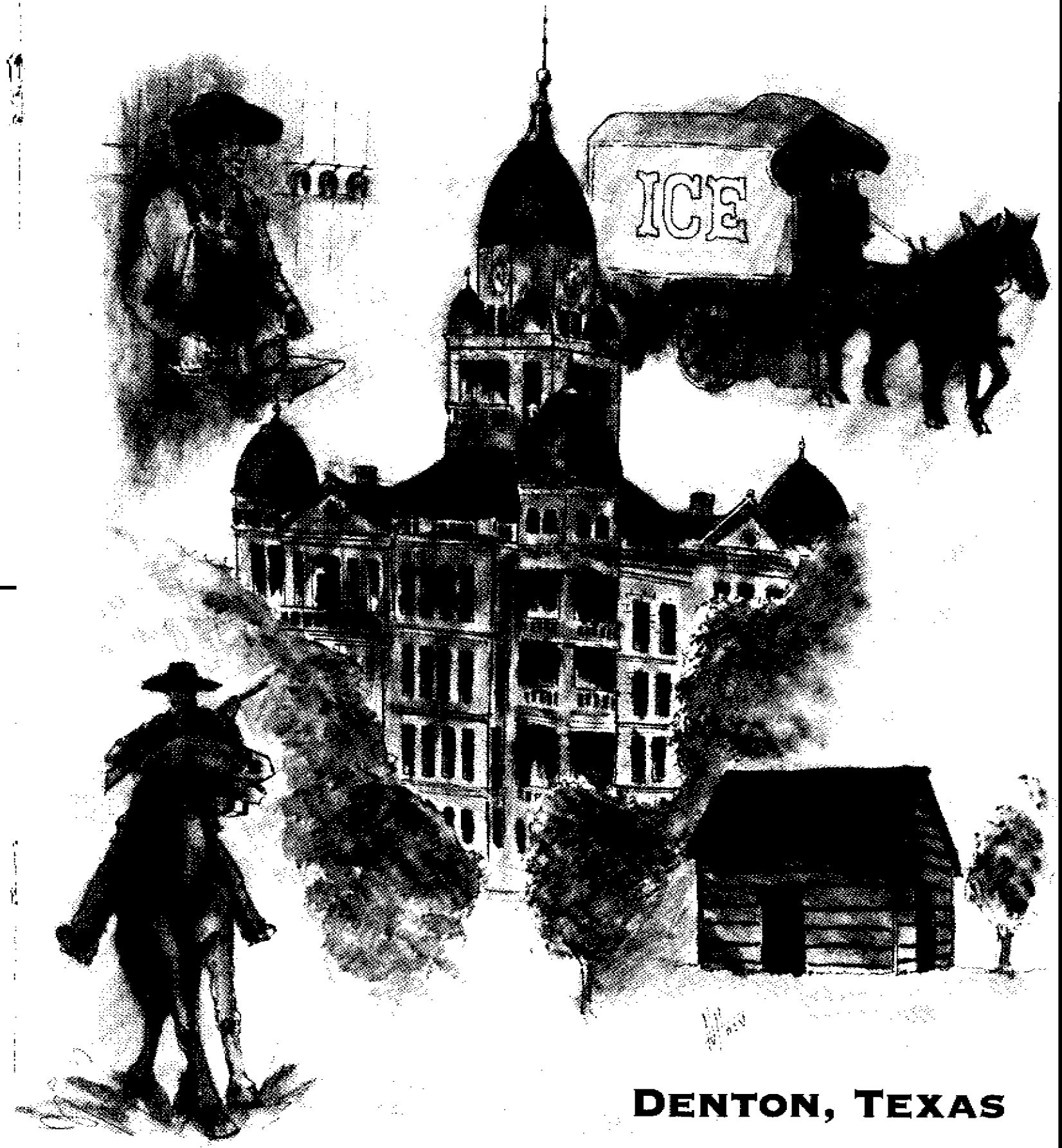
Call 940-565-8697 for information
Fax 940-565-8693
Mail PO Box 2800, Denton, Tx 76202

COURTHOUSE-ON-THE-SQUARE
HISTORICAL MUSEUM
is located in Historic Downtown Denton 1st Floor,
110 W. Hickory Street in Denton, Texas

Denton County Historical Museum, Inc.
Courthouse - on - the - Square Museum
P.O. Box 2800
Denton, Texas 76202

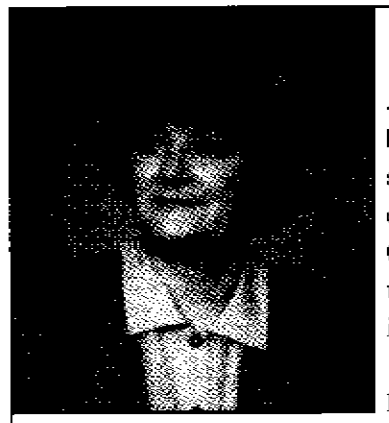
Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
Denton,Texas
Permit No. 926

COURTHOUSE HISTORICAL MUSEUM HAS A PASSION FOR HISTORY ...page 3



DENTON, TEXAS

Board of Trustees pictured: L to R Chairman Norma Cole, Joyce Crawford, Lillie Clark, second row Betty Bailey, Vertalee Coleman, Treasurer, Elizabeth Shearer, Marvourene Matthews, Letitia deBurgos, Helen Whiten. (not shown are Rob Rayner and Nita Watkins). Pictured elsewhere in the magazine are: Vice Chairman Dr. Louise Alton, Secretary Peggy Gentry, Immediate Past Chairman Judy Selph, Alma Clark and Bob Castleberry.



A Passion for History" is a very apt title for this new publication because the Courthouse on the Square Historical Museum is staffed by devoted lovers of history who enjoy their work, making this one of the most special places in Denton County. Visitors quickly feel the enthusiasm. As you enjoy the pictures and brief notes throughout these pages, we hope you will gain a broader understanding of the diverse services provided by this fine institution.

When you grow up visiting museums and historical sites, habits are formed which you pass on to your children. The shared heritage builds a bridge between the generations and provides understanding among cultures. these wonderful experiences provided by my parents instilled a love of history at an early age. Spending hours in a hot August sun while my husband and son read most if not all of the memorial markers in a Civil War Cemetery gave me a different perspective.

During the last four years, with strong support of the Board of Trustees, the Museum has rapidly expanded its research facilities, increased its exhibits and open hours. The generosity of many local and out of town people, together with the county and city of Denton made this possible. We are extremely grateful to all who have shared the vision and worked diligently to make it come true from the very beginning to the present. The Museum's future is bright and holds much promise for future generations.

Director Norma Lynn Graham/Gamble

The governing board of the Museum has the responsibility of guiding the destiny of the Museum. it was a very special privilege to be elected chairman for 1997 - 98. With 32 years teaching experience, many years of civic volunteer work and being a third generation Denton county native, I come well prepared to join with the trustees in leading the Museum.

The diversity of the Museum board of trustees is very representative of the community. Together with our excellent staff and volunteers the Museum will continue to prosper. it is our goal to meet the needs of the community for whom we manage this fine institution and continue to make it the very best Museum found anywhere.

On behalf of the board of trustees, I welcome you to visit the Museum and invite you to return often.

Chairman Norma Cole

This Museum holds memberships in:

American Association of Museums
North Texas Association of Museums
Texas Association of Museums
Center for Non Profit Management
Texas Oral History Association
Preservation Texas
Heritage Communique
Denton County Chambers of Commerce

The Courthouse-on-the-Square Museum (aka Denton County Historical Museum, Inc.) is organized, presented and staffed for the public to enjoy and learn about the history of Denton County, this region and Texas. The time frame for the collection is 1845 to 1945 and includes special collections such as the University of North Texas History Collection and traveling exhibits from other institutions.

Partners In Progress

Partners In Progress has been designed for those who want to contribute and support the heritage of Denton County through the Courthouse on the Square Historical Museum programs.

For twelve months from the date the membership is received, Partners in Progress are eligible for the following benefits:

Special birthday edition of the Museum magazine, notification of events and exhibits, 10% discount on items sold in the gift shop, invitation to Texas Heritage Luncheons and Partners in Progress Membership Certificate. Contributions for this program start at $25.00 and up.

Friends Of The Museum

Friends of the Museum is a program for people to become paid supporters of the Museum. Family contribution for this program is $25. The single individual is $12.50; student $5.00, corporate and others $100. or more.

This membership puts one on the mailing list for special events and other privileges. Contact the museum for further information.

A Helping Hand

They're the Volunteers From the Community, and they give the most valuable gift of all - a helping hand! The Volunteers From the Community can include anyone from the child in grade school to a senior citizen. They're a vital part of the Museum's operation. Their many hours of volunteer work saves the staff time and frees them to do other things. Some of the tasks the service workers perform includes cleaning and dusting, data entry, preparing and updating mailing lists, cemetery records, etc. They work at the information desk directing people to various offices in the city and county, take inventory in the gift shop, help put up displays and exhibits, and through their enthusiasm and willingness to give of themselves, they provide inspiration as well.

By giving, they receive the gift of fellowship, and the excitement of knowing that they're doing their part in preserving history!

Words can't express the value of the volunteers helping hands!

Volunteer Silas Stamper videotapes and edits all special events for the museum

Volunteer Mrs. Mildred Stubler at information desk

Girl Scouts cleaning the case

Sixty volunteers from 1398 Church sleeve negatives

Volunteer Mrs. Ruby Ray at information desk

History Buffs In The Making!

They come from schools all over the metroplex. Teachers find that bringing their classes to the museum not only gives the children a much enjoyed field trip, but for many of them it is often their first trip to a museum. Who knows how many will go on to become history buffs!

When a tour is scheduled, the teacher is sent a packet of games, puzzles, and questions. In other words, they get a good lesson in history before making the trip to the museum. A sheet of questions about current exhibits is included. This packet was prepared by a public school teacher for learning before and after the trip.

Students who use this list not only have fun, they learn many facts about life in Denton County from the year 1846 through 1945.

The tour includes a brief history of Denton County, the Courthouse, a guide titled "Visual Treasures of the Courthouse," and interpretative narratives about the exhibits.

Tour guides for school classes are volunteers who reside in all parts of Denton County, and often drive a great distance to provide special tours.

Since The Courthouse-on-the-Square is a working building, the offices of the Museum and exhibit rooms are on the first floor. Commissioners and the County Judge with their staffs are housed on the second and third floors. Classes are taken to these floors to see the special features of the building along with their tour of the first floor exhibit areas of the museum.

The Museum welcomes teachers' suggestions and questions concerning the museum programs.

If the class can't come to the museum, not to worry! The Traveling Teaching Kits can come to them! A trunk is filled with turn of the century artifacts (some replicas) that are selected because of their special use by the early settlers of Denton County, Texas, and the Southwest. Narrative text and teacher's guides are included.

Students in most cases can handle the artifacts, discuss their use and determine what has replaced them in todays society. Often, that discussion is continued at home involving parents and grandparents.

For instance the 'Early Denton County Kitchen' traveling kit allows students to handle early tools which are primitive when compared to their home kitchens of today. A new insight is gained by lifting a sad iron, scraping nutmeg and learning about the ice man delivery card.

The 'Early School Kit' contains a teacher's manual with items such as slates, school bells, McGuffy readers, and a dunce cap.

The 'Jones Farm' and Archeology kit was prepared by the University of North Texas. This teacher's manual provides details on a 'dig' with pictures and archeological artifacts such as petrified wood, brick fragments, horseshoe nails, and cartridge shells.

There's even an 'Artifact Bingo Kit'!

A 'Traveling Teaching Kit' can include a carousel of slides with a narrative, (most schools have projectors), and a set of instructions. They can be delivered to the Denton County Satellite Office nearest the individual schools saving teachers the drive to the museum.

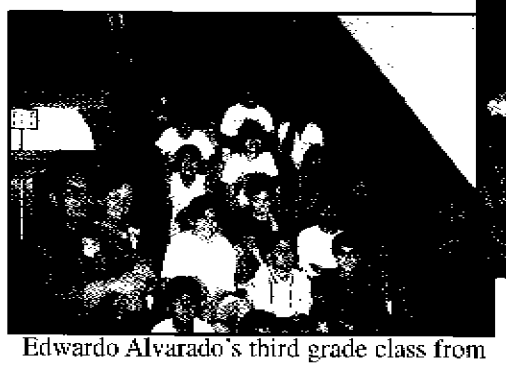
The School Friends is a special program available for public, private and home school groups which allows each classroom to become a member for $10. This enables the class to then receive quarterly packets of Denton County history puzzles, games and maps together with a certificate for the class and one for each child.

For information about these programs call 940-565-8697.

Museum's Mountain Men Workshop For Children - was featured on Dallas Metroplex Television

Lewisville School Bus Arrives

Lewisville ISD Summer Enrichment Program visits the Museum



Edwardo Alvarado's third grade class from Robert E. Lee School posing on stairwell

Montessori School Children view exhibit

DISD class touring with Robbie Swafford, volunteer co-ordinator.

Courthouse Historical Museum Has A Passion For History!

Many of us realize that the best way to get a realistic look at the past is to go to a museum. The 'Denton County Courthouse Historical Museum', proving to be one of the most fascinating museums in the state, is drawing people from all over the world. The guest register is impressive with names of visitors who come from Kansas, New York, Arkansas, the District of Colombia, California, Germany, Costa Rica, Hong Kong, the British Isles, France, and more. Positive economic impact of tourism in Denton County exceeds 124 million annually. The Museum attracts tourists who spend dollars in Denton.

Housed in the impressive Denton Courthouse On The Square, the Historical Museum, is manned by four full-time employees, one part time employee, and a group of dedicated volunteers. These dedicated employees and volunteers have one thing in common - a consuming passion for history!

The courthouse, built in 1896, is one of Texas' most treasured pieces of architecture.

The museum is open to the public with free admission. Walk-through guided tours are offered by appointment. Volunteers man a desk in the lobby where they give out literature and information on the various exhibits, and offer directions to any place in town!

The Denton County Historical Museum fills many needs. The casual visitor can view anything from a collection of rare dolls, Sam Bass memorabilia, guns, fashions from the Victorian era including jewelry fashioned from human hair, clothing, etc. There's a collection of music boxes and fans, an old-time kitchen, bedroom, parlor, and photographs.

There's a large portfolio of fascinating old photos in the lobby. Visitors may order reproductions of his or her favorites.

A large gift shop offers a variety of cook books, a large collection of Texas and local historical books (five of these books are printed in house), hand-made pottery, Texana styled magnets and ornaments. There are antiqued documents, Texas flags, a Victorian Etiquette book, stained glass, T Shirts, art, 'Amanda Goes West' paper dolls, and children's old time toys, some that start as low as 25 cents.

On display is an impressive collection of dolls and a Mickey Mouse doll. Other displays in this room include native American pottery and art.

There's much more that goes on behind the scenes however. The museum also offers extensive cemetery research, an extensive professional library with a research index that has been painstakingly cataloged, city directories from the 1900's forward, City of Denton tax appraisal records with each appraisal card containing a history of the houses and or businesses in the 1940's. Many of them accompanied by a black and white photo, and more.

The Museum has a school outreach service for teachers that includes slides with narratives and Traveling Teaching Kits that contain artifacts along with extensive written material, and a School Friends program.

The exhibits are cleverly thought out and assembled for display. Some are rotated, giving this museum a continual freshness and thought-provoking appeal.

One such exhibit titled 'Then and Now' shows turn-of-the-century business tools as opposed to our modern fax, copy machine and calculator.

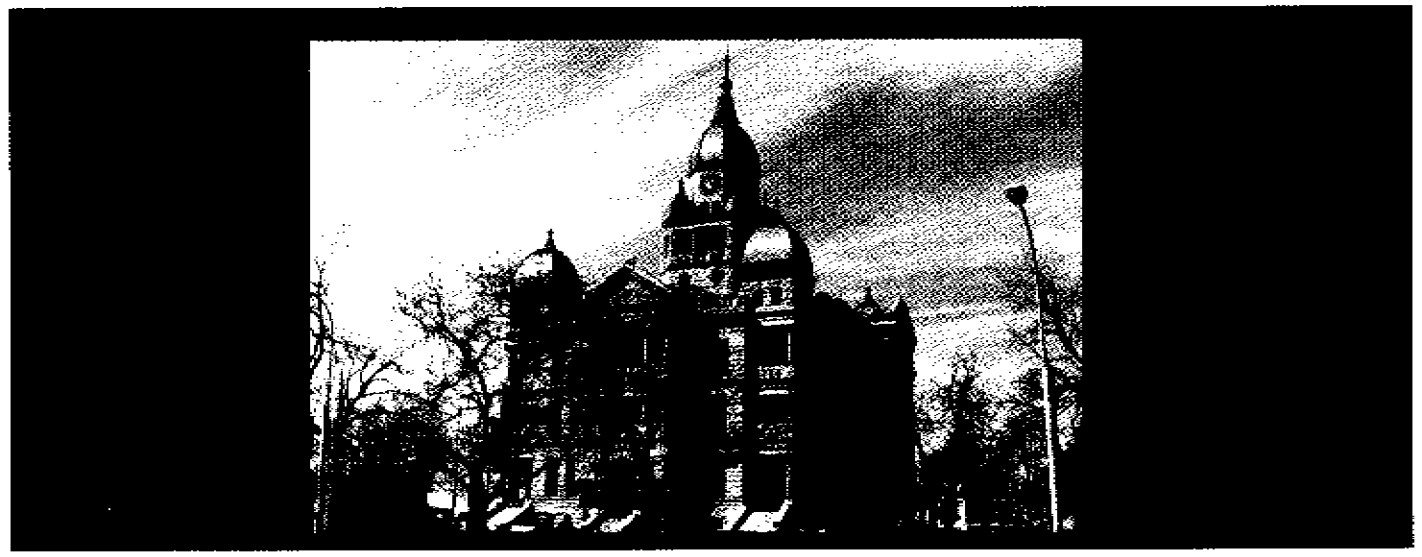
One exhibit is built around the women of early Denton County. Photos provide a glimpse of women's efforts which played a vital part in Denton County's development. They include ladies clubs, emancipation campaigns and a poster calling women to work in the factories in World War II.

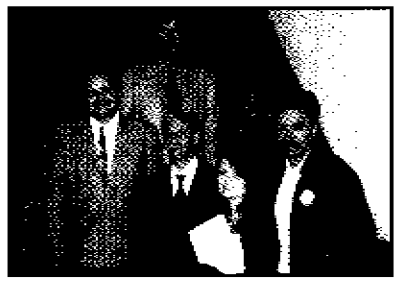
An entire case contains old photos of children and babies.

Another case offers an exhibit titled 'Gone To Texas'. It's built around a little girl's diary of her family's trek from Illinois to Texas in the 1800's.

The museum has become a valuable research facility drawing people world wide. Since collections of objects and documents are gifted to the museum constantly, there's a wealth of material that has to be sorted, identified and maintained. It takes dedicated employees and volunteers who are not only skilled in these areas, but who are passionate about history as well. This is one museum where that passion has paid off in a big way, drawing new visitors from far and wide, and regular history buffs who come again and again!

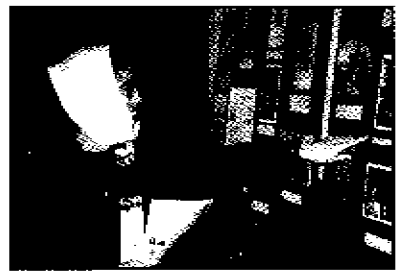
History Of The Denton County Courthouse





Elected officials from Mexico hosted by the Courthouse Museum at the request of the city of Denton.

Denmark Tourists pose by bus in front of courthouse

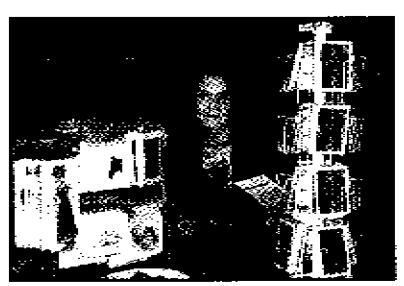


Joyce Thompson from Texas Woman's University finds genealogy information

The first courthouse, completed in 1857, was a two-story frame building. It burned on the night of December 23, 1875. Replaced by a three-story brick building that cost approximately $40,000, it was struck by lightning and declared unsafe in 1894. When it was torn down the bricks were used by William Crow Wright in building Denton's Opera House which still stands. In 1896 an imposing Romanesque structure, constructed of locally quarried stone at a cost of $179,000 to the county taxpayers was erected. Proving a wise investment, it has been totally restored. The beauty and character remain a century later.

Visitors come from far and wide. Children refer to the courthouse as a 'castle' and its basement as the 'dungeon'. From the rotunda, tin ceilings and slate roof, to the original wainscoting, the courthouse is a historical treasure.

You've heard that phrase in the popular movie Field of Dreams, "If you build it they will come!" In this case, the residents of Denton county not only built a fantastic courthouse, but a museum as well! They came and they keep coming from all over the United States and internationally.



Dorothy Chastain, Museum Assistant, in museum gift shop

International visitors are regular tourists

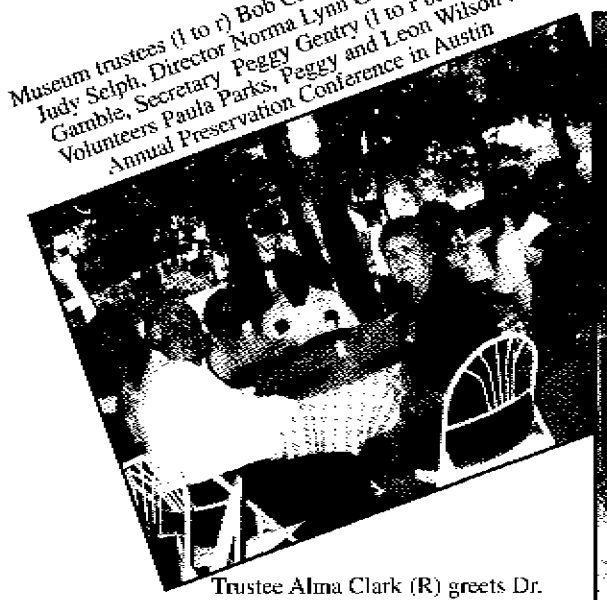
Carrollton resident, Ike Wernaer with guests Mr. Norbert Peters and Ms. Ursula Schuhmacher from Bad Kreuznach, Germany.

Boy scouts examine Judge Carrol's old safe.

Activities That Make The World Go Around

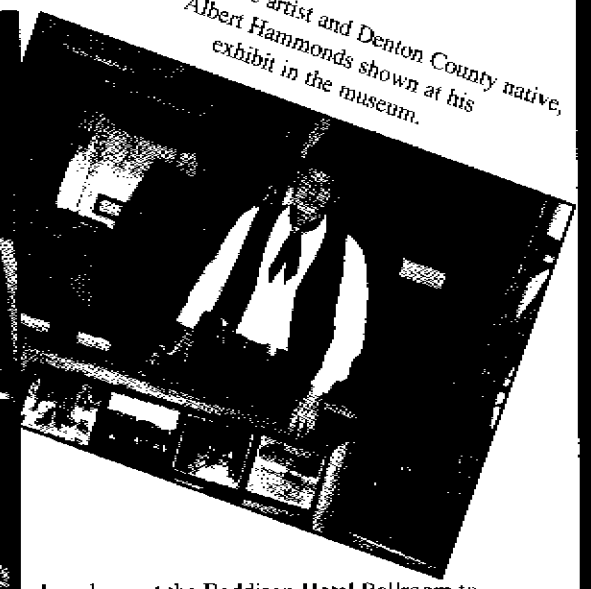
One of the things that has made the Courthouse Museum on the square a success are the many activities, special showings and outstanding events. They can include anything from a luncheon at the Raddison with a best selling author as a speaker, the museum's booth at the Denton Jazz and Arts festival, a special seminar for the board members and volunteers, or an artist with his exhibit in the museum.

With an ever changing agenda offering subjects of interest to the members and public, the Museum has an abundance of activities that do indeed make the world go around!

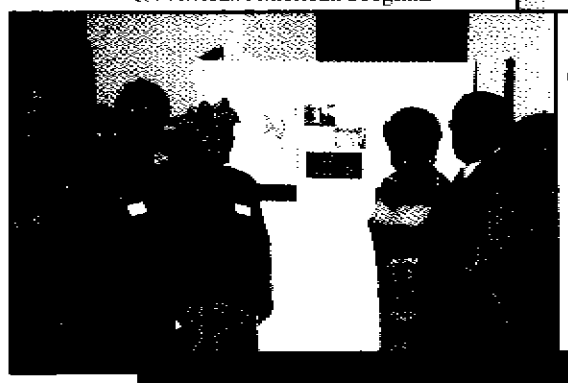


Museum trustees (l to r) Bob Castleberry, Past Chairman Judy Selph, Director Norma Lynn Gamble and Gene Gamble, Secretary Peggy Gentry (l to r back row) Volunteers Paula Parks, Peggy and Leon Wilson at Annual Preservation Conference in Austin

Trustee Alma Clark (R) greets Dr. and Mrs. Williams, Austin, Texas for African American Program



Western Bronze artist and Denton County native, Albert Hammonds shown at his exhibit in the museum.



Assistant Director of Special Collections, Richard Himmel, of the University of North Texas is all smiles as he unwraps treasure in the museum's archives.

Luncheon at the Raddison Hotel Ballroom to hear best selling author Jodi Thomas

Museum's booth at the Denton Jazz and Arts Festival

Dr. Louise Alton joins Co-op adventures with Denton's Breakfast Lions Club in their food donation drive.

Donations Add To The Museum's History

Over the years the Courthouse-On-The-Square Museum has been gifted with some wonderful collections.

J. W. Jagoe was an early Denton County Abstracter, lawyer, mayor of Denton, land dealer, debt collector, wine maker and hay grower. Fortunately, he was a man who never threw a paper away.

A gift of documents beginning in the 1850's and extending into the 1920's include probate estate records, duns from eastern manufacturers on local businesses, advertising from local firms, letters inquiring about county residents and their descendants and abstracts on many of the residences and businesses in the county. This collection is so extensive, it's still being catalogued.

The owner of the Pilot Point Post Signal donated bound volumes of the old Pilot Point Mirror and Pilot Point Signal newspapers dating from 1887 through 1910 for microfilming.

The 1950s do not seem so far away for those who were young during those years, but time has a way of getting away. Photographs from that era have become invaluable in reflecting the events and recording the lives of the people.

In 1993 Cordray Studio (formerly Loveless Studio) donated 3000 negatives. Last year Bruce Davis Photography donated about 40,000 more negatives taken during the late 1940s and 1950s. These photos include weddings, school events, business activities, insurance claims, family gatherings and church programs.

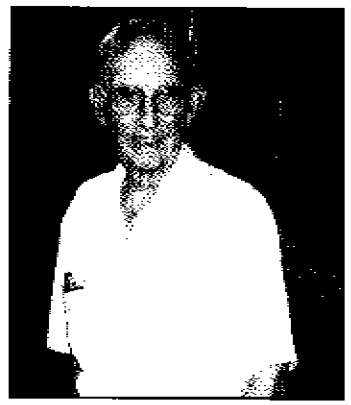
These are just a few examples of the priceless materials donated to the Museum.


Linenschmidt/Tritsch family members viewing family history


Ron Shelnutt of Geo Map and Globe Company shows new visitor map he donated.


Mary Jagoe Berry looks at papers and memorabilia donated by Jagoe family


James and Johnie Corbin shown with their family pump organ that they gifted to the Museum.


Joe Jagoe III, donor of history family and business collection.


Beth Carruth reviews gifts of family memorabilia and photographs


Glenna Krueger, representing the Elks Lodge who donated John Schmitz's 1911 store ledger in memory of Bob Schmitz


Leon Wilson, shows off old Victrola.


Huggie Bear finds a new little pal.


Mr. and Mrs. Santa play host to crowd

Victorian Christmas

An annual event that's held the first Saturday of December, Victorian Christmas draws people from all over the metroplex. Staged by the Courthouse-on-the-Square Museum, this program is popular with children and adults alike, there's the Teddy Bear Parade, visits by Shaggy Dog and Huggy Bear, entertainment by choral groups and orchestras from local schools, demonstrations by spinners and weavers, and visits by Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus. If you love Christmas, or if you need to get in the Christmas spirit, this is one event you don't want to miss!


Longtime volunteer, Frank Rimmer shown running the elevator during Victorian Christmas.


Huggy Bear keeps secrets for little visitor


Cowboys take time out from riding the range for a Victorian Christmas!


Volunteer Bill Gentry gives out information.

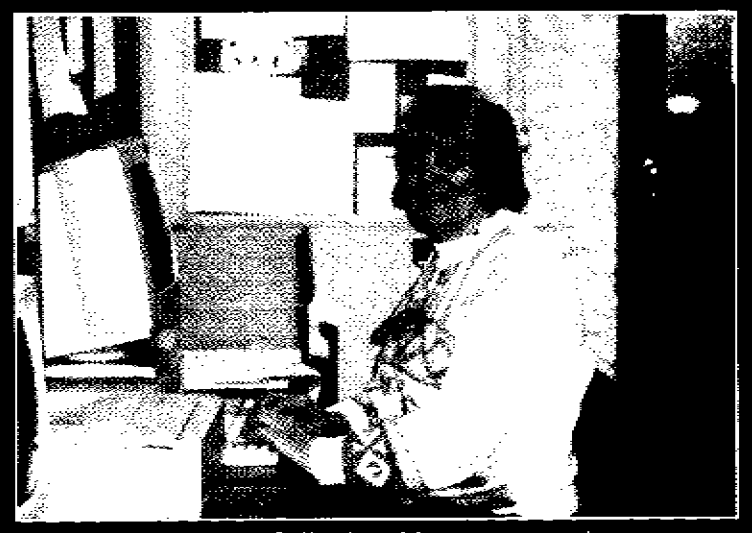

Jennie Estes' Evers Park Elementary School choir performs annually


Is she a Christmas angel looking in on the festivities?


Borman Elementary School choir performs in courtroom.


Spinners fascinate their audience.

Collections, Collections, Collections!



Holly Hervey, Collections Management Assistant

Sharon Plumly, Administrative Secretary helps visitor with research

In every little boy or girl there is the urge to collect, be it paper dolls or baseball cards. Grownup boys and girls collect, but usually on a grander scale. Museums collect much in the same manner, but with broader objectives. Collections of postcards, correspondence, land patent records, wills, deeds, birth and death records are all found in the archives of the Museum in the courthouse. Guns, dolls, dishes, pottery, washing machines, safes, toys, pump organs and aprons are artifacts in the exhibit collection. These collections provide a means of studying the past.

A little boy may keep his baseball cards in a shoe box under his bed. Museums must meet special standards in the care and preservation of its collections. Storage under the bed is not acceptable. special machines chart the temperature and humidity of the storage rooms. Light filters protect artifacts on public display. Knowing how to handle a vase or clean a book requires special knowledge.

Donations to Museums must be cataloged, gift agreements signed by the donor and records kept. Many donations of artifacts are received by the Museum. Policy requires all donors to sign gift or loan agreements to the Museum with all donations cataloged. American Association of Museum guidelines are followed.

Each month proposed donations are reviewed by the accessions committee and accepted by a vote of the board of Trustees.

The Collection Management Assistant is responsible for this work and is helped by trained volunteers. To make a document or picture useful, it must be cataloged so it can be located easily by name, type of object, donor or other special designations.

A major collection of special importance to Denton County is the Jagoe Papers. Through the generosity of this family, documents from the grandfather Joe Jagoe Sr. provide researchers with a look into early Denton County.

The Marvin Loveless Photograph Collection donated by Caldray and Davis is invaluable in its stories of Denton in the 1950's. With over 43,000 negatives, this collection is a major challenge to catalog to allow use by the public. Currently, over 4000 negatives are in use with the remainder in process.

Families are encouraged to donate or allow to be copied their early family photos. Together with family histories, the Museum provides documentary exhibits of early Denton County. Researchers travel to Denton from around the world to seek information on their families. The descendants often find and meet relatives unknown before their trips to the Museum research center.

Writers find the resources a great tool to use for creating novels, both true and fiction. Sam Bass, Alford Grant, and Ann Sheridan are native Dentonites currently being documented in novels whose authors have visited the Museum.

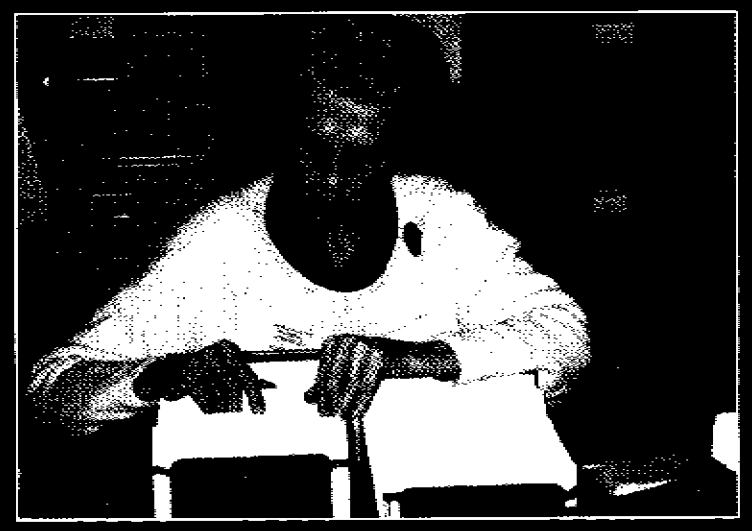
Archives are not open to the public for people to browse through. Procedures for research are in place modeled after the archives at the Texas State Library research center. Museum policies and good common sense.

Reproductions of documents and photographs is available by request. It is a matter of pride for the Museum that many businesses display reproductions from the Museum's collection and researchers from around the world seek information.

During the last four years, a major thrust has been the development of a research center for genealogist, authors and scholars.

Dolena Holms from Canada and Beverly Eliason from Utah are LDS Missionaries Specializing in Genealogy who worked over a year cataloging documents in the "Denton Collection."

Betty Bailey on the right (a retired librarian from the University of North Texas) does cataloging shown with Letitia de Burgos on the left has spent 8 years researching the history of American Pressed Glass and documented 700 plus pieces in museum collection - most of which are blue in color.



Volunteer Silvie Sidaway helps with research

John Samuel Adams, Linda Gloyd, Ren Adams and Jack Adams, descendants of the Medlin family, visiting from Oklahoma to research the family history.

Family Researchers from out of state.

Retired librarian, Ann Davis catalogs materials in the research center.