



DALLAS COUNTY PIONEER ASSOCIATION

History Lives Here!
WINTER 2025

Next Meeting: 12/06/25 at 10am



Successful 150 th Anniversary Celebration!

A huge thank you to our members and supporters that attended our recent birthday party at the El Fenix on Northwest Highway on October 19th. We met a lot of new people and enjoyed celebrating with longtime friends and past board members.

Also in attendance were four past DCPA presidents and several authors of local history. Enjoy the photos shared below!



CANDLELIGHT AT OLD CITY PARK



2025 marks the 50th anniversary of the annual Candlelight celebration at Old City Park and the first time the celebration has been held with Dallas Parks in charge. DCPA is encouraging its members to volunteer at this event on the first night, December 13th, and help with guest services, registration, or other administrative activities. Volunteers are being coordinated by the Old City Park Conservancy on Preservation Dallas's website and specific needs are outlined at the following link:

[Candlelight Volunteer Form](#). We hope to see

you there on either December 13th or 14th for Dallas' most beloved holiday tradition!

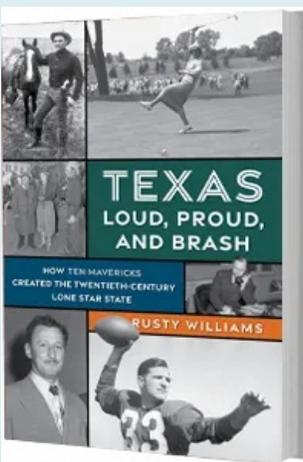
NEXT MEETING - Sat, Dec 6 at 10am

Our guest speaker for December is longtime newspaperman and prolific author **Rusty Williams** whose latest book, "*Texas: Loud Proud and Brash*" tells the stories of ten legendary Texans who shaped the state we know and love today. Rusty spoke to us back in 2021 after the publication of his previous book, "*Deadly Dallas*" and he's a gifted and **humorous speaker**. He will also be selling and signing copies of his latest book for us.

For more information about Rusty, please visit his website at rustywilliamsauthor.com.

TEXAS

Loud, Proud and Brash



Rusty Williams

Texas: Loud, Proud and Brash

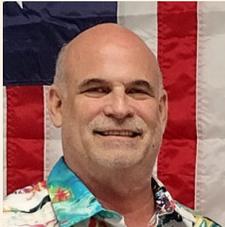
If you're a first-time guest or simply a new member that's never attended one of our meetings, please join us for breakfast at 9:00a prior to the 10:00p meeting. Let us know you're a first-timer and enjoy a complimentary meal on us! Please make your dinner reservation by clicking the red button below, or on our website dallaspioneer.org, or by voice mail at 972-260-9334 and mention that you're a guest. You can also email Vice President Paul Ridenour at vp@dallaspioneer.org

that you're a guest.

[Make a Meal Reservation](#)

CITY HALL PETITION

Speaking of preservation, we'd also like to invite our members to log your name on the petition to save Dallas' iconic 1977 City Hall from demolition and redevelopment. It only takes a minute to follow this link and log your name requesting the city focus on repairing the facility and preserving it for future generations. The petition is at the following link: [Save Dallas City Hall](#)



From the Vice-President

I would like to thank all of you who donated items to the Silent Auction for our 150th Anniversary celebration at El Fenix back on October 19, 2025. Kathy Ann Red donated many items. Deborah Franklin went above and beyond by getting several "Blazing Saddles" items signed by Burton

Gilliam. I also want to thank all of you who purchased an item from the auction.

We are currently in the **Thanksgiving** season and soon will be in the Spirit of **Giving** season! Just a reminder that you can **give** to DCPA during this season too! If you have an IRA and have to take a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) you can **give** to Charitable organizations from your IRA to reduce your taxable income for the year. So while we are in the seasons of **Giving** and being **Thankful**, we hope that you will remember DCPA with a **Thankful Heart** for all the work we do to preserve Dallas History.

We pledge to make good use of your donations in our efforts to preserve Dallas County history! DCPA is a long-time 501(c)3 organization, EIN 75-1641669. Donations can be made on our [website](#) or through banks utilizing Zelle by simply using our email address Donate@dallaspioneer.org as the recipient.

[DONATE](#)

CEMETERY REPORT

by Kathy Ann Reid

HAUGHT CEMETERY LAWSUIT

A tax foreclosure lawsuit was brought by local taxing entities against the actual dead buried in the well-known Haught Store/Slapfoot Cemetery in Mesquite. There was a slim chance given for response in order for an answer to be given to the court. Fortunately one very elderly descendant, a citizen of Arizona, retained the capacity to react by contacting her younger sister. Turned out that a descendant from Arizona was the one who contacted DCPA and others for help.

That few to zero middle-aged local descendants were served with notice of the lawsuit seems strange, to say the least. Congratulations to Linda Haught Ortega for valiant successful efforts and prayers to save the land donated so long ago for pioneer burials. An Order for Non-Suit was signed by the judge on September 15. A recent change in state law encourages the government's representatives to check with historical organizations before taxing cemetery land, and the Cemetery Watchers of DCPA have volunteered to help in that endeavor.

SOWERS CEMETERY

On September 27, 2025, at Sowers Cemetery Irving's pioneers were remembered, fun was had and work was done, and thereafter the Farris Family was featured with pictures and an article on the front page of a local newspaper ("Past honored at Sowers Cemetery" by Mark Zeske, Irving Rambler Newspaper October 4, 2025). The dedication, determination and organization of Betsy Farris and her family were honored. Reading of the publication is by subscription only. Sowers Cemetery information is on their [website](#) and also on dallaspioneer.org.

CONSTELLATION OF LIVING MEMORIALS

The Constellation of Living Memorials (CLM) is going full steam ahead with its mission to "transform neglected historic cemeteries into living, regenerative memorial landscapes that honor those interred, restore native ecosystems, and cultivate community stewardship, education, and well-being."



Julie Fineman, Co-Creator of CLM, was featured at the 2025 Symposium of Native Plant Society of Texas and was given their [Nancy Benedict Memorial Award](#). CLM gave \$1,000 for tombstone repairs at W. W. Glover Cemetery, and Mike Rowlands of Michelangelo Historic Stone Preservation and Restoration is working on the stone of Minnie V. Glover who was a niece of W. W. Glover. Although Minnie's parents and siblings moved on to settle in Hamilton County by 1880, a donation was made in 2025 for maintenance of the cemetery in honor of the donor's grandmother Eliza Caroline Glover Hurley. This member of a fading generation was 95 years old in September, and hopefully she is not the last Glover descendant who will donate for maintenance of the cemetery. Grandmother Hurley had often expressed that her beloved baby sister, Minnie Viola Glover (1874-1875), was buried in the cemetery.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension in partnership with the CLM, is hosting a symposium on December 2. Civic leaders, environmentalists, reservationists, and philanthropists are invited to attend to encourage thinking of historic

cemeteries as living, ecological, and community spaces that honor life in all its forms. Volunteers from participating cemeteries are scheduled to participate in a panel discussion entitled, “Guiding the Constellation: Lessons from the Front Lines of Cemetery Renewal.” The panelists are Dallas City Councilwoman Paula Blackmon, Selina Cinecio of Beeman Cemetery, Kim Cole of Albert Carver Cemetery, Van Johnson of Western Heights Cemetery, and Kathy Ann Reid of W. W. Glover Cemetery. For details see the [CLM website](#).

These cemeteries need your help in order to be preserved. Please see more on our [Events page](#) at dallaspioneer.org

COCKRELL CEMETERY

On November 8, Dustin Durrett, Tim Durrett, Carey Roper, Betsy Farris, Marsha and Mike Leach, and Kathy Ann Reid cleaned the Wesley Cockrell Cemetery. Two neighbors visited with us and expressed concern and gratitude for our work and a follow-up mowing was discussed. Next we impulsively visited the Horton Cemetery where nearby dirt work for development is being done. In 2023 the current owners filed a Notice of Existence of a Cemetery (Instrument No. 202300158930) so we know they are aware of the cemetery.

McKINNEY FAMILY CEMETERY

After a call from a City of Dallas code compliance inspector, a drive-by look at McKinney Family Cemetery revealed that a city crew had cleared much of the vegetation. We plan to have a workday there on March 21, 2026, to get it looking good by adding our finishing touches. [Please link to Events wording at end of this page]

CEMETERY WATCHERS GROUP

The Cemetery Watchers group is open to questions, concerns, suggestions, new members, and friends. Please let us know which Dallas County cemeteries interest you. If you visit a cemetery, please let us know the condition. We welcome your communication by email to cemetery@dallaspioneer.org

To view past field trips see our [Outings and Events](#) page

FUTURE EVENTS

CLEANING McKINNEY FAMILY CEMETERY

On March 21, 2026 from 10:00 am - 12:00 Noon we'll be cleaning the McKinney Family Cemetery, 10425 Rylie Crest Dr., Dallas, Texas North of 10500 US Hwy 175 and north side Rylie Crest Dr. at Cade Parkway. Mapsco 69C.

Padgitt Bros Company

by Mike Magers

Although it may be difficult to imagine today, there was a time when personal transportation (besides walking, of course) relied on horses and mules, buggies and coaches. For decades, local saddlemakers enjoyed a thriving business.

One such company was Padgitt Bros. of Dallas. James Robert Padgitt and Mary Jane Bond Padgitt had three sons who lived to be adults. They were Tom (born in 1846), William (born in 1849) and Jesse (born in 1851). Not long after they relocated to Harris County, Texas, their father died of yellow fever in 1854 and their mother died in another outbreak of the same disease in 1859. The Padgitts had other family members in Harris County, including their maternal grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Bond. Their grandfather Jesse and an uncle named Tom Bond were both in the saddle business there in Houston.



Though they were orphaned at a young age, the brothers were known to be industrious. A family history says that brother Tom, while still a young teenager, took odd jobs to bring in income for his brothers. When they got old enough, each became apprentices in the Bond family saddle business. One by one, they launched out and started their own careers coinciding with the development of the Houston and Texas Central rail line. Tom settled in Waco and set up business near the rail lines and the Brazos River. William and Jesse each appear to have worked for Tom for a while, but continued to move north as the H. and T. C. laid track. Tom's business became very successful. He married, raised a family and lived his entire adult life in Waco.

Most accounts give 1867 as the approximate date that William and Jesse began working together, but they didn't set up shop in Dallas until around 1874. Their first permanent location appears to have been around what was then the 200 block of Main Street, a three story building near Main and Poydras. They later outgrew it and moved their offices to a five story building on Commerce Street, approximately where the Earle Cabell Federal Building is located today.

Their main business was saddles, harnesses, leather goods, hardware and the like. For many years, their business was strong and Padgitt Brothers was one of the major leather goods manufacturers in the country. As automobiles became more affordable and widely owned, their main lines of business declined. For a while they made leather interiors. The business continued on for many years thereafter, run by descendants of the founders.

The co-founder William Clinton Padgitt died in 1909 at age 60 and is buried in Oakland Cemetery. His brother Jesse David Padgitt died at the age of 97 in

1948 and is buried in Grove Hill Cemetery.

LINKEDIN REMINDER

Thank you to everyone that follows DCPA on Instagram, X, Tumblr, and Facebook. We've launched a new profile on LinkedIn which we're using to connect with other historical organizations and history lovers. Please give us a follow the next time you're on LinkedIn! [DCPA on LinkedIn](#)

DALLAS FIRST CHINESE BUTCHER

by *Dustin Durrett*

In the historic Oakland Cemetery of Dallas rests Charley Sing, remembered as the city's first Chinese butcher. His story reflects perseverance, partnership, and the shared spirit of a growing city. Charley Sing began his career in 1899, working at a Chinese restaurant in Oak Cliff as a cook.



Charley Sing

Through hard work and determination, he soon advanced beyond restaurant work. By 1904, the Dallas City Directory listed him as a meat market proprietor.

Sing entered into partnership with Samuel Lansky, a Jewish grocer, his market was at 645 North Washington Avenue in the "Short North Dallas" area. Their collaboration reflected the cooperation and mutual respect often found among immigrant business owners striving to build better lives in early Dallas.

When Charley Sing passed away in 1909, he was buried at Oakland Cemetery. Nearly a year later, Frank Beaumont, a former Texas Ranger, was laid to rest beside him—a fitting symbol of Dallas's diverse and intertwined past.

Thanks to the efforts of the Dallas Asian American Historical Society, Charley Sing's story has resurfaced. His life stands as a reminder that Dallas's early success was built by people from many cultures, whose enterprise and resilience helped shape the city's enduring character.

UPDATES TO OUR WEBSITE

Did you see our new article about the first hundred years of [Gaston Avenue Baptist Church](#)?

Did you read about former DCPA president & Dallas Mayor, [John Henry Brown](#)?

And how about our recent piece about the history and importance of the beautiful Romanesque [Slaughter Building](#)?

There's always something new and informative being added to our website so bookmark us and visit often. This is your association and we need your contributions to both our website and our newsletter. If your pioneer ancestors need to be profiled online, please send that to us at webmaster@dallaspioneer.org. And if you'd like to include an interesting bit of pioneer history in our quarterly newsletter, hit us up at newsletter@dallaspioneer.org.

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