

Historical Society Website: daytontxhistory.com

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Old School Museum: The Old School Museum is located next to Parker Hall at 111 West Houston St. in Dayton and is open Saturdays from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M.

Dayton Historical Society: The Society has reconvened its monthly meetings effective June 28, 2021 at Parker Hall at 6 P.M. (the last Monday of each month) for a historical program presented by guest speaker(s). The program is preceded by a Society business meeting and followed by refreshments.

Dayton History News

The Legacy of Boyd Arnold (1928-2017)

The impacts of a person's life upon the people and places encountered during a lifetime is often referred to as legacy.

Daytonite Eli Boyd Arnold left an indelible legacy with his family, friends and hometown of Dayton.

Evidence is apparent to anyone who drives into Dayton's City Park (aka Gov. Bill & Vara Daniel Park). The park's address is 1 Arnold Drive; therefore, every person who enters the park does so on a road named in honor of Boyd Arnold.

Ever been to a meeting or event at Parker Hall next to the Old School Museum? Making a reservation requires coordination with the Dayton Historical Society of which Boyd was a long-time member and regular attendee at their meetings.

In his honor, the Historical Society erected a memorial garden at the entrance to Parker Hall with a plaque entitled "Boyd Arnold's Garden".

Ever driven down N. Main St.? On the northwest corner of the intersection of N. Main and W. Clayton is the State Farm Insurance offices of Randel Arnold, son of Boyd Arnold.

Then there is the Arnold Construction Company, Inc. building on N. Main next to Randel's State Farm office.

Although he sold the construction business to Gene McDowell in March 2000, they agreed he could continue using the name 'Arnold Construction'.



Better Business Bureau records indicate that Arnold Construction Company officially started on January 1, 1954 when he and Turner Kirksey started a painting/drywall business after gaining experience at McDonald Construction starting at age 18.

This was followed by him becoming part owner and partners with Joe and Bobby Harris at Pelco Construction.

It was 1981 when Boyd and his wife Patsie formed Arnold Construction which remained active until his 2016 retirement.

That's 62 years of construction experience translates to a legacy of a very large number of businesses and homes being built or remodeled.

Even Liberty has benefitted from Boyd's legacy via his son Dr. David Arnold's dentistry business on Travis St.

A not so obvious impact is the influence he had on the youth of Dayton as a baseball coach. This provided countless opportunities to mentor boys and do his part to help them become productive citizens.

Biography of Boyd Arnold

Eli Boyd Arnold was born November 16, 1928 in Springdale (aka Forest Home), Texas – a small East Texas sawmill town of less than 75 people in Cass County, 20 miles south of Texarkana, Texas.

Cass County was where his parents Thomas “Todd” Hamilton Arnold (1903-1986) and Elizabeth “Essie” Skinner Arnold (1906-1993) were married April 17, 1928.

As of the 1940 census, Boyd was 11 years old and the only child living with his parents in Caddo, Louisiana where his father was working as an oil field pumper.

In 1943, the Arnolds moved to Dayton where the Liberty County oil boom was still happening. Boyd was enrolled at Dayton High School from which he graduated in 1946.

Success and popularity in high school appeared natural for Boyd. He played football and basketball, was editor of the Broncho news, a member of the student council, vice-president of the junior class, president of the senior class, an actor in the junior class play and a member of the speech club.

A Dayton High School graduate named Lester Wisegerber was a freshman in 1946 when Boyd was a senior. Lester was friends with two other freshmen named Patsie Clark and Betty Jo George. Patsie would become the wife of Boyd Arnold and Betty Jo would become the wife of Lester Wisegerber. The Wisegerbers and Arnolds have remained friends for the past 75 years.

**Dayton High School Students
(per 1946 Broncho Yearbook)**



**Boyd Arnold
Senior**



**Patsie Clark
Freshman**

Boyd’s senior year (1945-1946) at Dayton High School began at a momentous time in history as World War II ended on 2 September 1945. However, he was still required to register for the draft when he turned 18.

That took place on November 19, 1946 at the local draft board in Liberty. His draft card described him as 5’ 10” tall with blue eyes, blonde hair and a ruddy complexion.

He stated that he was currently employed with McDonald Construction Company working in Liberty, Texas.

The city of Dayton has benefitted greatly from Boyd’s leadership skills as he served as President of the School Board, Dayton Community Center and Community Development Corp.; and as a founder of the Dayton Chamber of Commerce.

An obvious benefit to all who knew him was his character which consistently displayed integrity, steadfastness, friendliness and faithfulness as well as mentorship towards young people with advice to get involved in their community.

Arnold Family Legacy

Boyd Arnold passed away on Saturday, January 21, 2017 in Houston, Texas with services held at the First United Methodist Church of Dayton and burial by Pace-Stancil Funeral Home at Magnolia Park Cemetery. His mother, Essie Elizabeth Skinner-Arnold-Ogrodowicz died in 1993 and is also buried at Magnolia Park Cemetery in Dayton.

His father, Todd Hamilton Arnold died on 22 June 1986 at the age of 82 but is buried at Bethsaida Y Cemetery in Bethsaida, Cass County, Texas. His service as a Corporal in the U.S. Air Force who served in Korea is recorded on Todd’s headstone.

A question that may come to mind is why is Todd buried up in Cass County, Texas and not near Dayton.

His Find-A-Grave memorial indicates that Todd had 2 sisters – Etta Lillian Arnold-Law (1894-1972) and Alice C. Arnold-Miller (1908-1963). Both of whom are buried at Bethsaida Y Cemetery in Cass County, Texas.

The same goes for his paternal grandparents – Eli Wilson Arnold (1865-1933) and Alma Josephine Arnold (1876-1950) – who are also buried at Bethsaida Y Cemetery.

And the same goes for Boyd’s paternal 1st great-grandparents – John T. Arnold (1834-1915) and Mary E. Davis-Arnold (1842-1903) – who are also buried at Bethsaida Y Cemetery.

The interment exceptions begin in 1863 with Boyd’s paternal 2nd great-grandparents. His 2GGF Thomas Hendrick Arnold Jr. (1797-1863) is

buried at the Arnold Family Cemetery in De Ann, Hempstead County, Arkansas as is Boyd’s 2GGM Mary Ann Davis Wilson-Arnold (1800-1845).

Boyd’s 3rd great-grandparents Thomas H. Arnold (1766-1844) born in Virginia and Mary Bidestone Arnold (1766-1857) born in South Carolina are both buried at the Autaugaville Cemetery in Autaugaville, Alabama.

3GGF Thomas Arnold fought for America’s freedom in the American Revolution as a patriot – having enlisted in 1779 and re-enlisted in 1783.

4GGF Colonel Benjamin Arnold, Jr. (1719-1797) was born in Bedford County, Virginia in 1719 and died in Greenville County, South Carolina. His wife Ann Hendricks-Arnold (1719-1806) was born in King William County, Virginia but burial location is unknown. 4GGF Benjamin Arnold also fought in the American Revolution as a patriot.

5GGF Benjamin Arnold Sr. (1660-1723) was the first generation in America. He was born in New Kent County, Virginia and died in King William County, Virginia. He married Ann Bogardus in 1689.

