Get Your Own Dayton Texas Star!

Order for homes or businesses.
Business orders to-date include:

- AM Donuts
- American Rice Growers
- Chachere Veterinary
- Chicken Express
- Colbert Elementary
- Custom Cuts
- Dayton Chamber of Commerce
- Dayton Chiropractic Center
- Dayton City Hall
- Dayton Community Center
- Dayton Electric Company
- Dayton Farm & Ranch Supply
- Dayton High School
- Dayton Police Dept/Muni Court
- Dayton Sports Bar
- Dayton Trading Post
- Dr. Wayne MacDonald
- First Liberty National Bank
- Fordland Estates
- Green Mechanical
- Hall's Veterinary
- John Griffin Surveyors
- Jose's Mexican Restaurant
- Kidz Corner
- Kimmie Brown Elementary
- Kwik Kar
- Liberty/Dayton Chamber
- Los Compadres
- Mainframe 24 Hour Wrecker
- Marshall Family Practice
- McCoy's Building Supply
- Mike's BBQ Restaurant
- Nena's Child Care
- New Day Massage
- Pace Stancil Funeral Home
- Pecan Wood Mobile Home Park
- Prosperity Bank
- Richter Elementary
- Sterling Funeral Home
- Stephen F. Austin Elementary
- Sumiden Wire Corp
- THS Medical Clinic
- Williamson's Propane

ORDERS: Caroline Wadzeck 936-402-3797 cwadzeck@hotmail.com

Historical Society

The Society meets in Parker Hall at 6 P.M. the last Monday of each month for a historical program presented by guest speakers. The program is preceded by a Society business/project status meeting and followed by refreshments.

Contact Information

Editor: Janette (JC) Goulder-Frick

http://daytontxhistory.com

daytontxhistory@gmail.com

Rent Parker Hall For Your Event

To reserve Parker Hall, contact:
Lee Krigar at 936-776-1161 or **936-257-0330**; or
Felix Skarpa at 936-776-1039.

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 History News

The Price of Freedom

For Americans, the month of May is renowned for its Memorial Day holiday which represents a long weekend to relax and the school year ending for students.

For some, it is much more – a solemn time to remember those who died while serving in America's armed forces.

After America's Civil War (1861-1865), a day of remembrance on May 30th known as Decoration Day was established to commemorate fallen confederate and union soldiers. On that day, soldiers would decorate graves of their fallen comrades with flowers, flags and wreaths.

At the first Decoration Day ceremony on May 30, 1868, James A. Garfield (future U.S. President) said,

"If silence is ever golden, it must be beside the graves of 15,000 whose lives were more significant than speech, and whose death was a poem, the music of which can never be sung."

Although the name was changed to Memorial Day in the 1880s, it didn't become an official holiday until 1967.

May 30th remained the holiday until 1971 when the last Monday in May was designated Memorial Day to facilitate a long weekend in compliance with the Uniform Monday Holiday Act.

Although some seem unaware, Congress passed a law in December 2000 that all American citizens must pause at 3 p.m. local time on Memorial Day to remember and honor our fallen soldiers.

Dayton City Hall Memorial

Respect and honor for Dayton citizens who have served in the armed forces is evident at five memorials located at Dayton City Hall, Palm Cemetery, Linney Cemetery, Civic Center and the Crossroads (Hwy 146 @ Hwy 90).

There are also 11 streets named after citizens who died in World War II:

- Barrow – Douglas Barrow
- Flowers – John E. (Jack) Flowers
- Friery – John C. Friery Jr.
- Harmon – Geator J. Harmon
- Holitke – Joseph L. Holitzke
- Kay – Clyde David Kay
- Merritt – William H. Merritt III
- Seekamp – Vernon H. Seekamp
- Stevens – Calvin Ray Stevens
- Waring – Willie B. Waring
- Young – Charles Stenious Young

Military Service Memorials

The five military memorials erected in Dayton each have a unique focus.

The **Crossroads memorial** consists of a flagpole flying the U.S. flag and the Texas flag with a circular stone marker at the base which states:

"Lest We Forget – This edifice is dedicated to the men and women of the United States military services. Never have so few done so much, for so many! September 11, 2007."

The Crossroad memorial was dedicated by Dayton's City Council on the 6th anniversary of the infamous 9/11 attacks by Islamic al-Qaeda terrorists during which 2,996 people were killed and 6,000 others were wounded. Deaths included 265 on four hijacked planes, 125 at the Pentagon, and 2,606 in the collapse of New York's World Trade Center.

The **City Hall memorial** located near the building entrance states:

"We, the citizens of Dayton dedicate this monument to the memory of these servicemen of World War II who gave their lives so that we may enjoy freedom. We shall forever remember their ultimate sacrifice for us."

The **Palm Cemetery memorial** is located just past the entrance to the cemetery where the road splits and states:

"In honor of those who served our country."

It lists 124 names of Dayton citizens who served in America's military.

Civic Center Military Memorial

The **Linney Cemetery memorial** is located near the entrance to the cemetery and states:

"In memory of our veterans who served with honor in wars."

The **Civic Center memorial** is the most elaborate of Dayton's military memorials and is located south of the front parking lot. There is a seating area, a memorial fountain and a 3-part wall of honor.

The left wall lists 90 veterans and the right wall lists 103 veterans – with name, rank, branch of service, dates of service and location/war where served. The center wall lists 14 names and states:

"To those who gave the ultimate sacrifice – killed in action, missing in action, prisoners of War – KIA, MIA, POW"

A memorial stone and a historic marker honor the 12 sons of Dayton citizens Stach and Mattie Ripkowski – all of whom served in the U.S. military, survived, and returned home – an unsurpassed American record.

Old Spanish Trail & Old Liberty Road

At an elevation of 84.5 feet, Dayton is the highest point between Houston and New Orleans.

It is also a hub for transportation because of the proximity of four highways – Hwy 90, FM 1960, Hwy 321 and Hwy 146 and two railroads through Dayton – Union Pacific (north-south) and Burlington Northern Santa Fe (east-west), and Union Pacific (east-west) through the community of Kenefick.

During the 1600s and 1700s, horse, mule and cattle trails were established by Spanish explorers, trappers and traders.

The emergence and popularity of bicycles and automobiles at the turn of the 20th century inspired the "Good Roads" movement. This led to the conception in 1915 of the Old Spanish Trail (OST) transcontinental highway between San Augustine, Florida and San Diego, California across 8 states.

A book by the same name states, *"The Old Spanish Trail was the longest, crookedest, most arduous pack mule route in the history of America."*

The highway was forged over formerly impassable swamplands in the southeast that required crossing five major Gulf of Mexico river outlets.

The OST opened for travel in 1929 having cost $80 million. It entered Texas at Beaumont and passed through Houston and San Antonio before exiting at El Paso.

It became known as U.S. Highway 90 in the eastern states and U.S. Highway 80 in the western states.

The segment through Dayton was finished in 1928 and the first stoplight in Dayton was installed in 1934 at Main Street and Hwy 90.

According to Pomella Eaton (1904-2004) who moved to Dayton in 1920, travelers through Dayton used Old Liberty Road before Hwy 90 was built. In the words of Pomella:

"It (Old Liberty Road) came into town about one block south of where present Houston Street enters Hwy 146 and stayed on Houston Street to South Winfree."

"Then it turned left, crossed the railroad, turned right and followed north of the railroad to the Trinity River. There it went over the Trinity on the high bridge (built in the early 1900s)."

"Many times, the highway was closed due to high water so if people needed to go to Liberty, they traveled by train as there were many passenger trains passing and stopping in Dayton."