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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 Bill Moreau

Have a reason to see Judge Alan D. Conner at Dayton Municipal Court, U.S. Representative Brian Babin at his Dayton satellite office or Volunteer Fire Chief Adam Piserelle at the fire station?

They all have one thing in common – access to their offices is via a street named Bill Moreau Drive.

It was June 15, 2015 when Municipal Court Judge Conner appeared before the Dayton City Council and requested that the street where the new public safety facility was going to be built be named in honor of Bill Moreau.

Bill had served as Dayton's Volunteer Fire Chief for 18 years in addition to being Dayton's mayor from 1978-1991 (13-1/2 years) – the longest running mayoral term until a new length of service record was set by Mayor Larry Harris who served from 1991-2005.

Born and raised in Dayton, Wilmer Maurice (Bill) Moreau was a 1940 graduate of Dayton High School and attended Sam Houston State Teachers college for 2 years before joining the U.S. Marine Corps in 1942 after America entered World War II in December 1941.

Bill went through basic training in San Diego and was assigned to the Marine 3rd division in the Pacific Theater as a gunner and mortarman.

He achieved a promotion to corporal in June 1944. An injury in August 1944, put Bill in a Hawaiian hospital and resulted in issuance of a purple heart to him. He was discharged in May 1945.



**Wilmer Maurice (Bill) Moreau
(1922-2007)**

Fellow Daytonites who enlisted at the same time with Bill were Tommy Waring, Willie Waring, and Clyde Kay.

Of the 4 Daytonites who enlisted together, only 2 came home. Clyde Kay was killed in action on the island of Saipan in July 1944 as was Willie Waring in the South Pacific about a month later after having fought at the Bougainville and Guadalcanal battles.

By early 1946, Bill was a member of the Dayton Volunteer Fire Department where his fellow brother-in-arms Tommy Waring was now Assistant Chief under Captain Curtis Conner.

One of his most challenging experiences as a fire fighter was being part of the response team for the Texas City disaster of April 1947.

He was elected fire department captain in 1948 and fire chief in 1954 – a role in which he served from 1954 through 1968 in addition to serving in the 1970s. Bill was elected Dayton mayor in 1978 where he served until 1992.

Leo and Mavdee Moreau

The Moreau heritage in Dayton began about 1907 when Bill Moreau's father – Leo Clayton Moreau (1894-1958) moved to Dayton from St. Landry, Louisiana.

Leo's parents were Jean Baptiste Moreau (1862-1929) and Marie Angelina Hollier (1865-1941).

Bill's mother, May Dixon (Mae Dee) Alford (1895-1962) had moved to Dayton from Crystal Springs, Mississippi in 1901 with her parents Julius Caesar Alford (1847-1936) and Maud H. Trotter (1866-1949) at the age of 6.

Leo married Mae Dee on December 23, 1917 in Liberty. They had 2 sons – Clayton Leo Moreau (1919-1970) and Wilmer Maurice (Bill) Moreau (1922-2007) – both of whom have Dayton streets named after them.

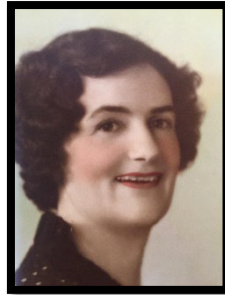
According to the 1920 U.S. Census, Leo and Mae Dee Moreau were living on Liberty/Dayton Road and owned their home. His occupation was listed as a barbershop in Dayton. Leo's brother Leon (age 21) was living at Leo's home as well.

The location of Moreau's barbershop was the northwest corner of N. Main St. and Bryan streets in Dayton across from what was a feed store, then a Ben Franklin's Variety Store and then Voygt's Variety Store.

The barber shop was sold to Cotton Payton about 1955 – a few years before Leo's death. The buildings were torn down to create a parking lot and the Bryan St. shopping center where businesses like the Adorn Salon and Mike's BBQ are now located.



**Leo Clayton Moreau
(1894-1958)**



**May Dixon Alford
(1895-1962)**



**Wilmer Maurice (Bill) Moreau
(Headstone 1922-2007)**

After having been a Dayton resident for 50 years, Leo was pronounced deceased at Dayton Memorial Hospital and was buried at the Liberty Catholic Cemetery. His pallbearers included Chester Holbrook, Guin Granbury, Vernon Swartzenberg as well as Crawford, Offord, Wiley and Murphy Carrier.

After having been a Dayton resident for 61 years, Mae Dee died at age 67 and was also buried at the Liberty Catholic Cemetery. Her pallbearers included Chester Holbrook, Curtis Conner, Wilfred Moreau, Homer Sims and Willie Douzat – all of Dayton and C. B. Cain, Sr. of Liberty.

Clayton Street Honoree

Excerpt – The Streets of Dayton book (by Caroline Wadzeck)

"Clayton Street had two previous names. It was first called Alden and later called Liberty Avenue. It was renamed for Clayton Leo Moreau, born on February 10, 1919, who was the son of Leo and Maedee Moreau. He was born and raised in Dayton and contracted polio at a young age. He had one brother, Wilmer M. "Bill" Moreau. This article appeared in the Dayton News in February 1942:



**Clayton Leo
Moreau
(1919-1970)**

**Photo was courtesy
of Punky Moreau**

Clayton Moreau, son of Mr. and Mrs. Leo Moreau, whose 24th birthday was on the 10th, celebrated the event Sunday, the 14th with a birthday dinner. Only relatives and a few friends numbering 27, were present to enjoy the occasion.

Clayton, being crippled, can't fight with guns and bayonets, but is doing his best to help with the war. Practically one hundred percent of his allowance from his parents is put into defense bonds.

An extra incentive in wanting to help with the war is the fact that his younger brother, Wilmer, is in the service, and by this time probably overseas. Besides wearing apparel and other gifts Sunday, Clayton received enough money to buy another defense bond."

"Clayton loved baseball and football and his favorite team was Texas A&M. As an older man, he was often seen sitting on his front porch watching traffic drive by. He passed away on October 1, 1970, at the age of fifty-one."

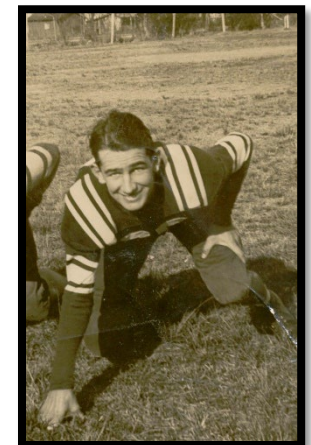
More About Bill

Mr. Moreau was preceded in death by his wife Laura Kate "Katie" Dowell-Moreau (1925-1985) and grandson Roger Dale "Buffy" Anderson (1973-2006). They are all interred at Magnolia Park Cemetery in Dayton.

He was a member of First United Methodist Church of Dayton and of the Liberty County Appraisal Review Board.

Raising cattle and growing rice were joys for him as was participating as a member of the Southwest Texas Cattleman's Assn. and Beefmasters Breeders United.

Bill was also named Citizen of the Year by the Liberty-Dayton Chamber of Commerce.



**Bill Moreau
Dayton High School**