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**Interested? Contact Caroline Wadzeck
936-402-3797 or 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.

**Newsletter or Website
Contact Information**

Editor: Janette (JC) Goulder-Frick
<http://daytonxhistory.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

Dayton Historical Society Club

The Dayton Historical Society was organized in July 1983 at the home of Mary Beth Jamison. She founded the Society and served as its president for the first 25 years.

The club’s initial purpose was that of researching sites worthy of historical marker identification – an objective that was achieved for several local sites.

When the group took on the task of saving “The Old School”, membership grew as Daytonites became passionate about the task at hand and helped with both fund-raisers and restoration labor.

Upon dedication of the Old School Museum in 2007, the Dayton Historical Society began meeting in the museum conference room.

As membership continued to increase, it became apparent in 2011 that a larger meeting place was required.

Member David Parker pledged to build a structure for that purpose. The site chosen was behind the Old School Museum and it was named in honor of David’s parents – Robert and Lillian Parker. They are the same people for whom Parker Park is named.

Interest in learning and preserving Dayton’s history continued to grow, as did the Dayton Historical Society membership; therefore, David Parker expanded Parker Hall to accommodate more people in 2014.



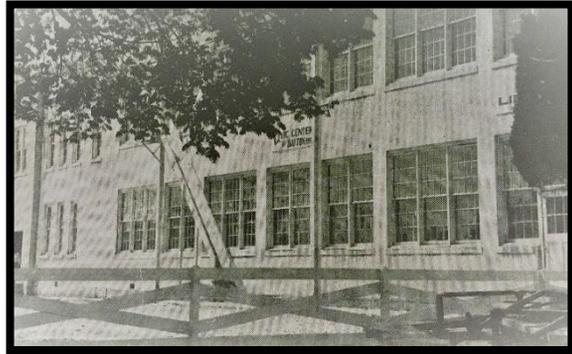
As the desire to rent Parker Hall increased, members volunteered to manage the growing demand to use the building for community events.

Fortunately, building rental has become a source of income for the club which helps offset the cost of utilities and maintenance of the meeting hall and the museum (which is free of charge to visitors).

A current task at hand for the club is the preservation of business buildings in Dayton that are at risk. They range from 70 to 125 years old and were identified in the September 2018 newsletter. Since then, the Dayton City Council voted to support the club’s risk mitigation strategy.

Interested in this club? The Dayton Historical Society meets the last Monday of each month at 6:00 pm in Parker Hall. Refreshments are served after the meeting. The most recent release of this newsletter is distributed to attendees as well.

Lambda Alpha Sigma Club & Dayton Public Library



Dayton Public Library location [Opened June 14, 1962]

The vision for establishing a public library in Dayton originated in the 1960s within a local women’s club called Lambda Alpha Sigma.

In 1961, the vision became a reality when the American Rice Growers donated a building for that purpose.

Once the structure was relocated to the Dayton City Park (now Parker Park), the club members and their spouses commenced renovations.

During the remodel, a two-story elementary school on the corner of East Houston and South Main was made available for use as a civic center and public library. [now site of Dayton Post Office]

The “Dayton Public Library”, as it was called when it opened on June 14, 1962 within the “Dayton Civic Center” was one-room that would only be open two afternoons a week for three hours.

As demand increased, the City of Dayton assumed financial support and a full-time librarian, Rose Klimitchek, was hired in the early 1970s.

In 1976, the library moved to the southeast corner of Cook St. and North

Main. [now site of the Dayton Police & Fire Museum]

In 1985, the library moved to a newly constructed building on the southwest corner of West Houston and South Cleveland that was named Jones Public Library. [now site of Greg Hayman Educational Center]

In 2010, the public library moved to its current location inside the Dayton Community Center. [on South Cleveland St. between Ripkowski Dr. and Entzminger St.]

Today, the library staff consists of 5 members including Library Director Sherry Sikes.

Members of the Lambda Alpha Sigma club are still supporting the Dayton Public Library and participate in an associated community group called Friends of the Library.

The library continues to modernize in order to meet the growing needs of the community. There are now 28 computers available for use by Dayton citizens including 10 set aside in a classroom setting.

Dayton Future Farmers of America Club

Since its settlement in the early 1800s as large plantations, Dayton has been a farming and ranching community.

In the early 1900s, nearly 30 different “common schools” existed to educate the children of these farmers and ranchers.

Dayton citizens voted in 1907 to establish Dayton Independent School District. By 1934, all students from outlying common schools were now attending Dayton ISD schools.

One of the earliest ISD clubs was the Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapter established in 1938.

By 1941, a new building to house the vocational agriculture shop (as well as the band hall) was ready.

The Ag teacher was Anson Rigby. In 1955, L. J. Chachere hired on as his assistant. In 1960, Rigby became County Commissioner and Chachere took his place as Ag teacher.

The first rodeo arena was built in 1948 using old lumber donated to the Ag students from the teardown of the old football stadium. The first Dayton FFA Livestock Show and Rodeo took place in Spring 1949.

Initially, people would donate roping calves for the rodeo; however, the FFA began purchasing its own animals in 1950 to assure quality stock.

In 1955, the decision was made to tear down the old wooden arena and built a metal one.

After the FFA chapter was denied a building loan by Dayton State Bank examiners, a local rice farmer by the name of Joe Wisegerber (father of Lester Ray Wisegerber) offered them



Anson Rigby Memorial Arena [2017]

\$9,000 interest free. The “loan” was repaid the next year.

A rodeo in the wooden arena was held Labor Day weekend 1955, after which the old arena was torn down. The new metal arena was completed by May 1956 with the help of students and ex-students.

Jack Carraway taught Ag in Dayton from 1967 through 1983. In the early days, there was a calf scramble in which kids would compete to catch a calf donated by a local farmer or rancher.

In 1970, a youth auction of steers was added to the livestock show by Carraway. It has evolved to the point that students now sell steers, hogs, commercial heifers, lambs, goats, broilers and rabbits. The student who owns the animal receives the money from the sale of the animal.

Since 1949, more than 300 rodeos have been held in the Dayton FFA arena – some of which have been aired on national television. As of 2010, the Dayton FFA chapter was recognized as the 3rd largest in the state of Texas with 501 members.