

Historical Society Website: daytontxhistory.com

Rent Parker Hall

To reserve Parker Hall, call:
713-927-1629 or 832-233-3894

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Featured Dayton Texas Stars Artistry



Kidz Corner



OmniPoint Health

The Old School Museum, and Jamison Log Cabin are located across the street from the post office and Walgreens at 111 West Houston St. in Dayton and are open Saturdays from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. Dayton Historical Society members serve as hosts for visitors.



Dayton Historical Society: The Society meets monthly at Parker Hall (next to Old School Museum) at 6 P.M. on last Monday of month for a historical program presented by guest speaker(s). The program is preceded by a short business meeting and followed by refreshments. Public is welcome.

Dayton History News

Westel Ford Legacy

Two street names within Dayton's city limits are Milo and Ford. They were the name of two long-time residents of Dayton – Milo Westel (M.W.) Ford Jr. and his father Milo Westel Ford Sr. – both of whom are interred at Dayton's Magnolia Park Cemetery.

Westel Theron Ford (1829-1913)

The local Ford legacy actually began a generation prior with Milo Sr.'s father – Westel Theron (W.T.) Ford (born in New York in June 1829).

As of the 1900 census, W.T. (age 70) had moved to Devers in Liberty County from Des Moines, Iowa to farm rice – with his wife Martha Davis and their 4 children all born in Iowa - Jessica (age 19 born 1880), Ray (age 17 born 1883), Edith (age 14 born 1885), and Milo Sr. (age 12 born 1888).

As of the 1910 census, he and Martha along with their youngest child Milo Sr. lived with their son Ray Ford and his family in Chambers County.

W.T. died 3 years later and was buried at Mont Belvieu Methodist Cemetery. His wife Martha lived 13 years after W.T.'s death and was also buried at Mont Belvieu Methodist Cemetery.

Milo Westel Ford Sr. (1888-1967)

The 2nd in the Westel Ford lineage was Milo Westel Ford Sr. As of the 1900 census, he was age 12 working in Precinct 1 of Liberty County as a farm laborer. Per the 1910 census Ford Sr. was 22 years old and part owner in his brother Ray's farm.

In compliance with the World War I draft, Milo completed the registration card on 6/5/1917 on which he indicated that he was born in Earlham, Iowa; was single and employed as a rice farmer in Dayton; and that his widowed mother was dependent upon him for support.

By the 1920 census, Milo Sr. (age 31) had married Ella Fay King (age 21) and had his own farm on "Dayton Road". They had one child – a son age 1 whom they had named Milo Westel Ford Jr. According to the 1930 census, Milo Sr. was proprietor of a feed store and had a home valued at \$7,500.



**Milo Westel Ford Sr.
(1888-1967)**

Westel Ford Legacy

Milo Westel Ford Sr. (continued)

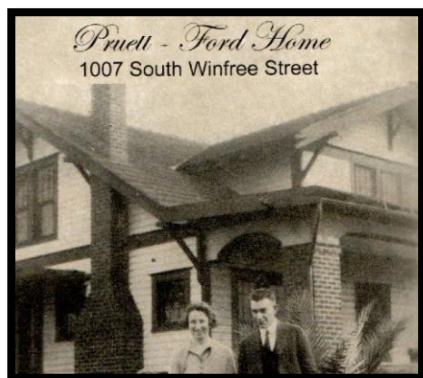
By then, he and Ella Fay were the parents of 4 children – son Milo Jr., (age 11), daughter Allene (age 9), son David (age 8) and daughter Minnie Boone (age 6). In response to the survey question “Lives on Farm”, the answer was “No”. Note – Ella Fay was a descendent of Daniel Boone.

By 1940, they were living in Stilson west of Dayton where Milo Sr. (age 52) and his wife Fay (age 42) owned a farm again.

All their children were still living with them – Milo Jr. (age 22), Aline (age 20), David (age 18), and Minnie (age 16). As of 1950, Milo Sr. (age 62) was a state cattle inspector while his wife Fay (age 51) was a florist along with their boarder Mary Tigner (age 31).

It was July 6, 1967 when Milo Sr. died at age 79. He was buried at Magnolia Park Cemetery in Dayton with funeral services facilitated by Sterling Funeral Home.

His home address given on the death certificate was 1007 South Winfree in Dayton – a short distance north of the intersection to the street Ford Avenue.



His obituary affirmed that he was a retired rancher who had lived in Dayton for 60 years and was a member of Dayton’s First Methodist Church as well as the Dayton Masonic Lodge #825 in which he had held various positions and honors.

Milo Westel Ford Jr. (1918-2014)

The 3rd in the Westel Ford lineage was Milo Westel Ford Jr. – the eldest son of Milo Westel Ford Sr.

According to his birth certificate, Milo Jr. was born 26 May 1918 to Dayton residents Milo Westel Ford Sr. (farmer and ranchman born in Iowa) and Ella Fay King (a school teacher born in Lincoln, North Carolina).

A 1936 graduate of Dayton High School, he started working at Dayton State Bank during his freshman year of high school (1932) as the janitor and part-time help. He retired as bank President in 1987 after 55 years but continued to serve on the Board of Directors.

Pruett-Ford Home – 1007 S. Winfree St.

This house was built circa 1900 by Edmund Day Pruett Jr. who engaged in the cattle business with his father by the same name. Sources disagree whether Edmund built the house, originally a yellow and red wood-frame for his wife or for his only daughter Lily. He sold the home in 1924 to Milo Westel Ford Sr. and wife Ella for \$7,500. It included the surrounding 99 acres and was already furnished with antiques. Milo raised cattle there while Ella raised their 4 children – M.W. Jr., Allene, George David and Boonie.

Westel Ford Legacy

Milo Westel Ford Jr. (continued)

By the April 1940 census, Milo Jr. was age 22 and had completed his 3rd year of college at Rice University.

In October 1940, Milo Jr. registered for the World War II draft. He stated that he was age 22 and employed by Dayton State Bank.

As affirmed by his headstone, Milo Jr. was a Captain in the U.S. Army Air Force during World War II.

A Rice University Fondren Library webpage about Milo Ford Jr. states:

“About Milo W. Ford, Jr. – he started at the Rice Institute in 1936 and graduated with a BA in 1940. After returning to his hometown of Dayton, TX, he eventually became President of the Dayton State Bank and retired in 1987. Ford passed away rather recently on October 24, 2014 at the age of 96. During his time at Rice, he worked at the Museum of Fine Arts.”

<https://woodsononline.wordpress.com/tag/milo-westel-ford-jr/>

It also includes a link to the following: Dayton Historical Society to host open house, art show

“In conjunction with the open house, the Society will host an Art Show at The Old School Museum, featuring 41 paintings by M.W. and Dorothy Russell Ford.

A lifelong resident of Dayton, M.W. Ford Jr. began his love of art as a student at Rice University.

To help with college expenses, he worked at the Houston Museum

of Fine Arts where he studied paintings as he worked.

After serving in the Air Force during World War II, Ford contracted tuberculosis and spent three years in the Veteran’s Hospital at Kerrville, Texas.

While there, he began painting to help pass the time. This hobby developed over the years into a passion which he honed to great result. These and many others will be featured in the show.

Dr. Jessica Ford-Johnson, superintendent of Dayton ISD, will talk about her parents love of art and painting during opening remarks at 10 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 18. (2014)”

M.W. Jr.’s list of awards, memberships and accomplishments is lengthy. His musical talents facilitated his service as Dayton’s First United Methodist Church organist/pianist for 70 years.

His life of community service ranged from mayor of Dayton to participation in various boards and organizations including Dayton’s Rotary Club which was founded by his father Ford Sr. and uncle Ray Ford on March 4, 1926 along with a Who’s Who of Dayton business leaders with surnames of Jamison, Neal, Tadlock, McGinty, Sterling, Moreau, ...



Milo Westel (M.W.) Ford Jr.
Rice University Senior Year Photo (1918-2014)