

# On The Vine

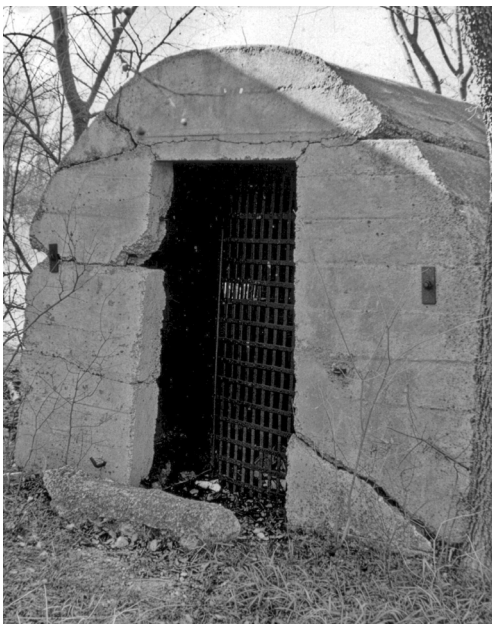
## GRAPEVINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

V29#1 • DEDICATED TO PRESERVING GRAPEVINE AND TEXAS HISTORY • JANUARY 2026

### ONCE A HOLDING CELL, IT NOW TRAPS TOURISTS

## *Grapevine's Concrete Calaboose*

Not a day goes by that visitors to Grapevine don't stop to marvel at our calaboose - the tiny concrete jail that stands at the corner of Franklin and Main Streets. After all, it's the only one left in Tarrant county - a 117-year-old survivor from an earlier, rougher-edged age of Texas law enforcement.



*The town calaboose photographed about 1967 in its original location on Barton Street south of the water tower.*

Grapevine never had a wild and woolly reputation, but there are always drunks, burglars, miscreants, transients, and people who just need to be locked up for a little while. The town evidently required a jail by the mid-1880s. The April 25, 1884, issue of the *Grapevine Telephone* newspaper noted "the stone of which the ornamental part of the new jail is being made is said to be too

soft. It looks well but will soon crumble." In fact, it's not clear how long it did last, as no further references to a town jail have been found.

After Grapevine was formally incorporated in 1907, the Mayor and Town Council were faced with the kinds of infrastructure and management issues that all municipalities face. There were salaries to be paid, contracts to be let, decisions with implications for the citizens. Monthly Town Council meetings tackled the issues, their results written out in terse long-hand by the council secretary.

Among those issues was, inevitably, crime. In April 1909 the *Sun* reported that "several robberies have occurred of late in our little city and it seems to us that it would be a good plan for the business men of Grapevine to employ a night watchman and see if the robbing could not be stopped or the robbers apprehended." Some sort of jail would also be needed. The city was paying the Town Marshall good money to haul bad guys off to Tarrant County, like the \$1.40 they had to reimburse the him for taking a man to jail after a holdup at the train depot in January 1908.

In their May 18 Council meeting, Mayor W. R. Cook "appointed a committee to investigate the cost and location of a Calaboose."

A. M. Dye, H. R. Wall, & J. T. Lucas

-- Continued next page

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

## *Happy New Year!*

I was not sad to see 2025 go. It was a tough year in many ways, but the thought of a "fresh start" and a new year is always encouraging and inspiring!

I hope each of you got to experience and be thrilled by the wonderful Christmas display in Grapevine this past December. The Christmas Capital of Christmas grows every year and is such an exciting experience for thousands of citizens and visitors alike!

I am so proud of what our little city has accomplished and how we've made it to the "big stage" in social media, TV and print! Being recognized as one of the top Christmas cities in the country is truly something to be proud of.

If you haven't visited our Historical Society Museum lately, you need to stop by soon! While we host visitors from all over the country and the world who want to learn about Grapevine, there is a lot to offer to our own citizens as well. We have a "traveling" exhibit in the museum that I think is of particular interest to our locals. It changes frequently, so come by when you can and see what we have to offer and learn more about the city you live in and love.

This year we will celebrate several milestones in our fair city. February 28 we will partner with the *Shield Foundation* in Grapevine to host a *Texas Independence Day Celebration*. The Shield Foundation raises funds

-- Continued next page



*Duff O'Dell  
GHS President*

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

## *An Outdoor Calaboose and an Indoor Holding Cell*

made up the committee. At the same meeting, the Council finished organizing the town fire department, and awarded J. E. Foust the franchise for local telephone services, intended to run 25 years.

Longtime Grapevine resident David M. O’Neill came through with a bid to build the calaboose. It was just enough to secure one or two prisoners for a night -- 8 x 10 feet and 8 foot high, with 8-inch-thick concrete walls. Two metal slatted windows and a door provided ventilation. Total price for the project: \$90.60. It was approved at June’s Council meeting... as was a motion to buy the Town Marshall a pair of handcuffs.

A spot on Barton Street behind the west side of Main Street was selected. It faced the rear of what is now Chez Fabien. D. M. O’Neill set to work. It was a straightforward job which must have been nearly finished by the July Council meeting, because they agreed to pay O’Neill \$75 of his fee. At the August 27, 1909, meeting they paid the remaining \$15.60, and the calaboose started taking on miscreants. (According to a brief 1966 *Grapevine Sun* mention, the calaboose also saw its first escape that same year.)

Grapevine’s calaboose (from an 18th century Spanish word “*calabozo*,” meaning jail or dungeon) was only intended as a brief holding pen. Open to the elements, with no lighting or plumbing, it would have been an unpleasant stay at the best of times. The concrete structure occasionally needed maintenance. In 1936, Mayor B. R. Wall took a *Sun* columnist on a tour. “He next took us to the City Jail, a small concrete structure just south of the canning plant, and told us that work had just been completed on it, making it more substantial that it might hold “transient offenders.” Whether it was through pride for our city, or “cold facts,” he impressed on us that our jail has not been used for local people as all of our offenders have been outsiders.”

In fact, by 1936 the City had added an indoor jail. In 1933 a Council committee made up of A. W. Willhoite, C. M. Millican, and D. E. Austin was tasked to find a space for an indoor prison cell. In January 1934, it was agreed that the City place a jail inside the C. T. Winfrey buildings across the street from the

Post Office. Which building would be used would be determined by Mr. Willhoite. He would receive a 33% discount on his building tax for each year the cell was used.

Mayor William D. Tate recalls that the jail “when I was a kid was in the back of City Hall where the fire equipment was stored. It was made out of two inch flat metal straps that formed a cage about 10’ and 14’. It was probably bolted together so it could be moved.” Similar strap-iron cages were common in small towns across Texas.

Once the indoor cell was available, the need for an outdoor jail diminished over time. The *Sun* in 1966 stated that the calaboose hadn’t been used since the mid 1940s. It was certainly outmoded when Grapevine got a proper police force in 1956.

The old concrete structure sat undisturbed and unloved among a stand of trees until 1975. Then, as part of a fervor of Bicentennial-inspired historical projects, the Grapevine Heritage Committee and the Grapevine Historical Society agreed to relocate the calaboose and set it up in Heritage Park, joining the old train depot which had recently been moved there to be come the city’s Historical Museum.

The calaboose remained in the park for the next two decades. In 1994, the Cotton Belt Depot was moved back to its original location next to the railroad tracks, and, using funds from GrapeFest, a new home was found for the calaboose -- the present location by Wilhoite’s Restaurant. Today, the only “transients” found at the calaboose are tourists seeking a unique photo opportunity.

--Larry Groebe



Seen in this 1975 *Grapevine Sun* photo, the calaboose was disassembled and moved next to the old train depot.

to support police or fire department personnel who have been injured on the job or lost their life in the line of duty. They also offer scholarships to children of police and fire department members. It will be open to the public and promises to be a fun, family event from 10am-10pm. There will be music, food, entertainment and a special presentation at noon by the Historical Society

celebrating the 190th anniversary of Texas independence, the 250th anniversary of our country and the 50th anniversary of public service by our Mayor, William D. Tate! It promises to be a full, fun day you won’t want to miss!

We have our first monthly membership meeting of the Grapevine Historical Society

on Monday, January 26, at 7 PM at The Vine on Worth Street. We have some great programs lined up for 2026 and I hope you’ll join us as we continue to preserve and protect the history and culture of Grapevine. I wish you all a very happy and prosperous New Year, and hope to see you soon at one of our meetings or events!

Duff O’Dell, Grapevine Historical Society

AMERICA 250

## Revolutionary War Soldiers are buried in North Texas

More than 230,000 soldiers served in the Continental Army during the American Revolution (although no more than 48,000 served at any one time). The largest number of troops gathered in a single place for battle was 13,000. Consider these numbers, and then consider the fact that there are 42 men who served during the American Revolution buried in Texas. The book “*American Revolutionary War Soldiers Buried in Texas*,” written by Clovis H. Brakebill and published in 1988 by the Texas Society Sons of the American Revolution, documents their stories and burial sites.

The graves of these 42 men are found in 26 Texas counties, including Dallas and Collin Counties. None are in Tarrant County. It’s actually quite amazing that there are 42 burials here when you consider the date of the Revolutionary War and their ages when settlers came to Texas. In 1840, a man’s average life expectancy was 40 to 50 years. Here are two of their stories:

### BURIED 39 MILES FROM GRAPEVINE NEAR LANCASTER, TX

**James Lemmon**, son of Robert Lemmon, was born near Hagerstown, Maryland, in 1765. In 1777 when he was 12 years old, he served as a messenger boy for George Washington because it was safer for boys to carry messages than men. He carried messages from George Washington’s camp to the camp of his father, Captain Robert Lemmon. He lived in Valley Forge and affectionately called George Washington “Uncle George.” Towards the end of the war, James entered the Continental Army as a private and served until the end of the war.

In 1800 James Lemmon married Sarah Carr and lived in Bowling

Green, KY, until her death in 1815. He then moved his family to Indiana where he married Amy Rawlins. About 1834, they were lured by free land to Illinois and settled in Green County near the Roderick Rawlins family.



The headstone of James Lemmon in Lancaster Cemetery

In 1844, Roderick Rawlins moved his entire family from Illinois to Texas and settled on a Peter’s Colony land grant located in the southern part of Dallas County. To help with the move, Roderick Rawlins brought along two neighbor boys, Robert Allen Lemmon (son of James Lemmon) and Carlos Wise. The two boys were so delighted with Texas that they selected two 640-acre tracts of land for their own families and walked back to Illinois to get their parents, which they did in August 1845.

On July 4, 1848, James Lemmon, 81 years old, died at his new home three miles below Lancaster on the Dallas-Ellis County line. He was buried in the Edgewood Cemetery, Lancaster, Texas, near the spot where the Rawlins caravan camped the night it arrived in the Peter’s Colony in 1844.

### BURIED 46 MILES FROM GRAPEVINE NEAR LAVON, TX

**John Abston**, born in Virginia in 1761, volunteered for Revolutionary War service in 1779 when he was 18 years old. He was in the Battle of Kings Mountain in South Carolina between the Loyalists and the Patriots which was a turning point leading to the defeat of General Charles Cornwallis.

After the war, John Abston raised a family and moved westward as the young United States expanded. By the 1830s, Abston had settled in Missouri. In 1853, at the incredible age of 92, he converted his bank notes to gold bars and made the long journey to Collin County, Texas, with the family of his son, Jesse. Jesse became ill with fever and died that same year near Melissa, TX. The Abston family moved on farther south in Collin County to the Lavon community. In 1854, John and Jesse’s widow, Sarah, purchased land in the area that is today near Lake Lavon.

A small portion of that land became the Abston family cemetery, with John’s burial in 1856 marking the first grave in the cemetery. It stands as a quiet reminder of a man who fought for America’s independence and carried his pioneering spirit all the way to Texas.

-- Continued on next page



IN 1959, GRAPEVINE WAS INTRODUCED TO THE “SUPER” MARKET

*Big Razz, the Mad Butcher, Buddies, and other grocery people*

Return with us now to those thrilling days of yesterday, when eggs were 39 cents a dozen, a T-bone steak was 69 cents per pound, and a can of dog food just a nickel. Return with us to December 1959, when a big new grocery store - a *supermarket*, in fact - opened for business on the south end of Grapevine Main Street.

Grapevine already had several venerable markets up and down Main when Mr. L. L. Raspberry decided to build a SUPER market at the intersection of Main and College Streets, just south of the Foust funeral home. Raspberry, a stocky Louisiana-born gentleman, had been in the grocery business since the 1920s. In the 1950s, partnering with L. L. Cannon, he'd started a small Fort Worth grocery chain called *Berry's*. In 1956 they sold that chain to a growing competitor, *Buddies*.

Now the time seemed right to try again with an expansive new modern self-service store. Raspberry built a 30,000 square foot metal structure, a full 100 feet long with a whole parking lot in front of it. It must have felt big-time to the folks on Main Street. It might have been a little threatening to Main's small established groceries.

And it would have been a source of conversation indeed when the newspaper announced the grand opening of “*Big Razz and the Mad Butcher*” -- the very unique name Mr. Raspberry had selected -- on Thursday December 17, 1959. It was not a name you would easily forget.

“Big Razz” made a big splash. The Light Crust Doughboys played a concert in the parking lot that first Saturday afternoon. There were full-page advertisements, games and drawings for cash prizes, turkeys, hams

--Continued on next page

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

*The Revolutionary War Connection to a Grapevine Cemetery*

Close to Grapevine's heart is Isaac Green Parker, grandson of Elder John Parker, the founder of Fort Parker near Mexia in Limestone County, whom we have mentioned in previous issues of On the Vine. Elder John Parker served in and survived the American Revolutionary War; he was killed and scalped by Comanche warriors at Fort Parker on May 19, 1836. In that raid, Cynthia Ann Parker was taken captive and Elder John Parker's son, Benjamin, was killed.

Benjamin's son, Isaac Green Parker, survived the raid. Isaac married Polly Driskill and in the early 1850s they settled a few miles south of Grapevine on Big Bear Creek.

Parker Cemetery at Hwy. 121 and Hall Johnson Road is named in honor of Isaac Parker...the *grandson* of a Revolutionary War soldier.

-- Sallie Andrews, with special thanks to Jane Doclar and the Captain Molly Corbin Chapter of the NSDAR for pointing me in the right direction!

THE GRAPEVINE SUN, GRAPEVINE, TEXAS, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1959

# GRAND OPENING!

**FREE! FREE! FREE! FREE!**  
 Register Every Day thru December 24  
 1st Prize \$50 - 2nd Prize \$25 - 3rd Prize \$15 - 4th Prize \$10  
**\$100 FREE - Cash for Christmas**

**BIG RAZZ and the Mad Butcher Invites You To COME SEE - COME SAVE**  
 Play Bust the Balloon for Extra Prizes  
 613 Main in Grapevine

Specials for Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Dec. 17-19

<b>Sugar</b> pure cane	10 lb	79¢
Folger's or White Swan <b>Coffee</b>	2 one lb cans	1 <sup>09</sup>
<b>Peaches</b> Cal Top No. 2 1/2 can		19¢
<b>Northern Tissue</b> reg roll		5¢
<b>Baby Food</b> Gerber's reg 4 1/2 oz		5¢
<b>Dog Food</b> Big Mike reg can		5¢
<b>Pork &amp; Beans</b> White Swan reg 300 size		10¢
<b>Eggs</b> large white grade A	49¢	med. white grade A 39¢
<b>BOSWELL'S Family Pak Ice Cream</b> 1/2 gal		55¢
<b>FREE</b> One Ham or Turkey each day until Christmas! Just come register each day - Eat on us Christmas!		
<b>Register for Free Gifts To Be Given Away till Christmas DAILY</b>		

<b>Quality Meats</b>		
<b>SPECIAL - Coffee &amp; Ham Sandwich 10¢</b>		
<b>Bacon</b> Marrells Palace	lb	27¢
<b>Sausage</b> Marrells Pure Pork	lb	25¢
<b>Bacon</b> Slab by the piece	lb	29¢
<b>Hams</b> Armour Star 1/2 or whole	lb	45¢
<b>Steak</b> Heavy Beef T-Bone, Round or Loin	lb	69¢
<b>Beef</b> Fresh Ground	3 lb	1 <sup>00</sup>
<b>Pork Roast</b> Boston butt cut	lb	29¢
<b>FARM FRESH PRODUCE</b>		
<b>Avocados</b> ea		5¢
<b>Potatoes</b> Russet	lb	5¢
<b>ONIONS</b> Yellow Globe	lb	5¢
<b>Bananas</b>	lb	9¢
<b>Lettuce</b> large head		9¢
<b>Paper Shell Pecans</b>	lb	39¢

December 17, 1959: this full page advertisement on the back page of The Grapevine Sun signaled the beginning of a new era in grocery shopping in little Grapevine.

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

## Grapevine's Original Supermarket

and more, and giveaways through Christmas. With "Big Razz," L. L. Raspberry had introduced the first supermarket to Grapevine.



L. L. Raspberry (left) and L. L. Cannon pictured in 1952 studying produce in one of their Berry's grocery stores.

"Big Razz and the Mad Butcher" may have had a healthy holiday shopping season, but it seems to have run into trouble not long into the new decade. First, the store was broken into in late January. Thieves smashed the front door, pulled out the safe, and got away with over \$400 dollars. Next, the store's large advertisements stopped appearing in *The Grapevine Sun* in late May. It's not clear when "Big Razz" left the grocery business for good, but by Christmas 1961, his new building had been reborn -- as a Buddies supermarket.

Buddies was a well-loved grocery chain that had grown from a single Fort Worth general store ("Buddies Day & Night Grocery" at 3220 North Main) in 1937. Burrell Lee "Buddie" Markum sold the business in 1957, but the chain that bore his name kept

adding stores and buying out smaller chains, and soon represented a large percentage of the area grocery business. Ads for Buddies first appeared in December 1961, selling T-bone steaks for 95 cents/lb, and large eggs for 49 cents/dozen.

Under the Buddies name, the supermarket on South Main thrived for the next 15+ years. It is still fondly remembered by long-time residents. Many high school students worked their first jobs there.

In the late 1960s the last small grocers on Main Street, stores long run by the Tates and the Fousts, closed; unable to compete with the buying power and selection offered by the chains. Then in 1976, the Buddie's chain was itself purchased by the Winn-Dixie grocery group. The Grapevine Buddies was rebranded as Winn-Dixie. It operated under that name for the next twenty-three years, serving another generation of Grapevine residents.

Just before the millennium, Winn-Dixie decided to shutter the old Main Street location and build a much bigger Winn-Dixie Marketplace several miles west, out on Highway 121 at Glade Road. The new store was more than twice again as large as the Main Street location. Suddenly, in April 1999, Grapevine's Main Street was without a grocery store for the first time in well over a century. Winn-Dixie's timing might have been better, as within three more years they exited the Texas grocery business entirely, and two years after that, filed for bankruptcy.



By 1970, when this Homecoming Parade photograph was taken, Buddies was a well-established presence on Main Street, supporting a full hardware section.

The building that was home to Big Razz, the Mad Butcher, Buddies, and Winn-Dixie for forty years was torn down to create the Westwood Business Center.

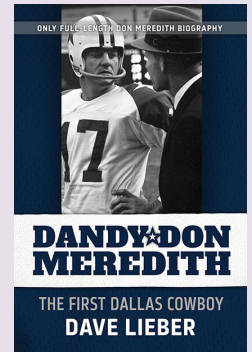
That complex is now anchored by Weinberger's Deli. At least food is still involved.

--Larry Groebe

### January 26 GHS Meeting

## Dandy Don Meredith

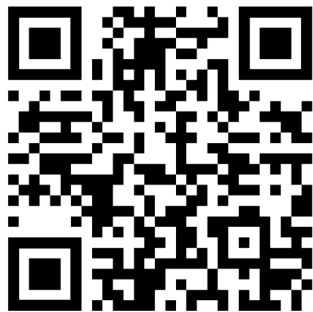
with Dave Lieber



Author Dave Lieber always tells an entertaining story. Past visits have focused on Amon Carter and Ross Perot. This month he returns with his latest book, the first-ever biography of Cowboys quarterback Don Meredith -- who found even more fame in the announcer's booth on "Monday Night Football."

**THE VINE ARTS CENTER**  
**225 W. WORTH**  
**6:30 PM REFRESHMENTS**  
**FREE EVENT**

*Time to renew your Grapevine Historical Society membership!*



Each year in January, annual memberships in the Grapevine Historical Society need to be renewed. If you haven't done so already, please take just a few minutes to renew (or begin) your 2025 membership now. Visit our website <https://grapevinehistory.org/join> or scan the QR Code. Alternatively, mail in this page along with a check or credit card information.

Grapevine, as the oldest ongoing community in Tarrant County, has over 180 years of history to uncover. Though just a small farm town for much of its life, as this issue of "On The Vine" illustrates, Grapevine has had more than its share of fascinating stories. And the Grapevine Historical Society is a primary resource for sharing them.

Your membership enables us to produce this monthly newsletter and host monthly meetings with a variety of fascinating speakers. The Society staffs the Historical Museum, maintains the Torian Cabin museum, and acquires historical artifacts for the collections. We've recorded oral histories, helped digitize crumbling old documents, and quite literally written the book(s) on the town's history. We host special tours, annual Texas Independence Day celebrations, and more.

Five decades after the Society was created as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, we continue researching, documenting, and sharing the histories of our community... and add little history of our own. We invite your participation - as a volunteer, but especially as a Society Member. The City of Grapevine has a rich legacy to share, and if you feel the least bit interested in - or connected to - our past, help us to preserve and celebrate that past, as we face whatever changes the future may bring. *Please renew or join today!*



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's name (if family membership): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization/Business: \_\_\_\_\_

- Individual \$20
- Family \$30
- Business/Organization \$50
- Historian \$100
- Pioneer \$250
- Settler \$500
- Guardian \$1000
- Additional Donation \$\_\_\_\_\_
- Memorial Donation \$\_\_\_\_\_ in memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_ CVV: \_\_\_\_\_

**The Grapevine Historical Society • P. O. Box 995 / Grapevine, Texas 76099-0995 • grapevinehistory.org**

Duff O'Dell, President • Larry Groebe, Communications Chair • updates@grapevinehistory.org

A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization supported by tax-deductible memberships and contributions. Become a member!

**Join The GHS' Facebook Group - search for "Grapevine Historical Society" and read all about it!**