

On The Vine

GRAPEVINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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ONE LAST NAME, SHARED BY TWO IMPORTANT FAMILIES

The Walls of Grapevine

Grapevine history is full of stories about the Wall family. Or, rather, the Wall *families* - because there are **two** distinct Wall families who are bedrocks of the Grapevine community.

One family was originally from Georgia; the other from Alabama. Both families came to Grapevine in 1872, 154 years ago. Most lovers of Grapevine history will recognize their descendants, extended family members, and the contributions they made to city and county government; building businesses and roads; serving in the military; and more. But there is confusion about who was whom. So, meet the Walls of Grapevine!

WALL FAMILY #1

Andrew Berry Wall (1833-1883) and his wife **Harriet Martin Wall** (1837-1880), were both from Georgia. They had pioneer spirit in their blood. About 1856, they moved to Bentonville, Arkansas, where their first seven children were born. During these years, Andrew Berry also served in the Civil War. They moved to Texas in 1872 and purchased a small tract of land six miles west of Grapevine in the Pleasant Run community. A second tract of adjoining land near Big Bear Creek was purchased

from Reverend Elihu Newton. There, on their homestead, four more children were born. Sadly, Harriet and an infant son died on December 20, 1880. Harriet was 43 years old and had given birth to eleven children. Harriet and the baby were buried at White's Chapel Cemetery.

Andrew was a blacksmith, farmer, and member of the Grapevine Masonic Lodge. The family were Baptists and worshiped in Pleasant Run. In 1875 their 14-year-old son Charlie, who had a wandering and wayward disposition, took off to see the world. He became a cowboy, scout, miner, and a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. He went to California, Bolivia, Argentina, Siberia, and Alaska in his travels.

Andrew Berry Wall died in 1883, just three years after Harriet. With both parents gone, eldest son

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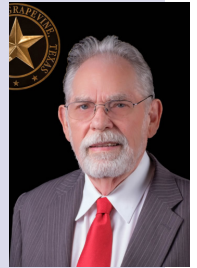


Some of the children of Andrew and Harriet Wall about 1920. Seated: Sarah Willhoite, Mary Dunn, Mattie Hoffman. Standing: Henry, Charles, Sandy, and Drew Wall

MUSINGS FROM THE MAYOR

The Stumble Inn

The Stumble Inn was located at what used to be called Webb City, on the northwest corner of what is now Texan Trail and Dallas Road, surrounded by cotton fields. It



was nicely situated on the route of farmers coming from their farms to town to buy supplies. It was a white plank building with neon signs in the windows. The filling station and grocery store called Mac's Corner occupies the space now.

The Stumble Inn was open 24 hours a day, and was a café and dance hall in the 1920s and 30s. It was operated at one time by Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Bailey.

Being outside the Grapevine city limits, it was not subject to local control and police authority. Of course there were no police in Grapevine at that time anyway, just a nightwatchman. Several of the men that served as nightwatchmen didn't even drive a car. They were foot patrols.

Despite Prohibition, the Stumble Inn probably served various alcoholic beverages from time to time, bootlegged from the Circle in Dallas, plus corn whiskey produced by area farmers. Local bands and artist played there on Friday and Saturday nights. You could get a good home-cooked meal there anytime, including fried cabbage

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The Walls of Grapevine

Henry R. Wall (born 1857, then age 26), was appointed the guardian of the four little children left at home. They were Mattie, Sandy, Emma and Drew. These children went to live with Henry and his wife, Lou, on the family farm. When Drew was 18 (in 1892), Henry and Lou moved into Grapevine, and Drew remained on the family farm with another family who rented it. It does not seem to have been a happy time for Drew. On his 21st birthday, he moved into Grapevine, too, while his brother Charlie returned. Drew and, Henry and Charlie bought the Grapevine Livery Stable. Drew and Charlie slept in the barn and had their living quarters there.

In the fall of 1896, Drew bought Charlie's interest in the livery business and Charlie – then 35

years old – married a 29-year-old local girl, Mary Coble. Their daughters were Martha Cluck – a Grapevine historian to whom we owe much for all her history work – and Ruth Wall, who has Ruth Wall Street near the Gaylord Texan named in her honor.

Another of Andrew and Harriet's daughters was Sarah Matilda Wall. After high school, Sarah married her teacher, Joseph Gillis Willhoite, who had come here from Tennessee to teach school. (His school bell is in the Donald Schoolhouse museum.)

In 1897, Drew married Ida Starr, daughter of Bart and Emma Starr. Bart would become Grapevine's



Drew Wall, Grapevine's tenth Mayor

first Mayor in 1907. Drew was elected Grapevine's tenth Mayor, taking office in 1923. Drew was active with a water works business and bought and sold cattle.

Henry and Sandy grew up to be Tarrant County Commissioners. Sandy

laid the groundwork for the network of highways Grapevine enjoys today. The Andrew Berry Wall family connects with Lipscomb, Cluck, Starr, Winfrey, Willhoite and many other important Grapevine families. Jean Bartley, a City of Grapevine retiree, and Janet Willhoite Dickey are descendants of the Andrew Berry Wall family.

Next month: the Benjamin Walls

--Sallie Andrews

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The Stumble Inn served all visitors

or corn, or a breakfast with sugar-cured meat, eggs, and hot biscuits.

Cotton Thompson was a regular Stumble Inn customer and a good conversationalist; a veteran who would later fight in WWII and receive the Purple Heart. For those who don't remember him, he was one of our town characters who picked up our trash from residences under contract with the City of Grapevine. He talked about seeing Bonnie and Clyde at the Inn often, and recalled dancing with Bonnie who was very young. Cotton himself was a good dancer and probably had no problem dancing with any of the ladies. He said when the law officers were hot on Bonnie and Clyde's trail, that they no longer came inside the Stumble Inn. Instead, they parked their car outside and visited with friends they knew. They would back their car up to the building so they had a good view of the movement around them and could make a quick getaway if necessary. There were never any incidents involving them there -- but occasionally farm boys would get in a disagreement and settle it outside, surrounded by a ring of patrons rooting them on.

Bonnie's parents lived on the Roanoke Road, and Bonnie visited Grapevine and her family as often as they could. On Easter Sunday 1932, Bonnie and Clyde were waiting on a dirt side road off Highway 114 for her mother, bringing her a gift of a bunny rabbit, when two Texas Highway Patrolmen came upon the pair and were murdered by the outlaws.

-- William D. Tate, Mayor of Grapevine



This matchbook cover, over 90 years old, is a rare surviving artifact from the Stumble Inn

PLANS WERE BEGUN IN THE 1960S

Grapevine Gets Going on Golf

On the surface, a golf course seems like a simple thing: smooth out some land, plant some grass, dig a few holes, invite people to tee off. But the path to the creation of the Grapevine's Municipal Golf Course was anything but a straight shot. It took 15 years and navigating a tricky water hazard before the facility could open.

When the modern version of golf was transplanted from Scotland to America in the late 1880s, it became popular in a remarkably short time. As early as 1894, the *Fort Worth Gazette* noted that "Fencing and golfing are the coming 'Fevers.'" Dallas, Austin, San Antonio, and Galveston all had courses in operation before 1900. But a golf course on the Grape Vine Prairie? Local folks were too isolated and too busy farming to have time for such frivolity. *The Grapevine Sun's* first mention of the sport was a line in 1898 acknowledging that "Golf red now has a place in the bicycle suit," implying the distinctive color made speeding cyclists easier to spot.

North Texas cities began building municipally-owned golf courses, open to all, during the early decades of the 20th century. Local golf nuts had to drive to Lewisville, Denton, Irving, Dallas, or Fort Worth to play. During the late 1950s and early '60s, the only golfing in Grapevine was *miniature* golfing -- on a course located at Northwest Highway and Scribner Road, across the street from where Cafe Italia now sits.

After the Army Corps of Engineers created Grapevine Lake in the 1950s, the first hints that this area could become a leisure destination began to surface. Although primarily intended as a water source for the City of Dallas, the Army-owned lake and its adjacent land promised new recreational opportunities. In 1965 the Grapevine Chamber of Commerce started exploring amenities that would draw people to town. One

possibility was a municipally-owned and operated golf course. Clyde Stimson, manager of the Austin Patio Dude Ranch, led a team which examined aerial photos, picking out promising acreage just downstream of the dam. The key would be getting the Army Corps of Engineers to lease the land to the City. Fourteen months on, Chamber members were still working on that. In December 1966, *The Grapevine Sun* optimistically relayed the news that "A recreation club and golf course (has) moved from a dream to a reality."

That optimism was premature. Golf courses were nowhere on the Army Corps' priorities for the Lake. Even today the Corps' official vision for Grapevine Dam and Lake is as "*a multi-purpose project used for flood control, water supply, navigation, sediment reserve, fish and wildlife, and recreation.*" Note that recreation is last on the list. An Army Corps Grapevine Lake Master Plan was published in 1971. The meticulously-illustrated 152-page report acknowledged camping spaces, picnic spots, and boat slips, but the word "golf" appeared not even once.

Nevertheless, the city kept working on the concept. In 1971 Grapevine Mayor Willis Pirkle announced that a partner company - Hunt Investment Company of Dallas - had been enlisted to build and manage a course...if only the Army would agree to lease some land to the city.

Three years later, only small progress had been made in the three-way dance between the city, the Hunts, and the Corps of Engineers. Half a million people now lived within a 20 mile radius of the proposed course - more than enough to make a success of golfing.



Golf legend Byron Nelson cuts the ribbon on opening day in 1979. Mayor Tate is at his left.

The DFW airport was about to open, which to be followed by new hotels and more visitors. Hunt could flesh out a plan for a 27-hole course (maybe even 36 holes!) and the City could then hold a bond election to raise money --

-- if only the Army would lease the land. In the fall of 1974 a 25-year lease application was drafted. But the Corps still said no. Phil Parker, then a city councilman, recalls "we talked to the Colonel at the Corps over in the Fort Worth office on several occasions, and they just flat refused to give us the land to build a golf course home." Without Army approval, the contract with the Hunt company expired in April 1975.

External pressure needed to be applied. As Parker remembers it now, in 1976 "I had the opportunity to go to Washington DC. A client of mine...was speaking to several people there about some situations he wanted to talk to. One of them happened to be Jim Wright, the speaker of the House of Representatives. When I met Mr. Wright, he knew who I was, being on the council, and also he said, 'I knew your dad real well.' (My dad had served on the council and was Mayor pro-tem back in the '50s.) I told him about our concerns of how we would love to have a golf course out

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The long drive to create our Municipal Golf Course

there, and how we had just been told we couldn't have that land."

"About two weeks after that trip, I got a call from (city manager) Floyd Ezell. He said, 'Guess who's in my office? The colonel from the Corps just dropped by and said, 'Y'all still want that land?'"

At last the big water hazard had been cleared. Grapevine could finally lease the land from the Army. A new bond package was developed and sent to the voters, who agreed by a vote of 174 to 144 to spend \$750 thousand dollars for a golf course. In January 1977, the City Council unanimously approved initial plans for the course which had been drafted by Joseph Finger and Associates, a golf club architectural firm from Houston.

Even while under construction, there were further challenges. Grapevine wanted to offer local residents a discount

for using the course, but the Corps of Engineers noted that this would violate federal regulations concerning use of federal lands. The discount went by the wayside and initial pricing was set at \$175 for 50 rounds — \$3.50 per round. (Today, in contrast, rates vary from \$27 for nine holes to \$78 for a full 18 with a golf cart.)

On April 3rd 1979, the big day was at last at hand. Forty-seven years ago this month, the Grapevine Municipal Golf Course opened with its initial 18 holes. Legendary golfer Byron Nelson, a Waxahachie native who had advised on Grapevine's design, cut the ribbon, then drove the first ball off the first tee with Mayor Tate and other dignitaries in attendance.

Other courses soon followed. The next year, the 18-hole Bear Creek Golf course by

the airport became our second course, and in 1992 plans were initiated for a third, the "Cowboys Golf Course" on additional Army-leased land. In 2000, work was begun on adding nine additional holes to the Municipal Golf Course. And when the Army Corps of Engineers updated its Master Plan for Grapevine Lake in 2001, golf was now acknowledged among the basic recreational functions.

In the 47 years since, the Grapevine Municipal Golf Course has undergone a series of updates to fresh attract visitors to what Phil Parker calls "one of the finest municipal golf course in the whole area."

And should you tire of playing there, there are now over 60 other courses within a 15 radius of Grapevine.

--Larry Groebe


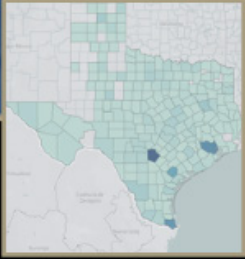
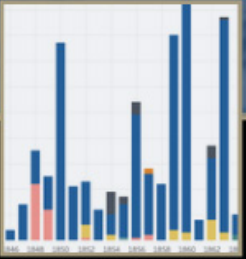



Monday, April 27

TEXAS IN TURMOIL

Mapping Interethnic Violence, 1821-79

Dr. Sam W. Haynes, Director
Center for Greater Southwestern Studies, UT Arlington



The Vine

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