
Guide to the

MARGE PARRISH IRVING HERITAGE SOCIETY COLLECTION 1964-1991

8 linear inches

Accession Numbers: 0203-162 and 0304-205

Collection Number: 71

Prepared by Kevin Kendro

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CITATION: The Marge Parrish Irving Heritage Society Collection, Collection 71, Box number, Folder number, Irving Archives, Irving Public Library.

Biographical Sketch

Marjorie (Marge) Darden Parrish was born in New Orleans, Louisiana, on November 21, 1923. She graduated from Eleanor McMain Secondary School and received her BA from Southwestern Louisiana Institute. She was a graduate of Pan American Airways' (Pan Am) second class of flight attendants.

In 1952, she married Morris Parrish. The couple lived in Houston and then Nacogdoches, Texas, where Morris Parrish served as a hospital administrator. They moved to Irving in 1973 when Parrish took a job as Hospital Administrator at Irving Community Hospital (today Baylor Medical Center – Irving). The couple had two children. Mr. Parrish served two terms on the Irving city council, 1991-1994, and two terms as mayor of Irving, 1995-1999.

In the late 1970s, the Parrishes purchased a house that had been built by Otis Brown, one of Irving's founders. The 1908 structure was in complete disrepair before the Parrishes rescued it and renovated it.

Marge Parrish was a charter member of the Irving Heritage Society and served two terms as its president, 1985-1987. During her terms, the organization undertook the development of Heritage Park and the moving of a historic railroad depot and the Caster Cabin into the park. The research and writing of an Irving history book, *Irving a Texas Odyssey*, by Dr. Joe Rice was also undertaken while Mrs. Parrish was president of the society. In addition, she served on the Irving Committee for the Texas State Sesquicentennial, 1986. The Parrishes were also members of the Downtown Irving Task Force during the late 1980s.

Marge Parrish died June 6, 2009.

Historical Sketch

The U. S. Bicentennial of 1976 sparked the interest of area residents in their local history. From of this interest, the Irving Heritage Society was founded in 1978. One of the tasks of

the society was to manage the Heritage House which had been given to the city to be used as a house museum. In the 1980s, the Heritage Society joined with the City of Irving to create Heritage Park. The society oversaw the placing in the park and renovation of a 19th century railroad depot, a pioneer cabin, a vintage water tank, and a windmill.

During the late 1980s, the Heritage Society sponsored the writing of a book about Irving history. The book, *Irving a Texas Odyssey* by Dr. Joe Rice, was published in 1989.

Other projects undertaken by the Irving Heritage Society through the years include sponsorship of historic home and trails tours, the Bracebridge Dinner, and participation in the Irving Heritage Festival. The society also places markers at points of historical interest throughout the city.

Sources:

The Marge Parrish Irving Heritage Society Collection; Marge Parrish's obituary; and the Irving Heritage Society yearbook, 2000-2001.

Scope and Content

The Marge Parrish Irving Heritage Society Collection, totaling eight linear inches and arranged in five series, is contained in one manuscript box, one half-size manuscript box, and space in Oversize Box 4. This collection provides a good record of the activities of the Irving Heritage Society during the mid-to-late 1980s while Marge Parrish was president of the group.

Series I consists of material relating to the Brown/Parrish house. The house was constructed in 1908 by Irving's co-founder and first mayor Otis Brown. By the late 1970s, the house had fallen into disrepair. The Parrishes purchased it and renovated the original area and added room onto the back of the house. Three of Irving's mayors have lived in this house, Otis Brown, mayor 1914-1917; his son Lynn Brown, mayor 1959-1967; and Morris Parrish, mayor 1995-1999. The material in folder one is related to zoning cases involving the downtown section of O'Connor Road near the subject house. Folder two contains material relating specifically to the Brown/Parrish house such as a history, an abstract, and a landscape blueprint.

Series II, Irving Heritage Society Material, makes up the bulk of the collection. Contained in the series are files relating to the creation of Heritage Park; purchase and renovation of the depot; moving the depot and Caster Cabin to Heritage Park; the publication of the Irving history book, *Irving a Texas Odyssey*; Irving Heritage Society newsletters; a file relating to Irving history; and a file containing correspondence and other documents produced by the Irving Heritage Society during the late 1980s. Of particular note is the contract for purchase of the depot, 1986. The contract is in Oversize Box 4.

Series III contains material relating to the Downtown Irving Task Force. This group was formed to address issues concerning downtown Irving and to promote redevelopment in the area. The Parrishes were members of the organization.

Series IV contains printed material and publications from a wide range of sources including: museum brochures; an Irving Historic Trails Guide, a Swiss Avenue Historical District coloring book, and programs from various history-related events. Included is an order of service from Lynn Brown's funeral, 1990. A placard advertising the dedication of Heritage Park is in Oversize Box 4.

The series also includes photocopies of newspaper articles relating to the activities of the Irving Heritage Society during the mid-and-late 1980s while Marge Parrish was president. There are also a few articles about the Parrishes and their house and Morris Parrish's retirement as director of Irving Community Hospital. The original newspapers were brittle so photocopies were made and the originals disposed of. The newspaper articles are in Oversize Box 4.

Series V is made up of photographs. One series of photos is from a city sponsored U. S. Bicentennial picnic, July 4, 1976. Other events recorded by the photos are the dedication of the depot and Caster Cabin in Heritage Park; the book-signing event for the book *Irving a Texas Odyssey*; the depot in a field before it was moved and renovated; and the caboose before it was moved to Heritage Park.

Note to Researcher

Oversize Box 4 contains a folder of the items from the various series that were too large to fit in the manuscript boxes. This material includes photocopies of newspaper articles, a poster from the dedication of Heritage Park, a sketch of the Heritage House, and other oversize materials which are listed in the container list.

A City of Irving Land Use and Heritage Preservation Plan, June 1985, and a copy of "Grave Markers in Cemeteries In and Near Irving, Texas," were removed from the collection. Copies of both of these publications and can be found in the City of Irving publication collection in the Irving Archives.

Provenance Statement

Accessions 0203-162 and 0304-205, the Marge Parrish Irving Heritage Society Collection, were donated to the Irving Archives on April 18, 2003, and June 4, 2004, respectively. Prior to its donation to the Archives, the material was in the possession of Marge Parrish.

Literary Rights Statement

Permission to publish from the Marge Parrish Irving Heritage Society Collection must be obtained from the Irving Archives, Irving Public Library.

Series I. Parrish/Brown House Material, 1985

Box 1

File

1 Zoning Change Request on O'Connor Road, 1985.

Contains material relating to a zoning change for approval of a home for unwed mothers on O'Connor Road between Second and Sixth Streets. The homeowners wanted to maintain single family zoning, 1985.

2 Parrish/Brown House Material, c. 1985

Contains material relating to the history of the Brown/Parrish house including a site plan; a landscape blueprint; a copy of a plat map of early Irving; and an abstract of title for the property "Lots 1, 2, and 3, Block 2, Brown's First Addition to Town of Irving, 1927."

Series II. Irving Heritage Society Material, bulk 1985-1989

3 Historical Research Material

Contains information on:

Bird's Fort - a research paper on the history of Bird's Fort, 1979;

O'Connor Family – information on John F. and James O'Connor;

also included is information on early Irving; a copy of a deed in which D. E. and Clara Britain sell some land to Otis Brown, 1909; a fact sheet on the history of First United Methodist Church on its 70th anniversary, 1978; information on Pastor B. O. Baker leaving Plymouth Park Baptist Church, 1988; and Netta Brown's History of Early Irving, 1947.

4 Irving Heritage Society Business File, 1985-1989

Contains correspondence, membership lists, notes, certificates, and forms relating to the activities of the Irving Heritage Society.

5 Book – *Irving a Texas Odyssey*, 1987-1989

Contains material relating to the development, publicity, and publication of the book *Irving a Texas Odyssey*. The book was sponsored by the Irving Heritage Society and written by member Dr. Joe Rice. Among the material included is: correspondence with Windsor Publication and the Dallas County Historical Commission, 1987-1989; publicity for the book; a chapter outline; and a speech by author Joe Rice.

6 Heritage Park Development, 1989

Contains material relating to the development of Heritage Park and the depot and cabin in the park.

7 Newsletters, 1980s

Contains the Irving Heritage Society newsletter *The Whistle Stop*, (four issues), from the late 1980s; and *The Medallion*, the newsletter of the Texas Historical Commission, (seven issues), 1989.

8 Bear Creek Heritage Center – Townsell Dinner, 1991

Contains organizing information for a dinner held honoring Jackie Townsell, 1991; and information on the development of the Jackie Townsell Bear Creek Heritage Center.

Series III. Downtown Irving Task Force, late 1980s

9 Downtown Irving Task Force

Contains correspondence, a list of prospective projects, information on the City of Plano's downtown redevelopment, membership lists, and zoning information relating to redevelopment and preservation projects in downtown Irving.

Box 2

Folder

Series IV. Publications and Printed Material, 1975-1990

10 Programs, Fliers, and Pamphlets, 1911-1990s (bulk 1980s-1990s)

Contains programs, fliers, postcards and pamphlets from various museums and events. Among others are: an Irving Heritage Society brochure, c. 1990; an Irving Historic Trails Guide; and the order of service from Lynn Brown's funeral, 1990.

11 Publication, 1975-1986

Contains publications from various historical organizations. Among others are: paper and photo preservation guides; a Texas Commission on the Arts plan for operation and funding; a Swiss Avenue Historical District coloring book; and a Texas Sesquicentennial handbook of organization.

Oversize Box 4 – Newspapers, 1985-1991

Contains photocopies of newspaper articles covering the activities of the Irving Heritage Society during the mid-to-late 1980s. Also included are some articles about the Parrishes and their house and Morris Parrish's retirement as director of the Irving Community Hospital.

Series V. Photographs, 1976-1989

12 Photographs, 1976-1989

Contains photographs (15) from a picnic held during Irving's celebration of the U. S. Bicentennial, 1976; a photo of the Brown/Parrish house after renovation; a photo of Dr. Joe Rice, 1989; photos of ladies in the Heritage House, 1990; a photo of the California Crossing Heritage Society Historical Marker; and an unidentified 19th century era railroad depot.

Series V. Photographs, 1976-1989

Folder

13 Photographs, 1987-1991

Contains photographs of the dedication of the depot and cabin in Heritage Park, 1988, and the Irving history book signing event in Heritage Park, 1989.

14 Photographs, 1937 and 1986-1987

Contains photographs of the depot in a field at Fate, Texas, before it was moved to Heritage Park, 1986; signing the contract for the depot, 1986; and the caboose before it was moved to Heritage Park.

A panoramic photo of members at a meeting of the Intercity Meeting, 128th District Rotary Clubs, Trinidad Generating Station of Texas Power & Light Co., Oct. 28, 1937, is in Flat File Cabinet, Drawer 3.

Inventory of Oversize Box 4

Contains photocopies of newspaper clippings covering the activities of the Irving Heritage Society, 1985-1991: including the development of Heritage Park; the production and sale of the Irving history book, *Irving a Texas Odyssey*; the development of the Heritage District; the documentary on Irving's history, *80 Acres of Dreams*; and Marge and Morris Parrish.

Also included is the contract for purchase of the depot in Heritage Park, 1986; a design drawing of the donor plaque in the depot; a certificate of commendation to Marge Parrish from the Dallas County Historical Commission, 1987; a large photo of the Live Oak School (not Irving related), c. 1905; a matted pencil sketch of the Heritage House by Dana Morgan, 1990; a poster advertising the dedication of Heritage Park; a commemorative edition of the *Dallas Morning News*, October 1, 1885; and a newcomer's guide to Irving, 1986.