

DALLAS COUNTY
HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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Flagpole Hill – Historical Marker Application

By Peter Bratt, Dallas Park & Recreation with Sherry Duffer

The Dallas County Chronicle is pleased to re-print here the Historical Marker application made to the State via the Dallas County Historical Commission.

FLAG POLE HILL PARK HISTORICAL MARKER

1. CONTEXT

The development of Flag Pole Hill Park shows the transformation of a portion of Dallas, as well as much of Texas, from an agricultural production center into an urban economic center by the end of the 20th century. Flag Pole Hill Park, which was originally the site working farm, was part of a larger purchase in 1909 by the City of Dallas to develop White Rock Lake, which was one of the city's first two reservoir lakes. Dallas' rapid growth in the 1920s and 1930s led to the development of additional reservoir lakes, resulting in the development of White Rock Lake into an urban park. Flag Pole Hill was largely developed in the late 1930s as a partnership between the City of Dallas and the National Parks Service, thanks to the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). To this day the unique architecture of the CCC makes Flag Pole Hill Park a significant example of mid-19th century public works construction. The park is sited in a geographically significant vantage point in the City of Dallas, providing paramount views of White Rock Lake Park, considered the soul of Dallas, many East Dallas neighborhoods, and the downtown city skyline.

2. OVERVIEW - The Goforth Farm (1888-1911)

The land that became Flag Pole Hill Park was once owned by Samuel Churchwell Goforth (1870-1961), better known as Church Goforth, who lived on the site with his family from 1888 until 1911. The family homestead was located on the existing pavilion site. The family stone-lined water well was discovered 100 years later, in 2011 during repairs of this pavilion. The Goforth home was on this hill 60 feet above the "bottom land" that is now White Rock Lake.

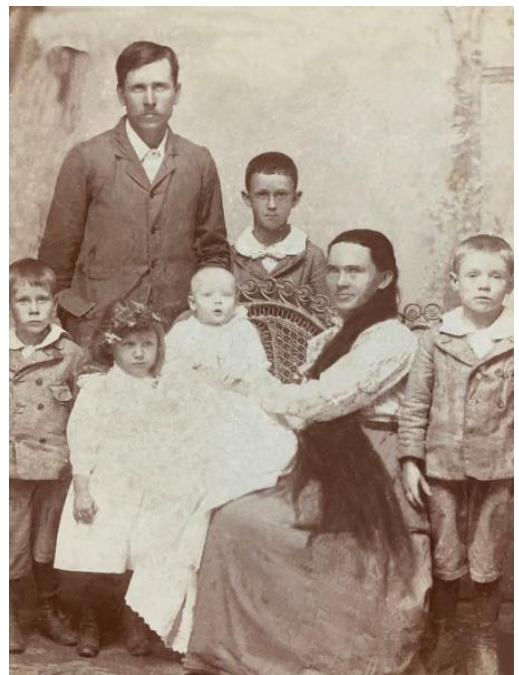
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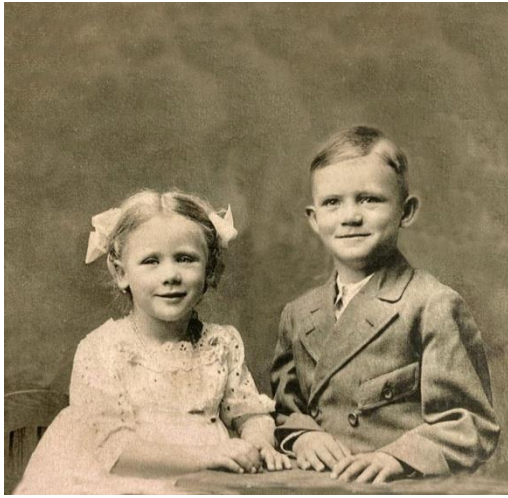
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Church and Alice Goforth, 1899 photo, with 5 of their 7 children: Herman, Hattie, Lee, Sloan and baby, Samuel Churchwell Goforth, Jr. The children were born between 1890-1899 at the family homeplace, today known as Flag Pole Hill



Kathryn (1905) and Jack Goforth (1903) were also born at family homeplace. Jack worked for and was Manager of Tenison Park and Golf Course for 42 years.

Church's grandfather, John Goforth, was born in England in 1790s. He arrived in Virginia and later settled in Roane County, Tennessee. After the conclusion of the American Civil War, Church's father, Samuel Goforth (1824-1888) brought his family west from Franklin County, Tennessee and settled in Garland area in 1876, when Church was 6 years old.

Church Goforth, Samuel's eldest son, married Alice Gault (1865-1938) on May 5, 1889 and used the money he made from his first large shipment of cattle north in 1888 to buy the 460 acres that include Flag Pole Hill Park where he built his home overlooking the valley which is now the north end of White Rock Lake.

Today the boundaries of this property would be Lanshire on the north, Jules Muchert Army Reserve on the east, Van Dyke and Mockingbird Lane on the south and White Rock Creek on the west. Goforth Road turns off Northwest Highway, just west of the main Flag Pole Hill entrance.

Church Goforth became a prominent cotton farmer and cattle rancher. Cotton was his main business, grown in the fertile "bottom lands" that

became White Rock Lake. Several seasons he delivered over (200) 500-pound bales of cotton to the cotton gin at Reinhardt to be processed for sale in Garland. He and his brother, Luther, worked the cattle along White Rock Creek in the area north of Northwest Highway along what is now Goforth Road. When White Rock Creek flooded the "bottomland", it could damage or destroy the cotton and cattle. They also tended the cattle near a family home that was on the hilltop near what is now Peavy and Van Dyke Roads.

Church also served as Deputy Sheriff of Dallas County for several years, enforcing the law in his White Rock district. He ran for Dallas County Sheriff in the 1910 election but was defeated.

Church gave an annual barbecue for city and county officials, and often had more than 200 invited guests. Calves and goats were grilled on open spits; long tables with jugs of lemonade, fruits, vegetables and homemade desserts were served. The November 17, 1911 Dallas Morning News notes that at the 1911 barbecue, the newspaper article details that short talks were made by City Attorney J. J. Collins, Dallas City Commissioners Nelms, Bartlett and Lee, and Dallas Chief of Police John Ryan. Church's oldest daughter, Hattie Goforth Payne, recalled that she wore a long white lace dress and her father had four fiddlers playing.

After moving from this family home place in 1911, Church lived on Ferguson Road near Mesquite and continued to raise cotton. In 1940, he retired to Fruitvale, Texas onto a small farm. Oil was discovered on the property and the royalties supported him. His family visited him every weekend. He and his son, Herman lived there until Church's death at age 90 in 1961.

Church's son, Jack Goforth (1903-1978), worked for the Dallas Park and Recreation Department for 42 years (1925-1967), and was Superintendent of Tenison Golf Course for 27 of these years (1940-1967). The Church Goforth family and relatives had annual family reunions at Flag Pole Hill Park until early 1980s.

All seven of the Goforth children were born in Dallas and spent their lives in the greater Dallas area. All continued to live in Dallas until their deaths. Kathryn Goforth, the last of the seven children, died in 1992. As of 2015, all the Church Goforth grandchildren (born between 1916 and 1925) have passed away. Many great grandchildren and great-great grandchildren remain in the Dallas area today.

Commemorative bricks detailing Church Goforth and Samuel Goforth may be found at the Memorial Plaza at the White Rock Lake Spillway at Winsted Road and Garland Road. Flag Pole Hill Park (1911-Present)

The Goforth property was first named Doran's Point Overlook in honor of William Doran (1847-1931), who was responsible for acquisition of all 2,292 acres that became White Rock Lake. Following the construction of additional reservoirs, White Rock Lake was decommissioned as a water source and turned over to the Dallas Park and Recreation Department in December 1929. Throughout this time Doran's Point Overlook was largely left untouched, considered by one writer as a "barren rocky outcrop."

(Story continues on the next page)



Hattie Goforth in her best white lace dress for her 16th birthday, 1911. Photo taken during the Goforth Family Annual BBQ Celebration. Four fiddler players were added for Hattie's big day.



Church and brother, Luther, work their cattle along White Rock Creek, by what is now Goforth Road. Years later this "bottom land" became the Northern end of White Rock Lake.

Large-scale development of recreational amenities at White Rock Lake did not occur until 1935 when the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) began work at the lake. The CCC was a public relief program created to employ unmarried men for work on local, state, and federal sites. Working in partnership with the Park and Recreation Department, the National Park Service developed a master plan for White Rock Lake in 1935, which proposed the building of a shelter, a concession building, and picnic facilities at Doran's Point Overlook. CCC workers lived at the CCC camp built by the US Army in 1935 on the back of Winfrey Point on the east side of White Rock Lake.

Construction of CCC projects at Doran's Point Overlook began in earnest in 1935. Work first began on the construction of Doran Circle at the top of the hill to Goforth Drive. This work was followed by the construction of a picnic pavilion. Near the apex of the overlook, CCC workers leveled off the top of this natural vantage point, and by purchasing \$283 worth of logs, cement and 40 tons of flagstone into a

picturesque overlook surmounted by a tall flagpole and accessible by sixteen wide stone steps from a newly-paved parking area. The Doran Combination Building (largely constructed of limestone) was completed in 1937, as was an overlook just north of Northwest Highway in 1938. Doran Combination Building was first used as a concession building for park users, who could get food, fishing supplies, and use the comfort station behind the building. In 1941, the WRR radio station was allowed to build a transmitting plant that consisted of one building and two radio transmission towers. WRR continued operations at Flag Pole in until 1971 when it relocated its facilities off site.

With the United States entering World War Two in December 1941, the CCC concluded its work at White Rock Lake in 1942. Largely due to the work done by CCC workers on Doran Point Overlook, the area gradually became known as Flag Pole Hill Park by the public and park department officials alike. In the post war years, Flag Pole Hill Park was heavily used by the public, with picnics, public events, and the occasional snowfall drawing large numbers of users.

Over time the buildings constructed by the CCC were readapted for other uses. The Doran Combination Building was a concession building until 1971, when the last concessioner departed due to weak sales. By 1972 the building was renovated and became the headquarters for the Park Department's East Region headquarters. In 2007 when the department dissolved its regional management structure, the building became the Recreation Division's headquarters. In 1971 WRR relocated its facilities from Flag Pole Hill, and the building was converted into a Park Department Reservation Office, and the radio transmission towers were demolished.

Flag Pole Hill Park began to be used in other ways in the 1980s. A playground was built in 1986 and refurbished in 1997. The Dallas Symphony Orchestra began offering concerts in 1968 at Flag Pole Hill and by 1988 the concert date was established as a Memorial Day tradition. While the hill had once been called a barren landscape, over

time Flag Pole Hill Park had become a habitat for native prairie grasses, a forested land scape, and other flora and fauna species. Today Flag Pole Hill stands as a treasure part of the Dallas Park System, beloved by residents, both young and old, and a physical landmark at White Rock Lake.

3. SIGNIFICANCE

Flag Pole Hill Park was created from land purchased by the City of Dallas in 1909 from the Goforth Family for the establishment of White Rock Lake Reservoir. Originally known as Doran's Point Lookout in honor of City Commissioner William Doran, the area was left largely untouched until the 1930s. Between 1935 and 1939, the Civilian Conservation Corps, in partnership with the City of Dallas, constructed a picnic pavilion, the Doran Combination Building, and an overlook dominated by a tall flagpole, thus giving this park the name Flag Pole Hill Park. In 1941 WRR built a radio station and transmission towers on the hill and broadcasted from this site until 1971. Flag Pole Hill Park has served as a community gathering point for concerts, protests, and sledding on the occasional snow days in Dallas since the 1930s. This 107 acre park provides a unique natural habitat in an urban setting as part of the larger White Rock Lake park system.



HISTORICAL MARKER UNVEILING

SATURDAY

JUNE 4, 2022 | 10:00 AM

FLAG POLE HILL

8015 DORAN CIR 75238

Join Adam McGough, Dallas City Council District 10, and Rob Stewart, Dallas Park and Recreation Board for this historical community event. Meet the descendants of Samuel Churchwell Goforth, better known as Church Goforth, original landowner of over 460 acres acquired by City of Dallas for the Northern area of White Rock Lake, including the land now known as Flag Pole Hill.

Refreshments will be served.



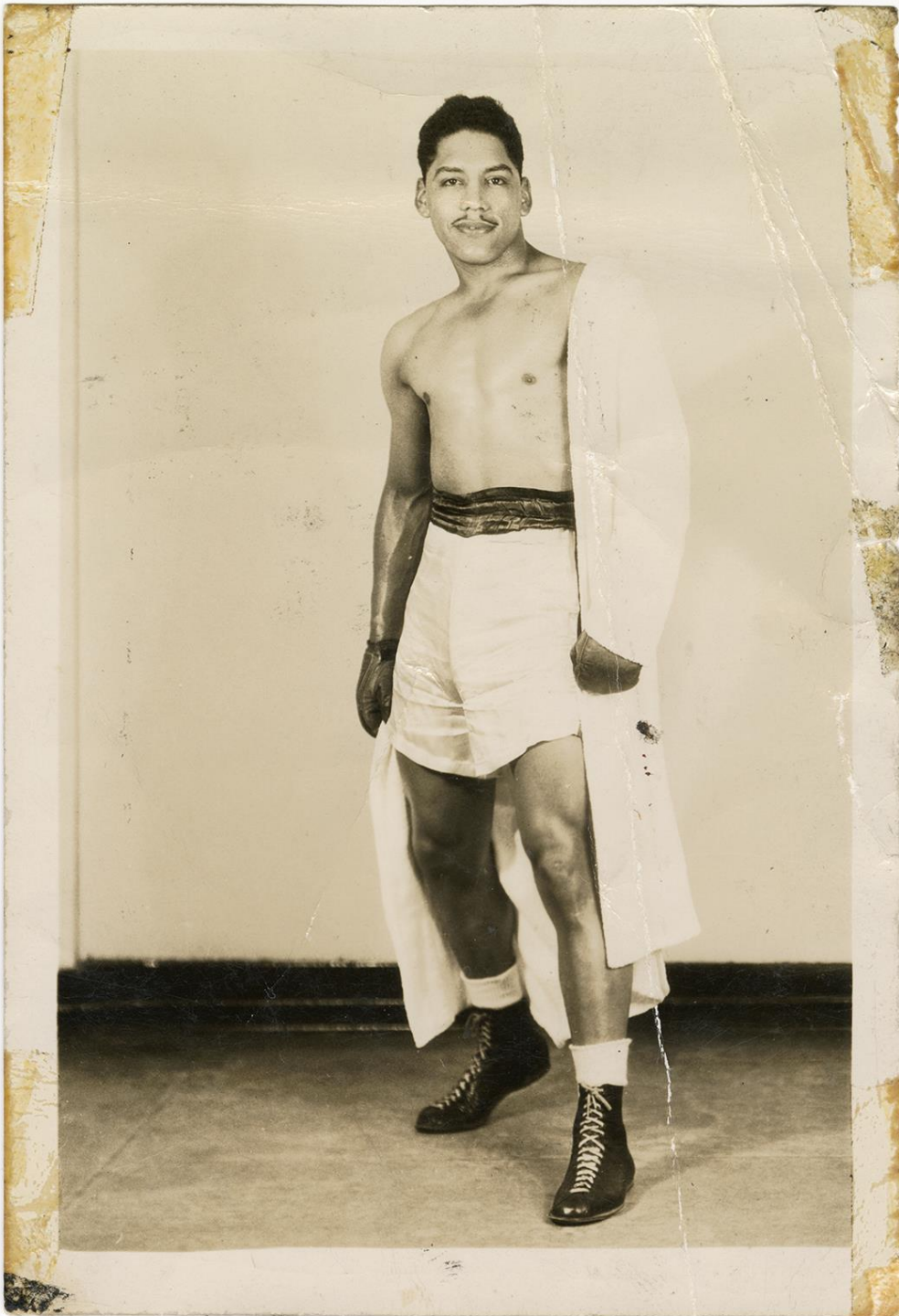


The Francisco "Pancho" Medrano Papers

By Priscilla Escobedo

The Dallas County Chronicle is pleased to re-print here an article from The University of Texas at Arlington's 'The Compass Rose' blog publication. The purpose of The Compass Rose is to raise awareness of Special Collections' resources and to foster the use of these resources. The blog series also reports significant new programs, initiatives, and acquisitions of Special Collections.

Francisco "Pancho" Medrano was born on August 2, 1920, in the Dallas Mexican-American barrio of Little Mexico, and died on April 4, 2002, in Dallas. He identified as Chicano and, as recorded in *White Metropolis: Race, Ethnicity, and Religion in Dallas, 1841–2001*, he was critical of contemporary Mexican-American organizations for not coordinating protests supporting Chicano and Mexican-American rights and for not working with Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities. He became one of the leaders of the burgeoning Chicano community of Dallas.



Early photo of Francisco "Pancho" Medrano in boxing attire, undated.

Medrano helped organize and participated in marches throughout Texas, from the Rio Grande City farmworkers protests to the Santos Rodriguez protests of Dallas. He served as a representative in the United Automobile Workers (UAW) union, and worked with the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL–CIO). He filed a suit against the Texas Rangers in 1968 in response to mistreatment of strikers and marchers by the Texas Rangers. This suit, *Medrano v. A. Y. Allee*, resulted in overturning Texas Civil Statutes and Articles that were found to violate the civil rights of protesters and marchers. His life's work was dedicated to Civil Rights and Labor Rights activism, and this dedication is carried on to this day by his children and grandchildren.

The Pancho Medrano Papers at the UTA Special Collections includes materials relating to Medrano's membership in the UAW, news clippings, and his work in Civil Rights and Labor Rights movements.

Medrano was introduced to both union work and boxing during his time at the North American Aviation Plant in Dallas. Here's a picture of him during his time as a local light heavyweight: His boxing skills would later be used during his campaign for Sergeant at Arms for UAW Local 645.

(Story continues on the next page)

VOTE for Pancho Medrano

I have devoted much time and effort - a good number of years of my life and through the years I have been active in many phases of the labor movement. Frankly, I have been militant when duty and honor called, humanitarian at all times. I have always, in a Christian-like manner planned and executed voluntary - or required honorable Union duties or deeds.

I have proved as Sergeant-at-Arms through successful accomplishments in the past that I am qualified - ready, willing and able!

My opponent cannot, in all truth, claim any of these things. How many times have you heard his name mentioned in connection with important Union activities???

This is the time of decision.... for truth and honor and we all have a moral obligation for our Local 390 and to dignity as a whole to vote honestly for the best qualified candidate...without a doubt... my record speaks for itself.

One of my favorites.....

"Almighty God, Thou who made Thy concern for the laboring man known in the form of a Carpenter, who, though He joined no local, organized the first International.

Grant that we may not forget the presence of that Carpenter among us. Help us to care, as Thou didst care, for those who sorely need justice and for the little people who have no lobbyists. In our desire for justice, keep us from crossing the picket lines of truth, that we not end up as spiritual scabs. Make us wise to seek the common good but not at the expense of integrity and principles, lest we find that we are striking against truth and wind up with larger incomes and smaller lives. Give tongue to those who plead for the weak and the oppressed, who whisper hope to the despairing who work for decency in our common life and promote understanding among men.

Amen"

**V
O
T
E** - Pancho Medrano -
Sergeant-at-Arms

The first image is of a campaign leaflet urging union members to vote for Pancho Medrano. On the background is a blue print of Medrano mid-boxing match with an opponent. The text reads:

I have devoted much time and effort - a good number of years of my life and through the years I have been active in many phases of the labor movement. Frankly, I have been militant when duty and honor called, humanitarian at all times. I have always, in a Christian-like manner planned and executed voluntary - or required honorable Union duties or deeds.

I have proved as Sergeant-At-Arms through successful accomplishments in the past that I am qualified - ready, willing and able!

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One of my favorites.....

Pancho Medrano campaign leaflets, Sergeant at Arms for UAW Local 645

"Almighty God, Thou who made Thy concern for the laboring man known in the form of a Carpenter, who, though He joined no local, organized the first International.

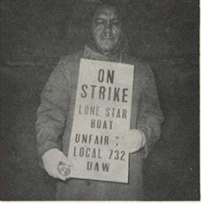
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Amen."


The second image is of another campaign leaflet: Vote for Pancho Medrano on May 5th! On the left and lower right of this leaflet are images of Medrano that depict qualities that Medrano felt proved his worthiness to be elected Sergeant at Arms. The first image on the left is of Medrano in a heavy coat and gloves carrying a sign that states: On Strike, Lone Star Boat Unfair, Local 732 UAW. This image was titled "Militant". The next image is of Medrano once again mid-boxing match, titled "Qualified". The last image is of Medrano standing with four protestors holding a sign urging people to not buy Tex-Son products. This image is titled "Cooperative". The last image is on the lower right corner of this page and is titled "Humanitarian". Medrano is pictured with a group of children, and in the background a mountain range can be seen. The leaflet was donated by friends and supporters of Medrano, and printed by Joseph R. Landin, member of the International Printing Pressman and Assistants' Union of North America - AFL-CIO.

(Story continues on the next page)

VOTE for PANCHO MEDRANO on May 5th!



Militant




Qualified

Vote for a qualified man - a man who is a Union man the year around - and who will do the very best job.

Our coming October crucial negotiations with the Company makes it imperative for Pancho to be elected Sergeant-at-Arms, since he has shown, through the years, how militant he is in time of need.


Pancho Medrano always treats everyone courteously and in a diplomatic manner - always with the interests of our Union at heart.



Cooperative

"LORD, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy. O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love; for it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born in eternal life."

Medrano's Prayer



Humanitarian

Printing donated by friends and supporters of Pancho Medrano.

Printed by Joseph R. Landin, member of the International Printing Pressman and Assistants' Union of North America - AFL-CIO

Pancho Medrano campaign leaflets, Sergeant at Arms for UAW Local 645

The text reads:

Vote for a qualified man - a man who is a Union man the year around - and who will do the very best job. Our coming October crucial negotiations with the Company makes it imperative for Pancho to be elected Sergeant-at-Arms, since he has shown, through the years, how militant he is in time of need. Pancho Medrano always treats everyone courteously and in a diplomatic manner - always with the interests of our Union at heart.

Between the last image on the left and the lower right image is the Peace Prayer of Saint Francis titled as "Medrano's Prayer". It reads:

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace; Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy. O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love; for it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying to ourselves that we are born to eternal life.

Medrano often stated: "In America, everything is politics, from the day you are born, until the day you die." He was a fighter from the boxing ring to the picket line, and his legacy reverberates throughout Texas.

To see more images from this collection, check out the Photo highlights from the Texas Labor Archives blog. To listen (or read) from Medrano himself, check out our Tejano Voices oral history interview that he gave in 1997.

Dallas County Historical Commission

Virginia Savage McAlester Tribute

David Preziosi, FAICP, Hon. AIA Dallas

Executive Director, Preservation Dallas

In 2020, Dallas and the country lost an incredible champion for historic preservation - Virginia Savage McAlester. She left a tremendous legacy with all that she did here in Dallas to preserve so many of our historic places across the city from neighborhoods to Fair Park.

Virginia's historic preservation activism began in 1971 when her Swiss Avenue neighborhood, then full of grand but decaying revival homes, was threatened with rezoning for high-rise apartments. At that time Dallas had no historic districts or a preservation program, so she led an effort to pass the city's first preservation ordinance and to create the first two local historic districts - Swiss Avenue and West End. Out of that effort, her and several others founded the Historic Preservation League, now Preservation Dallas, in order to have an organization that could advocate for historic buildings across the city. Virginia continued her preservation work through the League and organized and managed a revolving fund that oversaw the purchase, protection and resale of 26 houses in Old East Dallas. In 1995, she raised funds to create the InTown Living Center at the new headquarters of Preservation Dallas in the Wilson House as a way to interest people in moving to older Dallas neighborhoods. Another incredible effort of Virginia was the Discover Dallas program from 2001-2004. She chaired the Preservation Dallas program which trained hundreds of volunteers to research and document structures in numerous historic neighborhoods across the city.



Virginia Savage McAlester 1943-2020

(Story continues on the next page)



Fair Park was another passion for Virginia and in the mid-1980s she took on the task of advocating for Fair Park, which at the time was quite neglected. She was a founder of the Friends of Fair Park and during the 12 years she served on the board, the group gained National Historic Landmark status for Fair Park and raised \$100 million in funds for restoration work. Her extraordinary decades-long work with Fair Park earned her the “Spirit of the Centennial Award” in 2017 from the Friends of Fair Park, their highest honor for lifetime achievement.

Dallas owes a great debt to Virginia for her incredible work to save the historic architecture and neighborhoods that define Dallas. The city would be far different if it weren't for her tireless efforts to save its historic architecture from the small vernacular to the grand revival structures. Preservation Dallas recognized Virginia in 2004 with the Dorothy Savage Award its highest honor and named after her mother, another tireless advocate for preservation. Virginia's work was also recognized by the local, state and the national chapters of the American Institute of Architects when she received a 2017 AIA Honor Award.

Beyond Dallas, Virginia left preservationists across the county an incredible gift with her seminal work of *A Field Guide to American Houses*. It is an incredible book that has been used by countless people including preservationists, architects, historians, and people who love historic architecture. The book was first released in 1984 and was expanded and updated in 2013 with a new edition. The distinguished Houston architectural historian Stephen Fox said “The book really had a significant influence nationally as a kind of handbook that enabled people locally to be able to identify typical American houses and talk about the characteristics of architectural styles.” He noted that most architecture books focused on elite buildings and the work of well-known architects – not homes in ordinary neighborhoods from small towns to bigger cities like her book.

(Story continues on the next page)



Virginia Savage McAlester holding *A Field Guide to American Houses* first released in 1984 and later expanded and updated in 2013.



2020 Preservation Dallas Tribute in the garden of the Aldredge House in the Swiss Avenue Historic District.

After her passing, friends of Virginia and Preservation Dallas came together to find a way recognize her work and incredible contributions to Dallas. That culminated in the creation of a spectacular commissioned sculpture by local artist Kat Warwick. The tribute sculpture was installed last fall in its new home in the garden of the Aldredge House in the Swiss Avenue Historic District and across from Savage Park, named in honor of Virginia's parents. The dedication took place on October 2 after an amazing tribute event in Savage Park. Over 100 of her friends, neighbors, colleagues and supporters were in attendance for the memorial to Virginia and the unveiling of a sculpture to commemorate her life and many contributions to the preservation of buildings, neighborhoods and the history of Dallas. Many more also joined by live feed from the event where family members, colleagues and friends lovingly spoke about Virginia, her life and amazing work.

According to Warwick the sculpture represents Virginia's journey through life. The rectangular marble base is the strong foundation from her parents, education, friends and family. The swirling clouds with wind represent the ebb and flow of life with all of its twists and turns, joys and challenges and its silver lined surprises, all of which Virginia navigated so gracefully. After having navigated this life and having brought so much joy to others, at the top Virginia is represented by a powerful and graceful bird. The sculpture was created from a block of Italian Carrara marble, 3200 pounds of it, which was cut from the same mountain where Michelangelo harvested marble for his famous works.

In addition to the tribute sculpture, a Virginia Savage McAlester Tribute fund was set up at Preservation Dallas to continue her work to educate people about historic preservation. The fund will be used for special projects related to historic preservation efforts in Dallas, like surveys of historic neighborhoods, supporting educational programs on historic preservation and providing scholarships to students studying architecture and preservation.

To find out more about the Virginia Savage McAlester Tribute fund at Preservation Dallas or to donate to the fund please visit <https://preservationdallas.org/virginia-savage-mcalester>.



Sculpture by local artist Kat Warwick commissioned to commemorate the life and accomplishments of Virginia Savage McAlester